The ULTIMATE PIANO / KEYBOARD Self Tuition Book for Absolute Beginners

Adults, Teenagers & Seniors!

The Book that Carries on Giving!

Martin Woodward

FREE

PREVIEW

Obviously numerous pages have been omitted

But the list of contents should give you a good idea

211 PAGES IN TOTAL

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Enquiries: http://learn-keyboard.co.uk

Acknowledgements

To all the fantastic musicians who I've had the privilege of working with back in the 1960s / 70s including: Pip Williams (guitarist / record producer); Tex Marsh (drums); Roger Flavell (bassist / singer / songwriter); Kevan Fogarty (guitarist); Tommy Hunt (singer); Ron Thomas (bassist); Martin Johnstone (bassist / vocals); Geno Washington (singer); UK No. 1 singer / songwriter Emile Ford; U.K. top 10 artists: *'The Fantastics'* - John Cheatdom, Jerome Ramos, Donald Haywoode and Richard Pitts.

To the other members of *'Aquila'* - Ralph Denyer (singer / songwriter); Phil Childs (bassist); Jim Smith (drums); George Lee (saxophonist).

To my early mentors: Alan Simonds (guitarist / vocalist); big bruv Steve (guitarist) and Mr. Henley (my inspirational music teacher at Warlingham School 1960 - 65).

And to Myriad Software: http://www.myriad-online.com for the Harmony Assistant music notation software which was used to produce this book. - Thanks!

Aquila album cover design by Keith Besford - *Thanks Keith, I still Love it!*

A Couple of my many memorable 'Aquila' gigs in 1970

Note that the links may not work if you are viewing this in a Google or Amazon preview. Please go to https://learn-keyboard.co.uk/ultimate_piano.html for a more complete free *working* pdf preview.

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Introduction

As the title suggests, this book has been written for the absolute beginner and assumes no prior musical knowledge whatsoever - *just the desire to do it!*

This book includes the very best from my following books plus much more:

- Learn Piano / Keyboard for Absolute Beginners
- Learn Piano / Keyboard by Ear
- Learn Electronic Keyboard / Piano in a Week!
- Learn Piano / Keyboard for Auto-accompaniment

The contents of this book which is complete in itself are suitable for piano and / or electronic keyboard.

Items covered include:

- Buying your first keyboard or piano
- Reading music from scratch
- Easy, effective finger exercises which require no reading ability at all with audio demonstration links
- Important musical symbols
- Key signatures and transposition
- Pre-scale exercises
- Major, minor, pentatonic and blues scales in keyboard *and* notation view with audio links
- Chord construction
- Chord fingering
- Chord charts in keyboard view
- Arpeggios in keyboard *and* notation view with audio links
- Arpeggio exercises with audio links
- Your first tunes, plus links to more
- Playing from a *Fake Book* with and without auto-accompaniment
- Plus much more!

After completing this book, you should have a good basic understanding of music theory as well as a good basic playing technique, paving the way for more advanced study in your chosen field - *jazz, blues, pop, classical etc.*

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In addition, also included are the links for the following pdf books at **NO EXTRA COST**. These alone would cost more than even the hardback version of this book!

These links can be found at the end of the book. If you have difficulty with these, please don't leave feedback saying that they are not available or require additional payment - just contact me via my website at https://learn-keyboard.co.uk and I'll sort it for you.

The two Chord books give more information about chords and just about every chord that you will ever need including 9ths, 13ths etc., as well as diatonic chords in most keys.

The Scale and Arpeggio book includes every major, minor (harmonic, melodic and natural) scale and arpeggio in every key as well as the pentatonic and blues scales and scale modes in the most used keys. The Rhythmic Scales book shows what can be achieved by making slight alterations to the scales.

The Hanon book provides more of the great finger exercises already included in this book in an easy-to-read format. The Diatonic Chords / Arpeggios book gives some truly superb exercises to enhance your technique and theoretical understanding.

One of the tune books which was produced specifically to accompany this book is for normal easy two hand playing and the other has top line and chords only - for use with auto-accompaniment or to make up your own accompaniment using the chords shown or arpeggios. There are also links to other free sheet music sites.

So, all in all, the amount of information is truly enormous, and will take you from absolute beginner to high intermediate as long as you put in the practice. It's also *'structured'*. I will guide you through the order of practice.

Even without the inclusion of these additional resources, I believe this book is the most complete beginners' book available and incredible value for money.

Note that all the additional items are guaranteed as free downloads (with this book) *only* while I'm still alive. If my website at https://learn-keyboard.co.uk is still working, you can be sure I'm still here and the downloads will be available. At the time of writing this (2023) I am / was 74 and plan on living forever and so far, I have to say that it's not going too badly! But nevertheless, I realise that every day is a bonus!

Get the Best from this Book

This book has been written to be read as a paperback / hardback and / or a digital eBook. If you have the paperback, hardback or coil bound edition - *great,* - without doubt these are the best versions for flipping backwards and forwards to where you want to be. However, if you wish to hear the audio examples included, you may find it convenient to also have the digital version in pdf format which can be read on any PC, laptop or tablet. You may also find it useful to print out certain pages, perhaps to make notes on, or maybe because of inconvenient page turns etc. This you can do easily with the digital version.

If you have purchased the paperback, hardback, coil bound or kindle edition, the digital pdf version is *freely* available to you *for your own use only*. The download link can be found on page 210 along with the links for the other included items. Be sure to copy the links exactly as written including the hyphens and the underscore between the words. If you have any trouble with this, I will be happy to help.

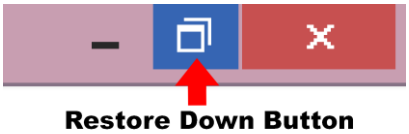
The audio links throughout the book can be accessed two ways:

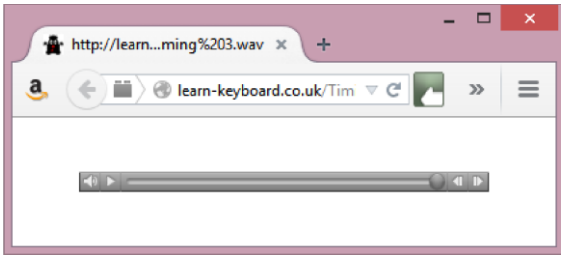
- by using the free external links at: https://learn-keyboard.co.uk/audio-links/ultimate_piano.html which gives access to all the links in the order in which they appear in each chapter or
- by using the links throughout the book as they appear in the digital pdf version - *internet connection required*

Using the *in-Book* Links

Quite probably you may only need to listen to some of the audio links, but all are included for your convenience.

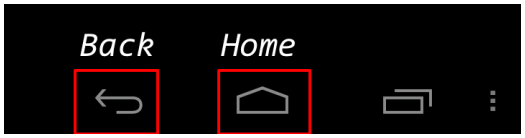
To access the links easily, if you are viewing this on a laptop or PC first of all go to your browser and click the restore down button in order to reduce the view size to something like the next image to the right (by dragging the bottom and sides).





Then click on the link which should then appear in front of the document enabling you to move it out of the way of anything that you may wish to see at the same time.

If you are viewing this on an Android tablet as soon as you click on the link you will lose the book view until you push the *'Back'* button (shown next).



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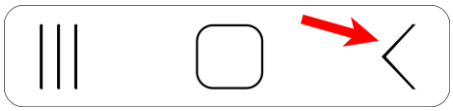
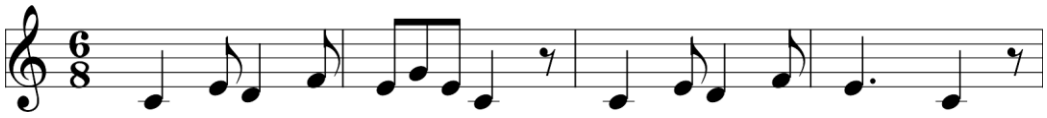


If you want to you can have a trial run now by clicking on the following graphic which actually is *'Pop Goes the Weasel'!* Note that this is simply an example to hear the links and not an attempt to teach you *'Pop Goes the Weasel'* as has been suggested on a previous review.



Note also that each link will open a new page in your browser, so you will eventually need to cancel them - *or just close the browser!*

In addition to the external links, there are also numerous internal links to help you navigate to certain reference points in the book and return, including the arrows either side of the chapter headings. Clicking the green right-hand arrow will take you instantly to the next chapter and the red left-hand arrow to the beginning of the last chapter.

If you want to navigate to another chapter quickly, simply click on the '«' icon which is in the footer of every page (including this one). This will take you instantly to the *'Contents'* page where you can then click and go to any section you wish - *so you can basically whizz through the document at lightning speed!*

Also, throughout the book I have included a few of my favourite keyboards. These are not *'adverts' per se,* they are basically just to fill space. Links for *all* the major manufacturers as well as my *'keyboard review'* section can be found on my website so that you can get all the up-to-date relevant information to make up your own mind as to what suits your needs either now or in the future!

⬅ Buying Your First Piano / Keyboard ➡

If you haven't already bought a keyboard or if you are perhaps thinking of changing, you may find the following information useful.

There are many different types of keyboards - all have black and white keys and to the uninitiated all look the same. But they can be vastly different, and which one will be right for you will be determined by:

- Your present needs
- Your ultimate needs, and of course
- Your budget

Prices can vary from as little as £50 to many thousands of pounds. The chance of buying one that is right for your initial and ultimate needs is about nil, *but you can at least try!*

Keyboards basically fall into the following categories:

a) Digital Pianos

b) Acoustic Pianos

c) Arranger Keyboards

d) Harpsichords

e) Organs

f) Workstations

g) Synthesizers

h) Controller Keyboards

And of course, all the above could be purchased either new or second-hand.

But here we are only going to discuss the first three which are the ones most suitable for beginners, but details of all the others and up to date information can be seen on my website at: https://learn-keyboard.co.uk/keyboard_reviews.html .

Digital Pianos - Home Use

Home use digital pianos in general tend to be less feature filled than the stage alternatives. Most up-to-date models will have 88 weighted hammer action keys - varying in quality. Many are also incorporated in a wooden frame with pedals included or at least have the option of a wooden stand making them fitting for a home

environment. Most will also have built-in speakers making the need for external amplification unnecessary.

Some will simply be pianos with few other features (although most do have a variety of tones). Others will have additional features such as auto-accompaniment and recording functions.

For a comparatively low-cost starter piano the Casio PX S1100 and PX S3100 are hard to beat. Both have quality piano sounds, built-in speakers, quality hammer action keybeds and many other useful functions.

Casio PX S1100 - 88 Keys

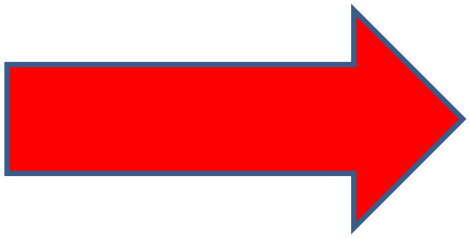
If you want the convenience of all the gadgetry on an electronic digital piano and also a nice bit of furniture, then there are many *low-tech* but generally expensive instruments available such as the Yamaha Clavinovas.

Yamaha Clavinova CVP-909GP - 88 Keys

But there are many, many more to choose from in all price ranges.

Digital Pianos - Stage / Studio

In contrast, digital pianos for stage or studio use tend to be more feature filled in relation to sounds, effects and other functions. These will have either 73 / 76 or 88 hammer action keys. Built-in speakers and auto-accompaniment are less likely to be found on these and an external stand and pedals would be required. Therefore, in all cases for stage use external amplification suitable for the venue would be required. See my website for details of external amplification.



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The Notes of the Keyboard

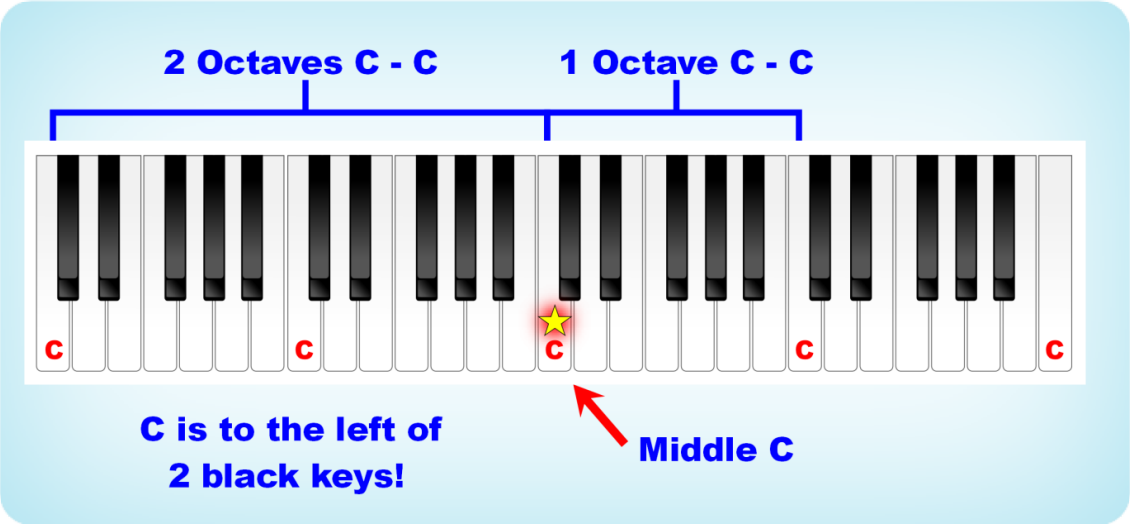
Firstly, we'll look at the notes of the keyboard and how to identify them.

As already shown, some keyboards / pianos have more keys than others, but this makes no difference in relation to understanding how to play them, as they all have the same basic arrangement of black and white keys.

If you look closely, you will see that the black keys are in groups of two then three.

This enables us to find every single note easily. And the first one that you must learn is **'C'** which can be found just to the left of two black keys.

The diagram below shows a four-octave span revealing five **C's** each of which are eight notes apart - hence octave - as in octagon and octopus - *eight!*



Probably the most important note on the keyboard is **middle C** which is the **'C'** that is more or less in the middle of the keyboard and because it is so important, we are going to put a star on ours as shown.

Now all the notes to the left of **middle C** get gradually lower in pitch and all the notes to the right gradually get higher. And usually, you will use your right hand for the higher notes and your left hand for the lower notes.

*So which hand plays **middle C**?*

That's a good question and the answer is that it could be either, but I will explain more shortly.

Now I'll show you what all the other notes are called, but I don't want you to get too confused about all this at the moment. We will be taking it all slowly step by step.

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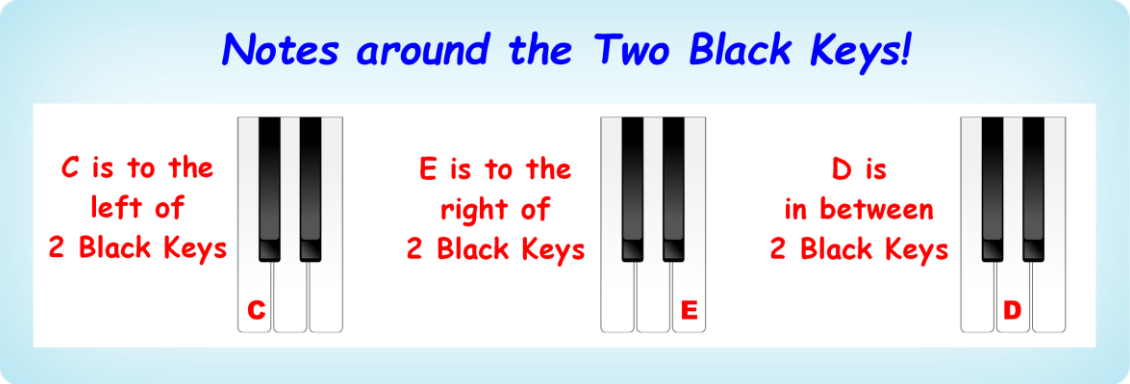
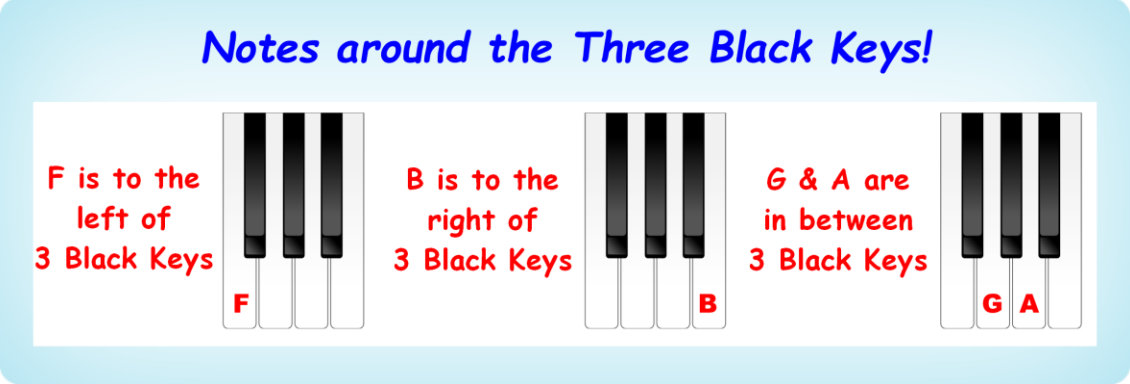
This is mind boggling, how am I going to remember this lot?

Easy, if you split them up into two main groups according to the number of black notes as shown below:





And if you can't remember which comes first **G** or **A,** you're probably going Gaga - get it? - GA - GA!!

What about the black ones, what are they called?

Don't worry I've not forgotten them, we'll be dealing with them shortly, but first we'll look at how the keys of the keyboard relate to music notation.

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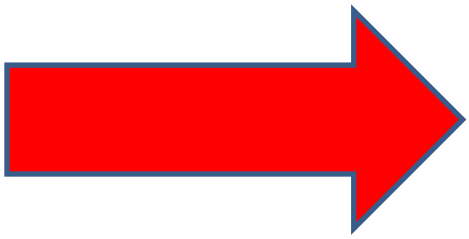

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⬅ Let's Begin ➡

Hopefully you now understand a little of the theory explained so far which obviously is important. But having understood this of course you also need the physical technical ability to hit the right notes with the correct velocity in the right order at the right time. This may take months of intense practice to become reasonably proficient and years to become superb. But make no mistake about it *anyone* can do it - *at any age*. Don't let anyone ever tell you that you are too old or too anything else to do this - I repeat - ***anyone can do it!*** And if you're knocking on a bit like me, it could give you a new lease of life!

In short, the more you put into it - *practice* - the more pleasure you will get out of it. The satisfaction achieved is totally immense. And there are some wonderful pieces of music available that are relatively easy to play. But it's never worth going beyond your capabilities as this will just cause anxiety. Take it one step at a time!

> *"After silence, that which comes nearest to expressing the inexpressible is music!"*
>
> Unknown

Correct Hand and Seating Positioning

Firstly, it's a good idea to make sure that your hands are clean and warm. You can achieve this by soaking them in warm water for a while, but then dry them thoroughly. Alternatively, sit on them to warm them up; but if you happen to be sitting on a cold marble slab, nestle your right hand under your left armpit and your left hand under your right armpit for a while which is a method that I used regularly whilst gigging around Europe during the cold winters of the 60's.

The next thing is to be sure that you adopt a correct seating position so that you can achieve the correct hand position. If your seating is incorrect (too low or too high) then your hand positioning will never be correct. I recommend using a height adjustable piano stool so that you can experiment in order to get comfortable. Or of course you may have an adjustable keyboard stand.

Do also consider the fact that you may need to use the pedals, or at least the sustain pedal. So, both feet should be comfortably flat on the floor to begin with.

And of course, your stool should be positioned so that you are seated more or less in the centre of the keyboard - belly button opposite **middle C**!

The next pictures illustrate the correct and incorrect hand positions.

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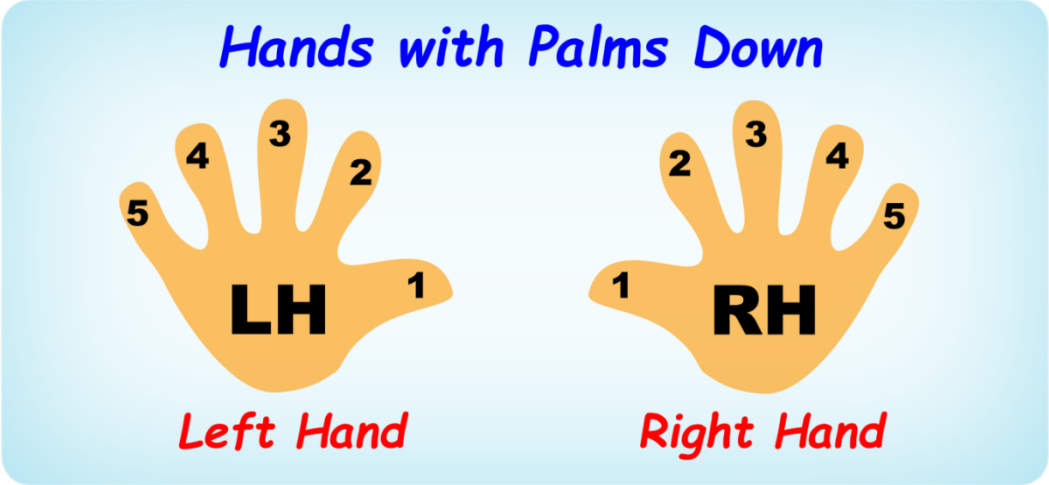
Fingering

As far as the piano is concerned what some people will call their *'first'* finger is their *'second'* finger as in piano / keyboard music the *'first'* finger is always your *'thumb'* (on both hands).



Your First Exercises

The first exercises that I am going to show you are simple but extensive and as they are taken from my *'Learn by Ear'* book they require no music reading skills. But don't be misled into thinking that you can learn these and then forget about them - they are superb ongoing exercises which you should continue with at least until you progress to the scales, arpeggios and Hanon exercises shown later.

They are great for the following reasons:

- They will create strength and flexibility in *all* your fingers
- They will effortlessly teach you the first half of the major and minor scales in every key
- They will (indirectly) teach you every major and minor triad chord in every key
- They're easy and fun!

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To perform these exercises, we'll be using a series of patterns with lots of segments, the first of which is shown below.

Pattern 1 - Right Hand

1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1 - 3 - 5 - 3 - 1

C Major

C Minor

Begin by resting the fingers of your right hand lightly on the five notes shown in the **C Major** diagram (above left) in a relaxed claw like position; then when you are ready begin depressing the keys in the order shown in *Pattern 1* in a piston type motion using the tips of your fingers and the side of your thumb. Make sure that you release each note before playing the next except for the last note which can be sustained a little longer. And try to play each note with equal pressure, which I know is not easy at first.

Hopefully to make this perfectly clear - your first finger (thumb) starts on middle **C** in the first segment and in *pattern 1* each note (from **C** to **G**) is played in order up and down until the last five notes where the **1 - 3 - 5 - 3 - 1** pattern kicks in which is the major (broken) triad in the first segment and the minor (broken) triad in the second (right-hand diagram above).

Most importantly keep to a strict rhythm which can be as slow as you like, ideally use a metronome set to a comfortable speed. Each exercise should be repeated several times and speed can be increased only as you gain experience.

Most people will make the mistake of practicing much too fast resulting in unevenness and difficulty. I recommend that you count **1-2-3-4** repeatedly slowly, ideally in time with a metronome and initially play each note *only* on each count of **'1'** and **'3'**. If you do this absolutely anyone will be capable of doing it as there will be plenty of time between each note for your fingers and brain to compute and prepare for the following note. After you can do this, play each note on each **1-2-3-4** count, then play two notes on each **1-2-3-4** count, then finally four notes on each count. Then gradually increase the speed as you are capable, but not at the expense of becoming uneven.

To explain this further I have made a short audio file demonstrating the above which should prove that anyone can do this if practiced slowly. The link is HERE or go to the website as explained previously.

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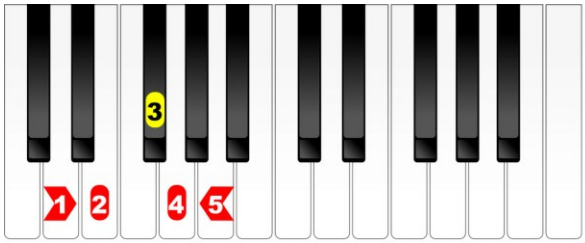
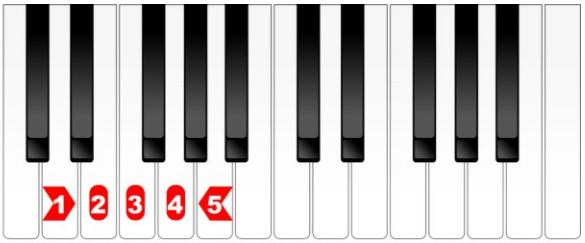
Having completed the first segment, move your fingers up a notch to the next segment as shown next and repeat the same pattern with the new notes, which will show different *'part scales'* and broken triads. Continue through all the segments.



D Major



D Minor

What do you mean by 'part scales'?

The five notes of each segment are the first five notes of the respective major and minor scales. This will become clear as we deal with scales later, but because these have *five* notes don't get them confused with *'pentatonic scales'* which are something completely different and will also be shown later.

Having completed each segment, you'll see at the bottom of each page that there is a *mirror version* for each pattern. In this case, as you should see it's the same pattern the other way around, which starts with your 5th finger (on **G** on the first segment).

Pattern 1 - Right Hand - (mirror)

5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 3 - 1 - 3 - 5

Using the mirror pattern ensures that each finger benefits equally in each pattern.

Before progressing to *pattern 2*, do the same again with your left hand starting an octave below **middle C** and then practice with both hands together. When you feel ready, progress through the remaining four patterns using the same technique.

Ideally these should be practiced in three ways:

- Legato - which is smooth and connected
- Staccato - where each note is detached and
- Swing - in swing feel

Examples of these can be heard by clicking the links below.

Legato **Staccato** **Swing**

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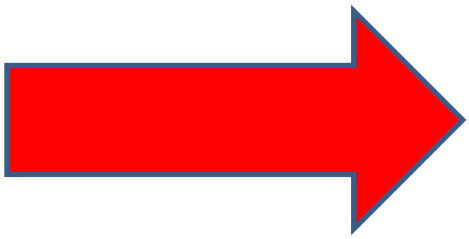

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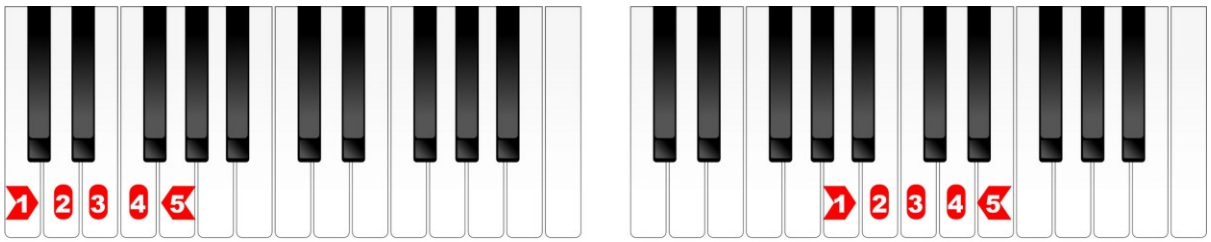
Creating Your Own Patterns

As well as learning the timing that's just been covered, hopefully you've been making progress with the 5 finger exercises.

What I want you to do now is an extension of these previous exercises but using the right hand only.

Previously, I've given you the set patterns, fingering and timing. But now I want you to create some of your own using just the **C major** and **A minor** *'5 note part scales'* as shown below.



C Major *A Minor*

For this, you can use exactly the same fingering as before (shown above) but now you can:

- choose which notes to hit in what order
- choose the time length of each note
- repeat any notes as required
- use only some or all the notes
- start and finish anywhere you choose

Due to the possible timing variations alone, there are only about 500 billion possible combinations even with just with these five notes, so there's a fair bit to go at!

"Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new!"

Albert Einstein

Comment: - I still remember my first gig when we were booed off stage!

To begin with I recommend that you start and finish on the root note (**C** or **A** respectively).

Why?

Because if using these notes as suggested, you will be in the key of **C major** or **A minor** and doing so will simply make it work better. As you gain a bit of experience, you can

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perhaps start on another note, but still end on the root. But having said this - *do what the hell you like!*

The following link buttons will give you a few audio examples - *you will obviously need the digital edition to click the buttons but remember you can download this without further cost!*

Notice that each example has too phrases; the first sort asks a question and the second answers it - or resolves it! This technique is common in all sorts of music.

In all the examples I've added the metronome as example 3 in particular starts off the beat!

Example 1 Example 2 Example 3

Example 4 Example 5

Notice also the difference between doing this in the minor key as against the major key - examples 4 and 5 are in **A minor**. You may also find that you can figure out how to play some simple tunes that you know just with these five notes.

As you progress and learn all the major and minor scales in full as well as the pentatonic and blues scales and arpeggios, this exercise can be repeated using a combination of all of them enabling you to improvise easily as well as compose and play just about every simple tune by ear! - *Wow!*

Yamaha PSR EW425 Arranger keyboard - 76 Keys

This is an excellent choice for beginners as it has auto-accompaniment and 76 keys making it suitable for piano music too!

⬅ Your First Reading Exercises ➡

Now we're going to do some simple exercises using music notation. If you've progressed with the last exercises, you should find these simple. Actually, they are basically the same patterns that you have already learnt, but only in the key of **C major** and of course we are now reading the notation rather than following the patterns.

As your music reading ability is no doubt limited right now, for these first few exercises we're going to use five notes only (in each hand), all of which are consecutive to one another so that you don't get lost. Each finger will always play the same note, but not necessarily in the same order. And we'll only be using time elements that we've already covered: crotchets, minims and semibreves - *and quavers a little later!*

Initially begin by resting your hands lightly on these five notes in a relaxed claw like position; then when you are ready begin depressing the keys in the order shown in a piston type motion using the tips of your fingers and the sides of your thumbs. Make sure that you release each note before playing the next except for the minims and semibreves which should be sustained longer. And try to play each note with equal pressure, which I know is not easy at first.

Most importantly keep to a strict rhythm which can be as slow as you like, ideally use a metronome set to a comfortable speed.

Each exercise should be repeated several times and speed can be increased only when you are ready.

Remember all of the exercises can be heard by clicking on the hyperlinks as they appear *as explained previously* or by referring to the website.

Each of the first five exercises uses the notes and fingering as shown in the next diagram. Note that the thumb of your right hand plays middle **C** and your left hand plays the same notes an octave below. Although both hands are used, they are not used together except for single sustained notes. In each case try and be aware of which notes you are playing. Perhaps sing along as you are doing it - *silently if you wish* - **C D E F G F** etc.

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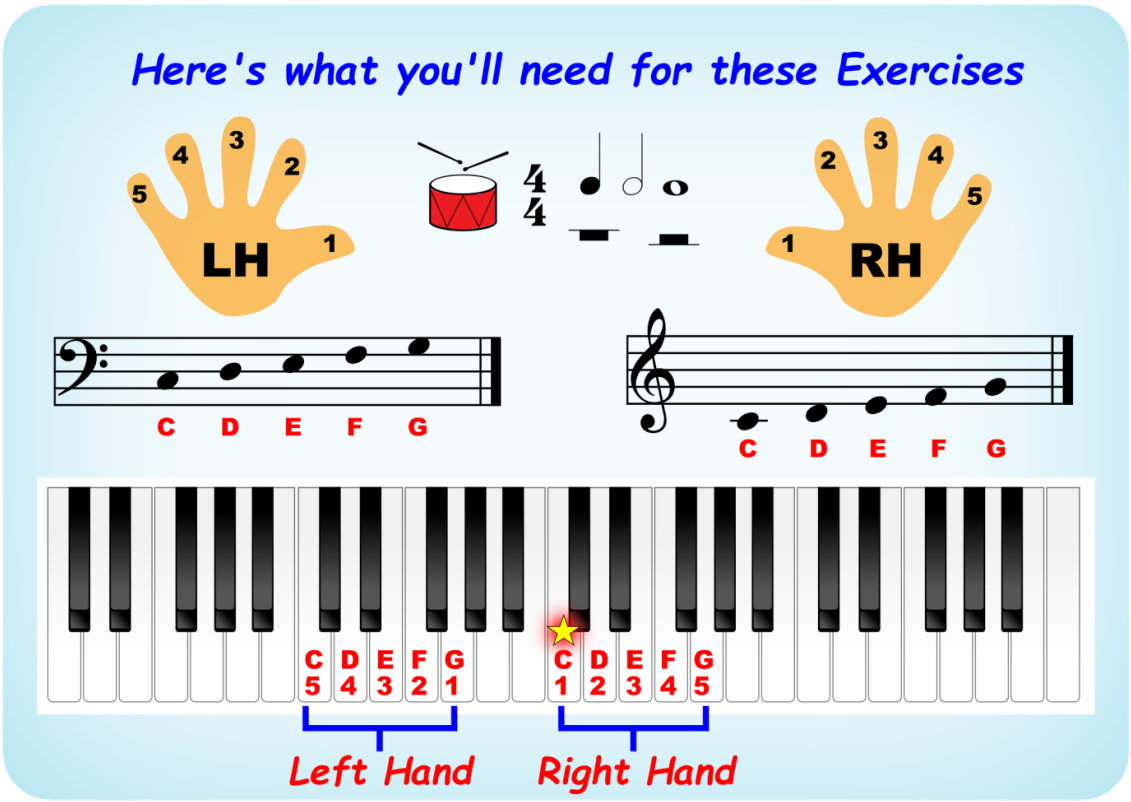
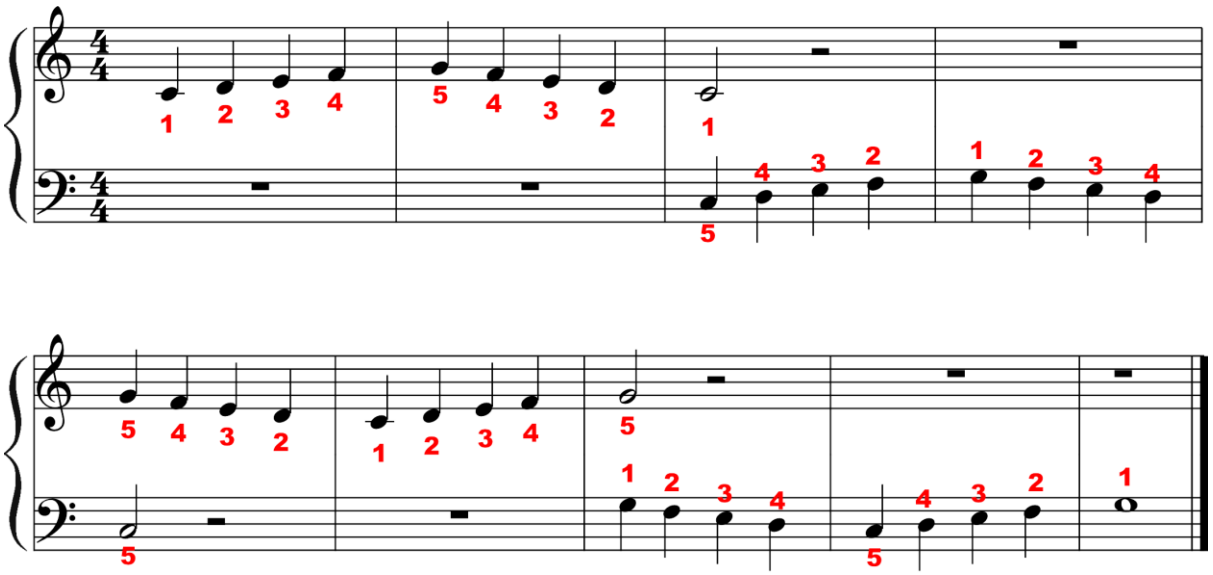


Exercise 1

This one is the simplest as it's just straight up and down, one finger after the other in order. Even though eventually you will find this very easy, I understand that if you're a complete beginner, even this will take some practice. But remember speed is not an issue.



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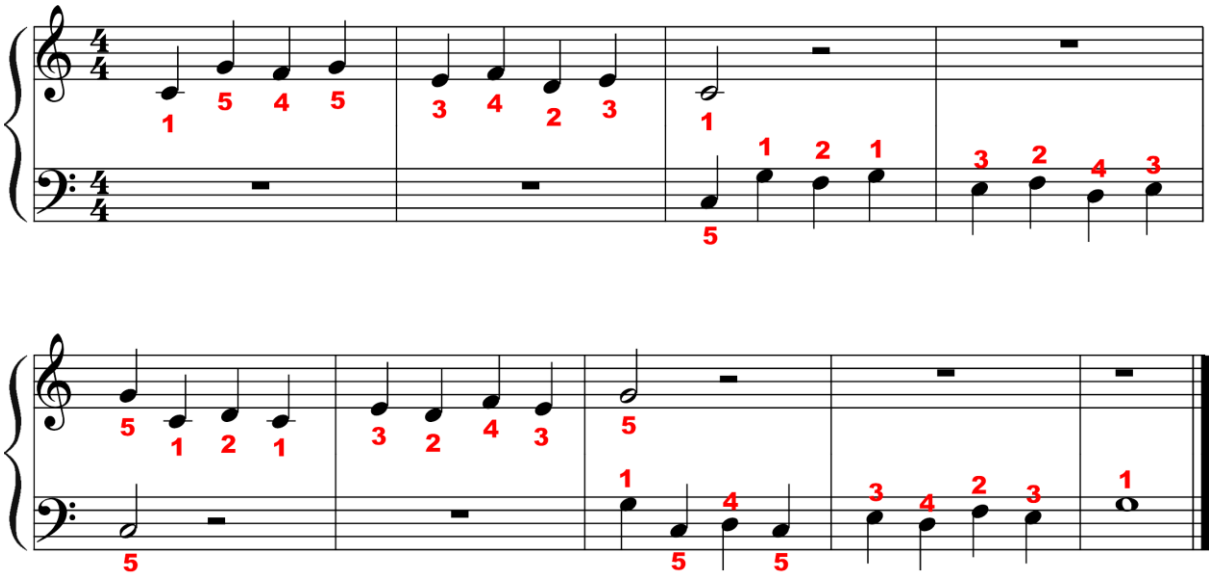
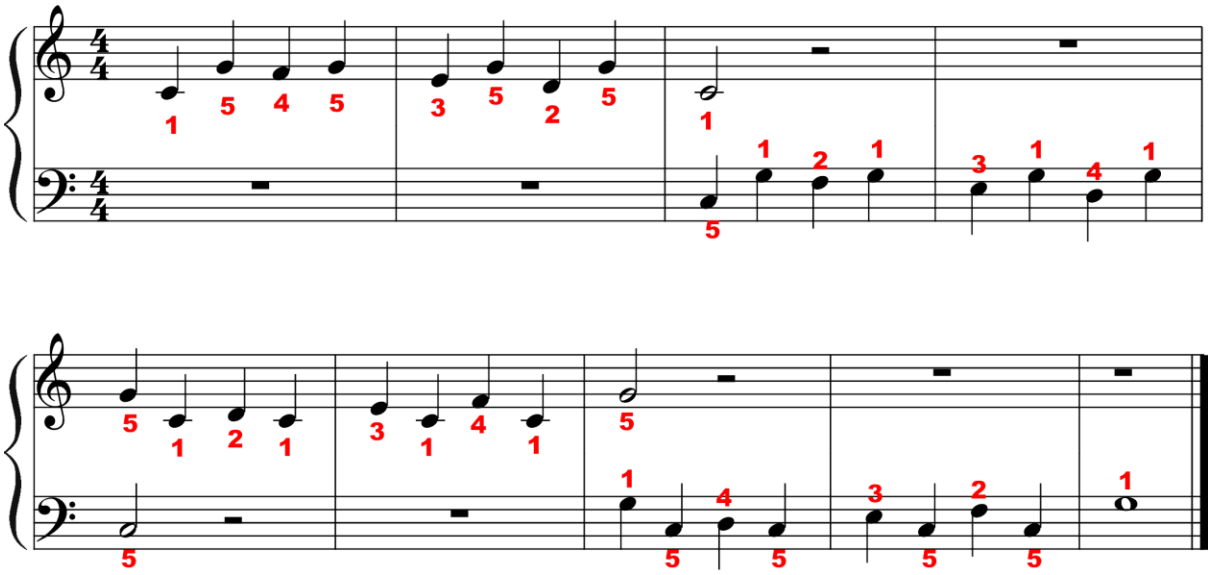
Exercise 2

This exercise uses the same five notes and fingers, but in a different order. If you hold your fingers over the notes, you can't fail to hit the correct ones, but remember, do try and be aware of which notes you are playing.



Exercise 3

This exercise looks very similar to the last one but look carefully to see the difference and notice how it gives more prominence to the first and fifth fingers.



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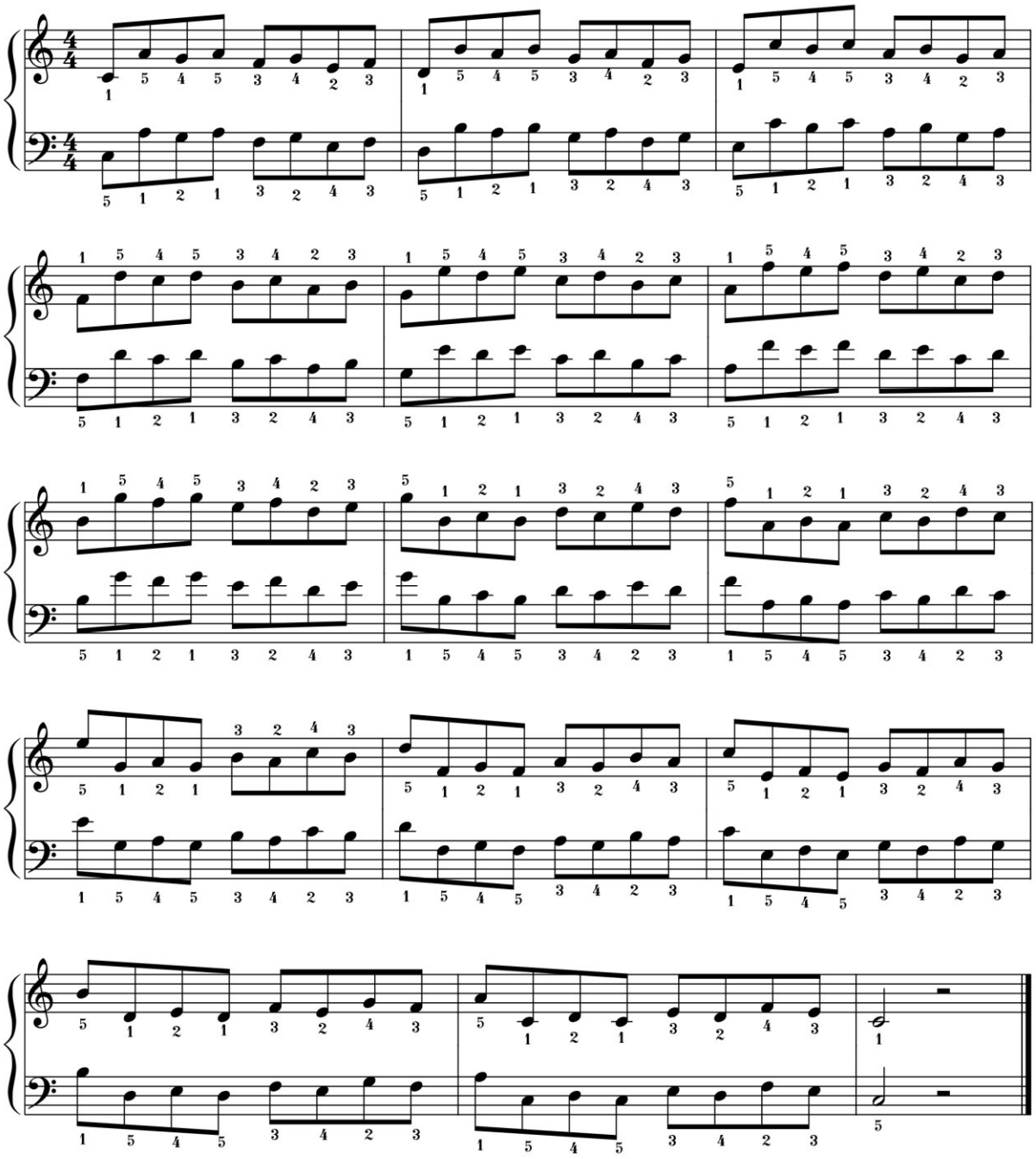
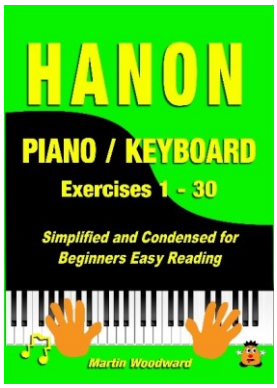
Exercise 10

This exercise uses the same pattern as exercise 2 but with a 6th interval (instead of the 5th) at the beginning of each measure.



Hanon Exercises



The last two exercises were in fact taken from the famous Hanon piano exercises, which are generally accepted as being the very best finger exercises available. A simplified and condensed version of the first 30 of these exercises are included in one of the pdf downloads. You'd be wise to go to the back and grab this link now - *and all the others while you're at it!*

But remember to take it steady. If you feel any strain, stop and rest which will avoid injury.

Yamaha Clavinova CVP 909 - 88 Keys

I guess this certainly must be the ultimate digital piano / arranger.
Unsurprisingly very expensive!

Yamaha PSR SX700 Digital Arranger - 61 Keys

Mid to high range arranger. But also see the Korg Pa700.
Yamaha, like Casio have a huge range of arrangers in all price ranges.

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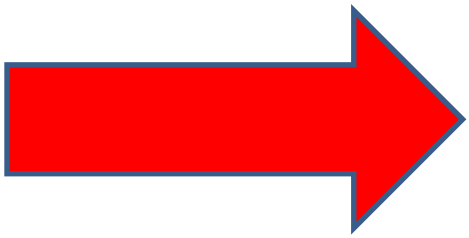

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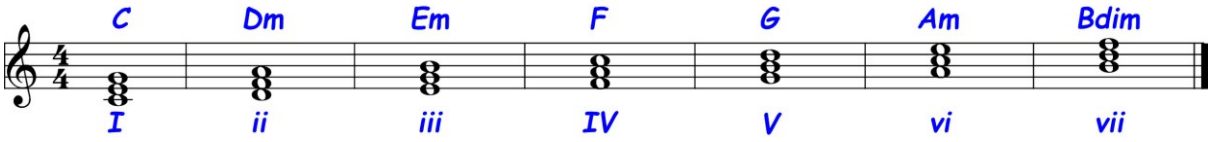
Chord Construction

Every musical piece (in classical, jazz and pop) is formed around a progression of chords, sometimes simple and sometimes very complicated. Either way learning all the basic chords is essential and even more so if using auto-accompaniment features. Understanding how chords are constructed is necessary for correct theoretical understanding - particularly for composition and improvisation.

The basic triad chords are constructed by piling notes of the scale on top of each other a third apart and playing them simultaneously. Using the scale of **C major** and referring to the diagram below you can see that the first and most important chord of the key is made as follows: **C** (root note - the *tonic*), **E** (3rd note of the scale - the *mediant*) and **G** (5th note of the scale - the *dominant*). This is the root position of the **C major** chord.



Moving up the scale, starting on **D**, we achieve a **D minor** triad, and then **E minor**, **F major**, **G major**, **A minor** and **B diminished**. These chords are the *diatonic* triads in the key of **C major**, which means that they are all *derived* from the notes of the **C major** scale and as such contain white notes only, (as there are no black notes in the **C major** scale).

Practice these with each hand separately and notice how they sound.

Notice that the difference between a major and minor triad is that the intervals in a *major triad* are a *'major 3rd'* followed by a *'minor 3rd',* whereas the *minor triad* has a *'minor 3rd'* followed by a *'major 3rd'*. The *diminished triad* consists of *'two minor 3rd*s' and the *augmented (+5) triad* has *'two major 3rds'*.

The Roman Numerals shown signify the degree of the scale which each chord starts on. In all cases the diatonic chords of a major scale contain *major* chords at the **I**, **IV** and **V** degrees, *minor* chords at the **ii**, **iii** and **vi** degrees and *diminished* at the **vii** degree. Usually, (but not always) the minor and diminished chords are signified with lower case Roman Numerals (**ii**, **iii**, **vi** etc., as shown here).

By adding further thirds above each triad, **CM7** is achieved, then **Dm7**, **Em7**, **FM7**, **G7**, **Am7**, **Bm7♭5**. You can go on further and create more complicated chords like **9ths** and **13ths** etc. but we will not be covering these in this book, although they are included in the two *'Chord'* books which are yours to download.

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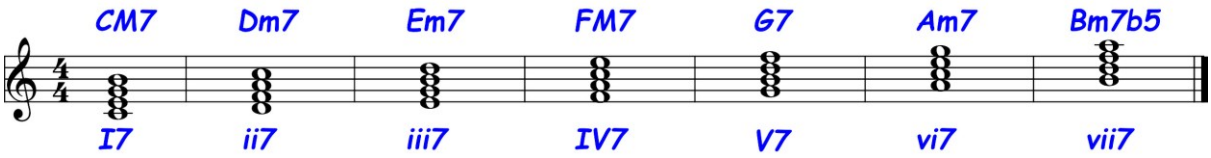
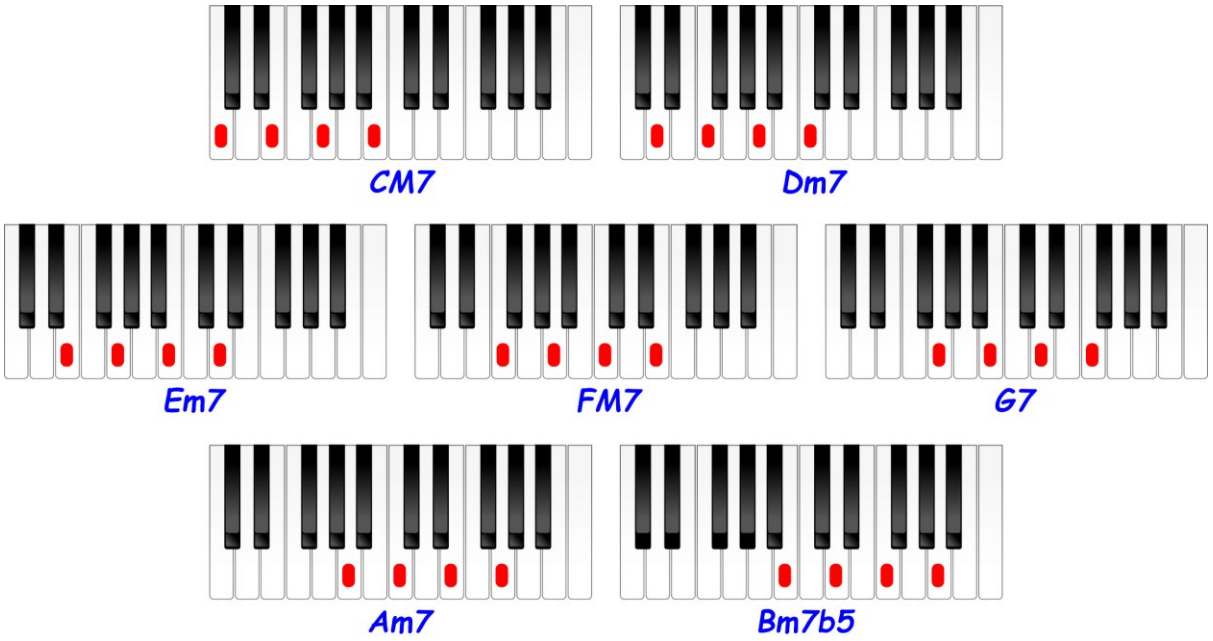


In the keyboard views below I have only shown the **7th** chords; to see the triads, simply omit the 7ths (the last note of each chord). Please also notice that some of the 7th chords are signified with a capital **'M'** and others with a lower case **'m'**, this is ***vitally important*** and will be explained shortly.



Additional chords can be created from the relative minor scales due to the harmonic and melodic (scales) some of these are shown in the *'Diatonic Arpeggio Exercises'* chapter.

Note that it's important to remember that while many musical compositions will use only the diatonic chords (found naturally in the relevant scale) and no other, it´s by no means necessarily the case. You can use any chord in any key if you can make it work, but the diatonic chords (as found in the scale) are more likely to work!

A Few Important points about 7th Chords

Major 7th (M7) chords must not be confused with what is generally called a *'normal'* **7th** (7) chord (which really should be called a ***dominant*** 7th but often isn't). **Major 7th** chords have a major 7th (one semitone down from the octave) whereas the *'normal'* (dominant**) 7th** chords are the same major triad with a minor 7th (2 semitones down from the octave). **Minor 7th** (m7) chords are like the *'normal' dominant* 7th chords but have a minor 3rd. And a **minor chord with a major 7th**, would be written **(C)mM7** although I have to say that this one is the least common, but it needs mentioning, nevertheless and it's a great chord.

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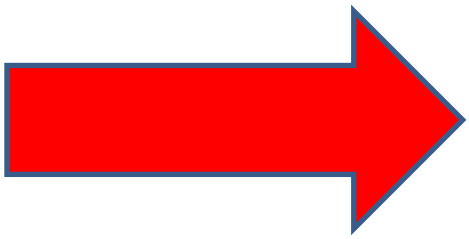

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⬅ Your First Tunes ➡

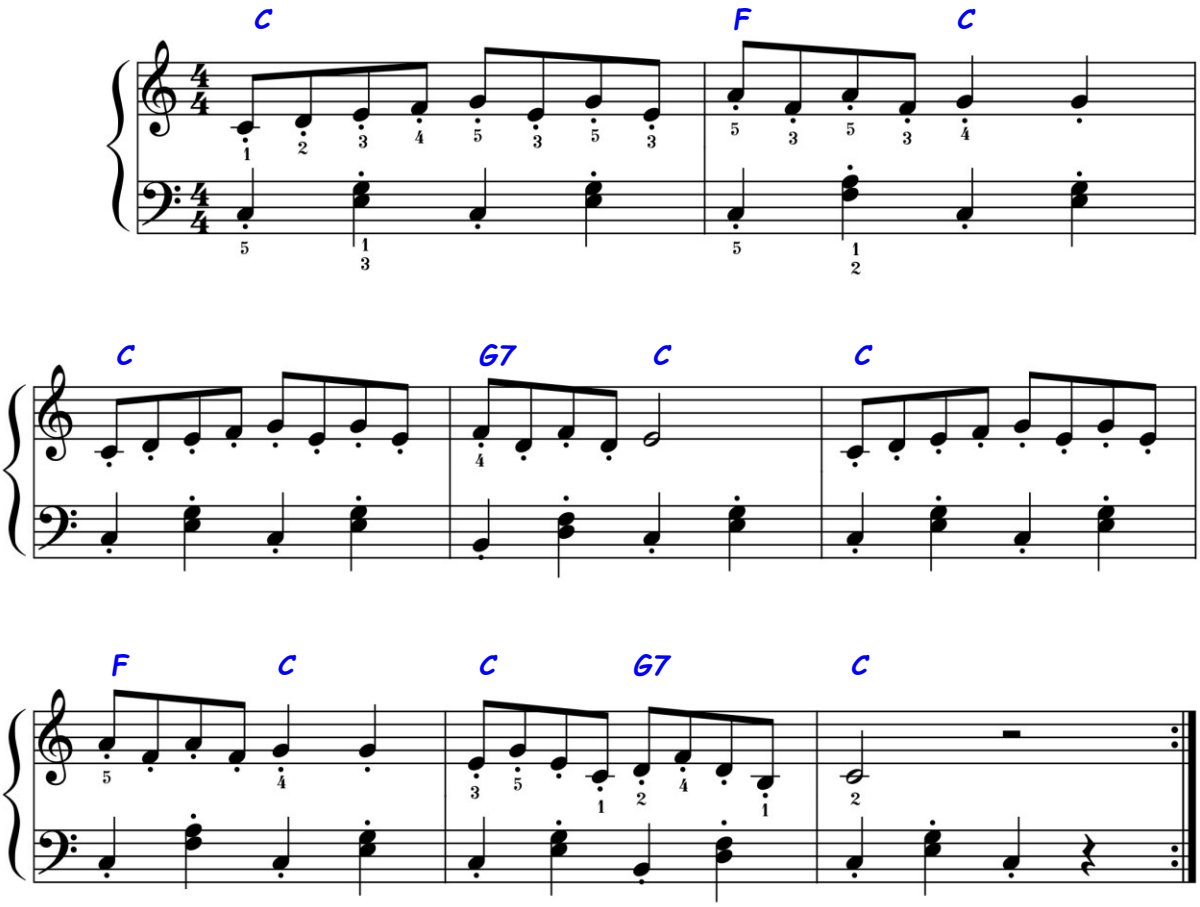
Ok so now we'll put your practice into *practice* and start playing some real tunes.

You might find the first few tunes a bit *'naff'* but please practice them anyway as it's all for a purpose. And it's a good idea to start with something that you are actually capable of playing, which these will be.

If you've managed to do the initial 5 finger exercises, our first three pieces should prove no problem to you as they require no finger crossovers as in the scales. Even still you may need to learn these one hand at a time, bar by bar at a speed that suites your playing and reading ability. As always remember that speed is not important, but accuracy and fluency is!

In all cases I feel that it's important to be aware of which chords are being played; something that I was never taught initially. In our first piece ***'The Jolly Farmer'*** you may notice that the left-hand part forms the *'split chords'* which are **C major (I)**, **F major (IV)** - second inversion, and **G7 (V7)**, (the **7th** being the **'F'** played in the right hand). Notice also that the right-hand melody follows these chords.

The Jolly Farmer



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This piece should be played *'joyfully'* and mainly staccato as indicated by the dots above / below many of the notes. Also, please notice the *'loop'* symbols seen in most of these pieces indicating that the sections effected should be repeated.

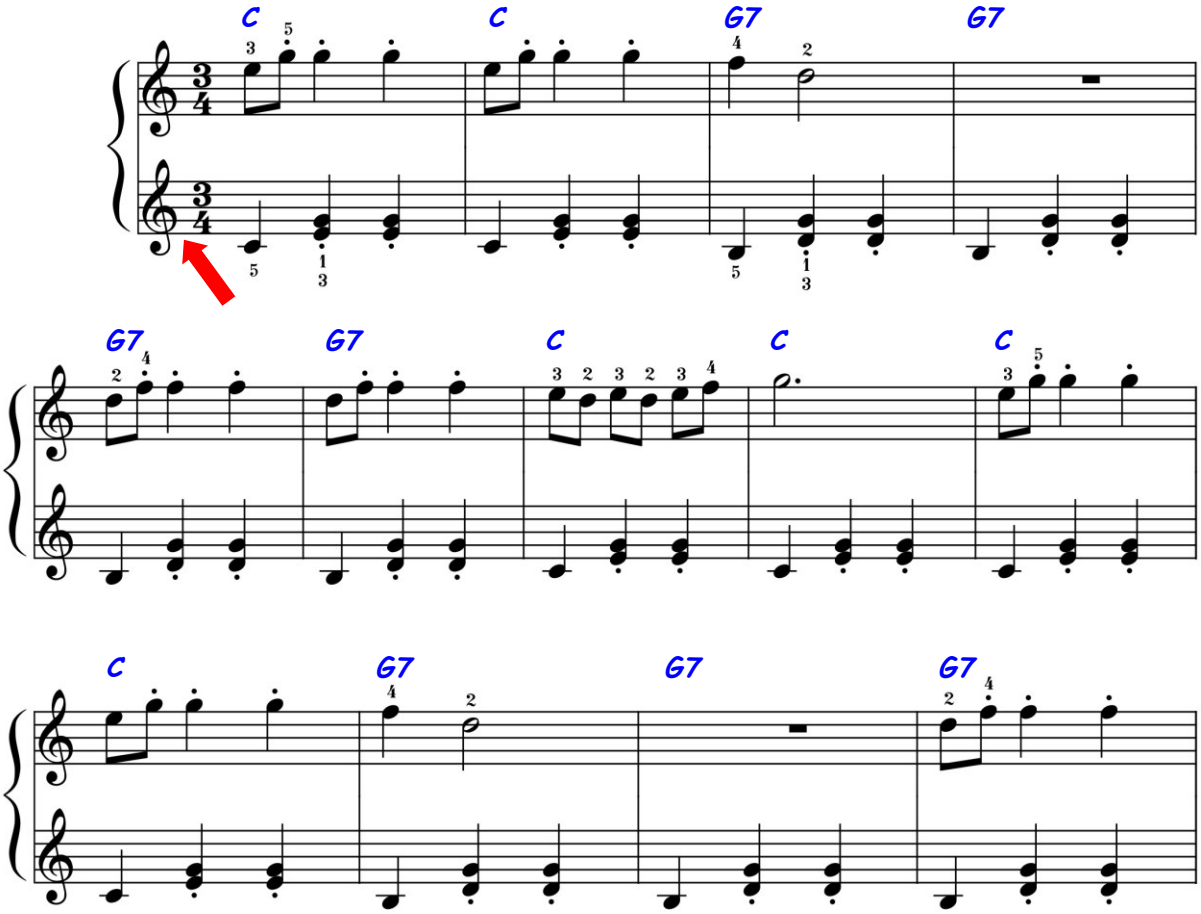
Now there's also a little story that goes with these first three pieces - just to make it a little more exciting!

The Jolly Farmer went into the jolly cowshed to check on his *'jolly udders'* and was met by the Jolly Milkmaid who asked the Jolly Farmer if he'd like *play* with her in the Jolly Haystack. The Jolly Farmer thought long and hard - for about a quarter of a second and decided that it might be *nice* to *play* with the Jolly Milkmaid in the Jolly Haystack so he agreed and off they jolly well went!

This brings us to our next piece the ***'Jolly Milkmaid'*** which should be played *'teasingly'* and with *'passion!'* You may notice that this piece only has 2 chords **C (I)** and **G7 (V7)** - first inversion, and is in **3/4** time.

Very importantly, also notice that the **left hand of this piece is in the treble clef!**

The Jolly Milkmaid



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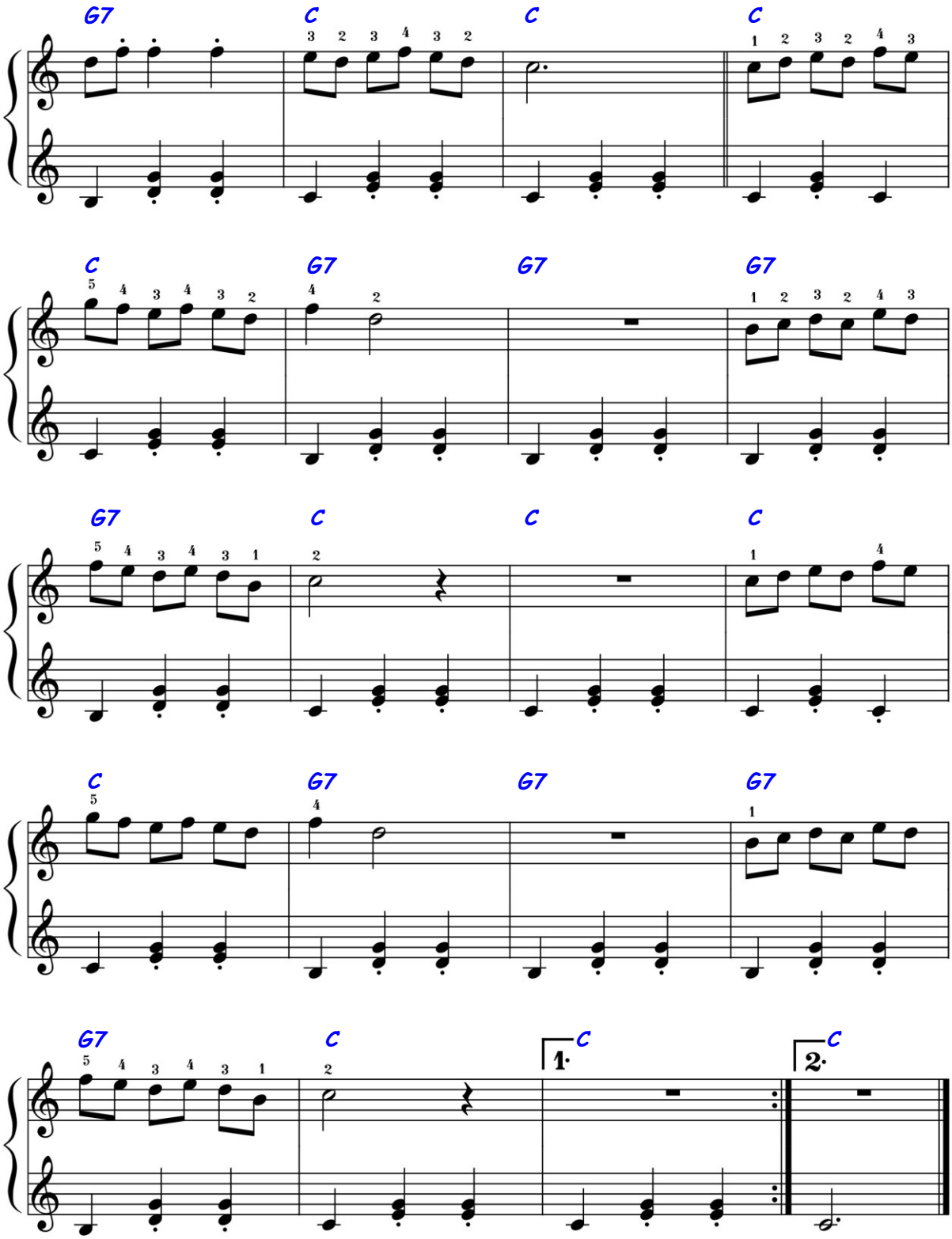

Now not long after the Jolly Farmer and the Jolly Milkmaid started *'playing'* in the Jolly Haystack who should come along but the Not So Jolly Farmer's Wife!

The Not So Jolly Farmer's Wife was not happy about the Jolly Farmer *'playing'* in the

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END OF PREVIEW!

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