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A GUIDE TO CHORD SELECTION FOR FIDDLE TUNES

To select a chord for a section of a tune, first look at TABLE 1 to see the most commonly used chords in a particular key. The chords shown are based on the first, forth, and fifth degree of the scale for the key plus a couple of likely minor chords. Some songs may contain additional chords not shown.

Next, identify the note for which you are trying to select a chord. Find the note by going down the left side column. Go across the row and look for notes that are identified as a 1, 3, or 5. Look up that column to see possible chords to use.

If you find a match between the likely chords in TABLE 1 and the chords identified in TABLE 2, that is the most likely chord to use. Notice, I said most likely.

TABLE 1: Keys and principal chords:

Key	1 chrd	4 chrd	5 chrd	minor	minor
C	C	F	G7	Am	Dm
G	G	C	D7	Em	Am
F	F	Bb	C7	Dm	Gm
D	D	G	A7	Bm	Em
Bb	Bb	Eb	F7	Gm	Cm
A	A	D	E7	F#m	Bm

TABLE 2: Scales and triads:

A two octave chromatic scale is shown in the left column. Commonly used chords are listed along the top along with their respective scales. The 1, 3, and 5 notes which create the chord triad are indicated.

Commonly used chords and their scales

	G	C	D	Em	A	Am	Bm	E	F	F#m	Dm	Gm	Bb	Eb
A					A(1)	A(1)								
A#													Bb(1)	
B					B	A	B							
C		C(1)				C(3b)							C	
C#					C#(3)		C#							
D		D	D(1)		D	D	D(3b)				D(1)		D(3)	
D#													Eb	Eb(1)
E		E(3)	E	E(1)	E(5)	E(5)	E	E(1)			E			
F		F							F(1)		F(3)		F(5)	F
F#			F#(3)	F#	F#	F#	F#(5)	F#		F#(1)				
G	G(1)	G(5)	G	G(3b)			G		G		G	G(1)	G	G(3)
G#					G#	G#		G#(3)		G#				Ab
A	A	A	A(5)	A	A(1)	A(1)	A	A	A(3)	A(3b)	A(5)	A	A	
A#									Bb		Bb	Bb(3b)	Bb(1)	Bb(5)
B	B(3)	B	B	B(5)			B(1)	B(5)		B				
C	C	C(1)		C					C(5)			C		C
C#			C#					C#		C#(5)	C#			
D	D(5)		D(1)	D					D	D	D(1)	D(5)		D
D#								D#				Eb		Eb(1)
E	E			E(1)				E	E					
F									F(1)	F				
F#	F#									F#(1)		F#		
G	G(1)											G(1)		
G#														
A														