

Transformational Triad Spelling

There are four types of triads in the *major-minor system*: major (M), minor (m), augmented (A), and diminished (d). If you memorize the 12 root position major triads, and their common enharmonic equivalents (Enh.), you can quickly arrive at the root position spelling of any triad using the *single semitonal transformations* described below.

MAJOR TRIADS

Spelling ¹	Enh.
C, E, G	
C [♯] , E [♯] , G [♯]	D [♭] , F, A [♭]
D, F [♯] , A	
E [♭] , G, B [♭]	
E, G [♯] , B	F [♭] , A [♭] , C [♭]
F, A, C	
F [♯] , A [♯] , C [♯]	G [♭] , B [♭] , D [♭]
G, B, D	
A [♭] , C, E [♭]	G [♯] , B [♯] , D [♯]
A, C [♯] , E	
B [♭] , D, F	
B, D [♯] , F [♯]	C [♭] , E [♭] , G [♭]

TRANSFORMATIONS

Minor Triads

Major triad, lower the third

C, **E**, G → C, **E[♭]**, G

C[♯], E[♯], G[♯] → C[♯], E, G[♯]

D, F[♯], A → D, F, A

etc.

Augmented Triads

Major triad, raise the fifth

C, E, **G** → C, E, **G[♯]**

D[♭], F, A[♭] → D[♭], F, A

D, F[♯], A → D, F[♯], A[♯]

etc.

Diminished Triads

Minor triad, lower the fifth

C, E[♭], **G** → C, E[♭], **G[♭]**

C[♯], E, G[♯] → C[♯], E, G

D, F, A → D, F, A[♭]

etc.

CHROMATIC SCALE: COMMON ENHARMONIC EQUIVALENTS²

B [♯] /C	C [♯] /D [♭]	D	D [♯] /E [♭]	E/F [♭]	E [♯] /F	F [♯] /G [♭]	G	G [♯] /A [♭]	A	A [♯] /B [♭]	B/C [♭]
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¹ Root position triad spellings are represented using *list notation*.

² Enharmonic spellings that employ double sharps or double flats are also possible.