

Triads - sus

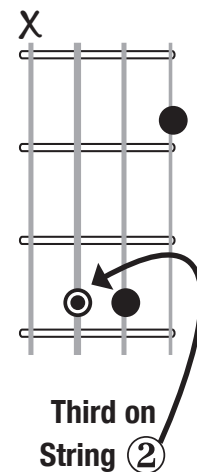
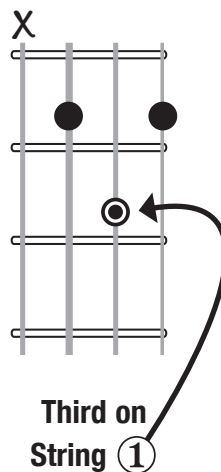
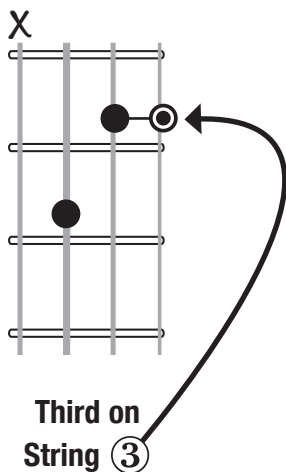
Exploring suspended a.k.a. "sus" chords

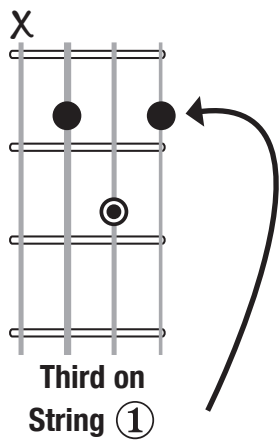
"sus 2" and "sus 4" Chords

A suspended chord (sus chord) is a chord in which the (major or minor) third is omitted, replaced usually with either a perfect fourth (sus 4) or a major second (sus 2) although the fourth is far more common. The lack of a minor or a major third in the chord creates an open sound, while the tension between the fourth and fifth or second and root creates dissonance.

Knowing where the third of a major or minor chord is the key to creating these chords and allows you to create these contemporary chords from your core major and minor triads on the fly as needed.

Here are the major triads on strings ① ② ③ showing what string the third of the chord is located on.

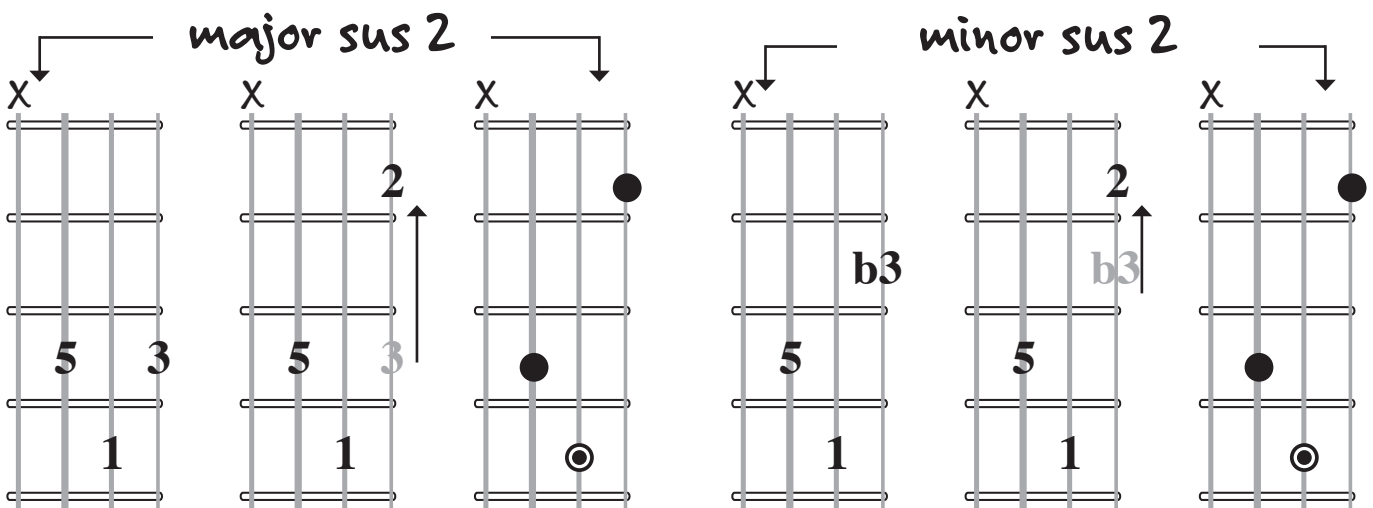
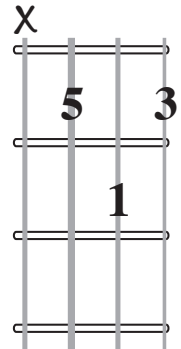




A major triad is a 1 3 5 or root, third and fifth of a major scale. A minor triad is a 1 b3 5 of a major scale.

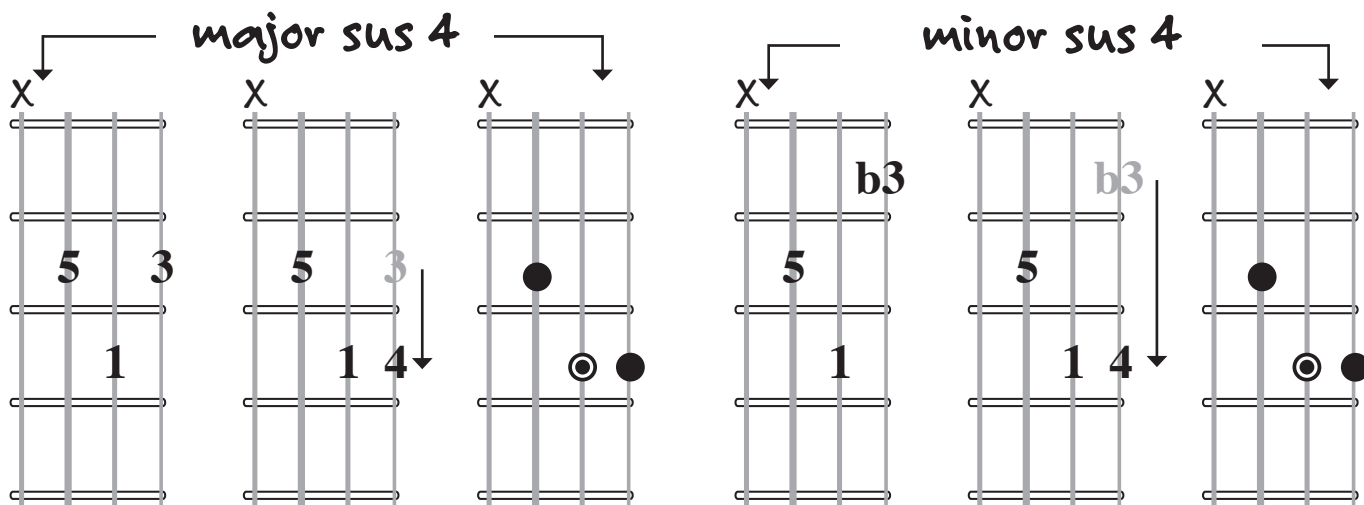
To the left is the major triad with the root on string two, the third on string one and the fifth on string three.

To create a sus 2 chord, lower the third of a major triad chord two frets. For a minor chord lower the flat third one fret. The minor sus 2 chord is rare.



As the root and the fifth of both a major and minor triad are the same there is no difference in the sound and shape of a major sus 2 or a minor sus 2. However its chord function within a chord progression or song are different.

To create a **sus 4** chord, raise the third of a major triad of the chord one fret. For a minor chord raise the third, a flat 3 two frets. The minor sus 4 chord is rare.



Here again as the root and the fifth of both a major and minor triad are the same there is no difference in the sound and shape of a major sus 4 or a minor sus 4. However its chord function within a chord progression or song are different.

With your core major and minor triads memorized there is no need to memorize a new chord shape – simply what string the third of a major or minor chord are on and how many frets to move it.

A sus 2 or sus 4 chord is direct substitute for a major or minor chord with the same root. An example would be Csus2 can substitute for C major and Gsus4 can substitute for G major.

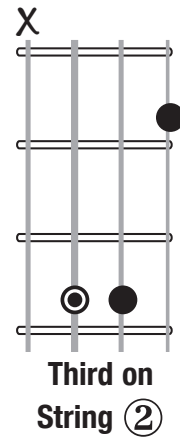
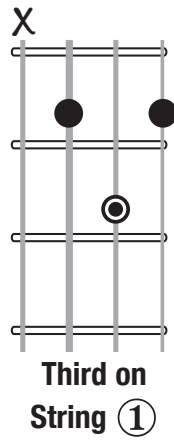
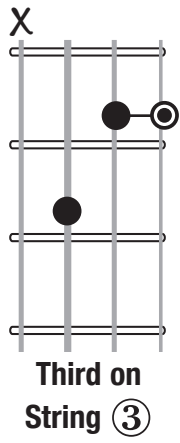
Original Progression



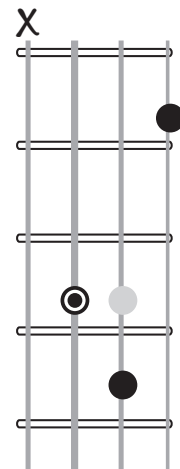
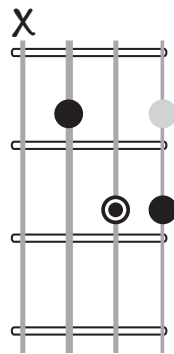
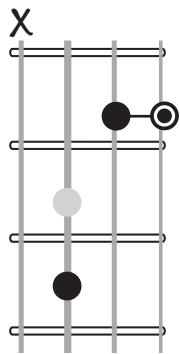
Progression with Substitutes



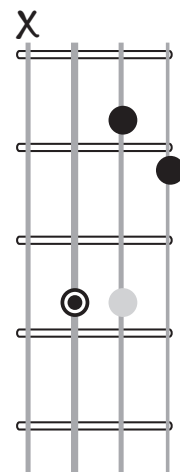
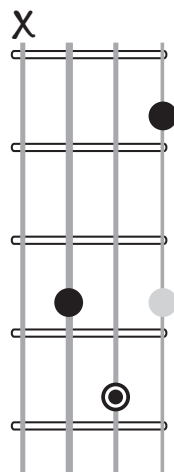
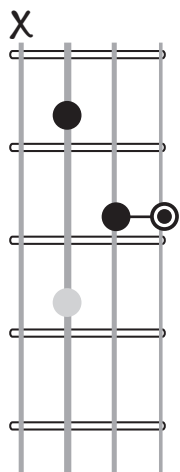
Major



sus 4



sus 2



● Displaced Third