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Nashville Numbers: One Chart, Any Key

A **Nashville number chart** writes each chord as the **step of the scale** it is built on. Learn the numbers once, and one chart works in **any key** the singer calls.

THE NUMBERS IN A MAJOR KEY

Number the major scale 1 to 7 and build a chord on each step, using only notes of the key (Handout 357). A **dash** (–) marks a **minor** chord and a small **circle** (°) a **diminished** one. A number with no mark is a major chord.

Write the dash and the circle every time. Some charts write 2m instead of 2–; it means the same chord.

	1 maj	2– min	3– min	4 maj	5 maj	6– min	7° dim
C major no sharps or flats	C	Dm	Em	F	G	Am	B°
G major one sharp	G	Am	Bm	C	D	Em	F♯°
E♭ major three flats	E♭	Fm	Gm	A♭	B♭	Cm	D°

CHART MARKS

4
One number, one bar
A whole bar: four beats in 4/4. Charts usually run **four bars to a line**.

4 5^7
Underlined: one bar
The two chords **share the bar**. With no other marks, two beats each.

5^7
Small 7: add the 7th
The 5 chord with its 7th on top. In C: **G7** (G–B–D–F).

1/3
Slash: the bass note
The 1 chord with **step 3** of the scale in the bass. In C: **C/E**.

All four marks in C, as a pianist could play them: **1 | 4 5^7 | 1/3 | 6–** · on the staff: names above, numbers below as labels



ONE CHART, TWO KEYS

An original 8-bar chart with one split bar (bar 7) and one slash chord (bar 5). The numbers stay the same; only the letters change with the key.

bar	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Chart	**1**	**6–**	**4**	**5^7**	**1/3**	**4**	**2– 5^7**	**1**
in G	G	Em	C	D7	G/B	C	Am D7	G
in D	D	Bm	G	A7	D/F♯	G	Em A7	D

Try it The singer asks for **E♭ major** (E♭ F G A♭ B♭ C D). Write bars 1–4 of the chart as chord names:

_____ | _____ | _____ | _____

Answer: E♭ | Cm | A♭ | B♭7

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