

Handy Hints for Chord Charts

An often overlooked part of your performance is the House Band. They are all the finest professional musicians who have played for the country's Top Country Music Artists. They are used to performing with professional charts and for the most part, the charts they see at Champs are of a high quality. However, those of you who are using hard to read charts are only making it harder to perform your best. Remember, the band are there to help, so help them, as much as possible.

Here are examples of 2 methods of writing charts that the band will have no problems reading.

Word Charts

These are the ones most people on the festival circuit use.

But don't use these for instrumentals.

Remember to not double up on chords. Sometimes, when the same chord is at the end of the verse and the start of the chorus, it is easier to read if you only write it in one place (the end of the verse, for example).

Pros

Good as a reminder of the chords and structure, if the band already knows the song

Cons

Tells the band what chords are used, but not how long each one goes for

May not be as neat as well ordered Bar Charts

Bar Charts

A necessity for **Instrumental Section**.

The band will have a better idea as to how your song should be played, and this will make it easier for you to **perform your best**.

Chords—more complex than **Word Charts** because of the timing involved.

Number—better than the others because even if you change the key of the song 5 minutes before you go on, the band can still use the same chart

Pros

This is the standard the band are used to using

Tells the band how long each chord goes for, so they can play it the way you want

The band can change the key easily

Cons

More time is needed in preparing the chart

The musicians who regularly play these songs may not know how to read them

Tips from the Band

- **Spell out everything and don't presume ANYTHING!**
- **Know who performs the song (a member of the house band may play for this artist!)**
- **It is fine to get your lyrics and chords from COWPIE/CHORDIE.COM and other websites, just make sure you don't leave them like that. Write the chart out completely.**
- **Know how to count-in your song or bring one of your own musicians who can do it for you.**

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Transposition and Numbering Tool

You can use this tool to transpose your song—pick the key the song is in (for example, C) and pick the key you are transposing to (in our example Bb) and follow the corresponding column for all of the new chords (C becomes Bb, F becomes Eb, Bb becomes Ab and G becomes F).

You can also use this tool to write number charts—pick the key the song is in (for example, C) and follow the corresponding column for all of the numbers for your song (C becomes 1, F becomes 4, Bb becomes b7 and G becomes 5). The **bold** note names are the common ones for each key.

1	b2	2	b3	3	4	#4	5	b6	6	b7	7
C	D ^b	D	E ^b	E	F	F [#]	G	A ^b	A	B ^b	B
F	G ^b	G	A ^b	A	B ^b	B	C	D ^b	D	E ^b	E
B^b	B	C	D ^b	D	E ^b	E	F	G ^b	G	A ^b	A
E^b	E	F	G ^b	G	A ^b	A	B ^b	B	C	D ^b	D
A^b	A	B ^b	B	C	D ^b	D	E ^b	E	F	G ^b	G
D^b	D	E ^b	E	F	G ^b	G	A ^b	A	B ^b	B	C
F[#]	G	G [#]	A	A [#]	B	C	C [#]	D	D [#]	E	E [#]
B	C	C [#]	D	D [#]	E	F	F [#]	G	G [#]	A	A [#]
E	F	F [#]	G	G [#]	A	B ^b	B	C	C [#]	D	D [#]
A	B ^b	B	C	C [#]	D	D [#]	E	F	F [#]	G	G [#]
D	E ^b	E	F	F [#]	G	G [#]	A	B ^b	B	C	C [#]
G	A ^b	A	B ^b	B	C	C [#]	D	E ^b	E	F	F [#]
1	b2	2	b3	3	4	#4	5	b6	6	b7	7

Other things you need to know

Breakdown of a Chart

Include the name of each section of the song (Verse, Chorus, etc.) in box at the start of that section

INT

1

b7

Directions for the band (Guitar Only, Band In, Drums Only, etc.)

GTR ONLY

4 1 5 1

4 1 5 /STOP

Each number represents a chord, and each chord goes for 1 measure (bar) This song is in the Key of C (see the Transposition and Numbering Table for more)

If a chord goes for more than 1 measure (bar), use a chord repeat sign $\%$ in place of the chord

VS

1

6-

4

b7

BAND IN

$\%$ 4 1

5 4 1 1⁷

1 4 1

4 1 5 STOP

If chords go for different lengths, such as 3 beats before a new chord, use slash marks / for each beat after the chord

If a whole section repeats immediately a section exactly, use repeat signs at the start ([: and the end. :])

SOLO

([: 4

2-

Stops should be clearly marked where they happen

5 1 6-

5 1 4 1 5 :])

Add a dash (-) for a minor chord.

If each chord only goes for half a measure (bar), draw a line underneath those chords.

INT

GTR ONLY

1	<u>4 1</u>	5	1
b7	4	1	5 /STOP

CH

BAND IN

1	<u>4 1</u>	1	5
1	<u>4 1</u>	5	<u>1 1⁷</u>
4	5	1	6-
2-	5	<u>1 4</u>	<u>1 5</u>

VS

1	∕	4	1
6-	5	4	1
4	1	4	1
b7	4	1	5 STOP

TURNAROUND

1	<u>4 1</u>	5	1
b7	4	1	5 STOP

CH

1	<u>4 1</u>	1	5
1	<u>4 1</u>	5	<u>1 1⁷</u>

4	5	1	6-
2-	5	<u>1 4</u>	<u>1 5</u>

SOLO

(:	4	5	1	6-
2-	5	<u>1 4</u>	<u>1 5</u>	:)

CH

1	<u>4 1</u>	1	5
1	<u>4 1</u>	5	<u>1 1⁷</u>

4	5	1	6-
2-	5	<u>1 4</u>	<u>1 5</u>

TAG

4	5	1	6-
2-	5	1	<u>1 5</u>

INT	GTR ONLY			CH			
C	<u>FC</u>	G	C	C	<u>FC</u>	C	G
B ^b	F	C	G / ^{STOP}	C	<u>FC</u>	G	<u>CC⁷</u>
CH	BAND IN			F	G	C	A-
C	<u>FC</u>	C	G	D-	G	<u>CF</u>	<u>CG</u>
C	<u>FC</u>	G	<u>CC⁷</u>	SOLO			
F	G	C	A-	(F G C A-			
D-	G	<u>CF</u>	<u>CG</u>	D- G <u>CF</u> <u>CG</u> :)			
VS				CH			
C	∕	F	C	C	<u>FC</u>	C	G
A-	G	F	C	C	<u>FC</u>	G	<u>CC⁷</u>
F	C	F	C	F	G	C	A-
B ^b	F	C	G ^{STOP}	D-	G	<u>CF</u>	<u>CG</u>
TURNAROUND				TAG			
C	<u>FC</u>	G	C	F	G	C	A-
B ^b	F	C	G ^{STOP}	D-	G	C	<u>CGC</u>