

In this supplement, we will be working on reading notation in the spaces of the staff. The following exercises start with just the spaces within the actual staff, then moves outside the staff. It contains only notes found in the spaces, except for the very last two measures. Practice this page frequently, even as you progress through the book.

PLAYING IN THIRDS

Any time you move from a space to the next space (or from a line to the next line), you just played a "third". It may be a *major third* (two whole steps distance), or a *minor third*, (one whole and one half step distance). If you start on the 3rd space up, "C" and move up to the next space, "E" that is a major third. (C to D is a whole step, and so is D to E.) If you start on that same C and move down to the next space "A" then you have travelled a minor third. (C to B is a half step; B to A is a whole step.)

Chords are built on 3rds. A triad is root, third, fifth, right? Well, the distance from the 3rd to the 5th is also a 3rd, so you're really just looking at a stack of thirds. The first three notes in this exercise are F, A, and C. That is an F major triad. A stack of thirds, right? Now when you add the fourth note, E, you now have the notes of an F Maj7 chord. Still a stack of thirds, but we have gone one further, to the seventh (F, A, C, E; 1, 3, 5, 7). There is a more in depth look at seventh chord types toward the end of the book, and an appendix devoted to them as well.

CHORDS & INVERSIONS

Let's look at the last two measures on the page. The first cluster of notes you see is a C chord (C, E, G). It may seem mind boggling when you start looking at chords as clusters of notes. But eventually you see shapes rather than analyzing each note within it. For example, a triad in root position (root is the lowest note) will always be line-line-line (as you see here) or space-space-space. The lowest note in the cluster is C, and you easily see that it's a triad because it's a neat vertical stack.

When I see this stack of notes, I usually just play any "C" chord. It looks as though I should play these particular three notes (which is sometimes the case, depending on the composer's intent) but sometimes it is not so important which C chord you play, as long as you know that the cluster represents a C chord. It all depends on how much freedom is given by the bandleader. He may have reasons for wanting that particular 'voicing' in that particular octave. I usually default to taking the freedom. One reason for that is, *unless* the music was written specifically for guitar, it is actually intended to sound one octave higher than where you're actually playing it. Guitar music is transposed one octave below "concert pitch", which is used as the central overview of an arrangement. So right off I *know* that if I did play exactly what I read, it would be incorrect anyway, by one octave. If the music was not written specifically for guitar then, and *you're playing it*, it could be at any stage of development for its new arrangement. So then it might be time for some artistic choices.

The second cluster is a G chord, but inverted. A "G" triad is G, B D. But here we are looking at a 'first inversion' triad. Instead of 1, 3, 5, (G, B, D) this triad is shown as 3, 5, 1 (B, D, G). Again, the shape is something you will eventually get used to. From bottom to top you will have notes on two consecutive spaces, then an empty space, and then the root will be on the next line up. (Or the opposite of all that.) It's a very recognizable shape. There is still second inversion that I haven't talked about, but since I didn't use it here, I won't get into it. There will be more triads used in upcoming supplementals though, so we will cover it then.

Playing the Spaces *(After Lesson 8, Page 33)*

