

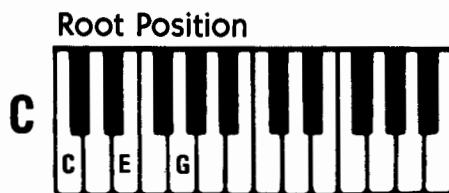
# PART ONE: ABOUT CHORDS

In written music, accompaniment harmony often is indicated by **chord symbols** above the staff. This book is concerned with what those symbols mean and how you can translate them on the keyboard.

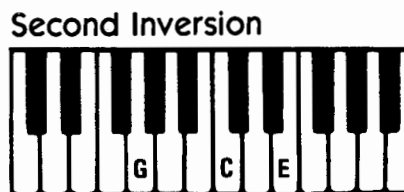
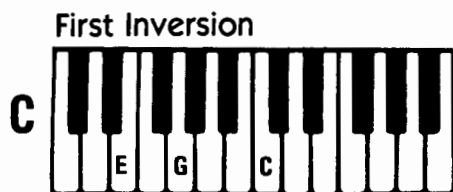
A chord is a group of notes sounding at one time. Most electronic keyboard instruments provide two ways of playing chords: **single-finger chords** and **fingering chords**. Fingering chords are the subject of this book. In fingering-chord mode, you play the notes of the chord in the accompaniment section of the keyboard, and the instrument automatically provides an appropriate bass.

Most of the chords you will be concerned with in playing your electronic keyboard are composed of three or four notes. The notes that make up a chord determine the kind of chord that it is. You probably are familiar with the most common kinds of chords, at least by name: major and minor. Both of these are three-note chords.

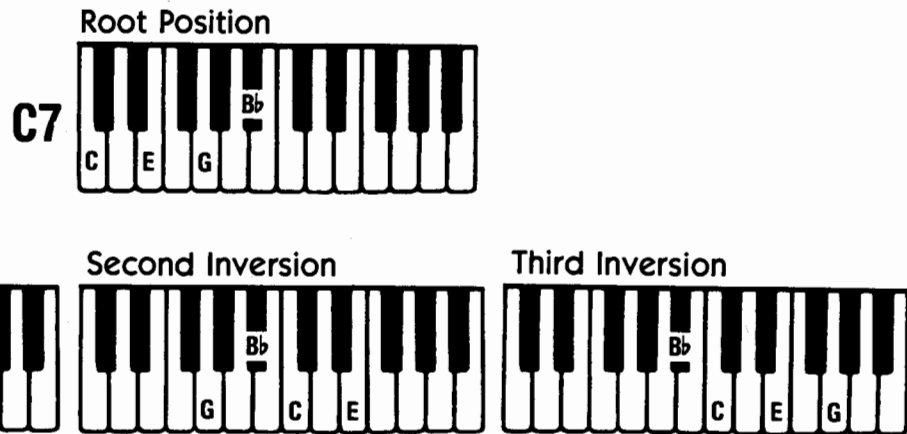
All chords are built upon a note called the **root**, which is the main tone of the bass. The root is the note that gives the chord its letter name. For example, a C major chord (abbreviated **C**) and a C minor chord (abbreviated **Cm**) both have the note **C** as their root. When a chord is played with the root (letter-name) note on the bottom, it is said to be in **root position**:



But chords are not restricted to being played in root position; the notes can also be played in different orders, called **inversions**. When the first note above the root is on the bottom, the chord is said to be in **first inversion**; when the second note above the root is on the bottom, the chord is said to be in **second inversion**:



**Seventh chords** have four notes rather than three. The additional note provides an additional inversion as well: **third inversion**, in which the third note above the root is on the bottom of the chord:



Common three-note chords are: major, minor, and augmented. Common four-note chords are: seventh, minor seventh, and diminished (sometimes called "diminished seventh"). All of these chords are shown in the chord charts that make up PART TWO of this book. The chords are shown in all positions for every note of the scale.

## ABOUT THE CHORD CHARTS

The most commonly played positions are shaded in the chord charts. With the exception of augmented and diminished chords, these are positions in which all the notes of the chord fall within the octave from **F#** to **F**. Augmented and diminished chords should be played in root position on electronic keyboards in order to produce the root as the bass note. For the other kinds of chords, electronic keyboards will produce the correct bass note regardless of what inversion you play.

## ABOUT THE SONGS

PART THREE of this book consists of songs that illustrate the use of the fingered chords shown in PART TWO. Because Hal Leonard E-Z Play ® TODAY Music is written so that it can be played on all organs and electronic keyboards, using either fingered chords or single-finger chords, it usually adheres to the simplest chords possible. But since this book is dedicated to exploring chords, additional chords are shown in the songs here, written in smaller letters above the normal chord symbols.

Whenever you encounter a chord symbol in the music, whether small or large, play the chord indicated; where a small symbol appears above a large one, play the small one. For example, in the following case...



...you should play C-Am-Dm7-G7.