

Cluster Max Chord Voicings

Guitar chords with 4 cluster tones + other notes for max dissonance

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One day I was inspired to figure out all the ways to play 4-note clusters on the guitar with a bar chord form. These voicings spread out the cluster notes over different octaves and incorporate more notes that are available depending on the hand position, which is usually other barred notes.

Below are the 6 voicings I found with their **reduced notes** and **12 tone pitch analysis**. By reduced notes, I mean the chord tones starting on C in scale order (I bolded the cluster notes). The 12 tone analysis equates each pitch to a number - C is 0, C# is 1, and so on until Bb is T for ten and B is E for eleven. This makes it easy to see the cluster notes.

How to use these? You could put one of these chords in place of a dominant to get a lot of tension to resolve. Or put it in a standard progression for fun, like Em, C, G, then voicing number 4 on the 3rd fret. You can move these around and play them as open string chords. They'd also be great for metal or dissonant music voicings.

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I'm putting the A string in parentheses since it's hard for me to play, but you might be able to!

T	9
A	11
B	8
B	8

Reduced notes **C Db Eb F A# B**
12 T pitches 0 1 3 5 T E

2

T	7
A	6
B	8
B	(8)

Reduced notes **C Db Eb F A# B**
12 T pitches 0 1 3 5 T E

3

T	9
A	7
B	7
B	(7)

Reduced notes **C Db D E Gb B**
12 T pitches 0 1 2 4 6 E

4

12	9
8	6
10	7
8	6
9	6
8	8

C E F Gb G Bb
0 4 5 6 7 T

5

9	6
6	7
6	6
6	6
8	8

C Db D Eb F Ab
0 1 2 3 5 8

6

10	6
6	6
6	9
6	6
8	8

C Db D Eb F B
0 1 2 3 5 E