

# Someone Else's Blues

Jonathan Feist

Cmi7 Fmi7 Cmi7

Fmi7(9) Cmi7

G7 Fmi7 Cmi7 1. Gmi7 2. Cmi7

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syllable of a word is held over multiple notes. **Phrase marks** may clarify that a series of notes is associated with a single word. Several verses might appear under a melodic line, but often just the first verse is written below the melody. Subsequent verses may appear as blocks of text at the end of the score. My tune "Someone Else's Blues" (shown above) is an example of a lead sheet with lyrics.

### Beyond Basic Lead Sheets

There are many style variations in lead sheets, in terms of what information is included. You might see lead sheets with guitar chord diagrams, written chord voicings under the melody, transpositions to different keys, arrangement directions, and more. I detail the many shortcuts

and special conventions in my book *Berklee Contemporary Music Notation*.

While a relatively codified form of lead sheet writing came out of the jazz era, the *Real Book* (circa 1972) has become the reference point for standard practice. Other abbreviated forms of notation have always existed in music from the basso continuo of the Baroque era to the Nashville numbering system and beyond. The conventions of lead-sheet writing are far from universal and variations abound. Like most things in music and the universe generally, deviation is the norm.

From a practical perspective, it is helpful to learn the many conventions in use and then focus on creating clear, consistent charts that help to facilitate communication. Which is, of course, the whole point.

### Chord Symbol Chart

Quality	Abbreviations	Examples	Notes for C Root
Major	(none, triad only) Ma, Maj, M, Δ	C CMa7	C E G C E G B
Minor	mi, min, m, -	Cmi C-	C E $\flat$ G
Suspended 2	sus2	Csus2	C D G
Suspended 4	sus4, sus	Csus4	C F G
Diminished	dim, $^{\circ}$	Cdim	C E $\flat$ G $\flat$
Augmented	aug, +	Caug	C E G $\sharp$
Five (Power Chord)	5	C5	C G
Sixth	6	C6 C-6	C E G A C E $\flat$ G A
Seventh	7	CMaj7 C7 C7 $\flat$ 5 Caug7 C-7 Cmin(Maj7) C $^{\circ}$ 7 Cdim(Maj7) C7sus4	C E G B C E G B $\flat$ C E G $\flat$ B C E G $\sharp$ B C E $\flat$ G B $\flat$ C E $\flat$ G B C E $\flat$ G $\flat$ B $\flat$ C E $\flat$ G $\flat$ B C F G B $\flat$
Half Diminished	mi7 $\flat$ 5, -7 $\flat$ 5, $\flat$	Cmi7 $\flat$ 5	C E $\flat$ G $\flat$ B $\flat$
Tensions	$\flat$ 9, 9, $\sharp$ 9, 11, $\sharp$ 11, 13, $\flat$ 13		C E G B $\flat$ D F $\sharp$ A
Altered	alt, (alt)	C7(alt)	Use tension substitutions per personal preference: D $\flat$ D $\sharp$ G $\flat$ B $\flat$ A $\flat$ , etc.
Chord with Designated Bass Note	/	C/D	D C E G
Chord with Upper-Structure Triad	—	B $\flat$ C7	C E G B $\flat$ D F
Polychord	/	C7/D7	D F $\sharp$ A C E G B $\flat$
No Chord	N/C	N/C	Chord without harmonic context or a tacet chord

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