



Welcome to ChordLab



Written by Arthur Roofs
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ChordLab – A Unique Musician's Tool Helps Spelling and Finding Chords

Introduction

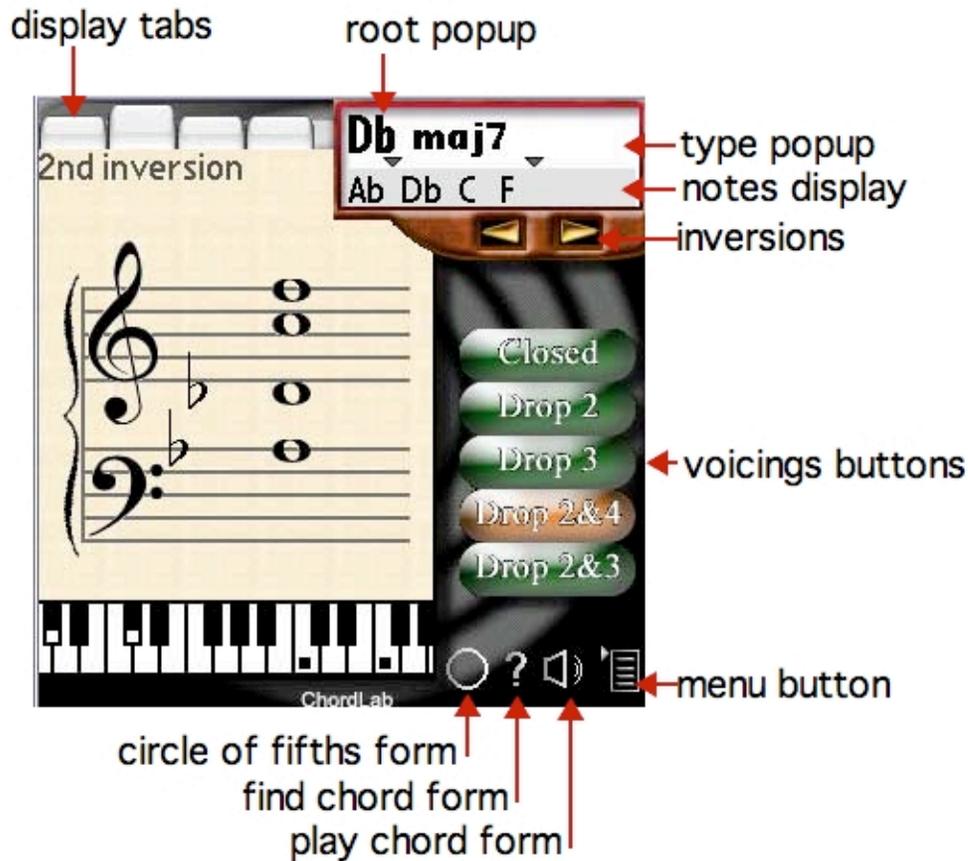
The essential tool for song-writers and musicians in general assists with all chord spelling tasks. Features a built-in Circle of Fifths and chord finder for when you know the pitches, but not the chord. Many times chord spelling becomes an essential task, be it to communicate what you are playing to others or simply when writing it down. To complicate matters music theory is often complex and correctly spelling a chord that may have sharps AND flats, double flats or double sharps is not always easy. That is where ChordLab can be of great assistance as a sort of chord calculator.

In addition ChordLab can also show you how to finger given chords on the piano or guitar. It features all the standard voicings commonly used in Jazz, Rock, Pop, and elsewhere. This helps to write fitting music for an instrument one might not be too familiar with.

Another essential tool found in ChordLab is the Circle of Fifths which is implemented interactively and can be used to show parallel minor/major key signatures.

The most important tool for many, however, will probably be the Chord Finder. This tool allows one to just enter a bunch of notes and find out what chord exactly these might represent. Many guitar players often play fingering combinations without being aware of the kind of chord these notes might represent. Notes can be entered just by pitch and without having to have the correct name.

The Main Screen



The left half of the screen displays chords in different ways. Use the tabs at the top to change between single staff, grand staff, TAB and guitar diagram views. The top right corner handles chord selection by root and kind. Tapping on the name (i.e. C) or the qualifier (i.e. maj) pops up a menu for selection. They are used to adjust the current inversion. On most devices you can use the 5-way buttons to adjust the display (right or left buttons). On all Palm OS® handhelds you can use the up and down scrollers (hard keys) to adjust the inversion of the chord currently viewed.

Additionally you can also elect to have the MIDI pitches for the chord tones displayed on the main screen. The setting for this is in Preferences.

The Chord Selector Gadget



Tapping on the A in the above picture shows the Root Popup to select and tapping to the right side of it shows the chord type popup. The line on a grey background will always spell all chord tones from low to high. This display is dynamic and will adjust per inversion/voicing, etc.



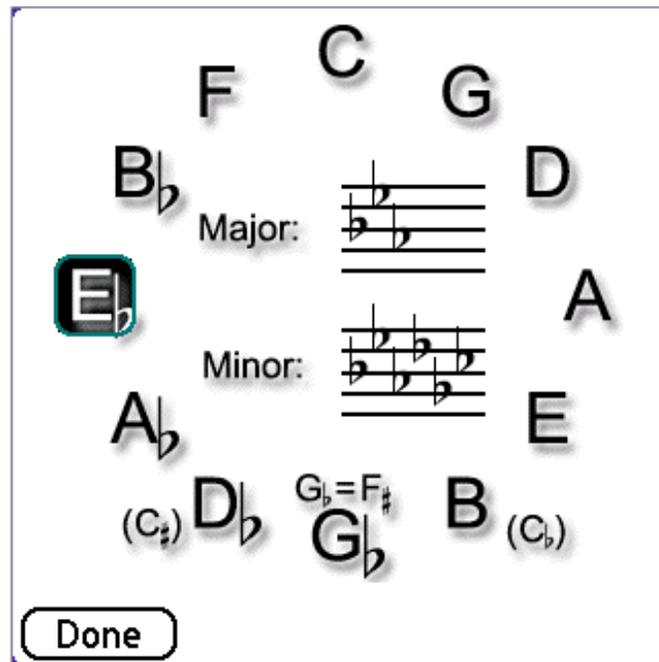
Preferences



The upper panel allows to select between 8 different backgrounds for the chord display on the main screen as well as picking a custom

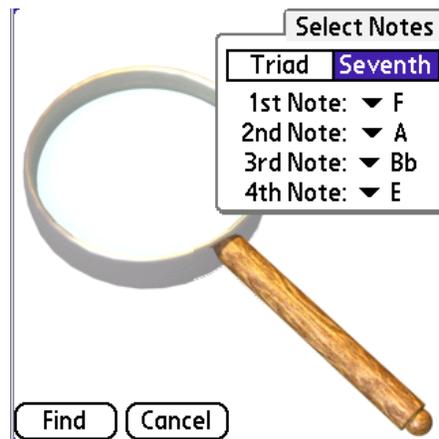
color for staff lines. The lower panel has several sound options. The Sound checkbox is used to switch playback on or off. AutoPlay will automatically play each rendition of a chord when a change is made (i.e. the inversion is changed). The Play popup menu contains settings for arpeggiated playback, block playback and both together. On devices that don't run Palm OS 5.0 or higher the playback is always arpeggiated. The playback volume is set with the Volume slider.

The Circle of Fifths Form



This universal tool for all musicians is implemented dynamically in ChordLab so that one can look up parallel major/minor key signatures. We made this display as large as possible, so that one can view it while practicing.

Find Chord Form



This may be the most important feature of ChordLab for many that write and compose music. The feature comes in handy when one plays a specific chord, but has difficulties naming it. Just enter the individual notes and never mind whether it is a G# or an Ab. Then hit the Find button. If it is a fairly standard chord, ChordLab will find it.

Instruments



This dialog is available from the File menu on devices with Palm OS 5.0 and higher. The 01_GrandPiano library is included in ChordLab's distribution and can be installed in RAM or on memory cards. If Built-In is selected, the internal soft synth will be used for playback.

BTW: New sound libraries will be released on our website in intervals. Make sure to check our RSS feed for updates.

Concluding

We had a great time creating this application and believe that it can be very useful. We might, however, not have thought of everything or maybe there is a feature you'd like to see in a future release. If so, let us know ;)

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