

# Drop 2 Voicings

This material is courtesy of Patrick MacFarlane. Check out his excellent site with tons of cool stuff

<http://www.guitarlessonworld.com>

Drop 2 voicings are formed by taking a chord and then dropping the next to the highest note, or voice, to the lowest note of the chord. Similarly, there are drop 1, drop 3, drop 2 & 4, etc. Drop 2 voicings are important because most of these chords are easy for a guitarist to play on 4 adjacent strings.

Drop 2 is just a name for how the chords were derived from another chord. This is only important for naming the voicings. I will describe how they are derived then I will show you the voicings.

The example below shows four C Major 7 chords and their drop 2 voicings in standard notation. The important thing to realize is which note is dropped to the lowest note.

## C Major 7 Drop 2 Voicings



Let's explore the theory behind the example. C Major 7 consists of four notes: C, E, G, B. There is a root chord and 3 inversions for any 4-note chord. The table below shows the chord intervals and the notes that create the chords. First, it shows the note intervals for the base chord. Second, it shows the note intervals for the drop 2 chord. Third, it shows the notes of the base chord (lowest to highest). Last, it shows the notes for the drop 2 chord (lowest to highest).

## Drop 2 Intervals and Notes

Voicing	Intervals	Drop 2 Intervals	Notes for C Major 7	Drop 2 Degrees
Root	1-3-5-7	5-1-3-7	C-E-G-B	G-C-E-B
1st Inversion	3-5-7-1	7-3-5-1	E-G-B-C	B-E-G-C
2nd Inversion	5-7-1-3	1-5-7-3	G-B-C-E	C-G-B-E
3rd Inversion	7-1-3-5	3-7-1-5	B-C-E-G	E-B-C-G

## **Practical Uses and Tips**

The theory of drop 2 voicings is dry, but the chords they produce are fantastic because they form compact and playable voicings. They don't stretch your fingers too much and they don't repeat any notes.

To use these voicings, I recommend learning the highest note interval and the lowest note interval for each drop 2 voicing. For example the 2nd Inversion drop 2 has the 1st, or root, as the lowest note and the 3rd as the highest note. You can use this to form a bass line as you change chords or as a melody on the highest note. This is effective in writing chord progressions.

If you're interested in jazz, you'll also notice that the color notes (3rd and 7th) are the two highest voices in the chord. If the bass player is playing the root, you can forego playing the root and play only the color notes to create the chord.

As you play more and more, you'll probably notice that the drop 2 chords on strings 1-4 and 2-5 are the most useful. If you need to lessen your practice, I would start with these string groupings first.

## **C Major 7 Drop 2 Voicings**

Each line below contains four drop 2 chords for a string set. The four chords are derived in order from the Root Position, 1st Inversion, 2nd Inversion, and 3rd Inversion. For example, measure 3 of line 2 is the 2nd inversion drop 2 C Major 7 chord on strings 2 - 5.

Drop 2 Voicings on Strings 3 to 6

	Cmaj7/G	Cmaj7/B	Cmaj7	Cmaj7/E
Diagram				
Musical Staff				
TAB	4 2 3 3	5 5 7 7	9 9 10 8	12 10 14 12

Drop 2 Voicings on Strings 2 to 5

	Cmaj7/G	Cmaj7/B	Cmaj7	Cmaj7/E
Diagram				
Musical Staff				
TAB	12 9 10 10	1 0 2 2	5 4 5 3	8 5 9 7

Drop 2 Voicings on Strings 1 to 4

	Cmaj7/G	Cmaj7/B	Cmaj7	Cmaj7/E
Diagram				
Musical Staff				
TAB	7 5 5 5	8 8 9 9	12 12 12 10	3 1 4 2

# C7 Drop 2 Voicings

**Drop 2 Voicings on Strings 3 to 6**

	C7/G	C7/Bb	C7	C7/E
Diagram				
Musical Notation				
TAB	3 2 3 3	5 5 7 6	9 8 10 8	12 10 13 12

**Drop 2 Voicings on Strings 2 to 5**

	C7/G	C7/Bb	C7	C7/E
Diagram				
Musical Notation				
TAB	11 9 10 10	1 0 2 1	5 3 5 3	8 5 8 7

**Drop 2 Voicings on Strings 1 to 4**

	C7/G	C7/Bb	C7	C7/E
Diagram				
Musical Notation				
TAB	6 5 5 5	8 8 9 8	12 11 12 10	3 1 3 2

# C Minor 7 Drop 2 Voicings

**Drop 2 Voicings on Strings 3 to 6**

Chord	Diagram	Tab
Cm7/G		3 1 3 3
Cm7/Bb		5 5 6 6
Cm7		8 8 10 8
Cm7/Eb		12 10 13 11

**Drop 2 Voicings on Strings 2 to 5**

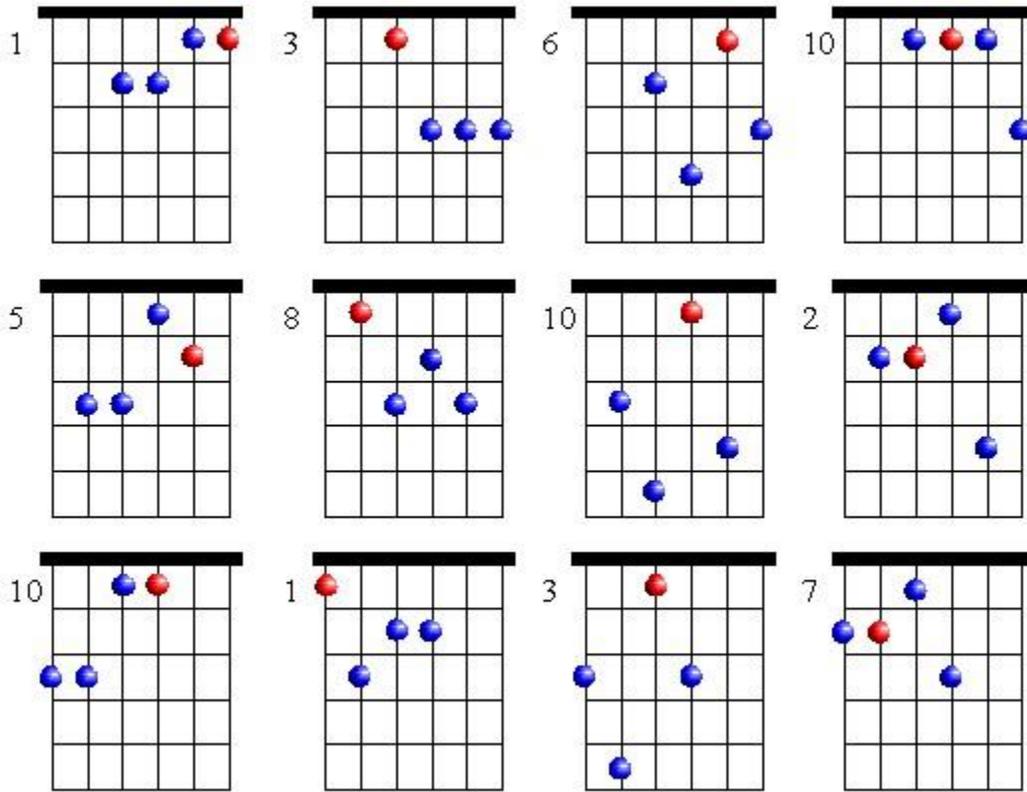
Chord	Diagram	Tab
Cm7/G		11 8 10 10
Cm7/Bb		1 0 1 1
Cm7		4 3 5 3
Cm7/Eb		8 5 8 6

**Drop 2 Voicings on Strings 1 to 4**

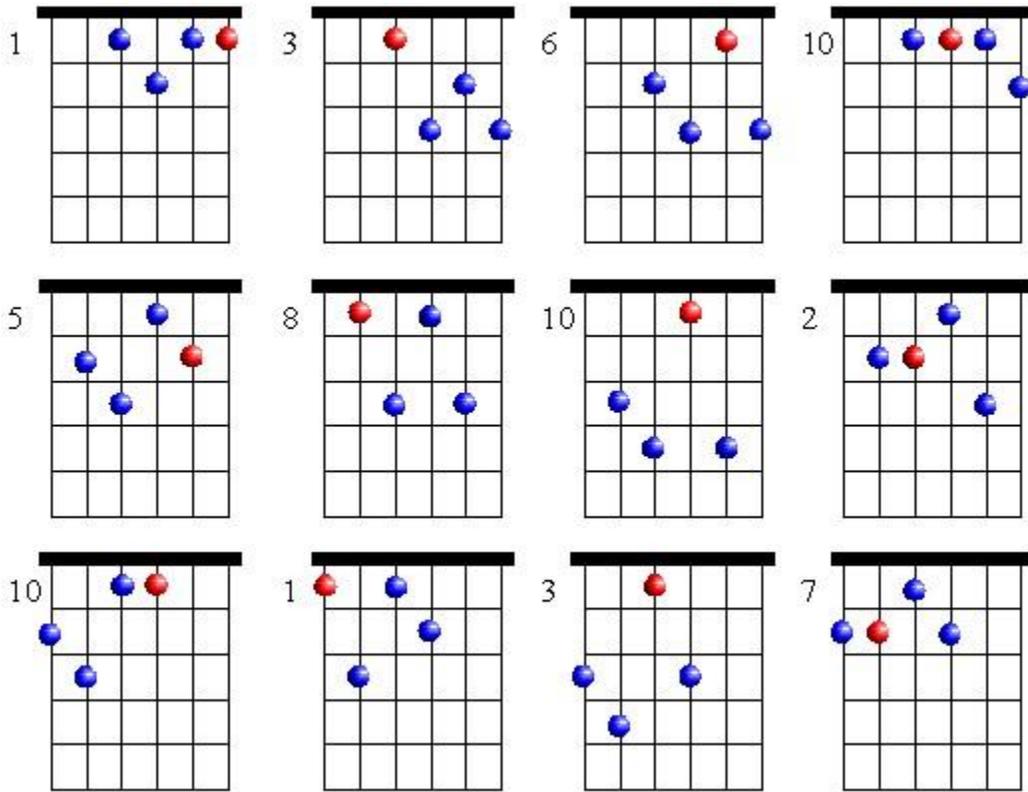
Chord	Diagram	Tab
Cm7/G		6 4 5 5
Cm7/Bb		8 8 8 8
Cm7		11 11 12 10
Cm7/Eb		3 1 3 1

Below are the drop 2 patterns for the F chords. The ordering is different in these patterns. See if you can identify how they are organized.

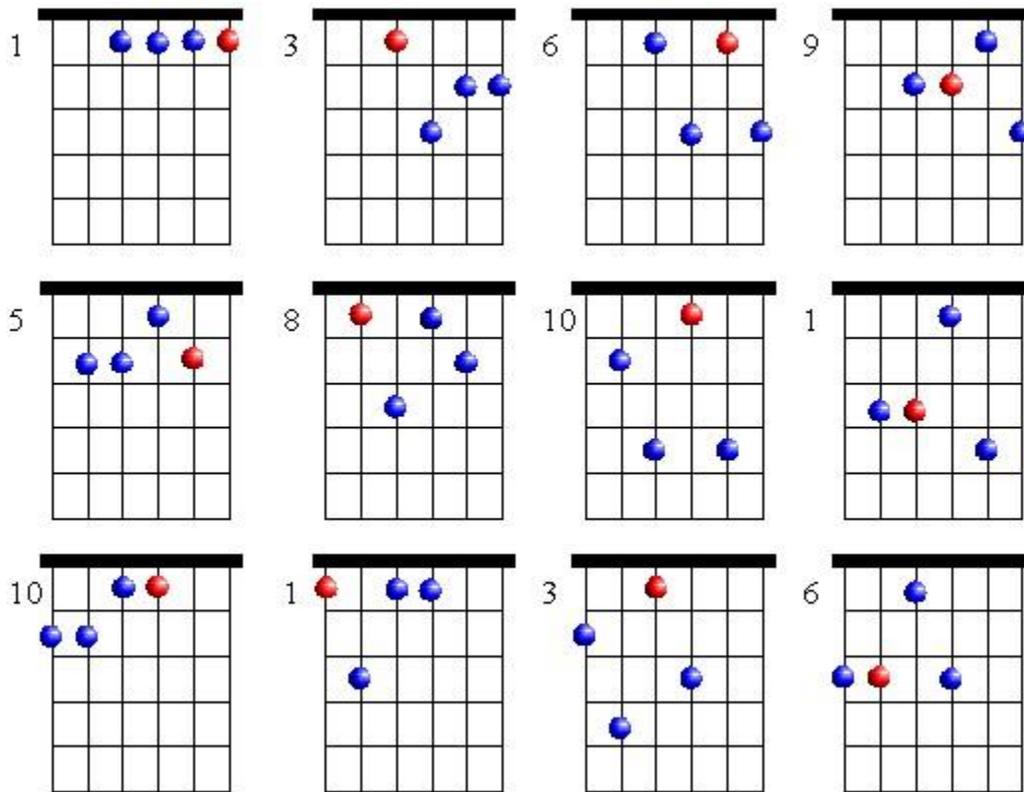
## F Major 7 Drop 2 Patterns



## F7 Drop 2 Patterns



## F Minor 7 Drop 2 Patterns



## ii V I Chord Progressions with Drop 2 Voicings

Now let us practice using some of these voicings in ii-V-I chord progressions. This is a very common Jazz chord progression. Practice these chord grips then try taking out the root note and optionally the 5th of each chord as if a bass player was playing the root note. This will keep the focus of your playing on the color notes (3rd and 7th) that determine the type of chord that is played (major 7, minor 7, dominant 7, etc). One tip is to remove the lowest two notes from the drop 2 chords that have the root as their lowest notes. These ones do not have a slash next to the chord name. The 3rd and 4th lines below show progressions using only voicings with the root as the lowest note.

♩ = 120

**Dm/C**  
xx  
10  
--1111

**G7/B**  
xx  
8  
--2314

**C/B**  
xx  
8  
--2311

*mf*

T	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	8
A	10	10	10	10	8	8	8	8	8	8
B	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9
B	10	10	10	10	9	9	9	9	9	9

**Dm7/F**  
xx  
--1314

**G7**  
xx  
5  
--1324

**Cmaj7/G**  
xx  
5  
--1114

T	5	5	5	5	7	7	7	7	7	7
A	3	3	3	3	6	6	6	6	6	5
B	5	5	5	5	7	7	7	7	7	5
B	3	3	3	3	5	5	5	5	5	5

**Dm7**  
xx  
12  
--1322

**G7**  
x  
10  
--1314-

**Cmaj7**  
xx  
10  
--1444

T	13	13	13	13	12	12	12	12	12	12
A	13	13	13	13	10	10	10	10	10	12
B	14	14	14	14	12	12	12	12	12	12
B	12	12	12	12	10	10	10	10	10	10

**Dm7**  
x  
5  
--1312-

**G7**  
xx  
1312--

**Cmaj7**  
x  
x  
--1324-

T	6	6	6	6	4	4	4	4	5
A	5	5	5	5	3	3	3	3	4
B	7	7	7	7	5	5	5	5	4
B	5	5	5	5	3	3	3	3	5

