Chord Reference Charts and the Nucleus Concept

Ted Greene 1974-10-11, 1976-05-19

Each grouping of chords on the following pages can be seen as being derived from a given Nucleus Chord (hence the “nucleus concept”). Some benefits of this approach are:

1) Ease of memorization of large groups of chords, due to the ability to see all of them in relation to one central, nucleus chord, instead of thinking of them as being unrelated.

2) A more clear understanding of the construction of chords (knowing which note is where – like knowing if the root is in the bass, or the 3rd is in the melody, etc.).

3) An increased ability to make up variations on chord progressions, songs, original compositions, etc.

4) A better feeling for the concept of “moving lines” (a general increase in contrapuntal vision) due to the ability to see where the different chord tones lie. And

5) A less frightening overall view of the fingerboard, due to the friendly relationship you will acquire with many small, visual anchor points.

These pages are given for the purpose as listed above; the knowledge of how or where to use or apply chords (in other words, the principles of Harmony), is a separate study. So, in a way, these pages are for reference, meaning, as you are learning more and more about chord progressions and the like, you will want to know more and more actual physical forms or ways to make the principles come alive. One way to gradually learn more forms then, would be to keep referring back to these pages and extracting chords when you feel the need.

As with most studies on the guitar, much patience and determination are necessary for success with this material.

Make sure you analyze all the tones (Root, 3rd, 5th, etc.) are in each chord – see the first diagram for an example. (You needn’t write them in if you don’t care to, but the important thing is to know where the tones are eventually.)

All chords are given in only one key each, but should be learned in all keys in various cycles for added interest and enjoyment (ask about these if you’re not familiar with them).

Some chords that are listed in one group might just as easily have been included in another group, so the choice was arbitrary to a certain extent, in some cases.
Because these 5 groups are so similar, a *summary* will be given on the following page. I have found it much easier to *memorize* chords from a summary, although, the above, more detailed layout is better for seeing how the chords are derived initially. Anyway, in the future, the above steps will be omitted, and only a summary given, when it is felt that this would help you learn the material faster. (This reasoning will become clear as you progress on.)
Altered Dominants:

Nucleus Chord | Extended Dominants: | Suspended Dominants:

Overtone Dominants: | Altered Dominants:
This section is grouped in areas not around nucleus concepts.
See if you can determine a reasonable nucleus chord for each group.
For diminished 7th chords, see Systematic Inversions
Chord Reference Charts and the NUCLEUS CONCEPT

Each grouping of chords on the following pages can be seen as being derived from a given NUCLEUS CHORD (hence the "nuke concept"). Some benefits of this approach are: 1. Easier memorization of phrase groups of chords, due to the ability to see all of them in relation to one central nucleus chord, instead of thinking of them as being unrelated. 2. A more concrete understanding of the construction of chords (knowing which note is where-like knowing if the root is in the bass or the 3rd is in the melody, etc.). 3. An increased ability to make up variations on chord progressions, songs, original compositions, etc. 4. A better feeling for the concept of "moving lines" (a general increase in contrapuntal vision) due to the ability to see where the different chord tones lie. And, 5. A less frightening overall view of the fingerboard due to the friendly relationship you will acquire with many small, visual anchor points.

These pages are given for the purpose as listed above; the knowledge of how or where to use or apply chords (in other words, the principles of HARMONY) is a separate study. So in a way, these pages are for reference, meaning as you are learning more and more about chord progressions and the like, you will want to know more and more actual physical forms or ways to make the principles come alive; one way to gradually learn more forms then would be to keep referring back to these pages and extracting chords, when you feel the need.

As with most studies on the guitar, much PATIENCE and DETERMINATION are necessary for success with this material.

Make sure you analyze where all the tones (Root, 3rd, 5th) are in each chord—see the 1st diagram for an example. (You needn't write them in if you don't care to, but the important thing is to know where the tones are (eventually).)

All chords are given in only one key each, but should be learned in all keys in various octaves for added interest & enjoyment (ask about these if you're not familiar with them). Some chords that are listed in one group might just as easily have been included in another group, as the choice was arbitrary to a certain extent, in some cases.

Because these 5 groups are so similar, a summary will be given on the following page. I have found it much easier to memorize chords from a summary, although the above more detailed study is better for seeing how the chords are derived initially. Anyway, in the future, the above steps will be truncated and only a summary given, when it is felt that this would help you learn the material faster (this reasoning will become clear as you progress on).
Chord Reference Charts and the Nucleus Concept - Page 2

Also try figuring out the 7th chords from here on in.

Asus

E6/E7
Chord Reference Charts - Pages

See if you can determine a reasonable nucleus chord for each group.

Maj 7, 7th, Dim, Aug, N.C.

For diminished 7th chords, see SYSTEMATIC INVERSIONS.