Diatonic Triads

Diatonic Triads - chord symbol and roman numeral analysis

Starting with a C major scale:

![Musical notation]

we are going to build a triad on each note of the scale:

![Musical notation]

These are the **diatonic triads** in the key of **C major**. They only use notes in the key signature with **no added sharps or flats**.

Here are the same **diatonic triads** in the key of **C major** in the **1st inversion**. To be completely accurate, chord symbols are generally followed by a forward slash (/) and the actual note name of the lowest voice (example: C/E, Dm/F, etc.). For the exact Roman Numeral Analysis, first inversion triads are expressed with an Arabic 6 following the Roman Numeral (example: I6, ii6, iii6, etc.).

![Musical notation]

(Continued on next page).
Here are the same diatonic triads in the key of C major in the 2nd inversion. Again, the exact chord symbol expressing this inversion would be C/G, Dm/A, etc., while the Roman Numeral Analysis would be followed by an Arabic 6 and 4 (example: I\(^6\)\(_4\), etc.).

The chord symbols above the staff describe each chord... i.e.

- the C, F and G chords are major
- the D, E and A chords are minor and
- the B chord is diminished

Below the staff there is a series of Roman Numerals. It traditional music theory, diatonic chords and chord progressions are analyzed with Roman Numerals.

- the upper case,(I-IV-V) are major chords
- the lower case (ii-iii-vi) are minor
- the lower case with the little circle (vii\(^{°}\)) is diminished.

**CHORD SYMBOLS** are widely used in popular and jazz sheet music. Understanding them is a must for any chord player.

Although the **ROMAN NUMERALS** are not used today in most sheet music, they are EXTREMELY IMPORTANT in understanding and using SUBSTITUTE CHORDS and CHORD PROGRESSIONS.

Listed on the next page are the **DIATONIC TRIADS** in all of the major keys. **NOTE THE KEY SIGNATURES AS ACCIDENTALS DO APPLY TO THE WRITTEN NOTES!!!!**