



Triad Qualities

The four basic three-note chords

Every triad is built from a root, a third and a fifth. Changing whether those intervals are major, minor or altered creates four distinct qualities — each with its own emotional colour.

The four qualities side by side

Quality	Formula	Example	Character
Major	1 3 5	C E G	Bright, stable, happy
Minor	1 b3 5	C Eb G	Darker, sad, thoughtful
Diminished	1 b3 b5	C Eb Gb	Tense, unstable, scary
Augmented	1 3 #5	C E G#	Mysterious, floating

How the 3rd and 5th decide the quality

- Major 3rd + perfect 5th = Major
- Minor 3rd + perfect 5th = Minor
- Minor 3rd + diminished 5th = Diminished
- Major 3rd + augmented 5th = Augmented

Where you will meet them

Major and minor triads are everywhere. Diminished triads often appear as vii° in major keys. Augmented triads are rarer but create striking colour when they do appear.

These four formulas are the foundation of the entire Chord Interval Chart.