

# Tenor Banjo Chords *(collected and arranged by Douglas McClure)*

This chord list is for the tenor banjo (CGDA tuning). It is much **simpler to use than it looks**. ☺ Just try it out and you'll find it's easy!

For example, let's suppose you're playing chord melody from a lead sheet and you come across this Abm7 chord with a melody note of Gb. Maybe you're not sure how to play it, or maybe you'd like to see if there is another version besides the one you know (for



example, one with a different bass note). Follow these steps:

1. Find the **m7** chords.
2. Since the melody note (Gb) is the **seventh** of the chord, go to the line labeled **(7)**.
3. Try out the first chord. You will probably have to **transpose** it (move it up or down) to the appropriate fret. (The chords printed in **blue** have open strings and therefore cannot be moved, but all the other chords can.) In this example, the first

**m7(7)** chord listed is 1122. Since you need a Gb on the top string, move the chord up to frets 8899 (because Gb is on the 9th fret). Play it and see how it sounds and feels.

4. Try the all the various **m7(7)** chords until you find the one that best suits your needs.

The first two pages of this document are the most important, and if you find them useful you might want to print them out to have at hand. (Pages 3 to 5 are for those who want a more detailed explanation.) Enjoy!

Melody Note	Frets	Tones	Nickname or (Root)
<b>MAJOR CHORDS</b>			
<b>major triad</b>			
ma maj M Δ (or no symbol)			
(1)	1134	R53R	n
	2331	3R5R	a
	3412	3R3R	a2
	5134	353R	
	4053	355R	(C)
	0523	RR3R	(C)
	6205	35RR	(D)
	0578	553R	(F)
	4620	535R	(A)
	5301	5R3R	(Bb)
	134	53R	nj
	412	R3R	a2j
	620	35R	(D, A)
	086	35R	(Ab, Eb)
	12	3R	njj
	31	5R	ajj
(3)	1224	3R53	n
	3113	5R53	a
	1341	53R3	a2
	6641	R5R3	
	0027	R533	(C)
	0057	R553	(C)
	0557	RR53	(C)
	0957	R353	(C)
	5530	R5R3	(F)
	0530	55R3	(F)
	2052	5RR3	(G)
	5305	5R33	(Bb)
	113	R53	nj
	341	3R3	a2j
	641	5R3	
	13	53	njj
	41	R3	a2jj
(5)	1344	53R5	n
	3351	R535	a
	4122	R3R5	a2
	6200	35R5	(D)
	6740	3R35	(D)
	3051	R335	(Eb)
	7405	R355	(G)
	0566	33R5	(Ab)
	0866	35R5	(Ab)
	122	3R5	nj
	095	R35	(C, G)
	740	R35	(G, D)
	51	35	ajj
	11	R5	njj
<b>6</b>			
ma6 maj6 M6 Δ6			
(1)	3142	365R	n
	1334	R63R	a
	5001	563R	(Bb)
SAME AS: m7(3)			
CAN ALSO USE:			
any minor triad (3)			
(3)	3133	5R63	n
	5113	6R53	a
	5500	R563	(F)
SAME AS: m7(5)			
CAN ALSO USE:			
any minor triad (5)			
(5)	1122	63R5	n
	3551	R635	a
	6400	36R5	(D)
SAME AS: m7(7)			
(6)	1131	R536	n
	1346	53R6	a
	124	3R6	aj
SAME AS: m7(1)			
CAN ALSO USE:			
any minor triad (1)			
<b>ma7</b>			
ma7 maj7 M7 Δ7			
(1)	2231	375R	
(3)	3153	5R73	
	1124	3753	
	5520	R573	(F)
CAN ALSO USE:			
any minor triad (1)			
(5)	4112	R375	
	1334	5375	
	3122	73R5	
CAN ALSO USE:			
any minor triad (3)			
(7)	1133	R537	
	3441	3R57	
	6411	5R37	
CAN ALSO USE:			
any minor triad (5)			
<b>ma9</b>			
ma9 maj9 M9 Δ9			
(1)	1312	973R	
(3)	1131	5973	
	1361	5393	
CAN ALSO USE:			
any m7(1)			
(5)	3142	7395	
	6620	3795	(D)
CAN ALSO USE:			
any m7(3)			
(7)	1113	R597	
	3133	9537	
CAN ALSO USE:			
any m7(5)			
(9)	1122	3759	
	1222	3R59	
	1536	R739	
	3551	5379	
	3151	5R79	
CAN ALSO USE:			
any m7(7)			
<b>69</b>			
ma69 maj69 M69 Δ69			
(1)	1112	963R	
(3)	1111	5963	
(5)	3144	69R5	
	6420	3695	(D)
(6)	1111	R596	
	1144	6396	
(9)	3144	3659	
	3131	5R69	
	5111	6R59	
	0225	R639	(C)
	114	639	
<b>7sus4</b>			
7sus4 sus4 sus#4 (see also 11 chords)			
(1)	1444	Rb74R	a
	3131	4b75R	n
	1366	b753R	a2
	5111	5b74R	a3
(4)	3144	5Rb74	
	5511	R5b74	
(5)	1111	b74R5	
(7)	1142	R54b7	
<b>7sus+4</b>			
7sus+4 7sus#4 sus#4 (see also +11 chords)			
(1)	2131	3b75R	n
	1434	Rb73R	a
	1356	b753R	a2
	4650	53b7R	(A)
	212	b73R	aj
	131	b75R	nj
	650	3b7R	(D, A)
	61	b7R	
(3)	3143	5Rb73	n
	1321	53b73	a
	2135	3b753	a2
	4641	b75R3	
	4341	b73R3	
	0357	Rb753	(C)
	5510	R5b73	(F)
	5002	b7R53	(G)
	143	Rb73	nj
	135	b753	a2j
	321	3b73	aj
	510	5b73	(Bb, F)
	21	b73	njj
CAN ALSO USE:			
any °(1) triad			
(5)	2122	b73R5	n
	1324	53b75	a
	3651	Rb735	a2
	5213	R3b75	
	1351	b7535	
	6500	3b7R5	(D)
	2035	5Rb75	(G)
	213	3b75	aj
	146	Rb75	
	651	b735	a2j
	611	b7R5	
	13	b75	
CAN ALSO USE:			
any °(3) triad			
(7)	1132	R53b7	n
	4551	3R5b7	a
	4125	R3Rb7	a2
	2125	b73Rb7	
	4351	3b75b7	
	0236	53Rb7	F
	132	53b7	nj
	125	3Rb7	aj
	314	5Rb7	
	521	R3b7	
	321	b73b7	
	840	35b7	(E, B)
	21	3b7	njj
CAN ALSO USE:			
any °(5) triad			
<b>9-5</b>			
9-5 9b5 (see also +11 chords)			
(1)	1232	9b7b5R	
(3)	1232	b59b73	
(5)	2141	b739b5	
CAN ALSO USE:			
any +			
(7)	2123	Rb59b7	
CAN ALSO USE:			
any +			
(9)=(2)	2123	3b7b59	
CAN ALSO USE:			
any +			
<b>7+5</b>			
7+5 7+ +7			
(1)	2141	3b7#5R	
(3)	4143	#5Rb73	
(5)	2123	b73R#5	
(7)	6501	3b7R#5	(D)
	1232	R#53b7	
<b>7-5</b>			
7-5 7b5			
(1)	2121	3b7b5R	
(3)	2143	b5Rb73	
(5)	2121	b73Rb5	
	1434	b53b7b5	
	212	3b7b5	
(7)	2143	Rb53b7	
<b>9</b>			
(1)	1212	9b73R	
	1242	9b75R	
(3)	1121	59b73	
CAN ALSO USE:			
any m7-5(1)			
(5)	2142	3b7395	
	6520	3b795	(D)
	4540	9b735	(D)
CAN ALSO USE:			
any m7-5(3), any minor triad (1)			
(7)	3132	953b7	
	1112	R59b7	
	5112	359b7	
	4145	R39b7	
	3640	395b7	(B)
CAN ALSO USE:			
any m7-5(5), any minor triad (3)			
(9)=(2)	2133	3b759	n
	3541	53b79	a
	1436	Rb739	a2
	6511	b7359	a3
	3141	5Rb79	
	0141	3Rb79	(Ab)
	214	b739	a2j
	541	3b79	aj
	141	Rb79	
CAN ALSO USE:			
any m7-5(7), any minor triad (5)			
<b>9+5</b>			
9+5 9#5			
(1)	1252	9b7#5R	
(3)	2121	#59b73	
(5)	2143	b739#5	
(7)	1212	R#59b7	
	2121	9#53b7	
(9)=(2)	2143	3b7#59	
<b>7-9</b>			
7-9 7b9 -9 (with no +9)			
(1)	1323	b9b73R	
	5404	3b7b9R	(Db)
	0845	b7b93R	(D)
	1350	3b9b7R	(A)
(3)	2132	5b9b73	
	5152	b7b9R3	

	0687	Rb9b73	(C)
	5840	Rb7b93	(F)
	5062	b7Rb93	(G)
	0476	b9Rb73	(B)
	0446	b9R53	(B)
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any 7</i>			
(5)	2132	b73b95	
	3540	b9b735	(D)
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any 7</i>			
(7)	2132	b95b37	
	4135	R3b9b7	
	1521	b9R3b7	
	5125	b93Rb7	
	5602	3Rb9b7	(Db)
	6087	Rb93b7	(F#)
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any 7</i>			
(9)=(2)	2132	3b75b9	
	1435	Rb7b3b9	
	1251	3Rb7b9	
	0746	b7R3b9	(D)
	6506	3b7Rb9	(D)
	8540	R3b7b9	(Ab)
	6560	b73Rb9	(Ab)
	0140	3Rb7b9	(Ab)

**7-9-5**  
7b9b5 -9-5 b9b5

(1)	1323	b9b7b5R	
(3)	1132	b5b9b73	
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any 7(7)</i>			
(5)	2131	b73b9b5	
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any 7(1)</i>			
(7)	3143	b9b53b7	
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any 7(3)</i>			
(9)=(2)	2122	3b7b5b9	
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any 7(5)</i>			

**11**  
9sus4 9sus  
(see also 7sus4 chords)

(1)	1222	9b74R	
	6414	4b79R	
	3561	49b7R	
	1136	b749R	
	0955	b794R	(D)
	7400	b794R	(A)
(4)=(11)	4142	b79R4	
	1122	59b74	
	0788	R9b74	(C)
	3730	Rb794	(E)
	5011	R9b74	(F)
	5073	b7R94	(G)
	0366	9Rb74	(Bb)
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any m7(7),</i>			
<i>any major triad (5)</i>			
(5)	1131	b7495	
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any m7(1)</i>			
(7)	3134	R49b7	
	2531	9R4b7	
	3142	954b7	
	5114	94Rb7	
	5501	4R9b7	(C)
	5086	R94b7	(F)
	0078	4R9b7	(G)
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any m7(3),</i>			
<i>any major triad (1)</i>			
(9)=(2)	1446	Rb749	
	3133	4b759	
	1141	4Rb79	
	7507	4b7R9	(D)
	0757	b7R49	(D)
	0007	b74R9	(D)
	7530	R4b79	(G)
	5550	b74R9	(G)
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any m7(5),</i>			
<i>any major triad (3)</i>			

(11)	see (4)		
<b>+ 11</b>			
9sus+4 9sus#4 (see also 9-5 and 7sus+4 chords)			
(1)	1232	9b7#4R	
(4)=(11)	1123	59b7#4	
(5)	1231	b7#495	
(7)	2123	R#49b7	
	2041	95#4b7	(C)
(9)=(2)	4133	#4b759	
	0345	Rb7#49	(C)
<b>see (4)</b>			

**13**  
7/6 7add6 9add6

(1)			
(3)			
(5)			
(7)			
(9)=(2)	5420	b7369	(G)
(14)	<i>(the eleventh is not normally used in thirteenth chords)</i>		
(13)=(6)	2124	b73R6	n
	1431	Rb736	a
	5215	R3b76	a2
	2144	b7396	
	5411	3b796	
	431	b736	aj
	215	3b76	a2j
	124	3R6	nj

**13-9**  
13b9

(1)			
(3)			
(5)			
(7)			
(9)=(2)			
(14)	<i>(the eleventh is not normally used in thirteenth chords)</i>		
(13)=(6)	2134	b73b96	
	2431	b9b736	

**MINOR CHORDS**

**minor triad**  
m mi min -

(1)	1124	R5b3R	n
	1331	b3R5R	a
	4124	b35b3R	a2
	5631	5b35R	
	5205	b35RR	(D)
	6402	5b35R	(B)
	124	5b3R	nj
	631	b35R	
	13	b3R	njj
	31	5R	ajj
(3)	1334	b3R5b3	n
	3112	5R5b3	a
	2351	5b3Rb3	a2
	0016	R5b3b3	(C)
	0056	R55b3	(C)
	6640	R5Rb3	(F#)
	112	R5b3	nj
	640	5Rb3	(B, F#)
	12	5b3	njj
	51	Rb3	
(5)	1244	5b3R5	n
	3341	R5b35	a
	6311	b35R5	
	5133	Rb3R5	
	5730	b3Rb35	(D)
	133	b3R5	nj
	730	Rb35	(G, D)
	41	b35	ajj
	11	R5	

**m6**  
mi6 min6 -6

(1)	2142	b365R	n
	6520	6b35R	(A)
	4540	5b36R	(A)
	213	6b3R	aj
	142	65R	nj
<b>SAME AS: m7-5(3)</b>			
(3)	3132	5R6b3	n
	5112	6R5b3	a
	3640	65Rb3	(F#)

	132	R6b3	nj
<b>SAME AS: m7-5(5)</b>			
(5)	2133	6b3R5	n
	3541	R6b35	a
	6511	b36R5	a2
	1214	5b365	a3
	214	b365	a3j
	541	6b35	aj
	511	6R5	a2j

**SAME AS: m7-5(7)**

(6)	1121	R5b36	n
	0135	5b3R6	(F)
	121	5b36	nj
	135	b3R6	aj

**SAME AS: m7-5(1)**

**m+7**  
m#7 min/maj7 mM7

(1)	1231	b375R	
(3)	3152	517b3	
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any +</i>			
(5)	4133	7b315	
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any +</i>			
(7)	1123	R5b37	
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any +</i>			

**m7**  
mi7 min7 -7

(1)	1131	b3b75R	n
	1424	Rb7b3R	a
	313	b7b3R	aj
	131	b75R	nj
<b>SAME AS: 6(6)</b>			
(3)	3142	5Rb7b3	n
	1134	b3b75b3	
	6620	R5b7b3	(F#)
	5001	b7R5b3	(G)
	142	Rb7b3	nj
<b>SAME AS: 6(1)</b>			
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any major triad (1)</i>			
(5)	3133	b7b3R5	n
	5113	Rb3b75	a
	5500	b3b7R5	(D)
	113	b3b75	aj

**SAME AS: 6(3)**

**CAN ALSO USE:**  
*any major triad (3)*

(7)	1122	R5b3b7	n
	3551	b3R5b7	a
	6400	5Rb3b7	(B)
	122	5b3b7	nj
	511	Rb3b7	
	551	R5b7	
<b>SAME AS: 6(5)</b>			
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any major triad (5)</i>			

**m7-5**  
m7b5 o7 o

(1)	1121	b3b7b5R	n
	0135	5b3R6	(D)
	121	b7b5R	nj
<b>SAME AS: m6(6)</b>			
(3)	2142	b5Rb7b3	n
	6520	Rb5b7b3	(F#)
	4540	b7b5Rb3	(F#)
	142	Rb7b3	nj

**SAME AS: m6(1)**

**CAN ALSO USE:**  
*any minor triad (1)*

(5)	3132	b7b3Rb5	n
	5112	Rb3b7b5	a
	3640	Rb7b3b5	(Eb)
	112	b3b7b5	aj

**SAME AS: m6(3)**

**CAN ALSO USE:**  
*any minor triad (3)*

(7)	2133	Rb5b3b7	n
	3541	b3Rb5b7	a
	6511	b5bRb3b7	a2
	214	b5Rb7	a3j
	541	Rb5b7	aj
	511	bRb3b7	a2j
<b>SAME AS: m6(5)</b>			
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any minor triad (5)</i>			

**m9**  
mi9 -9 -7(9)

(1)	2313	9b7b3R	
(3)	2231	59b7b3	
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any ma7(1)</i>			
(5)	3153	b7b395	
	5520	b3b795	(D)
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any ma7(3),</i>			
<i>any minor triad (1)</i>			
(7)	3122	95b3b7	
	1112	R59b7	
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any ma7(5),</i>			
<i>any minor triad (3)</i>			
(9)=(2)	1133	b3b759	
	1333	b3R59	
	1426	Rb7b39	
	3441	5b3b79	
	3141	5Rb79	
<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b>			
<i>any ma7(7),</i>			
<i>any minor triad (5)</i>			

**DIMINISHED CHORDS**

**all the diminished chords together**  
(if you're not interested in the details about each chord)

o o7 dim dim7 -  
(this section includes both triads and seventh chords)

(1/3/5/7)	2132, 1324, 4651, 1321, 2135, 3213, 1351, 1354, 4351	
	0246	
	132, 213, 135, 651, 321	
	510, 840	
	21, 13, 51	

**diminished triads**  
(classified according to top note)

o dim -  
(this section includes triads only)

(1)	1321	b3Rb5R	
	2135	Rb5b3R	
	135	b5b3R	
	321	Rb5R	
	510	b3b5R	(D, A)
	21	b5R	
	13	b3R	
(3)	1324	b3Rb5b3	
	3213	b5Rb5b3	
	1351	b5b3Rb3	
	213	Rb5b3	
	651	b5Rb3	
	13	b5b3	
	51	Rb3	
(5)	1354	b5b3Rb5	
	4351	Rb5b3b5	
	132	b3Rb5	
	321	b5Rb5	
	840	Rb3b5	(G#, D#)
	21	Rb5	
	51	b3b5	

**diminished triads and diminished sevenths**  
(classified according to top note)

o7  
(this section includes both triads and seventh chords)

(1)	2132	b3b7b5R	n
	1324	Rb7b3R	a
	4651	b5b3b7R	a3
	1321	b3Rb5R	
	0246	b7b5b3R	(D#)
	132	b7b5R	nj
	213	b7b3R	aj
	135	b5b3R	a2j
	651	b3b7R	a3j
	321	Rb5R	a4j
	21	b5R	njj
	13	b3R	ajj

**51** b67R a3jj

**CAN ALSO USE:**  
*any (1) triad*

(3)	2132	b5Rb7b3	n
	1324	b3Rb5b3	a
	4651	b7b5Rb3	a3
	1321	b5b3b7b3	
	0246	Rb7b5b3	(C)
	132	Rb7b3	nj
	213	Rb5b3	aj
	135	b7b5b3	a2j
	651	b5Rb3	a3j
	321	b3b7b3	a4j
	21	b7b3	njj
	13	b5b3	ajj
	51	Rb3	a3jj

**CAN ALSO USE:**  
*any (3) triad*

(5)	2132	b7b3Rb5	n
	1324	b5b3b7b5	a
	4651	Rb7b3b5	a3
	1321	b7b5Rb5	
	0246	b3Rb7b5	(A)
	132	b3Rb5	nj
	213	b3b7b5	aj
	135	Rb7b5	a2j
	651	b7b3b5	a3j
	321	b5Rb5	a4j
	21	Rb5	njj
	13	b7b5	ajj
	51	b3b5	a3jj

**CAN ALSO USE:**  
*any (5) triad*

(7)	2132	Rb5b3b7	n
	1324	b7b5Rb7	a
	4651	b3Rb5b7	a3
	1321	Rb7b3b7	
	0246	b5b3Rb7	(F#)
	132	b5b3b7	nj
	213	b5Rb7	aj
	135	b3Rb7	a2j
	651	Rb5b7	a3j
	321	b7b3b7	a4j
	21	b3b7	njj

## NON-CHORDAL TONES:

We often need to play a melody note over a chord which does not contain that note. These notes are called **non-chordal tones**, and they are very important in chord-melody playing. For example, here is a phrase from *Bye Bye Blues* in which fully half of the notes (the ones with asterisks below them) are non-chordal:

A musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The chords above the staff are D7, G7, C, C°, G7, and G+. The notes are: D7 (D, E, F, G), G7 (G, A, Bb, C), C (C, D, E, F), C° (C, Eb, F, G), G7 (G, A, Bb, C), and G+ (G, A, B, C). Asterisks are placed below the notes: E under D7, Bb under G7, Eb under C, F under C°, Bb under G7, and C under G+.

*NOTE: Sometimes a composer or arranger will choose to give a chord a different, more complicated name with the express aim of including the melody note. For example, the first chord above could also be called a D9, which includes the E as a chordal tone. In this discussion of non-chordal tones, however, we will restrict ourselves to the most basic chords: major, dominant seventh, and minor.*

**MAJOR:** The most common non-chordal tones used over a major chord are the major 2<sup>nd</sup>, the perfect and augmented 4<sup>ths</sup>, the major 6<sup>th</sup>, and the major 7<sup>th</sup>:

A musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The chord is CΔ (C major). The notes are: Root (C), 2nd (D), 3rd (E), 4th (F), aug 4th (F#), 5th (G), maj 6th (Ab), and maj 7th (Bb). Asterisks are placed below the 2nd, 4th, aug 4th, maj 6th, and maj 7th notes.

**DOMINANT SEVENTH:** The most common non-chordal tones used over a dominant-seventh chord are the minor and major 2<sup>nds</sup>, the perfect 4<sup>th</sup>, and the minor and major 6<sup>ths</sup>:

A musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The chord is G7. The notes are: Root (G), min 2nd (Ab), maj 2nd (A), 3rd (Bb), 4th (C), 5th (D), min 6th (Eb), maj 6th (E), and min 7th (F). Asterisks are placed below the min 2nd, maj 2nd, 4th, min 6th, and maj 6th notes.

**MINOR:** The most common non-chordal tones used over a minor chord are the major 2<sup>nd</sup>, the perfect 4<sup>th</sup>, the minor and major 6<sup>ths</sup>, and the minor and major 7<sup>ths</sup>:

A musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The chord is Am. The notes are: Root (A), 2nd (Bb), 3rd (C), 4th (D), 5th (E), min 6th (F), maj 6th (F#), min 7th (G), and maj 7th (G#). Asterisks are placed below the 2nd, 4th, min 6th, maj 6th, min 7th, and maj 7th notes.

Other non-chordal tones are also possible, but here we will concentrate on the most common ones, as listed in the above three staves.

When you encounter a non-chordal tone, you always have the option of simply playing the note without any harmony, but it is often preferable to play a full chord under it. In that case, **choose a chord whose top note is near the (non-chordal) melody note you need, and change the top note as required.** (This will typically require a change in fingering.) There is often more than one possibility. For example, if you need to play a high A melody note over a C major chord, you can either raise the top note of a C(5) chord or lower the top note of a C(1) chord:

Four guitar fingerboard diagrams for C major chords. The first two are for C(5) and C(6) chords, and the last two are for C(1) and C(6) chords. The diagrams show the fretting hand positions and fingerings (1-4) for each chord. The C(5) chord has a top note of G (5th fret), and the C(1) chord has a top note of C (1st fret). The C(6) chords have a top note of C (6th fret).

Below are some suggestions for playing non-chordal melody notes over major, dominant-seventh, and minor chords:

Melody Note	Frets	Tones	Nickname	Comments
<b>major triad</b> <b>ma maj M Δ (or no symbol)</b>				
(2)	1222 1136	3R52 R532	n a	Can only be used at the nut (C major, frets 0025) and in high positions (starting at about G♭ major, frets 66811). Best fingered 1134. Especially useful before or after the Δ(3a), which uses frets 3113.
(4)	3114 1225 1342 5531	5R54 3R54 53R4 R5R4	n a a aa	
(#4)	3115 1226	5R5#4 3R5#4	n a	
	1343 4421	53R#4 R5R#4	aa n	
(6)	1131 1346	R536 53R6	n a	Can only be used at the nut (F major, frets 0235) and in high positions (starting at about A major, frets 4679).
(Δ7)	1133	R537	n	
<b>7</b>				
(b2)	2132 1435	3♭75♭2 R♭73♭2	n a	Can only be used at the nut (C7, frets 0325) and in high positions (starting at about E7, frets 4769).
(Δ2)	2133 1436	3♭752 R♭732	n a	
	3541 3141	53♭79 5R♭79	n n	
(4)	3144	5R♭74	n	
(b6)	2123 2541	♭73R♭6 R♭73♭6	n a	
(Δ6)	2124 1431	♭73R6 R♭736	n a	
<b>minor triad</b> <b>m mi min -</b>				
(2)	1333 1126	♭3R52 R5♭32	n a	Can only be used at the nut (C minor, frets 0015) and in high positions (starting at about F minor, frets 55610). Especially useful before or after the m(3a), which uses frets 3112.
(4)	3114 1336	5R54 ♭3R54	n a	
	1242 5531	5♭324 R5R4	aa n	Can only be used at the nut (A minor, frets 0225) and in high positions (starting at about D# minor, frets 68811). Can be fingered 1243 or 1242.
(b6)	2231 1245	R5♭3♭6 5♭3R♭6	n a	
(Δ6)	1121 1246	R5♭36 5♭3R6	n a	
(b7)	1122	R5♭3♭7	n	
(Δ7)	1123	R5♭37	n	Can only be used at the nut (F minor, frets 0135) and in high positions (starting at about C# minor, frets 891113).

The chart above shows simple chords, each one with a single added non-chordal tone. Many of these — though not all of them — are equivalent to more complicated chords, and they could be notated as such. For example, a **C major chord** with an added **non-chordal sixth** is the same as a **C major sixth chord** with the sixth on the top string. Here is a list of equivalent chords:

Simple chord (with non-chordal tone)	=	Advanced chord name
C(6)	=	C6
C(Δ7)	=	CΔ7
C7(b2) or C7(b9)	=	C7b9
C7(Δ2) or C7(Δ9)	=	C9
C7(4)	=	C7sus4
C7(#4)	=	C7sus+4
C7(b6)	=	C7+5
C7(Δ6)	=	C13
Cm(Δ6)	=	Cm6
Cm(b7)	=	Cm7
Cm(Δ7)	=	CmΔ7

Of course, *any* non-chordal tone can appear over *any* type of chord, not just major, dominant-seventh, and minor. Nonetheless, once you've understood how they are used over these chords, you will certainly be able to deal with more complicated chords on your own, using your ear, your common sense, and a little trial and error.

## DETAILED EXPLANATION OF THIS DOCUMENT:

When I set out to make my own chord sheet for the tenor banjo (tuned CGDA), I first used traditional chord diagrams. (At [www.neckdiagrams.com](http://www.neckdiagrams.com) I found a good computer program for creating them.) However, I soon discovered that formatting the diagrams on the printed page was a complicated job, and the resulting document was difficult to update when I needed to add new chords. Besides, I had to find a more space-efficient format because I wanted several hundred chords to fit on one double-sided sheet of paper. So I switched to this text-only system, which has proved quite satisfactory.

As well as the usual **four-note chords**, this list also contains a number of **three-note chords** (sometimes called “junior” or “inside” chords) and **two-note chords**. These are useful when the melody notes are too low to be played on the top strings or when the performer desires a lighter, less dense sound or an easier fingering.

The chords are listed in four columns. The **FIRST COLUMN** lists, in parentheses, the **MELODY NOTE** (the highest note of the chord). This is essential for chord-melody playing.

Chord symbols in lead sheets sometimes specify the bass note (for example, A7/C#). But they practically never specify the top note, and there seems to be no standard method for doing so. However, this is sometimes necessary, especially in pedagogical works. There are various notational possibilities. For example, to specify a minor seventh chord with the third in the soprano, you could write:

**m7(3)**   **m7(3 mel)**   **m7\3**   **llm7**   **m7 (form 2)**   **m7 (form 3)**  
**Dm7(F)**   **Dm7(F mel)**   **Dm7\F**   **Dllm7**   **Dm7 (form 2)**   **Dm7 (form 3)**

In this document I use the first notation system, i.e., **m7(3)** and **Dm7(F)**.

In the **SECOND COLUMN**, the **FRET NUMBERS** are listed, from lowest string to highest:

- Chords in this list which are printed in **blue** have at least one open string (i.e., a fret number of 0). They are considered **non-movable** because they are normally only playable at the position indicated. For example, it is not very practical to move the chord form 6500 (the D7(A) chord) to, say, 7611 (for the Eb7(Bb) chord) because the latter would require a very long stretch.
- Nonetheless, many chords listed as non-movable can in fact be moved, particularly to very high positions, where the frets are closer together. The aforementioned example of 6500 (D7(A)) is indeed usable in a high position like 14 13 8 8 (Bb7(F)).
- All other chords, printed in black, are **movable**. Although the movable chords listed here are all at the first fret, they can easily be transposed up to any other position on the neck. For example, the 3143 chord — form (3) of the dominant-seventh chord — will give you Ab7(C). You can move it up one fret to 4254 and you will get A7(C#). Continue up another fret to 5365 and you get Bb7(D). You can transpose it as high as you want; for example, you can move it to 16 14 17 16 to get a high A7(C#) chord.
- All the movable chords can also be moved one fret LOWER, i.e. closer to the nut. Any strings that had been fingered on the first fret will now be open. For example, the aforementioned 3143 Ab7(C) chord can also be played 2032 to give a G7(B) chord. Of course, since this lowered version will have at least one open string, it will require a change in fingering.

In the **THIRD COLUMN**, you can find the individual **CHORD TONES**. For example, 5Rb73 means that the fifth of the chord is on the lowest

string, the root is on the next string, the minor seventh is on the next, and the third is on the top string.

In the **FOURTH COLUMN**, printed in **red**, are informal **“NICKNAMES”** which I use for some of the movable chords (“**7(3n)**”, “**m7(1aj)**”, etc.), based on the following considerations:

<b>n</b>	<b>“normal”</b> chord: the chord to use if there is no reason to use a different one (I only specify the letter “n” when it is needed to avoid ambiguity)
<b>a</b>	first <b>“alternative”</b> chord
<b>a2</b> or <b>aa</b>	second <b>“alternative”</b> chord
<b>j</b>	three-note <b>“junior”</b> chord
<b>jj</b>	two-note chord

(Junior chords are frequently the same as the top two or three strings of a corresponding four-note chord; in that case, the junior chord uses the same nickname: “nj”, “aj”, “a2j”, “njj”, “ajj”, or “a2jj”.)

In this column I have also included, in **blue ink** and in parentheses, the **ROOT NOTES** of all non-movable chords. Two- and three-note non-movable chords have more than one possible root, depending on which strings they are played on.

Under each chord name, the chords are listed in the following order (in each case, starting with the chord forms I consider the best):

- four-note movable chords
- four-note non-movable chords
- three-note movable chords
- three-note non-movable chords
- two-note movable chords
- two-note non-movable chords

This list does not include re-entrant chords (i.e., where the notes do not all go from lowest to highest), chords with unison strings, or chords above the ninth fret. (At <http://chordlist.brian-amberg.de/en/tenor-banjo/jazz> you can check out Brian Amberg’s incredibly complete list, which seems to include every possible chord.) Nor have I included **fingerings**, as they are usually quite easy to figure out (besides the fact that more than one fingering is often possible).

**Non-chordal tones:** As my chord list grew, I realized that it might also be a good idea to devote some space to non-chordal tones, so I have dedicated pages 3 and 4 to that subject.

**Printing:** Although this document is formatted for European “A4” paper (210 × 297 mm), it should print properly at full size on American “letter” paper (8½ × 11 inches). But if you want to be absolutely sure none of the content gets cropped, or if you are using any other paper size, choose “Fit” or “Shrink oversized pages” in Adobe Reader when printing. I recommend printing **in color** if possible.

At last count (in version 08e), this list contained 340 movable chords, each one transposable to about 16 different keys, and 124 non-movable ones, so you could reasonably say that there are **over 5,500 chords** here, all squeezed into just two pages! This chord list will probably always be a work in progress. I’ll keep the **current version** available on-line at [www.dmcclore.org/banjo](http://www.dmcclore.org/banjo). I’d love to hear your comments, corrections and suggestions, especially for good chords I’ve missed. Write me at [banjo@dmcclore.org](mailto:banjo@dmcclore.org) — I look forward to hearing from you!