

My Approach to Chords On The C6 Tuning

Chords on the C6 tuning, and the pedals that create them, are frequently mysterious to those unfamiliar with the tuning or with extended note chords. With all the possible combinations using selective string grips and various pedals and knee levers, the choices can be daunting and confusing. Below I list the most common usages for the chords and pedal changes I use on this tuning, though by no means are they ALL the possible usages for these pedals. Though any of these notes are contained in the chords as listed, the voicing of the particular chord will depend on the melody note desired or the particular arrangement of the song. Let practice, listening, and experience be the picker's guide.

Please understand that I am not presenting a discussion of chord theory, progressions, or their application to country music, jazz, western swing, or any other form of music; rather, this essay is simply an explanation of what chords I usually use on the C6 tuning, and the pedals and knee levers I use to create them. This work is not intended as a stand-alone course for the C6 tuning, but rather a reference source to be frequently used by the player.

All chords are shown in the open position, with the scale tone of each string. If a player for example, needs a G#7 chord position, he should find all the 7th chord positions available open (without using the bar) and then place the bar in the proper position on the fretboard, after "doing the math" to determine the proper fret for the chord required.

Here is the **copedent** (pedal arrangement) I use on the C6 tuning

	LKL	LKR	4	5	6	7	8	RKL	RKR	
1	D									1
2	E				F					2
3	C					D		B	C#	3
4	A	Bb	Ab	B		B				4
5	G			F#						5
6	E				Eb					6
7	C						C#		C#	7
8	A		B							8
9	F			F#			E			9
10	C			D			A			10

Open chords found on C6 without pedals

Several useful chords can be found on the C6 tuning without the use of any pedals at all. These are, in open position, **C, C6, C6/9, Cadd9, Am, Am7, Am11, F, F6, Fmaj7, Fmaj9, and F6/9**. These are shown on the staff below. Any of the strings listed under the chord names can be used in string grips for those chords.

	C	C6	C6/9	Cadd9	Am	Am7	Am11	F	F6	Fmaj7	Fmaj9	F6/9	
1	D		9	9			11		6			6	1
2	E	3	3	3	5	5	5			7	7		2
3	C	1	1	1	b3	b3	b3	5	5	5	5	5	3
4	A		6	6	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	4
5	G	5	5	5		b7	b7				9	9	5
6	E	3	3	3	5	5	5			7	7		6
7	C	1	1	1	b3	b3	b3	5	5	5	5	5	7
8	A		6	6	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	8
9	F							1	1	1	1	1	9
10	C	1	1	1	b3	b3	b3	5	5	5	5	5	10

Chords found with Pedal 4

Pedal 4 raises strings 4 and 8 one whole tone, from A to B. The notes are shown at left on the staff below. I use this pedal most frequently for melody passages, though I often find useful chord positions with it, in combination with pedal 5 and pedal 8. By itself, I use this pedal for the chords **Cmaj7, Cmaj9, Am9, Em, Em7, Gmajor, Gsus, and G6**.

	Cmaj7	Cmaj9	Am9	Em	Em7	G	G6	Gsus	G7	G13	
1	D		9		b7	5	5	5	5	5	1
2	E	3	3	5	1	1	6		6		2
3	C	1	1	b3				4			3
4	B	7	7	9	5	5	3	3	3	3	4
5	G	5	5	b7	b3	b3	1	1	1	1	5
6	E	3	3	5	1	1	6		6		6
7	C	1	1	b3				4			7
8	B	7	7	1	5	5	3	3	3	3	8
9	F								b7	b7	9
10	C	1	1	b3							10

Chords found with Pedal 5

Pedal 5, along with pedals 6 and 7, is one of the "Big Three" pedals in this tuning in that I use it as a base position for my left foot, and that I use this pedal and pedal 6 most frequently by itself and in combination with each other. Pedals 5 and 6 are the equivalent of pedals 1 and 2 of the E9 tuning in terms of the frequency of their being used together. Pedal 5 lowers string 5 1/2 tone (G-F#), raises string 9 1/2 tone (F-F#), and raises string 10 a whole tone (C-D). Those chords for which I use pedal 5 by itself are **D major, D7, D9, Am6, F#m7b5, and C6b5**

	D maj	D7	D9	Am6	F#m7b5	C6b5
1	D	1	1			
2	E		9	5	b7	3
3	C	b7	b7	b3	b5	1
4	A	5	5	1	b3	6
5	F#	3	3	6	1	b5
6	E		9	5	b7	3
7	C	b7	b7	b3	b5	1
8	A	5	5	1	b3	6
9	F#	3	3	6	1	b5
10	D	1	1			

Chords found with Pedal 6

Pedal 6, another very important pedal for this tuning, raises string 2 1/2 tone (E-F), and lowers string 6 1/2 tone (E-Eb). It is used equally by itself as well as in combination with pedal 5 and pedal 7, and frequently with any of the knee levers I use on C6. Those chords I obtain with pedal 6 by itself are **F major, F7, F9, F13, Cm, Cm6, Cmadd9, Dm7, Eb6, and Am7b5**.

	F maj	F7	F9	F13	Cm	Cm6	Cmadd9	Dm7	Eb6	Am7b5
1	D			6			9	1		
2	F	1	1	1				b3		
3	C	5	5	5	1	1	1	b7	6	b3
4	A	3	3	3		6		5		1
5	G		9	9	5	5	5		b3	b7
6	Eb	b7	b7	b7	b3	b3	b3		1	b5
7	C	5	5	5	1	1	1	b7		b3
8	A	3	3	3		6		5		1
9	F	1	1	1				b3		
10	C	5	5	5	1	1	1			

Chords found with Pedal 7

Pedal 7 raises string 3 one whole tone (C-D) and raises string 4 one whole tone (A-B). It is used equally by itself and in combination with pedals 5 and 6. The chords I obtain with this pedal alone are **G major, G6, Em, Em7, Am9, Cmaj7, and Cmaj9**.

	G maj	G6	Em	Em7	Am9	Cmaj7	Cmaj9
1	D	5		b7			9
2	E		1	1	5	3	3
3	D	5		b7			9
4	B	3	5	5	9	7	7
5	G	1	b3	b3	b7	5	5
6	E		1	1	5	3	3
7	C				b3	1	1
8	A				1		
9	F						
10	C					1	1

Chords found with Pedal 8

This pedal raises string 7 one half tone (C-C#), lowers string 9 one half tone (F-E), and lowers string 10 three half tones (C-A). It's occasionally referred to as the "Boo-wah" pedal, alluding to the deep descending tone on the 10th string when the pedal is engaged, such as used by Buddy Emmons in the solo to "Night Life" he recorded in 1962 with Ray Price. Again, this pedal is used by itself, and becomes more useful when combined with other pedals or knee levers.

By itself, I use this pedal to obtain the following chords: **A major, A7, A7#9 and C# dim..**

	Amaj	A7	A7#9	C#dim
1	D			
2	E 5	5		b3
3	C		#9	
4	A 1	1	1	
5	G	b7	b7	b5
6	E 5	5	5	b3
7	C# 3	3	3	1
8	A 1	1	1	
9	E 5	5	5	b3
10	A 1	1	1	

Chords found with C-B Lever

This knee lever lowers string 3 one half tone (C-B). Though frequently used alone, I most often use it in combination with pedals 5, 6 and 8, or to obtain melody notes. Used by itself, the chords I obtain with this lever are **Cmaj7, Cmaj9, Em, Em7, Am9, G6, and G6/9.**

	Cmaj7	Cmaj9	Em	Em7	Am9	G6	G6/9
1	D	9		b7			5
2	E 3	3	1	1	5	6	6
3	B 7	7	3	3	9	3	3
4	A				1		9
5	G 5	5	b3	b3	b7	1	1
6	E 3	3	1	1	5	6	3
7	C 1	1			b3		
8	A				1		6
9	F						
10	C 1	1					

Chords found with A-Bb Lever

This knee lever raises string 4 one half tone (A-Bb). One of my most used levers, I use it by itself and in combination with pedals 5, 6 and 8, or to obtain melody notes. Used by itself, the chords I obtain with this lever are **C7, C9, Gm, Gm6, Em7b5, Bb6/9, and Bb9#11.**

	C7	C9	Gm	Gm6	Gm7	Em7b5	Bb6/9	Bb9#11
1	D	9	5	5	5	b7	3	3
2	E 3	3		6		1		#11
3	C 1	1					9	
4	Bb b7	b7	b3	b3	b3	b5	1	1
5	G 5	5	1	1	1	b3	6	
6	E 3	3		6		1		#11
7	C 1	1					9	9
8	A							
9	F				b7		5	5
10	C 1	1						

Chords found with C-C# lever

Raises strings 3 and 7 one half tone (C-C#). This is a very useful lever, by itself and again in combination with pedals 5, 6 and 8. One of its main functions is to give the player an inversion of a major chord with the 5th tone of the chord as the highest note of the inversion, especially useful for tunings which have a D note as the 1st string. Used alone, I obtain these chords: **A major, A7, and C# diminished.**

	A maj	A7	C# dim
1	D		
2	E 5	5	b3
3	C# 3	3	1
4	A 1	1	
5	G	b7	b5
6	E 5	5	b3
7	C# 3	3	1
8	A 2	1	
9	F		
10	C		

Chords found with A-Ab lever

Lowering string 4 one half tone (A-Ab), this is another a very useful lever. I frequently use it by itself as well as in combination with pedals 5, 6 and 8. Used alone, I obtain these chords: **F minor, Fm6, Fm Maj7, Am Maj7 (without root), and the C, E, and Ab augmented chords**

	Fm	Fm6	Fm Maj7	Am Maj 7	Caug	Eaug	Ab aug.
1	D	6					
2	E		7	5	3	1	#5
3	C 5	5	5	3	1	#5	3
4	Ab b3	b3	b3	7	#5	3	1
5	G						
6	E			5	3	1	#5
7	C 5	5	5	3	1	#5	3
8	A			1			
9	F 1	1	1				
10	C 5	5	5		1		

Pedal and lever combinations

The most useful and frequently used chords available on the C6 tuning are obtained by using pedals and knee levers in combination, much like on the E9 tuning. Though effective chords can be obtained with almost any combination of feet and knees, the basic combinations I use in my playing are shown on the following staff lines. These are not all the chords available with these combinations, but are the ones I use most often.

Combinations with pedal 5

The most important position I use with pedal 5 is the diminished chord availability with pedal 6. My left foot home base is centered between pedals 5 and 6. I also use 5+A-Bb for augmented chords and 5+C-C# for an A6 chord quite often.

	Ped 5+4		Ped 5+6					Ped 5+7		Ped 5+A-Bb			
	D13		F#dim	Adim	Cdim	Ebdim	G#7b9	Bm7	D13	Daug	F#+	Bbaug	F#7 b5
1	D 1	D						D b3	1	D 1	#5	3	
2	E	F						E		E			b7
3	C b7	C b5	b3	1	bb7	b5	b9	D b3	1	C			b5
4	B 6	A b3	1	bb7	b5	b9		B 1	6	Bb #5	3	1	3
5	F# 3	F# 1	bb7	b5	b3	b7		F# 5	3	F# 3	1	#5	1
6	E	Eb bb7	b5	b3	1	5		E		E			b7
7	C b7	C b5	b3	1	bb7	3		C	b7	C			b5
8	B 6	A b3	1	bb7	b5	b9		A b7	5	A			
9	F# 3	F# 1	bb7	b5	b3	b7		F# 5	3	F# 3	1	#5	1
10	D 1	D						D b3	1	D 1	#5	3	

5+C-B			5+A-Ab			5+C-C#				
D13	D6/9		D9b5	D9#11		A6	Dmaj7	Dmaj9	F#m7	
1	D	1	1	D	1	1	D	1	1	1
2	E		9	E	9	9	E	5	9	b7
3	B	6	6	C	b7	b7	C#	3	7	7
4	A	5	5	Ab	b5	#11	A	1	5	5
5	F#	3	3	F#	3	3	F#	6	3	3
6	E		9	E	9	9	E	5	9	b7
7	C	b7		C	b7	b7	C#	3	7	7
8	A	5	5	A		5	A	1	5	5
9	F#	3	3	F#	3	3	F#	6	3	3
10	D	1	1	D	1	1	D	1	1	1

Combinations with pedal 6

The combinations I use most with pedal 6 are with pedal 5 for diminished chords, with pedal 7 for augmented chords, with A-Bb lever for 11th chords, with C-B lever for #11 chords, and with C-C# lever for augmented chords.

Pedal 6+5						Pedal 6+7				Pedal 6+A-Bb					
F#dim	Adim	Cdim	Ebdim	G#7b9		G7	Gaug	Baug	Eb aug		F11	Eb6	Eb maj7	Eb maj9	Eb 6/9
1	D					D	5				D		7	7	
2	F					F	b7				F	1		9	9
3	C	b5	b3	1	bb7	3	D	5			C	5	6		6
4	A	b3	1	bb7	b5	b9	B	3	3	1	#5	Bb	11	5	5
5	F#	1	bb7	b5	b3	b7	G	1	1	#5	3	G	9	3	3
6	Eb	bb7	b5	b3	1	5	Eb		#5	3	1	Eb	b7	1	1
7	C	b5	b3	1	bb7	3	C					C	7	6	6
8	A	b3	1	bb7	b5	b9	A					A	3		
9	F#	1	bb7	b5	b3	b7	F					F	1		
10	D						C					C			

Pedal 6+C-B					Pedal 6+A-Ab			Pedal 6+C-C#			
F9#11	Eb aug,	G aug,	Baug,		Fm7	F7#9	Ab		Faug.	A aug.	C# aug.
1	D				D				D		
2	F	1			F	1	1		F	1	#5
3	B	#11	#5	3	1	C	5	5	3	C#	#5
4	A	3				Ab	b3	#9	1	A	3
5	G	9	3	1	#5	G				G	
6	Eb	b7	1	#5	3	Eb	b7	b7	5	Eb	
7	C	5				C	5	5	3	C#	#5
8	A	3				A		3		A	3
9	F	1				F	1	1		F	1
10	C					C	5	5		C	

Combinations with pedal 7

Other than the above mentioned combinations with pedals 5 and 6, my only other combination with pedal 7 is one with pedal 8 for 9th and 11th chords. I will explain that in the following section on pedal 8 combinations.

Combinations with pedal 8

The combinations I most frequently use with pedal 8 are with pedal 7 for 9th and 11th chords, with the A-Bb lever for b9th chords, with the C-B lever for 9th chords, the A-Ab lever for major 7ths, and with the C-C# lever for full major and 7th chords.

	Pedal 8+7		pedal 8+A-Bb		pedal 8+C-B		pedal 8+A-Ab	pedal 8+C-C#			
	A9	A11	A7b9		A9		A9	A maj.	A7	A11	
1	D	11	D		D			D		11	1
2	E	5	E	5	E	5	5	E	5	5	5
3	D	11	D		B	9		C#	3	3	3
4	B	9	Bb	b9	A	1		A	1	1	1
5	G	b7	G	7	G	b7	7	G		b7	b7
6	E	5	E	5	E	5	5	E	5	5	5
7	C#	3	C#	3	C#	3	3	C#	3	3	3
8	A	1	A	1	A	1	1	A	1	1	1
9	E	5	E	5	E	5	5	E	5	5	5
10	A	1	A	1	A	1	1	A	1	1	1

I've included some blank tab staves below for note taking. I hope this essay has increased your awareness of the C6th tuning, or at least my limited approach to it! Good luck in your search for more musical knowledge, and remember... KEEP PICKIN'!

1		1
2		2
3		3
4		4
5		5
6		6
7		7
8		8
9		9
10		10

1		1
2		2
3		3
4		4
5		5
6		6
7		7
8		8
9		9
10		10

1		1
2		2
3		3
4		4
5		5
6		6
7		7
8		8
9		9
10		10