Basic Harmony

Jazz (and popular music) harmony is based on the **diatonic major scale**.

**Fig 1.** Scale of C

Classical music uses the **Triad** as its basic harmonic unit.
This contains 3 different chord "qualities": major, minor and diminished.

**Fig 2.** Diatonic triads

Jazz uses four note chords- **Sevenths**, as its basic harmonic unit.
This contains 4 different chord "qualities": major 7th, dominant 7th, minor 7th, and half- diminished.

**Fig 3.** Diatonic sevenths.

One chord which is used extensively in Jazz falls outside the diatonic scale- the **DIMINISHED 7th**.

Together, these represent the **5 CHORD QUALITIES** that we use in Jazz.

In the key of C:

- C (half diminished)
- Cm7 (diminished)

The intervals used in the five chord qualities are:

In G:

- Maj3rd m7 7
- min3rd Maj3rd min3rd
- Maj3rd min3rd Maj3rd

In F:

- Maj3rd m7 7