

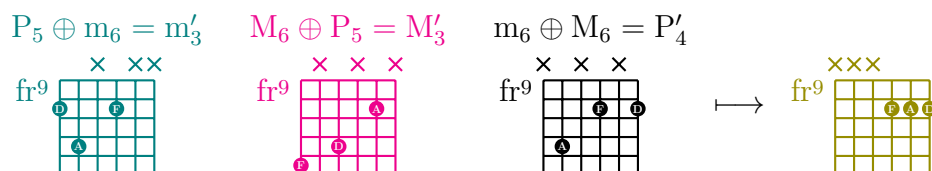
# Pitch Equivalent Fingerings of the D Minor Open Triads

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## Remarks

The following is a  $5 \times 4$  table of some commonly used voicings of the D minor open triads<sup>1</sup> on a 21 fret guitar. Let  $X(i, j)$  be the chord in row  $i$  and column  $j$ , so that, for example, the top left and bottom right chords of the table will be denoted  $X(1, 1)$  and  $X(5, 4)$  respectively. Notice that:

1. Chords on a given row fall in roughly the same range of frets.
2. Each row contains a root, first inversion and second inversion triad of the open D minor. The fourth chord is an upward pitch translation by one octave of the first chord. Thus, for example,  $X(3, 4)$  is one octave higher than  $X(3, 1)$  and of the same inversion.
3. **Chord pitch** is constant on fingerings of the same color (located on the diagonals of positive slope). Since there are 8 diagonals in the table, there are exactly 8 chord pitches. It is natural to refer to fingerings of the same color as being *pitch equivalent*, or belonging to the same *pitch class*. Clearly, all fingerings in a given pitch class will have the same inversion.
4. The highest notes in each of the first three chords of a given row, together, form an inversion of one of the three D minor closed triads located on the first three strings. For example, here are the first three open chords in row two, followed by the corresponding D minor closed inversion on the first three strings:



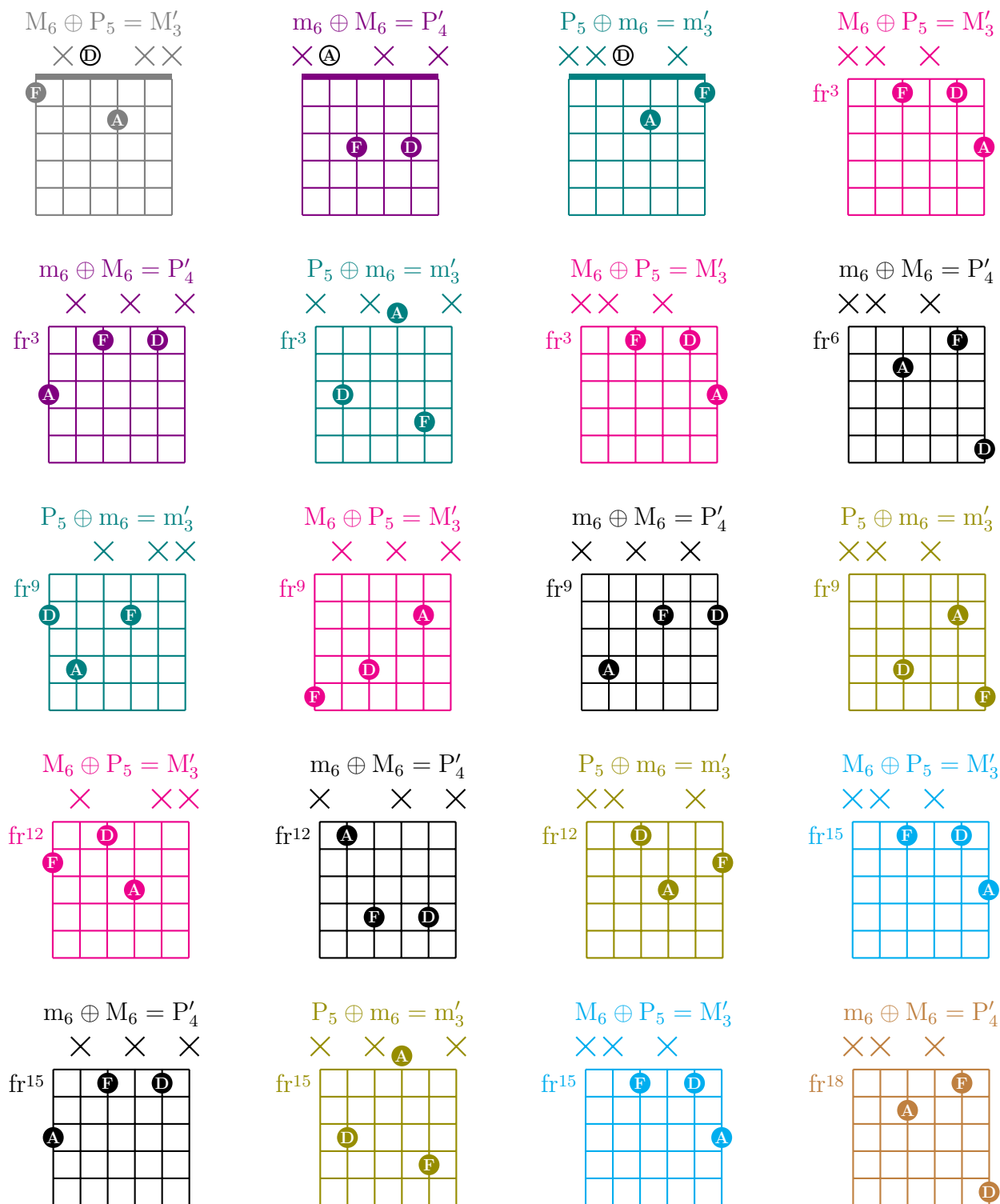
Different rows of the table generate different D minor closed triads in this manner. Conversely, each D minor closed triad on the first three strings generates a unique triple of D minor open triads whose highest notes determine the closed triple. Thus there is a one-to-one correspondence between D minor closed triads on the first three strings and triples of D minor open triads. Knowledge of this correspondence facilitates memorization of the open triads.

5. Since there are only three odd permutations of three notes, the chords in row  $i + 3$  will be an octave higher than in row  $i$  and of the same inversion.
6. The fingerings of minor triads in other keys can now be obtained by a pitch translation of the entire table.

<sup>1</sup>Please refer to the article [Guitar Chord Sequences Totally Ordered by Pitch](#) for terminology.

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## Some Suggestions for Practice

The chords can be practiced

1. One row at a time (so as to remain within a given fret range). Before and after each row, the closed chord determined by the highest notes of the three open chords can also be played.
2. One column at a time.
3. All chords of a given color.
4. In order of pitch increasing and pitch decreasing. This can be done by playing along all paths of length 7 connecting  $X(5, 4)$  to  $X(1, 1)$ . Notice that these paths contain every color exactly once.
5. Interleaved with musically related chords.