# Chords & Progressions in C Major

four chords, three loops — the toolkit behind a thousand songs
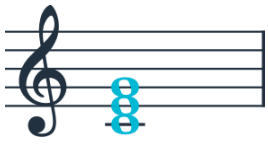
**LISTEN**
Scan to hear every example

**Thousands of songs run on the same four chords.** In C major they are **C, F, G7** and **Am** — played here as *smooth voicings*: shapes that share notes, so your hand barely moves between chords. Each chord wears the color of its root's scale degree:

1 · I home  4 · IV away  5 · V7 tension  6 · vi the sad twin

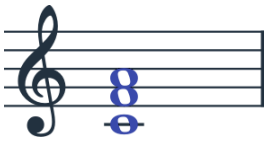
## THE FOUR SHAPES — SMOOTH VOICINGS

**I C**



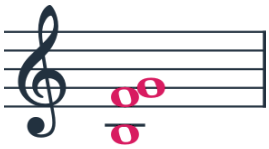
C · E · G
root position

**IV F**
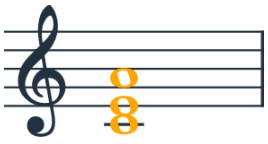


C · F · A
C stays on the bottom

**V7 G7**



B · F · G
the classic squeeze

**vi Am**



C · E · A
the relative minor
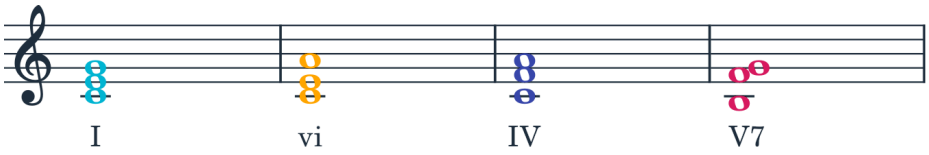
**See how little the hand moves.** From C · E · G: keep **C** and slide E–G up one step to F–A — that's IV. Keep **G**, drop C to B and nudge E up to F — that's V7. Keep **C–E** and lift G to A — that's vi. Every change is a step or less.

## THREE LOOPS EVERYONE PLAYS
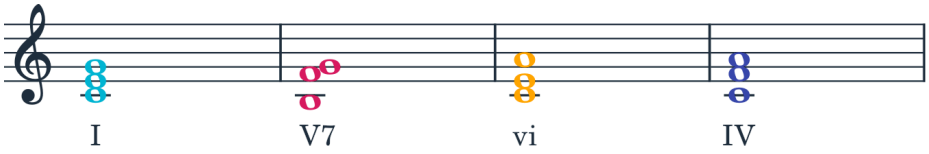
**The classic**
**I · IV · V7 · I**
the backbone of folk songs, hymns and rock & roll.




**The '50s loop**
**I · vi · IV · V7**
Stand by Me, Earth Angel — the doo-wop turnaround.




**The pop loop**
**I · V7 · vi · IV**
Let It Be (which plays a plain V, without the 7th) and many pop songs since.




**Try it** Loop each line: four slow counts per chord until every change happens without looking. Then add the chord's root deep in your left hand — **C** under I, **F** under IV, **G** under V7, **A** under vi. When a loop feels easy, halve the counts and keep the pulse. Learn these shapes in every key and you can accompany almost anything.



© 2026 Tissimo. All rights reserved.