

Autumn in New York – some chords for accordion left hand

First thing – note that in this chart a minus sign in a chord notation indicates a minor chord – the first chord, for instance: **G-7** is a G minor 7th chord.

You *could* play this tune using single chord buttons (as long as you are careful about major vs minor chords!) but it will sound a lot richer with some relatively simply chord combining.

- There are a lot of minor 7th chords indicated, starting with that first **G-7** chord. These are easily done by finding the root note (in this case **G**) on the counter-bass row. G is the counter-bass note on the **E_b** row. Add to that the **Major** chord on the adjacent row: B_b (major). That combination gives you the notes: **G+B_b+D+F** which make a G minor 7th chord.

There are lots of similar chords in this piece – the second chord is an **A-7** chord; it combines the counter-bass **A** note (on the **F** row) with the **C major** chord – on the adjacent row. Easy fingering! (And so on for all the Minor 7th chords)

- There are a couple of minor 6th chords: **B_b-6** in measure 2 and elsewhere. You *could* add a **G** note to a **B_b minor** chord using the **G** note that is the counter-bass on the nearby **E_b** row – this is identical to what you might play for a **G-7_b5** chord. (See below).
- There are several Maj 7th chords: **Fmaj7** in the 3rd measure for instance. There are several ways to play a Maj 7th chord – just don't play the 'dominant' 7th chord – which is the one written (for instance) **F7** that has a dedicated accordion button. These are *not* interchangeable and will sound wrong.

In most cases, I find the easiest thing to do is to replace the Maj 7th chord with a Maj 9th chord which is an easy chord combination – for **Fmaj9** play the F (major) and C (major) chord buttons at the same time. The combined notes: **F+A+C+E+G** produce an **Fmaj7** chord plus the 9th note (G). Again, easy fingering

- There are several major chords with a 7_b9 – like **D7_b9** at the end of measure 4. You could combine a standard **D7** chord with the **D[#]/E_b** note that's the counter-bass on the B row – but if that's too much of a stretch, just play **D7**.
- There's one minor 7th flat 5 chord – **A-7_b5** in measure 7. That's a straightforward variation on the **A-7** chord that we've already seen – again, start with the counter-bass **A** note (on the **F** row) and this time combine it with the **C minor** chord – on the adjacent row. This gives you **A+C+E_b+G** notes for **A-7_b5**. Minor 7th flat 5 chords have a very jazzy sound, and are also known as half-diminished chords, sometimes written with a circle with a vertical line through it.
- There are a couple of minor 6th chords: **B_b-6** in measures 23 and 30. You *could* add a **G** note to a **B_b minor** chord using the **G** note that is the counter-bass on the nearby **E_b** row – notice that this

is identical to what you might play for a **G-7b5** chord.

- There's a **C+7** (aka **C7#5**) chord at the end of measure 16. **+7** or **#5** chords are **augmented** chords. Instead of the C+E+G+Bb notes of a standard C7 chord, you're replacing the 5th note (G) with a G#/Ab: **C+E+G#+Bb**. Since the dominant 7th button on *most* accordions leaves out the 5th note (for a C7 chord, the G) you *could* add a **G#** using the counter-bass on the **E** row, or the **Ab** root note – but this might be a stretch that you'd rather avoid. Instead, try combining the **C7** and **E7** chord buttons: **C+E+G#+Bb+D** notes producing a **C9#5** chord. Give it a try!

*Note that on many 60 or 80 bass accordions, this (and some other) chord combining won't sound right – while the dominant 7th chord buttons on 48, 72, 96, and 120 bass accordions are (usually) voiced with the 1st, 3rd, and 7th notes of the chord – leaving out the 5th, on many (though not all!) 60 and 80 bass accordions, the dominant 7th chord buttons are voiced with the 3rd, 5th, and 7th notes of the chord. This is not just random accordion weirdness (though there's a lot of that!) – it's done so that these buttons work as the diminished chord for the next row over, which is useful since 60 and 80 bass accordions don't have dedicated diminished chord buttons. As an example, on the 60 and 80 bass accordions where this is the case, the notes played by the **C7** button: **E+G+Bb** can be used as a **G-dim** chord, one row over. But it means that the dominant 7th chord button can't be used for any chord combining that's counting on there not being a 5th note voiced in the chord – like our **C7#5** example.*

- In measure 22 and 23 there are **Eb-6** and **Bb-6** chords – these are basically inversions of the **Bmaj7** and **F#maj7** chords so you could play them as maj9 chords as described above.