Nashville Numbering System Explained - Simplified pg.1

Here is a simplified explanation I hope you will use and not just store it away someplace.

The hardest part is having a chart to easily access what sharps or flats (the key signature) each scale has in it. I have one below but let's take an example first so you know how to use the chart.

The simplest scale is C Major. It has no sharps and flats. It's "relative minor" is A minor which also has no sharps or flats. For the numbering system we need to assign a number for each note in the scale. Luckily there are only 7 notes in a Major scale so we put the 1 on top again to make a complete scale. Traditionally Roman numerals are used. This helps remind us what kind of chord is being built on each scale step. Roman numerals in Upper case are major chords while chords using lower case like the "i" help designate if the chord is minor (ii , iii, Vi) or diminished (Vii $_o$). Hard to get the "o" at the top of the number.

C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
I	ii	iii	IV	V	Vi	Vii$_o$	I

Now let's build some chords! The basic chord is built using the first, third , and fifth. We will get to the seventh in a minute. Let's use the C scale again. Traditional chords are written out and played using the name of the chord on the bottom. I have created chords using the 1st, 3rd, and 5th scale steps

G	A	B	C	D	E	F#	G
E	F	G	A	B	C	D#	E
C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
I			IV	V			

If you use the chart below as a quick reference, The C, F and G chords are all Major because the fit into a Major scale. Try this with any Major scale below.

KEY&Scale Name	I	ii	iii	VI	V	Vi	Viii
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C	C	D	E	F	G	A	B
D	D	E	F#	G	A	B	C#
Eb	Eb	F	G	Ab	Bb	C	Db
E	E	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D#
F	F	G	A	Bb	C	D	E
G	G	A	B	C	D	E	F#
A	A	B	C#	D	E	F#	G#
Bb	Bb	C	D	Eb	F	G	A
B	B	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A#