

# My personal approach of using the Iranian santour

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## The harmonies on the santour - 1: Notation

In a series of texts, I present the construction of harmonies on the santour. The present text is the first one in the series. *These texts consider that the reader has the theoretical knowledge of harmonies: what is a chord, what distinguishes a major chord from a minor chord etc.*

In the following, I will illustrate the different ways of noting down the santour chords. These notation systems will be used in the following texts dedicated to the construction and execution of the chords sur le santour.

The figure 1 shows an Em (E minor) chord and an E (E major) chord on a staff in the G clef.



Figure 1

The figure 2 shows an Em chord with a notation in a grid format. This representation illustrates the construction of the chord in the overall ecosystem of the double-bridges santour.

*Note: the configuration of the double-bridges santour presented here and in the texts that follow, corresponds to my own personal needs and therefore does not represent a unique and obligatory character (see my texts on the subject of the double-bridges santour). The subjects discussed on the harmonies, however, remain valid for non-doubled bridges santours.*

			F		F	F #			F #	F #	F	F	B b	C
		E	E b	D #	E b	E b ^	E		E	E b ^	E b		A b	
D #	D	D b ^	D b	D b	D b ^	D	D #	D #	D	D b ^	D b		G	
		C #	C	C	C #	C #				C #	C		F	
		B	B b	B b	B b ^	B	B			B	B b		E b	E
A #	A	A b ^	A b	A b	A b ^	A	A #	A #	A #	A b ^	A b		D	
		G #	G	G	G #				G #	G	G		C	C #
		F #	F	F	F #	G #				F #	F		G #	B
E	E b ^	E b	D	D	E b	E b ^	E		E	D	C		B b	

Figure 2

The figure 3 shows an E chord in the same grid format.

			F		F	F #				F #	F #	F	F		B b	C
		E	E b	D #	E b	E b <sup>^</sup>	E				E	E b <sup>^</sup>	E b		A b	
D #	D	D b <sup>^</sup>	D b	D b	D b <sup>^</sup>	D	D #			D #	D	D b <sup>^</sup>	D b		G	
	C #	C		C	C #	C #						C #	C		F	
	B	B b		B b	B b <sup>^</sup>	B	B					B	B b		E b	E
A #	A	A b <sup>^</sup>	A b	A b	A b <sup>^</sup>	A	A #			A #	A	A b <sup>^</sup>	A b		D	
	G #	G		G	G #						G #	G	G		C	C #
	F #	F		F	F #	G #						F #	F		G #	B
E	E b <sup>^</sup>	E b	D	D	E b	E b <sup>^</sup>	E				E	D	C		B b	

Figure 3

The figure 4 shows a more synthetic grid in 5 columns. The first column is a reminder of the names of the santour strings, regardless of the accidental of the notes in different configurations. The other 4 columns represent, from left to right: the left of the white bridges, the right of the white bridges, the left of the yellow bridges and the right of the yellow bridges. Thus, the grid in figure 4 may correspond to the chord of Em or E, depending on the configuration of the bridges or the tuning used on the santour.

The names of the santour strings →

F				
E				
D				
C				
B			●	
A				
G			●	
F				
E			●	

Figure 4

On the grid of figure 5, by replacing the circles used in figure 4 with the name of the notes, the grid incorporates the quality of the chord.

F				
E				
D				
C				
B		B		
A				
G		G#		
F				
E		E		

Figure 5

The figure 6 shows 2 variants of the handwritten notation of the chords, here an Em chord.

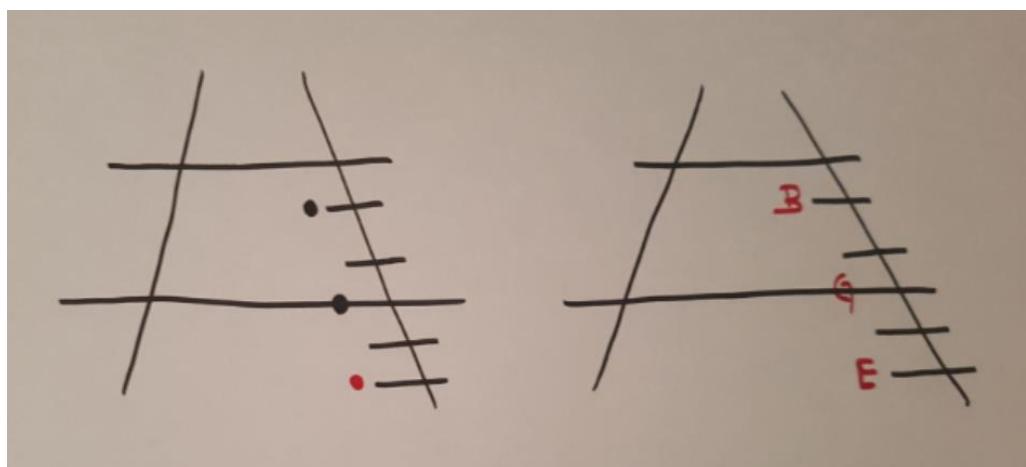


Figure 6