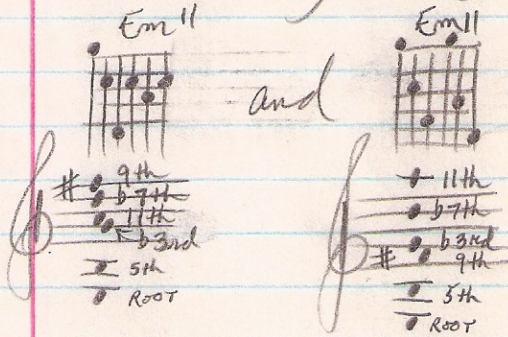


When a new student comes to my home for their 1st lesson, I introduce them to my cats, Leo & Zorro, and after knocking over a music stand or two, I ask them what they're interested in learning. One of the most common responses goes something like "I'm bored with the chords I play - if I just knew some better voicings"

So that's what this article is going to be about: chords & voicings. For those of you who don't know, the word voicing refers to how the notes of a chord are arranged. For instance,



are different voicings of Em11

because the order or arrangements of notes are not the same. But they are both Em11 chords, the same 6 letter names are contained in both voicings - the order is different, that's all.

Of course, the sounds of the 2 chords are slightly different too, which is what makes learning more about voicings worthwhile.

We'll start off talking about 'major' type chords & voicings. The basic major chord contains the 1st, 3rd & 5th tones of the major scale. EX: a Bb major chord contains the Bb D and F tones out of the Bb MAJOR SCALE: (1) Bb (2) C (3) D (4) Eb (5) F (6) G (7) A (8) Bb

Some good-sounding voicings of this chord are :