

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

(version 5a)

When I set out to make my own chord sheet, I first used traditional chord diagrams. (At 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 the following 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 three columns. The first column gives the **CHORD NAMES** (III7, VIIIm7, etc.). These names are composed of two parts:

- a **Roman numeral** (III, VII, etc.), which identifies the **highest note** of the chord (third, seventh, etc.). This is essential for chord-melody playing.
- some **other characters** (7, m7, etc.), which tell you what **type of chord** it is (dominant seventh, minor seventh, etc.). If there are no characters following the Roman numeral, the chord is a simple major triad.

In the second column, the **FRET NUMBERS** are listed, from lowest string to highest:

- Chords in this list which include an open string (i.e., a fret number of 0) are **non-movable** and are normally only playable at the position indicated. For example, it is not practical to move the chord 6500 (D7) to, say, 7611.
- Nonetheless, many chords listed as non-movable can in fact be moved, particularly to high positions, where the frets are closer together. The aforementioned example of 6500 (D7) is indeed usable in a high position like 16 15 10 10 (C7).
- All other chords 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 (III7) will give you Ab7. You can move it up one fret to 4254 and you will get A7. You can continue up another fret to 5365 and get Bb7. 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 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 chord can also be played 2032 to give a G7 chord. (Of course, since the "at-the-nut" 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, and so on.

Also included in this column are "**nicknames**" I use for some of the movable chords ("III7 s", "VIIIm7 a", etc.):

- "s" = standard chord
- "a" = alternative chord
- "aa" = second alternative chord
- "j" = three-note "junior" chord
- "jj" = two-note chord

And I have included 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.)

For each chord name, the chords are listed in the following order:

- 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** (where the notes do not all go from lowest to highest) or chords above the ninth fret. (At <http://chordlist.brian-amberg.de/en/tenor-banjo/jazz> you can see 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.

Printing: This page is formatted for European "A4" paper (210 x 297 mm). To print it on American "letter" paper (8½ x 11 inches), choose "Fit" or "Shrink oversized pages" in Adobe Reader when printing.

This list will probably always be a work in progress. I'll try to keep a current version available on-line at www.dmclure.org/tenorbanjochords.pdf. I'd love to hear your comments and suggestions, especially for good chords I've missed. Feel free to write me at banjochords@dmclure.org — I look forward to hearing from you!

Chord name	Frets	Chord tones									
MAJOR CHORDS											
I	1134	R53R "I s"	3351	R53S "V a"	IIIma9	1131	5973	4341	b73R3		
	2331	3R5R "I a"	4122	R3R5		1361	5393	3530	b75R3 (F)		
	3412	3R3R "I aa"	6200	35R5 (D)	Vma9	3142	7395	5510	R5b73 (F)		
	5134	353R	6740	3R35 (D)		6620	3795 (D)	5002	b7R53 (G)		
	4053	355R (C)	3051	R335 (Eb)	VIIIma9	1113	R597	143	Rb73 "III7 sj"		
	0523	RR3R (C)	7405	R355 (G)		3133	9537	135	b753		
	6205	35RR (D)	122	3R5 "V sj"	IXma9	1122	3759	321	3b73		
	0578	553R (F)	095	R35 (C,G)		1222	3R59	510	5b73 (Bb,F)		
	134	53R "I sj"	740	R35 (G,D)		1536	R739	21	b73 "III7 sji"		
	412	R3R "I aaj"	51	35 "V aji"		3551	5379	1324	53b75 "V7 s"		
	620	35R (D,A)	11	R5 "V sji"		3151	5R79	2122	b73R5 "V7 a"		
	086	35R (Ab,Eb)	I6	3142	365R "I6 s"	I96	1112	963R	1351	b7535	
	12	3R "I sji"	III6	1334	R63R "I6 a"	III96	1111	5963	3651	Rb735	
	31	5R "I aji"		3133	5R63 "III6 s"	V96	3144	69R5	5213	R3b75	
III	1224	3R53 "III s"		5113	6R53 "III6 a"		6420	3695 (D)	6500	3b7R5 (D)	
	3113	5R53 "III a"	V6	5500	R563 (F)	VI96	1111	R596	213	3b75 "V7 sj"	
	1341	53R3 "III aa"		1122	63R5 "V6 s"	IX96	1144	6396	146	Rb75	
	0057	R553 (C)		3551	R635 "V6 a"		3144	3659	651	b735	
	0557	RR53 (C)	VI6	6400	36R5 (D)		3131	5R69	13	b75 "V7 sji"	
	0957	R353 (C)		1131	R536 "VI6 s"		5111	6R59	VII7	1132	R53b7 "VII7 s"
	5530	R5R3 (F)	Ima7	1346	53R6 "VI6 a"		114	639		4125	R3Rb7
	0530	55R3 (F)	IIIIma7	2231	375R	DOMINANT CHORDS			4551	3R5b7	
	2052	5RR3 (G)		3153	5R73	I7	1434	Rb73R "I7 s"	2125	b73Rb7	
	113	R53 "III sj"	Vma7	1124	3753		2131	3b75R "I7 a"	4351	3b75b7	
	095	R35 (C,G)		5520	R573 (F)		4650	53b7R (A)	132	53b7 "VII7 sji"	
	530	5R3 (Bb,F)		1334	5375		212	b73R "I7 sj"	125	3Rb7	
	13	53 "III sji"	IIIIma7	4112	R375		131	b75R "I7 aji"	314	5Rb7	
	41	R3 "III aji"		3122	73R5		650	3b7R (D,A)	521	R3b7	
V	1344	53R5 "V s"	VIIIma7	1133	R537		61	b7R	321	b73b7	
				3441	3R57	III7	3143	5Rb73 "III7 s"	21	3b7 "VII7 sji"	
			Ima9	1312	973R		1321	53b73 "III7 a"	I7sus4	1444	Rb74R
							2135	3b753		3131	4b75R

IV7sus4	3144	5Rb74
	4400	R5b74 (E)
V7sus4	1111	b74R5
VII7sus4	1142	R54b7
IV7sus+4	3145	5Rb7#4
I7+5	2141	3b7#5R
III7+5	4143	#5Rb73
V7+5	2123	b73R#5
	6501	3b7R#5 (D)
VII7+5	1232	R#53b7
I7-5	2121	3b7b5R
III7-5	2143	b5Rb73
V7-5	2121	b73Rb5
VII7-5	2143	Rb53b7
I9	1212	9b73R
III9	1121	59b73
V9	2142	b7395
	6520	3b795 (D)
VII9	1112	R59b7
	3132	953b7
	3640	395b7 (B)
IX9	2133	3b759
	1436	Rb739
	3541	53b79
	3141	5Rb79
	214	b739
III9+5	2121	#59b73
V9+5	2143	b739#5
VII9+5	1212	R#59b7
	2121	9#53b7
IX9+5	2143	3b7#59
I9-5	1232	9b7b5R
III9-5	1232	b59b73
V9-5	2141	b739b5
VII9-5	2123	Rb59b7
IX9-5	2123	3b7b59
I7+9	2212	#9b73R
III7+9	1221	5#9b73
V7+9	1224	5#9b75
	3133	b7#9R5
	5113	R#9b75
	6530	3b7#95 (D)
VII7+9	1122	R5#9b7
IX7+9	2134	3b75#9
I7-9	1323	b9b73R
III7-9	2132	5b9b73
V7-9	2132	b73b95
	3540	b9b735 (D)
VII7-9	2132	b953b7

IX7-9	2132	3b75b9
	1435	Rb73b9
I11 (9sus4)	1222	9b74R
IV11 (9sus4)	1122	59b74
V11 (9sus4)	1131	b7495
VII11 (9sus4)	3142	954b7
IX11 (9sus4)	3133	4b759
	0335	Rb749 (C)
I+11 (9sus+4)	1232	9b7#4R
IV+11 (9sus+4)	1123	59b7#4
V+11 (9sus+4)	1231	b7#495
VII+11 (9sus+4)	2123	R#49b7
	2041	95#4b7 (C)
IX+11 (9sus+4)	4133	#4b759
	0345	Rb7#49 (C)
IX13	5420	b7369 (G)
XIII13	1431	Rb736
	2124	b73R6
	2144	b7396
	5411	3b796
XIII13-9	2134	b73b96
	2431	b9b736
MINOR CHORDS		
Im	1124	R5b3R "Im s"
	1331	b3R5R "Im a"
	4124	b35b3R
	5205	b35RR (D)
	4520	5b35R (A)
	124	5b3R "Im sj"
	520	b35R (D,A)
	13	b3R "Im sjj"
	31	5R "Im ajj"
IIIIm	1334	b3R5b3 "IIIIm s"
	3112	5R5b3 "IIIIm a"
	2351	5b3Rb3
	0056	R55b3 (C)
	6640	R5Rb3 (F#)
	112	R5b3 "IIIIm sj"
	12	5b3 "IIIIm sjj"
	51	Rb3 "IIIIm ajj"
Vm	1244	5b3R5 "Vm s"
	3341	R5b35 "Vm a"
	5200	b35R5 (D)
	5730	b3Rb35 (D)
	4022	Rb3R5 (E)
	133	b3R5 "Vm sj"
	730	Rb35 (G,D)
	41	b35 "Vm ajj"

11	R5 "Vm sjj"	
Im6	2142	b365R
IIIIm6	3132	5R6b3
	4001	6R5b3 (G)
Vm6	2133	6b3R5
	5400	b36R5 (D)
VIm6	1121	R5b36
Im+7	1231	b375R
IIIIm+7	3152	517b3
Vm+7	4133	7b315
VIIIm+7	1123	R5b37
Im7	1131	b3b75R "Im7 s"
	1424	Rb7b3R "Im7 a"
	313	b7b3R "Im7 aj"
IIIIm7	3142	5Rb7b3 "IIIIm7 s"
	1134	b3b75b3 "IIIIm7 a"
	6620	R5b7b3 (F#)
	142	Rb7b3 "IIIIm7 sj"
Vm7	3133	b7b3R5 "Vm7 s"
	5113	Rb3b75 "Vm7 a"
	5500	b3b7R5 (D)
	113	b3b75 "Vm7 aj"
VIIIm7	1122	R5b3b7 "VIIIm7 s"
	3551	b3R5b7 "VIIIm7 a"
	6400	5Rb3b7 (B)
	511	Rb3b7
Iø7 (m7-5)	1121	b3b7b5R
IIIø7 (m7-5)	2142	b5Rb7b3
Vø7 (m7-5)	3132	b7b3Rb5
	5112	Rb3b7b5
VIIø7 (m7-5)	2133	Rb5b3b7
	5400	b5bRb37 (B)
Im9	2313	9b7b3R
IIIIm9	2231	59b7b3
Vm9	3153	b7b395
	5520	b3b795 (D)
VIIIm9	3122	95b3b7
	1112	R59b7
IXm9	1133	b3b759
	1333	b3R59
	1426	Rb7b39
	3441	5b3b79
	3141	5Rb79
DIMINISHED CHORDS		
Io (triad)	1321	b3Rb5R
	2135	Rb5b3R
	135	b5b3R
	321	Rb5R
	21	b5R

13	b3R	
Ilo (triad)	1324	b3Rb5b3
	3213	b5Rb5b3
	1351	b5b3Rb3
	213	Rb5b3
	13	b5b3
	51	Rb3
Vo (triad)	4351	Rb5b3b5
	1354	b5b3Rb5
	132	b3Rb5
	321	b5Rb5
	510	b3b5R (D,A)
	21	Rb5
	51	b3b5
Io7	2132	b3b7b5R
	213	bb7b3R
	132	bb7b5R
	51	bb7R
	(or any Io triad)	
IIIo7	2132	b5Rb7b3
	132	Rb7b3
	135	bb7b5b3
	321	b3b7b3
	21	bb7b3
	(or any IIIo triad)	
Vo7	2132	bb7b3Rb5
	213	b3b7b5
	135	Rb7b5
	13	bb7b5
	(or any Vo triad)	
VIIo7	2132	Rb5b3bb7
	213	b5Rbb7
	132	b5b3bb7
	135	b3Rbb7
	321	bb7b3bb7
	21	b3bb7
	13	Rbb7
	51	b5bb7
AUGMENTED CHORDS		
I+	1234	R#53R "I+ s"
	2341	3R#5R "I+ a"
	123	#53R "I+ sj"
III+	1234	3R#53 "III+ s"
	2341	#53R3 "III+ a"
	123	R#53 "III+ sj"
V+	1234	#53R#5 "V+ s"
	2341	R#53#5 "V+ a"
	123	3R#5 "V+ sj"