

## Monteverdi Gloria for 8 voices M 19

### Learn the basic facts about chords 1. What a chord is and how chords get their letter names.

You need a keyboard for this. A real one is ideal because you're going to be playing three notes at once. At least one of the on-line piano keyboards allows you to do this by pressing keys on your computer keyboard. It's the one at [onlinepianist.com](http://onlinepianist.com).

Even knowing a bit about chords helps one to sing more confidently. When you are singing with others, it is chords you are (or should be!) making by combining your notes. Recognising chords helps you to sing the right notes. To understand the Gloria better, you really do need some basic knowledge about chords.

This sheet aims to help you learn 3 really important things about chords.

1. A chord is a group of notes that happen at the same time. There are usually at least 3 different notes. There can be more, but Monteverdi sticks to chords which have 3 notes. The notes can go nicely together or jar with each other in an exciting or jazzy way. Monteverdi sticks to notes that go together nicely.

Here are some typical three-notes-going-together-nicely chords. Play them and enjoy hearing them.

C E G                      F A C                      D F A                      G B D

Notice how all the chords have the same structure. Experiment with three adjacent notes on the keyboard. Exciting / dramatic / clashing - anything but going-nicely-together. For that, you pick a note, add the next-door-but-one-note and the next next-door-but-one-note.

These three note, uncomplicated, every-day sort of chords are often called **triads**.

2. Every chord has a letter name. In the examples above, the first chord is a C chord, the second is an F chord. It's the note that the chord is built on. What are the names of these chords? Don't be put off by seeing accidentals, in the middle or top notes - just look at the note the chord is built on. Answers on Activity Sheet 20.

i.    ii.

3. The note the chord is built on isn't always the bottom note (though it often is) Here are 6 versions of the C chord. They each have the notes C and E and G, but sometimes one is at the bottom and sometimes another is. Sometimes one or more of the notes is doubled. What makes them all C chords, is that they are all made out of C and E and G and when you put those notes as close to each other as you can on the keyboard you see that the chord is built on C.

4. Work out the letter names of each of these chords. This means using what you have learned in step 3. You can use the space by each chord to write out the notes again so you can get them into their closest positions.

i.    ii.    iii.    iv.