A MODERN APPROACH TO LEARNING PIANO

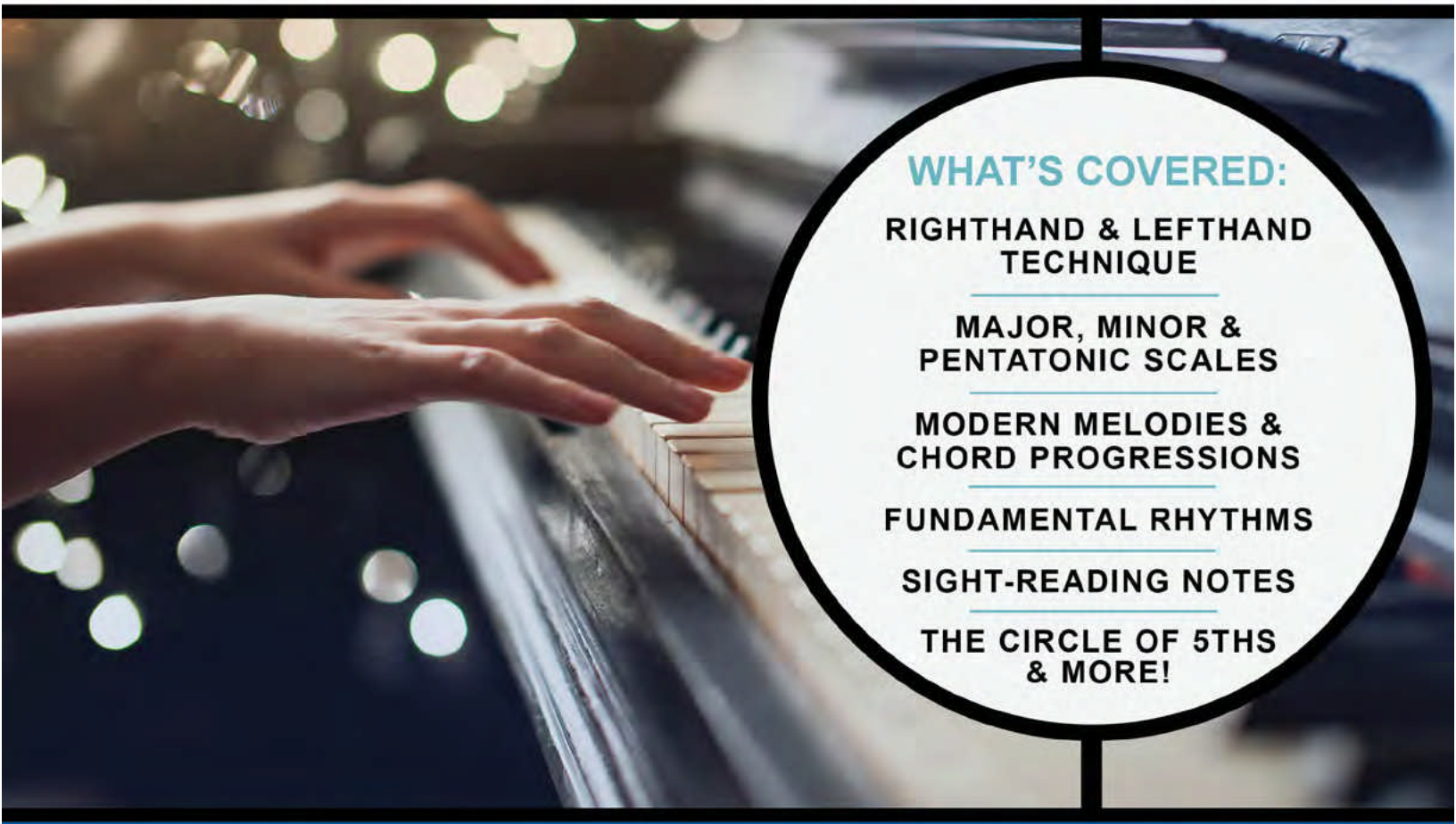
MUSIC READING OPTIONAL

HOW TO PLAY PIANO IN 14 DAYS!

BY AUSTIN CROSBY

Edited by Troy Nelson

DAILY PIANO LESSONS FOR BEGINNERS



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HOW TO PLAY PIANO IN 14 DAYS!

Daily Piano Lessons for Beginners

By Austin Crosby

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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on your decision to learn to play the piano! The piano is the world's most popular instrument, and for good reason: its versatility will enable you to play just about any style of music, and it will provide a musical foundation upon which to learn just about any instrument. Whether you want to learn piano to accompany a singer or other instruments, you want to challenge yourself with something new, or you just want to pick up a new hobby, playing piano is a rewarding endeavor!

There are countless resources available to help you learn piano. Most will follow the same structure and approach. This book, however, will not. In *How to Play Piano in 14 Days,* we take a novel approach to piano education that will have you playing great-sounding music in no time! This book is not designed to be an exhaustive, be-all, end-all resource for piano; instead, this book's intention is to jumpstart anyone—regardless of skill level or age—into the world of piano playing. Ultimately, creativity is the key! We hope this book inspires not only music creativity, but creativity in every facet of your life. Music has a great way of doing that.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The book is divided into 14 chapters, one for each day of the two-week program. Within each chapter/day are six sections: Scale, Rhythm, Melody, Chord Progression, Theory, and Musical Piece. The goal is to spend 10 minutes playing the exercises in each section, for a total of 60 minutes (10 X 6 = 60) per day.

Granted, 60 minutes of practice per day can seem daunting to some, especially if you're unaccustomed to practice sessions lasting longer than 20–30 minutes. And that's OK! Just because the book is structured to teach you piano in 14 days doesn't mean you have to follow the program precisely. On the contrary, if you have, say, 20 minutes to devote to the book each day, then simply extend each chapter to a three-day practice session. The material is there for you to use, whether you get through the book in 14 days or 40.

While the 14-day plan is the goal, it's probably unrealistic for some. The important thing is to stick with it, because the material in this book will have you playing the piano with confidence and credibility. How quickly just depends on the amount of time you're able to spend on getting there.

Before you begin your daily sessions, I suggest spending at least 10–15 minutes listening to the accompanying audio (audio icons indicate music examples with companion tracks) to get a feel for the forthcoming exercises, as well as reading the text in each section for some pointers and to better understand the material you're about to learn. That way, you can spend the full 60 minutes (or however much time you have to practice that day) practicing the actual exercises.

To help you keep track of time in your practice sessions, time codes are included throughout the book. Simply set the timer on your smartphone to 60 minutes (1:00)—or however much time you can dedicate to your session—and move on to a new section every 10 minutes. Alternatively, you can set the timer to 10 minutes (0:10) and move on to the next section when the timer goes off.

Next, set your metronome (or click track) to a tempo at which you can play the exercise all the way through without making too many mistakes (60–80 beats per minute [BPM] is probably a good starting point for most exercises). Once you're able to play the exercise cleanly, increase your tempo by 5–10 BPM. Again, make sure you can play through the exercise without making too many mistakes. If the speed is too fast, back off a bit until your execution is precise. Continue to increase your tempo incrementally until it's time to move on to the next section. If you don't own a metronome, then just search "metronome" in your phone's app store! There are many free metronome apps that will work just fine.

There will be times when the timer goes off but you feel like you didn't adequately learn the material. When this happens, I suggest moving on to the next section nonetheless. It may seem counterintuitive, but it's better to continue to progress through the book than to prolong the practice session while trying to perfect the material. After you've completed the book, you can always go back and review the exercises. In fact, I recommend it. Making steady progress, while not always perfectly, keeps you mentally sharp and motivated. Focusing too much on any one exercise is a sure way to sidetrack your sessions.

THE BASICS

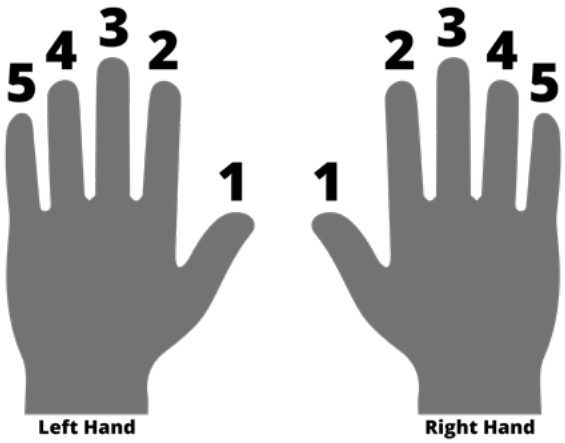
Before we jump into the daily lessons, there are a few things we need to go over. Be sure to read through this section carefully, as it will lay the foundation for the rest of the book. That said, don't feel the pressure to have every part of this section memorized before moving on to the daily lessons. Feel free to refer back to The Basics as often as needed!

POSTURE

When you sit down at the piano, be sure to have a comfortable chair, stool, or bench to sit on. Sit nice and upright and make sure your forearms are about level with the keys. During long practice sessions, you want to be focused on developing your skills, not on an aching back! Your hands should remain nice and relaxed while playing. Let your wrists guide your hands, not your arms. Your fingers should stay slightly bent.

FINGER NUMBERS

Each finger is assigned a number. This will help you to know which fingers should play which notes. Proper finger placement allows for efficient piano playing.

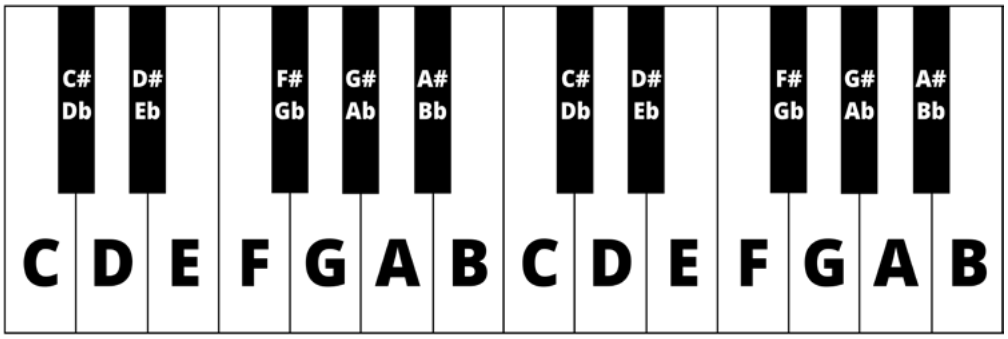


KEYBOARD LAYOUT

The layout of the keyboard is based on the *musical alphabet*:

A B C D E F G

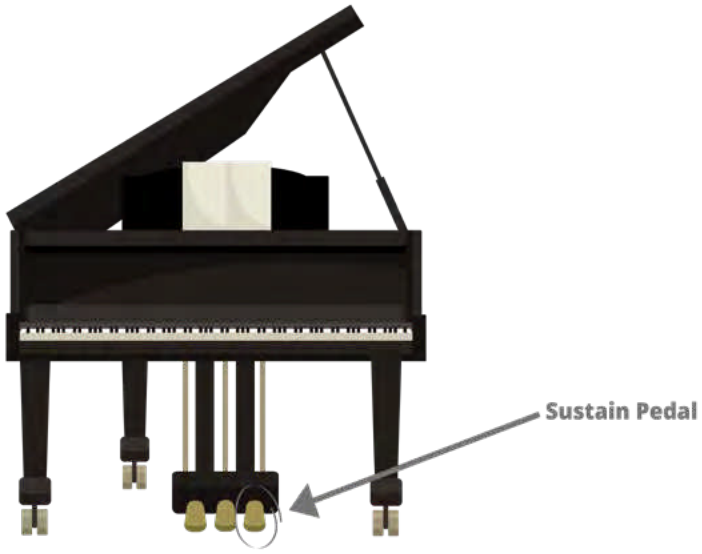
As you can see below, each of the white keys is assigned one letter of the musical alphabet, while the black keys are the sharp/flat of these letters. (In the back of the book, you will find a page containing the keyboard diagram below. Feel free to cut out the notes and tape them to your keyboard/piano keys.)



SUSTAIN PEDAL

If you're playing on a traditional acoustic piano, the sustain pedal will most likely be the pedal furthest to the right. If you're playing on an electric keyboard, you likely have a separate sustain pedal that plugs into the keyboard. Pressing down on the sustain pedal will *sustain* whatever notes you play on the piano. Proper use of the sustain pedal will help to keep your music from sounding choppy and disjointed. For this book, holding down the sustain pedal for one measure (four beats) at a time is adequate. In between each measure, simply lift the sustain to release, then re-engage the pedal. That said, don't

feel obligated to use the sustain pedal right away; instead, think of it as a resource that you want to eventually incorporate into your playing.

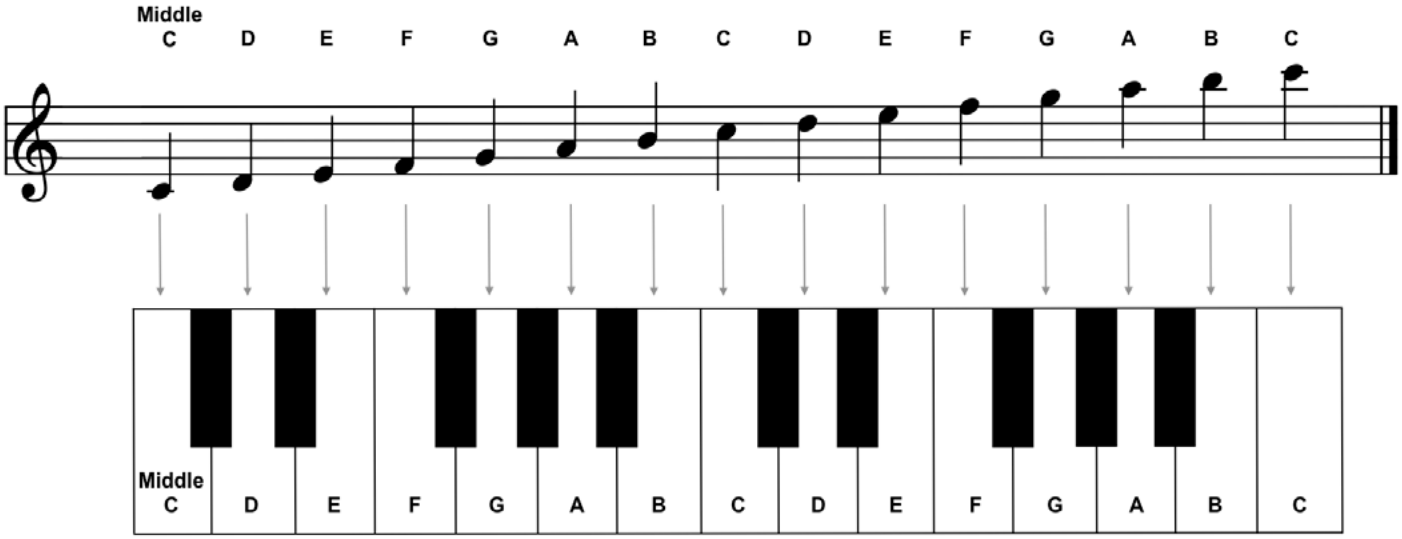


MUSICAL SYMBOLS

In this section, you will find several musical symbols that are foundational to learning piano. Don't worry about having all of these memorized right away; instead, feel free to refer back to this section as you progress through the book.

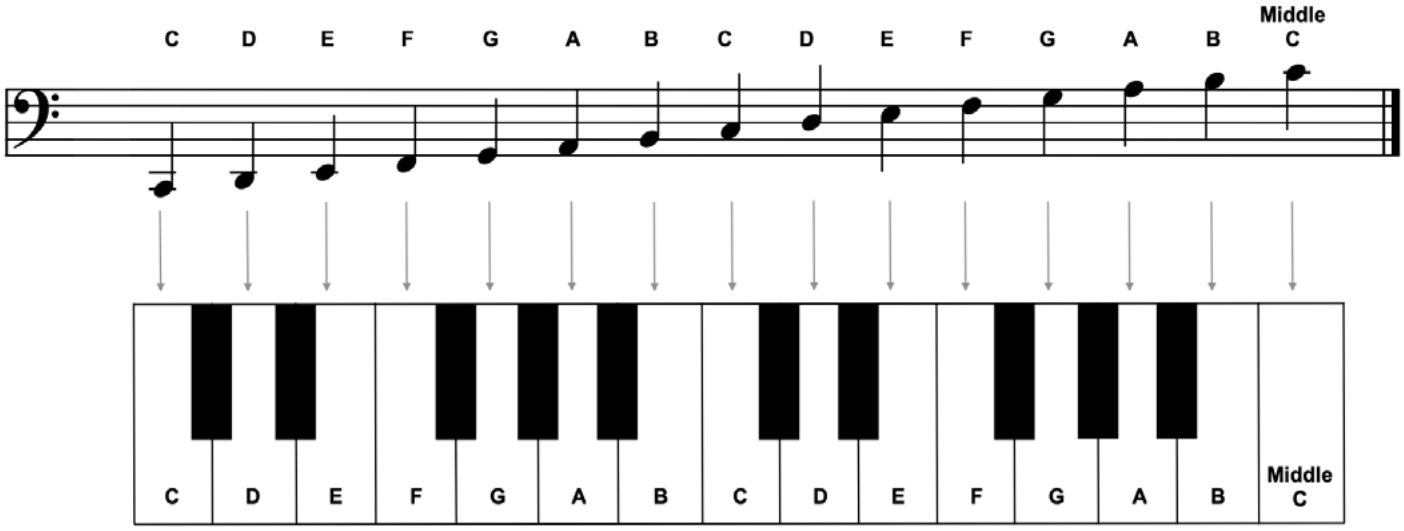
Treble Clef

The *Treble Clef*, also called the *G Clef*, is depicted on the upper half of the grand staff—the staff that combines the treble and bass clefs—and indicates notes above C4 (Middle C).



Bass Clef

The *Bass Clef*, also called the *F Clef*, is depicted on the bottom half of the grand staff and indicates notes below C4.



Notes on the Staff

Each line and space on a staff refers to a specific note. Take some time to review the two previous diagrams, as well as the diagram on the next page, to learn what notes correspond with what line or space.

Bar Lines

Bar lines are vertical black lines that divide the staff into measures. A double bar line denotes the end of a section or passage of music. A double bar line at the end of a piece of music (where one line is thicker than the other) represents the end of the song or musical piece.

Measure

A *measure*, or *bar*, is a group of notes that, collectively, has a specific length (i.e., duration of time) as defined by the *time signature.*

Time Signature

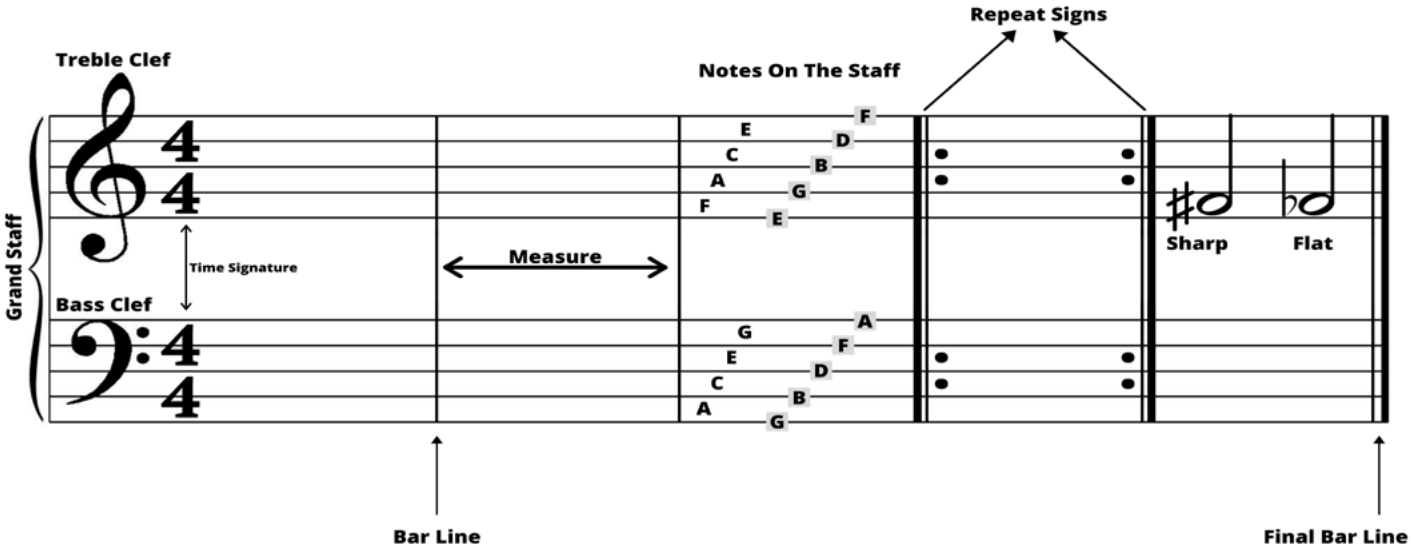
The *time signature* is a set of two numbers. The top number specifies how many beats are in a measure, and the bottom number specifies which note receives one beat.

Repeat Signs

The *end repeat sign* tells the musician to go back to the *start repeat sign* and repeat that section of music. Sometimes, repeats will have different endings, which are denoted by numbers above the staff.

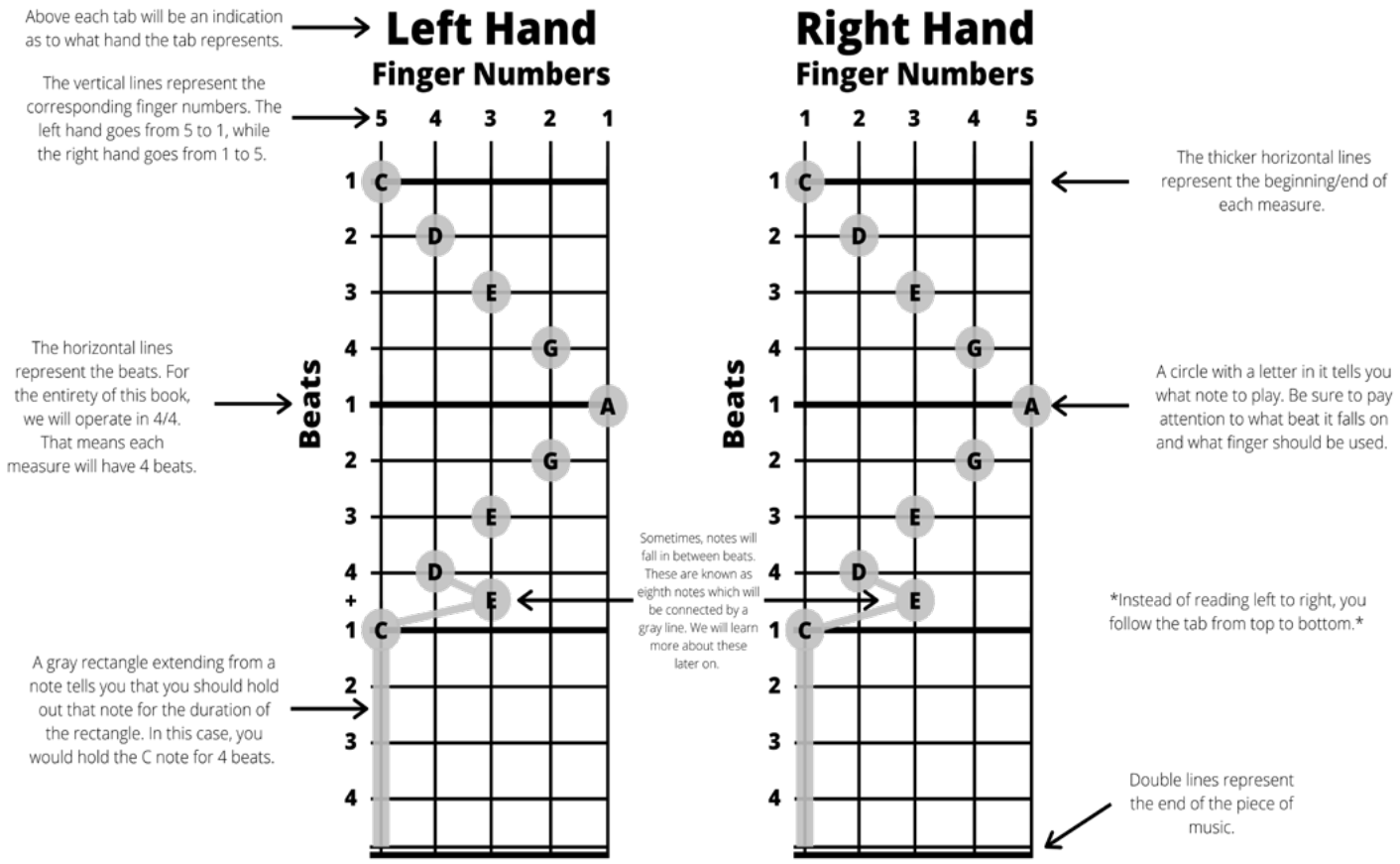
Sharps & Flats

A *sharp symbol* raises a note by a semitone (half step), or the distance of one key on the piano. A *flat symbol* lowers a note by a semitone.



PIANO TAB

For this book, we've developed a revolutionary piano tab to help kickstart your piano-playing experience. While this book will teach you to read traditional sheet music notation, for every exercise, we've also provided piano tab. This tab is designed to help you determine which notes and rhythms to play, as well as which fingers to use. This will be especially helpful if you're a visual learner. Take some time to familiarize yourself with the layout of the tab below.



THE SIX SECTIONS

Each day/chapter is broken up into six 10-minute sections. Here is a breakdown of what each section will entail:

Scale

A *scale* is a collection of notes that ascend or descend in steps. In most traditional seven-note scales, each step will either be a half step or whole step. A *half step* is the distance between two adjacent keys on a keyboard, whereas a *whole step* is equivalent to two half steps. By the end of the book, you will have learned the major and minor scales, major and minor pentatonic scales, the blues scale, the harmonic minor scale, and the melodic minor scale. Each day begins with a scale because scales serve as great warmups. We recommend that you set your metronome to 60 BPM while practicing scales. As you get more comfortable and accurate, gradually increase the speed.

Rhythm

Rhythm is the systematic arrangement of musical sounds and deals with the timing and duration of notes. Every day, there will be a rhythm selection to practice. How you practice the rhythm is up to you: you can clap it, play it on a single note on the piano, or recite the rhythm aloud. Just like the scale, we recommend that you play along with a metronome, start slow, and gradually increase your speed as you get more and more comfortable.

Melody

Melody is a series of notes strung together. Melody incorporates the timing of notes (rhythm), as well as the frequency (pitch) of notes. Think of your favorite song and hum the chorus. What you're humming is a melody. Every day, we will provide a melody to practice. If you have some extra time, we recommend spending a few minutes each day creating your own melodies, as well.

Chord Progression

A *chord* is multiple notes played simultaneously. For instance, a C major chord is comprised of the notes C, E, and G, which are played at the same time. A *chord progression* is when you play a series of different chords, one after another. Most of today's popular music can be broken down into simple three- or four-chord progressions; therefore, learning and practicing chord progressions is a great way to learn contemporary music. If you want to learn piano as a means by which to accompany vocalists or other instruments, understanding chord progressions is a must.

Theory

Music theory is a collection of musical ideas and terms. Music theory not only helps us understand music, but also provides a language to effectively communicate with other musicians. Every day, we will spend some time learning a new music theory concept.

Musical Piece

Every day, will end our session with a musical piece. This is where you get to put together everything you've learned from the other sections! If there is any section we want you to hone in on more than others, it's this one. The musical pieces will incorporate both hands, but if any of them become too daunting, just practice each hand separately and slowly. As you become more comfortable, you can add your second hand and put it all together!

WEEK 1

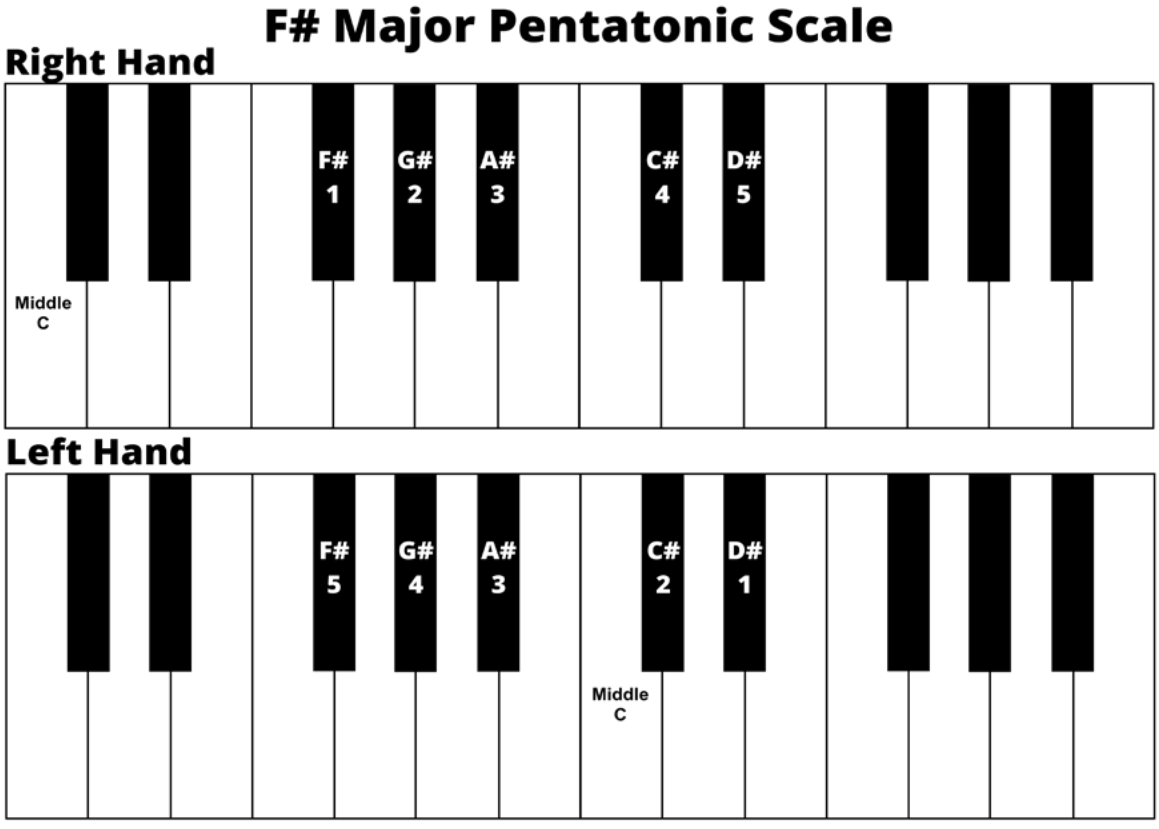
DAY 1

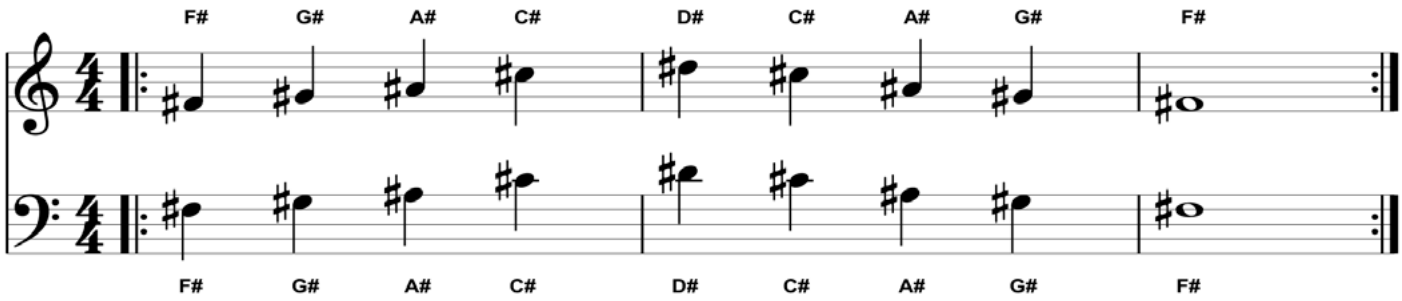
SCALE: F♯ MAJOR PENTATONIC (1:00–0:50)

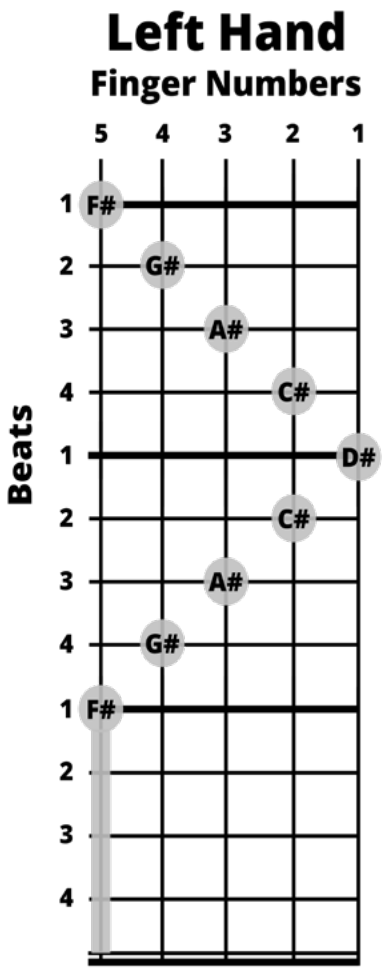
Don't let the "♯" scare you—the F♯ major pentatonic scale (F♯–G♯–A♯–C♯–D♯) is the simplest piano scale there is. It only utilizes black keys, so, for now, you can pretend like the white keys don't exist. The scale is only five notes; therefore, you will use each finger once.

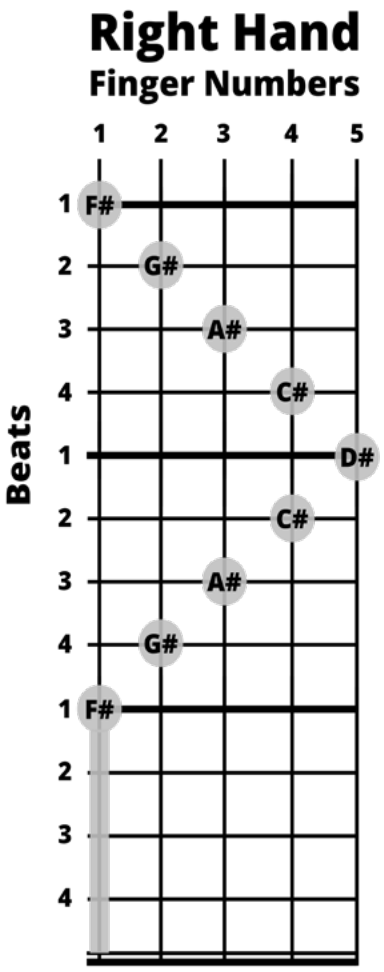
We'll begin with the right hand. Start with your thumb (1) on the F♯ located six keys (both black and white) above Middle C. (Middle C is the middle most C note on the piano. To locate Middle C, find the lowest C on your piano, which is C1, and count up to 4, with C1 being "1," and C4 being "4." On smaller keyboards, the lowest note is sometimes C2, so you would count up to 3.) When looking at the black keys, you'll notice that they are in groupings of 2s and 3s. The first black key in any grouping of 3 is F♯.

Once you've mastered the right hand, try it with your left hand! The only difference is that you will start with your pinky finger (5) on F♯ (the first F♯ below middle C) instead of your thumb. If you're feeling extra brave, try both hands at the same time!



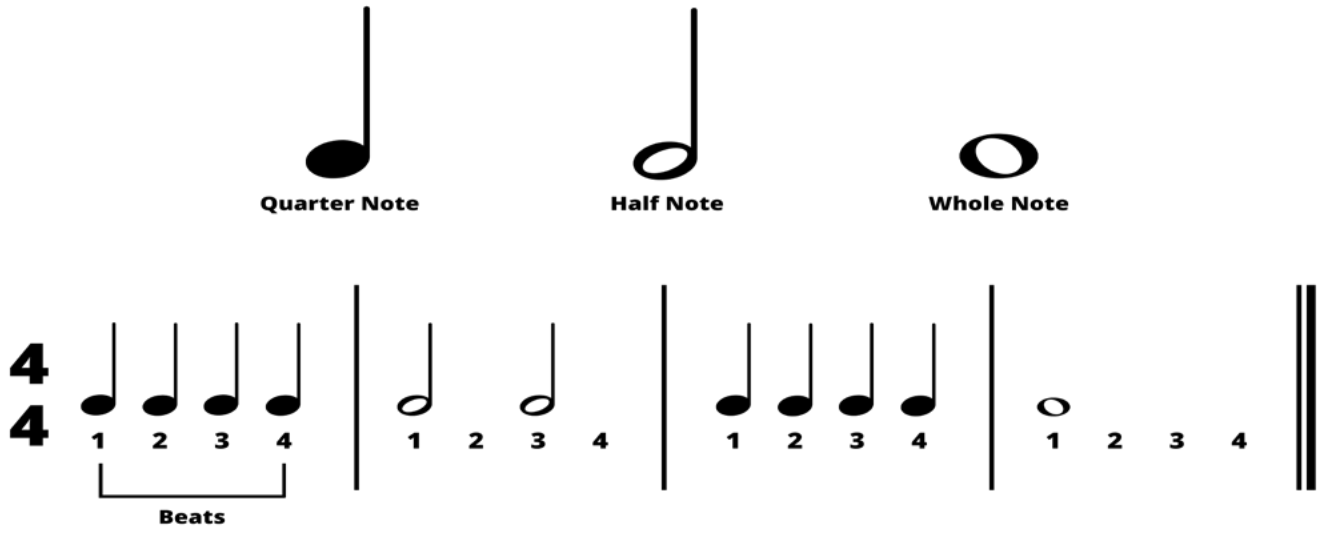

F# G# A# C# D# C# A# G# F#
F# G# A# C# D# C# A# G# F#


Left Hand
Finger Numbers
5 4 3 2 1
Beats
1 F#
2 G#
3 A#
4 C#
1 D#
2 C#
3 A#
4 G#
1 F#
2
3
4


Right Hand
Finger Numbers
1 2 3 4 5
Beats
1 F#
2 G#
3 A#
4 C#
1 D#
2 C#
3 A#
4 G#
1 F#
2
3
4

RHYTHM: WHOLE, HALF, AND QUARTER NOTES (0:50–0:40)

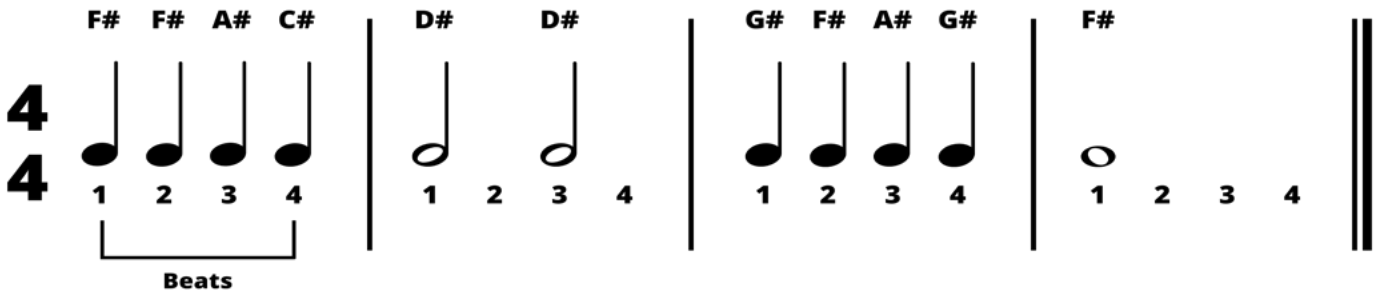
Different notes have different durations. Today, we will learn three different notes: whole, half, and quarter. Their durations depend on the *time signature* (which we'll cover more thoroughly on Day 3). When operating in the most common time signature, 4/4 ("four-four"), a whole note gets four beats, a half note gets two beats, and a quarter note gets one beat. Take some time to practice the rhythm below. You can clap the rhythm or play the rhythm on an F♯.

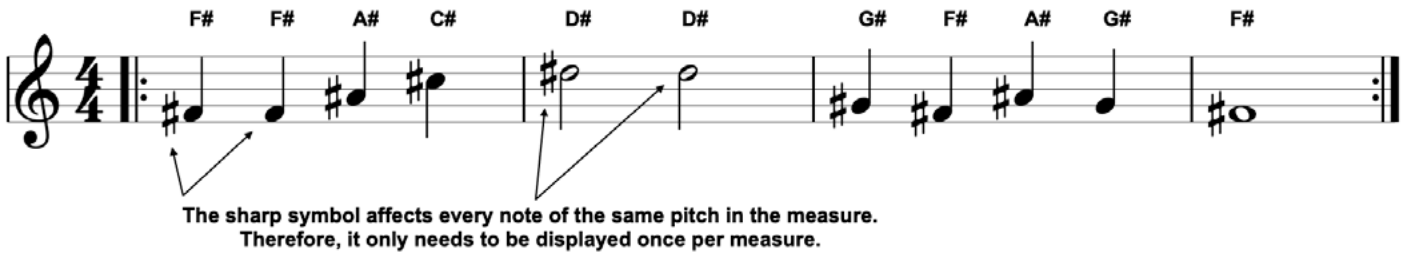


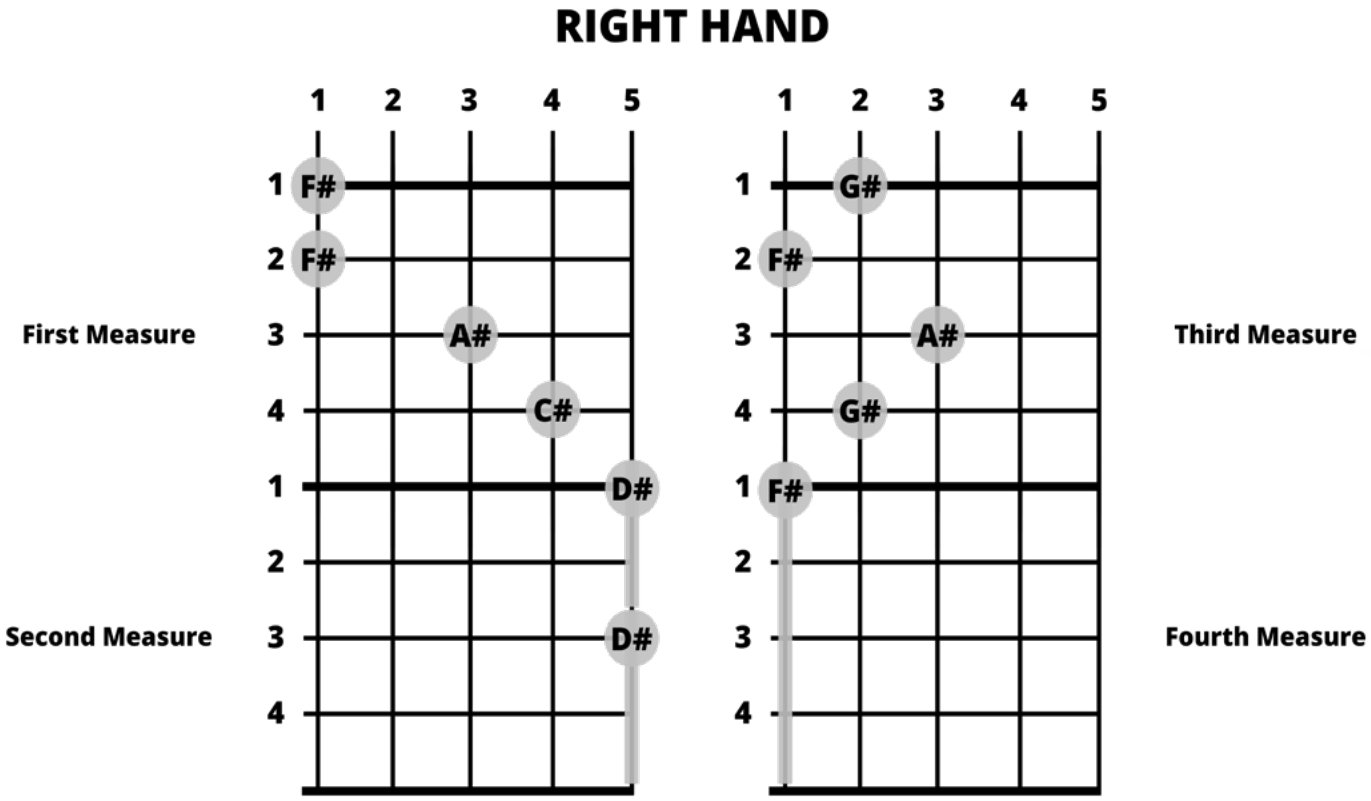
MELODY (0:40–0:30)

Today's melody consists of notes from the F♯ major pentatonic scale. With your right hand, start by resting each finger on its corresponding F♯ major pentatonic scale note. You might have noticed that the melody incorporates the same rhythm that you just learned.

We have provided you with three different ways to visualize and learn today's melody: standard notation (with note names included for reference in both clefs), rhythm-based notation, and piano tab. As you begin, it will probably be easiest to use the simple rhythm-based notation with the notes listed above. But take some time to look at the tab and standard notation, as well, as this will help to develop your sight-reading ability.





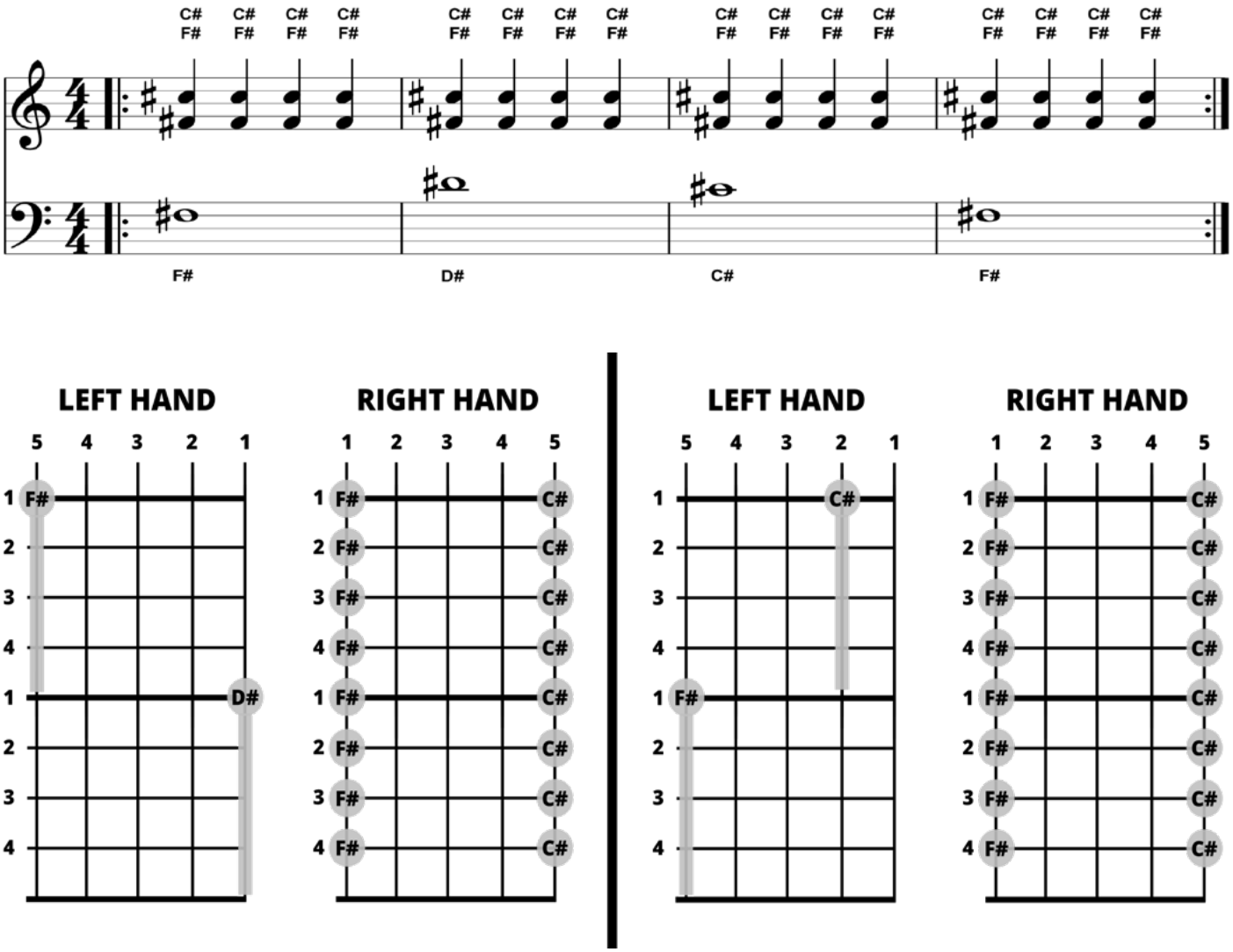


CHORD PROGRESSION (0:30–0:20)

As we begin to learn chord progressions, I must admit: we are going to cheat just a little. You will play the same two notes in your right hand for every chord. Your thumb (1) will be on F♯ and your pinky (5) will be on C♯. This chord progression is in 4/4 time so you can just pulse quarter notes in your right hand. In other words, your RH will play F♯ and C♯ once for each beat. While your RH stays the same, your LH will be changing notes. For the first measure, your LH will be on F♯, followed by D♯ in measure 2, C♯ in measure 3, and back to F♯ in measure 4. Unlike the RH, your LH will just play whole notes—one note for every four beats.

This chord progression is F♯–D♯m–C♯–F♯. Now, when I say we are cheating just a little, what I mean is that you aren't necessarily playing the true triads (three-note chords) for each of these chords; you're actually playing some seventh and suspended chords! But don't worry about knowing what that means

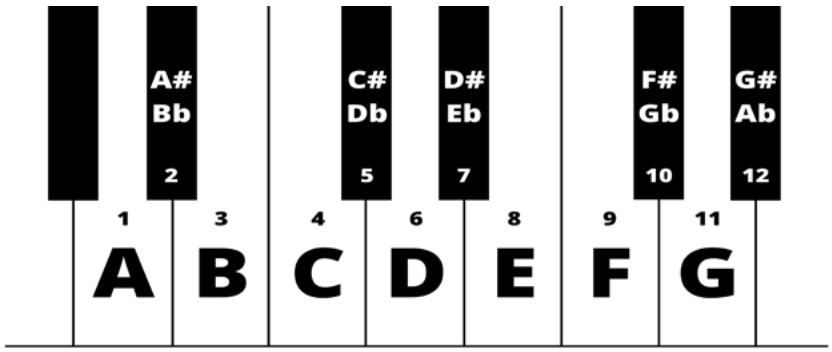
right now. Triads, sevenths, and suspended chords are a different lesson for a different day. The point is to create an easy way to play a chord progression that also sounds really cool!



THEORY: THE 12 KEYS OF MUSIC, PART 1 (0:20–0:10)

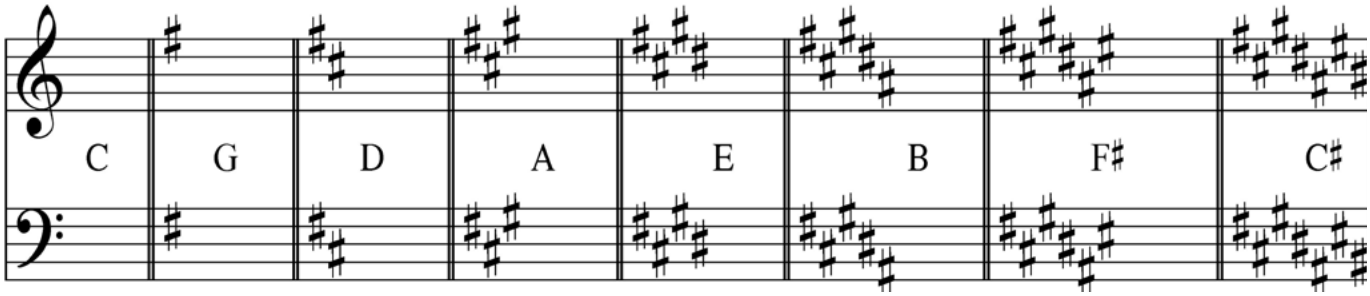
The “key” that any given song is in refers to which note is the tonal center, or foundation of the song. For instance, in the key of C major, the tonal center is C. For the key of F♯ major, the tonal center is F♯. Think back to playing the F♯ major pentatonic scale. When you’re descending and arrive back at F♯, there is a nice resolution to the sound. You have returned to the tonal center, F♯.

There are 12 different keys represented in music. This is because you will find 12 different notes on the piano: A, A♯/B♭, B, C, C♯/D♭, D, D♯/E♭, E, F, F♯/G♭, G, and G♯/A♭. (Some pitches have two different names—a “sharp” one and a “flat” one. These notes are called *enharmonic equivalents*. Which note is used is determined by the scale or key of the music.)

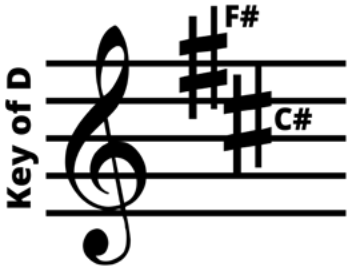


The primary way you can determine what key a song is in is by looking at the key signature. The *key signature* is illustrated at the beginning of a piece of music and will tell you what sharps or flats will be used in the song. For instance, the key of C uses no sharps or flats, so you will not see any sharps or flats listed in the key signature. On the other hand, the key of G uses one sharp, F♯; therefore, you will see one sharp on the top line of the treble clef.

Today, we will focus on the key signatures that include sharps. Below, you will see examples of every possible key signature that contains sharps.



There are two ways to use the key signature to determine what key the music is in. First, you can simply memorize how many sharps are in each key signature. The other method is to look at the last sharp (furthest to the right) and go up by one half step. Remember, a half step is the distance between two adjacent keys on the keyboard. Look at the example below. The key signature contains two sharps, F♯ and C♯. Go up one half step from C♯ and you get to D; therefore, the key is D major.

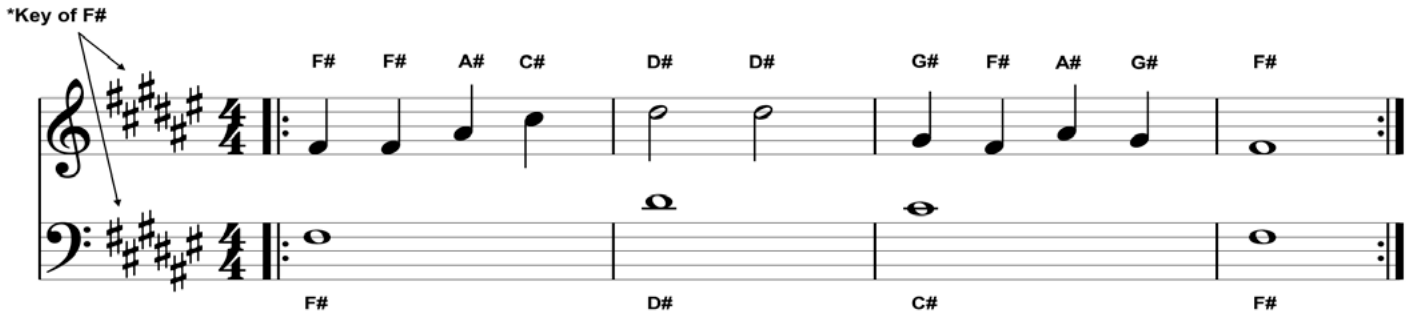


Notes in the Key of D

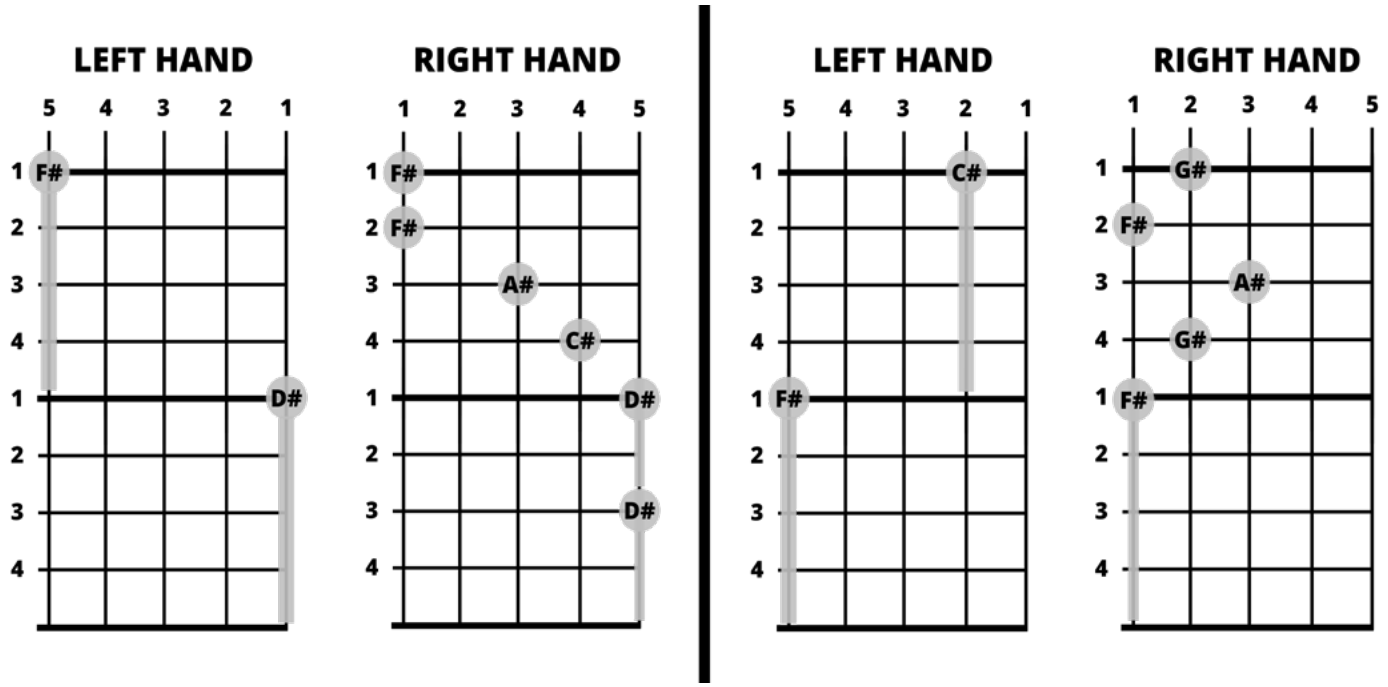
D - E - F# - G - A - B - C# - D

MUSICAL PIECE (0:10–0:00)

The musical piece is a culmination of everything you have learned throughout the day's practice session. Here, your right hand will play the melody we learned earlier, while your left hand will play the chord progression we learned in the Chord Progression section. Start slow and, if you prefer, practice each hand independently before putting it all together.



*Notice that the notes don't have a sharp symbol (#) in front of them. This is because the key signature is listed at the beginning of the score. The key signature indicates which notes will be sharp or flat (in this case, sharp) for the entirety of the song.



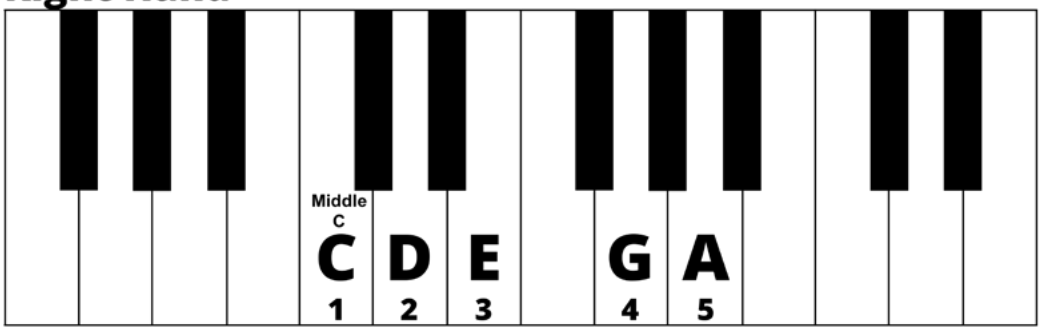
DAY 2

SCALE: C MAJOR PENTATONIC (1:00–0:50)

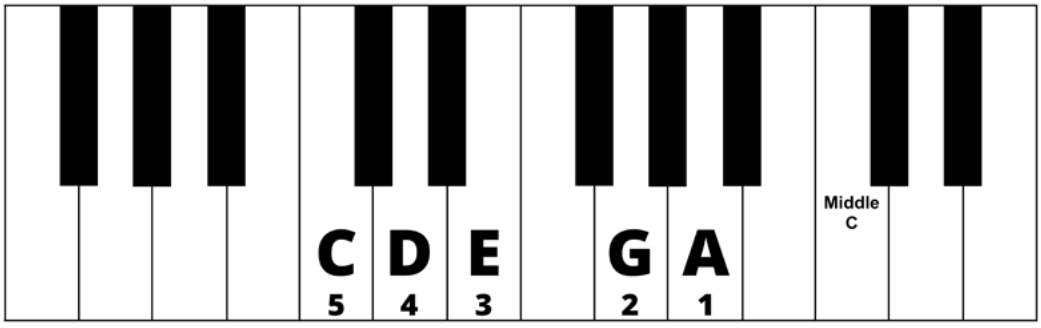
Today, we will learn another major pentatonic scale. Just like yesterday's scale, F♯ major pentatonic, this scale is comprised of five notes; however, instead of only black keys, we will use only white keys. The notes of the C major pentatonic scale are C, D, E, G, and A. Begin by resting each finger on their corresponding note (the thumb of your right hand will be on middle C). Take time to practice with your right hand, left hand, and both hands together. Make sure your metronome is on and running, start slow, and gradually increase speed as you feel comfortable.

C Major Pentatonic Scale

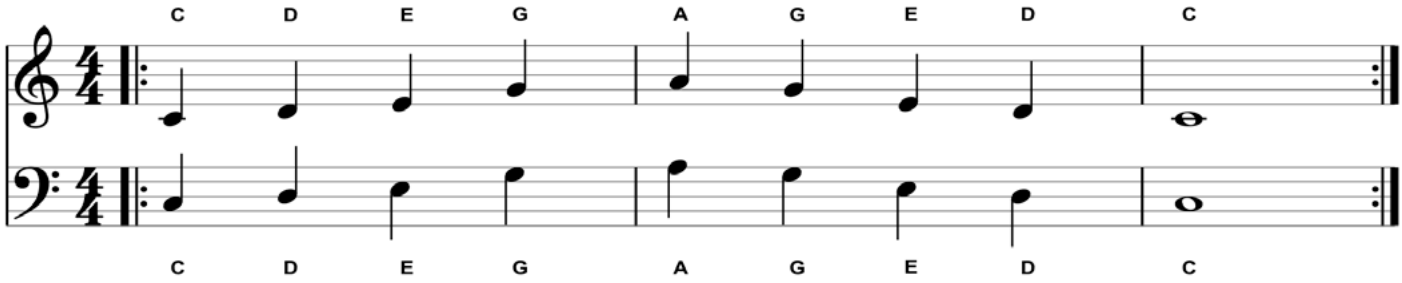
Right Hand

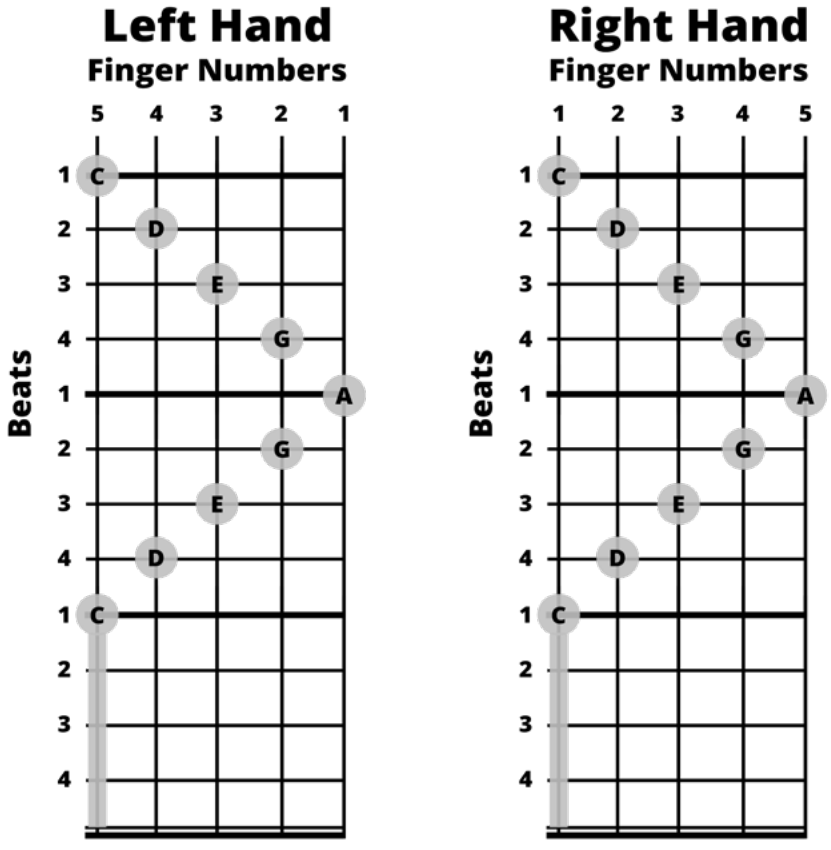


Left Hand




MIDDLE C

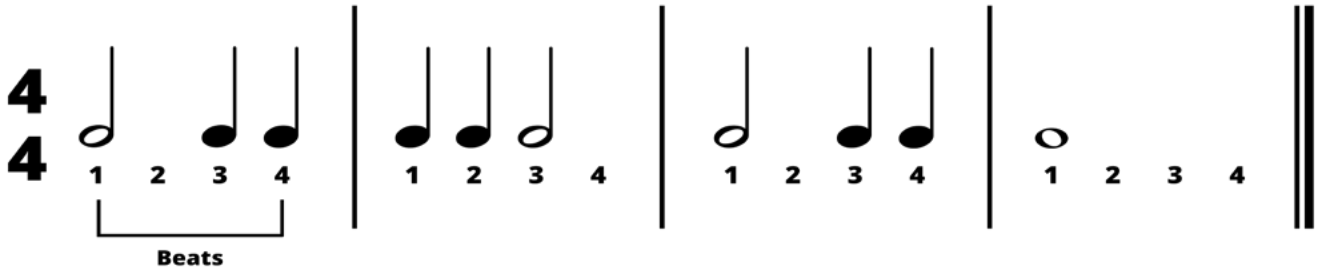

C D E G A G E D C
C D E G A G E D C


Left Hand
Finger Numbers
5 4 3 2 1
Beats
1 C
2 D
3 E
4 G
1 A
2 G
3 E
4 D
1 C
2
3
4

Right Hand
Finger Numbers
1 2 3 4 5
Beats
1 C
2 D
3 E
4 G
1 A
2 G
3 E
4 D
1 C
2
3
4

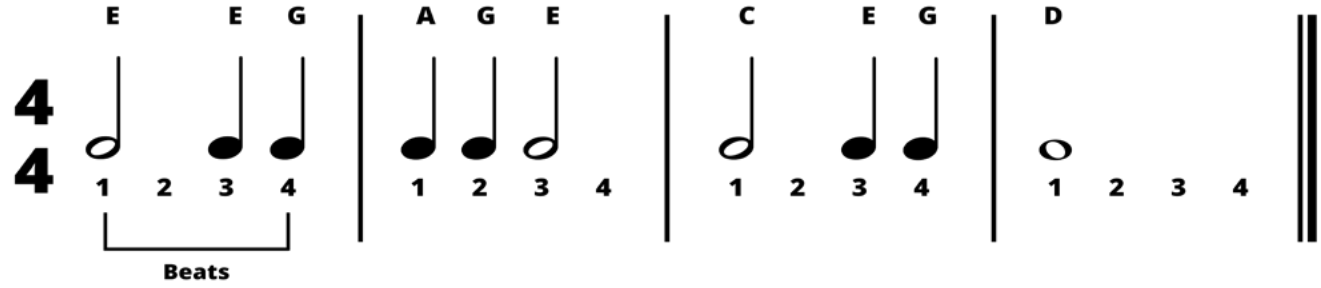
RHYTHM (0:50–0:40)

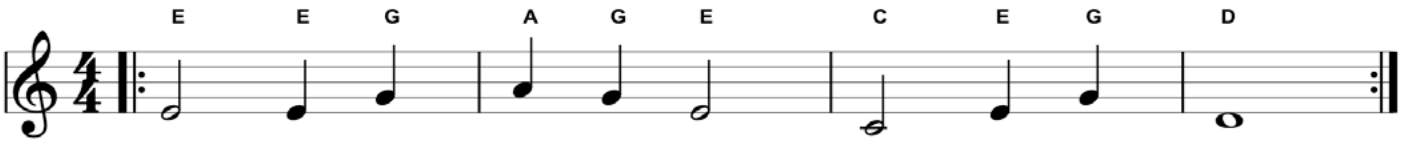
Yesterday, you learned about whole, half, and quarter notes. Today's exercise is a review of those foundational notes, so be sure to spend the full 10 minutes on this one. As always, turn that metronome on and start slowly, increasing your speed incrementally.



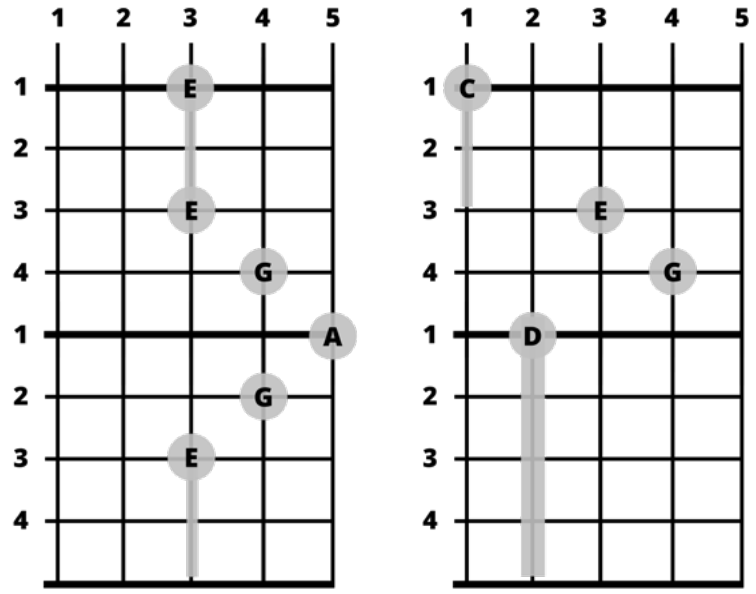
MELODY (0:40–0:30)

Today's melody consists of notes from the C major pentatonic scale. With your right hand, start by resting each finger on its corresponding note of the C major pentatonic scale (again, your thumb will be on middle C). Just like Day 1, we have built the melody off of the rhythm you just learned.



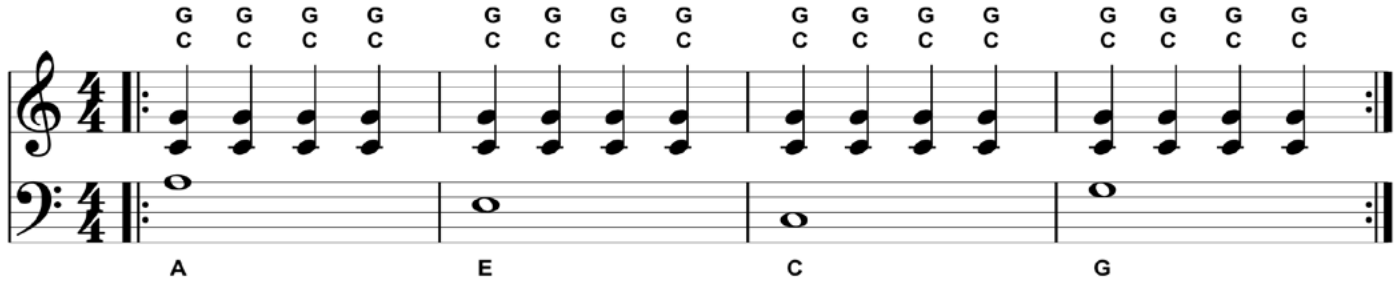


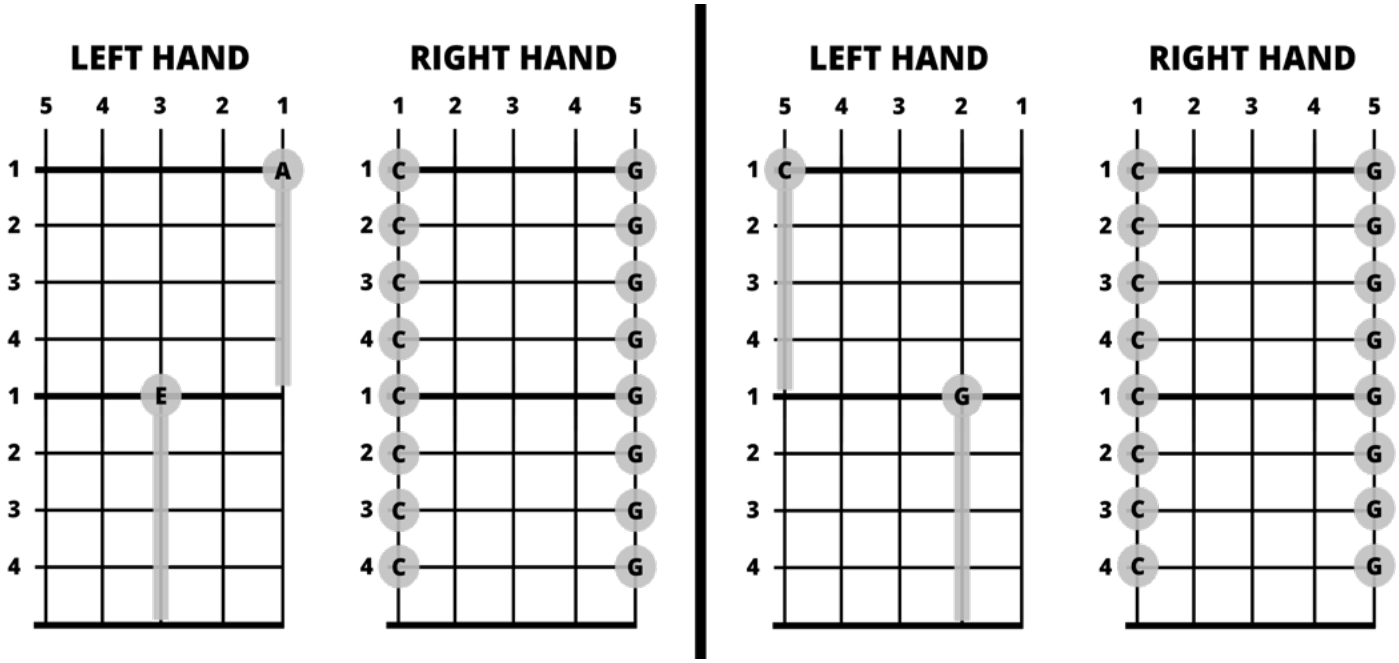
RIGHT HAND



CHORD PROGRESSION (0:30–0:20)

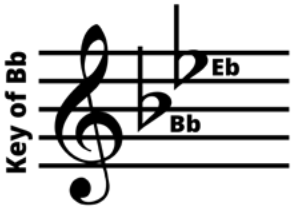
Just like yesterday, we are going to “cheat” with our chord progression. The right hand will pulse C and G in quarter notes. Meanwhile, the left hand will switch between A, E, C, and G every four beats. This chord progression is Am–Em–C–G.





THEORY: THE 12 KEYS OF MUSIC, PART 2 (0:20–0:10)

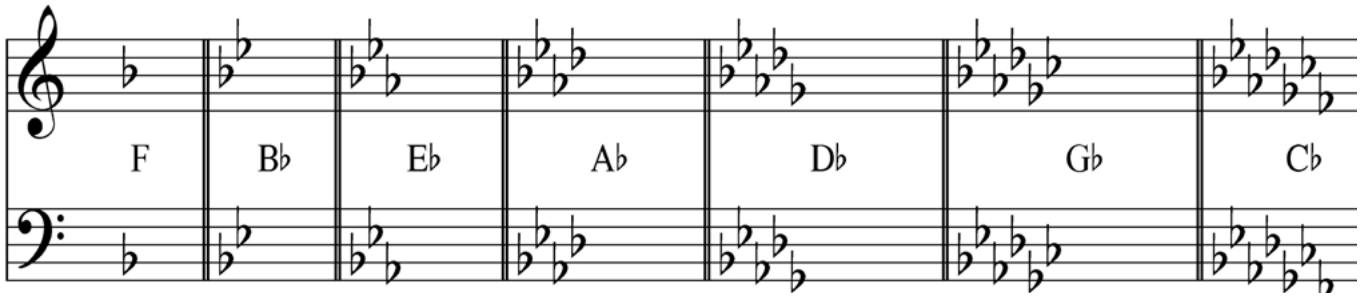
Yesterday, we learned about the key signatures containing sharps. Today, we’ll focus on the key signatures with flats. With flat keys, you can determine the music’s key by locating the second flat from the right. For instance, in the example below, the second flat from the right is B♭; therefore, this key signature represents the key of B♭ major.



Notes in the Key of Bb

Bb - C - D - Eb - F - G - A -Bb

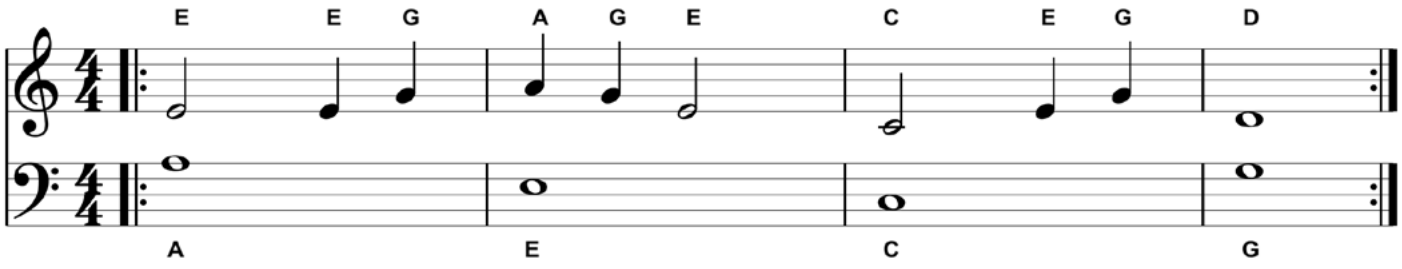
The example below contains every possible key signature with flats. You may notice that there is some overlap between key signatures. For instance, G♭ contains the same notes as F♯. In other words, they are the same key, only one is notated with sharps, while the other is notated with flats. As mentioned earlier, these keys are *enharmonic equivalents*.

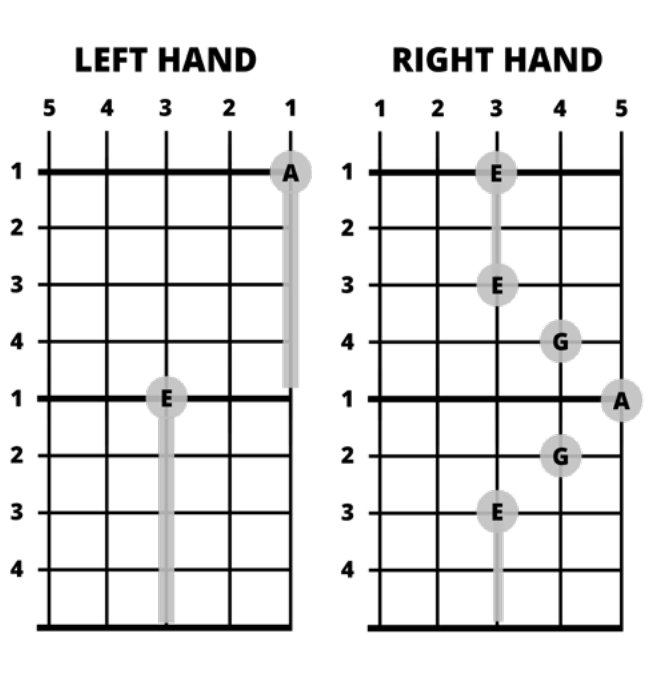


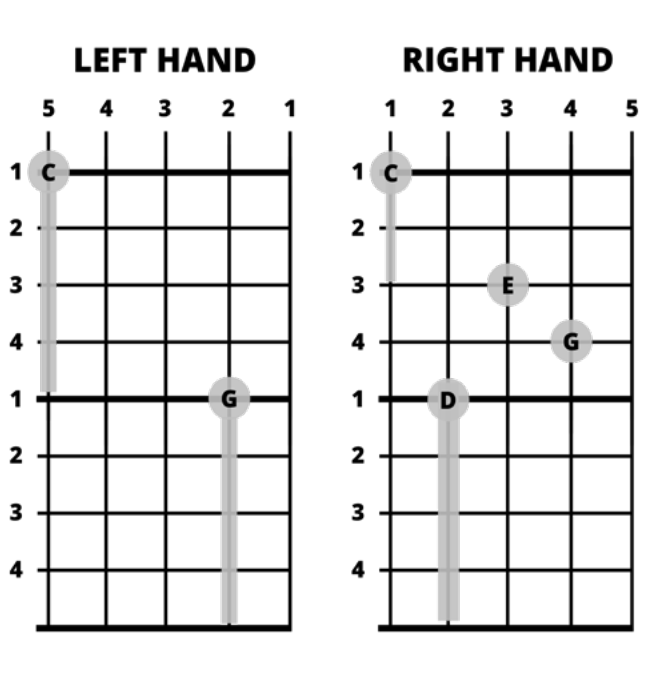
MUSICAL PIECE (0:10–0:00)

Continuing with our pattern, the musical piece below is a culmination of everything you have learned today. Your right hand will play the melody we learned earlier, while the left hand will play the chord progression from the Chord Progression section.

Of course, our daily musical pieces are not full songs. If they were, they may just be the world's shortest! Instead, they are quick exercises to get you playing great music fast! Many of these pieces are designed to be played as a loop. That means, when you reach the end, you can immediately go back to the beginning and repeat the exercise.




LEFT HAND
RIGHT HAND
5 4 3 2 1
1 2 3 4 5
A
E
E
E
G
G
A
E


LEFT HAND
RIGHT HAND
5 4 3 2 1
1 2 3 4 5
C
G
C
E
G
D

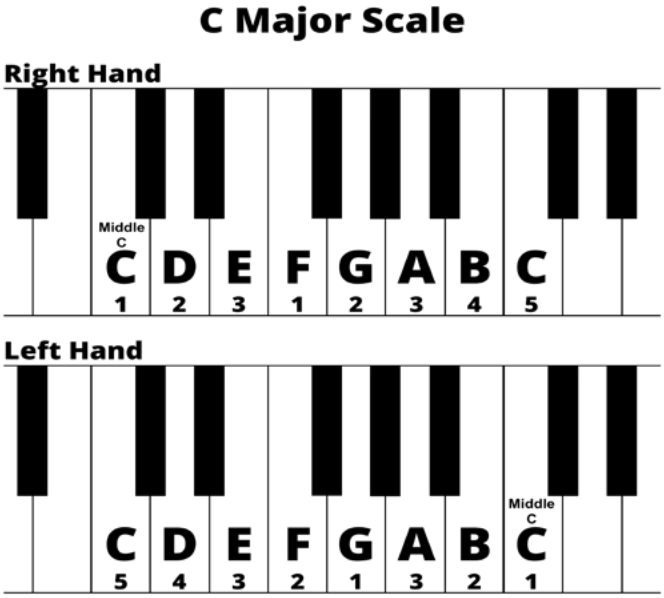
DAY 3

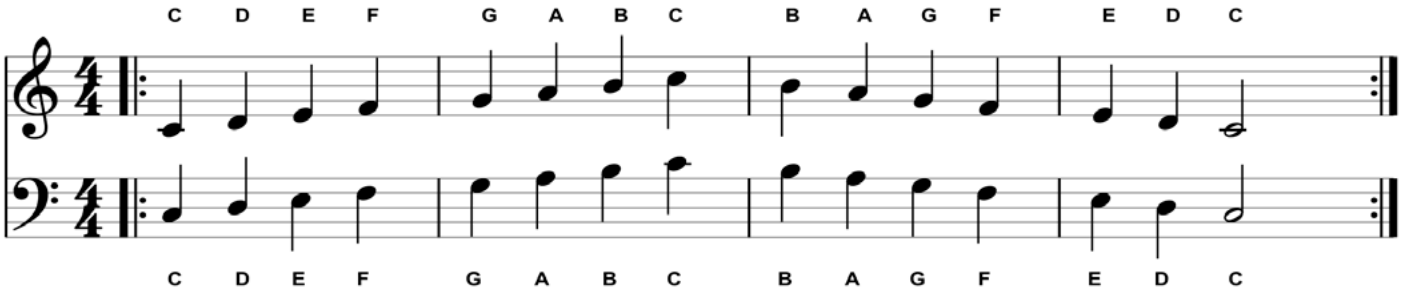
SCALE: C MAJOR (1:00–0:50)

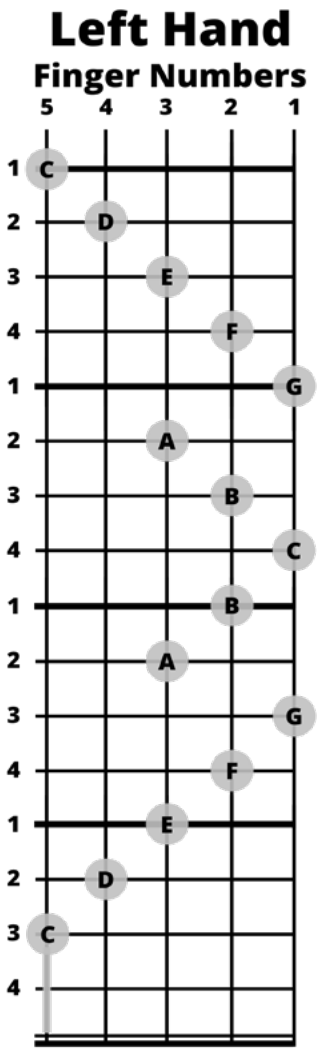
Today, we will introduce our first *seven*-note scale. The C major scale is the most basic on piano, as it incorporates only white keys. The fingering for a major scale is different from a pentatonic scale. First, locate middle C (C4). With your RH, your thumb (1) will start on C. Once you have played E (3), your thumb (1) will move underneath your middle finger (3) and play the F. From there, you can use the remaining four fingers, in order, to ascend the rest of the scale.

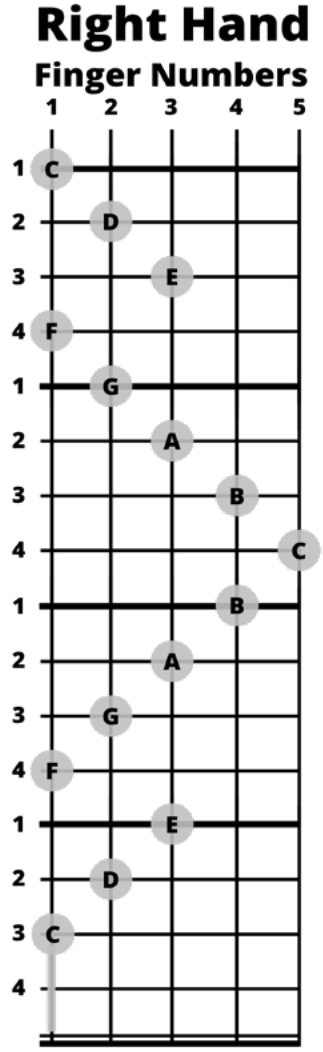
The LH will start with your pinky (5) on C3. You will use all five fingers to ascend all the way to G. Once you've reached G, your middle finger (3) will move over your thumb and land on A. This will allow you to continue ascending and land on C4 (middle C) with your thumb (1).

Don't forget to use your metronome! Practice with each hand separately and gradually increase your speed. Once you feel comfortable, try it with both hands!



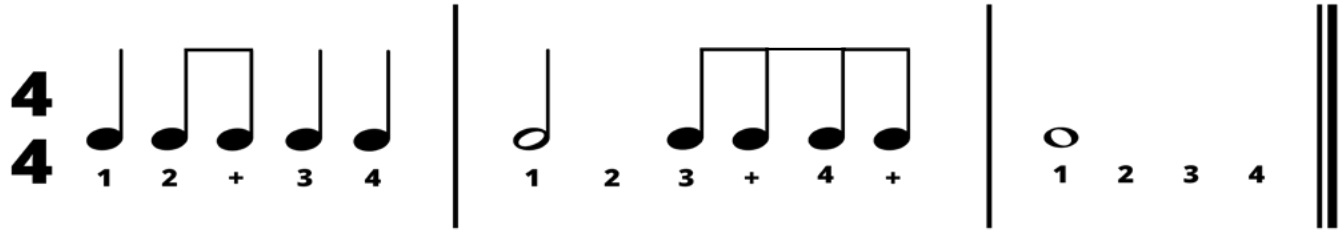






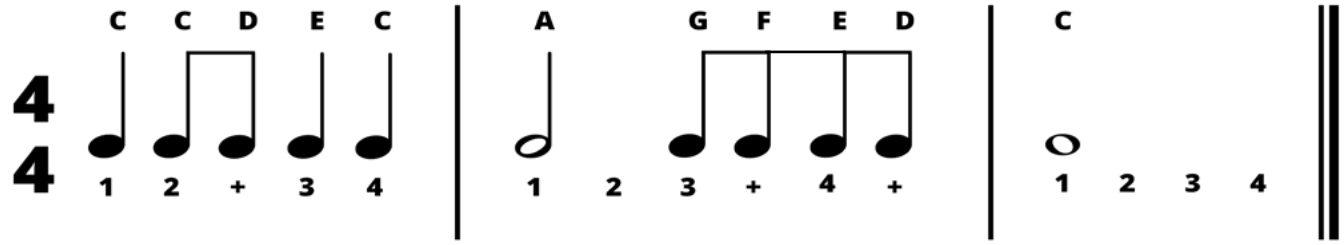
RHYTHM (0:50–0:40)

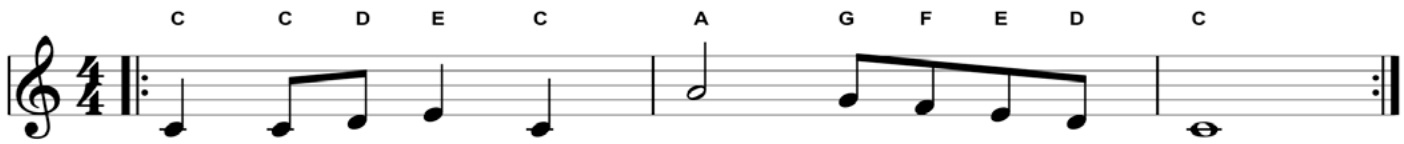
Today, we will add in eighth notes! If you're good with math, by now, you've probably deciphered that an eighth note is half the amount of a quarter note. That means that, in 4/4 time, the eighth note gets half a beat. When counting out loud, we represent the eighth note that occurs between beats (i.e., the off-beat) by saying "and." Turn your metronome on and set it to 60 BPM. For every click, count out loud: "One, two, three, four." Next, add "and" in between each number: "One-and, two-and, three-and, four-and." Counting out loud while playing a rhythm is a great way to stay on beat.



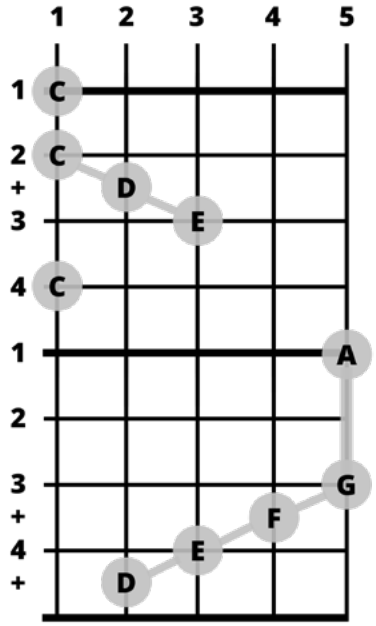
MELODY (0:40–0:30)

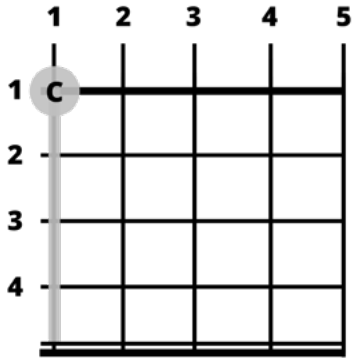
Today's melody will consist of notes from—you guessed it!—the C major scale. Be mindful of the finger numbers, which enable you to play the melody in the most efficient way possible.





RIGHT HAND



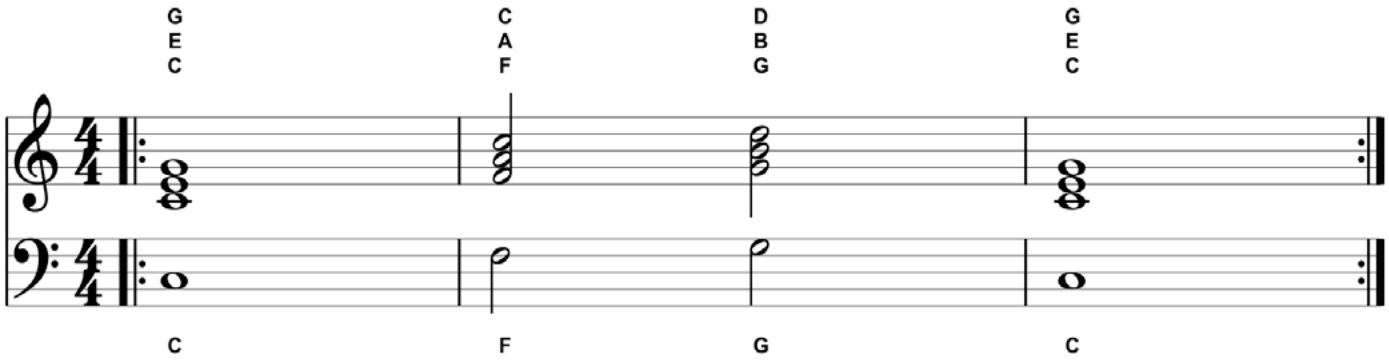


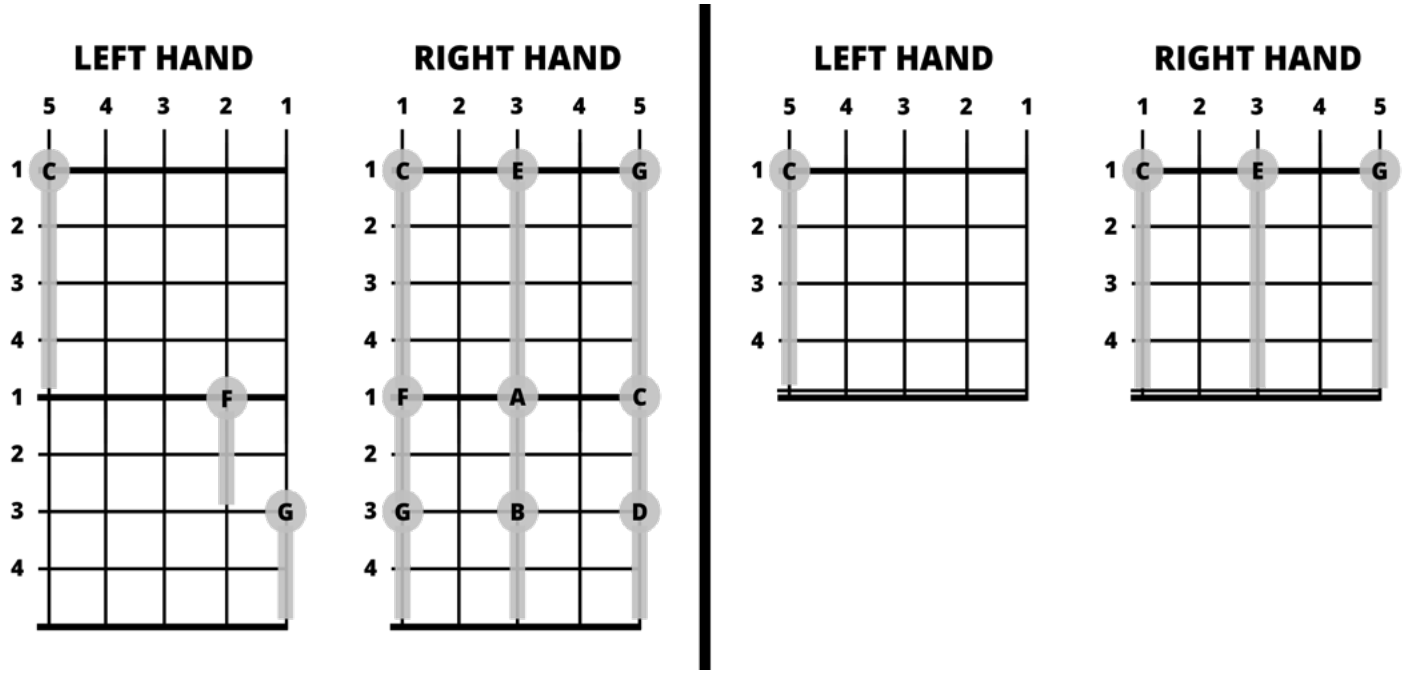
On beat 3 of measure 2, you'll shift your pinky (5) from A to G and then descend the remaining notes with consecutive fingers.

CHORD PROGRESSION (0:30–0:20)

Today, we are done cheating! Rather than keeping the same two notes in your RH, you will play triads. A *triad* is a series of three notes stacked in 3rds (every other note of their corresponding scale). A C major triad, for example, consists of the notes C, E, and G—the first, third, and fifth notes of the C major scale.

With your RH, use your thumb (1) to play C, middle finger (3) for E, and pinky (5) for G. If you play the notes at the same time, you're playing a C major chord, or triad. Repeat the same process for the next two triads, F and G. First, take time to practice the chord progression with just your right hand. Once you're comfortable, add in your left hand, which plays the lower root notes. The *root note* is the first note in a chord, and the note from which the chord gets its name. So, your LH will simply play C, F, and G.





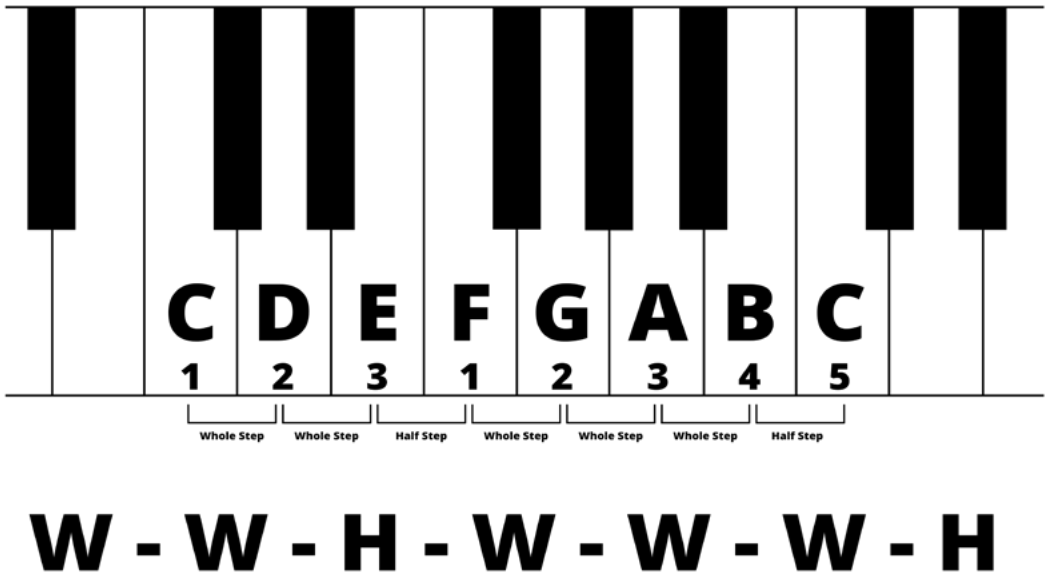
This progression, C–F–G–C, is not only one of the simplest, but also one of the most popular of all time.

THEORY: THE WHOLE STEP/HALF STEP PATTERN OF MAJOR SCALES (0:20–0:10)

Since there are 12 different keys in music, there are also 12 different major scales that can be played on the piano. Every major scale uses the same whole step and half step pattern. Remember, a half step is the distance between two adjacent notes on the piano, and a whole step is two half steps.

Below is the whole step/half step pattern for major scales:

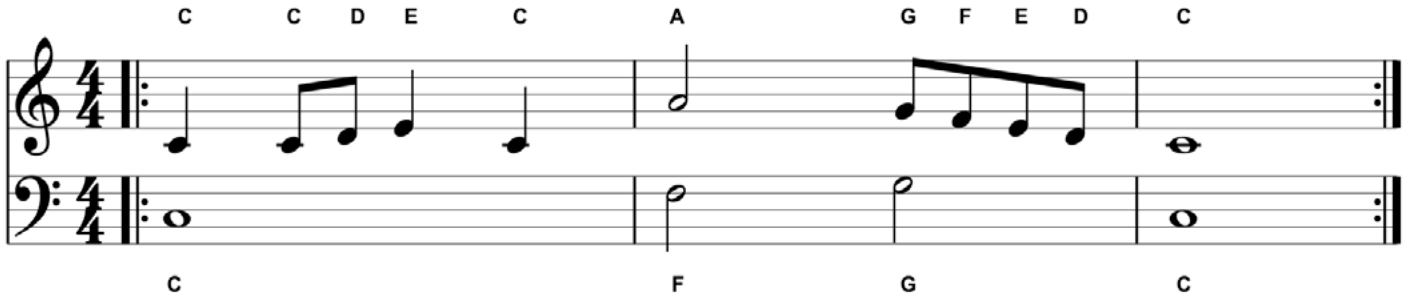
Whole – Whole – Half – Whole – Whole – Whole – Half

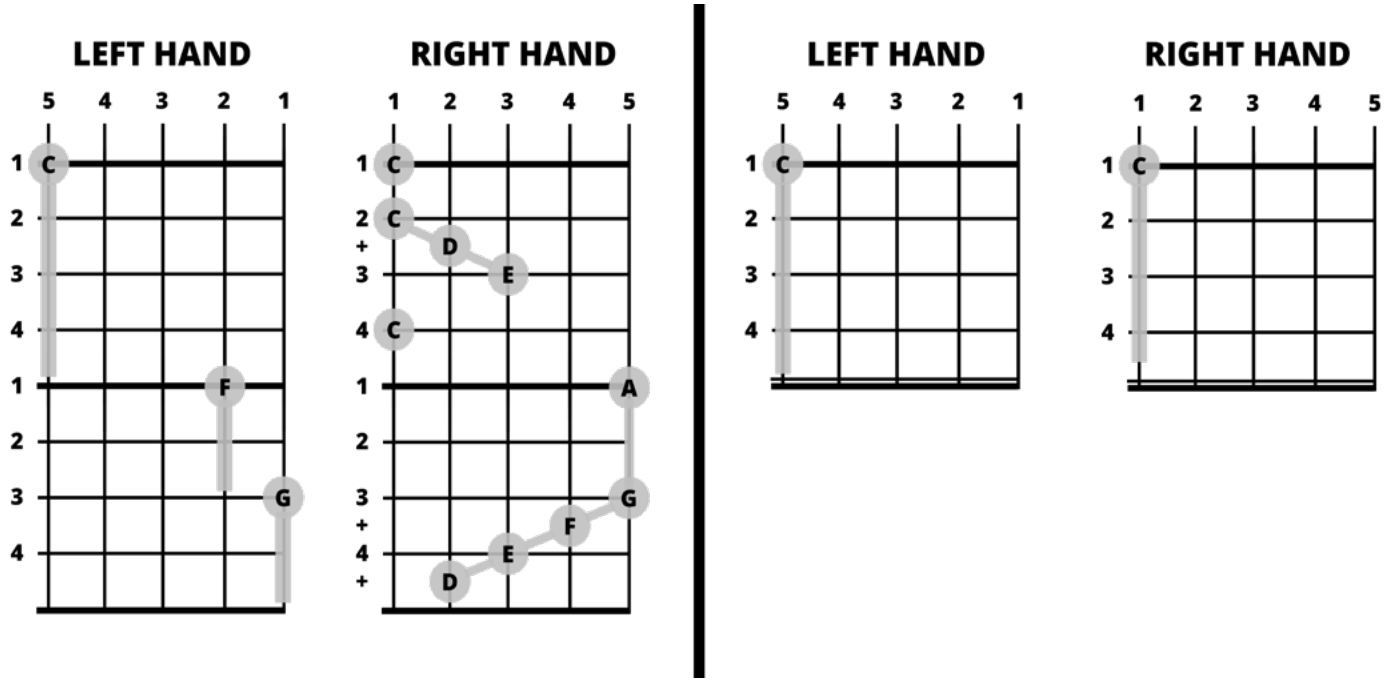


As you can see, a natural half step occurs between the notes E and F, and B and C. On the piano, this means that there is no black key separating them. Once you understand the whole step/half step pattern of major scales, you can figure out any major scale on your own! If you're feeling brave, take some time to figure out major scales that start on notes other than C.

MUSICAL PIECE (0:10–0:00)

As always, the musical piece below is the culmination of everything you have learned in today's lessons. Your right hand will play the melody we learned in the Melody section, while the left hand will play the chord progression from the Chord Progression section.



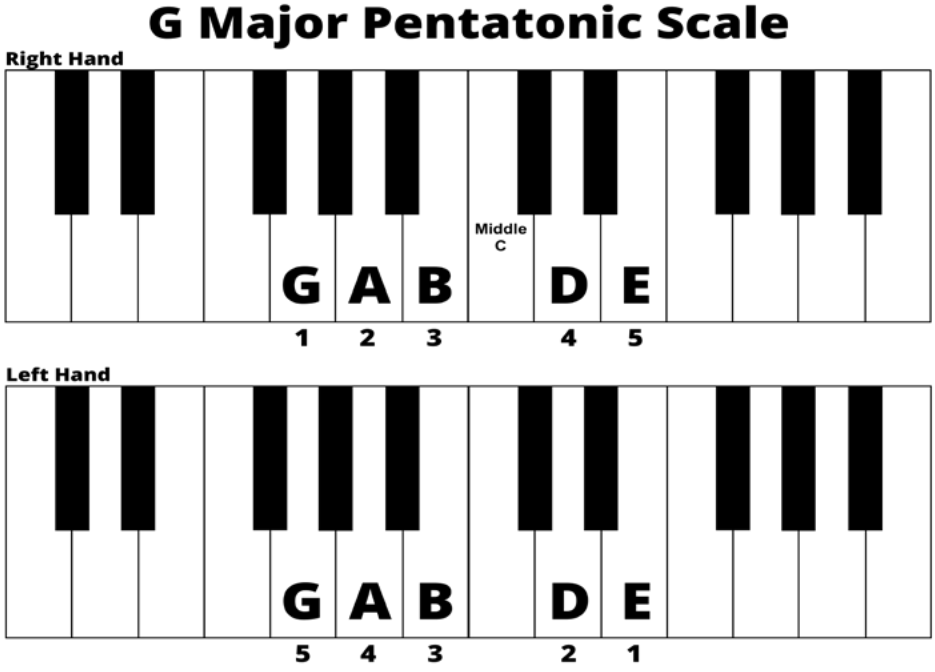


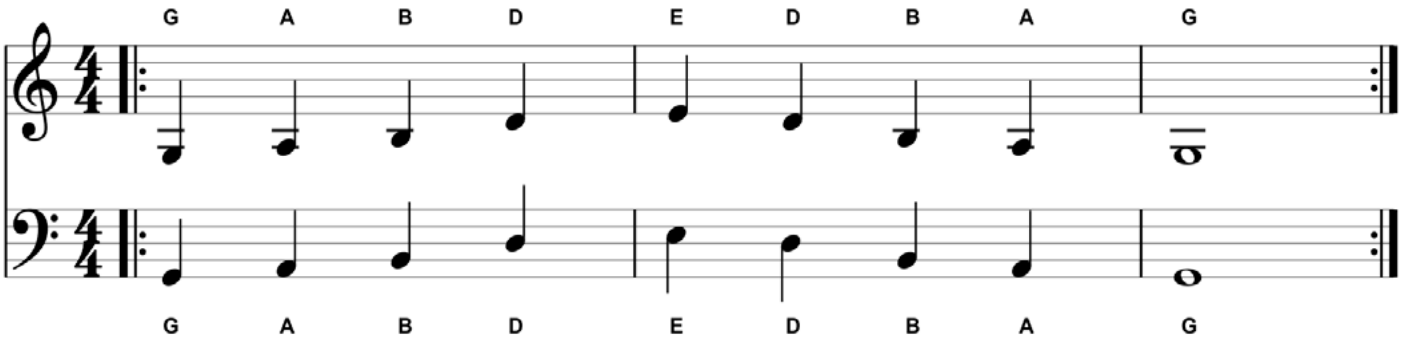
DAY 4

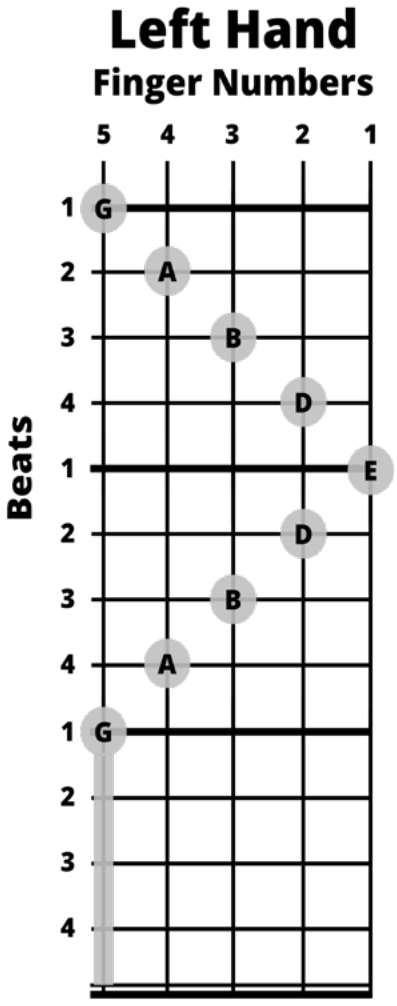
SCALE: G MAJOR PENTATONIC AND G MAJOR (1:00–0:50)

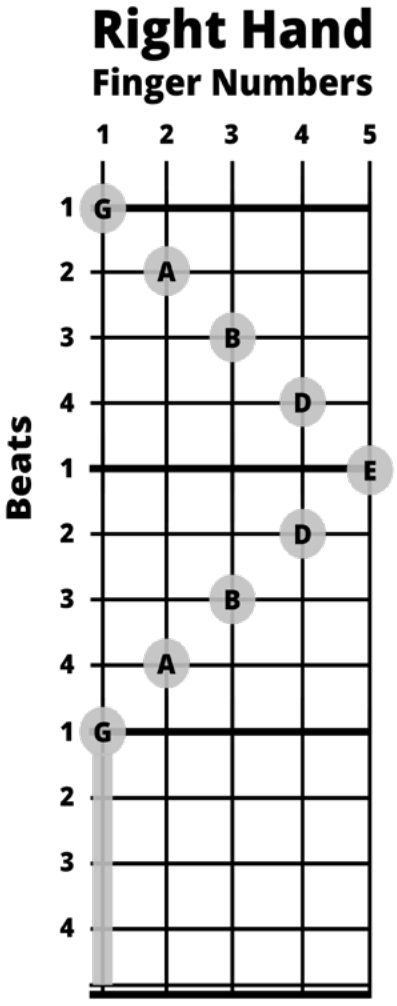
Today, we have two scales to practice! Take some time to practice both the G major pentatonic scale and the G major scale. Notice that the G major scale uses only one black key, F♯.

Don’t forget to use your metronome! Practice with each hand separately and gradually increase the speed. Once you feel comfortable, try it with both hands! Also, don’t feel obligated to master both scales in one sitting; instead, spend five minutes on each scale, and then move on to the next section. You can come back and work on these scales periodically until they become second nature. In fact, scales are a great way to warm up!



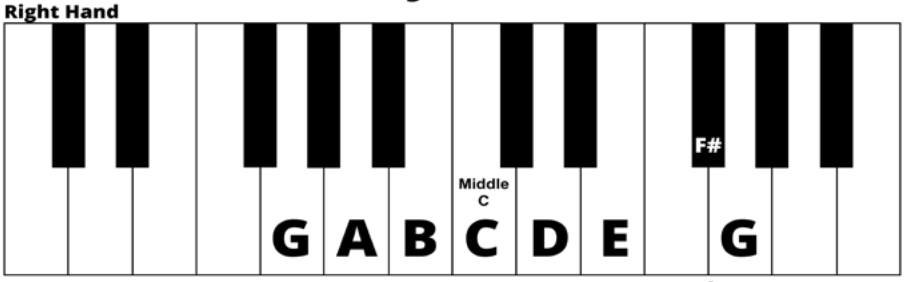

G A B D E D B A G
G A B D E D B A G


Left Hand
Finger Numbers
5 4 3 2 1
Beats
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4
G A B D E D B A G

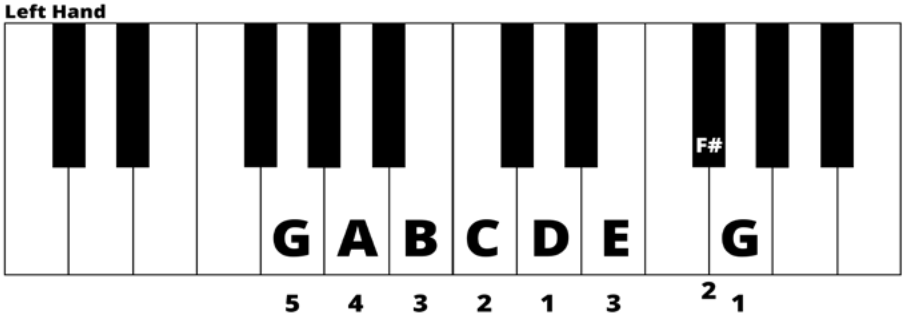

Right Hand
Finger Numbers
1 2 3 4 5
Beats
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4
G A B D E D B A G

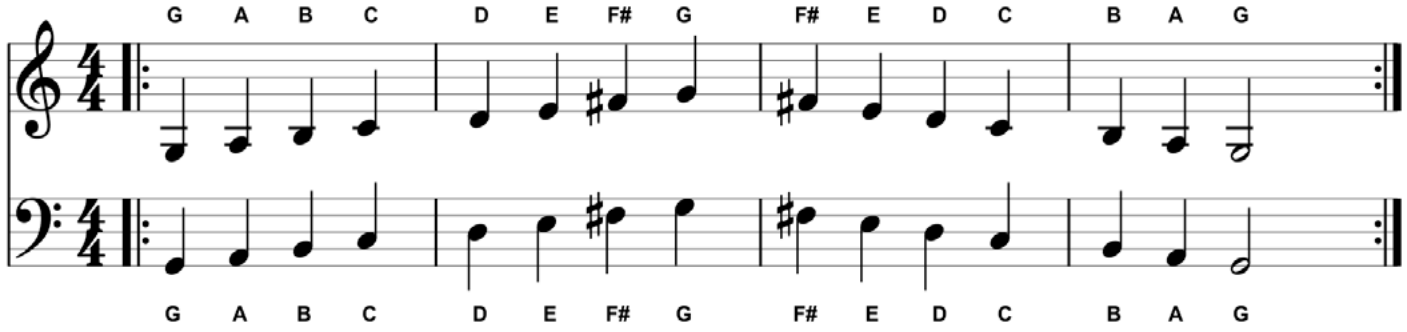
G Major Scale

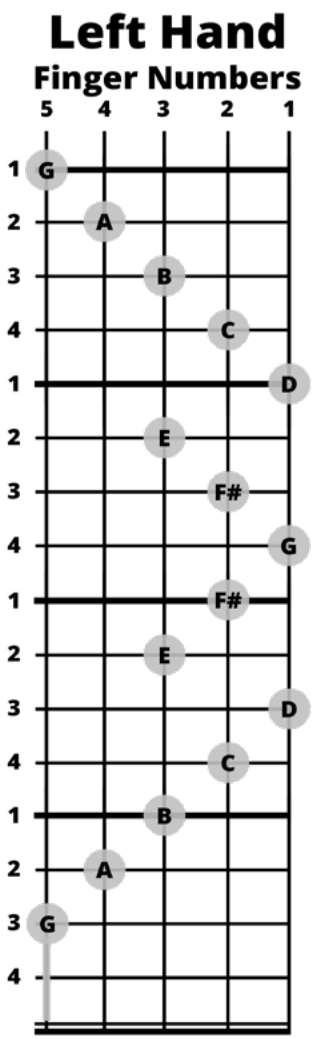
Right Hand

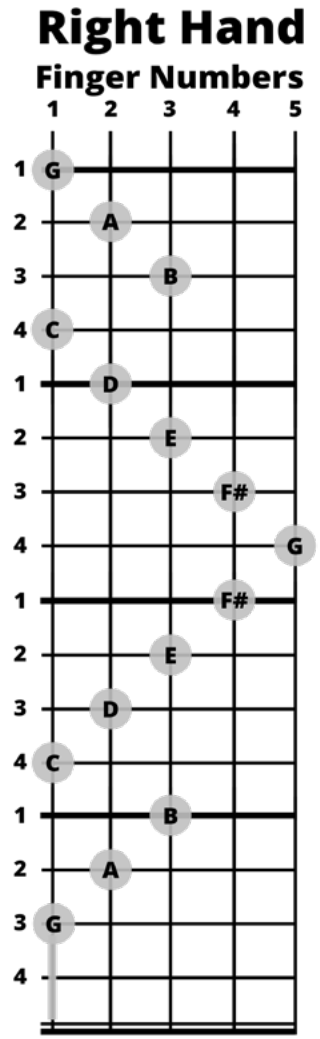


Left Hand



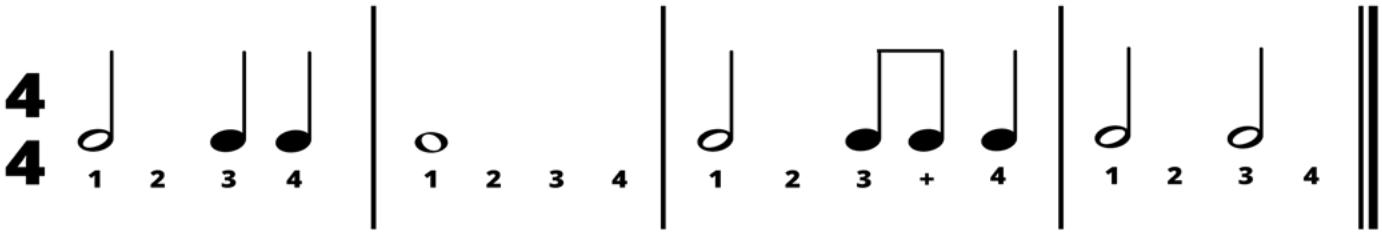






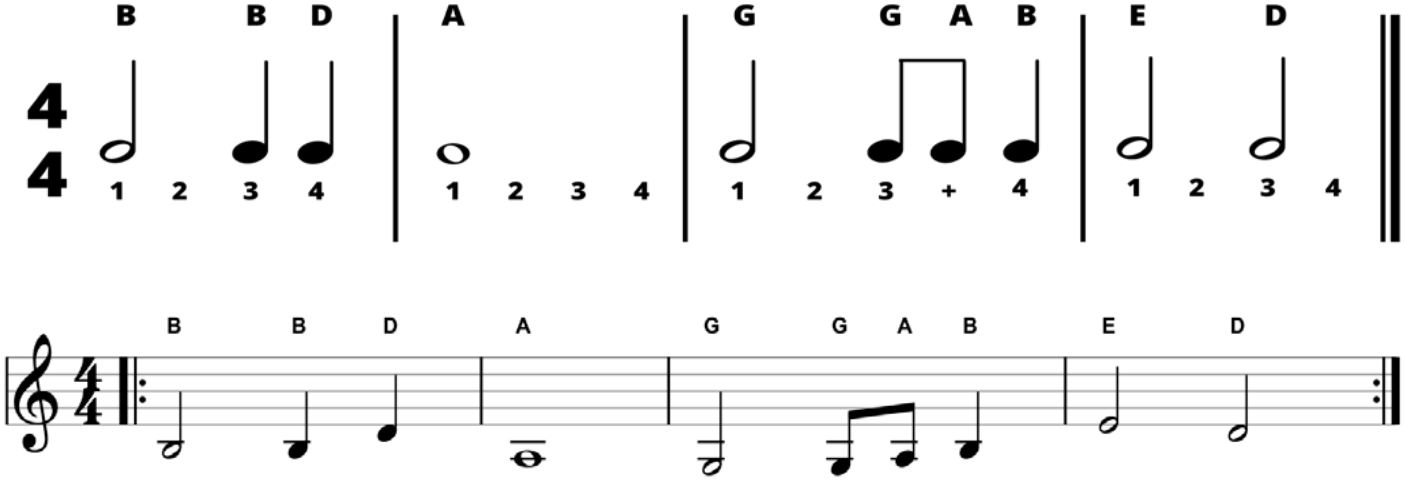
RHYTHM (0:50–0:40)

Today's rhythm incorporates whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, and eighth notes. Be sure to start slow, stay with your metronome, and gradually increase the speed as you get more and more comfortable.

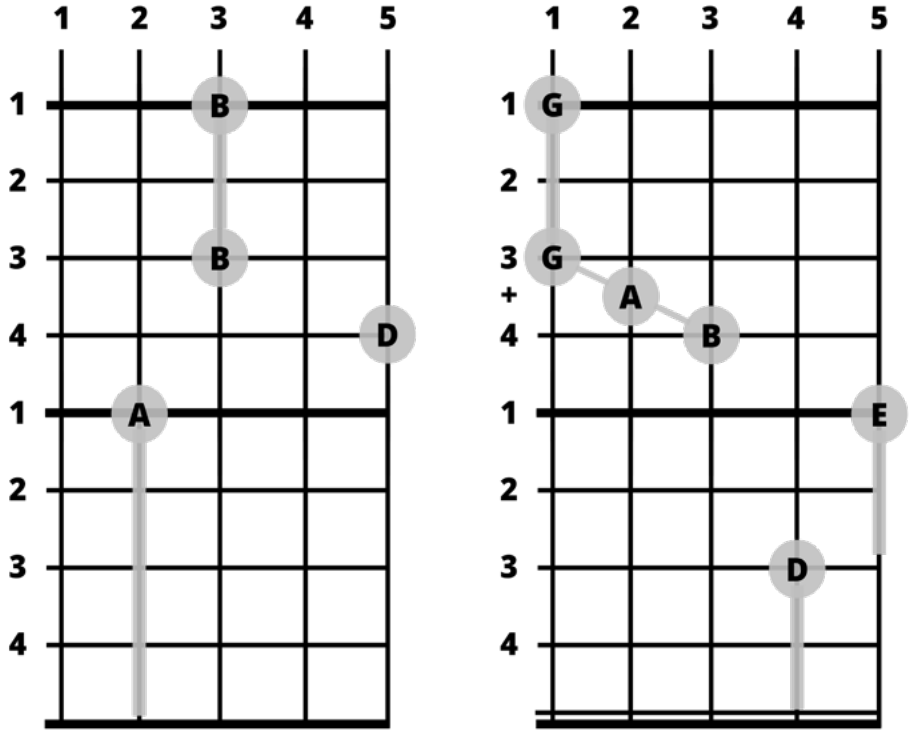


MELODY (0:40–0:30)

Today's melody is built off the G major pentatonic scale. The fingerings are pretty straightforward, but be sure to reference the piano tab as you go.



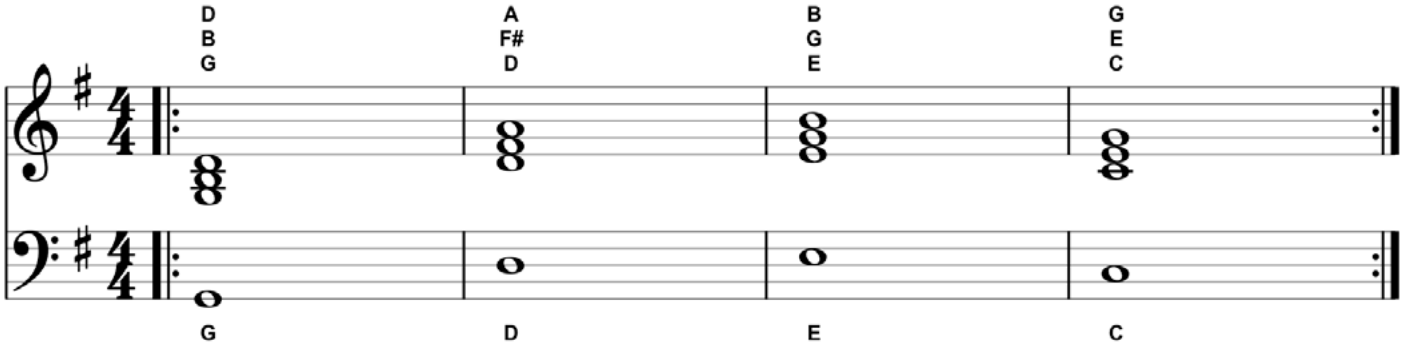
RIGHT HAND

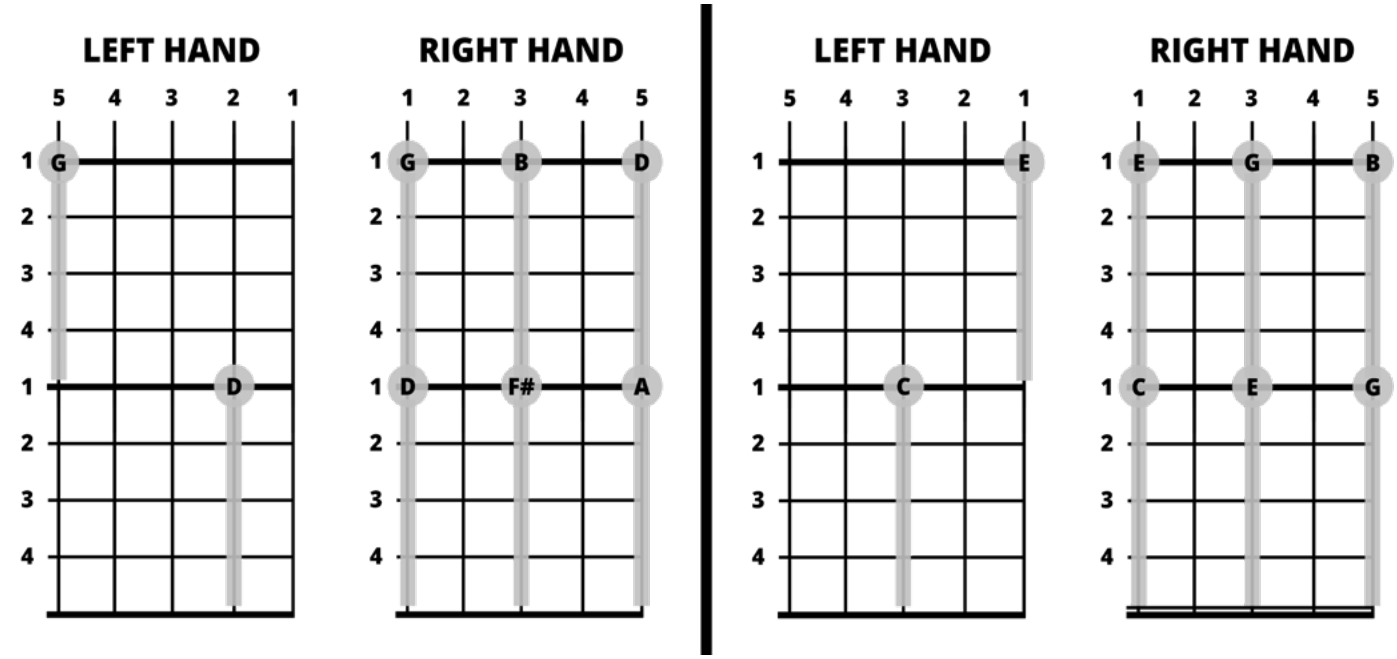


CHORD PROGRESSION (0:30–0:20)

Today's chord progression, G–D–Em–C, is a pop music staple. From classics like "Take Me Home, Country Road" (John Denver) and "Let It Be" (The Beatles) to more contemporary hits like "She Will Be Loved" (Maroon 5) and "Fight Song" (Rachel Platten), this chord progression can be found in a variety of genres and music generations.

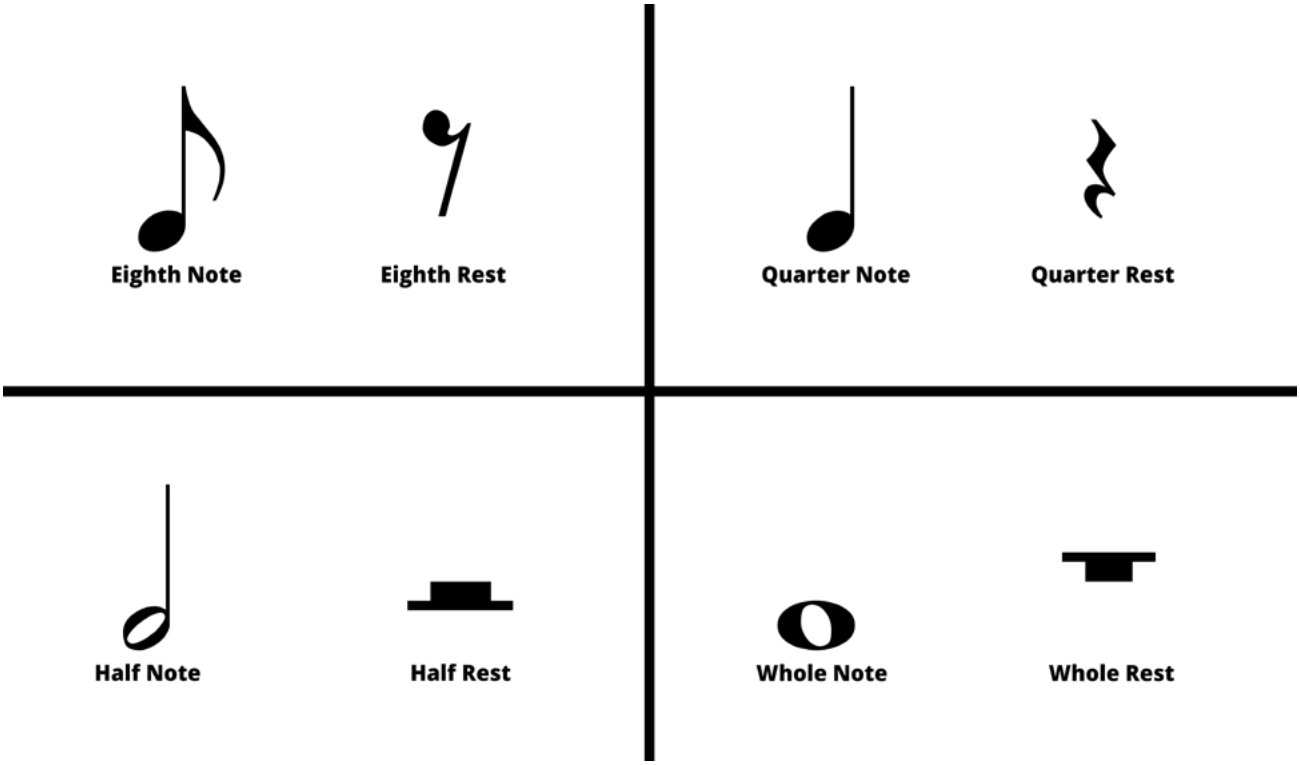
As always, refer to the piano tab for fingering tips. This one is pretty straightforward, but the tab will help to speed up the learning process.





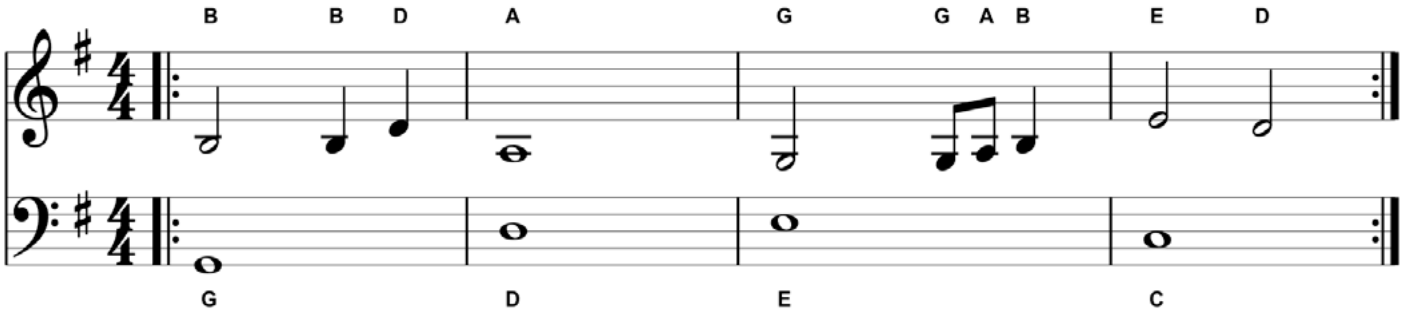
THEORY (0:20–0:10)

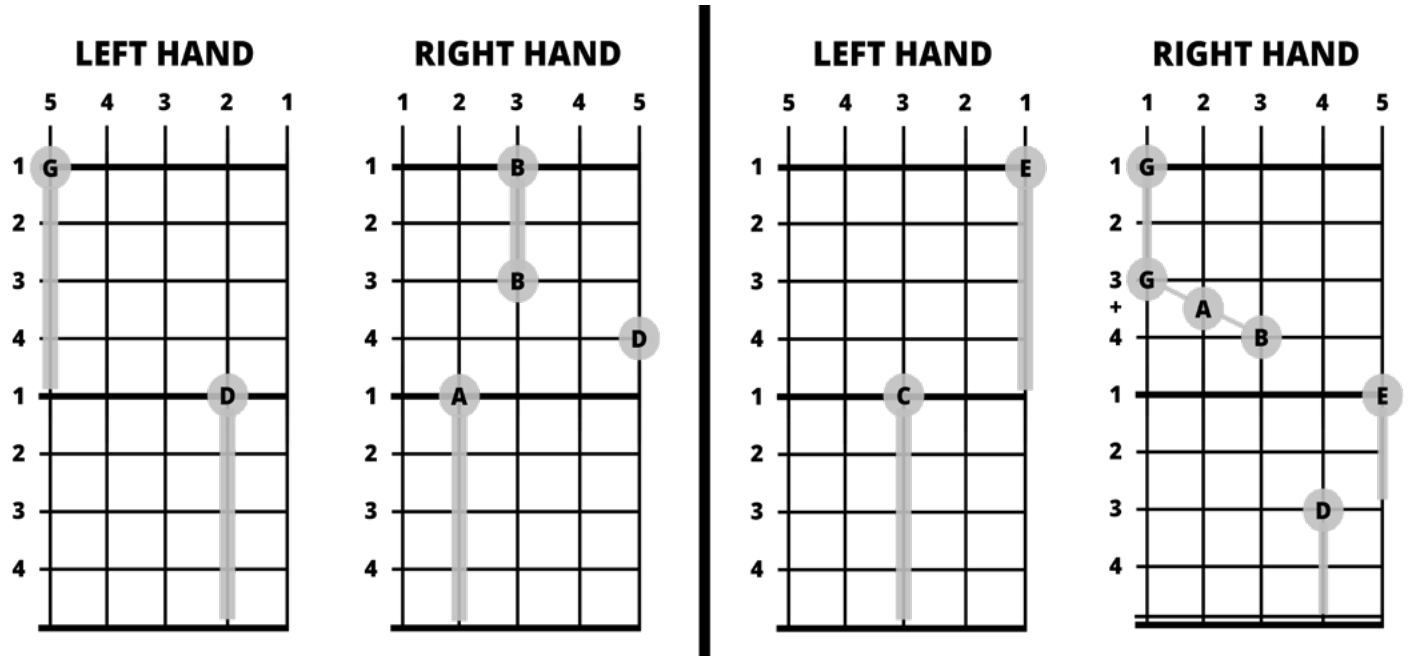
A *rest* is the musical term used to represent a moment of silence. There are different symbols that denote how long to rest. These symbols correspond with certain types of notes. For instance, a quarter rest is the same duration as a quarter note (1 beat). Take some time to study the symbols below to learn which rests correspond with which notes.



MUSICAL PIECE (0:10–0:00)

Today's musical piece incorporates the melody from the Melody section (right hand) and the chord progression from the Chord Progression section (left hand). Remember, if you struggle playing both parts simultaneously, then simply practice each hand independently. Once you get comfortable, try bringing both hands together.



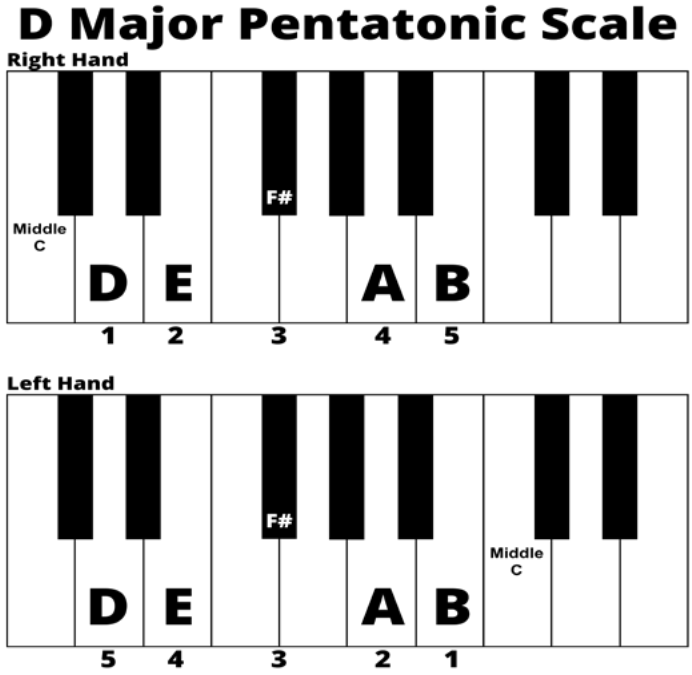


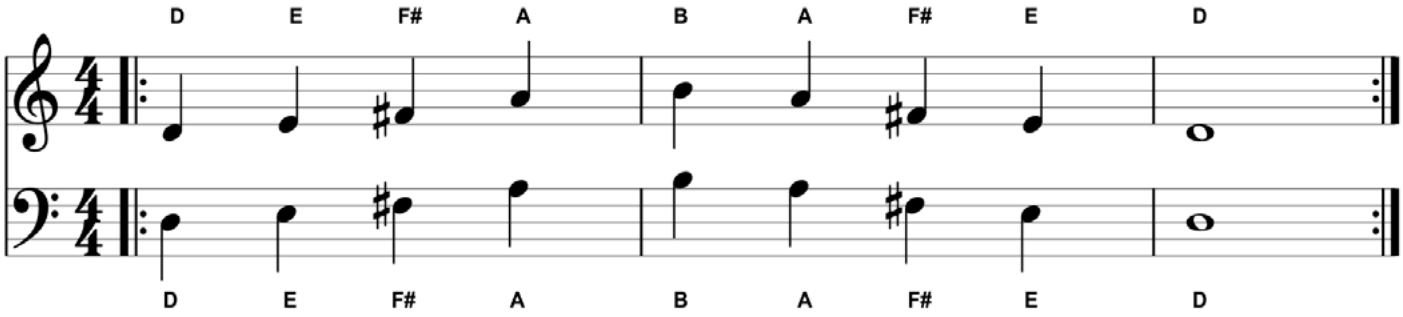
DAY 5

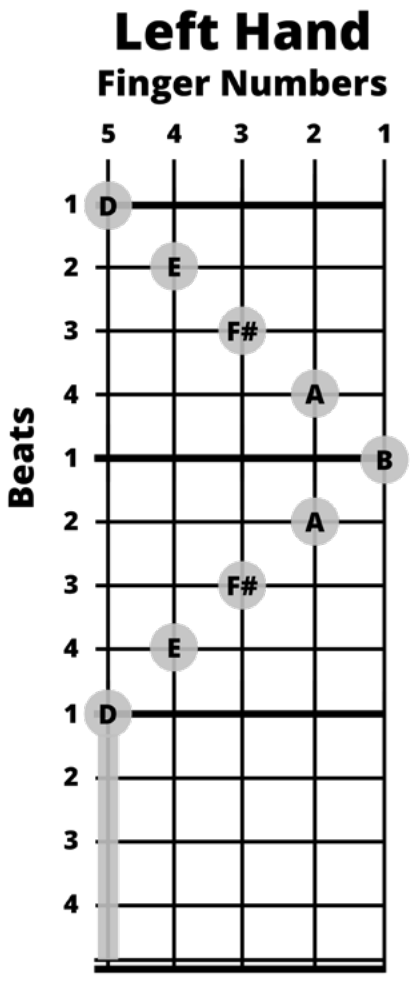
SCALE: D MAJOR PENTATONIC AND D MAJOR (1:00–0:50)

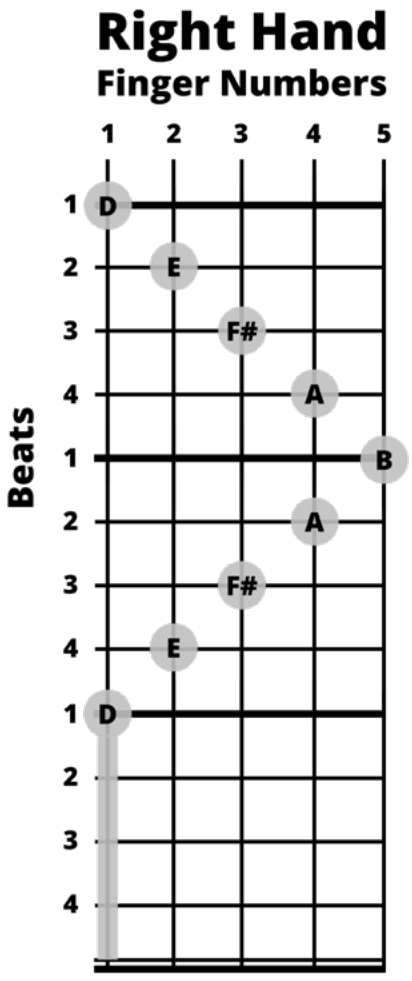
Two new scales today—D major pentatonic and D major! The D major pentatonic scale contains one sharp, F♯, and the D major scale contains two sharps, F♯ and C♯. Remember, practicing scales can serve as a great warmup!

As stated yesterday, don't feel obligated to master both scales in one sitting; instead, divide your time between each scale, and then move on to the next section. You can always come back to these scales at a later date. In fact, I recommend it!



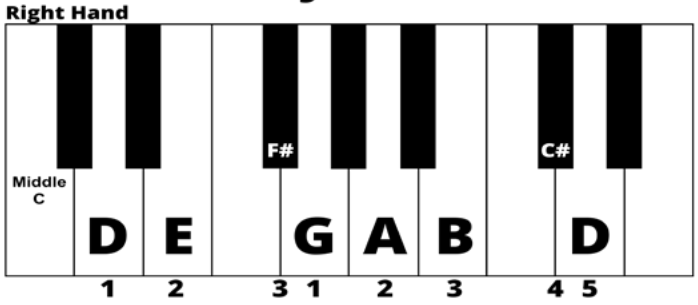

D E F# A B A F# E D
D E F# A B A F# E D


Left Hand
Finger Numbers
5 4 3 2 1
Beats
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4
D E F# A B A F# E D

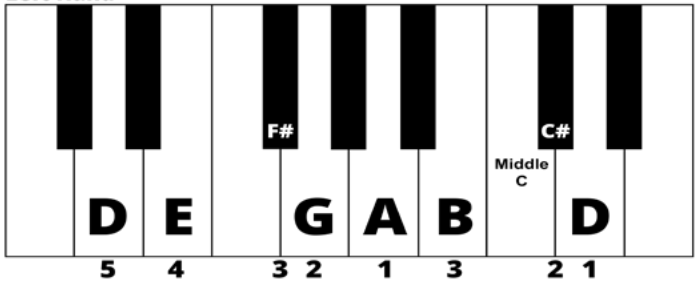

Right Hand
Finger Numbers
1 2 3 4 5
Beats
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4
D E F# A B A F# E D

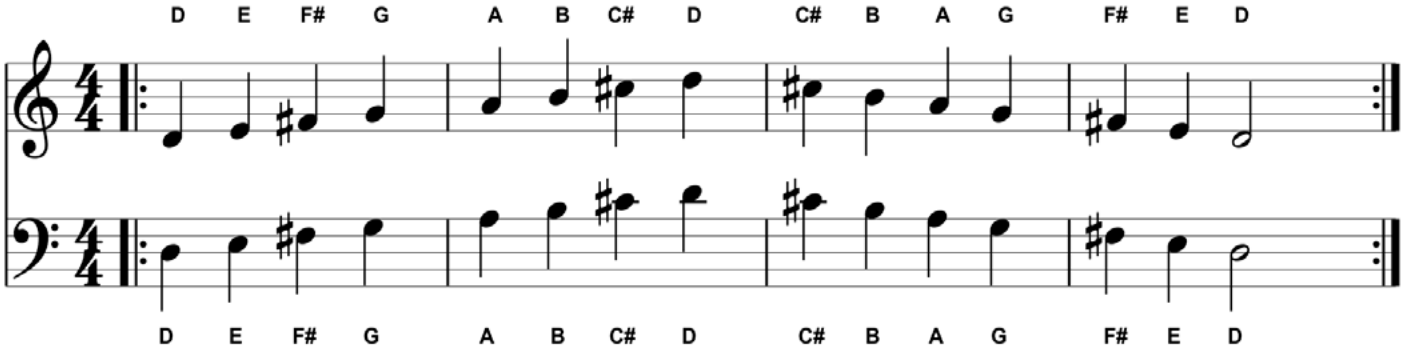
D Major Scale

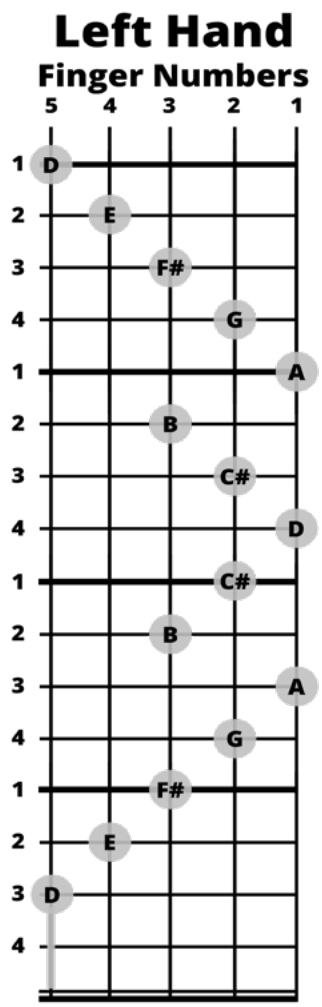
Right Hand

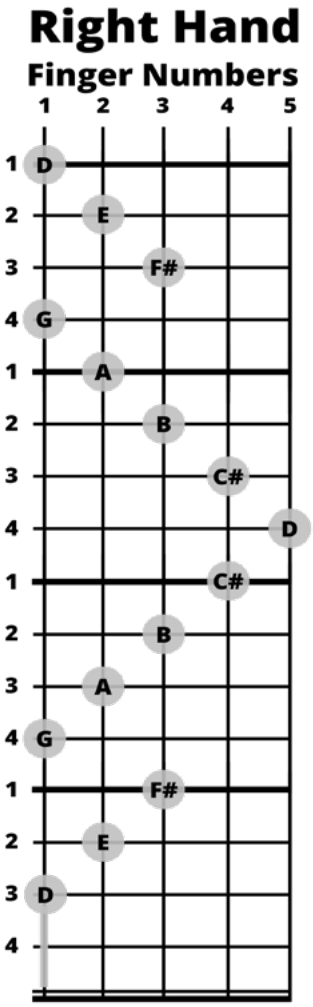


Left Hand



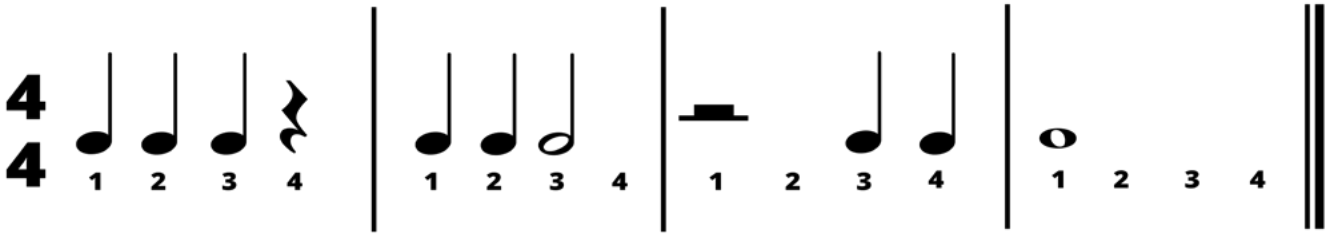






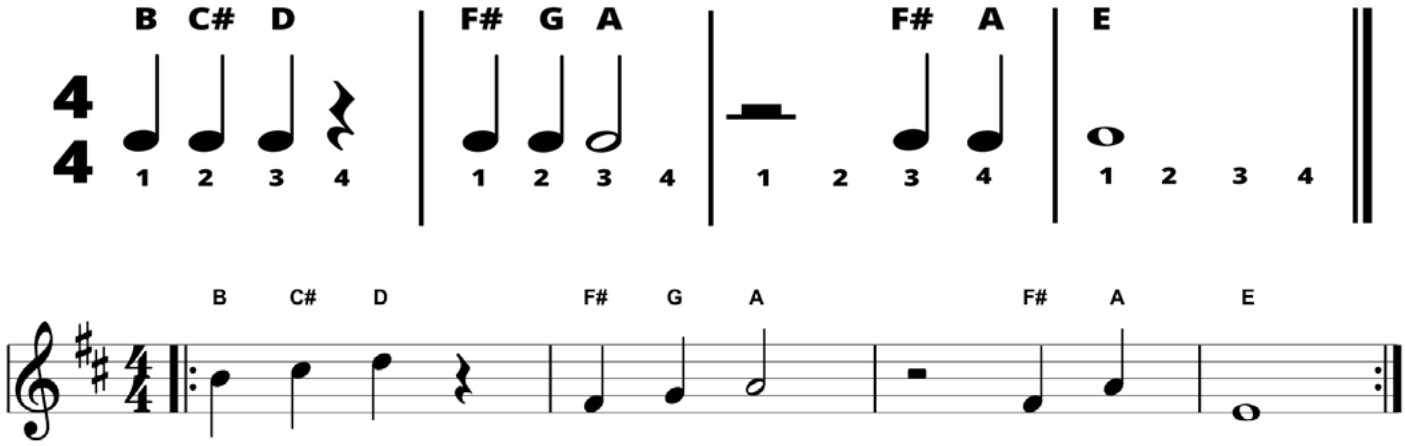
RHYTHM (0:50–0:40)

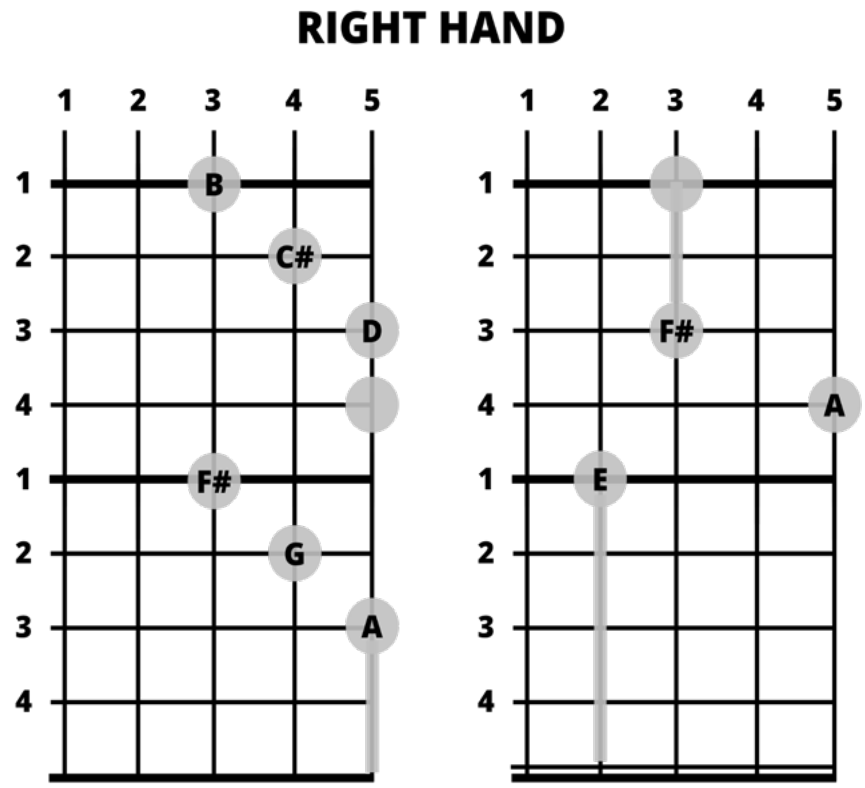
Yesterday, we learned about rests, and today our rhythm example incorporates these rests. Make sure your metronome is on and stay locked in while you clap along. If the rhythm gives you trouble, listen to the accompanying audio to hear how it should sound.



MELODY (0:40–0:30)

Today's melody is built off the D major scale. Be mindful of the finger numbers so you play the melody in the most efficient way possible. And look out for those black keys!

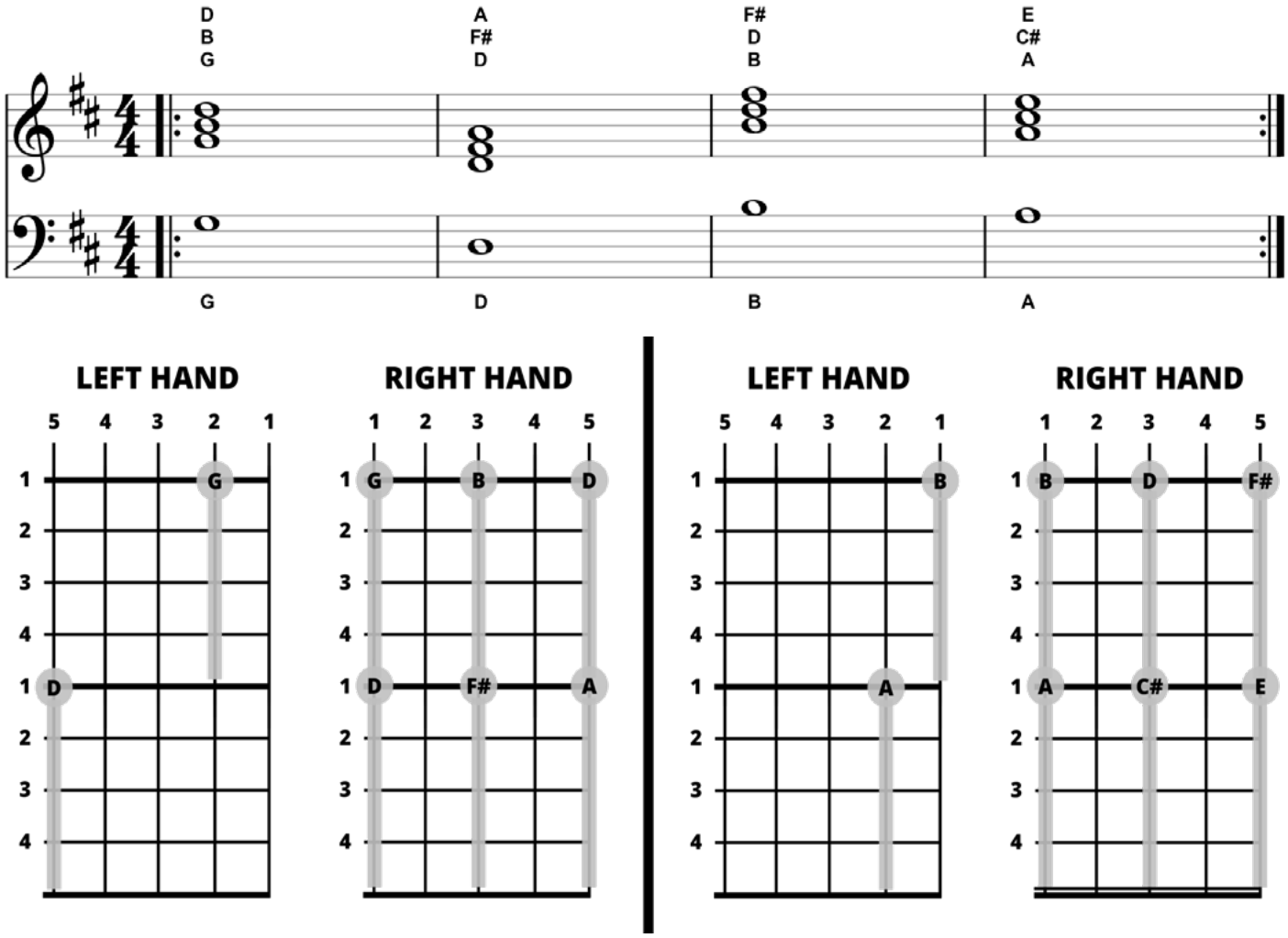




CHORD PROGRESSION (0:30–0:20)

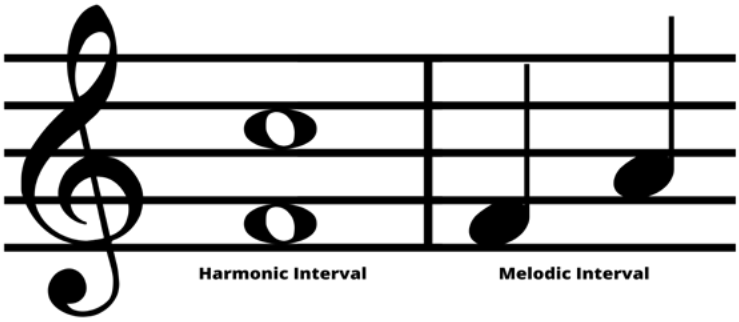
Today's chord progression, G–D–Bm–A, is another progression that can be found throughout pop music. Remember back to the first couple of days, when we "cheated" on the chord progressions by using the first and fifth notes of the scale? This can be a great tactic to use here while you're locking in your

left hand. Plus, it sounds great! So, feel free to practice this chord progression while only playing the notes D and A throughout with your right hand's thumb (1) and pinky (5) fingers, respectively. Once you feel comfortable with your left hand, try playing the full triads in your right hand.



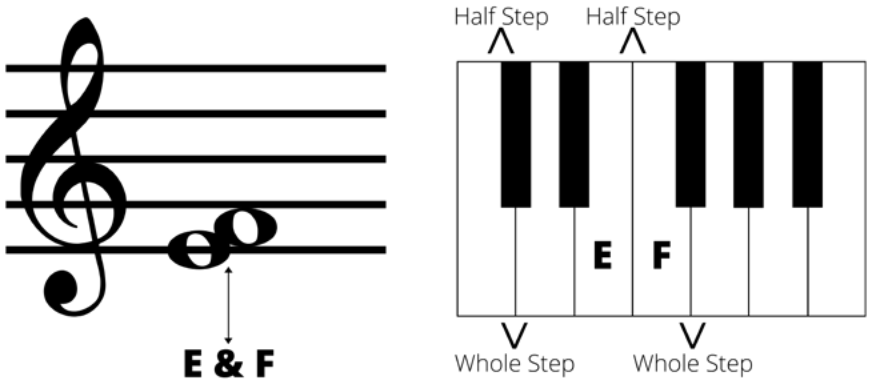
THEORY (0:20–0:10)

Today's theory lesson is on intervals! An *interval* is the distance between two pitches. There are harmonic (vertical) intervals and melodic (horizontal) intervals. A *harmonic interval* is two notes played simultaneously. Think about our "cheat" chord progressions. When you play those two notes in your right hand, you're playing a harmonic interval of a perfect 5th. A *melodic interval* occurs when two notes are played one after another, like in a melody.



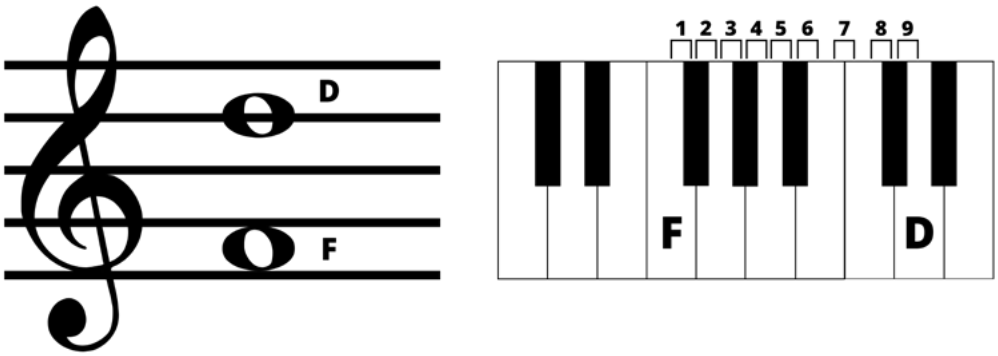
You've already learned about the two smallest intervals: a half step and a whole step. To review, a *half step* is the distance between two adjacent keys on the keyboard.

Half Step



There are two main identifiers for intervals: *quality* and *number*. There are five different "qualities" of intervals: major, minor, perfect, augmented, and diminished. The number refers to the distance from the first note of the interval to the next while counting up the musical alphabet. For example, C to G is an interval of a perfect 5th: **C (1)**, D (2), E (3), F (4), **G (5)**. Major intervals include the major 2nd (M2), major 3rd (M3), major 6th (M6), and major 7th (M7). Minor intervals include the minor 2nd (m2), minor 3rd (m3), minor 6th (m6), and minor 7th (m7). And perfect intervals include the unison (P1), perfect 4th (P4), perfect 5th (P5), and perfect octave (P8).

You can identify an interval by playing it on a piano and counting how many half steps are in between the notes. The table on the next page will help you determine what intervals correlate with the number of half steps.



9 Half Steps = Major 6th

Number of Half Steps	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Type of Interval	m2	M2	m3	M3	P4	* A4/d5	P5	m6	M6	m7	M7	P8

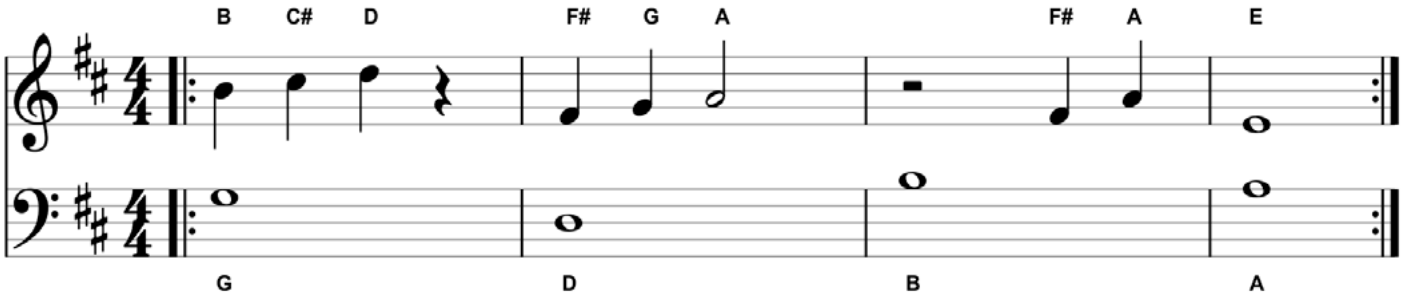
m = Minor, M = Major, P = Perfect

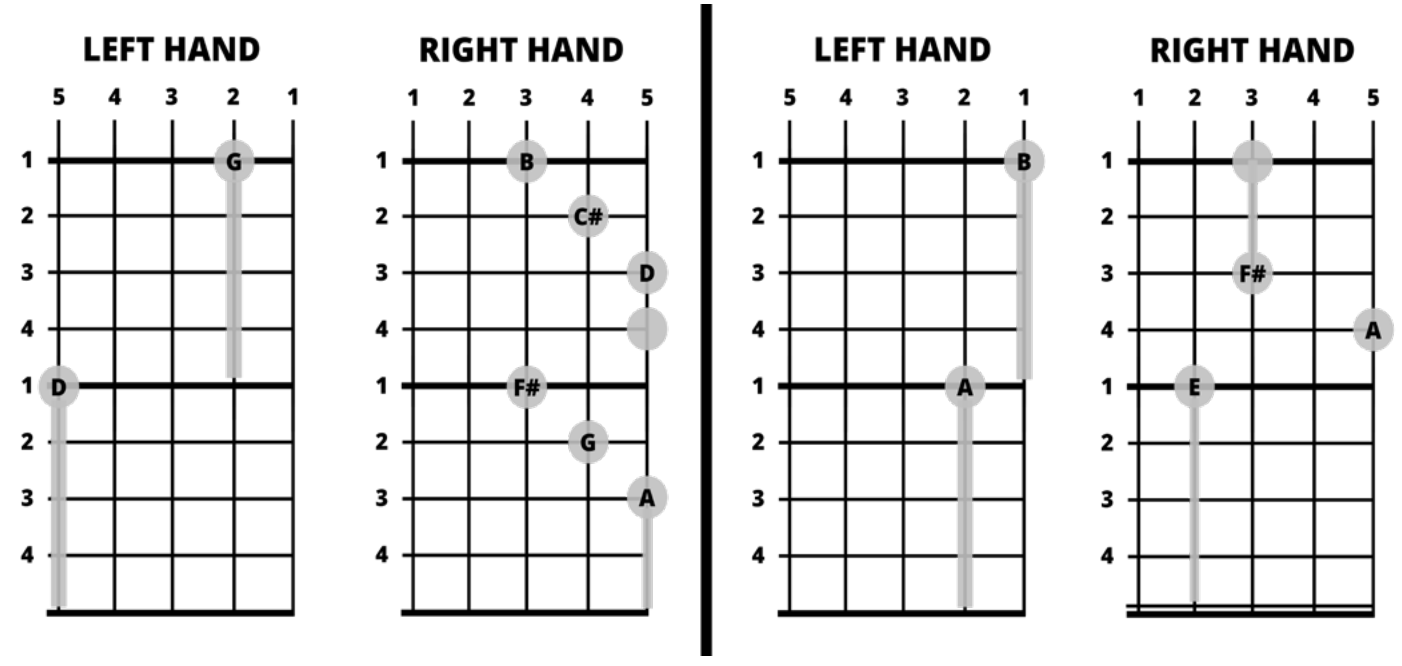
An interval consisting of 6 half steps is known as a "tritone." It can also be called an "augmented 4th" or "diminished 5th."

For some extra practice, go back to the melodies, chord progressions, and musical pieces from previous days and try identifying different intervals!

MUSICAL PIECE (0:10–0:00)

As with previous days, the musical piece below is a review of everything you've learned today. Your RH will play the melody from the Melody section, while the LH will play the chord progression from the Chord Progression section. Watch out for those rests! For help, listen to the accompanying audio track.

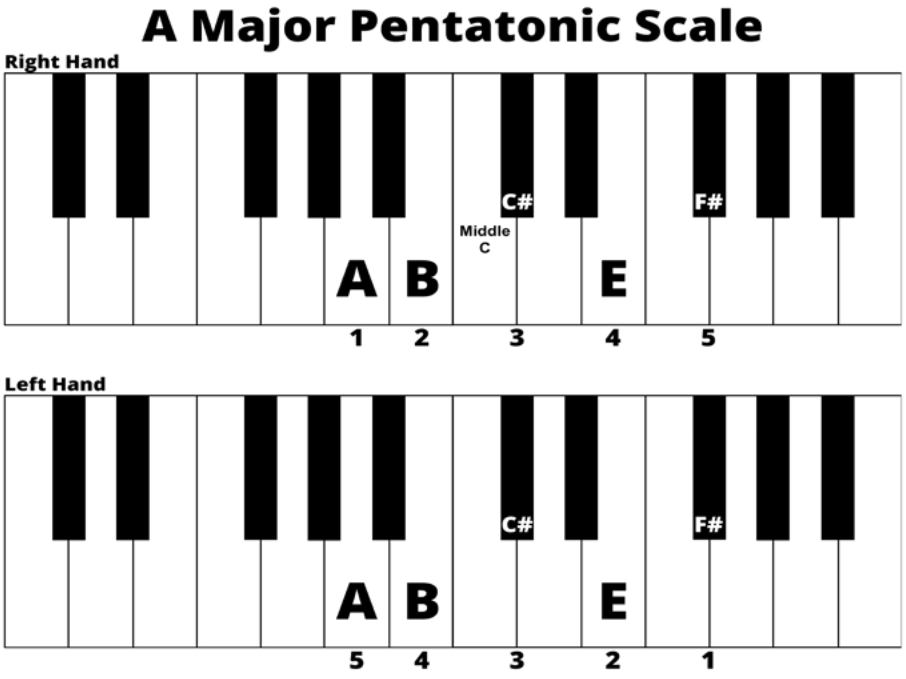


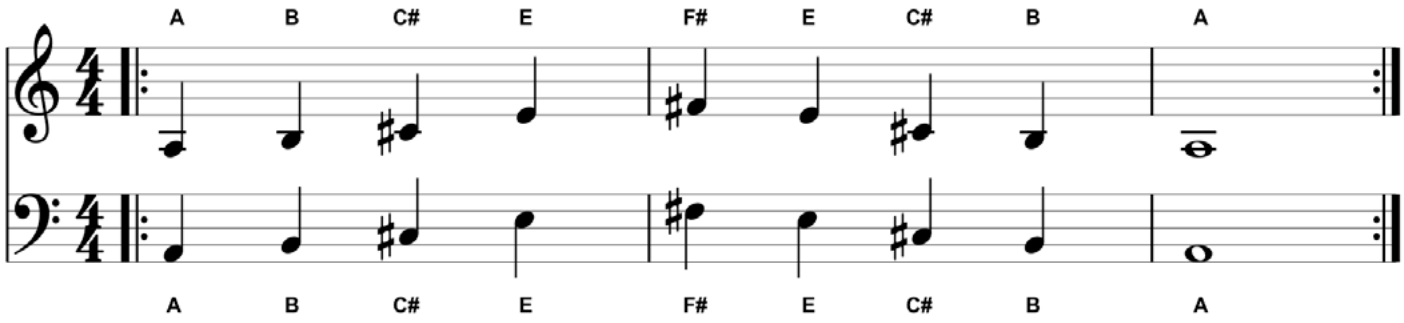


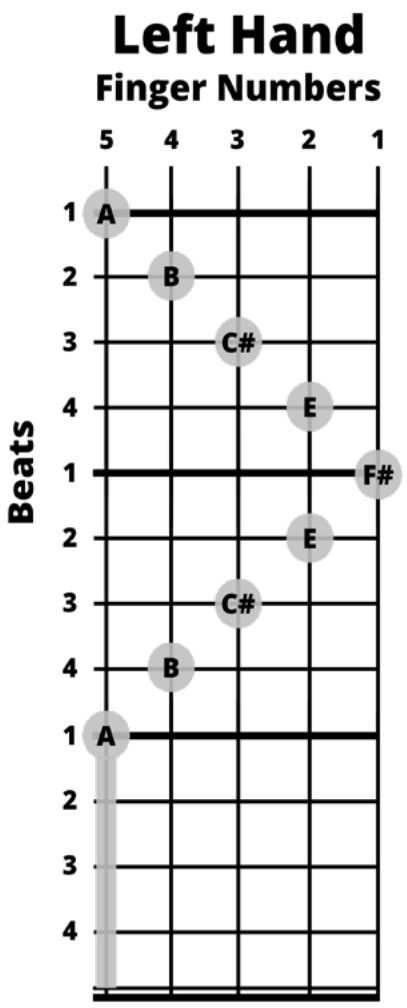
DAY 6

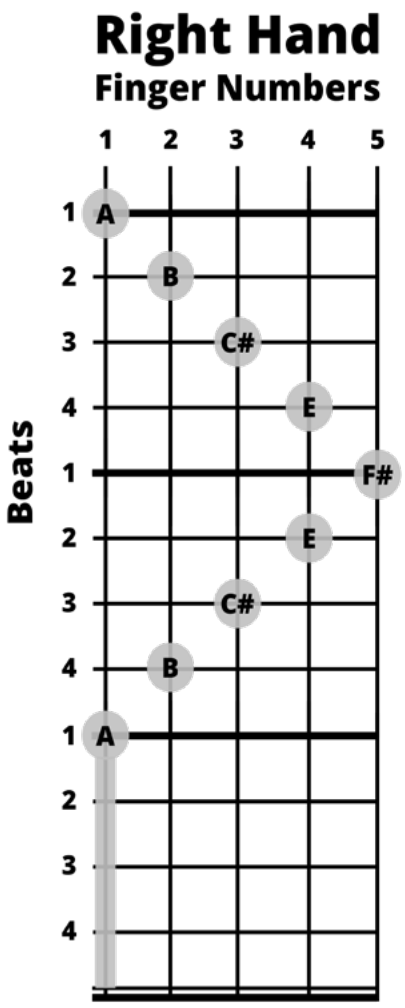
SCALE: A MAJOR PENTATONIC AND A MAJOR (1:00–0:50)

Two more scales today—A major pentatonic and A major! The A major pentatonic scale contains two sharps, C♯ and F♯, and the A major scale contains three sharps, C♯, F♯, and G♯. Pay close attention to your finger positioning! These are challenging scales, so don't get discouraged if you struggle at first. Like all of the examples in this book, you can always come back to them for further practice and review.



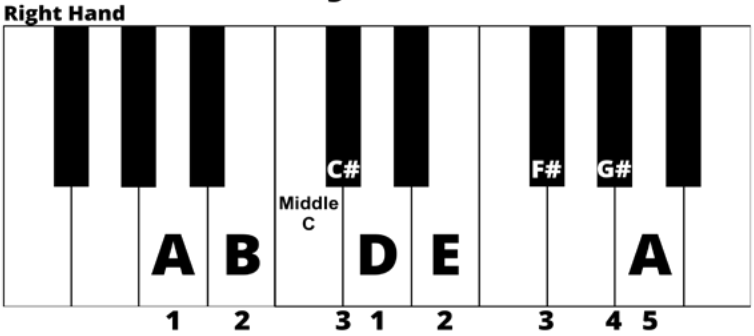

A B C# E F# E C# B A
A B C# E F# E C# B A


Left Hand
Finger Numbers
5 4 3 2 1
Beats
1 2 3 4
A B C# E F# E C# B A

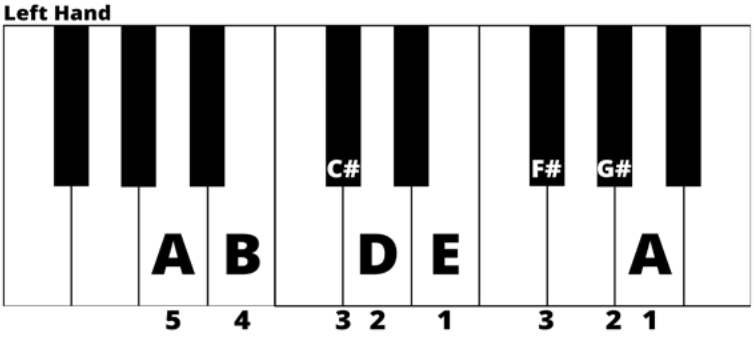

Right Hand
Finger Numbers
1 2 3 4 5
Beats
1 2 3 4
A B C# E F# E C# B A

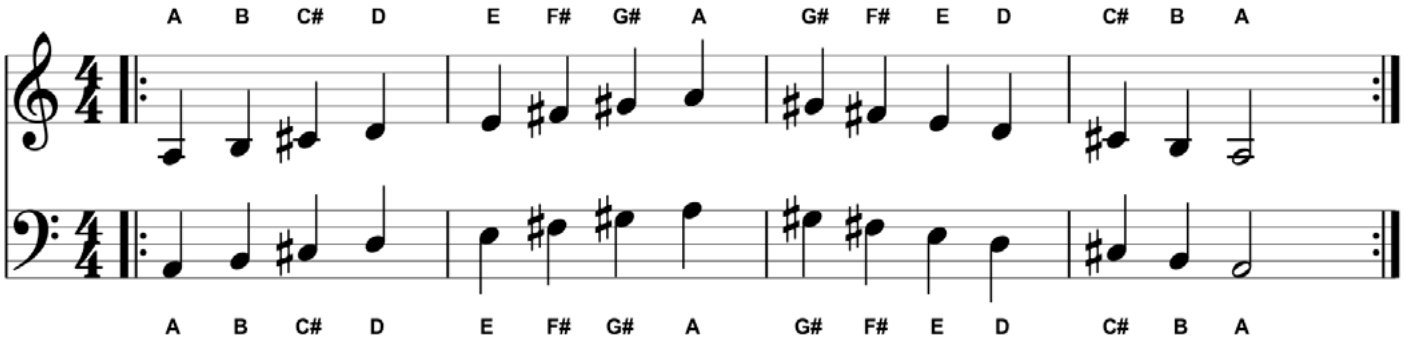
A Major Scale

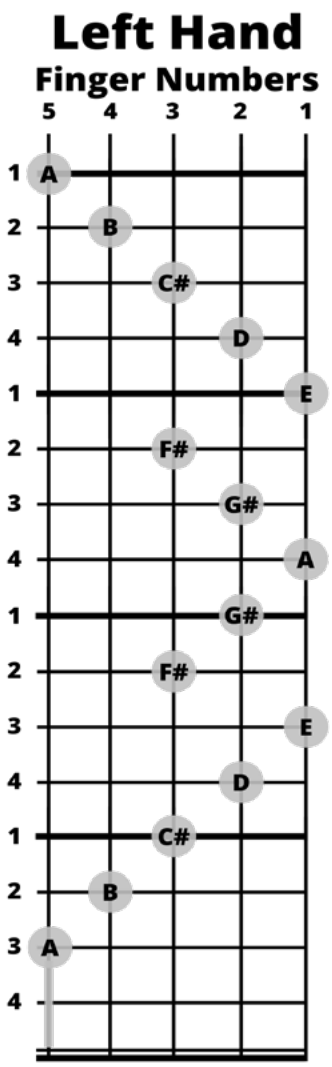
Right Hand

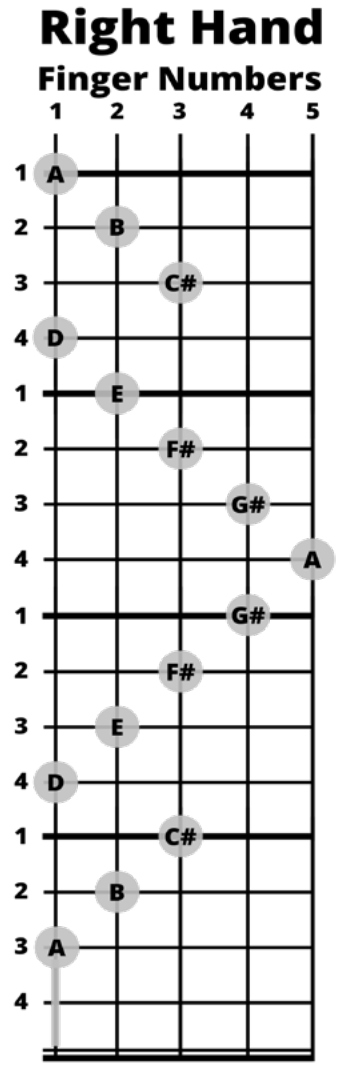


Left Hand



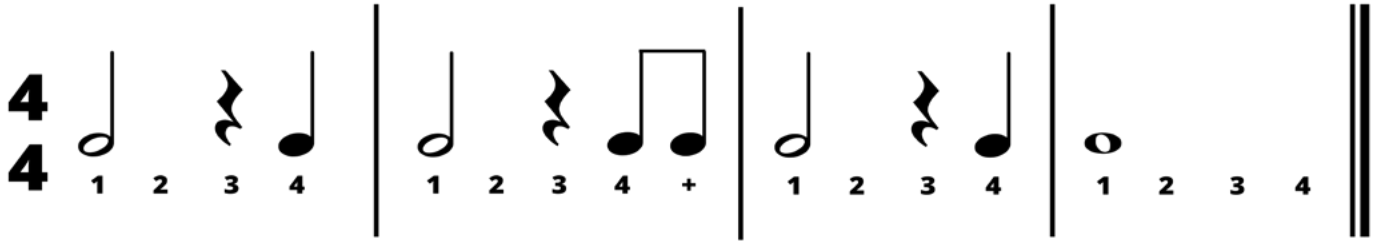






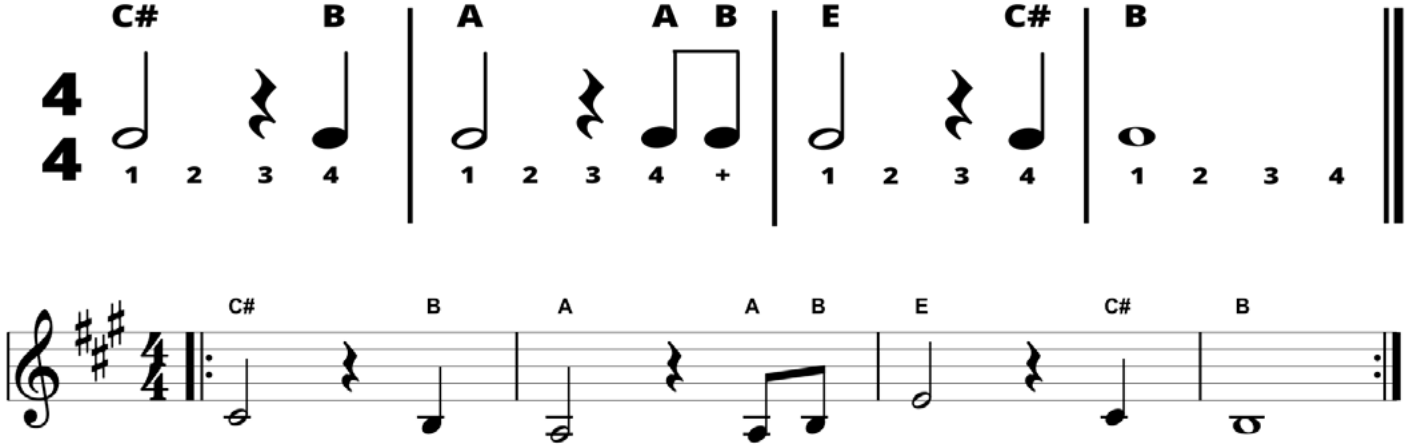
RHYTHM (0:50–0:40)

Yesterday, we worked on the quarter rest and half rest. Today, we're going to focus solely on the quarter rest. Make sure that metronome is on and you stay locked in! And, if this rhythm gives you any problems, listen to the accompanying audio to hear how it should sound.

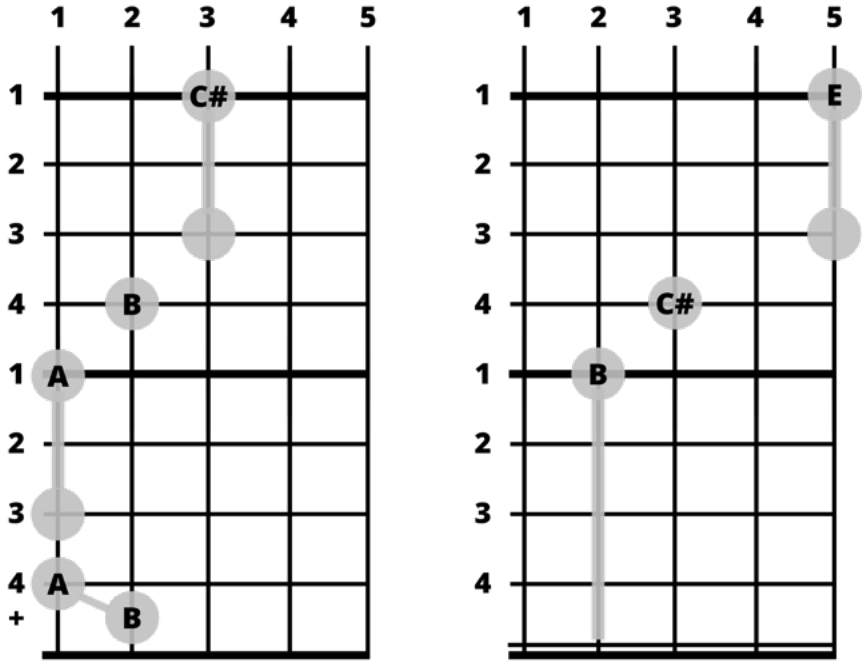


MELODY (0:40–0:30)

Today's melody is built off the A major scale. Be mindful of the proper finger numbers, which will help you to play the melody in the most efficient way possible. And look out for that C♯—the sole black key in this example!

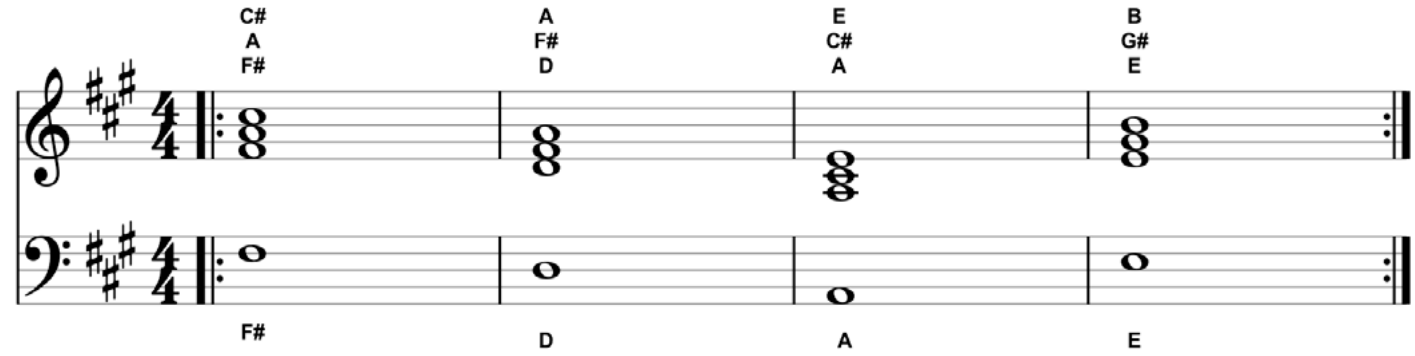


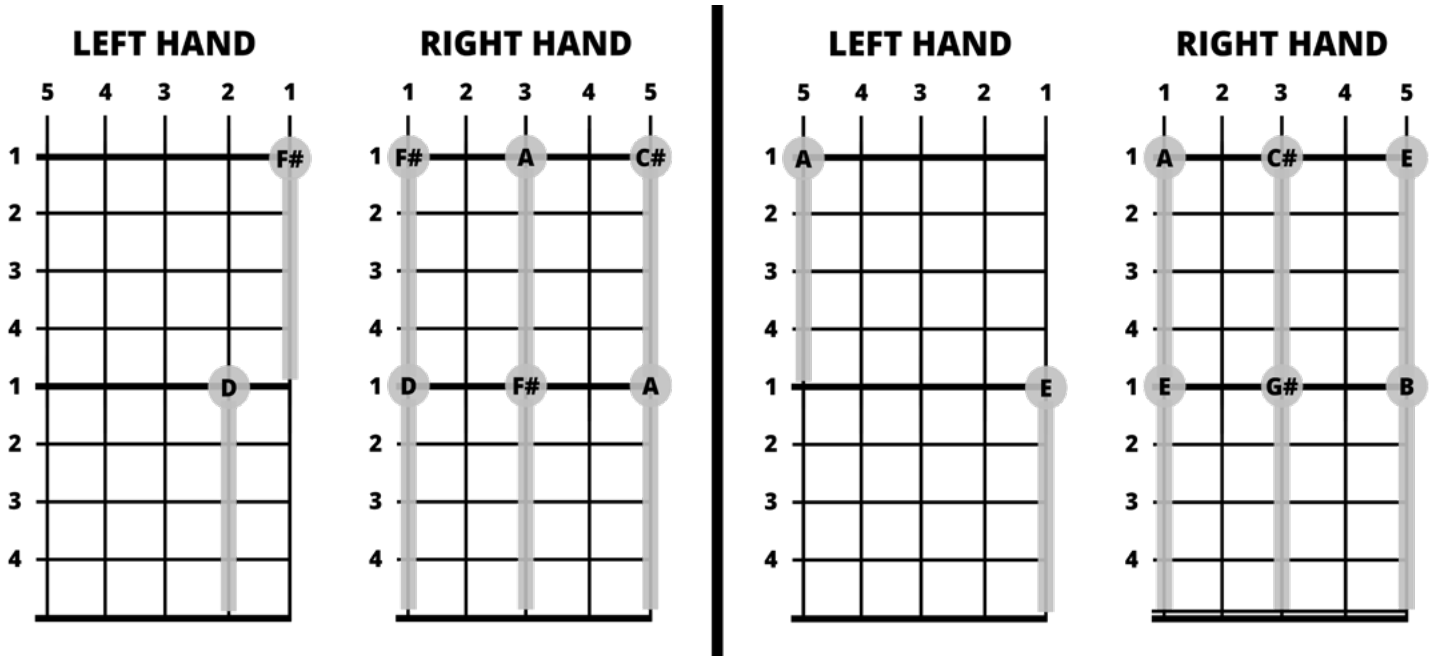
RIGHT HAND



CHORD PROGRESSION (0:30–0:20)

Today's chord progression is F♯m–D–A–E. Start with the right hand's chords, then practice the left hand's bass notes. Once you're comfortable with both, try bringing them together.

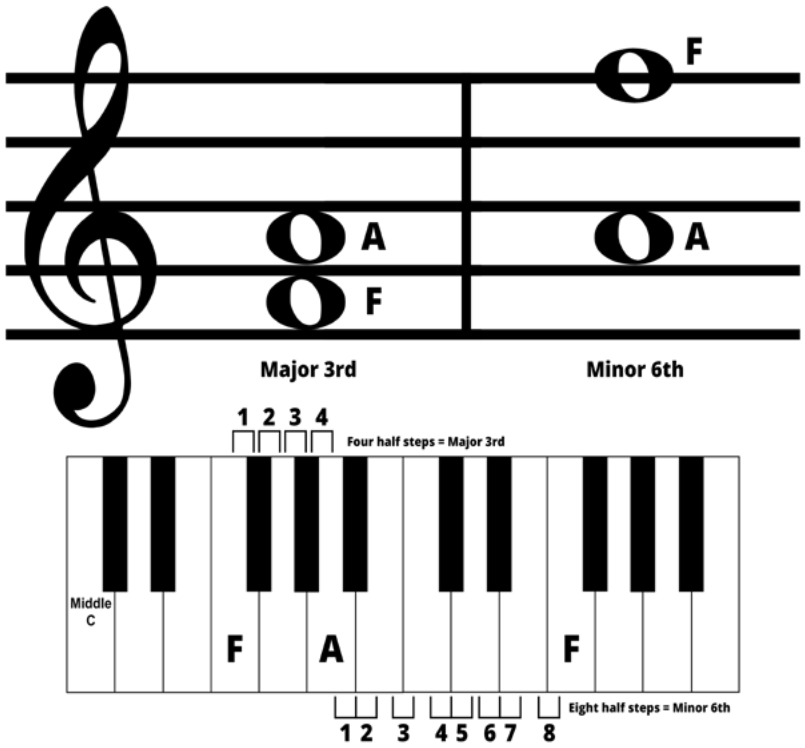




THEORY (0:20–0:10)

Today, we will learn about inversions. A proper understanding of inversions will enable you to play in a more efficient manner and open up a whole new world in your piano playing.

Inversions refer to a rearrangement of notes within a chord or interval. For instance, take a look at the example on the next page. The first measure represents a major 3rd: F–A. If you invert this interval, you would take the F and move it up an octave (12 half steps). Now, your interval is a minor 6th: A–F.



This is what happens to each interval when inverted:

Major intervals become Minor

Minor intervals become Major

Perfect 4th becomes Perfect 5th

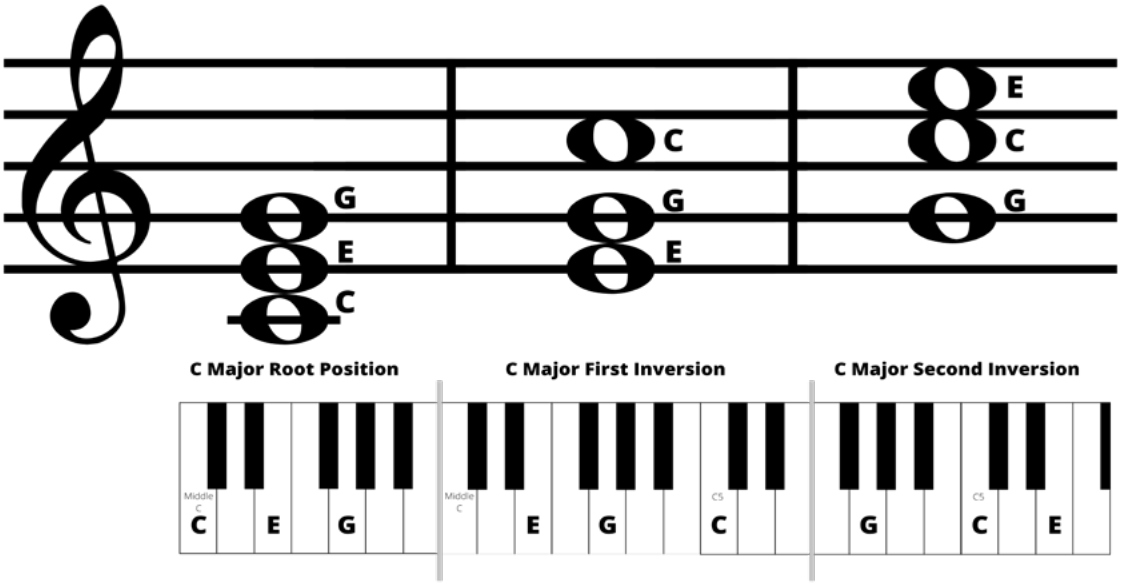
Perfect 5th becomes Perfect 4th

Augmented becomes Diminished

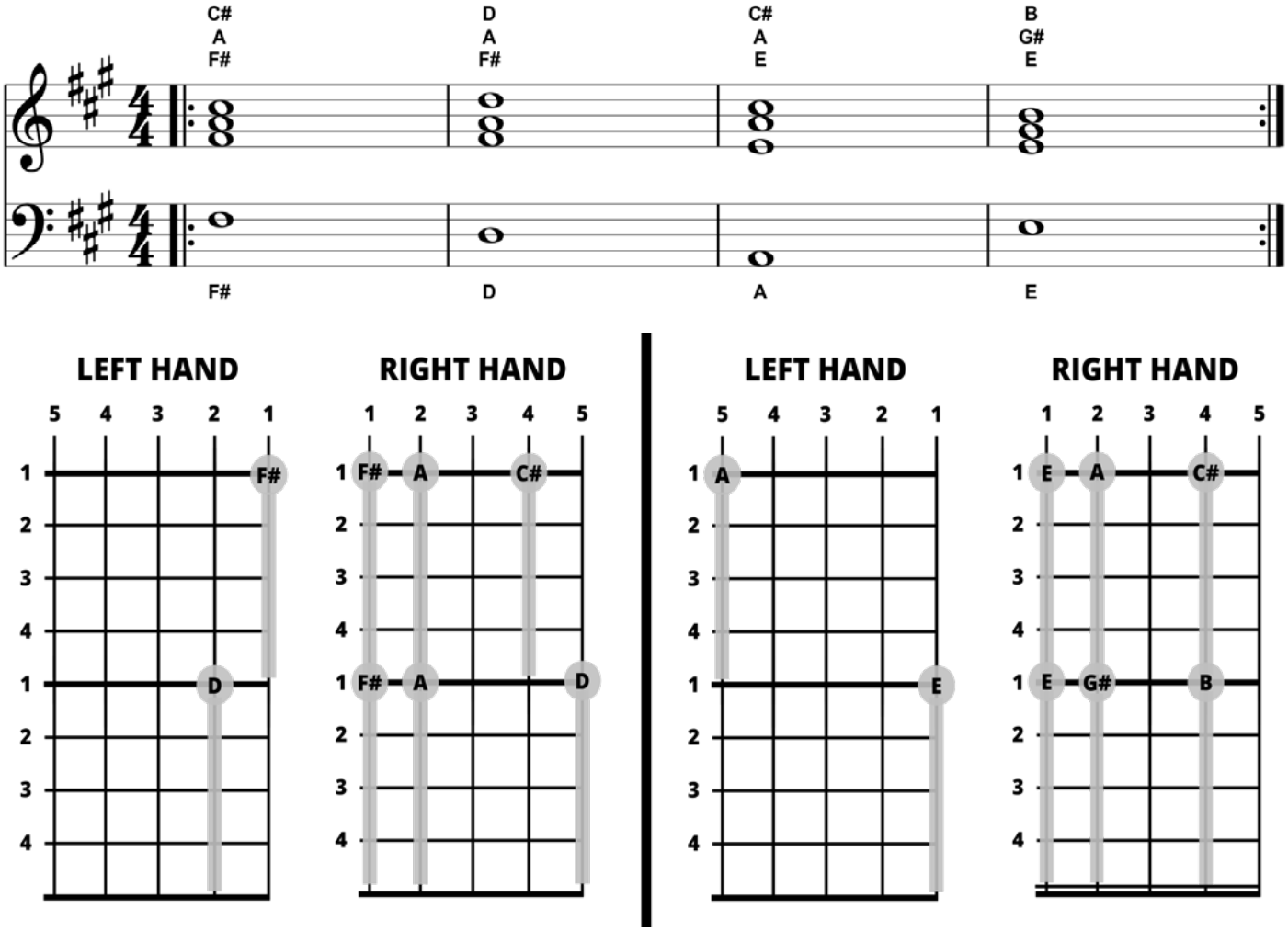
Diminished becomes Augmented

Chords can also be inverted. Throughout this book, you have played the chord progressions in one of two ways: as a triad or as a perfect 5th interval (our “cheat” method). Both of these can be inverted.

Let’s take a C major triad. Remember, a triad is a chord consisting of three notes stacked vertically. In a major chord, you have a major 3rd on the bottom and a minor 3rd on top (C–E = major 3rd, E–G = minor 3rd). If you invert the C major triad, you take the C from the bottom and move it up one octave. Now your chord is no longer C–E–G, but E–G–C. This is what we call *first inversion*. You can invert it one more time, as well. By moving the E up one octave, you’re now in *second inversion*, and your chord is G–C–E. All of these chords are C major; they’re just in different *inversions*.

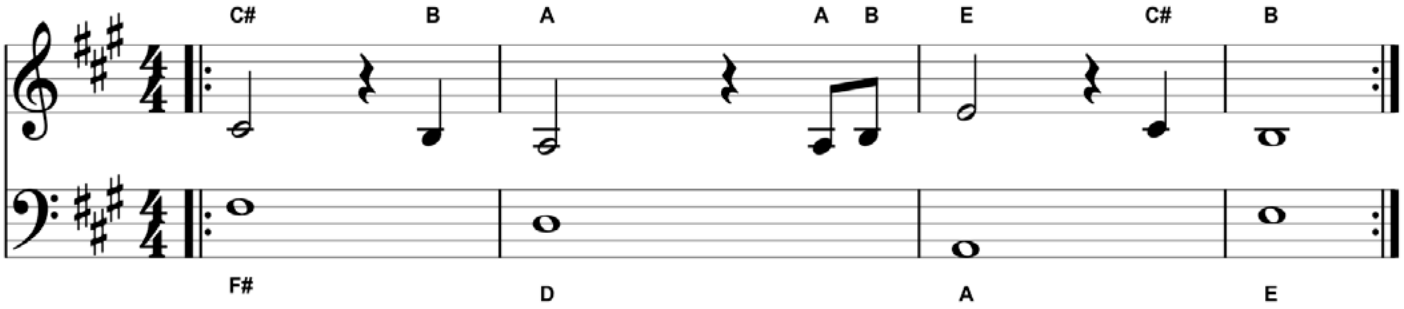


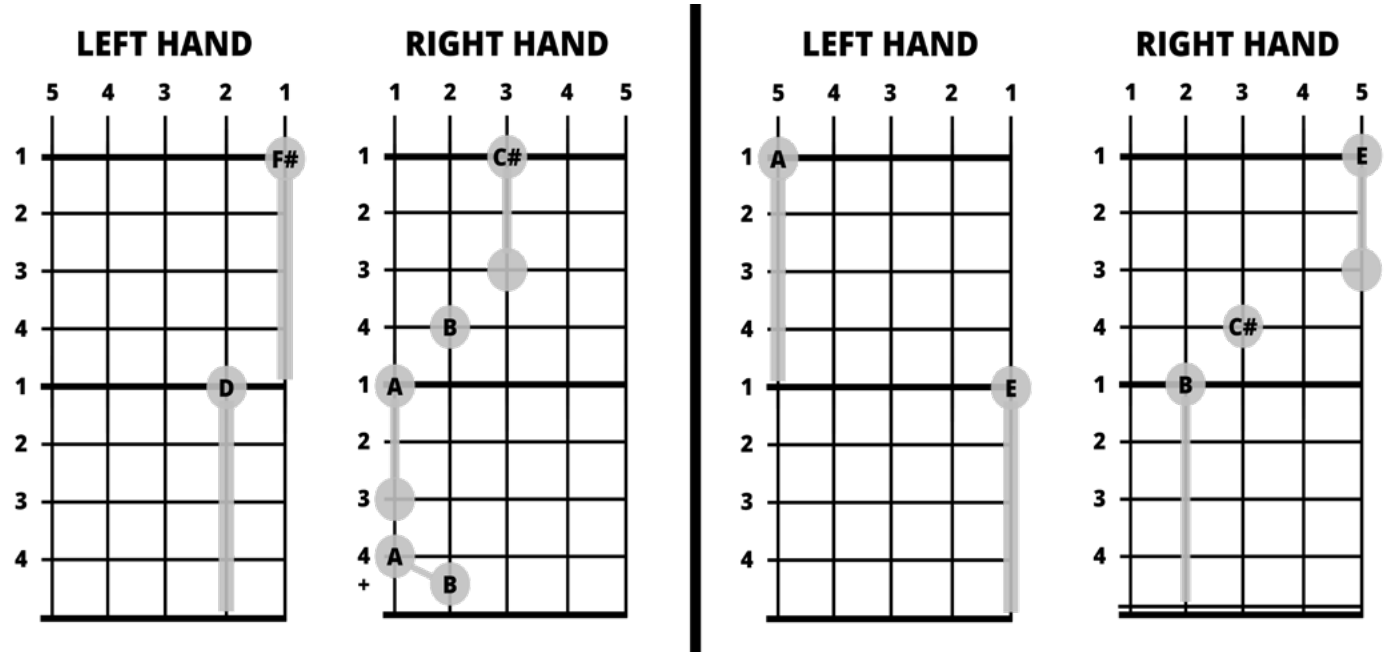
As we mentioned earlier, inversions will allow you to play more efficiently. Think about the chord progression you just played. In order to play “true,” or “root position,” triads, you had to move your right hand around a lot. With inversions, you can avoid some movement across the piano. For instance, check out the tab and notation below. This is the same chord progression you just played, only with inversions. You will notice that your right hand doesn’t have to move nearly as much to play the same chords as earlier!



MUSICAL PIECE (0:10–0:00)

As always, the musical piece below is a culmination of everything you have learned throughout today's session. The RH will play the melody we learned in the Melody section, while the LH will play the chord changes from the Chord Progression section. This one can be tricky, so be sure to listen to the audio track before diving in.



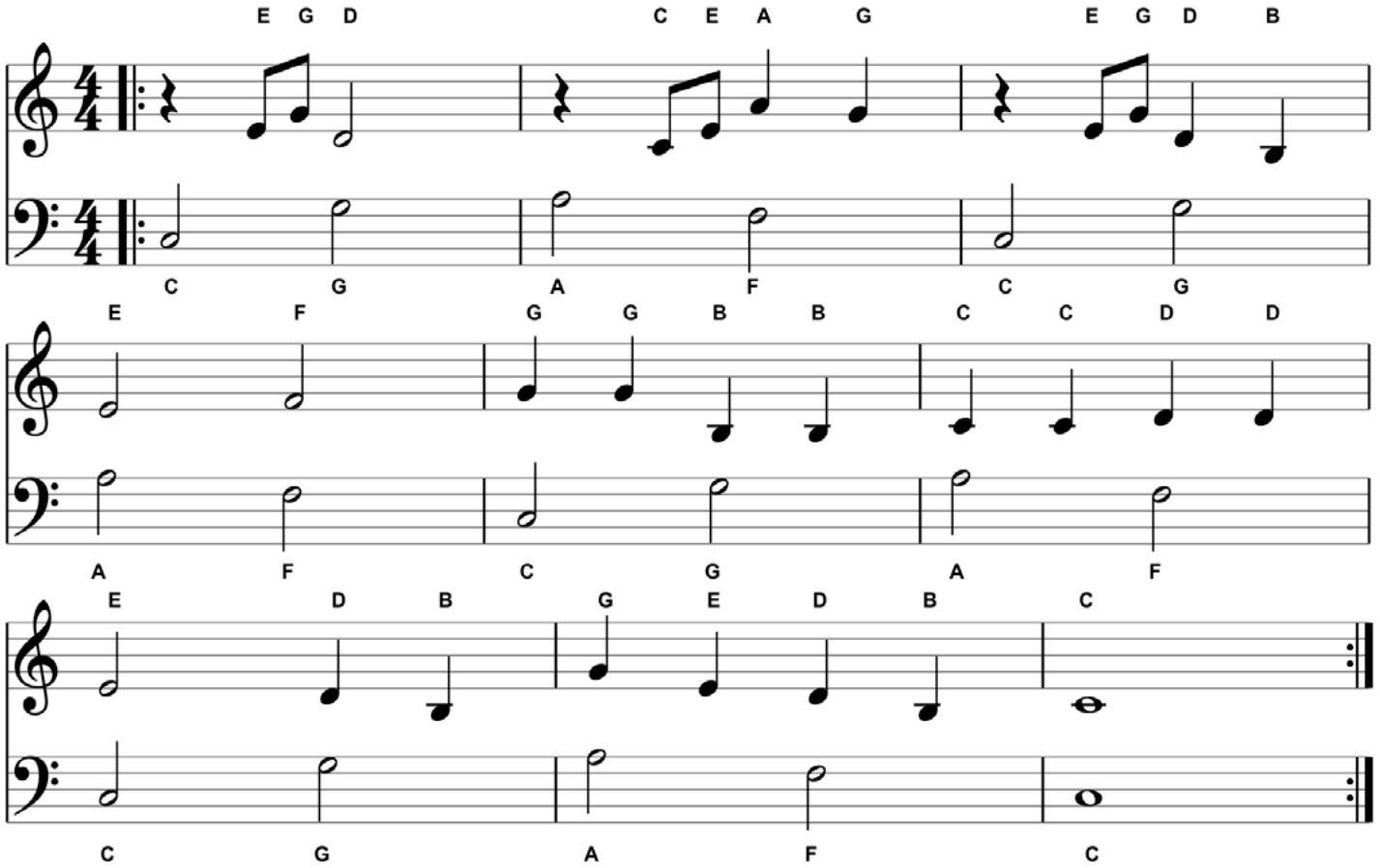


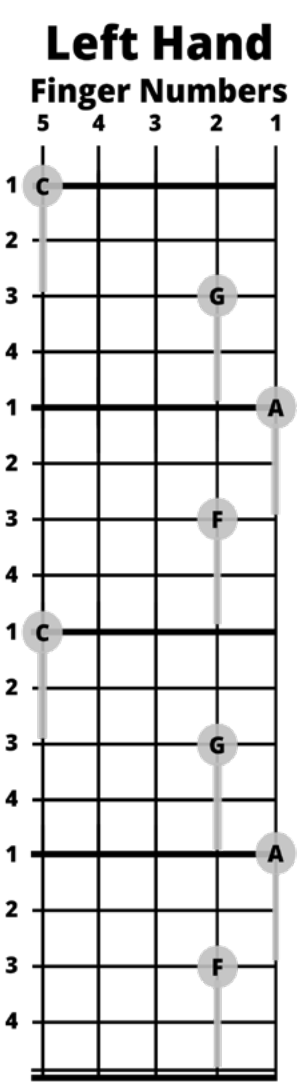
DAY 7

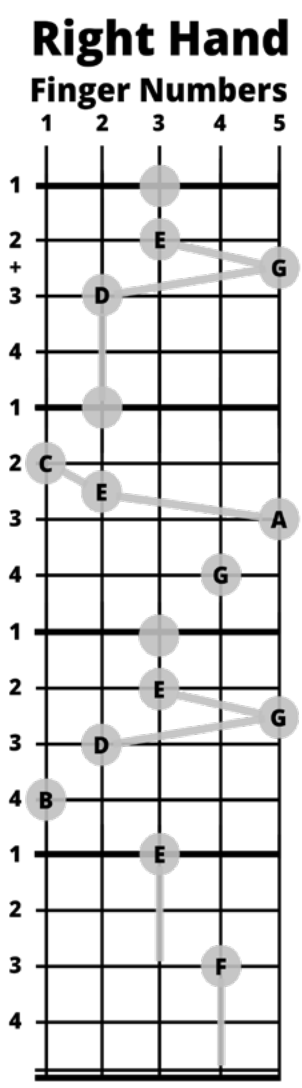
WEEK 1 REVIEW: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER (1:00–0:00)

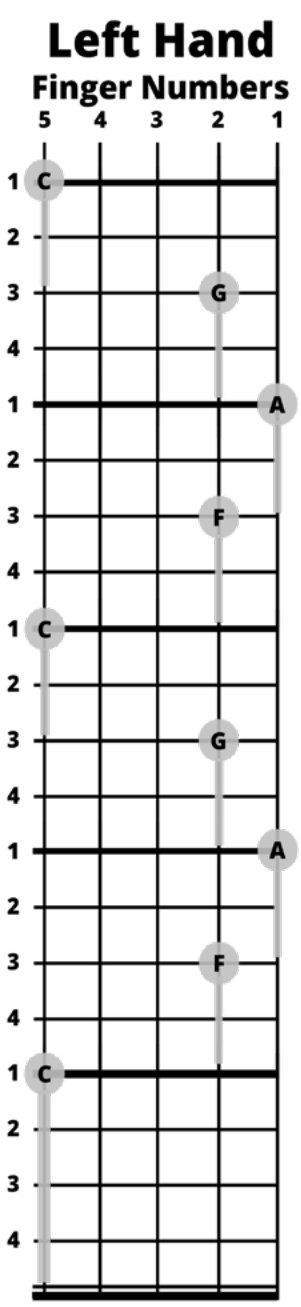
Spend the first 15–20 minutes of today's lesson going back and reviewing all of the material you have learned this week—practice each scale, review the theory lessons, and briefly play through each day's musical piece. After reviewing, spend the next 30 minutes or so practicing the music example below, "Amber Meadow," which contains much of the material you've been working on the past six days.

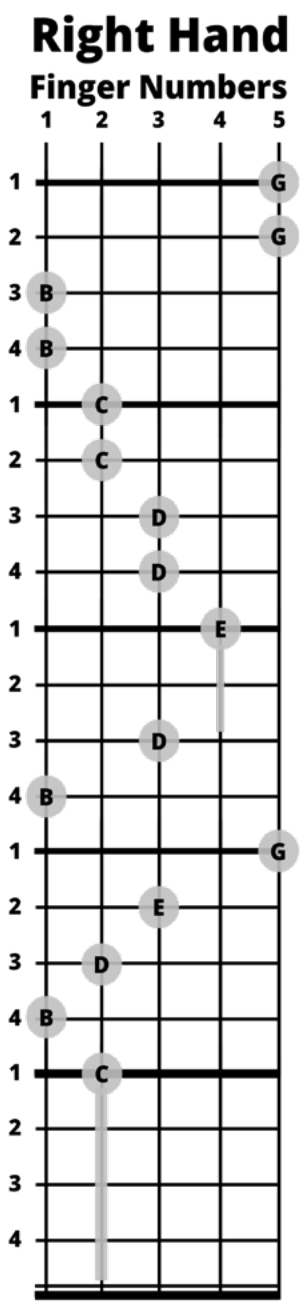
AMBER MEADOW




Left Hand
Finger Numbers
5 4 3 2 1
1 C
2
3 G
4
1 A
2
3 F
4
1 C
2
3 G
4
1 A
2
3 F
4


Right Hand
Finger Numbers
1 2 3 4 5
1
2 E G
+
3 D
4
1
2 C E A
3
4 G
1
2 E G
3 D
4 B
1 E
2
3 F
4


Left Hand
Finger Numbers
5 4 3 2 1
1 C
2
3 G
4
1 A
2
3 F
4
1 C
2
3 G
4
1 A
2
3 F
4
1 C
2
3
4


Right Hand
Finger Numbers
1 2 3 4 5
1 G
2 G
3 B
4 B
1 C
2 C
3 D
4 D
1 E
2
3 D
4 B
1 G
2 E
3 D
4 B
1 C
2
3
4

For the final 5–10 minutes of the practice session, answer the six questions below (answers can be found on the next page).

1. **This song is in the Key of _____.**
2. **The time signature is _____.**
3. **_____ rests can be found in this song.**
4. **This song contains _____, _____, _____, and _____ notes.**
5. **The chord progression of this song is _____ - _____ - _____ - _____.**
6. **This song has _____ measures.**

1. **This song is in the Key of C.**

2. **The time signature is 4/4.**

3. **Quarter rests can be found in this song.**

4. **This song contains whole, half, quarter, and eighth notes.**

5. **The chord progression of this song is C - G - Am - F.**

6. **This song has 9 measures.**

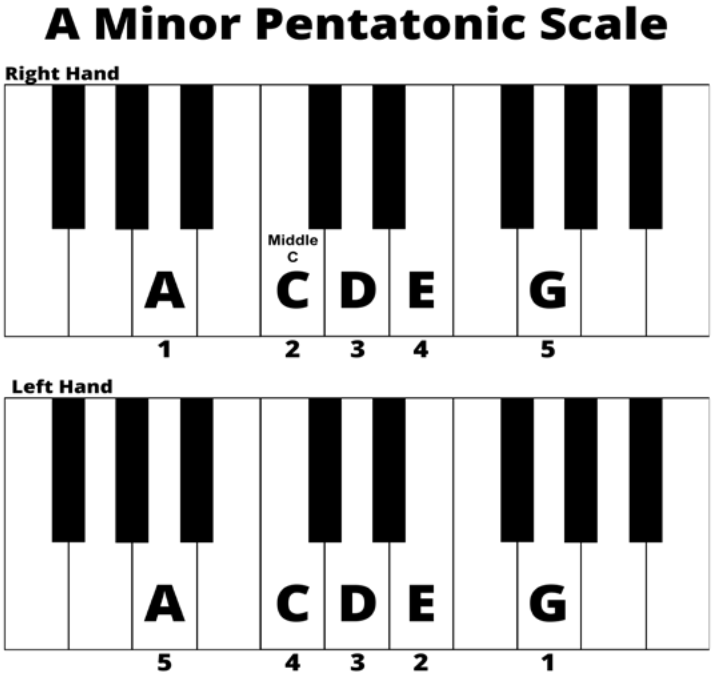
WEEK 2

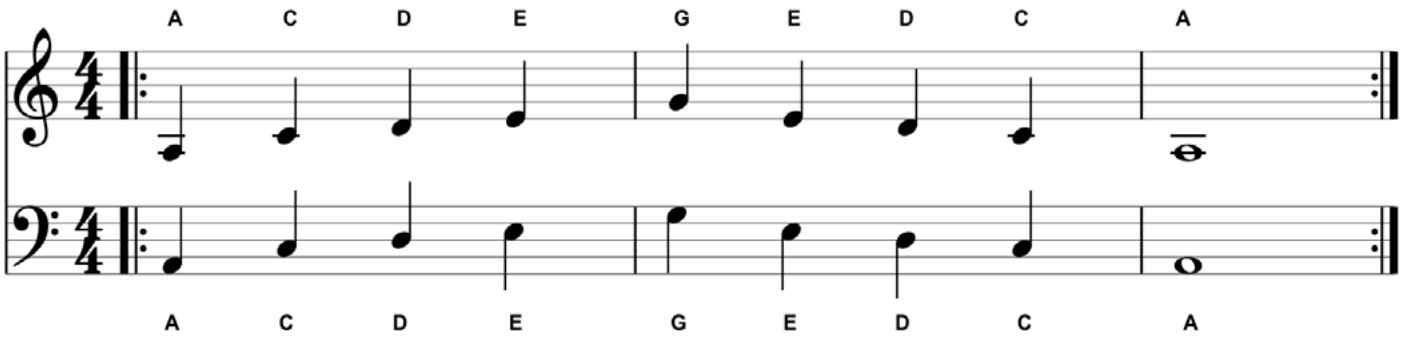
DAY 8

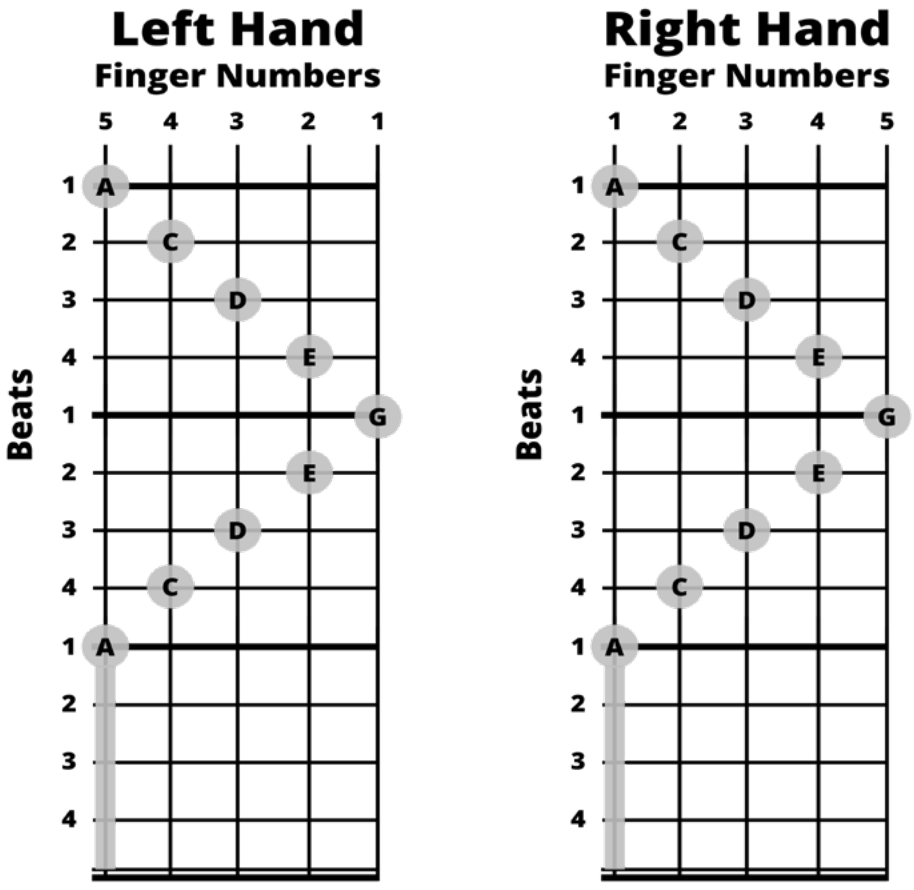
SCALE: A MINOR PENTATONIC (1:00–0:50)

For the next week, we will turn our attention to minor scales. Before we jump into a full, seven-note minor scale, we will start with the five-note A minor pentatonic scale. Think back to the C major pentatonic scale. The A minor pentatonic scale will use the same exact notes, with the only difference being where you start.

As always, turn on the metronome and take some time to master the A minor pentatonic scale.

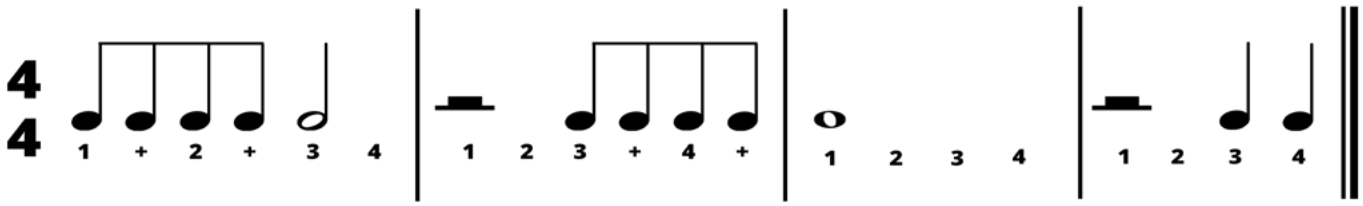






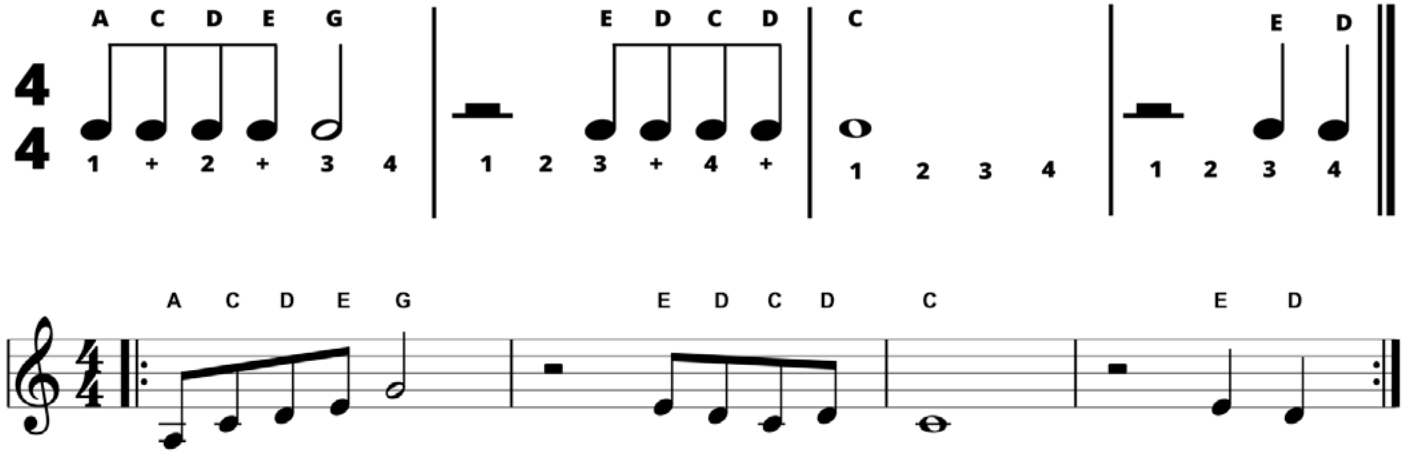
RHYTHM (0:50–0:40)

As you practice clapping today's exercise, try to audibly count the rhythm. Remember, eighth notes can be recognized by saying "and": "1-and, 2-and, 3-and, 4-and…"

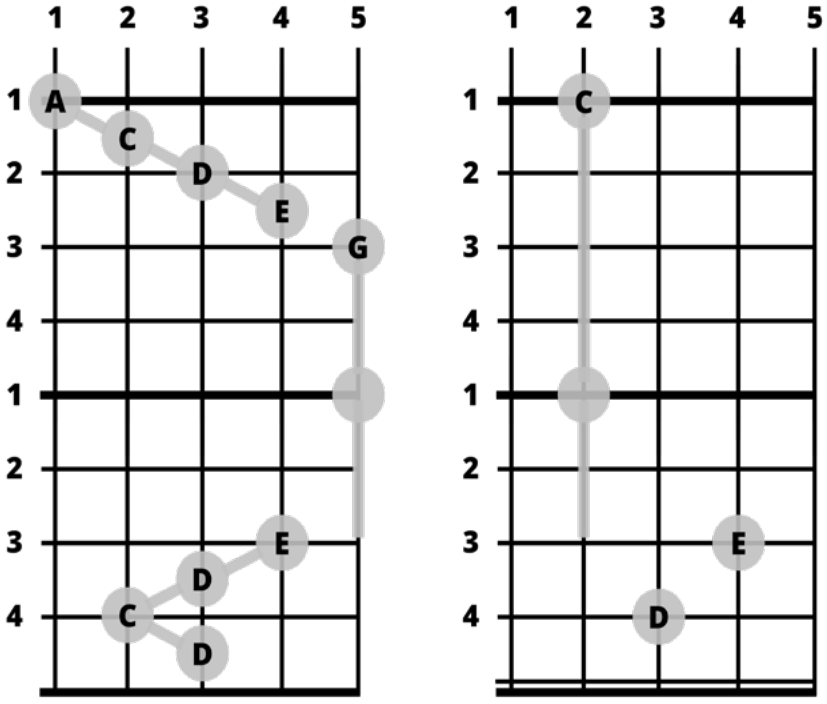


MELODY (0:40–0:30)

Today's melody is built off the A minor pentatonic scale. Be mindful of the finger numbers, as they will help you play the melody in the most efficient way possible. This melody, like much of our musical exercises, is designed to be played as a loop. When you've reached the end of the melody, you can immediately repeat back to the beginning.

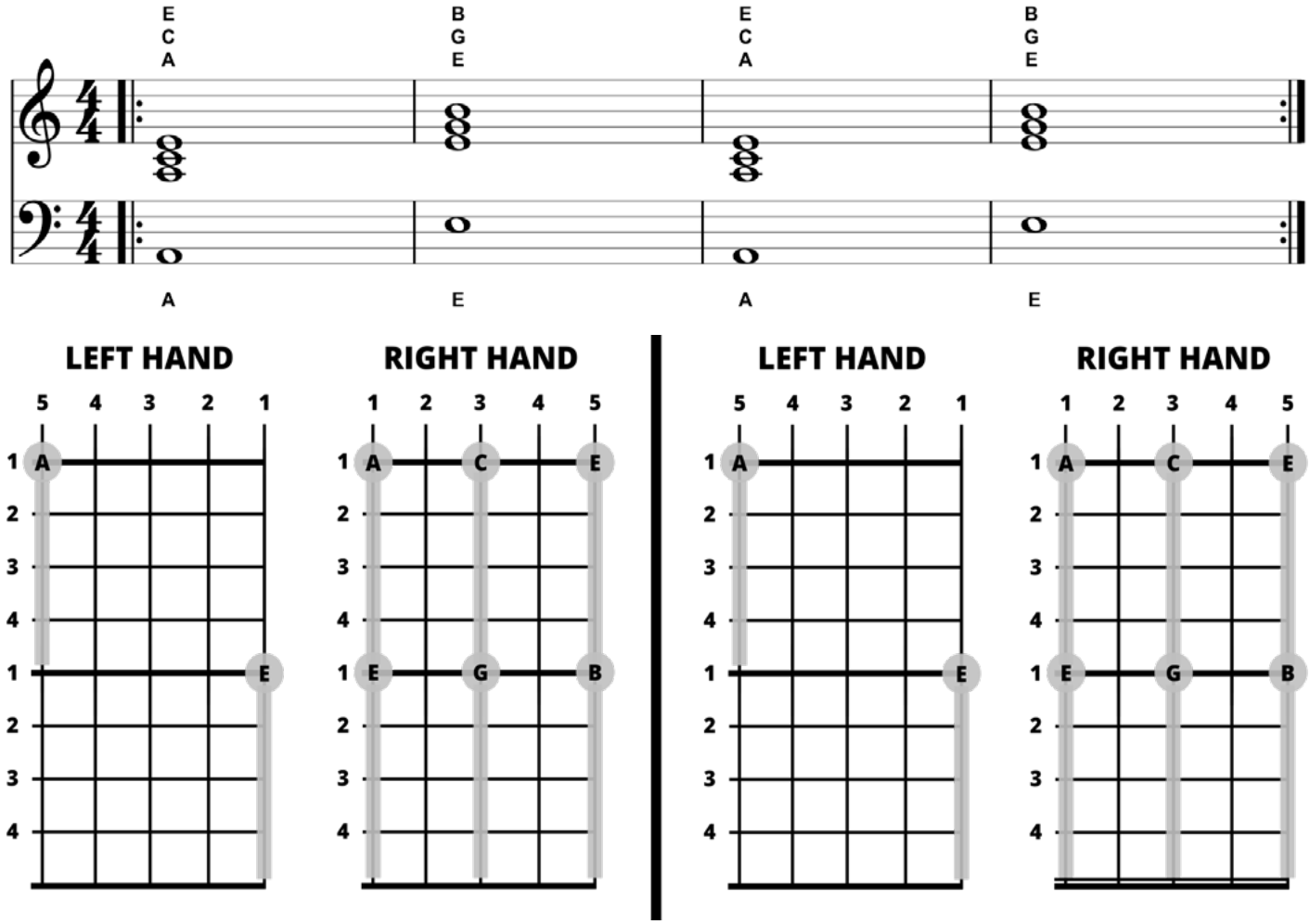


RIGHT HAND



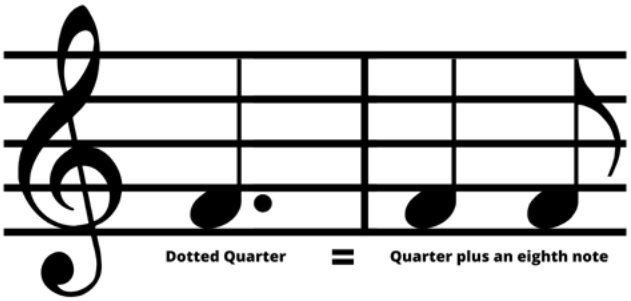
CHORD PROGRESSION (0:30–0:20)

Today's chord progression only consists of two chords, Am and Em. The shift from Am to Em requires a relatively large jump of four white keys, so use your thumb to target the roots of the chords, A and E. Meanwhile, the shapes of the two chords are the same, so they shouldn't give you too much trouble.



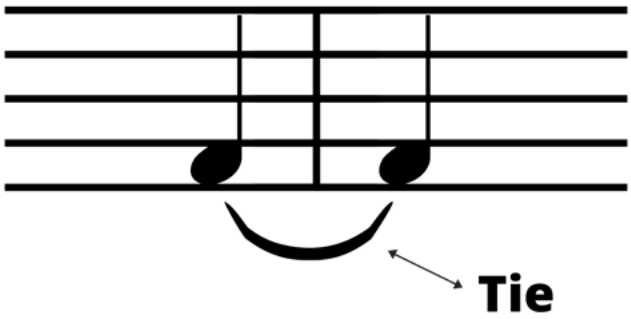
THEORY (0:20–0:10)

Dots and *ties* are two musical markings that alter a note's or rest's duration. A *dot* next to a note/rest will increase that note's duration by half. For instance, if a quarter note has a dot next to it, it now has a rhythmic value of 1.5 beats (in 4/4 time). In other words, a dotted quarter note is equivalent to a quarter note plus an eighth note.



Name	Note	Rest	Value
Dotted Whole			6 beats
Dotted Half			3 beats
Dotted Quarter			1.5 beats
Dotted Eighth			0.75 beat

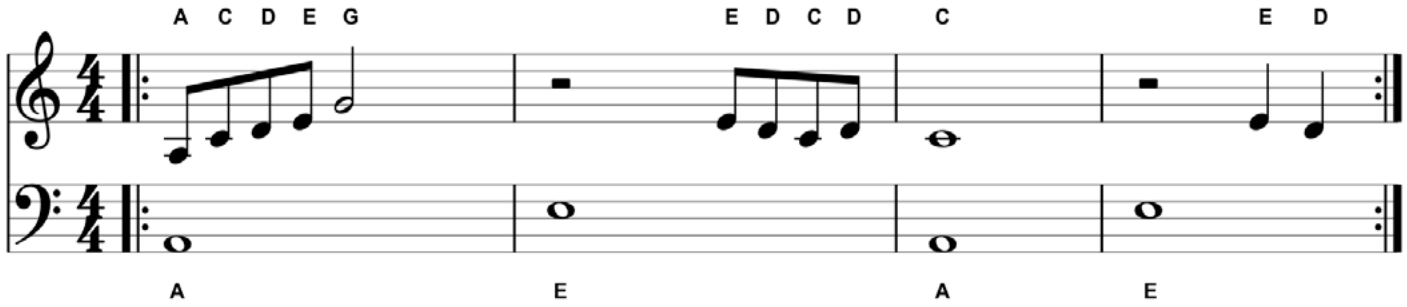
Ties are markings used to merge multiple notes of the same pitch. Ties are sometimes necessary to connect notes across beats or bar lines. For instance, in the example below, the quarter note tied to a quarter in the next measure will be played as a half note.

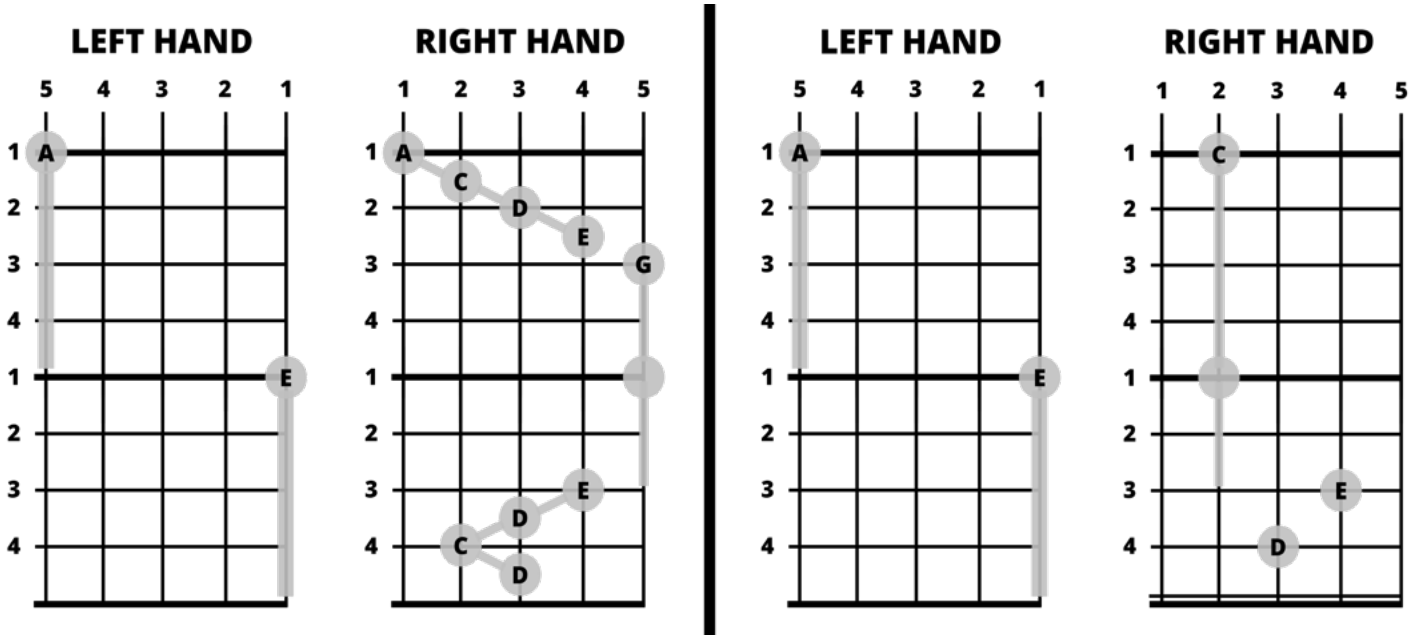


MUSICAL PIECE (0:10–0:00)

The musical piece below is a culmination of the material you've learned throughout today's practice session. Your RH will play the melody we learned in the Melody section, while the LH will play the chord changes from the Chord Progression section.

If you want to add an extra challenge, try playing two notes in your left hand! For the Am chord (measures 1 and 3), your left hand can play A and E (fingers 5 and 1, respectively). For the Em chord (measures 2 and 4), your left hand can play E and B (5 and 1). This will add extra richness to the sound.



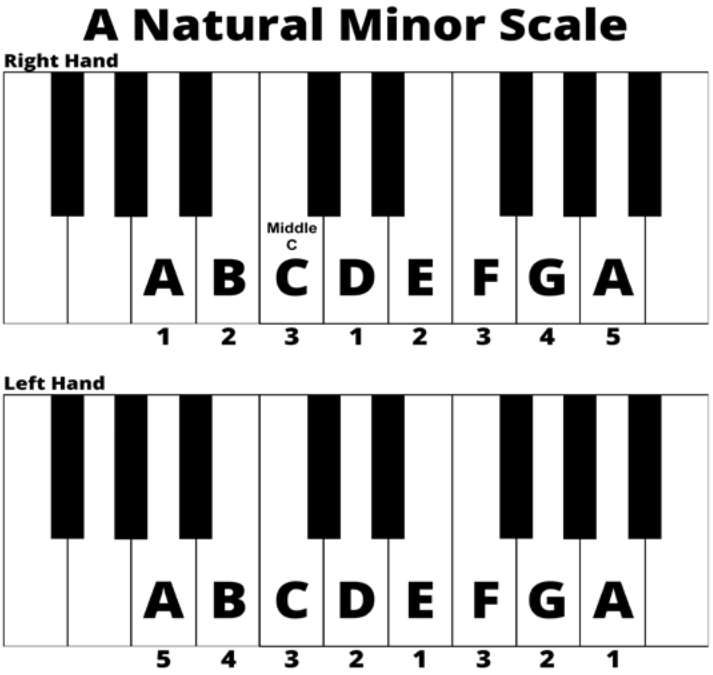


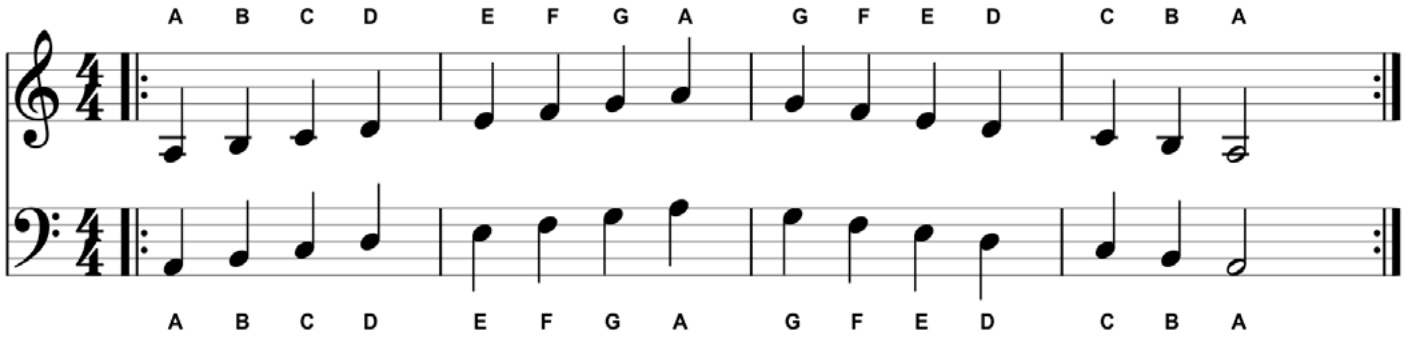
DAY 9

SCALE: A NATURAL MINOR (1:00–0:50)

Yesterday, you learned the A minor pentatonic scale. Today, we will add a few more notes to play the A natural minor scale. This scale, like C major, incorporates only white notes. However, here, you will start on A and ascend until you reach the next A.

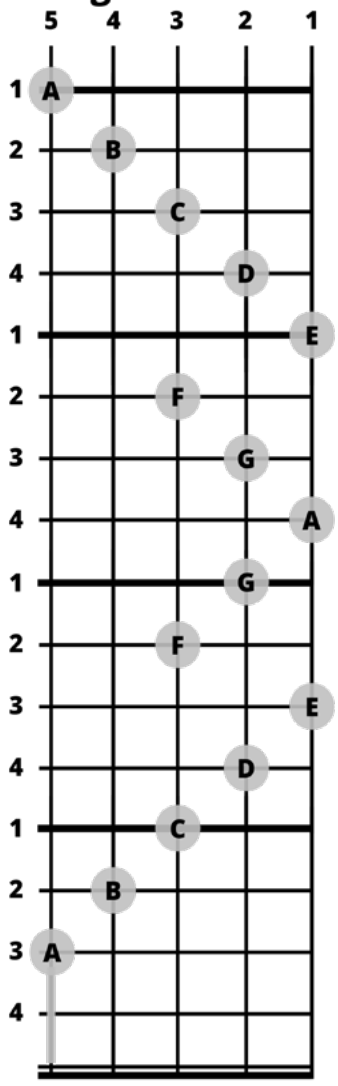
As always, fire up the metronome and spend the next 10 minutes getting to know the A natural minor scale.





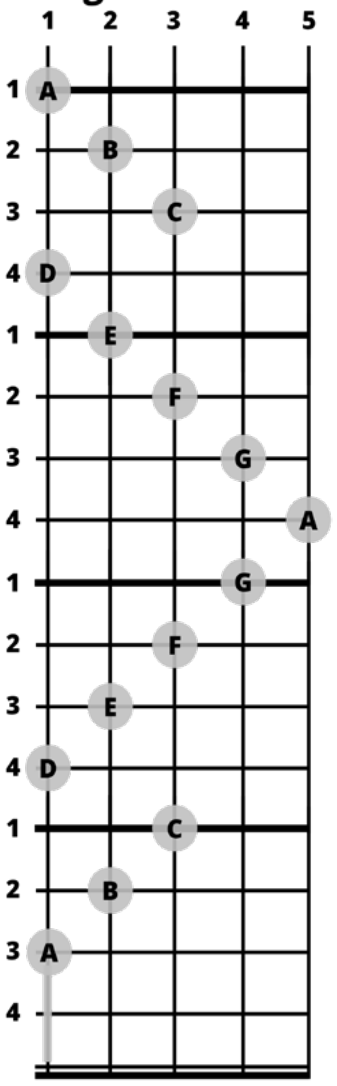
Left Hand

Finger Numbers



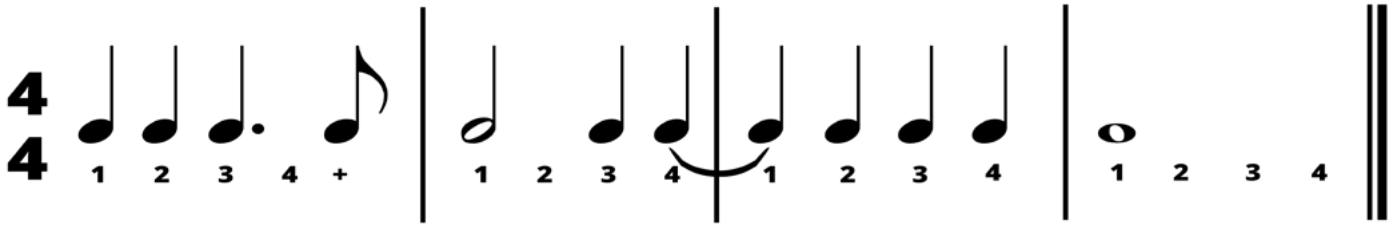
Right Hand

Finger Numbers



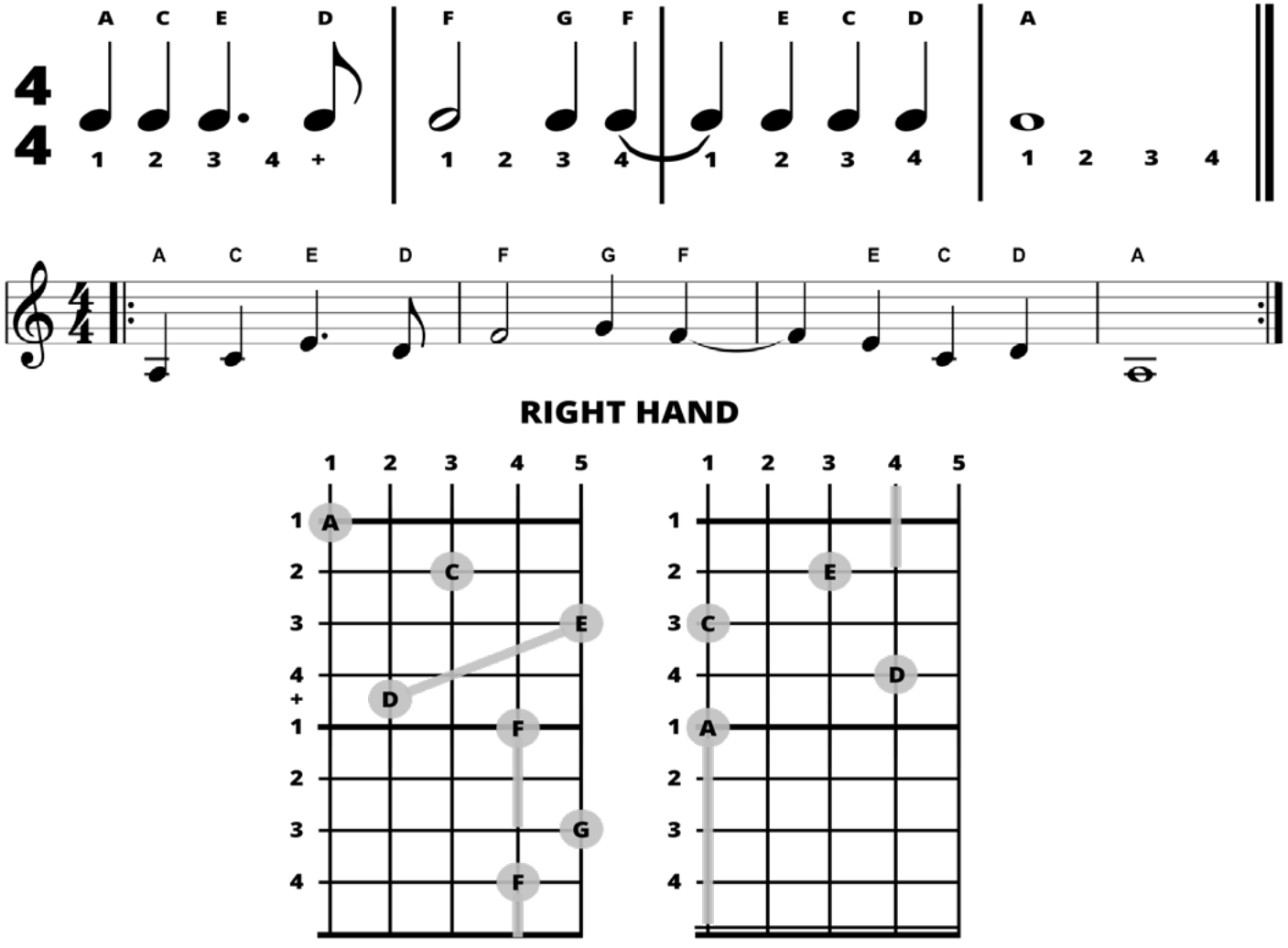
RHYTHM (0:50–0:40)

Yesterday, we introduced you to *dots* and *ties.* Today, we put them into practice. The rhythm exercise below contains a dotted quarter note and a tied quarter note. Listen to the audio example and then practice clapping out the rhythm against the click of your metronome. Or, you could simply tap your foot in quarter notes to keep the pulse while you clap. Your choice.



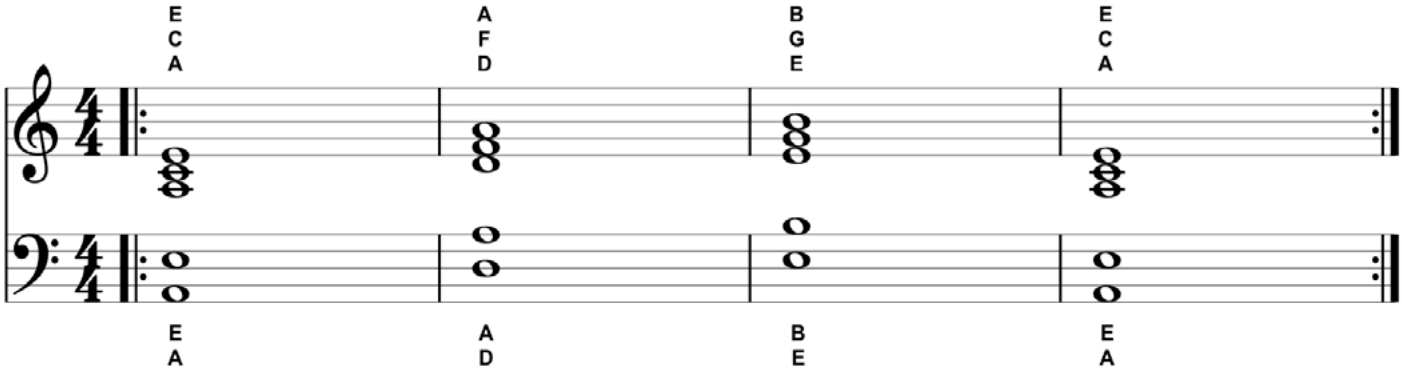
MELODY (0:40–0:30)

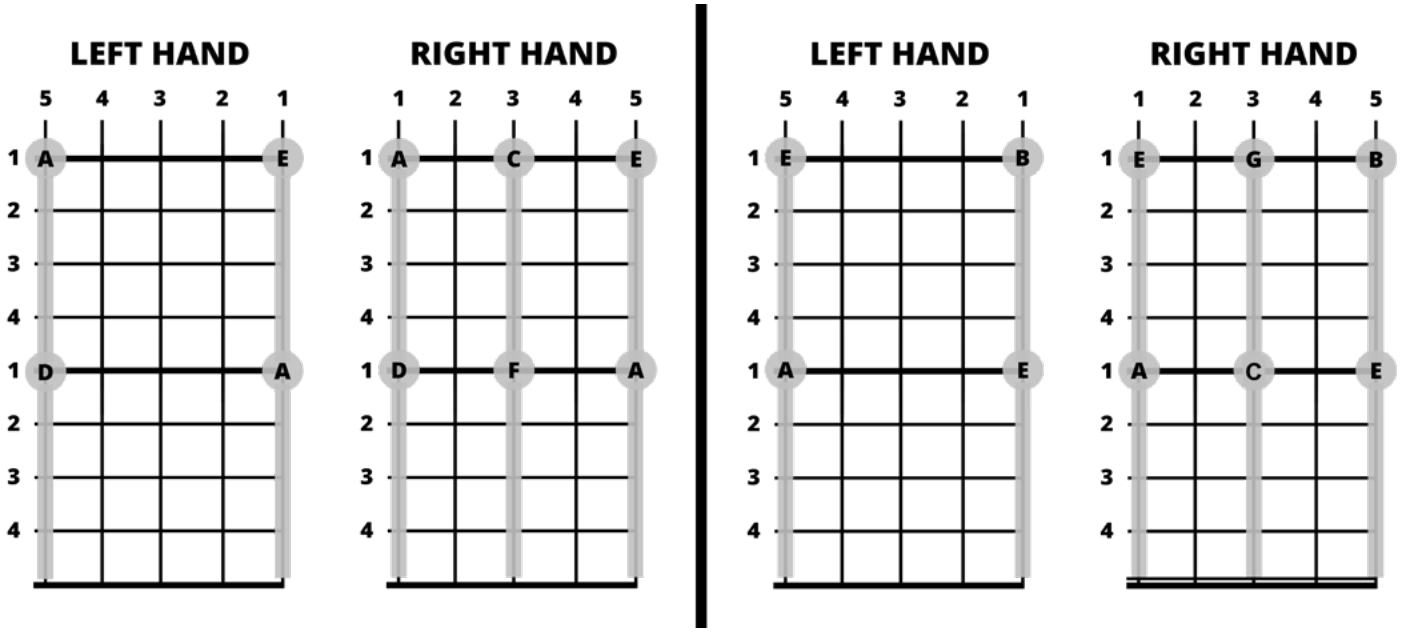
As always, today's melody follows the rhythm you just learned in the previous section. The finger positioning can be tricky on this one, so pay close attention to the finger numbers provided in the tab.



CHORD PROGRESSION (0:30–0:20)

Yesterday, we challenged you to add a second note to the LH chords in the Musical Piece, and we will do that again today. If you think back to our lesson on intervals, you're playing a perfect 5th in your left hand. This gives the music a thicker, richer sound.

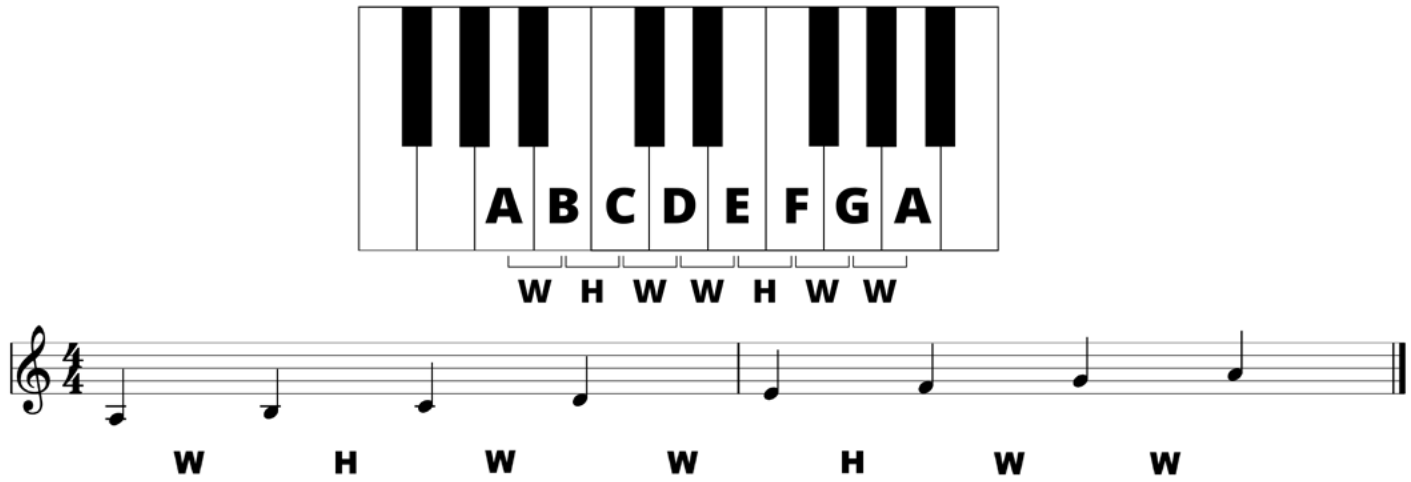




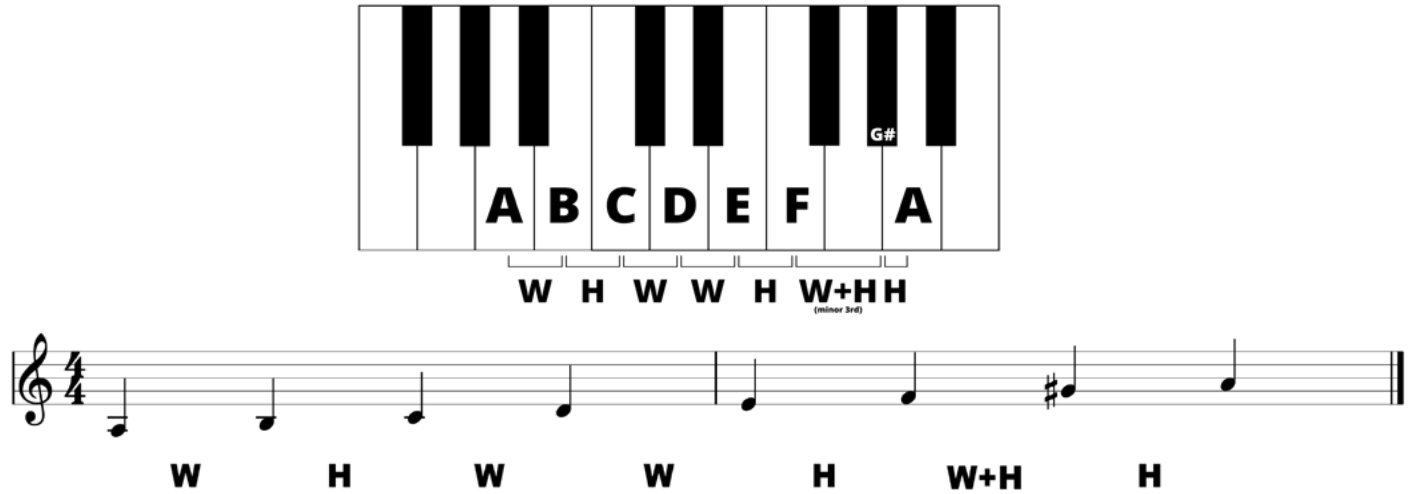
THEORY (0:20–0:10)

There are three types of minor scales that you will learn by the end of this book: *natural minor* (which you learned earlier), *melodic minor*, and *harmonic minor*. These three scales are the most popular seven-note minor scales in music.

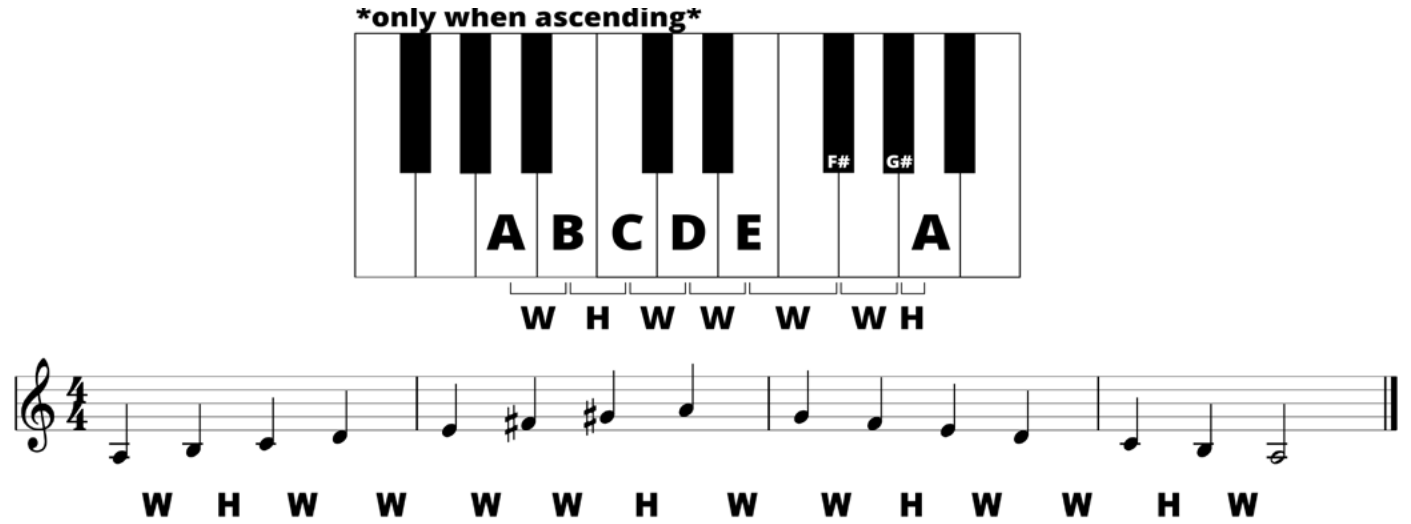
The natural minor scale has a whole step/half step pattern similar to the major scale, with the only difference being where you begin. For instance, as you saw earlier, the A natural minor scale has the same notes as the C major scale, with the only difference being that you start on A instead of C.



The *harmonic* minor scale is the same as the natural minor scale, only the seventh note is raised by a half step. For example, in A natural minor, the seventh note of the scale is G. In A harmonic minor, however, the seventh note is G♯.

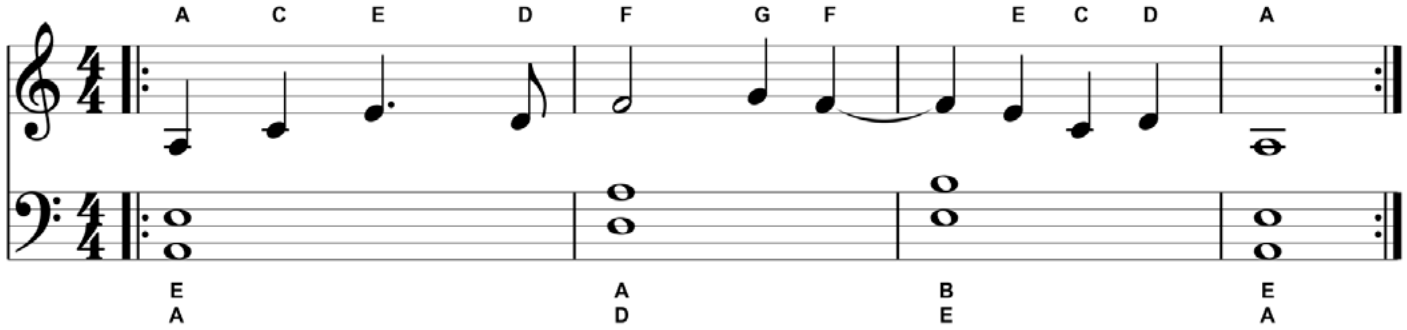


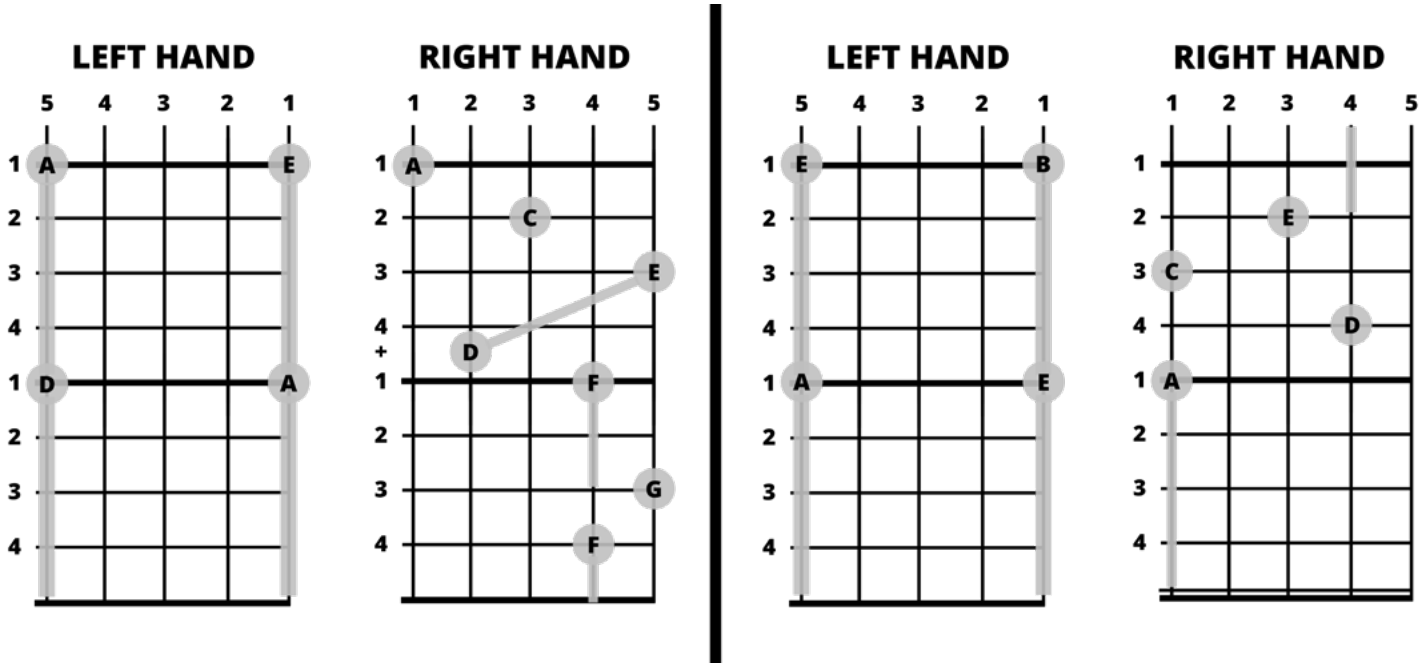
With the *melodic* minor scale, you will raise both the 6th and the 7th notes of the scale by one half step—but only when you're *ascending* the scale. When descending this scale, you will play the same pitches as the natural minor scale. In A melodic minor, for example, you will play F♯ and G♯ (instead of F and G) on the way up, but on the way down you will play F and G (instead of F♯ and G♯).



MUSICAL PIECE (0:10–0:00)

Now let's piece together all of the material that you've learned today: multiple notes in the left hand, dots, ties, tricky finger positioning… You got it!



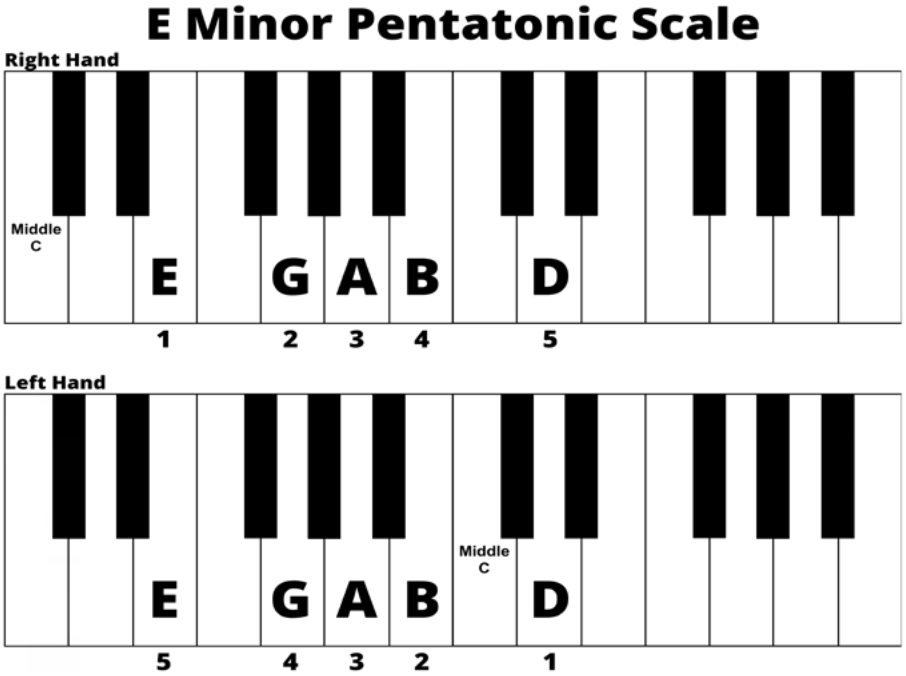


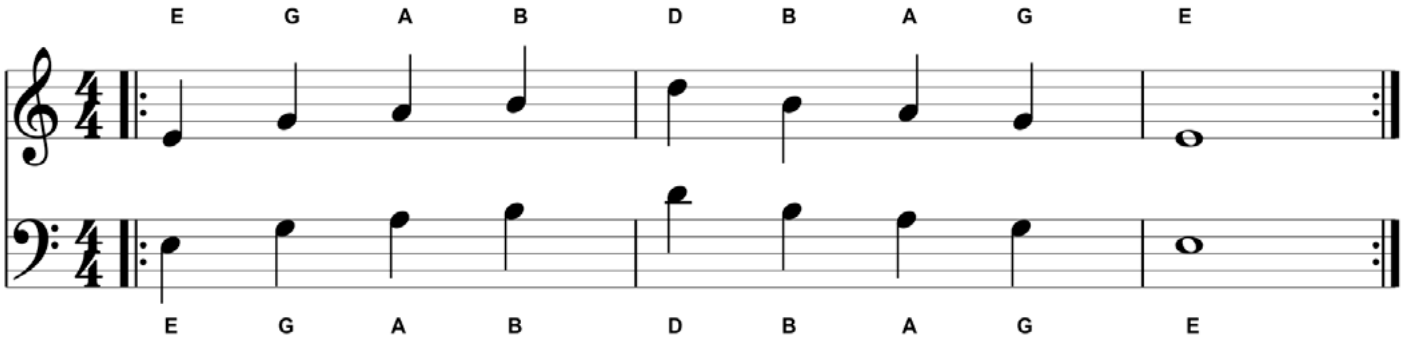
DAY 10

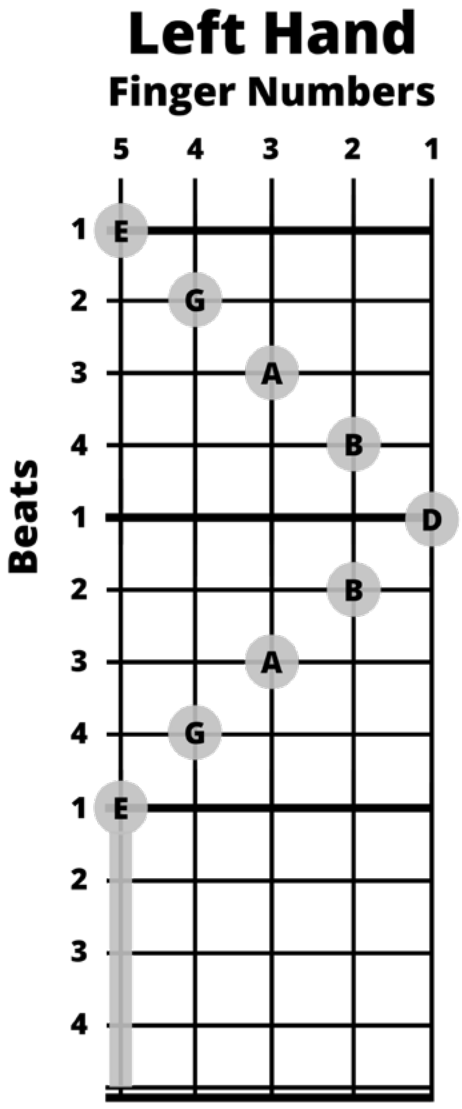
SCALE: E MINOR PENTATONIC AND E NATURAL MINOR (1:00–0:50)

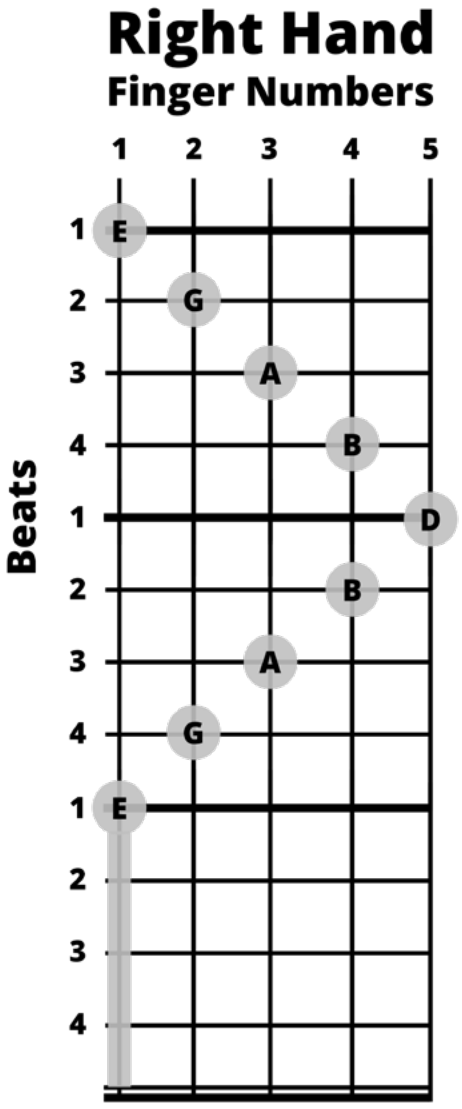
Today, we have two minor scales to learn and practice, E minor pentatonic and E natural minor. Thankfully, they are very similar, with the only difference being the number of notes in each scale.

If you haven't already, spend a few minutes listening to the accompanying audio to hear how each scale should sound. Then, spend five minutes playing through E minor pentatonic several times before moving on to E natural minor, which should also get a good five minutes of practice time. If you struggle to play the scales with both hands simultaneously, then practice each hand separately until you feel confident enough to try them together. Eventually, you'll want to be able to play all of the scales in this book with both hands at the same time.



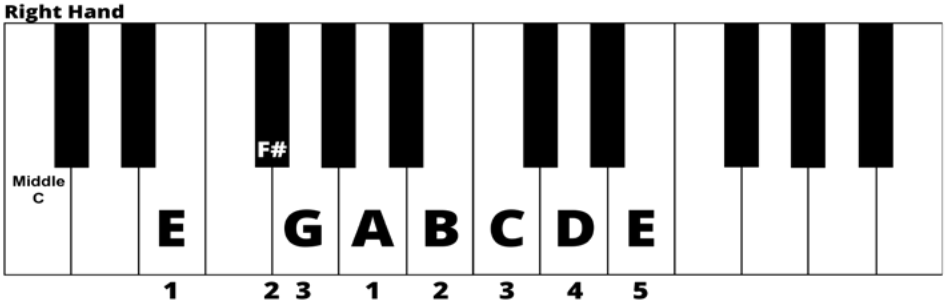

E G A B D B A G E
E G A B D B A G E


Left Hand
Finger Numbers
5 4 3 2 1
Beats
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4
E G A B D B A G E

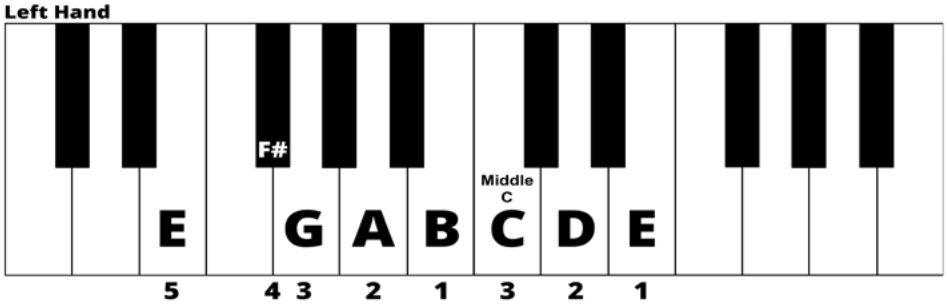

Right Hand
Finger Numbers
1 2 3 4 5
Beats
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4
E G A B D B A G E

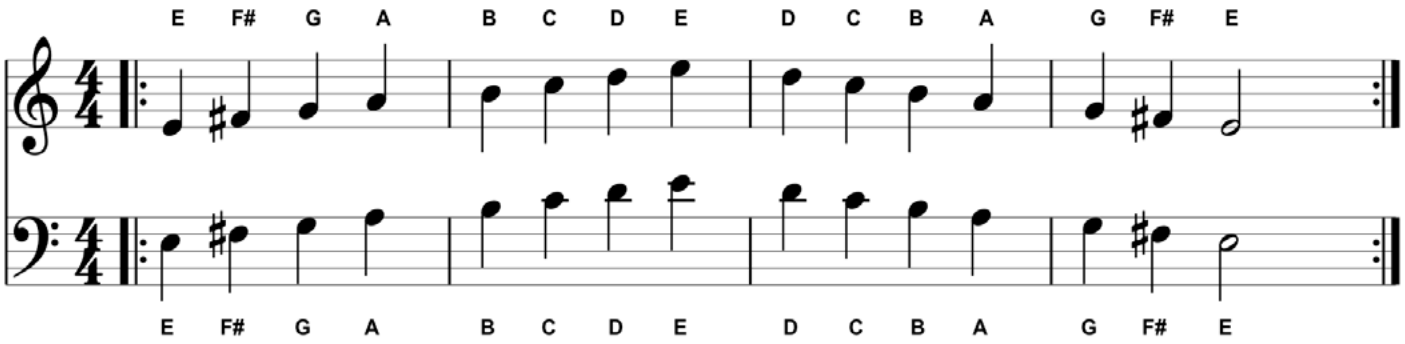
E Natural Minor Scale

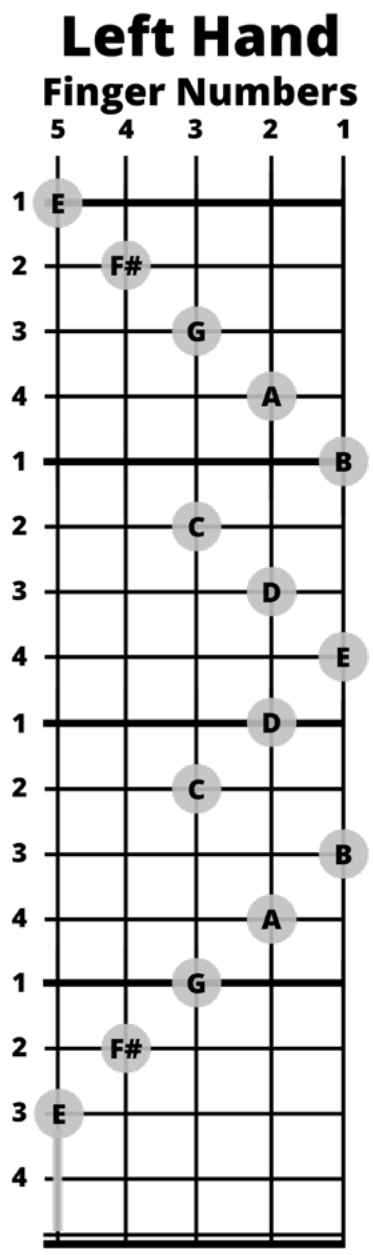
Right Hand

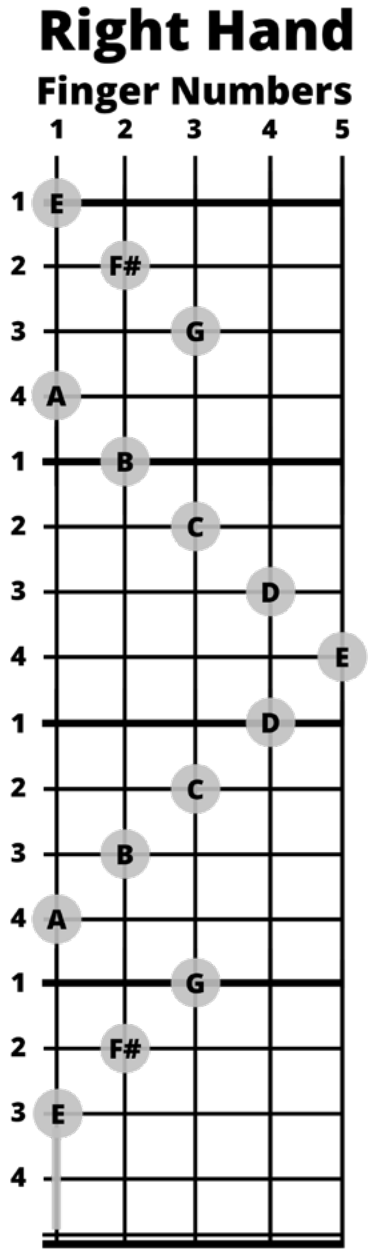


Left Hand




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

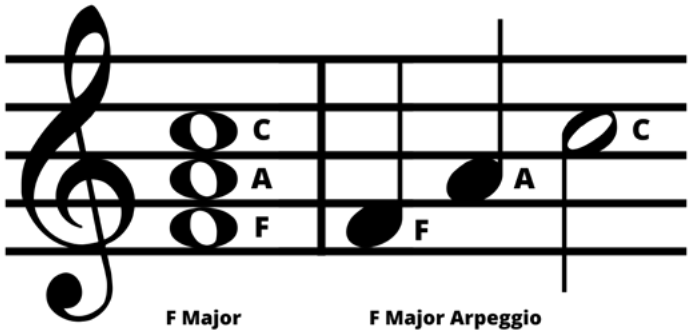

Left Hand
Finger Numbers
5 4 3 2 1
1 E
2 F#
3 G
4 A
1 B
2 C
3 D
4 E
1 D
2 C
3 B
4 A
1 G
2 F#
3 E
4


Right Hand
Finger Numbers
1 2 3 4 5
1 E
2 F#
3 G
4 A
1 B
2 C
3 D
4 E
1 D
2 C
3 B
4 A
1 G
2 F#
3 E
4

THEORY (0:50–0:40)

We're going a little out of order today. We've moved theory up because today's theory lesson will be incorporated into the music exercises that follow. Today, we're going to discuss arpeggios. Although a relatively simple concept, arpeggios take some time to master.

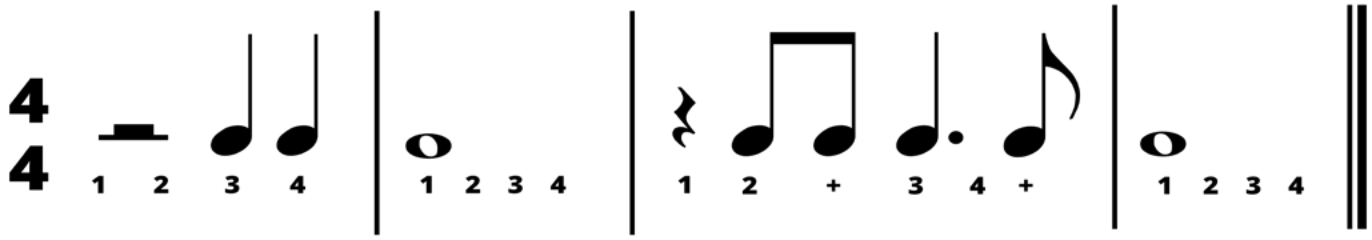
An *arpeggio* is simply the notes of a chord played one after another. In our previous chord progression exercises, we played our triads as chords—that is, all of the notes simultaneously. Similarly, in our left hand, we played either one note or two notes at the same time. With arpeggios, however, the rhythm and order of the notes can vary. The figure below depicts an arpeggio of an F major chord.



Moving forward, we will be incorporating arpeggios into our music exercises.

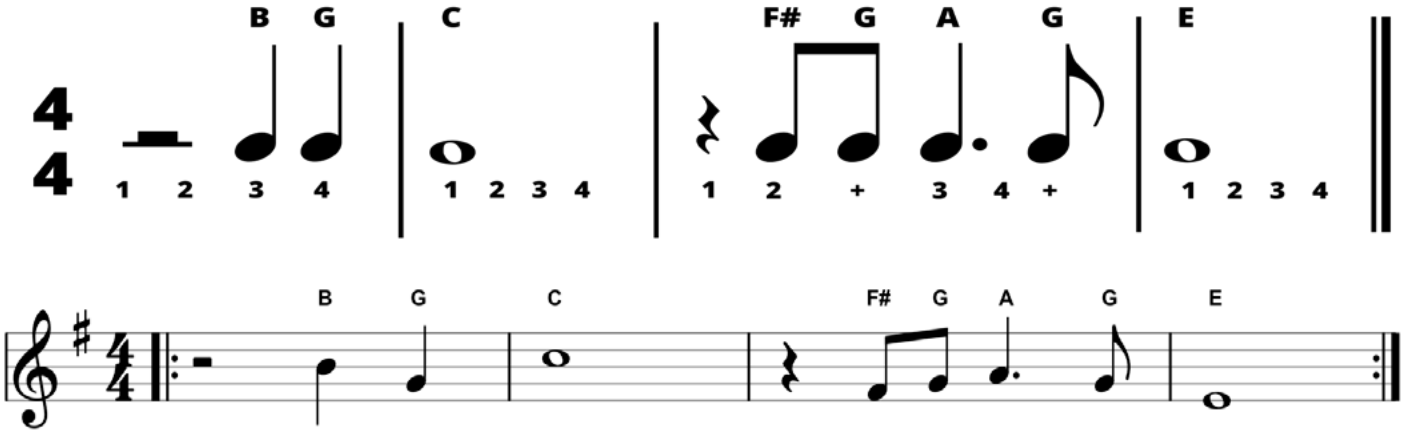
RHYTHM (0:40–0:30)

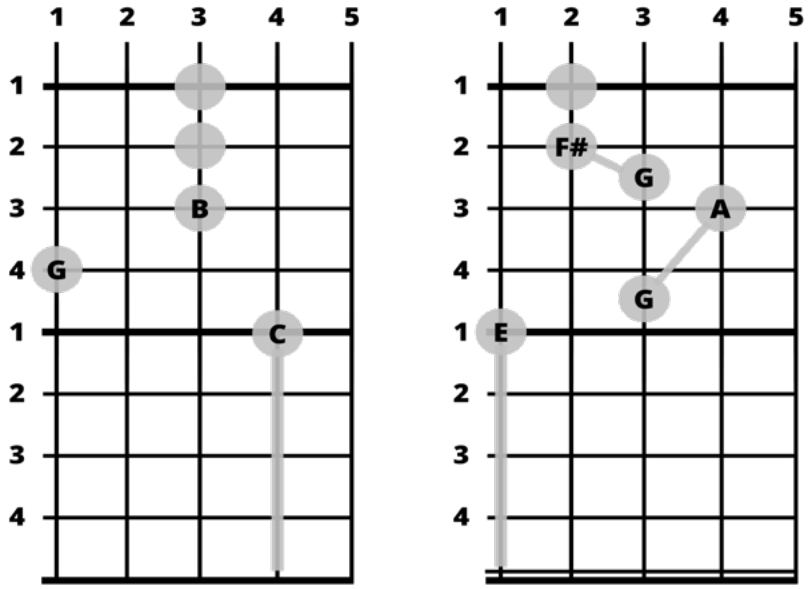
Later in today's lesson, you will begin playing arpeggios in your left hand. This will add an extra layer of complexity to the final music exercise. Because of that, it is important that you lock into this rhythm really well. As always, listen to the audio track to hear how it should sound, then try clapping it out while tapping your foot or while your metronome provides the quarter-note pulse.



MELODY (0:30–0:20)

Today's melody—you guessed it!—follows the same rhythm you just learned in the previous section. Consult the piano tab for the most efficient way to finger the melody.

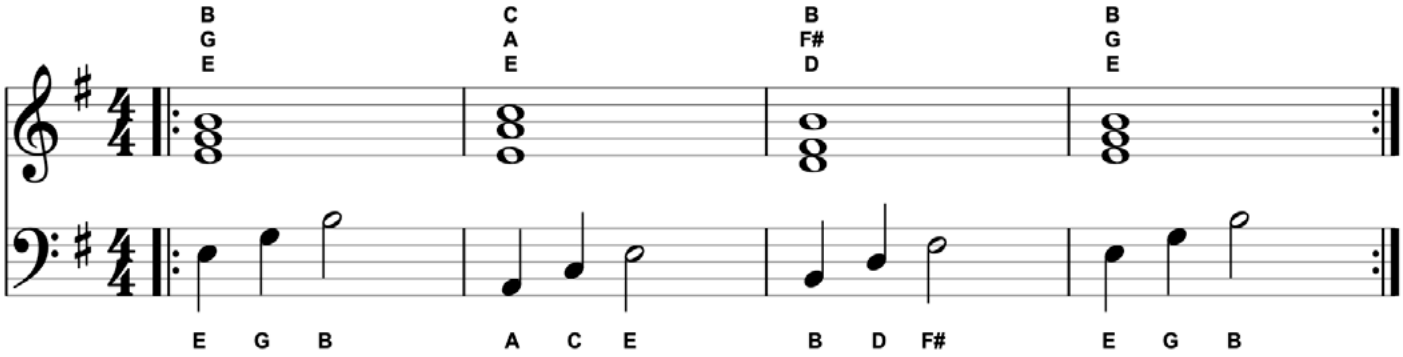


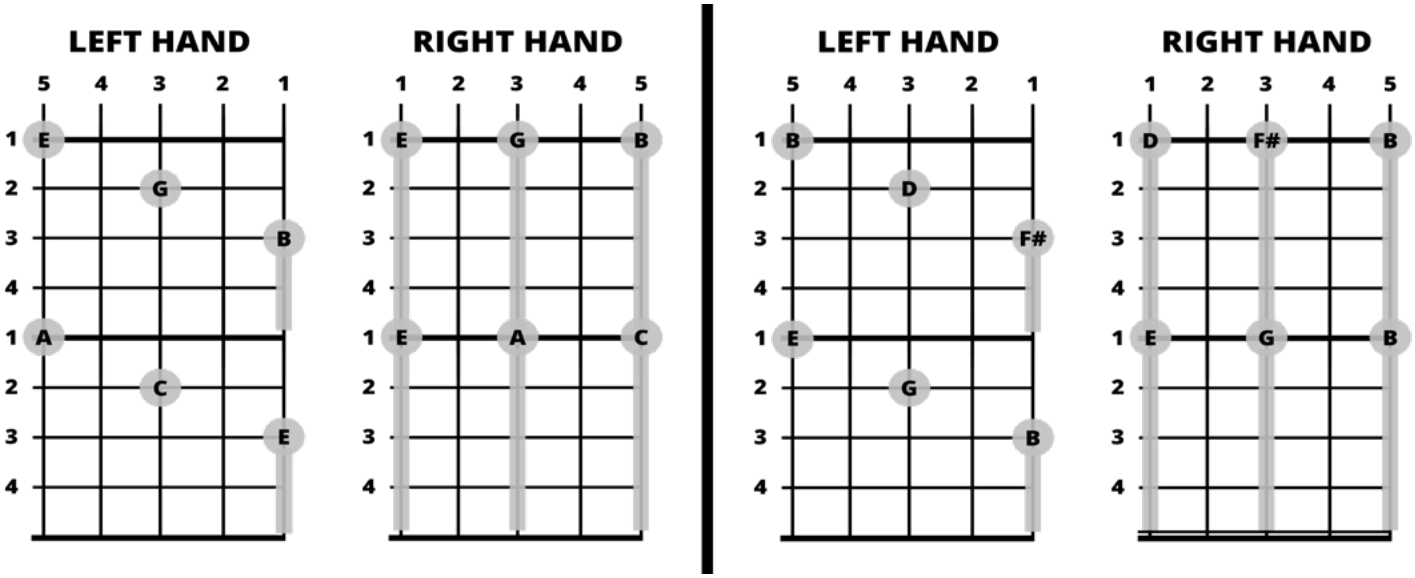


CHORD PROGRESSION (0:20–0:10)

It's arpeggio time! While your right hand holds the Em, Am, and Bm chords for four beats apiece, your left hand will play each chord as an arpeggio, using two quarter notes and a half note. This chord progression is the same chord progression that you learned yesterday, only in a different key (i.e., Em instead of Am). We will also use inversions in your right hand to minimize the distance your hand must travel. Because of this, we're going to play the Am and Bm arpeggios an octave lower; in other words, below the tonic chord, Em.

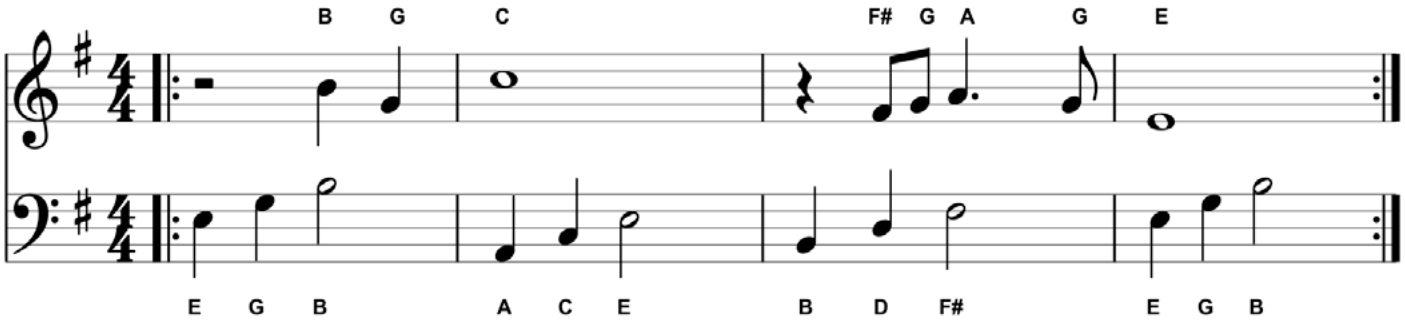
Take some time to practice each hand separately before putting it all together.

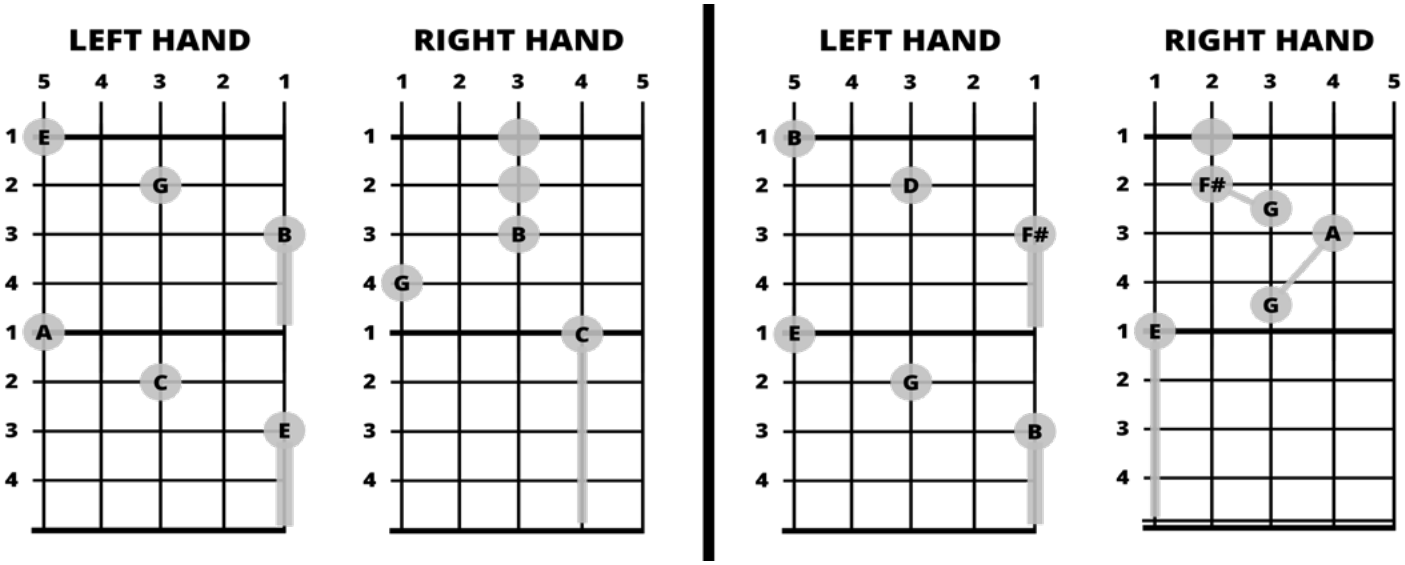




MUSICAL PIECE (0:10–0:00)

Now, we will piece together the LH arpeggios that you just played and the RH melody that you learned earlier. The rhythm between the two can be tricky, so it's OK to start slow… just use that metronome!





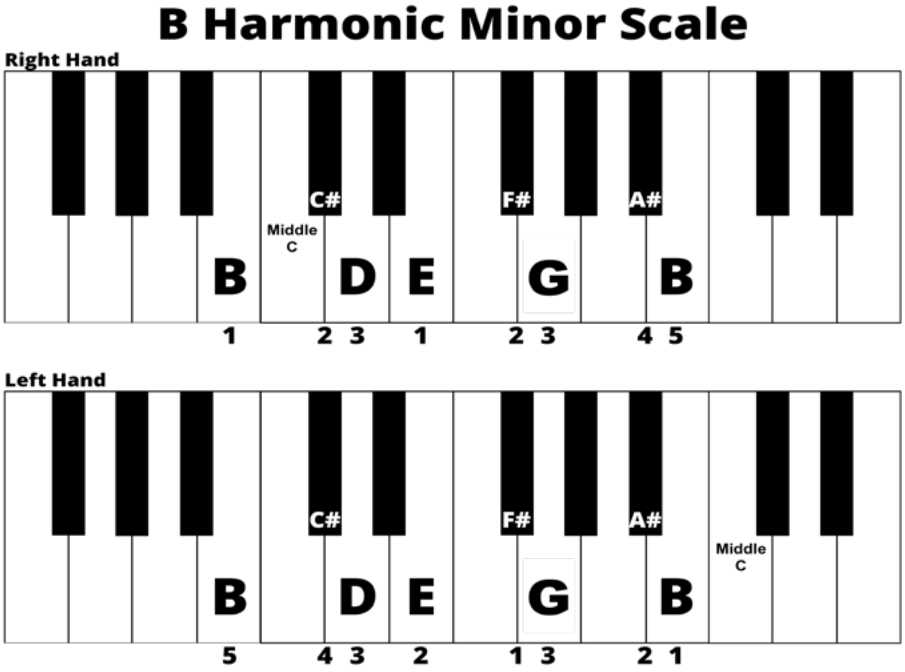
DAY 11

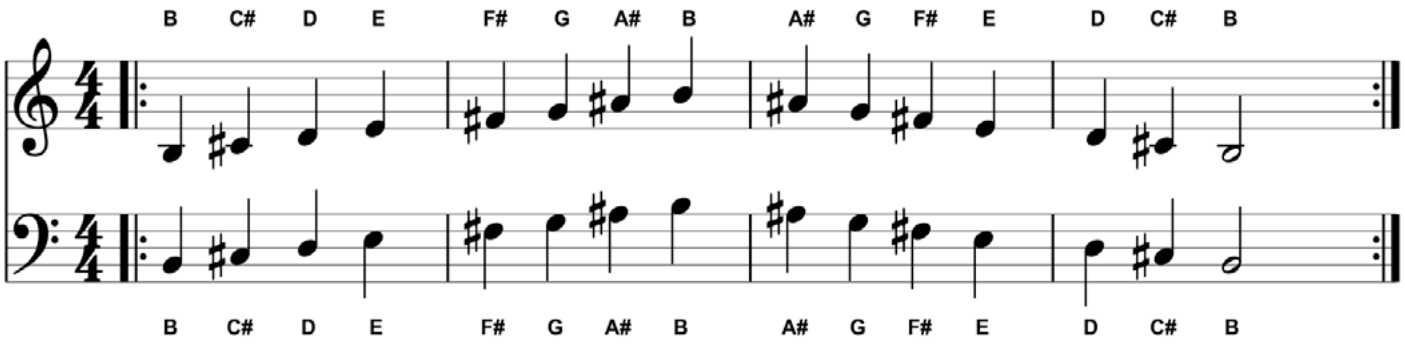
SCALE: B HARMONIC MINOR (1:00–0:50)

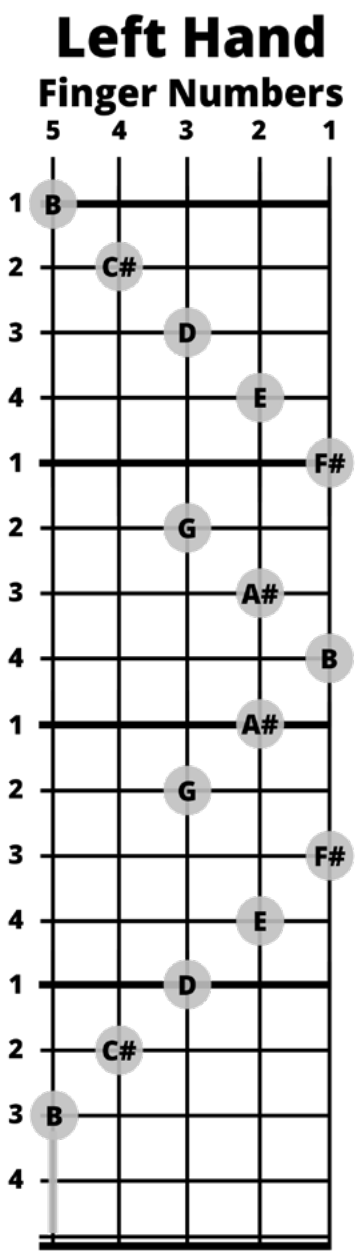
Two days ago, we spent our theory lesson learning about the different types of minor scales. Today, we will learn to play one of those scales—B harmonic minor. If you think back to Day 9, we learned that harmonic minor is the same as natural minor, only the seventh note of the scale is raised by one half step.

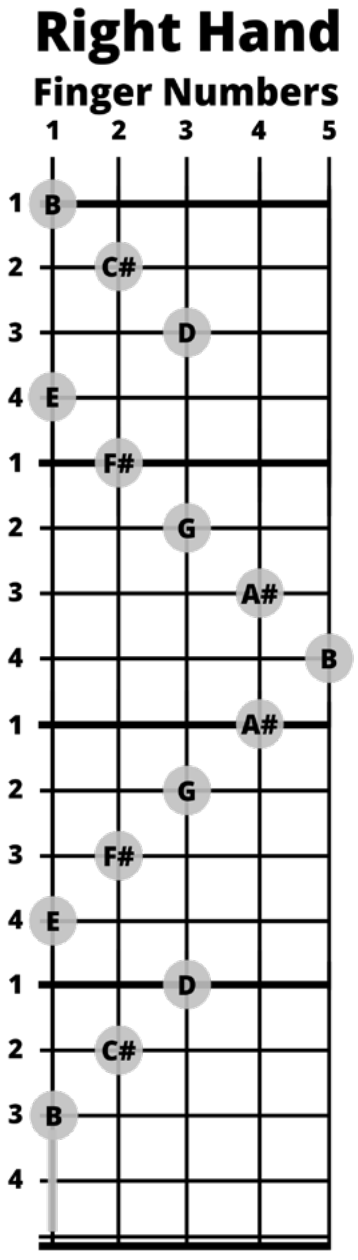
The B natural minor scale is spelled B–C♯–D–E–F♯–G–A. Therefore, if we raise the seventh tone one half step from A to A♯, we get the B *harmonic* minor scale: B–C♯–D–E–F♯–G–**A**♯. The harmonic minor scale possesses a dark, somewhat spooky sound.

As always, fire up that metronome and spend the next 10 minutes getting comfortable with the B harmonic minor scale.



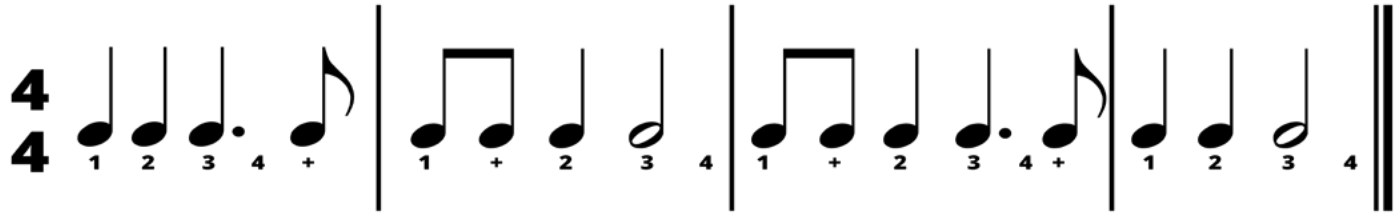

B C# D E F# G A# B A# G F# E D C# B
B C# D E F# G A# B A# G F# E D C# B


Left Hand
Finger Numbers
5 4 3 2 1
1 B
2 C#
3 D
4 E
1 F#
2 G
3 A#
4 B
1 A#
2 G
3 F#
4 E
1 D
2 C#
3 B
4


Right Hand
Finger Numbers
1 2 3 4 5
1 B
2 C#
3 D
4 E
1 F#
2 G
3 A#
4 B
1 A#
2 G
3 F#
4 E
1 D
2 C#
3 B
4

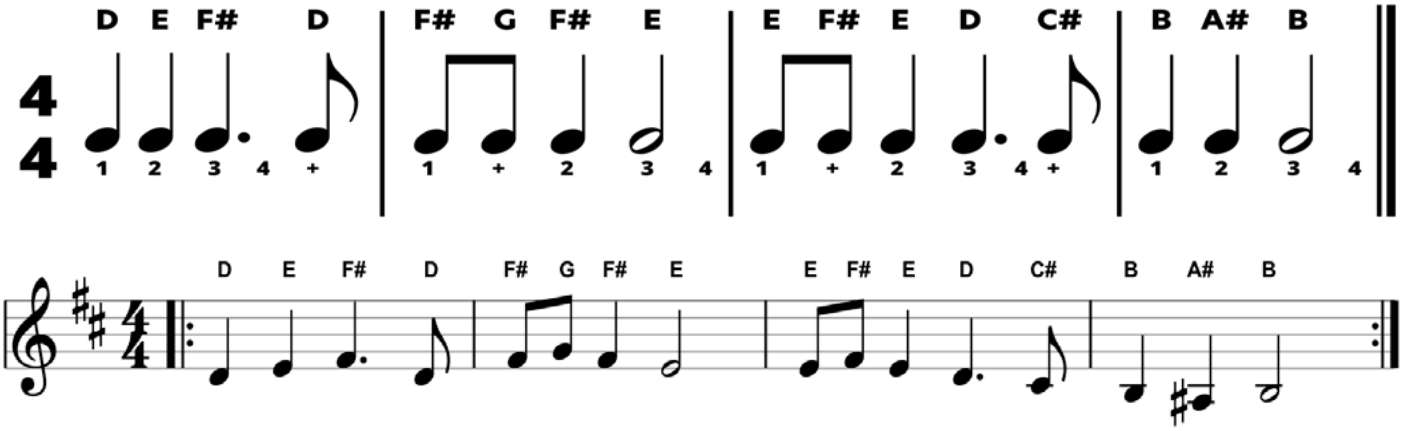
RHYTHM (0:50–0:40)

Our example today continues our effort to learn more complex rhythms. The rhythm below will be paired with LH arpeggios in the Musical Piece at the end of the day, so take the next 10 minutes to get to know this rhythm intimately. As always, clap it out with a metronome or foot stomps.

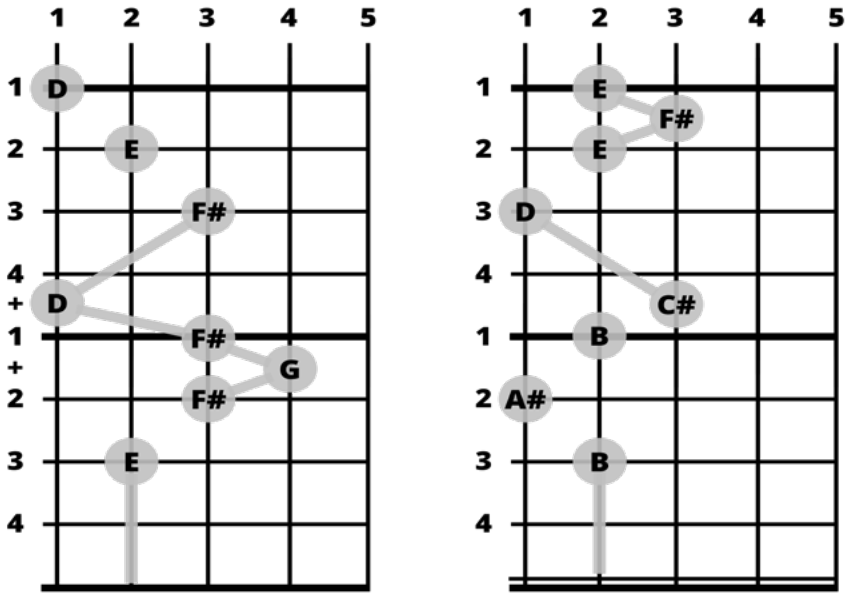


MELODY (0:40–0:30)

Today's melody, and subsequent Musical Piece, could work well as the soundtrack to a Halloween cartoon. Embrace the spooky and get playing!



RIGHT HAND

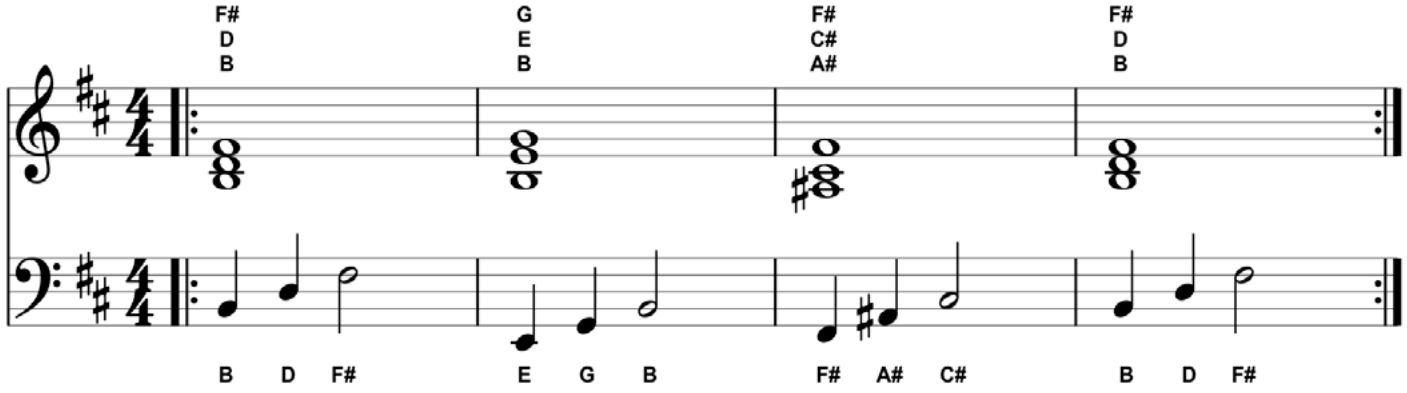


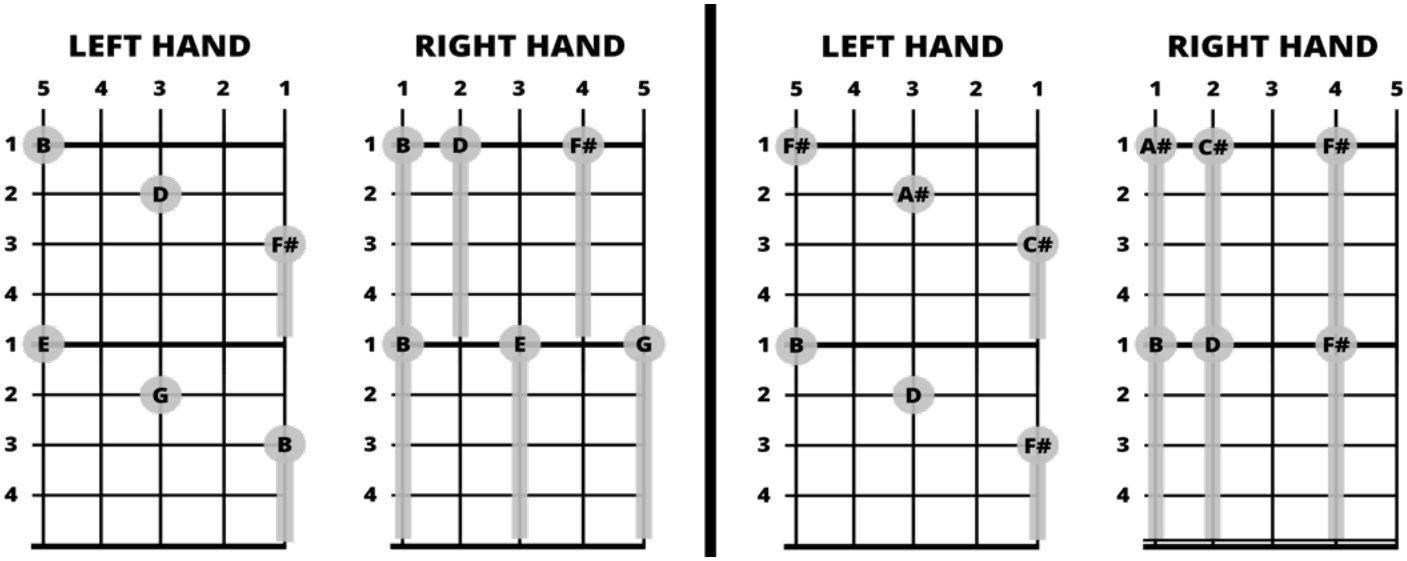
At the end of measure 3, your middle finger will pass over the thumb for the final four notes: C# (3), B (2), A# (1), and B (2).

CHORD PROGRESSION (0:30–0:20)

In this section, we continue with the same chord progression that we've been playing the last few days, with just a few more adjustments. To match the scale we learned today, B harmonic minor, the chord progression will be played in the key of B minor. Remember, the seventh note of harmonic minor is raised one half step (in the case of B harmonic minor, A is raised to A♯). This directly affects the F♯ chord. Instead of playing an F♯m chord (F♯–A–C♯), we will play an F♯ *major* (F♯–A♯–C♯). This gives us a progression of Bm–Em–F♯–Bm.

We have also written the chord progression with inversions instead of the typical root-position triads. Because of this, the Em and F♯ arpeggios are played below the tonic chord, Bm, in the left hand. Pay close attention to the fingerings notated in the tab. This will help you efficiently play the chord progression.



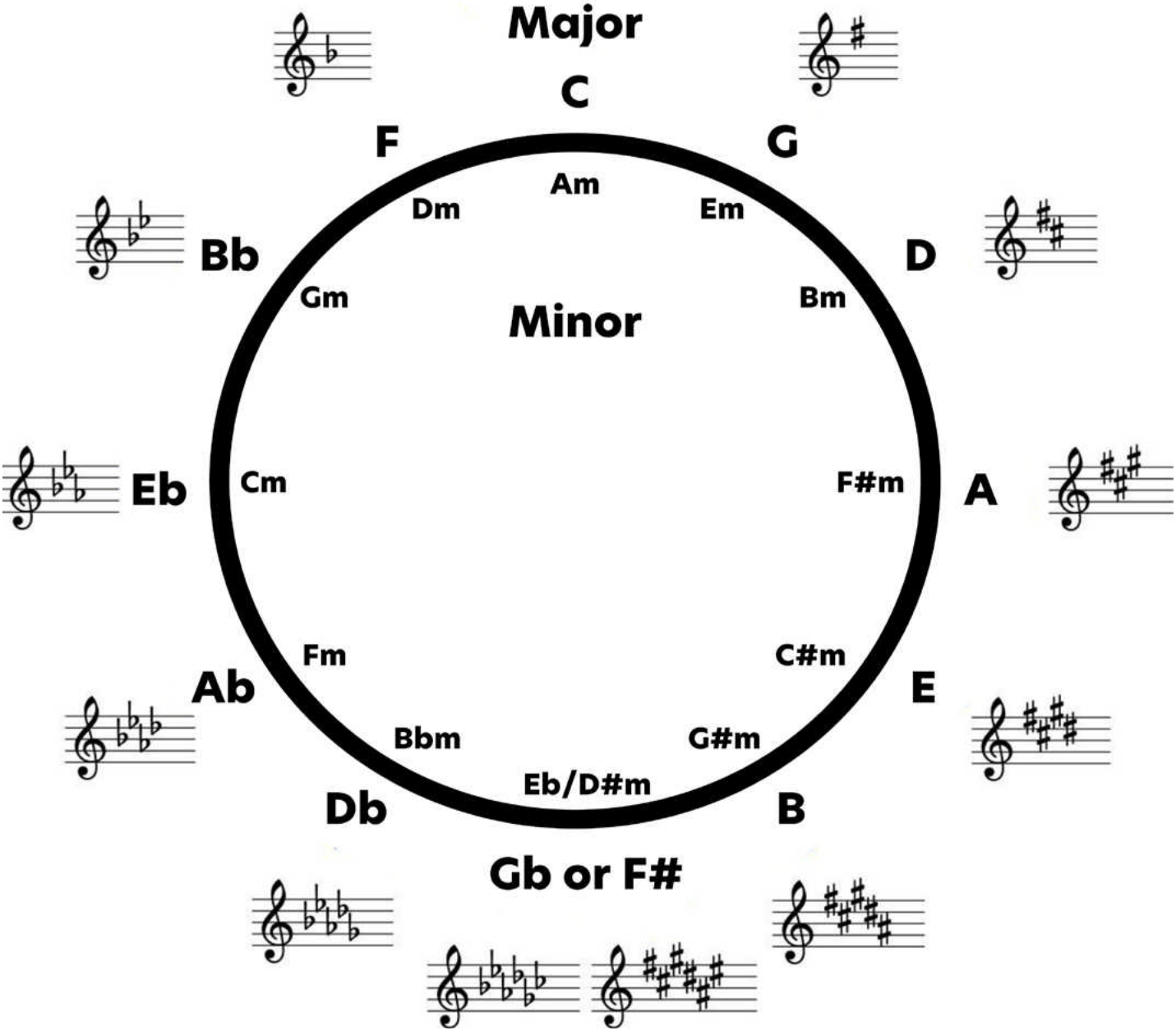


THEORY (0:20–0:10)

Today, we will learn about the Circle of 5ths, which is used to illustrate the relationship between the 12 tones of the chromatic scale. Remember when we learned that there are 12 different notes on the piano? Well, if you start on C and go up a Perfect 5th, you can continue ascending by perfect 5ths and eventually arrive back at C, having hit all 12 notes/keys. From scales to key signatures to intervals, the Circle of 5ths brings together multiple topics you have already learned.

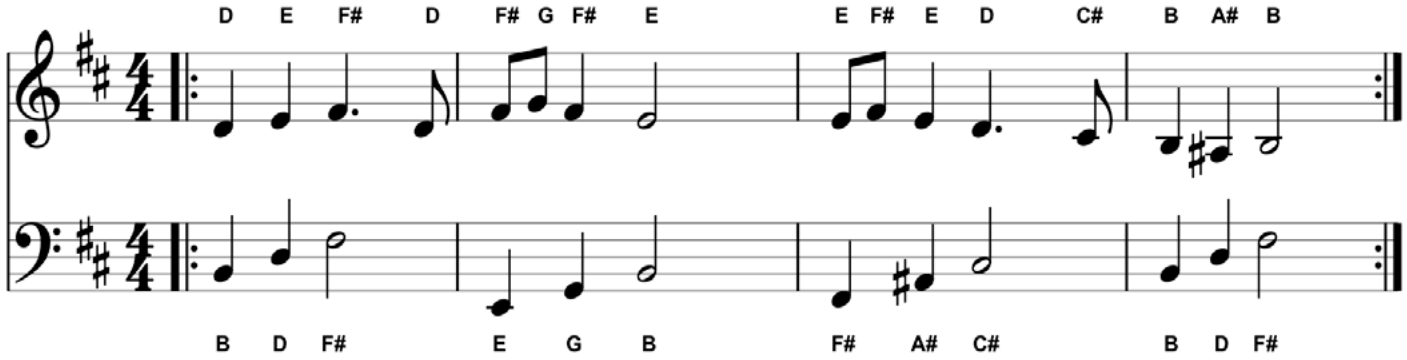
The Circle of 5ths also includes each key's *relative minor.* Every major key has a relative minor whose root is always the sixth note of the scale. For instance, the sixth note in the key of C is A. Therefore, the relative minor of C major is A minor. This is why C major and A minor share the same notes—just different starting points.

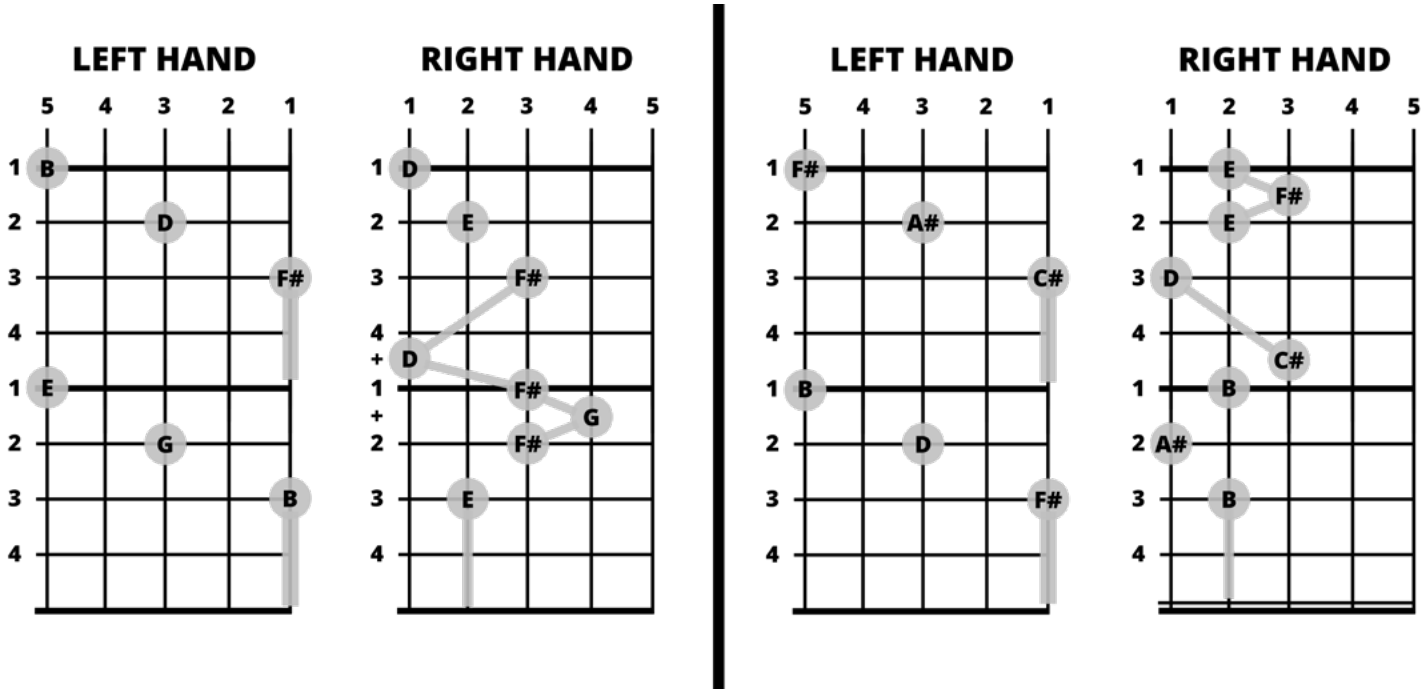
Take some time to review the Circle of 5ths illustration below. We don't have time in this book to play through every possible key, but if you continue playing piano, you will interact with these keys and their relative minors at some point.



MUSICAL PIECE (0:10–0:00)

Did we mention that today's music sounds spooky? When you put together the arpeggios in your left hand with the melody in your right hand, you will notice that there are some notes that sound almost… wrong. But don't fret! If you're following the tab/music correctly, you will hear what is known as "dissonance" in the music. *Dissonance* refers to the sound of tension, or clashing between notes. Dissonance can add a rich element to music that is otherwise consonant—kind of like how certain foods can be bitter yet enjoyable.



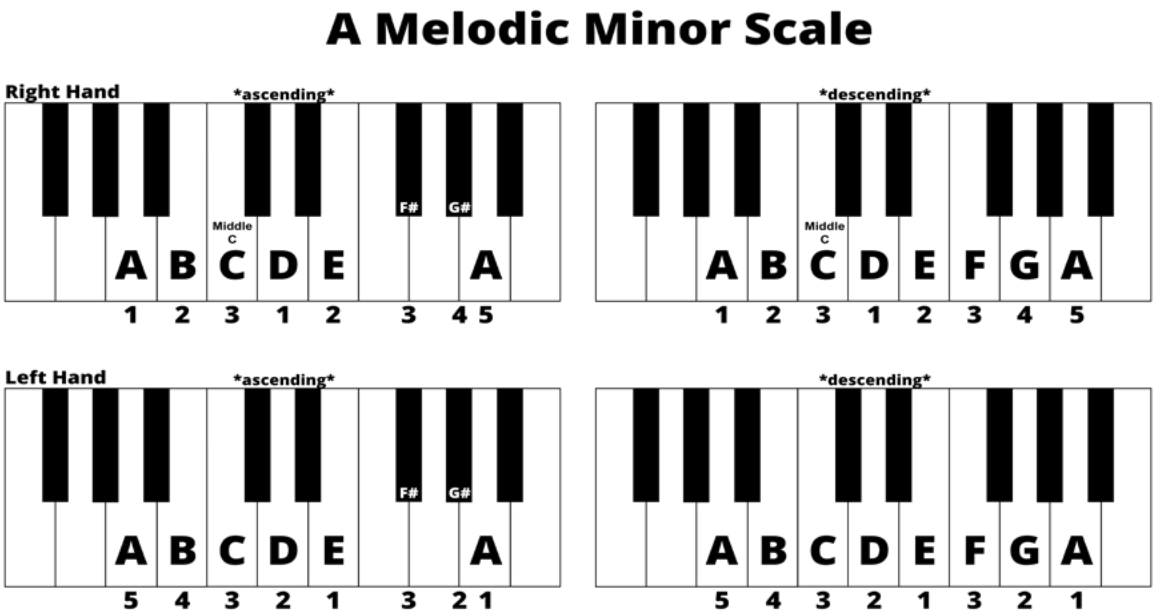


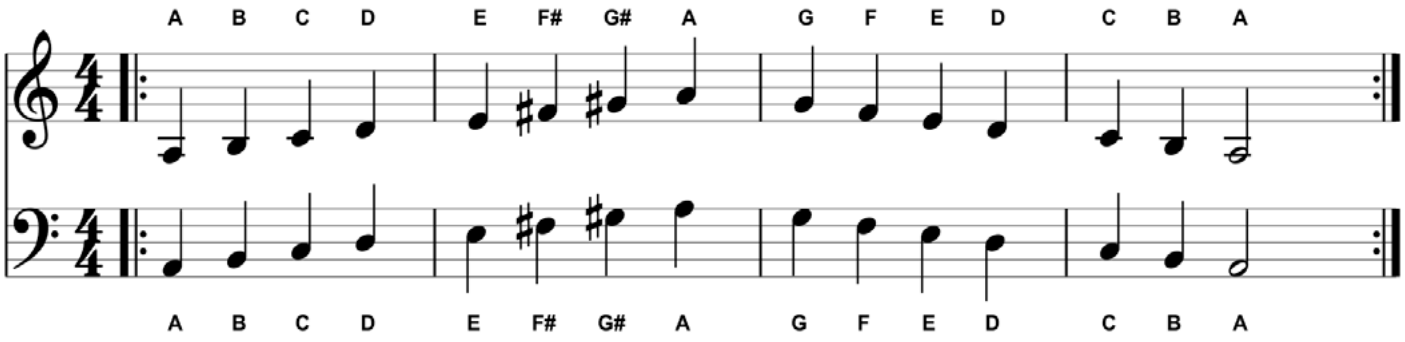
DAY 12

SCALE: A MELODIC MINOR (1:00–0:50)

We are back in the key of A minor, but this time it's A *melodic* minor. This means that the sixth and seventh notes will be raised by a half step on the way up. This is the first scale we've learned where you play something different on the way up than on the way down. So, be careful!

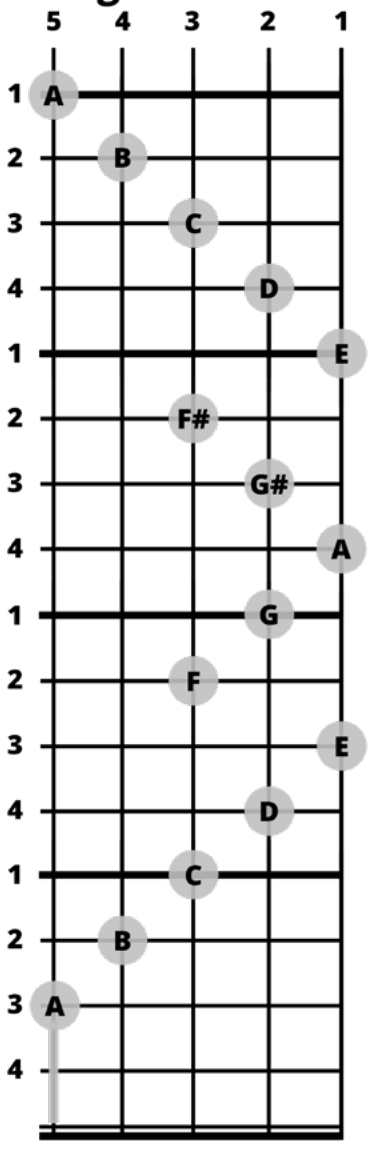
As always, dial up a comfortable tempo on your metronome and spend the next 10 minutes getting to know the A melodic minor scale.





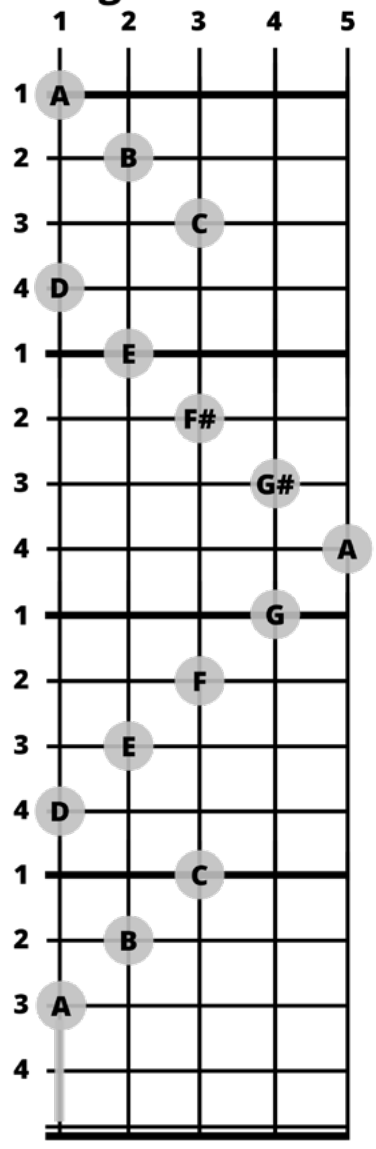
Left Hand

Finger Numbers



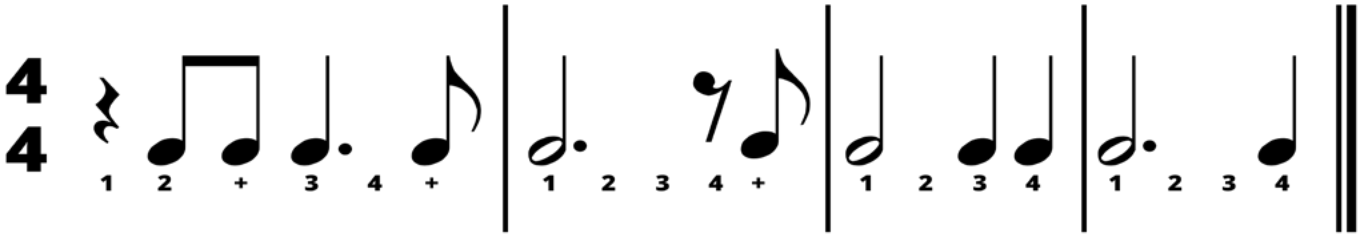
Right Hand

Finger Numbers



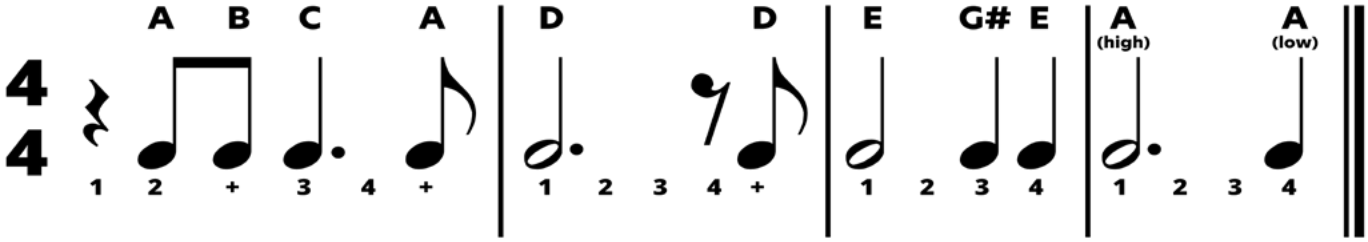
RHYTHM (0:50–0:40)

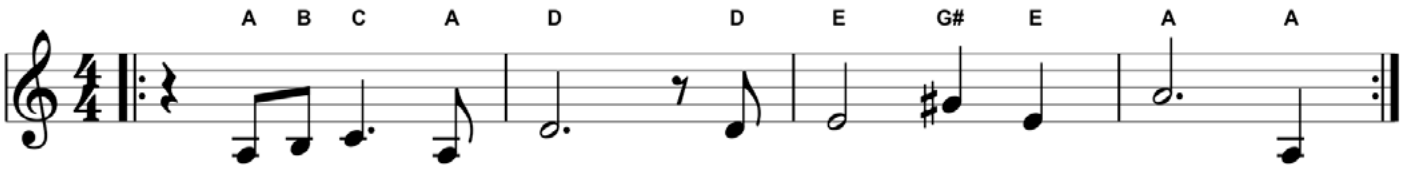
By now, you've probably noticed that your multitasking skills have strengthened. A major challenge of playing piano, as well as many other instruments, is the task of playing different things in different hands. The best way to develop this skill is to practice each hand separately, play consistently with a metronome, and start slow when needed. Thankfully, for this example, you only have to focus on one rhythm at a time!

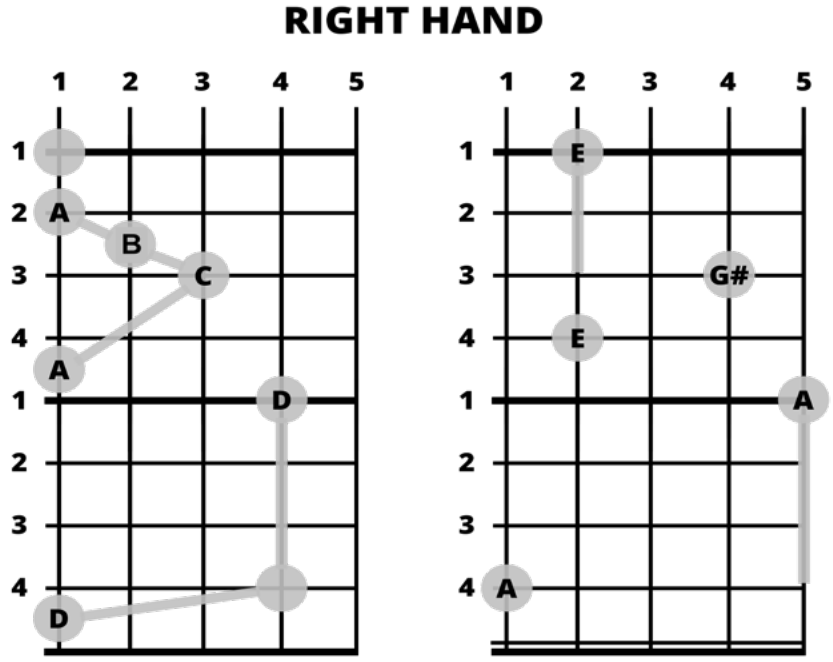


MELODY (0:40–0:30)

Today's melody exercise continues our spooky theme. Proper finger positioning will be important for this melody, especially in the final measure, which features an octave jump!



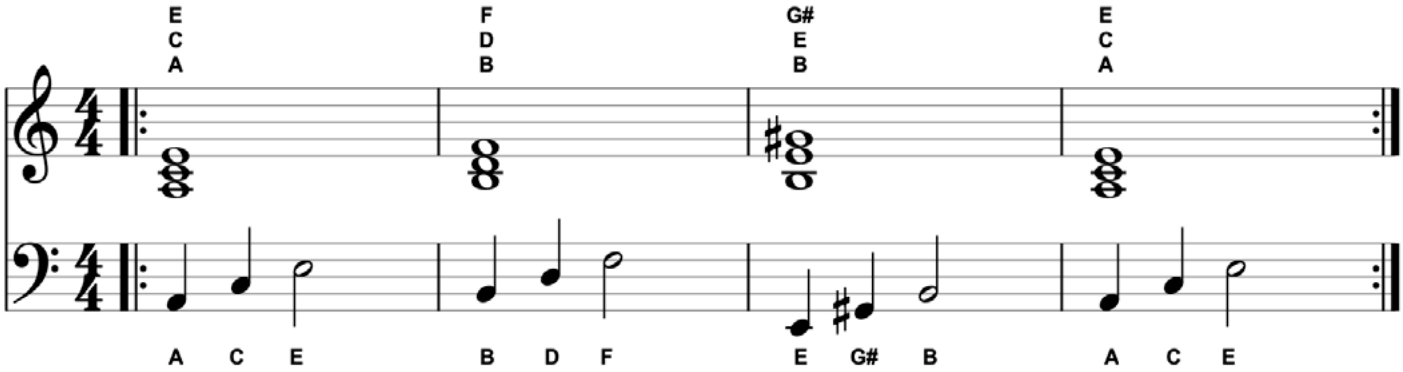


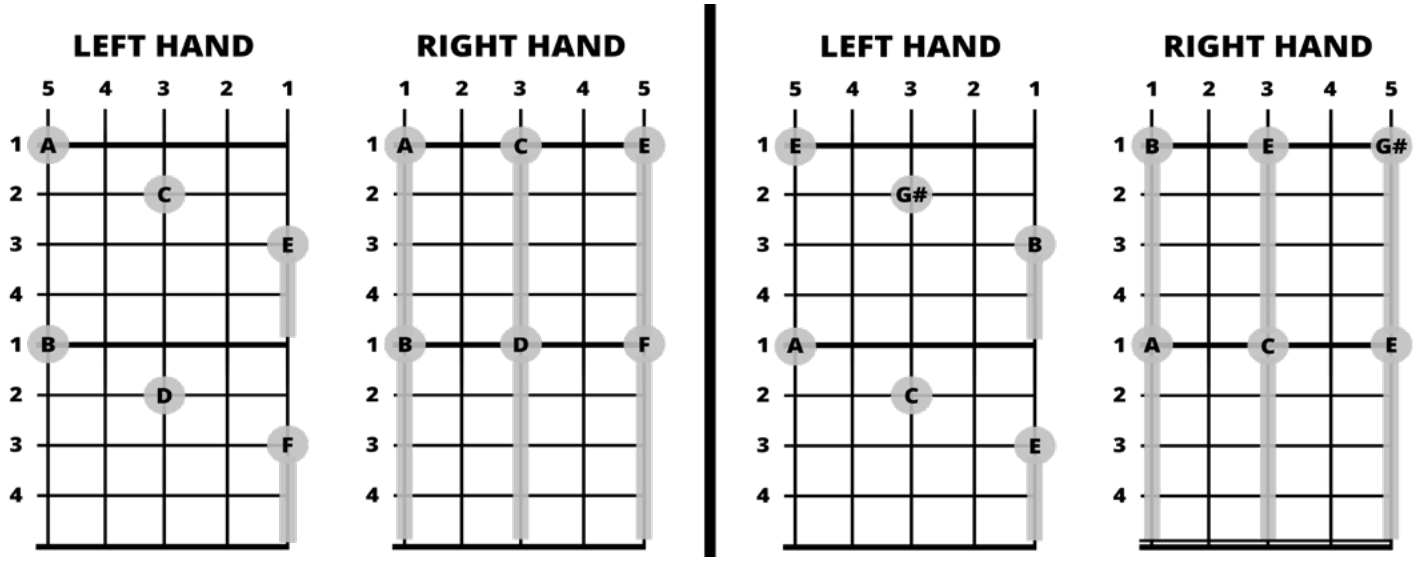


CHORD PROGRESSION (0:30–0:20)

Today's chord progression introduces a new type of chord: diminished. Up to this point, we've played only major and minor chords. A major chord consists of a major 3rd on the bottom and a minor 3rd on top, whereas a minor chord features a minor 3rd on the bottom and a major 3rd on top. A diminished chord, however, contains no major 3rd; instead, it's comprised of *two* minor 3rds.

In today's progression, Am–Bdim–E–Am, a B diminished triad bridges the gap between more common Am and E chords. If played loud enough, a diminished chord can sound somewhat like a train horn.





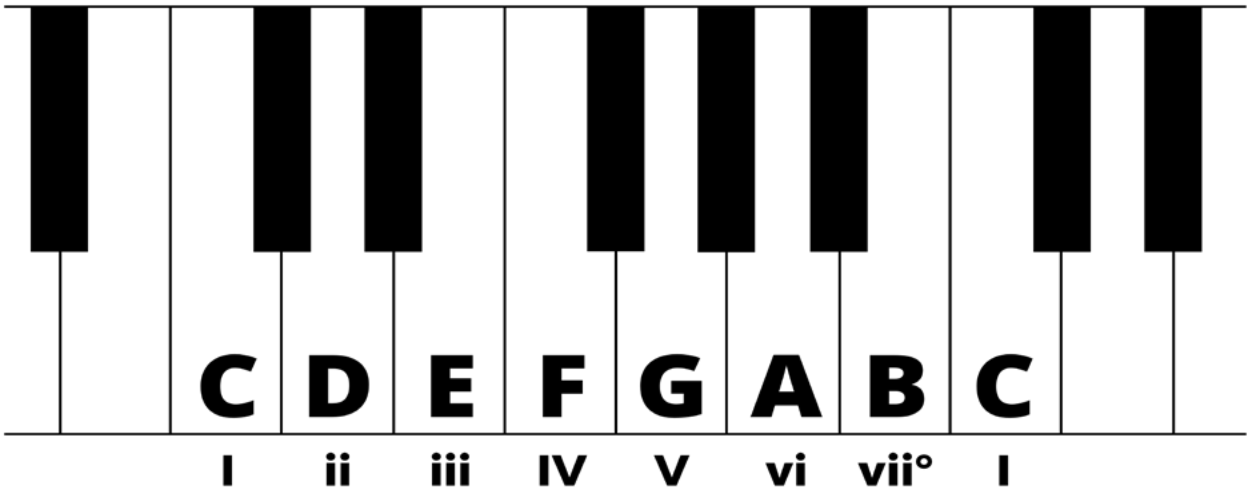
THEORY (0:20–0:10)

Today's theory lesson is on another concept that, when mastered, can open up a world of possibilities in music: the Nashville Number System.

Basically, the Nashville Number System translates the letters of the musical alphabet into numbers. This enables musicians to communicate in a "universal language," which is particularly helpful when changing keys on the fly, or when a group of musicians must perform together without rehearsing.

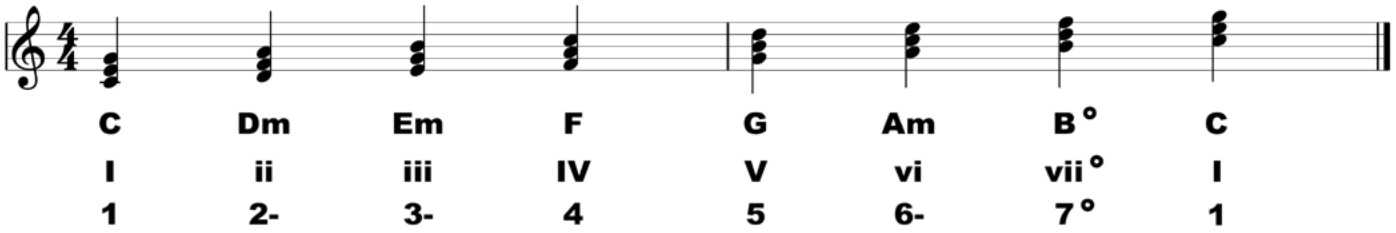
When using the Nashville Number System, regardless of key, each note is assigned a number. Whatever key you're in, that root note is the 1 ("one") chord. For example, let's look at the key of C.

Most commonly, you will see the numbers of a scale represented by Roman numerals:



° = diminished chord

The numbers represent each note within the key. The vast majority of the time, these numbers will be used to communicate chords within a key. The example below illustrates every chord in the key of C. Major chords are denoted by uppercase Roman numerals, and minor (and diminished) chords with lowercase Roman numerals.



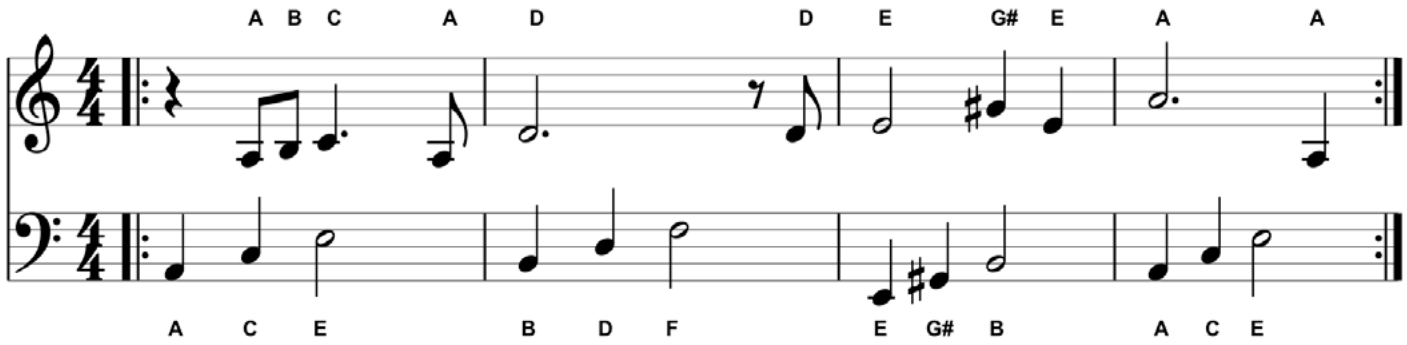
The four most common chords you will see in music today are the I, IV, V, and vi ("one, four, five, and six minor"). In the key of C, these chords are C (I), F (IV), G (G), and Am (vi). In the Nashville Number System, however, the Roman numerals are replaced by traditional numbers, and a small dash is used to indicate whether a chord is major or minor. In our C major example, C, F, G, and Am then become 1, 4, 5, and 6-.

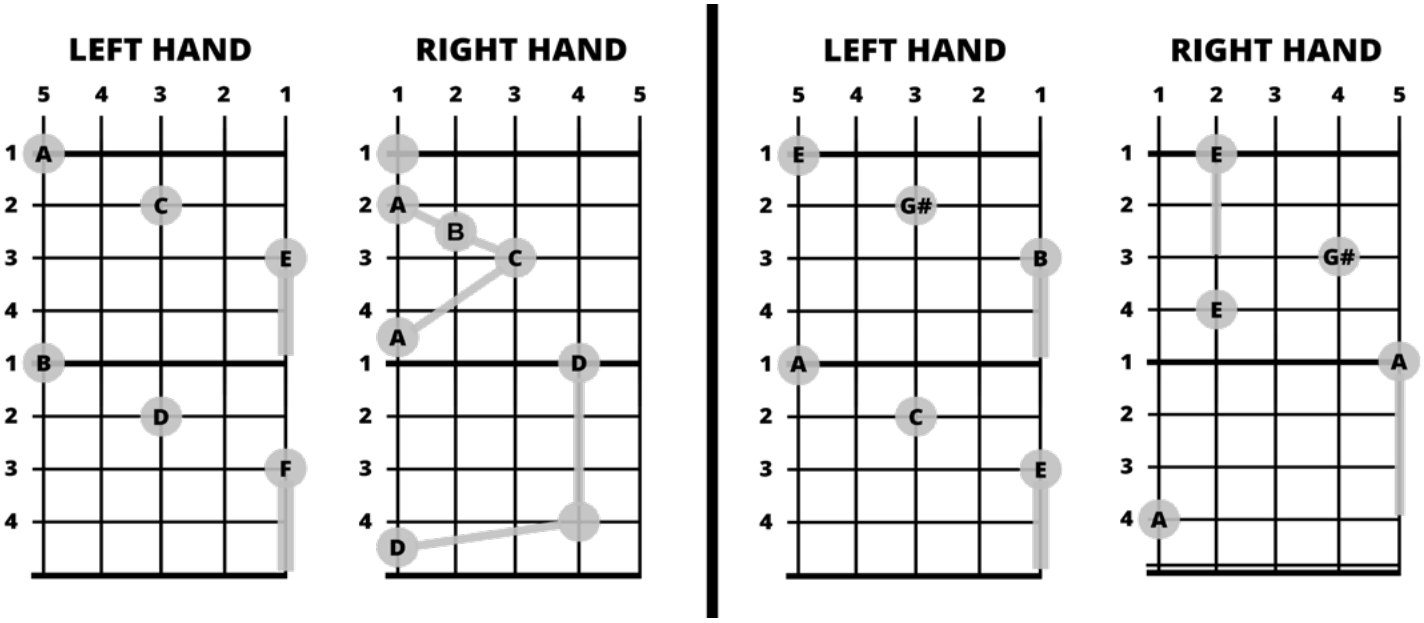
One important note: the Nashville Number System is based entirely on major scales. That means when a song is in a minor key, the accompanying numbers are based on the key's *relative major*—that is, the major scale that shares the same notes. For example, our Em–Am–Bm–Em progression from Day 10 is in the key of E minor (E–F♯–G–A–B–C–D), whose relative major is G major (G–A–B–C–D–E–F♯). So, in the Nashville Number System, we'd base this progression on G major instead of E minor, giving us a 6- 2- 3- 6- progression. (**Note:** In a diatonic progression, where all the chords belong to the same key, including our C major example above, the I, IV, and V chords are always major; the ii, iii, and vi chords are always minor; and the vii chord is always diminished.)

If you want some extra practice with Nashville Numbers, go back to the chord progression exercises from Week 1 and identify each chord's accompanying number.

MUSICAL PIECE (0:10–0:00)

Today's musical piece is another great exercise for playing competing rhythms in each hand. It's OK to start slow and practice each hand independently. Then, when you start to get comfortable, try playing the exercise with both hands.

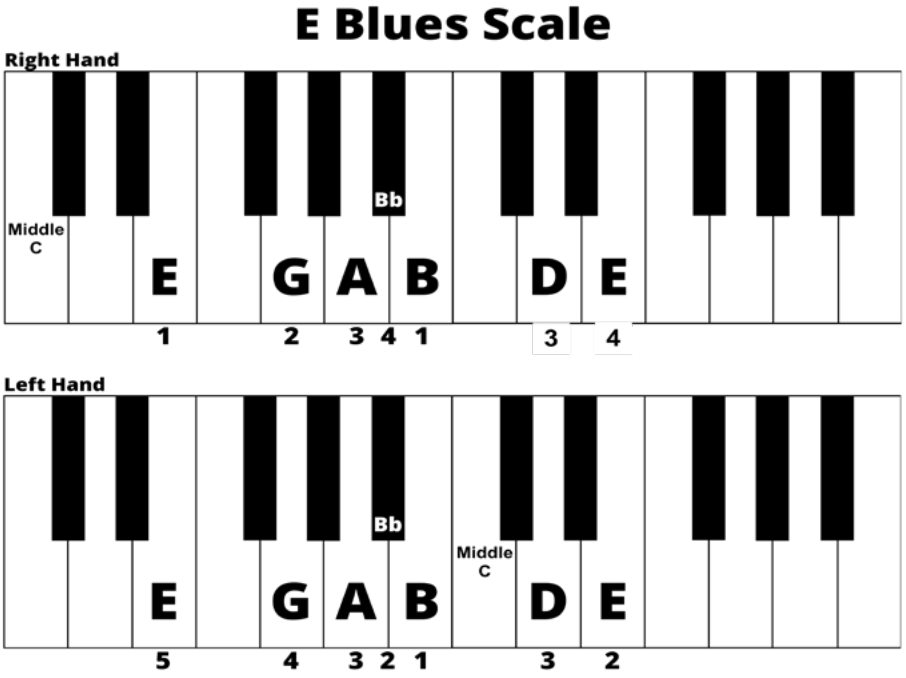


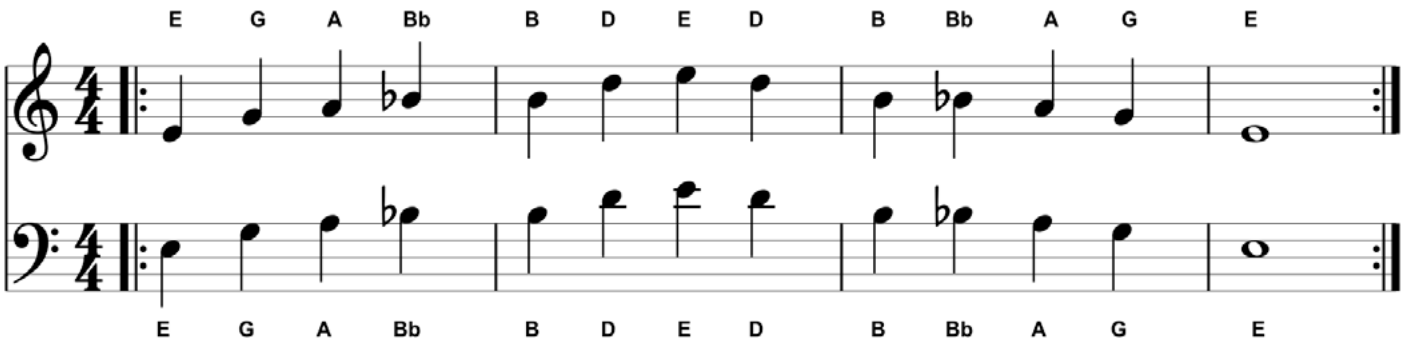


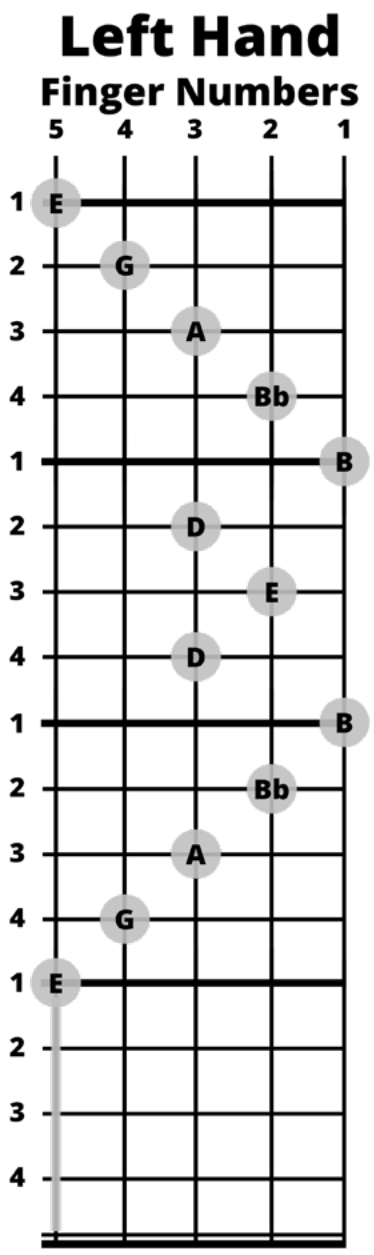
DAY 13

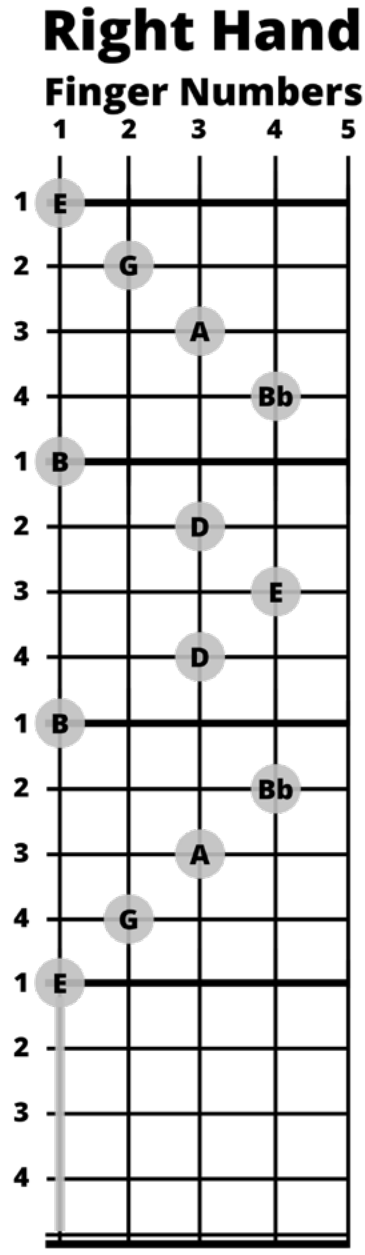
SCALE: E BLUES SCALE (1:00–0:50)

The last scale we will learn on our two-week journey is the E blues scale. On Day 10, you learned the E minor pentatonic scale, and today's scale is nearly identical, with the only exception being the addition of the note B♭. Blues scales can be a lot of fun when mastered. If you have extra time after learning the E blues scale, take a few minutes to improvise a solo (i.e., play a melody) by using the notes found in this scale.




E G A Bb B D E D B Bb A G E
E G A Bb B D E D B Bb A G E

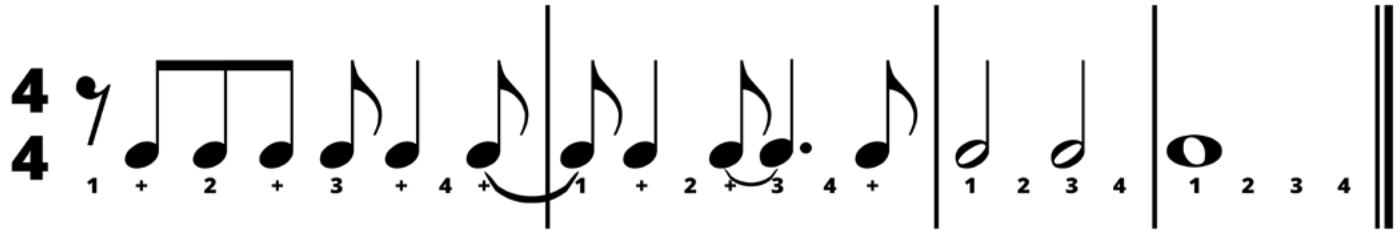

Left Hand
Finger Numbers
5 4 3 2 1
1 E
2 G
3 A
4 Bb
1 B
2 D
3 E
4 D
1 B
2 Bb
3 A
4 G
1 E
2
3
4


Right Hand
Finger Numbers
1 2 3 4 5
1 E
2 G
3 A
4 Bb
1 B
2 D
3 E
4 D
1 B
2 Bb
3 A
4 G
1 E
2
3
4

RHYTHM (0:50–0:40)

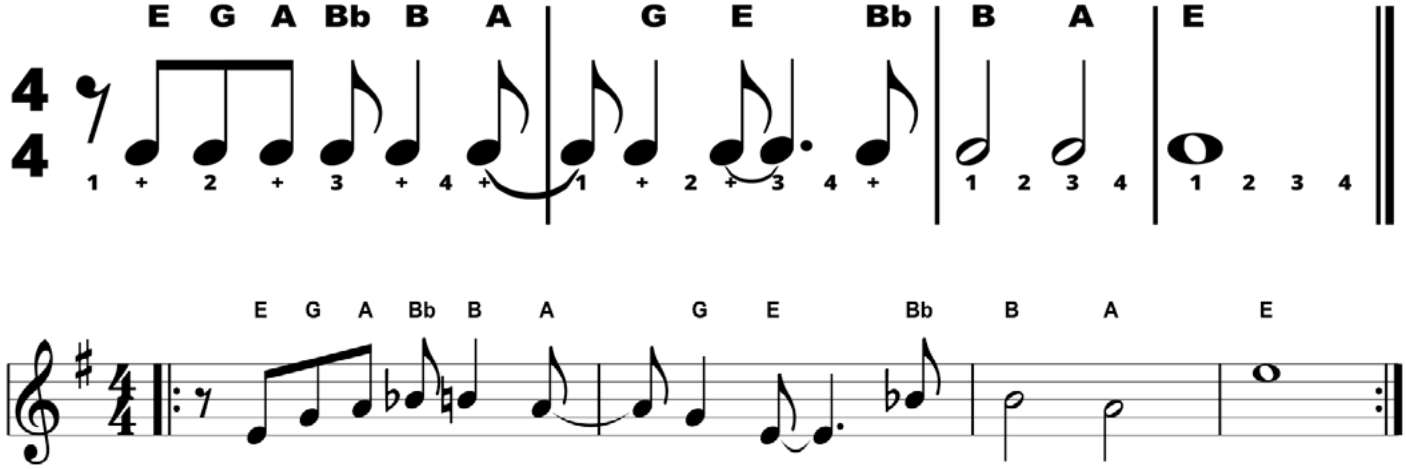
Today, syncopation is the name of the game. *Syncopation* occurs when emphasis is placed on the off-beat. In 4/4 time, off-beats occur between each of the measure's four strong beats, or quarter-note pulse. Remember when we learned that eighth notes can be represented with "and" (+)? Well, syncopation occurs when emphasis is placed on the "and"—the second note of an eighth-note pair—like in the example below.

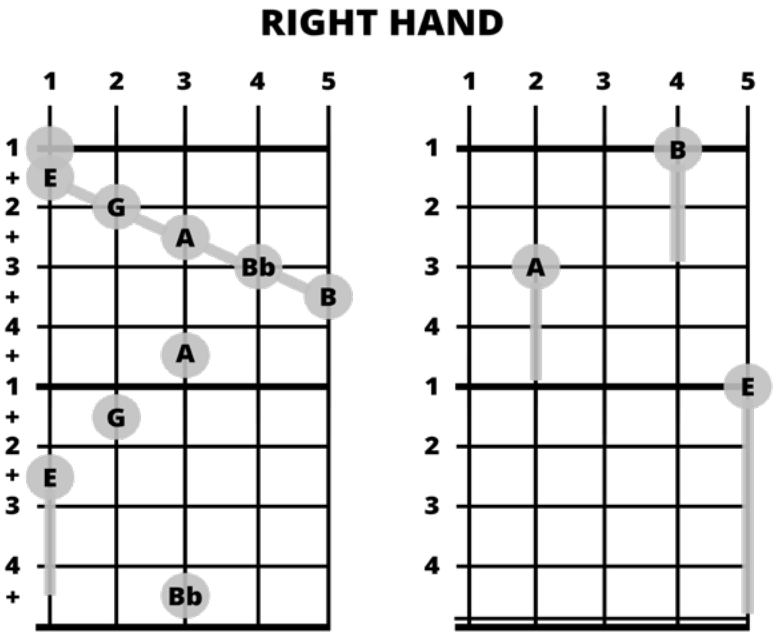
Syncopation can add a lot of personality to your music. As always, turn that metronome on, start slow, and stay locked in!



MELODY (0:40–0:30)

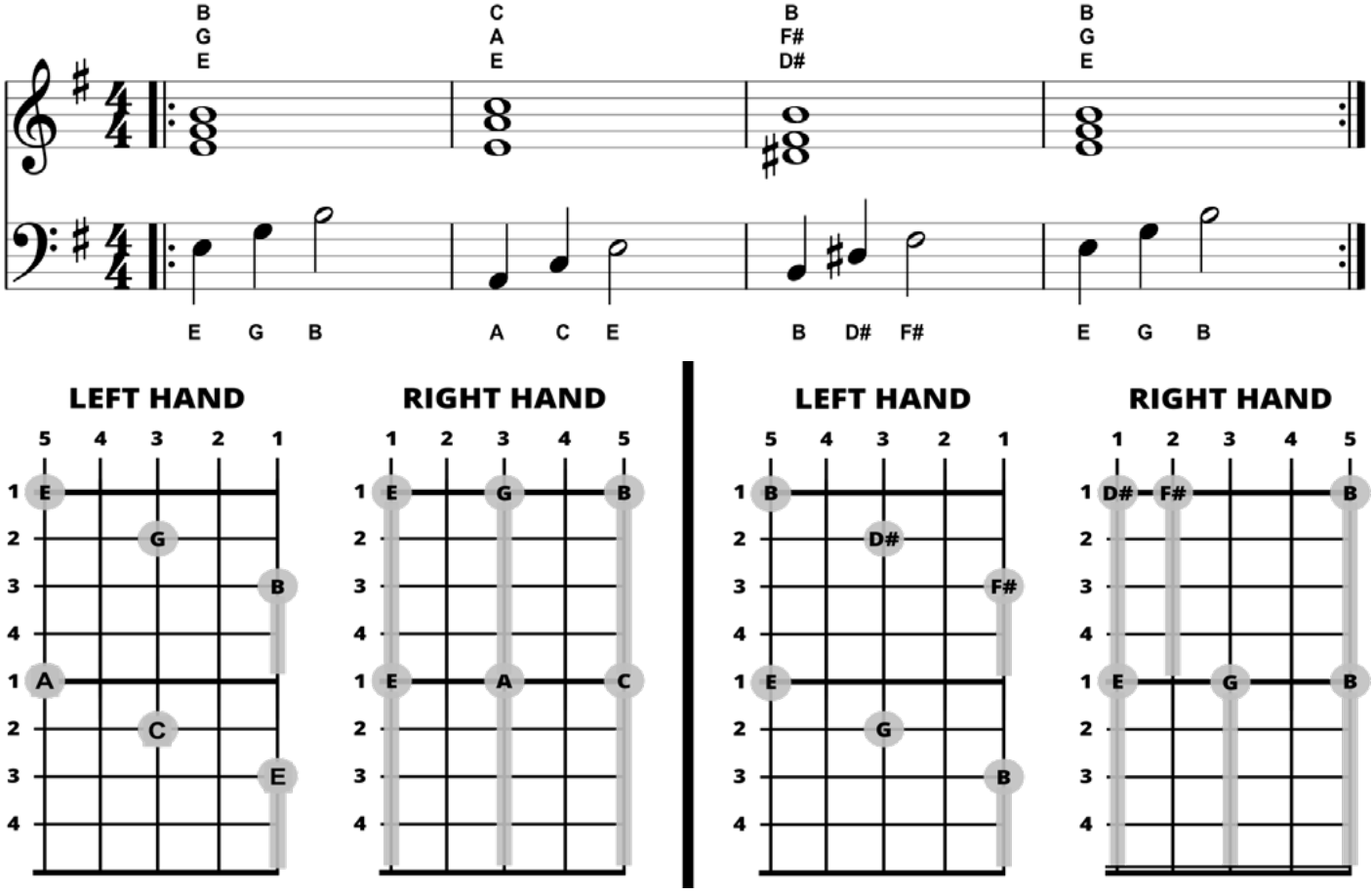
Now, we'll add our melody to the syncopated rhythm that we just learned! As you might have expected, all of the notes are derived from the E blues scale. As always, go slow and be mindful of the proper fingerings, which are indicated in the tab.





CHORD PROGRESSION (0:30–0:20)

Today's chord progression is the same set of changes that we learned on Day 11, only here we will play it in the key of E minor, which gives us an Em–Am–B–Em progression. Some of the chords are played as inversions, so pay close attention!



THEORY (0:20–0:10)

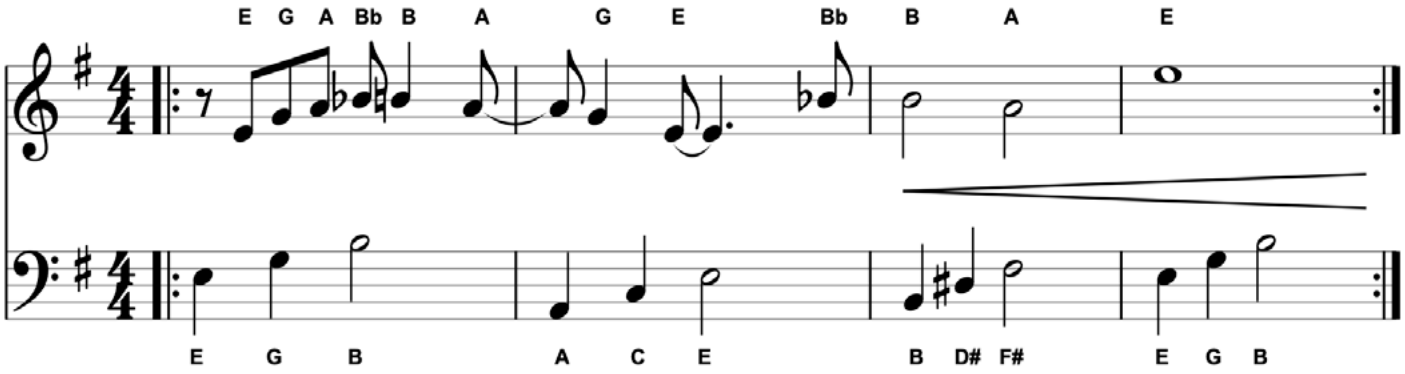
In our final theory lesson, we're going to talk about dynamics. It's one thing to play all of the notes and rhythms correctly; it's a completely different thing to play all of the notes and rhythms correctly *and* with musicality. A proper understanding and application of dynamics is what separates good musicians from great musicians.

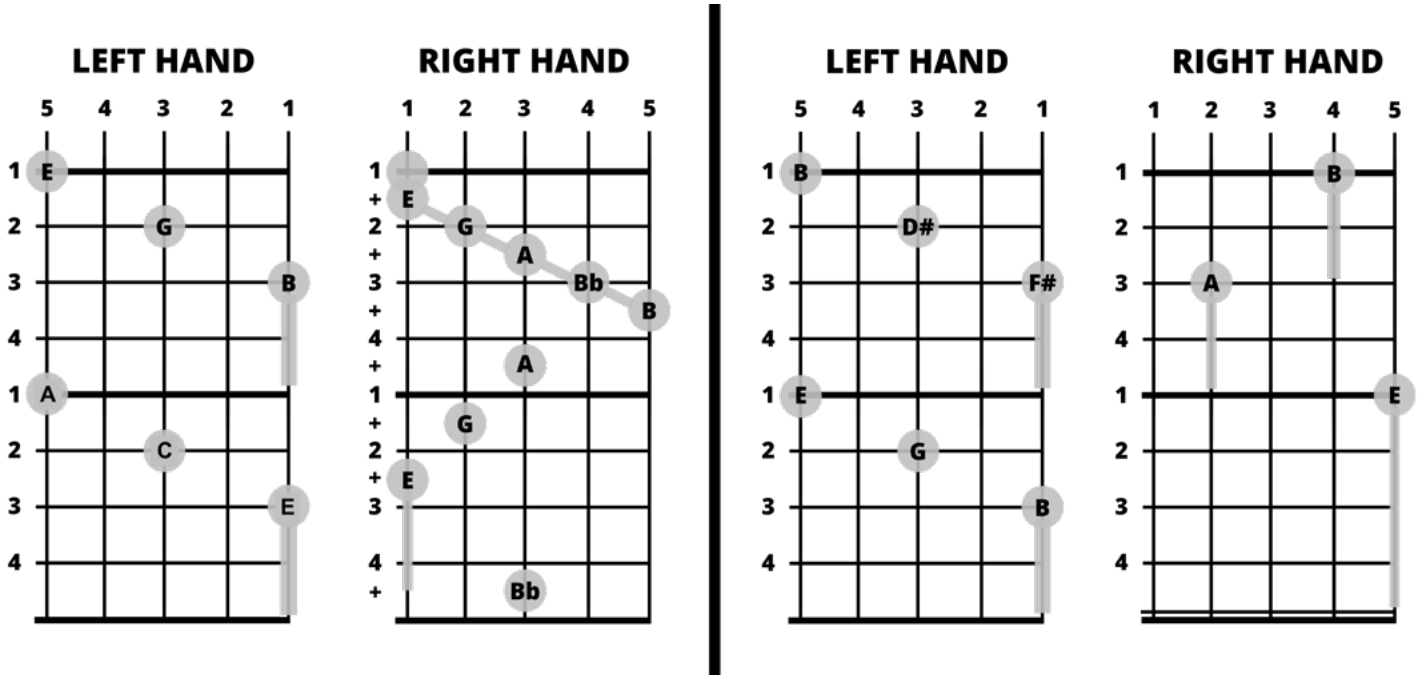
Dynamics specifically refer to how loud or soft you play a section of music. Below are a few markings that denote different dynamics. Get to know them, as they show up quite often in piano music.

Notation	Abbreviation	Description
Pianissimo	*pp*	*Play very softly*
Piano	*p*	*Play softly*
Mezzo Piano	*mp*	*Play moderately softly*
Mezzo Forte	*mf*	*Play moderately loudly*
Forte	*f*	*Play loudly*
Fortissimo	*ff*	*Play very loudly*
Crescendo	*cresc.*	*Gradually get louder*
Diminuendo	*dim.*	*Gradually get softer*

MUSICAL PIECE (0:10–0:00)

The syncopation makes this one tough, but if you break it down hand by hand, measure by measure, you'll have it in no time! Don't overlook the crescendo (cresc.) in measure 3. Listen to the audio track to hear how it should sound and then try it for yourself.





DAY 14

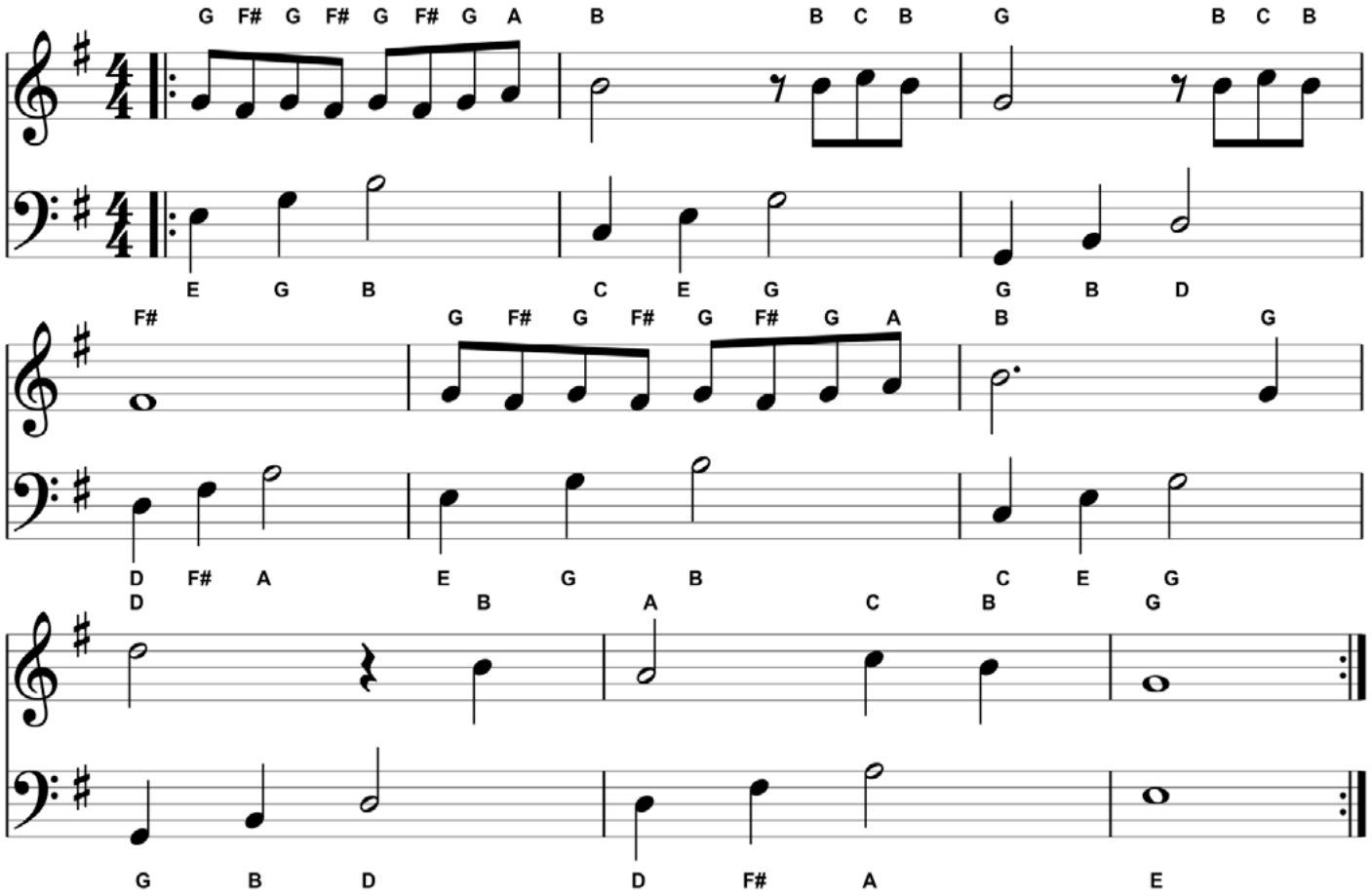
WEEK 2 REVIEW: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER (1:00–0:00)

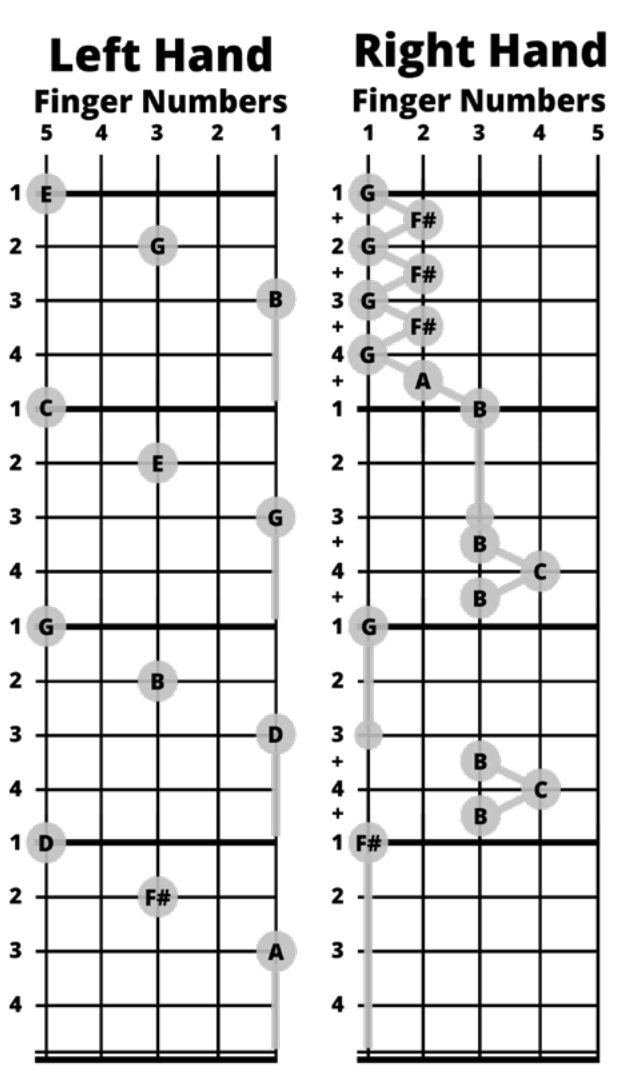
Day 14. You've made it! Whether it's day 14 or 40, I want to congratulate you on sticking with it and making it to the end of the book. I hope this has been a fun and fruitful resource in your piano journey. Before we jump into today's song, take 15–20 minutes to review the content from Week 2.

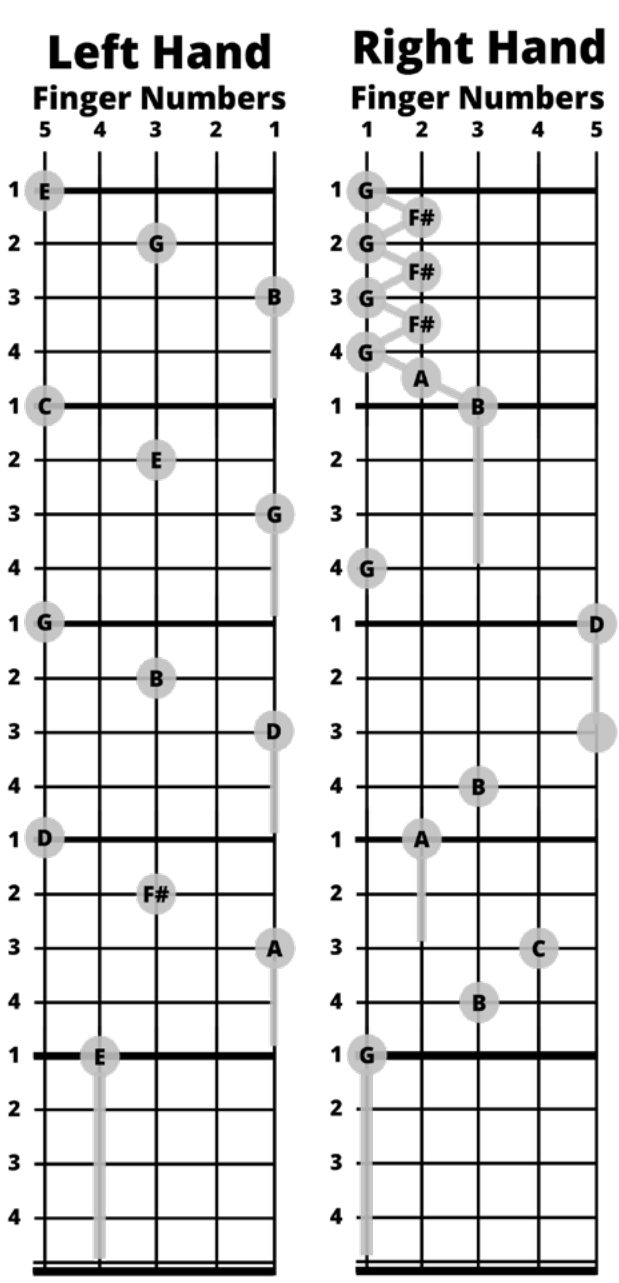
Our final song is "Amber Nights." Feel free to break things down hand by hand, measure by measure, and note by note. In fact, I recommend it! Once you have a grasp on the notes and rhythms, don't forget to add as much musicality as possible. In other words, try to alter your volume (dynamics) periodically to make the exercise sound more like a song, and less like a musical exercise.

Once again, congratulations! We wish you the best on your piano-playing journey!

AMBER NIGHTS







1. This song is in the Key of _____.

2. The time signature is _____.

3. _____ and _____ rests can be found in this song.

4. This song contains _____, _____, _____, _____, and _____ notes.

5. The chord progression of this song is _____ - _____ - _____ - _____.

6. This song has _____ measures.

1. This song is in the Key of Em or G Major.

2. The time signature is 4/4.

3. Eighth and quarter rests can be found in this song.

4. This song contains whole, half, dotted half, quarter, and eighth notes.

5. The chord progression of this song is Em - C - G - D.

6. This song has 9 measures.

KEYBOARD NOTE CUTOUTS