

Commonly used substitutions per chord tone, in 5 chord qualities

Legend: R - Root, 3 - 3rd of the chord, etc.

This is based on Gary Lindsay's book on jazz arranging. The idea is that a chord is only complete when it contains a note in all four "categories" (R, 3, 5, 7). This can mean you play the root, 3, 5, or 7, or any of the listed substitutions. "Available" (common) substitutions vary from chord to chord.

You don't *have to* make substitutions in a chord. Most commonly the root goes first, but you can substitute anything in the left column for its corresponding substitution in the right column. Experiment and find your own voicings, but if you want to know some commonly used voicing techniques, check out my pages on voicings.

maj7

R	9
3	sus4
5	13, #11
7	6

7

R	9, b9, #9
3	sus4
5	#11, #5, 13
7	6 (rare)

mi7

R	9
3	No sub
5	11, 13
7	No sub

mi7(b5)

- Same as mi7. The b5 is already an alteration, but it's considered its own chord type because it changes the function pretty drastically. This chord is most common as the "ii" in a minor ii-V.

o7

- It's unusual to sub the 3, 5 or 7. Generally, pianists play the root as well in diminished 7 chords. If you want to add extensions to the o7 chord, you just play the notes from the o7 chord a whole step above. For example, the extensions of a Bo7 are just the notes of a C#o7.