The Five Basic Thirteenth Chords

Here are five basic thirteenth chords where the thirteenth is added to each of the five basic seventh chords. The thirteenth is the sixth note in the major scale of the chord's root. A thirteenth chord is created when a sixth is added to a seventh chord. When a sixth is added to a chord without a seventh, it is a defined as a *sixth* chord.

Keep in mind that ninths are almost always included in thirteenth 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. Notice, as well, that it is the *flatted-thirteenth* that is added to the half-diminished and diminished-seventh chords; not the natural, unaltered thirteenth.

The <u>Major-Thirteen</u> is formed by the root, 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 13th of the major scale. This is a major-seventh chord with a thirteenth. The chord symbols are CMaj13, CMa13, CM13, and C Δ 13. If the ninth D is included, the chord symbol may be written as CMaj9add13, etc.

The <u>Dominant-Thirteen</u> is formed by the root, 3rd, 5th, b7th, and 13th of the major scale. This a dominant-seventh chord with a thirteenth. The chord symbol is C13. If the ninth D is included, the chord symbol may be written as C9add13, etc.*

The <u>Minor-Thirteen</u> is formed by the root, b3rd, 5th, b7th, and 13th of the major scale. This is a minor-seventh chord with a thirteenth. The chord symbols are Cmin13, Cmi13, Cm13, and C-13. If the ninth D is included, the chord symbol may be written as Cmin9add13, etc.

The <u>Minor-Seventh Flat-Five Flat-Thirteen</u> or <u>Half-Diminished Flat-Thirteen</u> is formed by the root, b3rd, b5th, b7th, and b13th of the major scale. This is a minor-seventh flatted-fifth chord with a *flatted-thirteenth*. The chord symbols are Cmin7b5b13, Cmi7b5b13, Cm7b5b13, C-7b5b13 and CØb13. If the ninth D is included, the chord symbol may be written as Cmin9b5b13, etc.

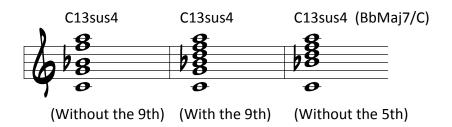
The <u>Diminished-Seventh Add Flat-Thirteen</u> is formed by the root, b3rd, b5th, bb7th, and b13th of the major scale. This is a diminished seventh chord with a thirteenth. For clarity, this chord symbol is sometimes written as Co7addb13, otherwise it might be interpreted as a diminished triad with a thirteenth. The chord symbols for this chord are Co7addb13 and Cdim7addb13. If the ninth D is included, the chord symbol may be written as Co7add9addb13, etc.



Here are the five basic thirteenth chords with the ninth included:



*One additional thirteenth chord that must be included here is an additional dominant function thirteenth chord. This chord is formed by the root, 4th, 5th, b7th, and 13th of the major scale. The chord has no third, but rather the fourth (a.k.a., the 11th), replaces the third. The chord symbol for this chord is C13sus4. The chord symbol is often written as C7sus4. This chord, moreover, will often include the ninth. This chord can also be written as BbMaj7/C. This would indicate the inclusion of the ninth.



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.