

# Basic Stuff That You HAVE To Know

The first thing and possibly the most important thing is the cycle of 5ths (or 4ths depending if you go up or down). 5ths (4ths) refers to intervals. Here is the cycle starting on C.

Chord sequence: C, F, B<sup>b</sup>, E<sup>b</sup>, A<sup>b</sup>, D<sup>b</sup>, G<sup>b</sup> (F<sup>#</sup>), C<sup>b</sup>, B, E, A, D, G

This is important for many reasons. the main ones being;

First - it's the order of the key signatures;

C (no flats, no sharps...F (one flat)...Bb (two Flats...and so on....

Going backwards, the Key of C (no flats or sharps)...G (one sharp)...D (two sharps)...A (three sharps) and so on...

Second - this cycle (which you absolutely have to memorize) is the cycle that defines about 90% of the chord progressions you will encounter playing any kind of jazz or pop music.

For example a simple Blues (in F) starts on F7 goes to Bb7 (up a 4th or down a 5th).

Chord sequence: F7, B<sup>b</sup>7, F7, B<sup>b</sup>7, F7, B<sup>b</sup>7, F7

There are many versions of the blues and most of the variations are done by incorporating a progression called the 2-5-1. Here is a 2-5-1 in the key of F (the key of the blues).

Chord sequence: G<sup>-</sup>7, C7, F

The chords are made up by building chords in thirds on each note of the scale like this;  
First in triads...

Chord sequence: F(1.3.5), G-(2.4.6), A-(3.5.7), B<sup>b</sup>(4.6.8), C(5.7.2), D-(6.8.3), E<sup>o</sup>(7.2.4), F(1.3.5)

Now we can start adding notes to the triads and get into all the hip jazz chords.  
 Four note chords; It's important to know that a triangle means it's a major 7th chord.  
 means diminished, and  $\emptyset$  means it's half diminished or a minor 7 flat five.

A minus sign (-) means minor.

O  $\emptyset$

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8(1)
F $\Delta$	G-7	A-7	B $\flat$ $\Delta$	C7	D-7	E $\emptyset$	F $\Delta$

Continuing this way by adding one more note we have 9th chords;

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(1_3_5_7_9)	(2_4_6_8_2)	(3_5_7_2_4)	(4_6_8_3_5)	(5_7_2_4_6)	(6_1_3_5_7)	(7_2_4_6_8)	(1_3_5_7_9)
F $\Delta$ 9	G-9	A-9? *	B $\flat$ $\Delta$ 9	C9	D-9	E-9( $\flat$ 5)? *	F $\Delta$ 9

\* These ones don't work. The B $\flat$  on top of the A-9? creates an impossible interval with the A on the bottom. The same interval occurs in the E-7( $\flat$ 5) between the F on top and the E on the bottom.

That same interval occurs when building 11th chords. It's the flat 9 interval between the B $\flat$  and the A that doesn't work.

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F $\Delta$ 11? *	G-11	A-11? *	B $\flat$ $\Delta$ (#11) **	C11	D-11	E-11( $\flat$ 5)? ***	F $\Delta$ 11? *

\*\* The #11 is the E natural. The 11 would be E $\flat$

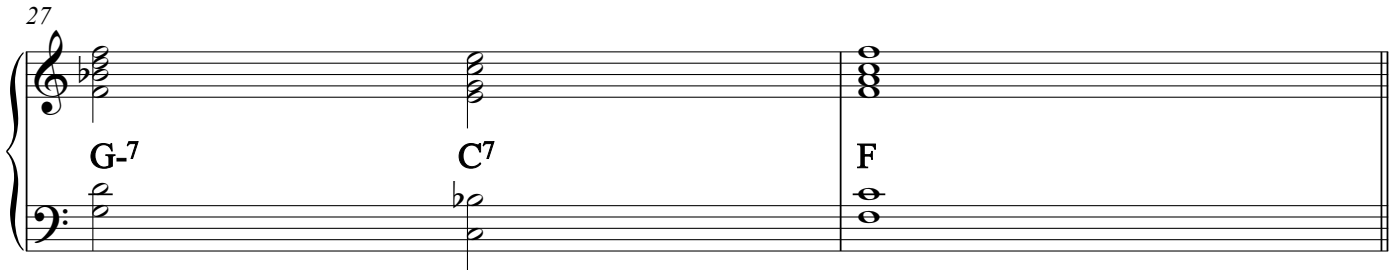
\*\*\* Here the flat 9 interval is between the F near the top and the E on the bottom

So that's how we make the chords

Every major and minor scale can be turned into chords the same way

So lets get back to the 2-5-1. Remember the cycle? If you do you'll see that the 2-5-1 progression comes from that cycle. G-7 (the 2 chord) goes up a 4th (down a 5th actually) to C7 (the 5 chord) which goes up another 4th to F (the 1 chord)

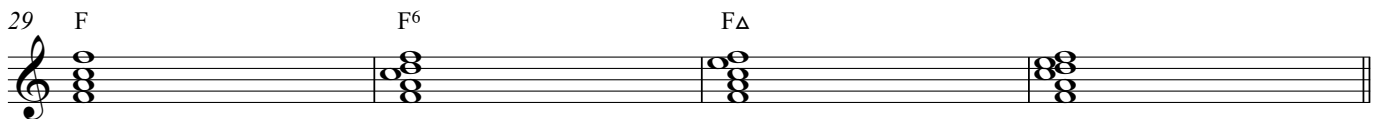
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Before we go any further there are a few givens that you must know and remember.

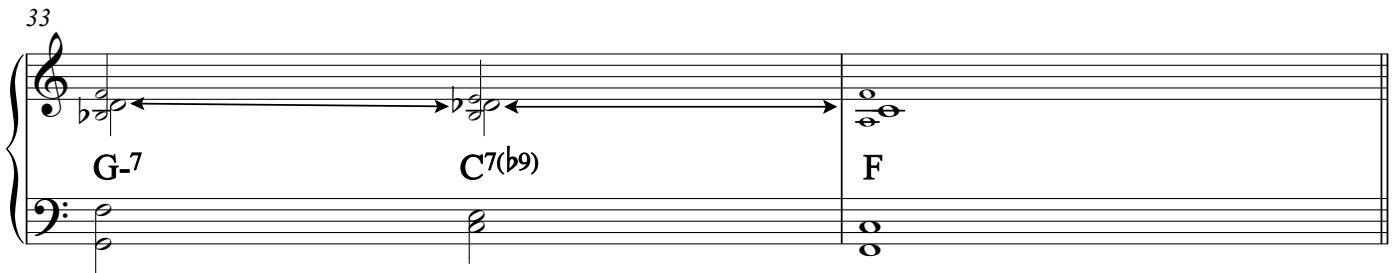
- 1.) A simple F chord symbol always includes a 6th and/or a major 7th.  
You probably would not play them all at once but they are all part of the sound

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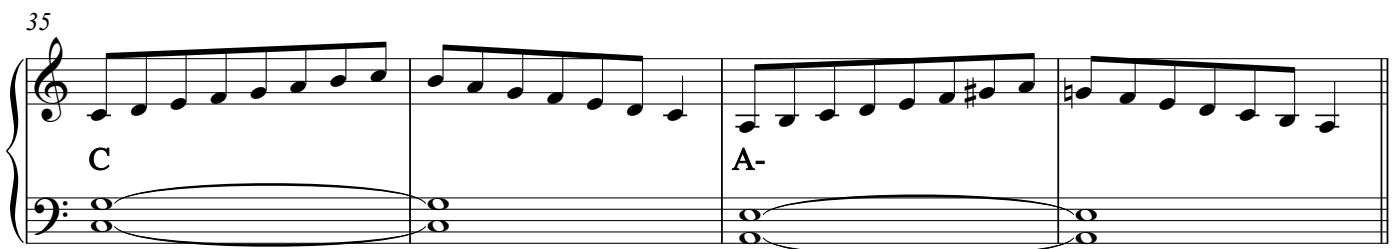
- 2.) The 9th in the 5 chord is almost always flatted.  
The reason is that it's part of a moving melody within the whole progression.  
Note that the D in the 2 chord descends to a Db in the 5 chord which descends (again chromatically) to a C in the 1 chord.

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- 3.) Relative minors (and majors). Every major key has a relative minor which is a minor 3rd below the major.  
For example; The relative minor of C major is A minor. They have the same key signature.  
These (in all keys) also must be memorized. This is not a small thing.  
It's an essential part of music and will be a great help when you're learning tunes.

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So let's get back to the blues and see how 2-5-1's work.  
 Basically, a 2-5-1 is a way of getting from one place to another.  
 For example: We're in F and we want to go to Bb so we use the 2-5-1 (of Bb) to get there.

### Blues in F

39 Piano

F7 Bb7 F7 Bb7 Bb7 Bb7

Bass

45

F7 C7 Bb7 F7 Bb7

So we're in F and in the 5th bar we are going to Bb so the way we'll do it is to put a 2-5 in bar 4 to get to the 1 chord (Bb7) in bar 5.

### Blues in F

51 Piano

F7 Bb7 F7 C-7 F7 Bb7

Bass

Same thing in the last bar. We're repeating back to F7 but we're already in F so, to make it interesting and not have three bars in a row the same, we put a 2-5 in the last bar.

57

F7 C7 Bb7 F7 G-7 C7

## Blues in F

63 Piano

Bass

\* It's worth noting that in the left hand only one note changes when going from C-7 to F7  
(Only one note changes in the right hand also but that doesn't effect the harmony)

Now we're going to add another chord and create the other most important chord progression, the 1-6-2-5. We'll back up in the cycle (that you have now memorized) from the G-7 in the last bar and put in a 2 chord (D7) two beats in front of it.

69

There's one more thing that you need to know about the 2 chord and that is that it doesn't always HAVE to be a MINOR 7th. It can be (and often is) a 7th (dominant) chord.

So back to the Blues.....

There are quite a few different ways to play the blues. Here's another one.

75 Piano

Bass

81

However, for the time being, I think we'll just play a simple blues which will go like this...

87 **F7** **B<sup>b</sup>7** **F7** **F7** **B<sup>b</sup>7** **B<sup>b</sup>7**

Pno.

Bass

93 **F7** **D7(b10)** **G-7** **C7(4)** **F7** **D7(b10)** **G-7** **C7(b13)**

(b6) (b6) (b10)

Pno.

Bass

So there are a few new things here...it's still a simple blues but not quite as simple as before.

- 1.) In bar 8 we have a flat 10 chord. This sounds exactly the same as a sharp 9 chord but the F natural is actually a flat 10. (The tenth would be an F sharp) so the F natural has to be called a flat 10.
- 2.) We also have a flat 6 which is the B<sup>b</sup>. B natural is the 6th. I like to be consistent with sharps and flats.
- 3.) In bar ten we have a C7(4) chord which is my way of writing a (sus4) chord.  
A sus (suspended) 4th means that the chord has a 4th in it instead of a 3rd. In this case its an F instead of an E.  
Another way of writing it would be G-7/C.
- 4.) The last chord is a flat 13 with the flat 10.

99 **D7(b10)** **C7(4)** **C7(b13)**

(b6) (b10)

Pno.

Up to now we've only been dealing with whole notes and half notes but obviously, no piano player would ever restrict himself to anything as simple as that. The main thing the pianist has to do is to play the harmony but it has to swing too, so I'll make a few suggestions as to how to get that swing feel to happen. No experienced player would ever come to the gig having worked out in advance what he was planning to play but we have to start somewhere so...first something easy (at least it looks easy). One simple rhythm played over and over. All it is is a dotted quarter followed by an eighth note. How easy is that?

102

F<sup>7</sup> B<sup>b7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> B<sup>b7</sup> B<sup>b7</sup>

Pno.

Bass

108

F<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup> B<sup>b7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup>

Pno.

8 So that should swing IF you play it right. Playing it right (with a real swing feel) means that you have to "roll" your eighth notes. Which means that a simple scale (1) in eighth notes would be played like this (2). Sometimes you will see things written like this (3) but it will almost always be played as triplets (in jazz). Most jazz composers write it in the score if they want "even" eighths. Otherwise the eighths are rolled (or swung).

So...when we play the example (1) it's actually played like this (2)

You can practice this feel by playing the triplets with one hand (either one) and the chords (as written) with the other. It would be good to tap quarter notes with your right foot. Do it slowly at first.



Maybe try practicing the rhythm only tapping on the table with your hands.  
Starting with the right hand, all the accents are with the right hand.

129

RLL RLR LRLRLL RLL RLR LRLRLL RLL RLR LRLRLL RLL RLR LRLRLL

Starting with the left hand, All the accents are with the left hand.

133

LRR LRRLRLRLLR LRR LRRLRLRLLR LRR LRRLRLRLLR LRR LRRLRLRLLR

As long as we're working with rhythm maybe we should look at the most basic jazz drum rhythm, the cymbal ride.

137 It looks like this... But it sounds like this...

Remember...whether you're a drummer or not you still have to keep time.  
If you can do this basic drum rhythm it will make everything else you do sound better.

141

R.H.  
L.H.  
L.F.  
R.F.

Hi Hat

*ppp* Right foot on bass drum real quiet but VERY important

Same thing but it looks easier. (it's all those triplets that make it look hard)

145

R.H.  
L.H.  
L.F.  
R.F.

Hi Hat

*ppp*

What's important about them is not the numbers or what they look like or what they are called. What's important is what they SOUND like and the only way you'll get to know what they sound like is to play them over and over on the piano until the sound sinks into your brain and memory.

When you've done that and you can recognize them by the sound you will be able to spot them in tunes when you hear them. It will make learning tunes a lot easier.

Having a good ear doesn't help much if you don't know what it is that you're hearing. It's like trying to understand a language you don't speak. You'll hear the words but you won't know what they mean.

There are a lot of tunes that begin with a 2-5-1. Here are a couple

**Gone With The Wind (Key Eb)**

149

etc...

Musical notation for 'Gone With The Wind' in E-flat major. The piece starts at measure 149. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in the bass clef. The first four measures are shown, with the final measure ending in a double bar line and 'etc...'. The chord progression is: F-7, Bb7, EbΔ, C7(b9), F-7, Bb7, EbΔ.

**It's You Or No One (Key F)**

153

etc...

Musical notation for 'It's You Or No One' in F major. The piece starts at measure 153. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in the bass clef. The first four measures are shown, with the final measure ending in a double bar line and 'etc...'. The chord progression is: G-7, C7, FΔ, Bb7, A-7, D7.

Many standard tunes start with a 1-6-2-5. The most obvious one being I Got Rhythm. Some others are The Way You Look Tonight, I'm Old Fashioned and Wonder Why. There are dozens more.

**I Got Rhythm**

157

etc...

Musical notation for 'I Got Rhythm' in B-flat major. The piece starts at measure 157. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in the bass clef. The first four measures are shown, with the final measure ending in a double bar line and 'etc...'. The chord progression is: BbΔ, G-7, C-7, F7, BbΔ, G-7, C-7, F7.

**The Way You Look Tonight**

161

etc...

Musical notation for 'The Way You Look Tonight' in F major. The piece starts at measure 161. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in the bass clef. The first four measures are shown, with the final measure ending in a double bar line and 'etc...'. The chord progression is: FΔ, D-7, G-7, C7.

165 I'm Old Fashioned

Musical notation for 'I'm Old Fashioned' in B-flat major. The piece consists of four measures. The chords are: EbΔ, C-7, F-7, Bb7, EbΔ, C-7, F-7, Bb7, etc... The melody is simple, with quarter notes in the right hand and half notes in the left hand.

169 Wonder Why

etc...

Musical notation for 'Wonder Why' in C major. The piece consists of four measures. The chords are: CΔ, A-7, D-7, G7, C7(4), C7(b9), FΔ, Bb7, etc... The melody features eighth notes and quarter notes in the right hand, with half notes in the left hand.

There are a few tunes written on the cycle of fifths (remember that?) The most obvious one is "All The Things You Are". Take note of the fact that the first chord is the relative minor (of Ab).

173

Musical notation for 'All The Things You Are' in A-flat major. The piece consists of four measures. The chords are: F-7, Bb-7, Eb7, AbΔ. The melody is simple, with quarter notes in the right hand and half notes in the left hand.

177

etc...

Musical notation for 'All The Things You Are' continuation. The piece consists of four measures. The chords are: DbΔ, D-7, G7, CΔ, etc... The melody continues with quarter notes in the right hand and half notes in the left hand.

Another one is Dizzy Gillespie's bebop tune, "Woody'n You".

181 Key "Db"

Musical notation for 'Woody'n You' in D-flat major. The piece consists of four measures. The chords are: Gø, C7(b10), Fø, Bb7(b10). The melody is more complex, featuring eighth notes and quarter notes in the right hand, with slash marks in the left hand.

185

etc...

Musical notation for 'Woody'n You' continuation. The piece consists of four measures. The chords are: Ebø, Ab7(b10), DbΔ, etc... The melody continues with eighth notes and quarter notes in the right hand, with slash marks in the left hand.

Another is "The Best Thing For You" written by Irving Berlin.  
 (This one and "Woody'n You" both start on the tritone of the written key)

189 Key "C"

Musical notation for measures 189-192. The key signature is C major. The chords are: F#ø, B7(b9), E-7, A7(b9), D-7, G7.

193

Musical notation for measures 193-196. The key signature is C major. The chords are: CΔ, A-7, D-7, G7, CΔ.

Let's do an analysis of "All The Things You Are" using what we know about the cycle, 2-5-1's  
 Flat nines, relative minors etc...

**A** (Relative Minor)

197 F-7 → B<sup>b</sup>-7 → E<sup>b</sup>7 → A<sup>b</sup>Δ →

(Cycle begins...)

Musical notation for measures 197-200. The key signature is E-flat major. The chords are: F-7, B<sup>b</sup>-7, E<sup>b</sup>7, A<sup>b</sup>Δ.

Counter-melody, just to make it interesting

201 D<sup>b</sup>Δ ...Cycle ends) (2) Dø (2,5 to C) (5) G7 (1) CΔ D-7 (2,5 to C-) G7

Musical notation for measures 201-204. The key signature is E-flat major. The chords are: D<sup>b</sup>Δ, Dø, G7, CΔ, D-7, G7.

**A2** (Cycle begins again in key of Eb (Cminor) (Second eight bars the same as first eight but a 4th lower)

205 C-7 → F-7 → B<sup>b</sup>7 → E<sup>b</sup>Δ →

Musical notation for measures 205-208. The key signature is E-flat major. The chords are: C-7, F-7, B<sup>b</sup>7, E<sup>b</sup>Δ.

209 A<sup>b</sup>Δ ...Cycle ends) (2) Aø (2,5 to G) (5) D7(b9) (1) GΔ

Musical notation for measures 209-212. The key signature is E-flat major. The chords are: A<sup>b</sup>Δ, Aø, D7(b9), GΔ.

**B**

213 (2) A-7 (5) D7(b9) (1) G $\Delta$  C $\Delta$

The original chord stays on G but I like the Cmaj better

217 (2) F#-7 (5) B7(b9) (1) E $\Delta$  (5) C7(#5) (b9) **Goes to F-7**

**C**

221 (1) F-7 → B $\flat$ -7 → E $\flat$ 7 → A $\flat$  $\Delta$  →  
(Cycle begins...)

225 D $\flat$  $\Delta$  → G $\flat$ 7 → C-7 Sub for Abmaj → B $\circ$  →  
...Cycle ends one bar later ...Sub for F7 which would be in the cycle

229 (2) B $\flat$ -7 (5) E $\flat$ 7(4) E $\flat$ 7(b9) (1) A $\flat$  $\Delta$  G7(b9) C7(b13) (b10)  
This is a 2-5 back to F-7 (1)

This kind of analysis is essential with every tune you ever learn.

Learning tunes is largely a case of really listening to what's going on and Using everything you know about music to figure out what it is. It's essential that you try to learn as much as you can the first time you hear a tune. Try to hear the form first. Is it a blues? How long is it? Does it have a bridge? Is it an A-A-B-A tune or a tune with two 16 bar sections? Does it have a tag? (An extra few bars at the end) If there is a bridge where does it go? ALWAYS remember the CYCLE and start with the knowledge that most of the tunes you will learn will be based on it. In other words, F usually goes to Bb. Most of the tunes will be made up of 2-5-1's and 1-6-2-5's. Use math, guess if you don't know for sure but guess based on what you know about theory. Learning music is the same as learning anything else.

Music is all the same. It doesn't matter if it's Jazz or Classical. The rules and the theory are the same. It has to sound good and the job of the musician is to make it sound as good as possible.

But first let's learn the intervals...In the key of "C" (These too must be identifiable by sound)

There are a few (quite a few, actually) chords that you HAVE to know and be able to identify by the sound. This identification all begins with the assumption; Major is happy, Minor is sad.

233

Minor 2nd (semitone)	(Major) 2nd (Wholetone)	Minor 3rd	(Major) 3rd
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237

(Perfect) 4th	* Aug. 4th Tritone (Three tones)	Flat 5th	* Perfect 5th	* Aug. 5th	* Flat 6th
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241

(Major) 6th	(Dominant) 7th	Major 7th	Octave
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245

* Flat 9th	9th	Sharp 9th	* Flat 10th	10th
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\* One more thing you Have to know is Enharmonics and how they work.  
An enharmonic is the sharp alternative to a flat and vice versa. Bb =A#, Ab=G# and so on

Here are the main chords that you must know in order to play jazz. In the key of "C".  
You have to know them in all 12 keys.

It's important to know that there are many different ways of writing the same chord.

For example CM7, Cmaj7 and  $C^{\Delta}$  are all major 7th chords.

Each arranger has his own way of writing chord symbols.  
If you do encounter unfamiliar chord symbols the best thing to do is simply to  
ask the bandleader what they are.

249 Major Minor Diminished Major 7

The image shows four chord diagrams on a treble clef staff. The first is a C Major chord (C-E-G-B). The second is a C Minor chord (C-Eb-G-Bb). The third is a C Diminished chord (C-Eb-Gb). The fourth is a C Major 7 chord (C-E-G-B).

253 Minor Major 7 (dominant) 7th (Dominant 7 (sus4) Minor 7 Minor 7 flat five

The image shows five chord diagrams on a treble clef staff. The first is a C Minor Major 7 chord (C-Eb-G-B). The second is a C (dominant) 7th chord (C-Eb-G-Bb). The third is a C (Dominant 7 (sus4)) chord (C-Eb-F-Bb). The fourth is a C Minor 7 chord (C-Eb-G-Bb). The fifth is a C Minor 7 flat five chord (C-Eb-Gb-Bb).

258 Major 9 (Dominant 7 (9) Minor 9 Minor 9 (flat 5)

The image shows four chord diagrams on a treble clef staff. The first is a C Major 9 chord (C-E-G-B-D). The second is a C (Dominant 7 (9)) chord (C-Eb-G-Bb-D). The third is a C Minor 9 chord (C-Eb-G-Bb-D). The fourth is a C Minor 9 (flat 5) chord (C-Eb-Gb-Bb-D).

262 (Dominant 7 (flat 9) (Dominant) 9 (flat 10) Major 7 (Sharp 11) Minor 11 Minor 11 (flat 5)

The image shows five chord diagrams on a treble clef staff. The first is a C (Dominant 7 (flat 9)) chord (C-Eb-G-Bb-F). The second is a C (Dominant) 9 (flat 10) chord (C-Eb-G-Bb-F-A). The third is a C Major 7 (Sharp 11) chord (C-E-G-B-D#). The fourth is a C Minor 11 chord (C-Eb-G-Bb-D-A). The fifth is a C Minor 11 (flat 5) chord (C-Eb-Gb-Bb-D-A).

If anyone ever said music was easy, well.....  
It isn't, but it is the most fun you can ever have  
and it's worth all the hard work when you're finally able to really play.