MUSC 141

**7th Chords**

Here’s a visual comparison of the five common seventh chords, arranged from the major 7th chord, which spans the largest interval from the root to the 7th, to the fully diminished 7th chord, which spans the smallest distance. I’d recommend that you memorize these chords as: triad type + 7th interval

Notice that the dominant 7th, minor 7th, and half-diminished 7th all span the same distance: m7 interval from root to the 7th.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| M7 | M3 |
| m7 | m3 | m7 | m3 | m7 | M3 |
| Major  Triad | Major  Triad | Minor  Triad | ø7 | m3 |
| Diminished  Triad | Diminished  Triad |
| **Major 7th chord**  **(Maj7, M7 or ∆7)** | | **Dominant 7th chord (7)** | | **Minor 7th chord**  **(min7, m7 or -7)** | | **Half-diminished 7th chord (Ø)\*** | | **Fully diminished 7th (o7)** | |

\*in lead sheet notation the half-diminished 7th chord is sometimes called a minor 7th chord with a lowered 5th, such as Cmin7b5

Or another way to compare these chords is to consider their thirds, but it will take much more brainpower to memorize the chord types this way.

|  |
| --- |
| M3 |
| m3 | m3 | M3 |
| m3 | m3 | M3 | m3 |
| M3 | M3 | m3 | m3 |
| m3 | m3 | m3 |
| **Major 7th chord** | **Dominant 7th chord** | **Minor 7th chord** | **Half-diminished 7th chord** | **Fully diminished**  **7th chord** |