

# 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. (Nonetheless, if you are interested in all the details, you can find them on the last page of this document.)

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):

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 **move** it 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 various **m7(7)** chords until you find the one that best suits your needs.

Enjoy!

Melody Note	Frets	Tones	Nickname or (Root)
<b>MAJOR CHORDS</b>			
<b>major triad</b>			
<b>ma maj M Δ (or no symbol)</b>			
(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	nij
	31	5R	ajj
(3)	1224	3R53	n
	3113	5R53	a
	1341	53R3	a2
	6641	R5R3	
	0057	R553	(C)
	0557	RR53	(C)
	0957	R353	(C)
	5530	R5R3	(F)
	0530	5R3R	(F)
	2052	5RR3	(G)
	5305	5R33	(Bb)
	113	R53	nj
	341	3R3	a2j
	641	5R3	
	13	53	nij
	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	nij
<b>6</b>			
<b>ma6 maj6 M6 Δ6</b>			
(1)	3142	365R	n
	1334	R63R	a
	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)	314	365	a2j
	1131	R536	n
	1346	53R6	a
<b>124</b>   3R6   aj			
SAME AS: m7(1)			
CAN ALSO USE:			
any minor triad (1)			
<b>ma7</b>			
<b>ma7 maj7 M7 Δ7</b>			
(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>			
<b>ma9 maj9 M9 Δ9</b>			
(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>			
<b>ma69 maj69 M69 Δ69</b>			
(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>DOMINANT CHORDS</b>			
<b>7</b>			
(1)	2131	3b75R	n
	1434	Rb73R	a
	1356	b753R	a2
	4650	5b7R	(A)
(5)	212	b73R	aj
	131	b75R	nj
	650	3b7R	(D, A)
	61	b7R	
(3)	3143	5Rb73	n
	1321	5b73	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	nij	
	CAN ALSO USE:		
	any °(1) triad		
(5)	2122	b73R5	n
	1324	5b75	a
	3651	Rb735	a2
	5213	R3b75	
	1351	b7535	
	6500	3b7R5	(D)
	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	nij
	CAN ALSO USE:		
	any °(5) triad		
<b>7sus4</b>			
7sus4 sus4 sus			
(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>			
sus+4 7sus#4 sus#4			
(see also +11 chords)			
(1)			
(4)	4401	R5b74	(E)
(5)			
(7)			
<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>			
7b5			
(1)	2121	3b7b5R	
(3)	2143	b5Rb73	
(5)	2121	b73Rb5	
1434	b53b7b5		
212	3b7b5		
2143	Rb53b7		
(7)	2143	Rb53b7	
<b>9</b>			
(1)	1212	9b73R	
(3)	1242	9b75R	
	1121	59b73	
(5)	2142	b7395	(D)
	6520	3b795	(D)
	4540	9b735	(D)
	CAN ALSO USE:		
	any m7-5(1)		
(7)	3132	953b7	
	1112	R59b7	
	5112	359b7	
	4145	R39b7	
	3640	395b7	(B)
	CAN ALSO USE:		
	any m7-5(5),		
	any minor triad (1)		
(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			
(1)	1252	9b7#5R	
(3)	2121	#59b73	
(5)	2143	b739#5	
(7)	1212	R#59b7	
	2121	9#53b7	
(9)=(2)	2143	3b7#59	
	CAN ALSO USE:		
	any °		
<b>9-5</b>			
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+9</b>			
7#9 +9			
(with 5, not +5, and no -9)			
(1)	4313	3b7#9R	
	2212	#9b73R	
	1550	3#9b7R	(A)
	0650	#93b7R	(A)
(3)	1365	#9Rb73	
	4241	b7#9R3	
	1221	5#9b73	
	221	#9b73	
	0887	R#9b73	(C)
	5509	#9b7R3	(D)
5860	Rb7#93	(F)	
5110	R#9b73	(F)	
0074	#9b7R3	(A)	
4152	R3#95		
1224	#9b75		
3133	b7#9R5		
5113	R#9b75		
6530	3b7#95	(D)	
	CAN ALSO USE:		
	any major triad (3)		
(7)	4155	R3#9b7	
	4511	3R#9b7	
	3521	#9R3b7	
	1122	R5#9b7	
	4065	R#93b7	(E)
	6320	R3b7#9	(Gb)
	CAN ALSO USE:		
	any major triad (5)		
(9)=(2)	2134	3b7#9	
	2431	53b7#9	
	1253	3Rb7#9	
	5451	b73R#9	
	215	b73#9	
	431	3b7#9	
	0326	Rb73#9	(C)
	0986	R3b7#9	(C)
	6508	3b7R#9	(D)
	0748	b7R3#9	(D)
	CAN ALSO USE:		
	any major triad (1)		
<b>7-9</b>			
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)
	CAN ALSO USE:		
	any °		
(5)	2132		

(3)	1132   b5b9b73   <b>CAN ALSO USE:</b> any 7(7)	(13)=(6)	2124   b73R6   n 1431   Rb736   a 5215   R3b76   a2 2144   b7396   5411   3b796   431   b736   aj 215   3b76   a2j 124   3R6   nj	(7)	<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b> any + 1123   R5b37   <b>CAN ALSO USE:</b> any +	1426   Rb7b39   3441   5b3b79   3141   5Rb79   <b>CAN ALSO USE:</b> any ma7(7), any minor triad (5)	321   b5Rb5   a4j 21   Rb5   njj 13   bb7b5   ajj 51   b3b5   a3jj					
(5)	2131   b73b9b5   <b>CAN ALSO USE:</b> any 7(1)	<b>13-9</b> 13b9			<b>m7</b> mi7 min7 -7			<b>DIMINISHED CHORDS</b> (see the "ALL THE DIMINISHED CHORDS TOGETHER" section below for a practical summary)				
(7)	3143   b9b5b3b7   <b>CAN ALSO USE:</b> any 7(3)	(1)		(1)	1131   b3b75R   n 1424   Rb7b3R   a 313   b7b3R   aj 131   b75R   nj	<b>diminished triad</b> ° o dim - (triads only)			(7)	<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b> any °(5) triad		
(9)=(2)	2122   3b7b5b9   <b>CAN ALSO USE:</b> any 7(5)	(3)		(3)	3142   5Rb7b3   n 1134   b3b75b3   a 6620   R5b7b3   (F#) 142   Rb7b3   nj	<b>(1)</b> 1321   b3Rb5R   2135   Rb5b3R   135   b5b3R   321   Rb5R   510   b3b5R   (D, A) 21   b5R   13   b3R			2132   Rb5b3bb7   n 1324   bb7b5Rbb7   a 4651   b3Rb5b7   a3 1321   Rbb7b3bb7   0246   b5b3Rbb7   (F#) 132   b5b3bb7   nj 213   b5Rbb7   aj 135   b3Rbb7   a2j 651   Rb5bb7   a3j 321   bb7b3bb7   a4j 21   b3bb7   njj 13   Rbb7   ajj 51   b5bb7   a3jj			
<b>11</b> 9sus4 9sus (see also 7sus4 chords)		(9)=(2)	{11}	(13)=(6)	2134   b73b96   2431   b9b736	<b>(3)</b> 3133   b7b3R5   n 5113   Rb3b75   a 5500   b3b7R5   (D) 113   b3b75   aj			(1)	1321   b3Rb5R   2135   Rb5b3R   135   b5b3R   321   Rb5R   510   b3b5R   (D, A) 21   b5R   13   b3R	<b>ALL THE DIMINISHED CHORDS TOGETHER</b> (in case you don't care which one you use)	
(1)	1222   9b74R   6414   4b79R   3561   49b7R   1136   b749R   0955   b794R   (D) 7400   b794R   (A) 4142   b79R4   1122   59b74   0788   R9b74   (C) 3730   Rb794   (E) 5011   R9b74   (F) 5073   b7R94   (G) 0366   9Rb74   (Bb)	<b>MINOR CHORDS</b> minor triad m mi min -			<b>(5)</b> 3133   b7b3R5   n 5113   Rb3b75   a 5500   b3b7R5   (D) 113   b3b75   aj			(3)	1324   b3Rb5b3   3213   b5Rb5b3   1351   b5b3Rb3   213   Rb5b3   651   b5Rb3   13   b5b3   51   Rb3   1354   b5b3Rb5   4351   Rb5b3b5   132   b3Rb5   321   b5Rb5   840   Rb3b5   (G#, D#) 21   Rb5   51   b3b5	<b>° 7</b> o o7 dim dim7 - (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		
(4)=(11)	1222   9b74R   6414   4b79R   3561   49b7R   1136   b749R   0955   b794R   (D) 7400   b794R   (A) 4142   b79R4   1122   59b74   0788   R9b74   (C) 3730   Rb794   (E) 5011   R9b74   (F) 5073   b7R94   (G) 0366   9Rb74   (Bb)	<b>m7-5</b> m7b5 ø7 ø			<b>(7)</b> 1122   Rb5b3b7   n 3551   b3R5b7   a 6400   5Rb3b7   (B) 122   5b3b7   nj 511   Rb3b7   551   R5b7			(5)	1354   b5b3Rb5   4351   Rb5b3b5   132   b3Rb5   321   b5Rb5   840   Rb3b5   (G#, D#) 21   Rb5   51   b3b5	<b>AUGMENTED CHORDS</b> (see the "ALL THE AUGMENTED CHORDS TOGETHER" section below for a practical summary)		
(5)	1131   b7495   <b>CAN ALSO USE:</b> any m7(1)	(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	<b>SAME AS: 6(5)</b> <b>CAN ALSO USE:</b> any major triad (5)			<b>° 7</b> o o7 dim dim7 - (this section includes both triads and seventh chords)			<b>+</b> aug		
(7)	3134   R49b7   2531   9R4b7   3142   954b7   5114   94Rb7   5501   4R9b7   (C) 5086   R94b7   (F) 0078   4R9b7   (G)	(3)	1334   b3R5b3   n 3112   5R5b3   a 2351   5b3Rb3   a2 0056   R55b3   (C) 6640   R5Rb3   (F#) 112   R5b3   nj 640   5Rb3   (B, F#) 12   5b3   njj 51   Rb3   1244   5b3R5   n 3341   R5b35   a 6311   b35R5   5133   Rb3R5   5730   b3Rb35   (D) 133   b3R5   (G) 730   Rb35   (D, D) 41   b35   ajj 11   R5	<b>(7)</b> 2133   Rb5b3b7   n 3541   b3Rb5b7   a 6511   b5Rb3b7   a2 214   b5Rb7   541   Rb5b7   aj			(1)	2132   b3bb7b5R   n 1324   Rbb7b3R   a 4651   b5b3bb7R   a3 1321   b3Rb5R   0246   bb7b5b3R   (D#) 132   bb7b5R   nj 213   bb7b3R   aj 135   b5b3R   a2j 651   b3bb7R   a3j 321   Rb5R   a4j 21   b5R   njj 13   b3R   ajj 51   bb7R   a3jj	(3)	1234   R#53R   n 2341   3R#5R   a 5630   #53#5R   (A) 6305   3#5RR   (D) 123   #53R   nj 630   3#5R   (D, A) 1234   3R#53   n 2341   #53R3   a 5630   R#5R3   (F) 6305   #5R33   (Bb) 123   R#53   nj 630   #5R3   (Bb, F) 1234   #53R#5   n 2341   R#53#5   a 5630   3R3#5   (Db) 6305   R3#5#5   (Gb) 123   3R#5   nj 630   R3#5   (Gb, Db)		
(9)=(2)	1446   Rb749   3133   4b759   1141   4Rb79   7507   4b7R9   (D) 0757   b7R49   (D) 0007   b74R9   (D) 7530   R4b79   (G) 5550   b74R9   (G)	(5)	1244   5b3R5   n 3341   R5b35   a 6311   b35R5   5133   Rb3R5   5730   b3Rb35   (D) 133   b3R5   (G) 730   Rb35   (D, D) 41   b35   ajj 11   R5	<b>SAME AS: m6(3)</b> <b>CAN ALSO USE:</b> any minor triad (3)			(3)	2132   b5Rb7b3   n 1324   b3Rb5b3   a 4651   bb7b5Rb3   a3 1321   b5b3bb7b3   0246   Rbb7b5b3   (C) 132   Rbb7b3   nj 213   Rb5b3   aj 135   bb7b5b3   a2j 651   b5Rb3   a3j 321   b3bb7b3   a4j 21   b5b3   njj 13   Rb3   a3jj	<b>ALL THE AUGMENTED CHORDS TOGETHER</b> (in case you don't care which one you use)			
(11)	see (4)	(1)	2142   b365R   n 6520   6b35R   (A) 4540   5b36R   (A)	<b>m6</b> mi6 min6 -6			<b>CAN ALSO USE:</b> any °(1) triad			<b>+</b> aug		
<b>+ 11</b> 9sus+4 9sus#4 (see also 9-5 and 7sus+4 chords)		(3)	3132   5R6b3   n 5112   6R5b3   a 3640   65Rb3   (F#)	<b>SAME AS: m7-5(3)</b>			<b>(3)</b> 2132   b5Rb7b3   n 1324   b3Rb5b3   a 4651   bb7b5Rb3   a3 1321   b5b3bb7b3   0246   Rbb7b5b3   (C) 132   Rbb7b3   nj 213   Rb5b3   aj 135   bb7b5b3   a2j 651   b5Rb3   a3j 321   b3bb7b3   a4j 21   b5b3   njj 13   Rb3   a3jj			<b>ALL THE AUGMENTED CHORDS TOGETHER</b> (in case you don't care which one you use)		
(1)	1232   9b7#4R	(5)	2133   6b3R5   n 3541   R6b35   a 6511   b36R5   a2 214   b365   541   6b35   aj	<b>SAME AS: m7-5(5)</b>			<b>(5)</b> 2132   b5Rb7b3   n 1324   b3Rb5b3   a 4651   bb7b5Rb3   a3 1321   b5b3bb7b3   0246   Rbb7b5b3   (C) 132   Rbb7b3   nj 213   Rb5b3   aj 135   bb7b5b3   a2j 651   b5Rb3   a3j 321   b3bb7b3   a4j 21   b5b3   njj 13   Rb3   a3jj			<b>+</b> aug (1/3/5) 1234, 2341 5630, 6305 123 630		
(4)=(11)	1123   59b7#4	(6)	1121   R5b36   n	<b>SAME AS: m7-5(7)</b>			<b>(5)</b> 2132   b5Rb7b3   n 1324   b3Rb5b3   a 4651   bb7b5Rb3   a3 1321   b5b3bb7b3   0246   Rbb7b5b3   (C) 132   Rbb7b3   nj 213   Rb5b3   aj 135   bb7b5b3   a2j 651   b5Rb3   a3j 321   b3bb7b3   a4j 21   b5b3   njj 13   Rb3   a3jj			<b>ALL THE AUGMENTED CHORDS TOGETHER</b> (in case you don't care which one you use)		
(5)	1231   b7#495	<b>m+7</b> m#7 min/maj7 mM7			<b>(7)</b> 3122   95b3b7   1112   R59b7			<b>(5)</b> 2132   bb7b3Rb5   n 1324   b5b3bb7b5   a 4651   Rbb7b3b5   a3 1321   bb7b5Rb5   0246   b3Rbb7b5   (A) 132   b3Rb5   nj 213   b3bb7b5   aj 135   Rbb7b5   a2j 651   bb7b3b5   a3j				
(7)	2123   R#49b7	(1)	1231   b375R	<b>(7)</b> 1112   R59b7			<b>(5)</b> 2132   bb7b3Rb5   n 1324   b5b3bb7b5   a 4651   Rbb7b3b5   a3 1321   bb7b5Rb5   0246   b3Rbb7b5   (A) 132   b3Rb5   nj 213   b3bb7b5   aj 135   Rbb7b5   a2j 651   bb7b3b5   a3j					
(9)=(2)	4133   #4b759	(3)	3152   517b3	<b>(7)</b> 3122   95b3b7   1112   R59b7			<b>(5)</b> 2132   bb7b3Rb5   n 1324   b5b3bb7b5   a 4651   Rbb7b3b5   a3 1321   bb7b5Rb5   0246   b3Rbb7b5   (A) 132   b3Rb5   nj 213   b3bb7b5   aj 135   Rbb7b5   a2j 651   bb7b3b5   a3j					
(11)	see (4)	(5)	4133   7b315	<b>(7)</b> 1112   R59b7			<b>(5)</b> 2132   bb7b3Rb5   n 1324   b5b3bb7b5   a 4651   Rbb7b3b5   a3 1321   bb7b5Rb5   0246   b3Rbb7b5   (A) 132   b3Rb5   nj 213   b3bb7b5   aj 135   Rbb7b5   a2j 651   bb7b3b5   a3j					
<b>13</b> 7/6 7add6 9add6		<b>(the eleventh is not normally used in thirteenth chords)</b>			<b>(7)</b> 1112   R59b7			<b>(5)</b> 2132   bb7b3Rb5   n 1324   b5b3bb7b5   a 4651   Rbb7b3b5   a3 1321   bb7b5Rb5   0246   b3Rbb7b5   (A) 132   b3Rb5   nj 213   b3bb7b5   aj 135   Rbb7b5   a2j 651   bb7b3b5   a3j				

## 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:

*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 2nd, the perfect and augmented 4ths, the major 6th, and the major 7th:

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

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

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 sometimes necessitate 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:

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	<i>Can only be used at the nut (C major, frets 0025) and in high positions (starting at about G♭ major, frets 6689).</i>	
(4)	3114 1225 1342 5531	5R54 3R54 53R4 R5R4	n a aa		
(#4)	3115 1226 1343	5R5#4 3R5#4 53R#4	n a aa		<i>Can only be used at the nut (A♭ major, frets 0115) and in high positions (starting at about D major, frets 6779). Can be fingered 1243 or 1343.</i>
(6)	4421 1131 1346	R5R#4 R536 53R6	n a		
(Δ7)	1133	R537	n	<i>Can only be used at the nut (F major, frets 0235) and in high positions (starting at about A major, frets 4679).</i>	
<b>7</b>					
(b2)	2132 1435	3b75b2 Rb73b2	n a	<i>Can only be used at the nut (C7, frets 0325) and in high positions (starting at about E7, frets 4769).</i>	
(Δ2)	2133 1436 3541 3141	3b752 Rb732 5b79 5Rb79	n a		
(4)	3144	5Rb74	n		
(b6)	2123 2541	b73Rb6 Rb73b6	n a		
(Δ6)	2124 1431	b73R6 Rb736	n a		
<b>minor triad</b> <b>m mi min -</b>					
(2)	1333 1126	b3R52 R5b32	n a	<i>Can only be used at the nut (C minor, frets 0015) and in high positions (starting at about F minor, frets 55610).</i>	
(4)	3114 1336 1242 5531	5R54 b3R54 5b324 R5R4	n a aa		<i>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.</i>
(b6)	2231 1245	R5b3b6 5b3Rb6	n a	<i>Can only be used at the nut (F minor, frets 0134) and in high positions (starting at about A minor, frets 4578). Otherwise, use the top three strings only (x134).</i>	
(Δ6)	1121 1246	R5b36 5b3R6	n a		
(b7)	1122	R5b3b7	n		
(Δ7)	1123	R5b37	n	<i>Can only be used at the nut (F minor, frets 0135) and in high positions (starting at about C# minor, frets 891113).</i>	

The above chart shows simple chords, each one with a single added non-chordal tone. Some of these — but not all of them — are equivalent to more complicated chords, and 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, non-chordal tones can appear over *any* type of chord, not just major, dominant-seventh, and minor. Nonetheless, once you've understood how they are used over the above chords, you will certainly be able to deal with more complicated chords on your own, using 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 do not usually specify the melody note. Indeed, there seems to be no standard method for doing so. However, it is sometimes necessary, as 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:

<b>m7(3)</b>	<b>m7(3 mel)</b>	<b>m7\3</b>	<b>lllm7</b>	<b>m7 (form 2)</b>	<b>m7 (form 3)</b>
<b>Dm7(F)</b>	<b>Dm7(F mel)</b>	<b>Dm7\F</b>	<b>Dlllm7</b>	<b>Dm7 (form 2)</b>	<b>Dm7 (form 3)</b>

In this document I use **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 6500 (D7(A)) to, say, 7611.
- 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>	“normal” 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 “alternative” chord
<b>a2</b> or <b>aa</b>	second “alternative” chord
<b>j</b>	three-note “junior” 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 dedicated pages 3 and 4 to that subject.

**Printing:** This page is formatted for European “A4” paper (210 × 297 mm). To print it on American “letter” paper (8½ × 11 inches) or any other 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.dmclure.org/banjo](http://www.dmclure.org/banjo). I’d love to hear your comments, corrections and suggestions, especially for good chords I’ve missed. Write me at [banjo@dmclure.org](mailto:banjo@dmclure.org) — I look forward to hearing from you!