

A and B rootless voicings

Jazz pianists in the 1950's attempted to find more colorful ways to voice chords as a departure from the stride styles of the 1930's and the shell voicing approach of the beboppers in the 1940's. These more modern pianists found that the roots of the chords could be eliminated altogether if a bassist in the rhythms section provided the roots. These voicings are often called "rootless voicings" simply because they eliminate the root from the chord.

Rootless voicings are often divided into two categories; "A" voicings and "B" voicings. "A" voicings are simply the 3,5,7,and 9 of the chord. "B" voicings are the 2nd inversion of the "A" voicings, ascending from the 7th: 7,9,3, and 5.

A voicings

ROOTLESS VOICINGS

CMaj9 C9 Cmin9 Cø9 Cdim9

ROOT

B voicings

CMaj9 C9 Cmin9 Cø9 Cdim9

These voicings are frequently played in the left-hand alone, as an accompaniment to the pianist's right-hand melody and improvisation. The general range consideration is between the Db below middle C to the G above middle C.

CMaj9 C9 Cmin9 Cø9 Cdim9

CMaj9 C9 Cmin9 Cø9 Cdim9

Here are the "A" and "B" voicings transposed for the five basic 9th chords, through all 12 keys. Note that some of the voicings appear outside the desirable range.

G Maj9 G9 G min9 G ø9 G dim9

G Maj9 G9 G min9 G ø9 G dim9

D Maj9 D9 D min9 D ø9 D dim9

D Maj9 D9 D min9 D ø9 D dim9

A Maj9 A9 A min9 A ø9 A dim9

A Maj9 A9 A min9 A ø9 A dim9

E Maj9 E9 E min9 E ø9 E dim9

E Maj9 E9 E min9 E ø9 E dim9

B[♮]Maj9 B[♮]9 B[♮]min9 B[♮]ø9 B[♮]dim9

B[♮]Maj9 B[♮]9 B[♮]min9 B[♮]ø9 B[♮]dim9

F[♯]Maj9 F[♯]9 F[♯]min9 F[♯]ø9 F[♯]dim9

F[♯]Maj9 F[♯]9 F[♯]min9 F[♯]ø9 F[♯]dim9

D[♭]Maj9 D[♭]9 D[♭]min9 D[♭]ø9 C[♯]dim9

D[♭]Maj9 D[♭]9 D[♭]min9 D[♭]ø9 C[♯]dim9

A[♭]Maj9 A[♭]9 A[♭]min9 A[♭]ø9 G[♯]dim9

A[♭]Maj9 A[♭]9 A[♭]min9 A[♭]ø9 G[♯]dim9

E[♭]Maj9 E[♭]9 E[♭]min9 E[♭]ø9 D[♯]dim9

E[♭]Maj9 E[♭]9 E[♭]min9 E[♭]ø9 D[♯]dim9

B $\flat$ Maj9	B $\flat$ 9	B $\flat$ min9	B $\flat$ ø9	B $\flat$ dim9
B $\flat$ Maj9	B $\flat$ 9	B $\flat$ min9	B $\flat$ ø9	B $\flat$ dim9
F Maj9	F9	F min9	F ø9	F dim9
F Maj9	F9	F min9	F ø9	F dim9

Other types of 9th chords can be achieved by eliminating their root, as in these "A" voicings below:

C $\bar{9}$	Cmin $\bar{9}$	CminMaj9	CMaj9+5	CdimMaj9
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Other types of alterations can be accommodated by replacing a chord tone with it's alteration, and/or by eliminating the fifth chord factor and replacing it with a higher extension as in the "A" and "B" voicings below.

C7($\flat$ 9)	C7(+9 $\flat$ 13)	C13	C7($\sharp$ 11)	C9sus4
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The ii9 V9-I9 chord progression is a great exercise, especially when alternating "A" and "B" voicings. All keys are provided below

Dm9	G9	CMaj9	Dm9	G9	CMaj9
A	B	A	B	A	B

Am9 D9 GMaj9 Am9 D9 GMaj9

Em9 A9 DMaj9 Em9 A9 DMaj9

Bm9 E9 AMaj9 Bm9 E9 AMaj9

F#m9 B9 EMaj9 F#m9 B9 EMaj9

C#m9 F#9 BMaj9 C#m9 F#9 BMaj9

G#m9 C#9 F#Maj9 G#m9 C#9 F#Maj9

Ebm9 Ab9 DbMaj9 Ebm9 Ab9 DbMaj9

Bbm9 Eb9 AbMaj9 Bbm9 Eb9 AbMaj9

Fm9 Bb9 EbMaj9 Fm9 Bb9 EbMaj9

Cm9 F9 BbMaj9 Cm9 F9 BbMaj9

Gm9 C9 FMaj9 Gm9 C9 FMaj9

Gm9 C9 FMaj9 Gm9 C9 FMaj9