

The Five Basic Eleventh Chords

Here are five basic eleventh chords where the eleventh is added to each of the five basic seventh chords. The eleventh is the fourth note in the major scale of the chord's root. An eleventh chord is created when a fourth is added to a chord with a seventh in it. It is important to note that it is the *sharped-eleventh* that is added to the major-seventh and dominant-seventh chords with a major third; not the natural, unaltered eleventh.

Ninths are *almost always* included in eleventh chords. The inclusion of a ninth may or may not be indicated by a chord symbol. If a ninth is to be added, the chord symbol may be written to show that.

The Major-Seventh Sharped-Eleventh is formed by the root, 3rd, 5th, 7th, and #11th of the major scale. This is a major-seventh chord with a sharped-eleventh. The chord symbols are CMaj7#11, CMa7#11, CM7#11, and CΔ7#11. If the ninth D is included, the chord symbol may be written as CMaj9#11, etc.

The Dominant-Seventh Sharped-Eleventh is formed by the root, 3rd, 5th, b7th, and #11th of the major scale. This is a dominant-seventh chord with an eleventh. The chord symbol is C7#11. If the ninth D is included, the chord symbol may be written as C9#11, etc.*

The Minor-Eleventh is formed by the root, b3rd, 5th, b7th, and 11th of the major scale. This is a minor-seventh chord with an eleventh. The chord symbols are Cmin11, Cmi11, Cm11, and C-11. If the ninth D is included, the chord symbol may be written as Cmin9add11, etc.

The Minor-Eleventh Flat-Five or Half-Diminished Eleventh is formed by the root, b3rd, b5th, b7th, and 11th of the major scale. This is a minor-seventh flatted-fifth chord with an eleventh. The chord symbols are Cmin11b5, Cmi11b5, Cm11b5, C-11b5 and CØ11. If the ninth D is included, the chord symbol may be written as Cmin9b5add11, etc.

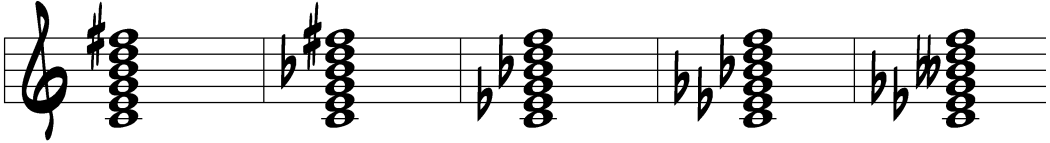
The Diminished-Seventh Add Eleventh is formed by the root, b3rd, b5th, bb7th, and 11th of the major scale. This is a diminished seventh chord with an eleventh. For clarity, this chord symbol is sometimes written as Co7add11, otherwise it might be interpreted as a diminished triad with an eleventh. The chord symbols for this chord are Co7add11 and Cdim7add11. If the ninth D is included, the chord symbol may be written as Co7add9add11, etc.

CMaj#11 C7#11 Cmin11 Cmin11b5 Co7add11

The image shows five chord voicings on a treble clef staff. Each chord is represented by a stack of five notes. The first chord, CMaj#11, has notes C4, E4, G4, Bb4, and D5. The second, C7#11, has notes C4, Eb4, G4, Bb4, and D5. The third, Cmin11, has notes C4, Eb4, G4, Bb4, and D5. The fourth, Cmin11b5, has notes C4, Eb4, Fb4, Bb4, and D5. The fifth, Co7add11, has notes C4, Eb4, Fb4, Bb4, and D5.

Here are the five basic eleventh chords with ninths included:


CMaj9#11 C9#11 Cmin11 Cmin11b5 Co7add9add11



The image shows five musical staves in treble clef, each representing a different eleventh chord with a ninth. The first staff is CMaj9#11 (C major with 9th and #11th). The second is C9#11 (C dominant 9th with #11th). The third is Cmin11 (C minor with 11th). The fourth is Cmin11b5 (C minor with 11th and b5th). The fifth is Co7add9add11 (C dominant 7th with added 9th and 11th).

*One additional eleventh chord that must be included here is an additional dominant function eleventh chord. This chord is formed by the root, 5th, b7th, and 11th of the major scale. This chord has no third, but rather the eleventh, or fourth, *replaces* the third.¹ The chord symbol for this chord is C11. The chord symbol is also written as C7sus4. This chord, moreover, will often include the ninth. When it does, it may be written as C9sus4 to specify the inclusion of the ninth. This chord may also be written as a slash chord: Gmin7/C. If the ninth is included and the fifth is omitted, the chord symbol Bb/C can be used.

C11 or C7sus4 C11 or C9sus4



The image shows two musical staves in treble clef. The first staff is C11 or C7sus4 (C dominant 11th or C dominant 7th suspended 4th). The second staff is C11 or C9sus4 (C dominant 11th or C dominant 9th suspended 4th).

¹ A good rule to keep in mind is that a major third and a perfect fourth (or eleventh) will rarely appear together in the same chord. When they occasionally do, the third appears *above* the fourth/eleventh in the chord voicing.