

PIANO LESSONS FOR BEGINNERS

THIS BOOK INCLUDES



An Essential Beginners Guide to Learn Piano
Lessons and Ways of Using Piano Chords

A Comprehensive Guide of Tips and Tricks
to Learn Best Ways of Using Piano Chords
for Melodious Music

Simple and Effective Strategies for
Optimizing Piano Chords

RYTHM DIVINE STUDIO

PIANO LESSONS
FOR BEGINNERS

RYTHM DIVINE STUDIO

PIANO LESSONS
FOR BEGINNERS

RYTHM DIVINE STUDIO

PIANO LESSONS
FOR BEGINNERS

RYTHM DIVINE STUDIO



**PIANO
LESSONS
FOR BEGINNERS**



RYTHM DIVINE STUDIO

© Copyright 2020 by Rythm Divine Studio - All rights reserved.

This document is geared towards providing exact and reliable information in regards to the topic and issue covered. The publication is sold with the idea that the publisher is not required to render accounting, officially permitted, or otherwise, qualified services. If advice is necessary, legal or professional, a practiced individual in the profession should be ordered.

- From a Declaration of Principles which was accepted and approved equally by a Committee of the American Bar Association and a Committee of Publishers and Associations.

In no way is it legal to reproduce, duplicate, or transmit any part of this document in either electronic means or in printed format. Recording of this publication is strictly prohibited and any storage of this document is not allowed unless with written permission from the publisher. All rights reserved.

The information provided herein is stated to be truthful and consistent, in that any liability, in terms of inattention or otherwise, by any usage or abuse of any policies, processes, or directions contained within is the solitary and utter responsibility of the recipient reader. Under no circumstances will any legal responsibility or blame be held against the publisher for any reparation, damages, or monetary loss due to the information herein, either directly or indirectly.

Respective authors own all copyrights not held by the publisher.

The information herein is offered for informational purposes solely, and is universal as so. The presentation of the information is without contract or any type of guarantee assurance.

The trademarks that are used are without any consent, and the publication of the trademark is without permission or backing by the trademark owner. All trademarks and brands within this book are for clarifying purposes only and are the owned by the owners themselves, not affiliated with this document.

Table of Contents

PIANO LESSONS FOR BEGINNERS ***An Essential Beginners Guide to Learn*** ***Piano Lessons and Ways of Using Piano Chords***

Introduction

[The History of the Piano](#)

[Benefits of Learning to Play the Piano](#)

[What You Will Learn In This Book](#)

[You Determine Your Piano Playing Experience](#)

Chapter One: Getting Started

[How to Sit at a Piano](#)

[Posture Exercises for Sitting at the Piano](#)

[Hand Exercises for Piano Playing](#)

[Exercises for Hands, Wrists, Forearms, and Elbows](#)

[Additional Exercises](#)

[The Practice of Playing the Piano with Curved Fingers](#)

[Pre Preparation Tips for Learning to Play the Piano](#)

[Common Mistakes That Beginners Make](#)

Chapter Two: Piano Terminology.

[General Musical Concepts](#)

[Terms of Musical Form & Notation](#)

[Terms for Rhythm](#)

[Terms for Tempo](#)

[Other Piano Terminology.](#)

Chapter Three: Piano Layout

[Types of Piano Keyboards](#)

[Different Size Pianos, Same Layout](#)

[Black and White Key Patterns](#)

Chapter Four: Musical Scales Basics

[What is the Scale?](#)

[Benefits of Playing Scales](#)

[Scale Degrees](#)

[Types of Scales](#)

[Other Ways of Classifying Scales](#)

[Major and Minor Scale Intervals](#)

[Perfect vs. Non-Perfect Intervals](#)

[The Moods of Major and Minor](#)

[Types of Major Scales](#)

[Types of Minor Scales](#)

[Natural Minor Scale](#)

[Harmonic Minor Scale](#)

[Relative Minor and Major Scales](#)

[Sharps](#)

[Flats](#)

Chapter Five: The Basics of Playing Chords

[What is a Chord?](#)

[Why it is Important for a Pianist to Understand Chords](#)

[The History of Chords](#)

[Types of Chords](#)

[Chord Notation](#)

Chapter Six: Playing Chords

[How Pianists Read Music Notes](#)

[Tips for Playing the Piano with Both Hands](#)

[How to Play Chords](#)

[Different Ways of Playing Piano Chords](#)

[How to Enhance Chords](#)

[Inversions](#)

[Chord Additions](#)

Chapter Seven: Advanced Lessons on Major and Minor Scales

[How to Play Major Scales](#)

[How to Play Minor Scales](#)

[More Tips for Learning to Play Major and Minor Scales](#)

Chapter Eight: Chord Progressions and Songs

[The Importance of Using Chord Progressions in Piano Playing](#)

[Major Chord Progressions List](#)

[Minor Chord Progressions List](#)

[Common Chord Progressions](#)

[The I - IV - V Chord Progression](#)

[The 12-Bar Blues Chord Progression](#)

[The I – V – vi – IV Chord Progression](#)

[Tips for Creating Chord Progressions](#)

Conclusion

Music is Life

References

PIANO LESSONS FOR BEGINNERS

A Comprehensive Guide of Tips and Tricks to

Learn Best Ways of Using Piano Chords for Melodious Music

Introduction

Chapter 1: Piano Basics

Chapter 2: Types of Piano

[Playing Across Genres](#)

Chapter 3: Piano Chords

[Chord Knowledge](#)

[Different Types of Chords](#)

[Music Theory](#)

Chapter 4: Strategies to Play the Piano

Chapter 5: Important Piano Related Terms

Other Piano Terminology.

Chapter 6: Finger Exercises

Proper Finger Technique

Finger Exercises

Speed Exercises

Finger/Hand Independence Exercises

Chapter 7: Chords and Music Theory.

What is Music Theory?

Natural Scales

Examples of Music Scales

Musical Intervals

Intervals and Distances

Textures of Musical Harmony.

Types of Musical Harmony.

The Rules of Chord Progression

Chord Inversions

The Three Primary Colors of Chords

Secondary Chords

Harmonic Analysis

Types of Melodies

Melodic Resources

Chapter 8: Practice

Piano Chords and Melodies

How to Memorize

How to Play a Song by Ear

Chapter 9: Tips and Tricks

Understand How Music Works

[How to Play by Reading](#)

[Chapter 10: Melody and Harmony Tips](#)

[Understand the Fundamentals](#)

[Chapter 11: Common Mistakes](#)

[Chapter 12: Piano Maintenance](#)

[Protection from Humidity](#)

[Additional Tips for Maintaining your Piano](#)

[Chapter 13: FAQs](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[References](#)

[PIANO LESSONS FOR BEGINNERS](#)

[Simple and Effective Strategies for
Optimizing Piano Chords](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Chapter 1: The Basics of Piano](#)

[Chapter 2: The Benefits and Obstacles to Learning the Piano](#)

[Chapter 3: Piano Postures](#)

[Chapter 4: Terminology and General Musical Concepts](#)

[Chapter 5: The Different Types of Pianos – Does it Matter?](#)

[Chapter 6: Chords](#)

[Chapter 7: The Different Types of Chords](#)

[Chapter 8: Playing Chords](#)

[Chapter 9: Chord Inversions](#)

Chapter 10: Scale Fundamentals

Chapter 11: Dynamics and Articulation

Chapter 12: Taking Care of your Instrument

Chapter 13: Would You Like to Play the Piano?

Chapter 14: Finger Exercises

Chapter 15: Harmonizing Melodies

Chapter 16: Tips and Tricks

Conclusion

Introduction

Learning to play the piano is quite an adventure. It is a beautiful thing to feel your fingers fly across the keys of the piano. It is a transcending experience to be carried away to another world by the notes you play. It truly feels otherworldly to create such lovely sounds and songs by just using parts of your body.

But you will never experience that feeling if you allow fear to stop you from taking those first steps to learning to play such a great instrument. Learning to play the piano can be a daunting task if you do not know where to start, I know. That is the reason I wrote this book. This book was created to remove the worry and uncertainty and arm you with knowledge and know-how to make this a musical journey that is joyful rather than stressful.

Becoming a Master Pianist Starts with Your Mindset

The piano has 88 black and white keys! That can seem like a huge number of parts to remember the tone and pitch for each, their location, and how to position your fingers on each. I am not going to sugarcoat it and tell you that you will learn to play the piano playing overnight. That is not going to happen. It did not happen for the brilliant Norwegian pianist, Leif Ove Andsnes (1970-), for the Chilean master musician, Claudio Arrau (1903-1991), or Russian master of classical music, Vladimir Ashkenazy (1937-). It was not an overnight process for Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) or Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849), either.

However, each of these famous and brilliant piano players started not knowing a thing about pianos to becoming master pianists of their time. The thing is, there was nothing special about them compared to any other person who wanted to learn to play an instrument except their mindset.

These people were patient, consistent, and did not give up because they forgot a key or musical note. They did not throw their hands up and walked away from the piano because they did not understand a chord or a scale. They certainly did not give up based on a bad performance or an off day.

They kept at it and improved over time. Anyone can do this as long as they do not stop trying. They believed that they would become a master piano player, and they manifested those thoughts with study and action.

The first thing you need to do is approach this piano playing adventure with a growth mindset. A growth mindset is one that is based on an underlying belief that anyone can achieve anything through learning and experience. People with this belief think that their success at any facet of their life is dependent on their effort rather than their current smarts or talent.

On the other hand, there are people with a fixed mindset. These people believe that people's qualities and talents are fixed and can never be changed. They believe that talent alone leads to success, and that effort is not required. A person of a fixed mindset believes that you are either born a master piano player, or you will never be one. That is a very limiting way of thinking.

The fact is we all change every day based on things we see, hear, smell, taste, feel, intuit, and experience. We are changed by the disappointments and successes we face. We adapt when our environments change.

Our ancestors and the people of today evolve in this way because our minds are not static things. They are dynamic and continually build new neural connections and adjust every day due to everything that we encounter in our world. This gives us a great capacity for learning that no other animal on this planet has. Anyone who has achieved anything great with consistent results has had the following properties:

- A great work ethic

- Attention to detail
- Diligence
- Commitment
- An eagerness to learn
- The willingness to practice
- Dedication

These are not fixed traits. These are traits that can be developed within anyone as long as that person is dedicated to personal growth and development. This person has to have a growth mindset.

Your success with piano playing is up to you. Your pace of learning may be slower or faster than other people. You may have difficulty where others learned with ease, and you may be naturally inclined where other beginner players struggle. Your piano playing journey is a unique one. You should not compare it to any other. The only comparison you need to make is your progression today compared to yesterday's progress. Your progression today has been picking up this book and being curious about piano playing. The next step involves building on that curiosity with sound knowledge and then practice. This book will help with both. To kick start your education about piano playing, let's start with the history of how the piano came into existence.

The History of the Piano

The piano was invented in 1709 by an Italian called Bartolomeo Cristofori (1655-1731). Cristofori invented the instrument because he was unsatisfied because of the lack of controls that the musician had over the volume of the harpsichord in that time period. Due to its close relation to the harpsichord, the piano was actually first called "clavicembalo col piano e forte," which, when translated, means "a harpsichord that can play soft and loud noises."

One of these original pianos still exists at the metropolitan museum of art in New York City.

The piano was divided into three categories based on the sound it produces. It was categorized as a string instrument, a wind instrument, and a percussion instrument. This categorization was based on the roots of the development of the piano, which has characterizations of the harpsichord, clavichord, and dulcimer.

From the first invention of the piano, it has gone through quite the metamorphosis and continually evolved since then. Domenico del Mela built on Cristofori's design by creating the earliest known upright piano in 1739. The piano got another upgrade soon after with the addition of pedals. The pedals lifted the dampers from the strings of the early piano to create a sustained sound. This was a contribution done by the piano builder called Gottfried Silbermann.

In the late 1700s, the piano building became a massive endeavor in Viennese schools. Mozart composed of the piano, which was then an instrument with a wooden frame with a note comprising of two strings.

The piano got another update in the early 1800s with the addition of a range of more than five octaves. Broadwood, an English firm, was the first to achieve this with sturdier made pianos. Around the same time, the theatrical pianist and composer called Franz Liszt were born in Hungary. He was a player known for his flair and the creation of the piano recital. In 1863, the player piano, which played itself using a piano roll and mechanics, was invented by the Frenchman called Henri Fourneaux. The grand piano and modern upright piano were also invented in the late 1800s.

By 1919, more than 150,000 pianos and almost 200,000 player pianos were being manufactured in the United States alone. At the height of the Cold War, Van Cliburn won the first International Tchaikovsky Competition in

Russia in 1958. This led to the first Van Cliburn International Piano Competition in 1962. This was held in Fort Worth, Texas.

Digital pianos made an appearance in the 1980s. This led to the production of keyboards and onboard recording technology for pianos. By the 2000s, pianos had become extremely high tech with onboard learning tools, MIDI technology installed, internet capability, and computer screens, to name a few of the additions. To show the popularity of these, over 140,000 digital pianos were sold in the United States alone in 2005.

The first pianos ever created were so expensive that even the wealthy had problems affording it. For nearly a century after the first piano was invented, only royalty and aristocrats owned pianos. Times have certainly changed and allowed almost anyone to have access to a piano so that they could learn the great skill of playing the instrument.

Benefits of Learning to Play the Piano

Playing the piano has mental, emotional, and physical benefits. They include:

- Relieving stress. Music takes the soul on an emotional journey every time a player takes up the art. This is a soothing feeling that cannot be described but a definite stress reliever. Playing the piano aids in improving mood. Not only is the feeling emotional, but the physical evidence of stress relief is also clear. It also helps lower blood pressure. The stress-relieving benefits of playing the piano are so strong that it has been shown to help relief stage fright.
- It improves brain function. When you learn to play any instrument (or develop any new skill, for that matter), new neural pathways are created in your brain. This enhances the performance of the brain.
- Enhances concentration and focus. Playing the piano requires that you use both your hands to perform different tasks at the same time while

remembering and performing musical notes. The player is also required to control his or her breath, operate pedals, and perhaps read and interpret sheets of music. Piano playing also requires hand-eye coordination. This is not something that is easy to achieve, but the more the performer practices and persists, the better his or her skills of concentration and focus become. These are skills that move across the board and help in other areas in your life, including career, education, and family life, because they make the player a better multitasker.

- Enhances muscle strength. Playing the piano requires that you position your hands and fingers in certain ways. This strengthens the muscles of your hands and arms, two areas that are not typically trained by the average person. However, it is vitally important that you keep your hands and fingers strengthened to increase your range of motion and to give you pain relief, especially as you age.
- Improves posture. You need to sit up straight with your back in a straight line to effectively play the piano. A slouched back is not allowed. Therefore, playing the piano promotes better posture which helps keep the bones and joints of your back in proper alignment, aids in decreasing the abnormal wearing of your joints, prevents the spine from becoming fixed in positions that are not normal and decreases the stress on your ligaments, just to name a few.
- It improves hearing and memory. Playing the piano requires that you remember musical theory and notes as well as how to position your body and hands to make musical magic. This requires enhanced memory skills, which you develop, the more you practice. Since playing the piano aids in improving brain processing and function, it also improves memory function. Also, the ability helps improve inner ear hearing, something that is often lost as we age. Playing the piano makes the player subconsciously learn to listen to the notes that are

being played more closely so that the auditory complex of the brain is adjusted accordingly. People who play the piano learn to develop a sense of relative pitch and to recognize intervals and chords, all of which help develop aural awareness.

- Improves language skills. It has been scientifically proven that children who practice piano playing in their early years are 20% more advanced in the vocabulary than their peers. Another study in the 1990s in Educational Psychology summarized that language development and spatial, temporal intelligence could be boosted by piano lessons for preschoolers. This was called The Mozart Effect.
- Improves response to criticism and disappointment. If a piano player ever plans to work with a teacher or perform in front of an audience, this person needs to learn to take feedback and advice on their skill and ability as well as learn from that advice and feedback. This ability typically transfers to other aspects of the player's life, such as professional and personal. The player may also choose to perform in piano competitions or at concerts. This is something that is filled with disappointment as well as successes. The player needs to learn to maintain a positive outlook, whether this feedback is good or bad. Just as you need to learn to celebrate your wins and progressions with piano playing, you need to learn to handle when things are not so bright.
- Aids in developing social participation. By learning to play the piano, it is safe to assume that a person plans to perform in front of a group at some point. This is a great ambition, as it is great to share your talents with other people. Playing the piano socially also helps you to expand your network as you build your status in the musical community. Also, discussing piano playing with other musicians is a great way to expand your knowledge and understanding in addition to building your social skills.

- Improves academic performance. Because piano playing improves concentration and focus, it is good at helping a person improve their overall academic performance. Scientific studies show that children who begin playing the piano at a young age have better grade school averages than children who do not. This is attributed to improved cognitive development and mathematical skills. A study in the Educational Psychology Journal in 1993 also summarized that persons who played the piano were more likely to develop better reading skills due to improved memory skills and the ability to discriminate between pitches.
- Improves mathematical skills. A study was conducted by Martin F. Gardiner and his colleagues at the Center for the Study of Human Development at Brown University. This study found that musical training boosted mathematical skills such as counting in 2nd graders.
- It helps improve time management and organization skills. Learning to play the piano needs to become part of your daily routine if you want to be good at it. It, therefore, requires that you organize your schedule to fit this into your life while also performing the other tasks and responsibilities that you need to throughout your days. This is an especially great function to develop in children so that it becomes a lifelong skill.
- Encourages creativity. Playing the piano and many other instruments encourages the performer to create a unique and original style and sound because it activates the part of the brain responsible for creativity while lowering the activity of the part of the brain responsible for default responses.
- It improves self-esteem and confidence. A 2014 study in Canada focused on 4th-grade students in public schools and found that children who received piano lessons for three years had boosted self-

esteem due to their musical achievements. Playing the piano and mastering its nuances is an incredible way to boost your confidence.

These are only a few ways that playing the piano develops not only musical skills but the person as a whole. With so many benefits and the stigmas attached, it can seem like playing the piano is a huge task that only a few can successfully accomplish. This is far from the truth. Anyone can learn to play the piano.

Learning to play the piano does not have to be difficult. It can be an easy and enjoyable task. Some approaches to the task can make it seem never-ending with too much to learn. The theory of it can seem a bore even though it is vital to understanding chords, melodies, scales, and songs. It does not have to be this way. This book shows that learning to play the piano is worth your time, energy, and effort because you will come away with not only a new skill but a newfound way of looking at the wider world. In fact, here is a thorough breakdown of what will be discussed in the chapters to come.

What You Will Learn In This Book

- Hand exercises to make piano playing a comfortable experience
- The proper posture for sitting at the piano
- Pre preparation tips that will make starting to play the piano as easy as possible.
- Common mistakes that beginner piano players make and how to avoid them
- Piano terminology you should know
- The layout of the piano
- How to play major and minor scales and chords

- Examples of chord progressions and songs
- So much more!

You Determine Your Piano Playing Experience

By the time you reach the end of this book, you will gain crucial insight and practical advice and strategies that will help ease you into the world of piano playing. You will learn what to do, what not to do, and tips that will make this journey easier and not overbearing. I find it admirable that you are undertaking such a beautiful musical journey, especially since you have taken this first step in solidifying the skill.

This leads me to my next point. Reading this book is worthless without action. I have done my part and gathered all this information into this compact, no-fluff, and straight-to-the-point book. The responsibility is now on you to not only read and absorb the knowledge imparted within these pages but to then put this knowledge into action. That is the only way you will see progress in your piano playing skills and abilities.

As mentioned earlier, a growth mindset is needed to ensure your piano playing experience is a rewarding one. Keep your mind and heart open. Do not let difficulties dissuade you and celebrate when you have success. Most importantly, have fun! Turn the page to change your life with a globally universal skill completely.

Chapter One

Getting Started

Piano playing often seems like a momentous task because many people try to approach it without breaking the process down into small, manageable steps. This chapter is dedicated to showing you how to get the art of piano playing down right from the beginning with good posture and finger exercises, practice far too many skips in a rush to playing.

How to Sit at a Piano

Piano playing requires that the player sits, oftentimes for hours on ends, while he or she plays. Sitting the correct way helps the player maintain flexibility in reaching all the keys as well as cultivating the proper technique for hitting the piano keys. This has several aspects that the player needs to consider, such as the height and quality of stool and placement of different body parts. Let us start with piano stools and their importance in your piano playing experience.

Piano Stools

Piano players come in different heights and sizes, and as such, one stool height will not be suitable for all. Therefore, the height and placement of the piano stool need to be a consideration before you start playing. A pianist needs to sit with his or her elbows at the same height as the keyboard in a ready to play the position. The height of the keyboard typically varies from 70 to 73 cm, but the standard height is 75cm.

There are persons who will not feel comfortable trying to achieve an elbow height of this range. Luckily, there are two types of piano stools. One is non-adjustable, and the other is adjustable. The adjusted types have been around since the 1970s and are the best bet if the range stated above does not work for you or your body type. It is good to note that you can add a cushion to a stool to give additional sitting height in a pinch.

Other qualities that piano stools possess include being single or duet. As the names suggest, the single stool is best for one player while the duet stool is made to sit two players at the same time. Two single sits can work just as well to house two players at the same time.

Another consideration is the make of the stool. There are 2 make types, which include the "flat packed" variety and stools with fixed jointed legs. The first variety comes packaged to be assembled, and so the legs need to be screwed on after being received. On the other hand, the second variety comes packaged as a single unit. Most piano stools made before the 1960s contained fixed jointed legs. These types of stools are typically closer to players' hearts. This may be because they are typically sturdier and last longer. They are also typically more expensive.

If you do not have a stool, using a chair is acceptable. A stationary chair is best. If the chair is too low, a quick fix is adding a hard cushion.

The Correct Sitting Posture for Playing the Piano

Height

When you sit on the stool, your elbows and arms should be able to fall freely from your shoulders. Your forearm needs to be parallel to the floor. Your arm placement needs to be at an angle slightly more than 90 degrees. Use an adjustable stool or cushions to get the right height.

Distance

The placement of your body is also important. You need to move your stool or chair forward enough so that your torso still moves easily, but your legs are under the keyboard. Your back needs to feel stable. You need to be able to bring your elbows slightly in front of your torso comfortably.

Hand Arc

The hands form an arc when the piano is being played. This means that the fingers need to be pointed downward so that they do not strike the keys flatly. You play the piano at your fingertips only. Your wrists need to be aligned with the rest of your arms. Adjusting your sit correctly will help

you achieve this arc. A common mistake that beginner piano players do is flatten their wrists.

Hand Placement

A neat trick here is to imagine that you are holding an egg in your palm as you position your hands over the keyboard. Imagine maintaining this hand posture as you play to ensure your hands remain correctly aligned. Keep the energy flowing through your whole arm and keep the bridge of your arm around.

Posture

Posture is defined as the position in which we maintain our bodies while standing, sitting, or lying down. Good posture is important for daily living to keep the bones and joints properly aligned to allow muscles to work efficiently and to prevent muscle strain, back pain, and overuse disorders. Posture is equally important when playing the piano.

When sitting at the piano, the player needs to face the instrument squarely, and the stool needs to be centered. The player needs to sit toward the front half of the stool with feet flat on the floor from toe to heel. Kids or shorter people can use a footrest to keep the feet balanced on a flat surface. Your weight needs to be centered on your bum so that you do not place weight on your feet. Not sitting too far back keeps the player flexible yet stable, which makes the process of playing more comfortable and, thus, easier.

Ensure that your shoulders and arms remain relaxed, and your back remains straight. This will allow you to move all your body parts up to your fingers smoothly. Ensure that your neck is long so that your head remains straight. Another common mistake among piano players is stretching their necks forward.

This causes pain. If you find that you continuously stretch your neck, this may be a sign of eye trouble. Consult a licensed doctor about this or wear your glasses if you have been prescribed them.

Posture Exercises for Sitting at the Piano

You should practice sitting at the piano even when you are not sitting at the piano. There are everyday exercises you can incorporate into your normal routine, so that correct posture becomes second nature to you.

There are also exercises you can perform while sitting at the piano. These will be discussed in this section, as well. Before we get to these, however, let's take a moment to discuss body awareness. Maintaining good posture whether or not you play the piano is about being self-aware. You need to become familiar with what feels good and what does not. Bad posture has signs and symptoms that you can look out for. They include rounded shoulders, a potbelly, knees that bend when you stand or walk, muscle fatigue, back pain, a head that leans to the front or back, and headaches.

Once you learn to recognize what bad posture feels like, then you can take corrective steps to fix this condition. The first step in this is creating body awareness in yourself. Body awareness is a type of mindfulness that encourages better self-care and the minimization of injury risk. There are several practices that you can engage in to develop this awareness, and they include:

- Practicing breathwork techniques
- Becoming familiar with diagrams of the human skeleton so that you are better able to imagine the bones underneath your skin and how your actions affect their stability and structure
- Focusing on your balance and engaging in practices that strengthen it.
- Learning to sense symmetry in your body so that you notice the muscle movement and sensation on either side of your body.

Treat developing body awareness as a meditation exercise. Think of the small details about your body. Continuously question yourself about the different things that you feel and the sensations flowing through your body. You can take just 5 minutes every day to do this. Consistency will allow you to notice the nuances in your movement and posture that suggest bad

posture so that you can correct this. You will be amazed at the progress you will make with this daily 5-minute exercise. After a while, this will become automatic, and you will do it without needing to be conscious of the action. Where bad posture would have been your default state, good posture will replace this.

Sitting Exercises for Good Posture

To promote good posture while sitting, here are a few simple exercises you can perform during your daily life:

- Keep your shoulders relaxed as you sit.
- Keep your forearms parallel to the floor.
- Use an adjustable backrest to support your lower and mid-back when you sit in a chair.
- Always ensure that your feet meet the floor from toe to heel when you sit. If your feet do not reach the floor, use a footrest.
- Keep a small gap between the back of your knees and the front of your seat as you sit.
- Ensure that your knees are at or below the level of your hips.
- Keep your ankles in front of you. Do not cross them.
- Do not sit in the same position for long time periods.

As you can see, these practices are much in keeping with what you should practice when you sit at the piano.

Standing Exercises for Good Posture

Here are a few of the practices you should perform to promote good posture while you stand:

- Stand straight. Keeping your shoulders pulled back and letting your arms hang naturally from your sides help with this.
- Primarily bear your weight on the balls of your feet.
- Keep your knees bent slightly.
- Keep your feet spaced shoulder-width apart.

- Keep your stomach tucked in.
- Do not push your head back, forward, or to either side. Keep your head level by keeping your ears in line with your shoulders.
- Move your weight from one foot to the other or from toe to heel if you stand for a long period of time.

Lying Exercises for Good Posture

Even when you lie down or sleep, you need to be aware of your posture. Practices that help you maintain proper posture even then include:

- Not lying on your stomach.
- Sleep on your side or back. If lying on your side, place a pillow between your legs. If lying on your back, keep a pillow under your knees. This will help prevent back pain.
- Use a pillow for your back, head, and neck while you sleep.
- Sleep on a mattress that is right for you. Some people find it more comfortable to sleep on a mattress that is harder or softer, while others are more comfortable with something in between. Be mindful of what works for you when you purchase your mattress.

Posture Exercises while Sitting at the Piano

You do not have to be a master piano player to practice your posture at the piano. Using all the tips about sitting at the piano, place your right hand on the C position, which is positioned in the middle of the keyboard. Press the C key. Lift your fingers then press the D key with your second finger. Move your fingers up to the G key then back down to C.

As you perform this task, be mindful of your body. Do you keep your back straight? Are our feet positioned stably on the floor? Are your hands arced? Do you feel pressure anywhere on your body? As you question yourself, correct any mistakes in your posture immediately. As you do this as well as incorporate good posture in your daily life with the practices stated above, this will come easier and easier for you.

Hand Exercises for Piano Playing

Your hands and fingers are your strongest assets for playing the piano and, as such, need to be treasured as the priceless items that they are. The hand has 35 muscles, and that does not account for those that connect it to the forearm. It is an unfortunate fact that piano playing can result in pain in the hands, fingers, wrists, and forearms. The pain is not a result of playing the piano itself but from poor techniques and failing to stretch the hands and fingers before beginning to play.

Therefore, it is of extreme importance that you make the commitment to care for your hands and fingers as a dedicated piano player. This will not only make you a better piano player but also prevent you from becoming injured and save you from footing the cost of medical expenses. This section is dedicated to providing you with exercises that will not only help prevent pain in the hands, fingers, and forearms but also help increase strength, dexterity, coordination, and flexibility in your hands and fingers.

Exercises for the Fingers

Piano sessions can be lengthy, and thus cramping and pain are common experiences. This can be avoided or at least minimized with finger exercises and stretches prior to playing. These exercises are also designed to increase dexterity.

Warm-Up Exercise 1

This needs to be performed before you start playing the piano. The warm-up exercise not only prep your fingers for playing but also improve flexibility and range of motion and prevent stiffness. All you have to do is close your fingers and squeeze tightly. Hold this pose for 3 seconds, then release. Repeat this action 10 times. Next, bend each finger individually. Once you have done this for all 10 fingers, rub your hands together. That is it! Just a few minutes can help prevent injury and increase your piano playing performance.

Warm-Up Exercise 2

Lifting the fingers can be a challenge for beginner piano players. The ring finger is of particular challenge to most. Nonetheless, lifting the fingers adequately is a needed skill. The higher you lift your fingers before hitting a key, the richer the sound that is produced. Here is an exercise that has a dual purpose. It is a great warm-up and serves to help with higher finger lifting. To perform the exercise, play your hands on the piano keys and consciously lift each finger, one at a time. Do this quickly, then work on playing your finger back on the key in a controlled way. Do this 5 times before moving onto the next finger.

Finger Independence Exercise

This is an especially important exercise for beginner piano players because it builds the needed skill of moving the fingers independently. It is also useful in developing increased flexibility, strength, and range of motion in the fingers. To start this exercise, place your hand on the piano keys. Put your right thumb on middle C. Next, hold any three notes with your left hand while you use your right hand to play different scales. Scales are sets of musical notes that are ordered by their frequency or pitch. An ascending scale is one that is ordered by increasing pitch, while a descending scale is one that is ordered by decreasing pitch.

You will switch hands after playing 5 sets of scales. Repeat the exercise twice.

Finger Gripping Exercise

This exercise can be done using an adjustable gripping device or a foamed finger. You simply grip and squeeze the device in smooth, even movements. However, if such a device is not available, you can hold your fingers out and imitate making bear claws while contracting your finger muscles slowly.

Strength Training for Fingers #1

As the title of this exercise suggests, this is designed to strengthen your fingers. The exercise is done on a flat surface rather than on the piano keys. Put your hands on the surface, palm down, and spread your fingers apart. Pushed down lightly but steadily in 10 pulses. Next, bend your knuckles slightly while still keeping your wrists relaxed. You will feel the muscles in your fingers relax and contract as you perform this exercise.

Strength Training for Fingers #2

This exercise is performed by making a fist and wrapping your thumbs around your fingers. Squeeze this fist gentle to feel the contraction of the muscles in your fingers. Hold this position for 5 seconds as you breathe in and out deeply. Release the fist and stretch your fingers. Repeat the exercise 5 times.

Exercises for Hands, Wrists, Forearms, and Elbows

Wrist Rotation Exercises

To perform this exercise, sit in a chair with arms that can comfortably support your forearms. With your forearms resting there, allow your wrists to be supported and let your fingers hang free. Bend your wrists back and point your hands toward you. Hold this pose for 5 seconds. Allow your hands to fall back so that your fingers hang. Repeat this 10 times.

Next, allow your elbows to rest on the chair rests and rotate your forearms until your palms face upward. Hold this pose for 5 seconds. Rotate your forearms back to its original position. Repeat this 10 times.

Writing Bending Exercises

Extend both hands in front of you and put your palms together with the left hand in the bottom. Pull your fingers back and hold this pose for 5 seconds. Allow your fingertips to touch, then flip the position of your hand and repeat the exercise. Repeat the entire exercise 5 times.

Forearms Rotation Exercises

Begin by holding your arms in front of you with palms put and fingers pointed out. Slowly rotates your forearms so that your palms face up. Hold this pose for 5 seconds. Form a fist and slowly rotates your wrists inward then outward. Return your hand to their downward position and open your fingers. Repeat the exercise 5 times.

Elbow Stretches

Stretch your arms out in front of you. Do not lock your elbows. Slowly bend your arms at the elbow and allow your fingers to touch your shoulders. Hold this pose for 5 seconds, then bring your hand back in front of you. Repeat this exercise 5 times. For increased strength, hold light weights in each hand.

Additional Exercises

Proper breathing is essential to achieving maximum results with any type of work out or exercise. People discount the importance of breathing even though it is as essential to human existence as food and sleep. Even though breathing is an automatic function of the body, there is a right way to do and not the right way. Breathing is not just about inhaling oxygen; the compound needed to enable proper body function and to expel carbon dioxides, which is a waste product. Breathing with awareness and intent avoids many benefits, including:

- Natural pain relief
- Allowing the processing of emotional pain and trauma
- Increasing joy and happiness
- Increasing self-image and confidence
- Improving posture
- Reducing anxiety and stress
- Detoxifying the body
- Improving blood circulation
- Increasing energy levels

- Enhancing creativity

Breathing the right way can allow you to master difficult situations such as when you have a bad day at piano playing so that these situations do not weigh you down. Typically, people breathe through their chest. This does not promote the complete circulation of air through the lungs, and thus, the body is shortchanged on the amount of oxygen it receives.

The proper way to breath to gain the most benefit is through the diaphragm. The diaphragm is a skeletal muscle that separates the base of the chest from the abdomen. It flattens and contracts when you inhale to create a vacuum that pulls air into the lungs. When you exhale, the vacuum action is eliminated, and the diaphragm relaxed to let air escape. You will feel your stomach rise more than your chest when you breathe through your diaphragm.

As you practice the exercises outlined above and below, be conscious of your breathing so that you reap the most benefit.

Another consideration that beginners and experienced piano players need to make is strengthening and increasing the flexibility of the neck and shoulders. A few quick exercises you can do in that regard include:

- Raising both your arms above your head and remaining in that position for 3 seconds before letting your arms relax at your side. Repeat this 5 times.
- Place your arms along your sides and gently shrug your shoulders. Repeat this 10 times.
- Cross your left arm over your chest and grip your right shoulder. Gently pull your left arm toward your body with your right hand for 5 seconds. Release and repeat on the other side.

Another healthy consideration is ensuring that you get proper nutrition and exercise. Also, it is important not to overdo it. These exercises are meant to help you, not hinder you. Overdoing can lead to injury. Start slow and

slowly increase your pace to build your strength, flexibility, and dexterity. Be sure to practice regularly in order to get the best results.

The Practice of Playing the Piano with Curved Fingers

Take a look at your fingers. You will notice that they are all different lengths and thicknesses. Unlike your fingers, all the keys on a piano are the same size. To compensate for this difference, piano players should curve their fingers to play the piano.

The Benefits of Playing with Curved Fingers

Many piano players are unaware that playing with curved fingers is the best technique. Others, such as the famous pianist Vladimir Horowitz, played with flat fingers. His style was unique, though. Many a beginner piano player found difficulty adopting the technique because curving the fingers is not a natural tendency of human beings. Just like good body posture, good piano posture is something that most piano players need to be aware of and to develop consciously.

Also, flat fingers create a different tone to curved fingers. It is usually fuller and more blurred. This is because flat fingers create tension in the arm because more effort is needed to keep the fingers straight.

Curved fingers create a cleaner, crisper sound, such as the music that was created by Bach or Mozart. It is also easier to push your fingers into the keys with curved fingers. Also, with curved fingers, you can move your fingers up and down the keyboard faster. This allows for quicker learning of scales.

Curving the fingers also allows better flexibility so that your hands can rotate in the direction that you are playing

How to Practice Curved Fingers

This is not complicated and involves simple techniques that build the muscle memory of having the fingers curved. This technique involves holding a water bottle. After your hand has taken the shape of the bottle,

remove it from your grip but retain the shape that your hand assumed while holding the bottle. Apply this shape to playing the piano.

Learning to play the piano with curved fingers is something that takes time and dedication to learn. Do not worry if you do not get it right away. Just keep on practicing.

Pre Preparation Tips for Learning to Play the Piano

The tips below are provided to help you maximize your piano playing time. They are:

- Create a schedule so that you fit the piano playing into your weekly agenda. This does not have to be a long time. Just ensure that you create the habit of making piano playing a priority.
- Ensure that you are comfortable before you start playing the piano. This includes making adjust such as your sitting for the right height and making accommodations for room to move comfortably. Also, ensure that there is appropriate lighting. If you are playing a digital piano, adjust the volume levels before you start playing.
- Eliminate distractions. You want to be completely focused on the task of playing the piano when you do. Therefore, ensure that your senses are completely zoomed in on the task but removing distractions such as smartphones and human company.
- Figure out a way to record your playing. This will help you notice your playing style and the areas you need to improve.
- Listen to recordings of other pianists. This will aid in helping learners to recognize the differences in tones and pitches so that you correlate this to your own style. Particularly listen to accomplished pianists so that your subconscious picks up nuances that can be helpful in your playing.
- Start slow. This is a huge endeavor that you are taking on. Taking on too much too fast can easily overwhelm you and discourage you from continuing the pursuit. Therefore, when you are playing, break the

music up into small parts and take your time as you learn. Even will you study the theory, learn a little at a time. This book was broken up into sections just to help you advance steadily without getting overwhelmed by the information.

Common Mistakes That Beginners Make

We have mentioned many of these mistakes, but just to reinforce this, here is a list of the common mistakes that beginner piano players make. Being aware of these mistakes can help you avoid them. They are:

- Ignoring the importance of practicing finger exercises
- Playing with flat fingers
- Not practicing good posture
- A lack of consistency when practicing
- Expecting great result too quickly
- Trying to play the piano at the beginning rather than practicing.
- Not using a metronome. A metronome is a device that produces an audible sound at regular intervals, which is usually in beat per minute (BPM). It is used to help musical practice playing in regular pulses.
- Not realizing that clefs do not refer to which hand to use. In piano playing, there are two lines of music on a sheet. One dictates the action of the right hand, and the other dictates the actions of the left hand. Clefs are musical symbols that are used to indicate pitch, not which hand to use.
- Treating keys and notes like they are the same. Keys are on the piano while notes are on the music sheet. They are not one on the same.
- Not deviating from C major. We will delve deeper into minor and major notes in this book, but it bears noting here that most beginners stick to C major because it is the easiest note to play. Ultimately you need to move on to advance your range and skill.

Chapter Two

Piano Terminology

Piano playing has its own language, and it is a beautiful language that will make piano playing much easier once you learn it. This is a musical language that is not used in everyday interactions, so it can seem a little confusion initially, especially many of the words are Italian. Some are also written in Latin, Spanish, German and French. Luckily, you do not have to learn to speak these other languages to grasp these concepts.

The more that you play the piano, the more acquainted that you will become with these words. To help you, I have compiled a glossary of terms to help you get started learning this musical language. These terms will include definitions for each term, expansions where necessary, and examples that are applicable. In each category, the terms have been placed in alphabetical order for easy finding.

General Musical Concepts

These are basic concepts that are the building blocks to all musical applications, not just piano playing. These are the terms that you should learn first because the music of all styles and from all era were created using these terms. Once you have these terms solidified in your mind, then you can move on to more advanced terms and terms directly related to piano playing.

Articulation

This is written in symbols or with words that are usually Italian on a music sheet. It describes the style in which sections or tones are played. They can be light or heavy, choppy or smooth, or long or short.

Dynamics

This is an indication of the volume of a musical piece. The loudness or softness of sections or tones of music is indicated by symbols on the musical sheets called dynamic markings.

Harmony

This invokes a particular mood. It is a group of tones that are played around or underneath the melody. You can change the harmony even if the melody remains the same. As a result, the mood the harmony invokes can change completely. An example of this a harmony changing from a happy mood to an angry mood.

Melody

This is a group of single musical tones that are played one after the other to create a complete unit. It is a theme that you play an instrument to or sing to.

Rhythm

This is the description of how a musical piece flows through time. It tells the arrangement of how to tone lengths and duration as time passes.

Tempo

This is a description of the speed at which music is being played. Is it slow or fast? The tempo is typically indicated at the beginning of a musical piece and when the speed should be changed.

Terms for Keys and Scales

Keys and major and minor scales are some of the first things you will learn as you learn to play the piano.

Arpeggio

This is a chord that is broken up so that the tones can be played on at a time instead of together at the same time.

Chord

This is at least 3 tones played together at the same time.

Chord Progression

This describes a series of chords played consecutively.

Chromatic Scale

This is a scale made up only of half steps.

Dominant

This is the fifth degree of a scale. It is the second most important tone of a scale and is also called scale degree 5. It is related to the keys.

Key

This is the relationship between tones. It is focused around a central tone. A key is integral for the function of the harmony of a musical piece or section.

Minor/Major

These are two types of groupings for tones, scales, and keys. Tones, scales, and keys written in a minor mode are typically serious, dark, and sad in the mood while those in major mode are usually positive, light, and happy.

Minor Scale

This is a scale comprising of whole steps and half steps and contains all tones of any minor key played. They go from highest to lowest or lowest to highest. There are variations of the minor scale and come of these include a natural minor, melodic minor, and harmonic minor.

Major Scale

This is a scale comprising of whole steps and half steps and contains all tones of any major key played. They go from highest to lowest or lowest to highest.

Octave

The Latin word for this called octaves, and it means eighth. It is the eighth tone of a set of 8 called a whole step. It is typically used in scales and used as a marker of distance. Scales are most often divided into octaves. A typical example of playing a one-octave scale is playing from one C to the next highest C on the piano.

Scale

This is a series of special tones that are played one after the other. They are arranged from highest to lowest or lowest to highest. Scales are normally comprised of 8 to 12 notes. A C major scale is comprised of such notes.

Scale Degree

This describes tones numbered from one to seven on a scale. The eighth tone is called the octave, and so it is not typically numbered.

Tonic

Also called the keynote or scale degree 1, it is the first tone of a scale. It is related to the keys and is the most important tone of a scale. For example, if you are in C Major, then the tonic is C, while the tonic of G minor is G.

Triad

This is a chord with 3 notes. It is the most common type of chord.

Whole Step/Half Step

This is the distance of two consecutive notes. A whole step is also called a whole note. This is the distance between one white key and the next white key or between one black key to the next black key on a piano.

A half step is also called a semitone, and it describes the distance between one key and the next key on a piano. It also describes the smallest distance between the two tones.

Both types of notes are used plenty in scales.

Terms of Musical Form & Notation

These terms describe the way a piece should be played. Knowing and understanding this concept will help you navigate your way through learning and playing musical pieces. They help you approach piano playing in a more informed way.

8va

This is an item that indicates that a musician should play the given passage one octave away from the notes that are printed. If the symbol is printed below the printed notes, then these notes should be played an octave lower than is printed. If the symbol is printed above the printed notes, then they should be played an octave higher than what is printed.

Accidental

These are symbols that indicate the lowering or raising of a pitch. They appear next to the notes themselves on the staff.

Bass Clef

This is a musical symbol that is placed on the bottom line or staff on a piano score. This line is also called the bass line. The bass clef is also called the F clef because the fourth line counting up from the bottom is the note F.



Binary Form

Also called AB form, this comprises 2 different sections of a piece of music called A and B. Typically, each section is played twice before going to the next section.

Clef

This is a musical symbol that is placed at the start of a staff. It determines the pitches of the notes placed on the staff.

Double Bar Line

This is a set of two bar lines with the second one being thicker than the first. It is an indication of the end of a piece.

Flat

This is an article that is written on the left side of a particular note to indicate that the note should be played a half step lower than its natural tone as notated.

Form

This is the overall structure and organization of a musical piece.

Grace Note

This accompanies a main note and is written in smaller type than the main note.

Grand Staff

This is particular to piano playing and is a situation where 2 staves (the plural word for staff) are linked by a curved line called a brace, which is placed on the far-left side, and a vertical line on the far-right side. Both lines span the entire length of the 2 staves.

Key Signature

This is an arrangement of flats or sharps that is found on the far left of every staff to indicate which pitches are to be played for a particular section or piece.

Ledger Line

This is an extension of the staff. It is used to indicate pitches that do not fit into the five staff lines because they are too low or too high.

L.H. and R.H.

L.H. stands for left hand while R.H. stands for the right hand. The abbreviation is written in a passage and are an indication of what hand should be used to play, left or right.

Measure and Measure Lines

Measures are also called bars. They are a collection that have a set number of beats. Each group is separated from the others by a thin vertical line called a measure line or a bar line. Each measure is numbered. The numbers are usually placed in a circle or square. These numbers are usually in a different font from the other numbers on the page. The numbers function as a reference point to allow the musician to quickly find his or her place on the score.

Natural

This is an article that is written on the left of a particular note to indicate that the note should be played as written without any alteration that is higher or lower.

Note

This is an article that is placed on a staff to indicate pitch, which is also called tone, and length, which is also called rhythm.

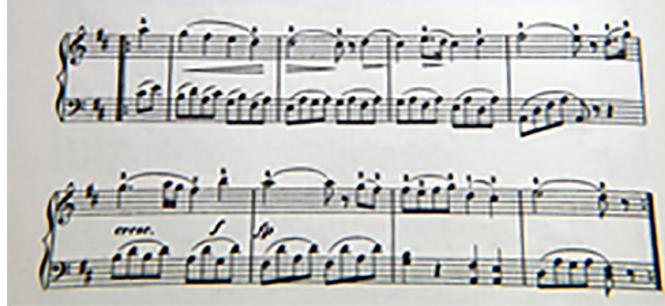
Repeat Sign

This is an article that indicates that a section of music should be played again immediately. It typically appears at the end of an A and B section in binary form. It can be indicated by a first or a second ending.

Score

This is the formal term for a music sheet containing a musical piece or song.





Sharp

This is an article that is written on the left side of a particular note to indicate that the note should be played a half step higher than its natural tone as notated.

Staff

On a score, this area is a set of 5 straight lines along with 4 breaks where musical notes are written. Vertical lines placed at the right and left corners connect the lines. The notes will either be written in a space or on a line.

Ternary Form

This is also called ABA form and comprised of 3 parts. The A section introduces the main melody and is sometimes repeated before going to the B section. The B section comprises of a different structure. Once the B section had be featured, the A section is reintroduced to complete the musical piece.

Theme and Variation

This musical form has a main melody, which is introduced at the start of the piece. This is the theme. Next, a series of variation are added to the melody. This adds different characters to the melody.

Treble Clef

A treble clef is a musical symbol that is placed on the line that is at the top or staff on the score of a piano. This line is also known as the treble line. The treble clef can also be referred to as the G clef as it also resembles the letter G and because it is positioned on the line comes in second, up from the lowest line. This is the note G.



Trill

This is abbreviated Tr and is a device used for rapid alternation between notes that are a whole step or a half step apart.

Dynamic Terms

These are concepts used to convey how soft or loud a given passage of music should be played. How soft or how loud is open to interpretation as there is no decibel value for this.

Crescendo

This is an indication that a musical piece should get louder over the course of a given passage. It is an abbreviated cresc.

Decrescendo

This is an indication that a musical piece should get softer over the course of a given passage. It is an abbreviated decresc.

Forte

This is an indication that a piece should be played at a loud volume. It is abbreviated f.

Mezzo Forte

This is an indication that a piece should be played at a medium loud volume. It is an abbreviated mf.

Piano

This is an indication that the piece should be played at a soft volume. It is abbreviated, p.

Subito Piano

The word subito is Italian for suddenly, and thus, this expression is an indication that a pianist must suddenly play a given note or passage quietly. This introduces an element of surprise into the musical piece and often comes after a loud note or passage

Terms for Rhythm

The following terms and concepts are very useful when it comes to attaining the ability to read music as they indicate how much time a given piece should be played for or how long a silence should be.

32nd Note and 32nd Rest

32nd note lasts for one-eighth of a beat, which is half as long as a sixteenth note. 32nd rest indicates one-eighth of a beat's worth of silence.

3/4

This is a group of 3 beats per measure. They are counted as 1-2-3, with the strongest beat being 1.

6/8

This is a compound meter where the eighth note gets the beat.

Beat

This is also called a pulse. It divides the rhythm into regular and equal units of time.

Common Time

This is a group of four beats that are counted as 1-2-3-4 with 1 and 3 being stressed.

Cut Time

This is a group of two beats that accounted for 1-2, with 1 being stressed.

Dotted Half Note

This sounds for 3 beats.

Downbeat

This is a strong beat. It is the first of a measure.

Eighth Note and Eighth Rest

An eighth note is one that counts for one half of a beat, and eighth rest means one-half beat of silence.

Fermata

This indicates that a note or rest should be held longer than is printed. The symbol looks like a bird's eye and appears over a note or rest.

Half Note and Half Rest

A half note is also called a minum. It lasts for two beats. A half rest is also called the half bar and indicates two beats of silence.

Pickup Note

This is a note that comes before the first full measure.

Quarter Note and Quarter Rest

A quarter note is a full beat, while a quarter indicates a full beat of silence.

Rest

This is an article that indicates silence for a particular length of time.

Sixteenth Note and Sixteenth Rest

Sixteenth note sounds for half as long as an eighth note while the sixteenth rest indicates one-quarter of a beat's worth of silence.

Syncopation

This is the emphasizing or de-emphasizing of a beat.

Time Signature

This is an organization of beats into groups. It is also called a meter and is indicated at the start of each piece, and anytime there needs to be a change.

Whole Note and Whole Rest

A whole note is also called a semibreve. It lasts for four beats. A whole rest is also called a whole bar and indicates that silence should be observed for the entire bar or measure.

Terms for Tempo

These terms aid a pianist in understanding the relative speed at which he or she should play a particular piece. These concepts are usually indicated at the start of every musical piece.

Accelerando

This is an indication that the speed should increase over the course of a given passage of music.

Allegretto

This is a moderately fast speed played with a light touch.

Allegro

This is a brisk tempo that is faster than allegretto.

Andante

This is medium-slow speed.

Decelerando

This is an indication that the speed should be gradually slowed down over the course of a given passage of music.

Energio

This is an indication that the musical piece or section should be played with enthusiasm and energy. This is the opposite of a grave marking.

Grave

This is an indication that the music should be played in a very slow and serious manner. This is the opposite of an energio marking.

Largo

This is an indication that the pianist should play at a slow speed.

Ritardando

This is an Italian term that means getting slower, and as such, the pianos should gradually slow down the pace over a given passage of music. This is an expression that is usually used at the end of a piece or section of music.

Rubato

The pianist gets to set the tempo when this expression is used and is able to slow down or speed up at will.

Articulation Markings

These are a reference to musical style and expression. Every pianist expresses himself or herself differently, but knowing these expressions allows this pianist to bring versatility to his or her style.

Accent

Similar to a marcato and the staccato, this article indicates that a particular note should be stressed more heavily

Accompaniment

This is a musical selection used underneath the main theme to either support the main theme or make it more interesting. This is usually a harmony but can sometimes be a melody.

Con Pedale

This is an indication that the pedal should be used to play a given passage.

Dolce

Directly translated, this is an Italian term that means sweet. It is an indication that a passage should be played in a gentle and sweet manner.

Dots

These are an indication meant to show if notes should be played short or with spaces between them. They appear as markings beneath or above notes.

Leggiero

This is an indication that a musical passage should be played swiftly yet with a delicate touch.

Marcato

This is an indication that notes are to be played short, sounding as if they are separated from each other by a slight space. It is usually printed as a word or abbreviation and is a bit heavier than a staccato.

Slur

This is an indication that notes should be played smoothly, sounding like they are connected to each other. This symbol is a curved marking that is printed above a group of notes.

Staccato

This is an indication that notes are to be played short, sounding as if they are separated from each other by a slight space.

Tenuto

This indicates that a musical piece should be performed in a sustained and smooth manner that is held longer than the printed length.

Other Piano Terminology

Break

This is a pause in a musical piece. It is common in jazz pieces and typically indicates that the pianist should improvise.

Coda

This Italian word means tail, and it describes a short section of music that occurs at the end of a musical piece.

Da Capo

This Italian term indicated that the pianist should return to the beginning of the piece.

Dal Segno

Printed in the abbreviated D.S., this term indicates that the pianist should repeat a specific passage of music.

Duet

This is a musical piece performed by two pianists. It is also called four-hand, named after the use of four hands.

Etude

This a French term that means "Study." This is musical training meant to develop a particular musical skill.

Fine

This is the Italian word for the finish. It indicated the end of a musical piece and is indicated by a double bar line.

Gavotte

This is a solo piece to be performed by the pianist with an orchestra.

Improvisation

This is primarily used in jazz performances and indicates that the performer should play a piece on the spot without the use of previously written notes.

March

This is a fast musical piece that is most often upbeat in nature. It is typically performed at military parades.

Nocturne

This is a slow, reflective-type musical piece that is meant to invoke nighttime imagery.

Opus

This is a system of numbering a composer's work.

Refrain

This is also called chorus and is a melody that repeats at special times of a musical piece or song. It is indicated by the use of the word "refrain" or "chorus" above the musical piece.

There are, of course, scores of other terms that need to be learned to be a skilled piano player, but those outlined above set a great foundation for you.

Chapter Three

Piano Layout



There are several types of piano keyboards to choose from and this can make the layout of a piano seem all the more intimidating to an untrained eye. Before I dive into the layout of a piano, let's take a look at the different types and what these differences mean for you as a beginner piano player.

Types of Piano Keyboards

The grand piano, digital pianos, digital keyboard and upright piano. These are only a few types of piano available for purchase these days. This type of piano fall into two general categories called the standard piano and the digital keyboard. Let's look at how each of these differ, specifically terms of keyboard layout.

The Standard Piano

This is the type of piano that most people are familiar with. It is the one that has been around so long that it is the one that you are likely to find at your grandparents' house. In fact, this type of piano was created in the 1880s.

This is a full-size piano and contains a full set of keys, which comprises of 88 keys total. Of these 88 keys, 52 are white keys and 36 black keys. This spans over seven octaves. Before this, the piano comprised of 60 keys maximum. The keys start on an A and end on a C.



Types of pianos included in this category are the baby grand, the upright and grand pianos.

This layout can also apply to a digital piano.

Digital Keyboards

The digital keyboard has several different sizes, and as such, this gives this type of piano many different layouts from the standard piano. These keyboards can have as many as 76 keys or as little as 25 keys. Let's take a closer look at the layout of the different digital keyboard layouts.

The 76 Key Digital Keyboard

This type of keyboard is only slightly shorter than the standard size, with only 12 fewer keys. The major difference lies in the fact that the keyboard starts on E and ends on G. This keyboard layout has 45 white keys and 31 black keys.

The 61 Key Digital Keyboard

This keyboard has 27 fewer keys than the standard piano with 36 white keys and 25 black keys. The keyboard layout starts on C and ends on C.

The 49 Key Digital Keyboard

With 39 keys less than the standard piano, this keyboard layout has 29 white keys and 20 black keys. The layout begins on C and ends on C.

The 37 Key Digital Keyboard

This layout has 51 keys less than the standard piano and starts on F and ends on F. It has 22 white keys and 15 black keys

The 25 Key Digital Keyboard

This type of keyboard is normally used by studio musicians or affect engineers because of its small size and ability to make different sound effects in live or recorded music. This is not typically used for playing music but instead for its specialized purpose. It has 15 white keys and 10 black keys, which starts on C and ends on C.

Different Size Pianos, Same Layout

The pianos discussed above have different numbers of keys, but the fact remains that the basic layout remains the same for all. This is true even though the keyboard layout starts and ends with different letters. This is because the keys in a piano-only represent 12 notes. Each key does not represent a completely different note. The 12 notes are repeated throughout the layout of whatever type of piano that is played. These 12 notes are grouped with 7 white keys and 5 black keys. These 12 notes grouped together is called an octave.

You do not have to learn to play every type of piano, but learning the basic layout can go a long way in quickly aiding with upgrading your skills. The best way to do this is to learn the pattern of how black and white keys occur on a keyboard. For the sake of this book, we will focus on the standard piano layout because the concepts can be applied across the board.

Black and White Key Patterns

Being able to navigate your way around the black and white keys of the keyboard is essential to playing the piano. This section is dedicated to helping you develop that GSP for piano playing.

The White Keys

The white keys of the piano are named after the first seven letters of the alphabets – A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. However, the alphabet on the piano starts with C, not A. The reason for this is because the most basic note in music is C. Therefore, the alphabet on the piano runs like this – C, D, E, F, G, A, B. This pattern then repeats with the subsequent keys.

To find the C key on your keyboard, look for any group of two black keys. The white key on the left of this group is the C key. On the standard piano, there are 8 C notes. There are 6 C notes on a 61 note keyboard and 5 C notes on the 49 note keyboard.

The highest C note is the furthest on the far right of the piano. Keys do not extend past the high C note.

One of the most common C notes is called Middle C. It is located in the exact center of the piano, hence the name. On a standard piano, the Middle C is typically located near the piano manufacturer's logo. This C note is also sometimes referred to as Number 1 or first position.

From Middle C, the keys move up and down alphabetically. Therefore, on the right of Middle C, you will find D, E, F, G, A, B, and C again. On the left of Middle C, you will find B, A, G, F, E, D, and C again. As you move eight notes right from Middle C, you go an octave higher. Moving from C to C is called C major and represents a scale. As you move eight notes left from Middle C, you go an octave lower. The three white keys around the 2 black keys are lettered C, D, and E. The four keys around the three black keys are lettered F, G, A, and B.

The Black Keys

Black keys come in groups of 2 and 3. The groups of 2 black keys are surrounded by 3 white keys. The white key furthest to the left is the first key of the octave.

There are 4 white keys surrounded the groupings of 3 black keys. The white key furthest to the right is the last key of the octave.

Black keys differ from white keys in that they represent half step intervals called sharps and flat rather than letters. A sharp is represented by a pound sign - #. The flat sign is represented by a lowercase B – b.

The black keys stand for different musical than those of the white keys. They have designated the same letter as the nearest white key; only it is with a suffix. The first suffix is sharp. It is used for a black key that is an octave high or on the right of a white key. The next suffix is called the flat, and it is utilized for a black key that is an octave lower or on the left of a white key.

A good way of memorizing this is to think of culinary etiquette. At the table, a knife is placed on the right area of the plate and is sharp. The

napkin is placed on the left area of the plate and is flat.

Each black key lies between 2 white keys, and so each black key has two names. This name depends on the location from which you approach the black key. To state an example, the black key on the right of C is called C-sharp (C#), but also D-flat (Db) is approached from the left.

It is important to note that sharps and flats are not black keys. While all black keys are either sharp or flat, sharps and flats are not necessarily black keys. An accidental is also a sharp or a flat and simple refers to playing the next higher or lower key on the piano, which can be either a black or white keys.

As we are on the subject, it should be noted that piano keys are not the notes. The white key immediately on the left of each group of two black keys is not necessarily C. It could also be B sharp or D double flat.

This is a vital piece of information to digest as a pianist. Piano keys play a game of compromise. C, B-sharp, and D double flat are not the same note; however, they correspond to the same key on the piano. A group of notes that correspond to the same key on a piano is called enharmonic. These are necessary to compartmentalize the piano, or else you will end up with an instrument of an illogical size.

Chapter Four

Musical Scales Basics

What is the Scale?

A scale is a set of musical notes arranged in order by a particular pitch. A pitch is a measure of how high or how low a musical note is. The unit by which pitch is measured and communicated is called Hertz (Hz). A note that vibrates at 261 Hz is caused by sound waves that vibrate at 261 times per second. This is the pitch that occurs on Middle C on the piano. Pitch is often confused with frequency, which is a measure of how sound changes and its possible pitches. Pitch is also often confused with a note, but notes are names pitches. For example, a pitch of 440 Hz is called note A. A note can also refer to an occurrence of a pitch. For example, a pitch of 880 Hz (440 Hz played twice) is called A5.

A scale can be ordered by increasing pitch. This is called an ascending scale. A scale can also be ordered by decreasing pitch. This is called a descending scale. Scales can also be ordered with different pitches that alternately ascend and descend. This last type of scale is called a melodic minor scale.

The scale that most people are familiar with is called the C major scale. This is because it starts at the Middle C on the piano and progresses up the white keys of the keyboard until the notes of C, D, E, F, G, A, B, and eventually C again have been covered. This is a complete octave from Middle C. The C major scale is typically the first scale a beginner pianist learns, but there are many more other scales. With 12 notes and various patterns for each one, there is a great number of scales that are possible. Different types of scales contain unique sounds and different numbers of notes. The variation in sound is due to variations in the patterns of intervals between the notes in each scale.

Benefits of Playing Scales

Many great pianists attribute their success to practicing scales on a daily basis. The world-renowned pianist, Ignacy Jan Paderewski, claims to have practiced scales 12 hours a day. He developed the habit when he studied under the guidance of master pianist, Theodor Leschetizky. Playing scales are beneficial in many ways, including:

- Aiding in developing the knowledge of keys
- Aiding in developing the awareness of tonality
- Helping improve knowledge of keyboard geography
- Aiding in increasing finger speed
- Aiding in developing finger strength
- Aiding in developing coordination between the two hands
- Aiding in developing effective thumb movement
- Aiding in developing muscle memory
- Encouraging creativity as it helps a pianist improvise
- Aiding in developing the musical ear
- Helping in developing a stronger sense of articulation, timing, and rhythm
- Aiding in developing confidence in piano playing abilities

Scale Degrees

The word scale is derived from the Latin word, ladder. As a result, you can think of a scale to be represented by a ladder. Each step (note) is represented by a degree. There are eight degrees. There are:

- 1st: Tonic. The first scale degree is the most stable note, the easiest note in the scale to remember and is considered the tonal center. Because of this stability, most musical pieces end with a tonic. The tonic has a ring of finality to it that is good for wrapping up a piece.
- 2nd: Supertonic. This is one step up from tonic.

- 3rd: Mediant. This note is the median between the tonic and the dominant notes.
- 4th: Subdominant. This note is also called the lower dominant because of its position before the dominant note. This note does not hold as much importance as the dominant note in an ascending scale.
- 5th: Dominant. This note has the second most important function after the tonic.
- 6th: Submediant. This is a lower class median because of its position between the eighth note, the other tonic, and the subdominant.
- 7th: Leading tone. This note is the most unstable note in the scale and does not have the intensity that tonic does. This is why is it not commonly used to end a musical piece. It goes by two names: leading note or subtonic. This name depends on the type of scale being used. The leading name tone is used when there is a half step between this note and the 8th note. The name subtonic is used when a natural minor scale, which we will go more into depth with soon, is used. This scale has the 7th degrees being a whole step before the tonic.

The eighth degree is also a tonic. The difference lies in it being an octave higher.

Types of Scales

An easy way of learning the types of scales that exist is by grouping them according to the number of pitch classes they contain. This listing includes.

Chromatic Scales

According to the American music theorist and musicologist, Allen Forte, "The chromatic scale...is a series of half steps which comprises all the pitches of our [12-tone] equal-tempered system." Just as this definition dictates, this type of scale takes in all the notes found within an octave. All the black and white keys in one octave on a piano are found in the chromatic scale. As such, this scale is not used a great deal in musical

pieces. Rather, as it takes in the entire collection of 12 notes, it is more useful in teaching and practicing. The tones of the chromatic scale are all the same distance apart, which is a one-half step. This is a difference from major or minor scales.

Even though this scale is not typically used in musically pieces, it has been used to create entire compositions because of its independence from the major and minor scales. This scale gives a sense of tension and motion. As such, it is great at inducing strong emotions like grief, loss, and sorrow.

Octatonic Scales

Commonly used in jazz and modern classical music, this scales contains 8 notes per octave. This scale most often occurs as a symmetrical scale that is composed of whole and half steps. This scale is also called the octatonic collection. Its earlier records can be seen in Edmond de Polignac's unpublished treatise, "Etude sur les successions alternates de tons et demi-tons (Et sur la gamme dite majeure-mineure)." This was created in 1879.

Heptatonic Scales

This scale contains 7 notes per octave. It is also called the seven-note scale. It is often used in Western art music but can also be found in music originating from African and American Indian music. The scale resembles medieval mode and, as such, is also found in European folk music.

Hexatonic Scales

Also, a commonly used scale in Western folk music, this scale contains 6 notes per octave. This is also called a six-note scale. The 11th-century Italian theorist, Guido d'Arezzo identified three hexatonic scales built of whole and half step intervals. He called them hexachords. His theories provided the practical foundation for the training of late Middle Ages and Renaissance singers.

Pentatonic Scales

This is also called the five-tone scale or the five-note scale. It is called such because it contains 5 different notes per octave. This scale of music has ancient roots and represents an early stage of musical development. As such, this scale is commonly used in folk music, blues, metals, and country music. It is especially prominent in Asian music.

There are two types of pentatonic scales. They are the hemitonic scales, which contains half steps, and those without half steps called anhemitonic scales.

Tetratonic, Tritonic and Ditonic Scales

These scales are not common in Western music and are considered prehistoric scales. The tetratonic scale contains 4 notes per octave. The tritonic scale contains 3 notes per octave. The ditonic scale contains 2 notes per octave.

Monotonic Scales

This scale contains 1 note per octave. It is used in liturgy and for effects in modern art music limitedly.

Other Ways of Classifying Scales

Scales can be classified apart from the number of different pitch classes they contain. One of the ways is by grouping them according to their constituent intervals. Their constituent intervals can be described as being hemitonic, anhemitonic. Hemitonic scales contain one or more half steps. Anhemitonic scales do not contain half steps. It is a whole tone scale.

Scales can also be described by their symmetry. Symmetry can be described as being palindromic, chiral, or rotational. Musical symmetry is described at a set of transformations, which, when applied in some way to music, leaves some distinguished aspects of that music relatively unchanged.

Major and Minor Scales

These are the two most frequently played scale for piano players. You can create a major or a minor scale by starting with any note on the piano. Each of the types of scales listed above has a major and a minor version.

These are both variations of the diatonic scale. This is a musical scale containing 5 whole steps and 2 half steps in each octave. In the diatonic scale, the 2 half steps are separated from each other by 2 or 3 whole steps. This system ensures that even when the scale spans more than one octave, the half steps are separated from each other by at least 2 whole steps.

The diatonic pattern for the major scale looks like this:

whole - whole - half - whole - whole - whole - half

On the other hand, the diatonic pattern for the minor scale looks like this:

whole - half - whole - whole - half - whole - whole

As you can see, the major and minor scale half steps are either separated by either two or three whole steps. The difference in the major and minor scales lies in which notes the half steps affect. In major scales, half steps appear after the 3rd and 7th notes while in minor scales, half steps follow the 2nd and 5th notes.

Apart from this difference, the other properties that make the major and minor scales different are:

- The position of the 3rd notes
- The location of each scale's intervals
- The moods of each scale

The Third Note Position

This is the note that reveals whether or not a scale is major or minor. This note is what determines if note will sound brighter, as is the case with major scales or darker as with minor scales. This contrast is created because the minor third note is one lower than the major third note. The minor third

note is described as being flat. To flat a note means that it is lowered by one note. Therefore, the minor third is always flatted, meaning that it is one note lower than the major third.

Major and Minor Scale Intervals

An interval describes the distance between two notes. An interval is created between any pair of notes. Each interval has a unique name. Some intervals even carry more than one name. This uniqueness extends to the sound that each interval creates. The half step is the unit of measure for intervals and is the smallest distance between two notes. Half steps work the same way, starting on any note.

The notes of a scale can be arranged in ascending order or descending order based on pitch. When a scale is created in ascending order, the notes are arranged in a pitch that is higher than the last one. On the other hand, with scales that in descending, the notes are arranged in a pitch that is lower than the last one

The inventor of the interval system is called Pythagoras. He was a Greek philosopher. He was also a mathematician. His discovery came from his interest in understanding the notes and scales used in Greek music. In particular, he studied the lyre. This is a Greek stringed instrument. He studied the relationship between and responses of two strings with the same measurement, stiffness, and thickness. He observed that the strings sounded the same when plucked. They behaved in unison and had the same pitch. They created a good sound that was considered to be consonant when they were playing together.

Next, he observed strings that varied in lengths. He kept the string tautness and thickness the same as with the first experiment. When the strings of varying lengths were played together, they produced different pitches and typically sounded bad or inharmonious.

Thirdly, he observed that two strings of particular lengths might have different pitches but still sounded consonant instead of dissonant. This led to the man developing the system of perfect and non-perfect intervals, both of which will be discussed shortly.

Intervals are marked with a number and a prefix. The number is a representation of the pitch number name. The pitch names can be A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. From the first pitch, such as beginning with F, and doing a whole step to G, counts as a second interval. The two-pitch names in this scenario are F and G. An interval with three pitch name is called a third.

This interval pattern continues through the eight-pitch names. An interval that contains all eight-pitch names is called an octave. It is also useful to notes that an interval from one pitch name to the exact same pitch name is called a unison.

The prefix of the interval value is based on the characteristics of the interval.

Perfect vs. Non-Perfect Intervals

Perfect intervals have both an octave and intervals that run from one pitch name to the exact pitch name, giving them one basic form. Perfect intervals are labeled "P." They include fourths and fifths in the interval. The interval is also considered perfect because when this interval is played, it has a sweet tone that invokes a feeling of resolution.

Intervals also come in the non-perfect variety with more than one form. The two most popular non-perfect intervals are called the major and minor. The major interval contains seconds, thirds, sixths, and sevenths. The major interval is labeled as "M." Intervals with seconds, thirds, sixths, and sevenths can be major.

The other type of non-perfect interval, minor interval, is labeled as "m." They occur when a major interval is a one-half step lower. This occurrence

is a result of either lowering the top note or raising the bottom, top note. Intervals with seconds, thirds, sixths, and sevenths can be minor.

Other types of non-perfect intervals include augmented and diminished intervals. An augmented interval is a result of a perfect or major interval being made one-half step larger. The interval number does not change in this situation when this occurs. Instead, as an indication of this interval value, the augmented interval is labeled with a prefix like "A," a "+" or "Aug." Augmented intervals contain Seconds, thirds, sixths, and sevenths or fourths, fifths, unisons, and octaves. The same can be said for diminished intervals.

Diminished intervals result when a perfect or minor interval is made one half step smaller. The interval number does not change in this situation in this case, either. Just like with augmented intervals, the interval value is marked with a labeled such as "°," a "deg" or a "dim."

The Moods of Major and Minor

The major and minor scales are often referred to by their contrasting personalities. These two personalities are easy to pick up by ear. The major scale has a happier, more upbeat, and positive feel to it while the minor is perceived as been sad and melancholy.

Types of Major Scales

The major scale is also called the Ionian scales. The most famous major scale is called the C major. C major is the only type of major scale that does not sharps or flats.

In keeping with the diatonic pattern for the major scale of whole - whole - half - whole - whole - whole – half, the C major scale follow this pattern:

- The first note played is C.
- The whole step from C is D.
- The next whole step takes you from D to E.

- The half step takes the player from E to F.
- Another whole step brings you to G.
- The next whole step brings you to A.
- One more whole step brings you to B.
- Finally, the last note is a half step and moves the player from B to C.

As you can see from this pattern, there are no sharps and flats.

C major is one of the 12 types of major scales. All the other contain sharps or flats. The major scales with sharps are A, D, E, and G. The major scales with flats are A, B, E, and F. The other type of major scales are referred to as enharmonic major scales. Remember that enharmonic stands for notes that have the same pitch but different note spelling. The major scales that are enharmonic are F sharp and G flat, C sharp and D flat, and C flat and B natural.

By contrast to the C major scales, the C sharp major scales looks like this:

- The first note played is C#.
- The whole step from C# is D#.
- The next whole step takes you from D# to E#.
- The half step takes the player from E# to F#.
- Another whole step brings you to G#.
- The next whole step brings you to A#.
- One more whole step brings you to B#.
- Finally, the last note is a half step and moves the player from B# to C#.

This scales has 7 sharps.

The other major scales have the following patterns:

- A major scale has 3 sharps and a pattern of A, B, C#, D, E, F#, G#, and A.

- A flat major scale has 4 flats and a pattern of Ab, Bb, C, Db, Eb, F, G, and Ab.
- B major scale has 5 sharps and a pattern of B, C#, D#, E, F#, G#, A#, and B.
- B flat major scale has 2 flats and a pattern of Bb, C, D, Eb, F, G, A, and Bb.
- D major scale has 2 sharps and a pattern of D, E, F#, G, A, B, C#, and D.
- E major scale has 4 sharps and a pattern of E, F#, G#, A, B, C#, D#, and E.
- E flat major scale has 3 flats and a pattern of Eb, F, G, Ab, Bb, C, D, and Eb.
- F major scale has 1 flat and a pattern of F, G, A, Bb, C, D, E, and F.
- F sharp major scale has 6 sharps and a pattern of F#, G#, A#, B, C#, D#, E#, and F#.
- G major scale has 1 sharp and a pattern of G, A, B, C, D, E, F#, and G.

Types of Minor Scales

Minor scales have a different sound to them compared to major scales. This difference is based on the different patterns of intervals. The pattern of the minor scale has a key signature because of the starting note. This leads to a different pattern of flats and sharps. A minor scale starts on the tonic and goes through the degrees of the interval pattern.

There are three types of minor scales. They are called:

- Natural minor scale
- Harmonic minor scale
- Melodic minor scale

The natural minor scales contains only the notes that are found in the minor key signature. The other two minor scales are different. They include notes that are not found in the minor key signature.

Let's take a look at each minor scale mentioned.

Natural Minor Scale

This minor scale is the naturally occurring diatonic scale. It is also called the pure minor scale. It has no added accidentals; neither are the scale degrees altered from the major scale. Remember that minor scales follow the diatonic pattern of the whole - half - whole - whole - half - whole – whole. In keeping with that pattern, here are the natural minor scale sequences:

- C minor scale has 3 flats and a pattern of C, D, Eb, F, G, Ab, Bb, and C.
- C sharp minor scale has 5 sharps and a pattern of C#, D#, E, F# G#, A, B, and C#.
- A minor scale has no sharps or flats and a pattern of A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and A.
- A flat minor scale has 8 flats and a pattern of Ab, Bb, Cb, Db, Eb, Fb, Gb, and Ab.
- B minor scale has 2 sharps and a pattern of B, C#, D, E, F#, G, A, and B.
- B flat minor scale has 5 flats and a pattern of Bb, C, Db, Eb, F, Gb, Ab, and Bb.
- D minor scale has 1 flat and a pattern of D, E, F, G, A, Bb, C and D
- • E minor scale has 1 sharp and a pattern of E, F#, G, A, B, C, D, and E.
- E flat minor scale has 5 flats and a pattern of Eb, F, Gb, Ab, Bb, Cb, Db, and Eb.

- F minor scale has 4 flats and a pattern of F, G, Ab, Bb, C, Db, Eb, and F.
- F sharp major scale has 3 sharps and a pattern of F#, G#, A, B, C#, D, E, and F#.
- G minor scale has 2 flats and a pattern of G, A, Bb, C, D, Eb, F, and G.

Harmonic Minor Scale

Most times that people refer to minor scales, they are referring to the natural minor. This minor scale is almost identical to the natural minor scale, but the difference lies in a raised 7th scale degree. As a result, the harmonic C minor scale looks like C, D, Eb, F, G, Ab, B, and C, compared to the natural C minor scale which looks like C, D, Eb, F, G, Ab, Bb and C. The 7th note is raised by one-half step whether the scale is ascending or descending. This makes the music played feel strongly positioned on the tonic.

Melodic Minor Scale

This minor scale has a raised 6th and 7th scale degree from the natural minor scale when the scale is ascending. This scale lowers the 6th and 7th scale degree from the natural minor scale when the scale is descending. When the scale is ascending, the 6th and 7th scale degrees are raised by a one-half step, but they go back to the natural minor scale when descending. Again, let's compare the C minor scales. The melodic C minor scale has a pattern of C, D, Eb, F, G, A, B, and C when going up the scale. On the other hand, when you go down the scale, natural C minor scale has a pattern on C, D, Eb, F, G, Ab, Bb, and C,

This type of minor scale often contains accidentals. As a result, melodic minor scales are often used by instrumentalists.

Relative Minor and Major Scales

Every major key has a relative minor key. As a result, the relative minor key for major key land on the sixth tone of the major scale. The two relatives have the same key signature. As such, the notes of major scales are the same as its relative minor. The major scales and their relative minor scales are as follows:

Sharps

- C major is relative to A minor.
- C sharp major is relative to A sharp minor.
- A major is relative to F sharp minor.
- B major is relative to G sharp minor.
- D major is relative to B minor.
- E major is relative to C sharp minor.
- F sharp major is relative to D sharp minor.
- G major is relative to E minor.

Flats

- C major is relative to A minor.
- C flat major is relative to an A-flat minor.
- A flat major is relative to F minor.
- B flat major is relative to G minor.
- D flat major is relative to B flat minor.
- E flat major is relative to C minor.
- F major is relative to D minor.
- G flat major is relative to E flat minor.

Chapter Five

The Basics of Playing Chords



Knowing chords is necessary for creating professional-sounding and hard-hitting music. To know chords to use them to your piano-playing advances, you first need to understand what they are, the different types, and how they apply to play beautiful-sounding music.

What is a Chord?

To understand what a chord is, you need to keep the terms of notes, intervals, and scales fresh in your mind. For a short refresher, here are the definitions.

Notes are symbols that describe a musical sound. They represent the duration and pitch of the sound. They also represent a pitch class sometimes. Notes can be thought of as the building blocks from which all music is created.

Intervals describe the distance between two notes. Generic intervals are measure on the staff. First or prime intervals are two notes that take up space the same line or space on the staff. C to C is a great example of a prime. Accidentals are not relevant when it comes to measuring generic intervals because of only the notes' position on the staff matter. As a result, C to C# is also an example of a prime.

The interval type changes as notes are placed further apart on the staff. Remember that the notes remain on the same position on the staff, either both on space or both on a line.

The first interval increase is called a second. C to D is an example of a second. The next increase is called a third. C to E is an example of a third. C to F is an example of a fourth. C to G is an example of a fifth. C to A is

an example of a sixth. C to B is an example of a seventh. C to C is an example of an eighth.

A scale is a set of musical notes that arranged according to their pitch. When the pitch increases, this is called an ascending scale. When the pitch is decreasing, this is called a descending scale.

With these definitions under our belt, we can move onto what a chord is. A chord is a blend of two or more distinctive notes, commonly referred to as a scale, being played together. Chords that are based on one note are called root chords. For example, a C chord has a root note of C. Chords with two notes is called diads because of the number and the quality of the notes. Most chords are created with at least three notes. These are called triads. The quality of a chord and thus, the sound it makes, depends on the intervals between notes. The most common types of triad chords are major, minor, augmented, and demised chords.

Chords are not limited to three notes. There are chords that contain four, five, six, and more notes, so do not be surprised if you hear the terms tetrad or tertian chords.

There are chords known as broken chords. Just as the name suggests, the notes are not played at the same time and are instead broken up into a pattern of notes. Some of these notes may be repeated on the broken chord, too. It is useful to know the term arpeggio. Arpeggio is defined at playing a broken chord in ascending order. While all arpeggios are broken chords, not all broken chords can be described as an arpeggio.

Chord symbols are represented by the letters C, D, E, F, G, A, and B. The letter may be accompanied by accidentals like sharps and flats. The letters, whether or not they are accompanied by accidentals, represent the notes on the staff. Each letter represents a root. It is also called the tonic. It is the first note seen and lets you know what type of chord is being built.

Why it is Important for a Pianist to Understand Chords

Chords are used to support a melody. As a pianist, you may play chords with your left hand to support the melody that your right hand is playing. As a result, chords impact the rhythm, tempo, articulation, and more, no matter what genre the pianist is playing.

It is absolutely vital that a pianist has chord knowledge. Chord knowledge is the state of knowing which notes make up which chords, how each type of chord sounds, the name of each type of chord, and how all this information can be applied to make your piano playing better. This is the knowledge that can complete change and revolutionize the way you play because chords are the building blocks to any piece of music. To help you understand just how far-reaching the knowledge of chords is, here are a few benefits to making the commitment to knowing them better.

- It is enhancing your knowledge of musical theory. It is not enough to put your hands on a piano and begin to play. You need to know the fundamentals that back the actions that are encouraged by teachers and master pianists. Whether or not you are seeking a qualification in musical theory, it is a component that you need to study in order to advance as a piano player. The knowledge of chords helps you learn and speak the language of music. Thus, you are able to communicate your ideas with other pianists and musicians. Just as with any other form of communication, if the message is not being given or interpreted correctly, then communication has failed.
- It allows easy genre changes. Chords do not change no matter what genre you play. Think of it like building a house. You can be building a ranch house or a traditional colonial mansion. The material you used to build it, such as wood and bricks are the same, even if the results of putting them together will be different. The same holds for chords. Different genres of music simply stack them differently to obtain different sounds. By knowing the chords, you can play any type of music and keep up with the tempo, articulation, expression, and more

because you have the foundation that builds them all, which is chords. Sound knowledge of chords also allows you to transition when there is a change in musical components smoothly. These changes can pose quite challenges if your grasp of chords is shaky.

- It allows accompaniment to work smoothly. As a pianist, you are likely going to have the opportunity to play with singers, other pianists, and other instrumentalists. You may play in a play or a band. You may be part of a musical recital. The possibilities are truly endless. These opportunities mean that you are not playing solo, and as such, you need to make adjustments to be accompanied by other musicians. Good knowledge of chords allows you to communicate effectively with other musicians so that you not only avoid embarrassment but also keep up with other professionals.
- It aids in learning arpeggios. Arpeggios have an interconnected relationship with musical chords. Knowledge of either one helps with building knowledge of the other. By constructing and deconstructing chords into its note components, you are better able to understand the form of arpeggios. The same goes for contrasting and deconstructing arpeggios.

The History of Chords

The earliest record of chords dates back several centuries. Medieval music, which was prevalent from 500 AD to 1400, has records of Christian hymns featuring organum. Organum is a plainchant (traditional ritual singing that was developed in the early centuries of Christianity) melody that has at least one dimension added to enhance the harmony. The organum of that era featured chord progressions. Also called a harmonic progression, a chord progression is defined as an ordered chain of chords. This helped place emphasis on the melody lines developed in this medieval era as well as in the Renaissance period, which ran from the 15th to 17 centuries.

The major and minor scales became popular in the 17th and 18th centuries. These scales featured chord progressions as well, in particular, circle progressions, which are a type of chord progression that is common in strong harmonic progressions. This time period was rich with accompaniments of melodies that featured chords. In the Renaissance period, the dominant seventh, a type of chord we will discuss later, was frequently used. Composers also started used diatonic chords at this time.

The 19th century added more dimension to chords as this was the time that chromaticism became popular. Chromaticism is a technique used by composers that intersected primary diatonic chords and pitches with other pitches that are located on the chromatic scale. The use of secondary dominants, another type of chord, also became popular with composers.

From then on, chord progressions continued to evolve. Many popular contemporary Western music uses the chromatic scale, and thus, the popular types of chords we will be discussing next.

Types of Chords

There 9 common chords that every pianist should know. Each type of chord has a particular sound. They include:

Major Chords

Major chords are the most important chord played in music and typically the first type of chord a pianist learns. They are created by adding intervals on the perfect fifth and major third position above the root, which is the note that starts the chord. The major thirds interval represents the distance between the root and the note that is four semitones above it. If the root is C, then the major third note above it E. The perfect fifth interval represents the distance between the root and the note that is seven semitones above it. Again, if the root is C, then the perfect fifth note is G.

These chords are typically represented by one capital letter with no other symbols attached and have a full, resolved sound to them. It is commonly referred to as a happy chord. The happy sound comes from the wider intervals that produce brighter sounds.

This type of chord is a triad and is made up of three types of notes. The three notes are called a root, a major third, and a perfect fifth.

The reason that most pianists start learning chords by playing major chords is that the easiest ones to learn, C, F, and G, comprise of playing white keys only. The other chords follow a three-key black and white pattern.

Below is a list of the major chords and the pattern they follow.

- C major has a pattern of C, E, and G
- C sharp major has a pattern of C#, F, and G#
- A major – has a pattern of A, C#, and E
- A sharp major has a pattern of A#, D, and F
- A flat major has a pattern of Ab, C, and Eb
- B major has a pattern of B, D#, and F#
- D major has a pattern of D, F#, and A
- D sharp major has a pattern of D#, G, and A#
- D flat major has a pattern of Db, F, and Ab
- E major has a pattern of E, G#, and B
- E flat major has a pattern of Eb, G, and Bb
- F major has a pattern of F, A, and C
- F sharp major has a pattern of F#, A#, and C#
- G major has a pattern of G, B, and D
- G sharp major has a pattern of G#, C and D#
- G flat major has a pattern of Gb, Bb, and Db

Minor Chords

Minor chords are created by adding intervals on the perfect fifth and minor third position above the root. The conditions of the perfect fifth interval remain the same as with major chords. The minor thirds interval represents the distance between the root and the note that is three semitones above the root. Minor chords sound sad yet resolved.

Despite the name, minor chords are no less important than major chords. The name simply describes the types of scale that they are built on.

Just like the major chords, the minor chord is a triad made up of three notes that consists of a root note, a third interval, and a fifth interval. The minor chord is written as a lower case "m" or abbreviated as "min."

You can create a minor chord in one of two ways. The first way includes playing a major chord and lowering the third interval or middle note by one-half step. As you saw above, the C major chord follows a pattern of C, E, G. To transform this into a C minor chord, lower the E to an E flat. The other way to create a minor chord is to play the root note then add the third and fifth notes on top of the minor scale. Here is a list of all the minor chords and the pattern they follow.

- C minor has a pattern of C, Eb, and G
- C sharp minor has a pattern of C#, E, and G#
- A minor has a pattern of A, C, and E
- A sharp minor has a pattern of A#, C#, and E#
- A flat minor has a pattern of Ab, B, and Eb
- B minor has a pattern of B, D, and F#
- B flat minor has a pattern of Bb, Db, and F
- D minor has a pattern of D, F and A
- D sharp minor has a pattern of D#, F#, and A#
- D flat minor has a pattern of Db, E, and Ab
- E minor has a pattern of E, G, and B

- E flat minor has a pattern of Eb, Gb, and Bb
- F minor has a pattern of F, Ab, and C
- F sharp minor has a pattern of F#, A, and C#
- G minor has a pattern of G, Bb, and D
- G sharp minor has a pattern of G#, B, and D#
- G flat minor has a pattern of Gb, A, and Db

Major Seventh Chord

This chord is represented by the symbols maj7 or M7. It is a chord that has four notes, which are root, a third, a fifth, and a sharp seventh. As you can see, the major seventh chord is a major chord with a sharp seventh note added. Here is a list of all the dominant seventh chords and the pattern they follow.

- C major seventh has a pattern of C, E, G and B
- C sharp major seventh has a pattern of C# F, G# , and C
- A major seventh has a pattern of A, C#, E, and G#
- A flat major seventh has a pattern of Ab, C, Eb, and G
- B major seventh has a pattern of B, D#, F# , and A#
- B flat major seventh has a pattern of Bb, D, F and A
- D major seventh has a pattern of D, F#, A, and C#
- E major seventh has a pattern of E, G#, B and D#
- E flat major seventh has a pattern of Eb, G, Bb, and D
- F major seventh has a pattern of F, A, C and E
- F sharp major seventh has a pattern of F#, A#, C# and E#
- G major seventh has a pattern of G, B, D and F#

Minor Seventh Chord

Essentially, this chord is a minor chord with an added flat seventh note. It has four notes, which are the root, the flat third, the fifth, and the flat

seventh on the scale. Here is a list of all the dominant seventh chords and the pattern they follow.

- C minor seventh has a pattern of C, Eb, G, and Bb
- C sharp minor seventh has a pattern of C# E, G# , and B
- A minor seventh has a pattern of A, C, E and G
- A flat minor seventh has a pattern of Ab, B, Eb, and Gb
- B minor seventh has a pattern of B, D, F# and A
- B flat minor seventh has a pattern of Bb, Db, F, and Ab
- D minor seventh has a pattern of D, F, A, and C
- E minor seventh has a pattern of E, G, B and D
- E flat minor seventh has a pattern of Eb, Gb, Bb, and Db
- F minor seventh has a pattern of F, Ab, C and Eb
- F sharp minor seventh has a pattern of F#, A, C# and E
- G minor seventh has a pattern of G, Bb, D, and F

This chord is represented by the symbols min7 or -7.

Dominant Seventh Chord

This is a commonly used chord. It has a dissonant and harsh sound. The most important function of this chord is resolving the tonic chord. This chord comprises a dominant triad, and an added minor seventh noted above the root. As such, this is a chord that consists of four notes. These four notes are a root, a third, a fifth, and flat seventh of the scale. Here is a list of all the dominant seventh chords and the pattern they follow.

- C dominant seventh has a pattern of C, E, G and Bb
- C sharp dominant seventh has a pattern of C#, F, G# , and B
- A dominant seventh has a pattern of A, C#, E and G
- A flat dominant seventh has a pattern of Ab, C, Eb, and Gb
- B dominant seventh has a pattern of B, D#, F# and A
- B flat dominant seventh has a pattern of Bb, D, F, and Ab

- D dominant seventh has a pattern of D, F#, A and C
- E dominant seventh has a pattern of E, G#, B and D
- E flat dominant seventh has a pattern of Eb, G, Bb, and Db
- F dominant seventh has a pattern of F, A, C and Eb
- F sharp dominant seventh has a pattern of F#, A#, C# and E
- G dominant seventh has a pattern of G, B, D and F

Suspended Chords

Suspended chords were invented by Renaissance musicians in the 16th century. Suspended chords have become particularly important in jazz music. This chord helps build tension and then release it. Suspended chords are represented by the abbreviation "sus." There are two types of suspended chords. They are sus2 and sus4. The difference in the two suspended chord lies in the scale degrees that are being held to give the chord its particular sound. Sus2 consists of a root, a second, and a perfect fifth on a scale. The second is the suspended note. Sus4 has a root, a fourth-degree, and a fifth. The fourth is the suspended note.

You may have noticed that these two notes are both missing a third. This means that these chords are neither a major nor a minor chord. This is the reason that they are called suspended chords. They are, in a sense, incomplete. Sus2 only resolves when the second degree goes to the third. Sus4 only resolves when the fourth degree goes down to the third as well.

Suspended chords are popular because they are a good substitution for major chords due to the variety they add to a musical piece.

Here is a list of all the suspended chords and the pattern they follow.

Sus2 Chords

- Csus2 has a pattern of C, D, and G
- C#sus2 has a pattern of C#, D#, and G#
- Asus2 has a pattern of A, B, and E

- Absus2 has a pattern of Ab, Bb, and Eb
- Bsus2 has a pattern of B, C#, and F#
- Bbsus2 has a pattern of Bb, C, and F
- Dsus2 has a pattern of D, E, and A
- Esus2 has a pattern of E, F#, and B
- Ebsus2 has a pattern of Eb, F, and Bb
- Fsus2 has a pattern of F, G, and C
- F#sus2 has a pattern of F#, G#, and C#
- Gsus2 has a pattern of G, A, and D

Sus4 Chords

- Csus4 has a pattern of C, F, and G
- C#sus4 has a pattern of C#, F#, and G#
- Asus4 has a pattern of A, D, and E
- Absus4 has a pattern of Ab, Db, and Eb
- Bsus4 has a pattern of B, E, and F#
- Dsus4 has a pattern of D, G and A
- Esus4 has a pattern of E, A, and B
- Ebsus4 has a pattern of Eb, Ab, and Bb
- Fsus4 has a pattern of F, Bb, and C
- F#sus4 has a pattern of F#, B, and C#
- Gsus4 has a pattern of G, C, and D

Augmented Chords

This chord is rarely used in music development and is one that sounds appropriate as the soundtrack of a Sci-Fi movie due to its unsettling and anxious sound. This chord is created just like simple major chords but differs in the fact that there is an added raised fifth. The raised fifth has eight semitones and is also referred to as a minor sixth. The augmented chord also has a major third with four semitones. Augmented chords are

represented by the abbreviation "aug" or the symbol "+." This is a triad chord with a root, a third, and a sharp fifth of the scale. Here is a list of all the augmented chords and the pattern they follow.

- C augmented has a pattern of C, E, and G \sharp
- C sharp augmented has a pattern of C \sharp , F and A
- An augmented has a pattern of A, C \sharp , and F
- A flat augmented has a pattern of Ab, C, and E
- B augmented has a pattern of B, D \sharp , and G
- B flat augmented has a pattern of Bb, D, and F \sharp
- D augmented has a pattern of D, F \sharp and A \sharp
- E augmented has a pattern of E, G \sharp , and C
- E flat augmented has a pattern of E \flat , G, and B
- F augmented has a pattern of F, A, and C \sharp
- F sharp augmented has a pattern of F \sharp , A \sharp and D
- G augmented has a pattern of G, B, and D \sharp

Diminished Chords

Diminished chords are created by adding a triton, which is composed of six semitones, and a minor third, composed of three semitones, above the root. These types of chords have a tense sound to them. The diminished chord is represented either by the abbreviation "dim" or the sign, "°."

This is also a triad chord consisting of a root, a flat third, and a flat fifth note. Here is a list of all the minor chords and the pattern they follow.

- C diminished has a pattern of C, Eb, and Gb
- C sharp diminished has a pattern of C \sharp , E, and G
- A diminished has a pattern of A, C, and Eb
- A flat diminished has a pattern of Ab, Cb, and D
- B diminished has a pattern of B, D, and F
- B flat diminished has a pattern of Bb, Db, and E
- D diminished has a pattern of D, F, and Ab

- E diminished has a pattern of E, G, and Bb
- E flat diminished has a pattern of Eb, Gb, and A
- F diminished has a pattern of F, Ab, and B
- F sharp diminished has a pattern of F#, A, and C
- G diminished has a pattern of G, Bb, and Db

C diminished denotes a diminished seventh chord on music sheets. As a result, it has 4 notes instead of three. These four notes are a root, a flat third, a flat fifth, and double flat seventh.

Here is a list of all the diminished seventh chords and the pattern they follow.

- C diminished seventh has a pattern of C, Eb, Gb and A
- C sharp diminished seventh has a pattern of C#, E, G, and Bb
- A diminished seventh has a pattern of A, C, Eb, and Gb
- A flat diminished seventh has a pattern of Ab, Cb, D, and F
- B diminished seventh has a pattern of B, D, F, and Ab
- B flat diminished seventh has a pattern of Bb, Db, E and G
- D diminished seventh has a pattern of D, F, Ab and B
- E diminished seventh has a pattern of E, G, Bb and Db
- E flat diminished seventh - Eb, Gb, A, and C
- F diminished seventh has a pattern of F, Ab, B and D
- F sharp diminished seventh has a pattern of F#, A, C and Eb
- G diminished seventh has a pattern of G, Bb, Db and E

Extended Chords

These chords can be described as triad chords with notes extended or added passed the seventh. To create an extended chord, all you have to do is extend the chord formula of seven chords. Therefore major, minor, and dominant chords can be extended.

There are other versions of extended chords with added ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth extensions, but these are not as popularly used.

Chord Notation

There is more than one way to represent chords in musical pieces. The main systems include:

- Using plain staff notation, such as what is used in classical music. This includes the use of musical symbols like clefs on the lines and spaces of the staff.
- Using Roman numerals. The Roman numerals such as I, II, III, IV, and others indicated the scale degrees in the chord. They also indicated the root notes in that scale degree. For example, II indicates the second scale degree in addition to the root the chord is designed upon. When the Roman numbers are written in uppercase (I, II, III, IV, V), they denote major chords. When they are written in lowercase (i, ii, iii, iv, v), they indicate minor chords.
- Using macro analysis. This notation system is commonly used by music theorists and students who study advanced music. The notation system is represented using uppercase and lowercase letters and symbols to record chord quality. The letters indicate the roots. For example, C major looks like this C, F, b°, e, a, d, G, C.
- Using figured bass. Figured bass is also called thoroughbass. It is a type of musical notation that was commonly used between the centuries of 1600 and 1750 to indicate harmonies that are written in relation to the bass line. This method of chord notation is closely related to chord playing accompaniment instruments like the pipe organ and lute. This chord notation system uses numbers, symbols, and accidentals below the staff to denote the intervals above the bass line that should be played. The numbers represent the number of scale steps above the written notes to be played. For example, if there is a

bass note of C and the numbers 4 and 6 are indicated, then the numbers 4 and 6 are the signal that the notes of the fourth and sixth position above should be played. In this case, that would be F and A. If there are no numbers written below the base note, then the assumption is that the third and fifth above the base note should be played.

- Using chord names and symbols. The chord notations that are used in many forms popular contemporary music like rock, jazz, and pop. These notations include:
 - a) Uppercase letters to indicate the root note. An example of this is C.
 - b) Abbreviations or symbols to indicate the quality of the chord. An example of this includes "aug" to signify an augmented chord or "°" to indicate a diminished chord. If there is no indication of chord quality, then the automatic assumption is that the chord is a major triad.
 - c) A number of numbers to denote the interval above the root.
 - d) A slash to indicate the bass note that should be played other than the root. The slash is accompanied by an uppercase letter to denote the bass note. Notes that have this symbol are called slash chords. An example of this is C/F. This indicated that this is a C major triad which should be played with F added in the bass.

Chapter Six

Playing Chords

Now that we have a sound understanding of what chords are, the major type, and how they are notated, let's take a look at how you can apply this to practical piano playing.

How Pianists Read Music Notes

Before we tackle playing chords, let's study the basics of reading a music sheet and playing the piano with your right and left hand. This knowledge is not just useful for playing chords but for playing scales and more as well.

It is important that you remember that music sheets are read from left to right. This practice began because the music was originally a practice that was concentrated on the development of notes on a scale in a horizontal fashion. In historical times, when people sang together, they usually did so in unison. This was the norm until the 9th century when vertical harmony and polyphony became popular. Polyphony refers to the variety of notes or voice that can use simultaneously played or sang.

Instruments that utilized keyboards like the harpsichord and the piano were created to satisfy the changing needs of the music words and to support vertical harmonies. The notes to be played on them were adapted into notations in a horizontal manner, so piano players need to be mindful of these nuances.

The first thing you need to do when reading a music sheet is to identify where the treble clef is. Identifying this will let you know which notes you should play with your right hand. Knowing the letter names of the spaces and lines on the staff will help you with this. Make this a practical exercise to solidify the memory. Take a staff paper. Starting from the bottom in the first space, label the spaces F, A, C, and E moving up one space at a time.

Next, do the same time by starting at the bottom of the staff, label the lines E, G, B, D, and F moving up one line at a time. Remembering the notes that fall in the spaces is easy because it spells out the word "face." A popular trick for remembering the notes that fall on the lines is memorizing the phrase, "Every Good Boy Deserves Fudge." The acronym spells out EGBDF. These letters represent the white keys on the keyboard. This means that you do not have to worry about flats or sharps at this point. We will focus on the black keys later on.

This is not a practice that advanced piano players typically use, but as a beginner player, it is perfectly fine to do. Take a music sheet with music that you would like to play. On the right side of the treble clef, write the letter name underneath the corresponding musical notes.

Once you have memorized the names of the letter on the line and spaces for your right hand, you can move onto reading the notes on the bass clef. These notes indicated the lines and spaces you should use your left hand to play.

Again, let's get practical and label staff. Starting at the bottom, right of the bass clef, label the spaces A, C, E, G, and B moving up one space at a time. Use the phrase, "All Cows Eat Grass" to help you remember the notes. Next, label the lines. Start from the bottom, right of the bass clef, label the lines G, B, D, F, and A. Again, memorizing the phrase, "Every Good Boy Deserves Fudge" will help here. As you can see, the notes on the lines match up for both hands.

Repeat the remaining steps by taking a musical sheet and writing the letter names underneath the corresponding musical notes right of the bass clef.

There is another technique to use numbers to represent each of the notes each finger plays. You can create a diagram of both of your hands to make this easier for you. On your right hand, starting on the thumb, label each finger from 1 to 5. Repeat the same with your left hand. Using this

numbered technique is great for learning songs that are recommended for beginner pianists. Such songs include "Jingle Bells," "Marry Had a Little Lamb," "Three Blind Mice," and "Hot Cross Buns." They are perfect for beginners because they only use the notes C, D, E, F, and G. These correspond to the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. To utilize this technique, align your fingers with the keys but placing both thumbs on middle C. Your right pinky, which is finger #5, will end up on G. Your left pinky, which is finger #5, will end up on F. You can write these numbers next to the letter names that you have already placed on the music sheet. Start with the white keys first.

To incorporate the black keys, use the same application of letter name here.

Tips for Playing the Piano with Both Hands

It can be quite the task trying to use both your hands at the same time to do different activities, and this is an area where many beginner pianists struggle. This is because our hands and feet are naturally inclined to mirror the same movement. Therefore, making two different motions confuses the brain. You have to actively get your brain used to the fact that your hand has to perform different movements at the same time, and the only way to do this is with consistent, persistent practice. To help you play the piano with both hands at the same time, here are a few tips:

- Improve your music sheet reading skills. As a beginner pianist, it will be difficult to coordinate your hands and fingers while reading the notes on the music sheet. By taking the time to get your mind accustomed to the notes on the sheets, you can more readily do the movements that they demand. The tips outlined in the section above will help you with this.
- Initially, practice playing the piano with each hand individually before trying to play with both hands at the same time. Break down tasks into smaller units makes them easier to accomplish and allows you to keep from becoming overwhelmed. When you do start to practice

playing the piano with both hands, begin slowly. The more you practice, the more you will develop the instinctive feel of how notes go together. A great tip is to use a metronome to help to develop your playing skills.

- Do not stress out over playing the piano. You will make mistakes. Every pianist makes mistakes, no matter their skill level. Keeping that in mind, just let things flow as you play. The coordination of your hands will come to a lot easier when you are mentally at ease.
- Use visualization techniques. A mind is a powerful tool. What you think is what you physically manifest. Therefore, visualize yourself playing the piano with both hands often. Ensure that the mental imagery includes you pressing the correct keys with both hands.

How to Play Chords

Let's take a look at how to play chords now. There really is not much to it. All you need to do is practice.

Remember that major chords are triads. Let us use C major as an example of how to play this type of chord. We will continue to use the C scale to indicate examples throughout this section. C major has a pattern of C, E, and G. This equates to playing the notes 1, 3 and 5. 1 represents C, 3 represents E, and 5 represents G. All you have to do is play the notes 1, 3 and 5 on the scale simultaneously and you have played the C major chord.

This practice applies to any major chord, whether it is D major, E major, or F. Just play the notes 1, 3, and 5 of that scale.

Playing minor chords is only slightly different. Again, using C minor as the example, you will see that the pattern of C, Eb, and G. This corresponds to playing numbers 1, flat 3, and 5. The three are flat because the third is lowered one-half step. The same goes for all the other minor chords.

Playing the major seventh chord involves using the 1, 3, 5, and 7 on the scale. On this C major seventh chord, this is C, E, G, and B. On the other hand; the minor seventh chord is played using the 1, flat 3, 5, and flat 7 notes. This corresponds to C, flat E, G, and flat B on the C minor seventh chord.

The dominant seventh chord is played with the numbers 1, 3, 5, and flat 7 on the scale. To play the C dominant seventh chord, the corresponding notes are C, E, G, and Bb. This is a C major chord with an added flat seventh note. Apply the same principles to all dominant seventh chords.

To play the suspended second chord, the notes 1, 2, and 5 are used. Therefore, for the C, D, and G notes are played. For the suspended fourth chord, notes 1, 4, and 5 are played. This corresponds to the notes C, F, and G.

The augmented chord plays notes 1, 3, and sharp 5 for the major scale. To play a diminished chord on the piano, you use the notes of 1, flat 3, and flat 5. The C diminished chord has a pattern of C, Eb, and Gb, so you can see how this number pattern applies.

Different Ways of Playing Piano Chords

The first way to play piano chords is by playing to a set beat. This is the easier way to play chords and so, is a great starting point for beginners. All you have to do is play the chord for the musical piece, one every beat, or more. Once every two or four beats are the most common ways to play chords in this manner. You do this using either your left hand or your right hand.

The next method involves playing the chord with either your left hand or your right hand while using the unused hand to play the root note. This is a technique used when the pianists can correctly pinpoint different types of chords on the piano. Once the player is secure in this knowledge, then he or she can complement the chords that he or she plays by adding the other

hand to play the root note, which is the note that the chord is based on. For example, if the C major chord, which has the notes of C, E, and G, is being played with the right hand, then the root note of C would be played with the left hand. You can build on this chord technique by playing the chord and then stretch the hand over an octave. This allows the player to play the root two times to different pitches.

Another way to play chords includes the chord with either the left hand or the right hand while playing the arpeggio with the unused hand. An arpeggio is a chord whereby each note is played on its own in descending order or ascending order. For a C major chord, it can be played either as C, E, G, and C again in ascending order or as C, G, E, and C again in descending order.

The final method is playing the chord with either the left hand or the right hand while the unused hand plays the melody. This is the most challenging way to play a chord.

How to Enhance Chords

Chords are the building blocks of music, and just as you can enhance the look of a house or other building after using building blocks, you can enhance chords with additions. These additions add variety and interest to the chord so that you do not hear the same sounds over and over again. Here is a list of the variations you can add to chords and how they enhance chords.

Inversions

This enhancement involves the notes exchanging places. Let us use the C major chord as an example. The standard way that the notes are situated is C, E, and G. By using inversion, you will have two alternate versions of this, which are E, G, and C, and G, C, and E. These chords are called C/E, which is a C major with the E at the bottom, and C/G, which is a C major

with the G at the bottom. As long as you play the C note, you are playing the C major chord. Both of these are slashed chords.

Inversions are useful because they maximize your hand movements on the keyboard because they allow smaller movements of the fingers. This allows you to play faster. This maximizations of movement also allow the player to be more comfortable due to the minimal motions. Lastly, playing inverted chords creates smooth lines between the chords.

Chord Additions

This involves adding a single tone to the chords. In the case of major and minor chords, it is as simple as adding a ninth tone to the chord. While adding ninth sounds fancy and complicated, it is as simple as adding the 2nd tone of the scale again. For example, the C major chord looks like this:

C D E F G A B C

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

If you continue this pattern, it will look something like this:

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

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21

This can run into an infinite pattern, but the thing to take away from this is the position of the ninth note. It is D in this instance, but as you will notice, it is also the second note on the scale. This addition adds interest to a chord.

You can make other additions like the thirteenth, which is also the sixth.

Chord Extensions

These are similar to chord additions but differ in the octave in which the addition is done. In chord additions, the addition is done in the same octave. On the other hand, chord extensions occur in the next octave hence how the chord extension happens.

Chord Arpeggios

This situation involves breaking up the notes of the chords into individuals instead of sounding them together.

Chord Omissions

This involves excluding notes that are not vital to the sound of the chord. This omission is usually the fifth note. It is considered one of the unessential notes because it does not contribute to the interest of the chord or to the essence of the major or minor chord. Omitting this chord does not affect the tone or stability of the chord, and so it is safe to do so.

The omission of the fifth note is not so easy with augmented or diminished chords because they have flat and sharp Bs. These altered fifths play a vital role in the sound of the chord.

It is also possible to omit the root, but it is not as easy as excluding the fifth. Even though it is a note that does not provide movement to the chord, it does add tonality. This is easiest accomplished on the dominant seventh chords.

Other notes that can be omitted with caution include the ninth and thirteenth.

These chord alterations listed above are only a few of the variations that can be accomplished. Others include chord pattern variations, melody lines, and octave switching.

Chapter Seven

Advanced Lessons on Major and Minor Scales



Since we have gone through how to practice playing chord, it is time to revisit scales so that you get a more thorough understanding of how you can develop your practical skills. Playing musical scales allows you to develop your overall piano playing technique. This is because you develop your finger control skills as you memorize these scales. It builds muscle memory and mental memory.

Playing scales is a fundamental practice of playing the piano. It gives you a better understanding of music that spans other instruments and vocalisms. This is because most musical pieces developed are based on the movement of scales. This knowledge can eventually lead to you composing your own musical pieces one day. Developing the skill of playing scales will take your proficiency at playing the piano to a whole new level.

How to Play Major Scales

Learning to play major scales typically starts with lessons on playing the C major scale. It is considered the easiest scale to play because it consists of playing white keys alone. White keys are also called natural keys. C major only consists of playing white keys because it does not have any flat or sharp notes. To play this scale, you start by positioning your thumbs on middle C, which is in the middle of the piano. From this position, you know that you can move eight notes up and down to form an octave.

It is vital that you pay attention to the position of your fingers. Let's start with the right hand. By playing the C major scale, you start with your right thumb positioned on middle C. Press down. Next, play the next two notes, which are D and E. You do this with your second and third fingers. Cross your thumb beneath your third finger and press the next note, which

happens to be F. You can then continue down the scale by pressing G, A, and B with your second, third, and fourth fingers. You end by pressing C with your pinky.

You can then play the scale in reverse by moving back down the scale. You do this by using the same fingering pattern that you did to go up. This is pinky, fourth finger, third finger, second finger, thumb crossed under the third finger, second finger, and thumb. That is it! You have successfully completed playing the C major scale with your right hand.

Now it is time to practice with your left hand. This will likely be more difficult to do if you are right-handed. Just like with the right hand, start on middle C, but this time use the pinky of your left hand to press down. Next, play D and E with your fourth and third fingers, respectively. Then you play F and G with the second finger and thumb, respectively. To play A, you need to cross your thumb with your third finger. Next, you play B with your second finger and C with your thumb.

To reverse the scale, again, you play in the reverse finger pattern. Begin with the thumb and press C. Next, play B with the second finger and A with the third finger. Cross the thumb under the third finger to play G. Play F with the second finger and E with the third finger. D is played with the fourth finger, and lastly, Middle C is pressed with the pinky.

Once you have practiced with each hand individually, you can then put them together on the piano. Do not be nervous. You might not feel like you are ready but do it anyway. You will make mistakes. Do not be discouraged by them. Making mistakes is part of the learning process. The important thing to remember is to get the positioning of your fingers right. Then practice, practice, practice. It might become repetitive or boring after a while, but it is important that you keep at it.

After you have practiced the C major scale, it is time to move onto the rest of the major scales. Move on only after you have confidently learned the C

major scale.

Typically, most people start the G major scale next because it is considered the next easiest to learn, but the principle is the same no matter what major scale you play. The finger positioning and movements are the same. All that changes is the notes that are played.

If you go to a formal class or teacher to learn scales, then they typically teach major scales in this order:

- C major
- G major
- D major
- A major
- E major
- B major
- F major
- F sharp major. This is also called G flat major.
- C sharp major. This is also called D flat major.
- A sharp major. This is also called B flat Major.
- D sharp major. This is also called E flat Major.
- G sharp major. This is also called A-flat Major.

I emphasize the need to master playing the major scales before you move onto practicing other types of scales. As you move onto other types of scales, things get more complicated with the addition of flats and sharps. Therefore, if you have not mastered the major scales, which have not flats or sharps, then you are going to run into a problem with the other scales types.

How to Play Minor Scales

Playing minor scales follows the same principle finger movements as playing major scales because they are the same notes relative to the major scale. This makes it doubly important than you get playing major scales perfected.

Just like with major scales, there is a particular order that minor scales are typically practiced. This order is:

- A minor
- A sharp minor. This is also called B flat minor.
- B minor
- C minor
- C sharp minor. This is also called D flat minor.
- D minor
- D sharp minor. This is also called E flat minor.
- E minor
- F minor
- F sharp minor. This is also called G flat minor.
- G minor
- G sharp minor. This is also called A flat minor.

More Tips for Learning to Play Major and Minor Scales

Begin slowly. Getting the correct movement down is more important than speed as a beginner. You can develop speed with time with regular practice. In the beginning, it is more important to develop muscle memory for positioning your hands and fingers and then moving them in the correct way to accomplish playing the scale. Rushing can train your muscles to perform the wrong movements, which is ultimately detrimental to your skill development.

- Practice scale in pieces. In an effort to keep from becoming overwhelmed, you can learn each scale a few notes at a time rather

than trying to play the whole scale in one go initially.

- Every time that you practice a scale, begin by saying the name of the scale-out loud. This helps build the association in your brain to what your fingers are doing.
- Start by limiting the number of scales you practice to no more than once per week. It is easy to become overwhelmed and, thus, become discouraged from playing the piano because there is a lot to remember and practically implement. Take things nice and easy as you pick up playing scales. Limiting the practice of playing one scale a week is a great starting point for beginners.
- Practice chromatically. By doing this forces your fingers to adjust to different patterns of different scales. This allows your fingers to become more nimble. As a result, it is common to see intermediate students use practice warmups like D flat major C sharp minor, or D major and D minor, and other similar combinations. These pianists typically also profess backward chromatically. Therefore, they might play B major and end with a C. Only attempt this after you have mastered playing major and minor scales.
- Practice scales in different rhythmic collections. This allows you to increase your flexibility and agility on the piano. It also allows you to increase your range. Start this practice by playing scales in quarter notes. Then move onto eighths. Eighth note triplets come next, followed by sixteenths. The pace of changes these notes is a challenge even for advanced pianists, but the skills it develops are priceless. Again, this is a practice that should only be engaged in after you have mastered playing major and minor scales.
- Look straight ahead while you play. While it is perfectly normal and acceptable to start out looking at the keys when you just being piano playing, you have to develop proprioception eventually. Proprioception is the perception a person has of the position and

movements his or her body has or does relative to the other objects in space. The development of this awareness is highly promoted in the world of athletes and dancers. Musicians also benefit greatly from having this awareness. Not only does this subconsciously train our muscles to react in the manner we want with less active thinking, but it also helps build confidence in our abilities. As a pianist, you want to develop your skills on an instinctive level so that your eyes are not necessary to play a musical piece beautifully. Developing proprioception also has auxiliary benefits because it promotes better posture and allows muscular freedom. This freedom allows you to produce better sounds.

Chapter Eight

Chord Progressions and Songs



Chord Progressions are a series of at least 2 chords. They are ordered to create a piece of music. Chords in a progression are represented by Roman numerals and are determined by key. Uppercase Roman numerals indicate that the chord progression is made of notations from the major scale. Lowercase Roman numerals indicate that the chord progression is made of notations from the minor scale

Chords are created following a few basic rules. These rules are:

- The player needs to choose a key to perform in. As a beginner piano player, using C major, G major, A minor and E minor at great starting points.
- Determine what primary chords you will be using. Primary chords are needed to build the progression. The primary chords are the three most commonly used chords in music, not just piano playing. They are built on chords (triads of notes) developed around notes on the 1 (I), 4 (IV) and 5 (V) of the scale. For example, the G major primary chord follows the pattern of G (I), C (IV) and D (V). The key for C major follows this pattern: C (I), F (IV) and G (V). These three chords are called the tonic, subdominant and dominant chords respectively. The use of these chords trains the listener's ear to seek out a resolution in the progression. This is because by beginning with the tonic and moving to the subdominant chord, the ear feels like the music is moving away from "home". This creates tension which is resolved by playing the dominant chord and resolving back to the tonic.
- Once the primary chords have been chosen, it is time to move on to choosing the secondary chords. These are the seconds most

commonly used chords in music. They are built around notes on the 2 (ii), 3 (iii) and 6 (vi) of the scale. For C major, D minor (ii), E minor (iii) and A minor (vi) are the secondary chords. For A minor, B diminished (II), C major (III) and F major (VI) are the secondary chords. Secondary chords are designed to contrast well with primary chords.

- The chord progressions need to start on chord I and also end on chord I.

The Importance of Using Chord Progressions in Piano Playing

The use of chord progressions tells a story in music no matter what form this music takes. Remember that a chord progression is the order of chords that are played in a musical piece such as a song. The types of chords used and the order in which they are played make up the harmony of the musical piece. A chord progression is a pattern of chords to be played or written. Chord progressions are used by many songwriters to tell a story that is pleasing to the ears and to invoke emotion. The order of chords can make the listener feel sad, angry, moody, happy and a host of other emotions.

Ultimately, any piano player who plans to play the instrument for the long haul will have to attempt to write his or her own musical pieces and not just play music written by others. This would make the pianist a songwriter as well. The fact can seem intimidating at first but just as with everything else, following the rules of creating chord progressions will make your life a whole lot simpler while still giving your musical piece the power to inspire, move and motivate other people. A musical piece can work with just a single chord but added more, as with a chord progression, gives you the power to tell a story to the person who is listening to the musical piece. Piano players have an advantage in songwriting because the piano is a chordal instrument just like the guitar. There are not many instruments that are acclimated to play chords and this is what makes the piano one of the superior musical instruments of this world.

Major Chord Progressions List

To learning chord progression easier for you, I have compiled a few tables to show you the chord progressions that are associated with all major and minor chords. We will be starting off with the primary chords associated with major keys. Note that the root notes of each chord are written first.

Key	Chord I	Chord IV	Chord V
C major	C, E and G	F, A and C	G, B and D
C sharp major	C#, E# and G#	F#, A# and C#	G#, B# and D#
A major	A, C# and E	D, F# and A	E, G# and B
A flat major	Ab, C# and Eb	Db, F and Ab	Eb, G and Bb
B major	B, D# and F#	E, G# and B	F#, A# and C#
B flat major	Bb, D and F	Eb, G and Bb	F, A and C
D major	D, F# and A	G, B and D	A, C# and E
E major	E, G# and B	A, C# and E	B, D# and F#
E flat major	Eb, G and Bb	Ab, C and Eb	Bb, D and F
F major	F, A and C	Bb, D and F	C, E and G
F sharp major	F#, A# and C#	B, D# and F#	C#, E# and G#
G major	G, B and D	C, E and G	D, F# and A

The following list shows the primary chords in minor keys.

Key	Chord I	Chord IV	Chord V
C minor	C, Eb and G	F, Ab and C	G, B and D
C sharp minor	C#, E and G#	F#, A and C#	G#, B# and D#
A minor	A, C and E	D, F and A	E, G# and B
A flat minor	Ab, Cb and Eb	Db, Fb and Ab	Eb, G and Bb
B minor	B, D and F#	E, G and B	F#, A# and C#
B flat minor	Bb, Db and F	Eb, Gb and Bb	F, A and C
D minor	D, F and A	G, Bb and D	A, C# and E
E minor	E, G and B	A, C and E	B, D# and F#

E flat minor	Eb, Gb and Bb	Ab, Cb and Eb	Bb, D and F
F minor	F, Ab and C	Bb, Db and F	C, E and G
F sharp minor	F#, A# and C	B, D and F#	C#, E# and G#
G minor	G, Bb and D	C, Eb and G	D, F# and A

Minor Chord Progressions List

Below is the list shows the secondary chords in major keys.

Key	Chord II	Chord III	Chord VI
C major	D, F and A	E, G and B	A, C and E
C sharp major	D#, F# and A#	E#, G# and B#	A#, C# and E#
A major	B, D and F#	C#, E and G#	F#, A and C#
A flat major	Bb, Db and F	C, Eb and G	F, Ab and C
B major	C#, E, and G#	D#, F# and A#	G#, B and D#
B flat major	C, Eb and G	D, F and A	G, Bb and D
D major	E, G and B	F#, A and C#	B, D and F#
E major	F#, A and C#	G#, B and D#	C#, E and G#
E flat major	F, Ab and C	G, Bb and D	C, Eb and G
F major	G, Bb and D	A, C and E	D, F and A
F sharp major	G#, B and D#	A#, C# and E#	D#, F# and A#
G major	A, C and E	B, D and F#	E, G and B

Below is the list shows the secondary chords in minor keys.

Key	Chord II	Chord III	Chord VI
C minor	D, F and Ab	Eb, G and Bb	Ab, C and Eb
C sharp minor	D#, F# and A	E, G# and B	A, C# and E
A minor	B, D and F	C, E and G	F, A and C
A flat	Bb, Db	Cb, Eb and	Fb, Ab and

minor	and Fb	Gb	Cb
B minor	C#, E, and G	D, F# and A	G, B and D
B flat minor	C, Eb and Gb	Db, F and Ab	Gb, Bb and Db
D minor	E, G and Bb	F, A and C	Bb, D and F
E minor	F#, A and C	G, B and D	C, E and G
E flat minor	F, Ab and Cb	Gb, Bb and Db	Cb, Eb and Gb
F minor	G, Bb and Db	Ab, C and Eb	Db, F and Ab
F sharp minor	G#, B and D	A, C# and E	D, F# and A
G minor	A, C and Eb	Bb, D and F	Eb, G and Bb

Common Chord Progressions

It is best to begin your practice of chord progressions by practice chord progressions that are tried and true. There are many chord progressions that are continuously used to create different songs and musical pieces. This section is dedicated to studying a few of them. By learning these chord progression, you can easily identify them in musical pieces, practicing playing them, and then apply them to compose your own pieces. Please note that there are far too many chord progressions created to discuss all.

Here is a quick list of a few them:

- I – vi – IV – V
- I V vi IV

- I vi IV V
- vi – IV – I – V
- I – IV – ii – V
- I – IV – I – V
- I – IV – V – IV
- I vi IV V
- i – V – i – iv
- I – ii – iii – IV – V
- I – III – IV – iv
- vi – V – IV – II

These chord progressions will not be discussed, but I listed them so you can do further research on them if you desire. In fact, I recommend that you do for the sake of enhancing your education on music and piano playing. We really can go through chapters and chapters of them, especially when you account for variations, but for the sake of this book, we will focus on three in this section.

The I - IV - V Chord Progression

This chord progression is the poster child for using the primary chords with a major key. It is practically impossible to avoid hearing this chord progress because of its natural inclination to create tension then bring resolution. It is used widely in Western music such as in pop, rock, country, jazz, blues, and classical music. This harmonious sequence of chords is highly pleasing to the ear. Another reason for its popularity is the ease with which it can be tweaked to create variation.

The I – IV - V chord progression in every key follows the following patterns:

- C major has a pattern of C, F, and G

- A major has a pattern of A, D, and E
- A flat major has a pattern of A flat, D flat and E \flat
- B major has a pattern of B, E and F sharp
- B flat major has a pattern of B flat, E flat, and F
- D major has a pattern of D, G and A
- D flat major has a pattern of D flat, G flat, and A flat
- E major has a pattern of E, A, and B
- E flat major has a pattern of E flat, A flat and B flat
- F major has a pattern of F, B flat and C
- F sharp major has a pattern of F sharp, A sharp and C
- G major has a pattern of G, C, and D

The 12-Bar Blues Chord Progression

This is a commonly used chord progression as well. It is a specific musical structure that is mainly centered on the creation of blues music but can also be used to create jazz, rock, R&B, and other popular types of Western music.

The chord progression uses the I, IV, and V chord structure. It is named 12-bar blues because it is a repeated 12-bar chord progression. The blues can be played in any key, but no matter the key that is used, the 12-bar blues used the same basic order of the I, IV, and V chords.

The 12-bar blues is made up of 3 sections of four bars. The first section is made up of 4 bars that use only the I chord. Therefore, it looks like this: I, I, I, I.

The second section is also made of 4 bars but uses a combination of I and IV chords. The sequence looks like this: IV, IV, I, I.

The last section looks like this: V, IV, I, V.

After you have played the sequence, you simply repeat the 12-bar structure to continue with the musical piece.

To play this progression, you simply apply the 12-bar pattern to the primary and secondary chords for on the major and minor scale. The chord progression is typically used to convey sad and discerning feelings like loneliness or hurt.

The I – V – vi – IV Chord Progression

This chord progression shuffles the order of the I – IV – V chord progression and adds the minor vi chord. This action adds complexity and depth to the chord progression.

The I – V – vi – IV chord progression in every key follows the following patterns:

- C major has a pattern of C, G, A minor and F
- A major has a pattern of A, E, F sharp minor and D
- A flat major has a pattern of A flat, E flat, F minor and D flat
- B major has a pattern of B, F sharp, G sharp minor and E
- B flat major has a pattern of B flat, F, G minor and E flat
- D major has a pattern of D, A, B minor and G
- D flat major has a pattern of D flat, A flat, B flat minor, and G flat
- E major has a pattern of E, B, C sharp minor and A
- E flat major has a pattern of E flat, B flat, C minor, and A-flat
- F major has a pattern of F, C, D minor and B flat
- F sharp major has a pattern of F sharp, C sharp, D sharp minor and B

- G major has a pattern of G, D, E minor and C

Tips for Creating Chord Progressions

Even though there are guidelines for creating specific types of chord progressions, the notes that are possible on chord allow enough flexibility to make sounds that have never even been heard before. The only rules you need to stick to is remembering that the tonic is the key which acts as "home" for the musical piece and that progression that resolves in chord I tend to sound better. Specifically, the resolution of V to I has a great impact.

Another great piece of advice for creating your own chord progressions is to know the quality of your chords. You need to know which chords are major chords and which ones are minor chords. You also need to know what type of feeling each type of chord invokes in listeners. Major chords uplifting and up-tempo chords, while minor chords invoke feelings of restlessness or sadness. It is quite a treat to the ears to combine both major and minor chords in a progression.

Most beginners and even advanced pianists use common chord progressions as a template for creating their own. The beauty of using common chord progressions is that you can rearrange and substitute chords at will to make it your own. You can even sparingly throw in chords that do not usually belong in the key. The key here is to return to the familiar chord quickly to show that the deviation away from the norm was intentional and temporary. This is quite impactful.

The use of circle progression can really add panache to a chord progression as well. A circle chord progression is one where the chord natural follows from the one other. This movement is so seamless that it seems circular. These act as additions to the main common chord and often include a lot of complexity with flats and sharps. For example, with a key of C major, which has the primary chords of I, IV and V (C, F, and G), the circle progression that can be added to this is I, IV, Vii, III, VI, II, V and I. This

translates into the notes C, F, Bdim, Em, Am, Dm, G and C. I am sure you understand what I mean about the added complexity. While it will take a beginner time to progress to play or create circle progression, it great to know that such variety exists.

When you just begin constructing chord progressions, it is a good practice to use chord maps. This is a diagram that shows the order in which chords flow together best.

My last piece of advice in creating your own chord progressions is to use chords inversions. Rearranging the order of notes in a chord creates a dynamic sound.

Conclusion

Music is Life

This is a phrase that many musicians and music lovers use. This phrase also fuels the passion that most people have for pursuing learning to play a particular instrument, such as the piano. But what does it really mean? Let me give you my interpretation...

Music has the power to transform the life of not only the person who is making music but other people who listen to the produced sounds. This power is so strong that it often has a physical manifestation. Everyone has had at least one moment where they listened to a piece of music and felt the hairs on their nape rise and goosebumps change the texture of their skin. This physical manifestation is possible because this musical piece struck a chord within the person. Something in that music was relatable, even if it was on a subconscious level. It stirred emotion and invoked thought.

Often, when music is created, it is done so as a way of representing the world, relating to it, and conceptualizing a new world with new thoughts and emotions. This is why music is so often compared to the metaphor of life and how we relate to our environment and other people in it. Music is not just something that pleases our ears. It is something that has the potential to change the way that we think and feel completely. Music has the power to change human behavior. This means that music is a symbolism of existing as a whole mentally, physically, and emotionally rather than just a means of communication.

There is no recorded time of the first instance of music because music has been with us from the very beginning. It is older than the Romans and the Greeks. At its most basic, the only things that are needed to create music are rhythm and sound, and any human is capable of creating such. This is because the ability to create music is solidified in the intelligence that

makes a human being a human being. If you can clap, you can make music. If you can click your tongue, you can make music. If you can tap your foot, you can make music. As long as a person is alive, he or she has the power to make music and, thus, change the ebb and flow of life.

Oftentimes, music does not need to be translated, clarified, or called upon to produce meaning. The way that the rhythm melody and harmony are organized speak to us on an instinct level that supersedes music just been art or expression. No matter what language is spoken, sometimes all that is needed for two human beings to connect is a single piece of music. Music translates feelings and thoughts. It conveys anger, romances, dilemma, confusion, greed, and every expression of emotion that exists on the human plane. Many people have said that when they listen to certain types of music, they feel that they understand the meaning of life in those moments. In its purest form, music is the representation of existence.

Piano playing is one of the greatest expressions of music. It is more than just a collection of melodies, notes, and chord progressions. Every piano player who sits at the instrument, whether this person is a novice or an expert, has the potential to communicate something powerful that invokes feelings and thought within other persons. All of the great piano players of our times and times before, see the instrument as an extension of themselves rather than a separate entity. And that is how any beginner piano player who strives for greatness in the musical world needs to approach piano playing.

Piano playing is not just about putting your fingers on the keys or reading notes off of a musical sheet. You are telling a story every time you sit down at a piano and play. This story can be one of triumph and victory. It can be comical or sad and thoughtful. It can be scary and foreboding. It can invoke images of holding hands, long walks on the beach, and secret kisses. There is no limit to the story that you can tell when you play the piano. Even

without saying a word, the notes that you play can change someone else's perception, and that is a power that you should not treat lightly.

Of course, you can learn the theory of piano playing in books such as this one, and you can imitate the greats and follow the direction of a teacher, but ultimately, every piano player has to develop his or her own style. Your unique style can help you evolve as a person. You can put every thought and emotion that you have into your playing. Every traumatic experience or hardship that you have had can go into your playing. All the victories that you have won and all the times that you have overcome hardships can become part of the makeup of your styles. Your hopes, dreams, and aspirations can become part of it, too. Without a doubt, playing the piano and putting heart and soul into it changes a person, and it helps this person grow.

Developing your style as a piano player gives you more than just the power to change yourself. You have the power to change other people, too. The emotions that you channel into playing the piano can help someone else get over a hard time or help them realize the greatness within themselves. It can help them appreciate themselves and be grateful for the things they did not realize the value of. It can help them be a better version of them and gain the courage to take difficult steps. You have the power to change what life means to other people. Ultimately you have the potential to change the world.

The world is rich with opportunities for piano players. There is a very limiting belief that achieving greatness as a piano player means only performing in front of a crowd while other people silently listen on. There are many more career options for piano players and other practical uses of this music.

The world certainly has a need for great piano players who perform to delight the crowd, but that is not all that you can be as a piano player. For example, there is a very noble profession of music therapy. Musical therapy

is the use of music intervention to address the emotional, cognitive, social, and physical needs of an individual. Such therapy is used to treat several types of issues such as stress relief, behavioral problems, depression, anxiety, and even memory loss problems associated with diseases such as Alzheimer's disease and dementia in the elderly.

Music therapy is not the only career that you can pursue to use your skills to bring happiness and joy to other people. Piano players can also be studio musicians, piano teachers, and more. No matter what path you journey as you hone your skills as a piano player, the most important thing that you remember is that you need be true to yourself as a musician and as a piano player. Do not lose your style, trying to be something that you are not. Take what you will from teachers, from imitating great piano players and even from this book, but be sure to keep a sense of individuality as you continue to learn more about playing the piano and as you continue to practice.

I wrote this book to help a novice piano player learn the basics but also to guide this person on how to move on past the most basic level of piano playing. The world needs more piano players because the sounds that the piano produces are so varied and diverse. The instrument creates notes that are unlike another, and the music world would definitely have a hole if it was not in it. In the hands of the right player, the sounds produced can be transcendent.

The piano is an instrument that makes beautiful music, and as we stated earlier, there is no discounting the importance of creating beautiful music to move, inspire, and motivate others. Each musician has a different journey while learning to play an instrument. At times it can seem overwhelming and too challenging, but the rewards are priceless. Some pianists are never going to use their skills as a career, but even as a hobby, piano playing is richly rewarding. As you continue to learn and practice, be fortified in the knowledge that you are one of the few people on this planet who has

developed a strong enough mindset to continue pursuing such a life-changing craft.

Without proper guidance, learning to play the piano can be disheartening, and many beginner piano players have given up because of this. I feel that the world has been deprived of great pianists because of this fact. I wrote this book to ensure that the world is gifted with more spirited, talented, and knowledgeable piano players. This is why I ensured that we covered a variety of subjects such as the basics of how to get started piano playing, such as the proper way to sit at the piano, the importance of posture, and hand and finger exercises. I even provided pre-preparation tips for before you ever sit at the piano. I also ensured to cover common mistakes that beginner piano players make so that you can avoid the pitfalls and speed up the process of learning to play the piano.

Next, we move onto piano technology so that you can become well versed in the language. This knowledge is needed to not only communicate effectively with your teacher and other piano players but also, to ensure that you have an easier time understanding this book and others that you may read.

The layout of a piano is also an important aspect that needs to be learned before a piano player can move on to more advanced information. It would be rather ineffective trying to play the piano if you did not know the position of the black and white keys, how many keys that you have to work with, or the type of sound that each key produces.

Music scales was also a topic that was covered. We delved into the definition and the benefits of scales as well as the types of scales. Major and minor scales set different moods, and every piano player needs to know just how they can use this to fine-tune the piano playing experience for not only themselves but any other person who is learning. We also discussed how to play both of the scales.

Chords and chord progressions are other major subjects that every piano player needs to master, and we spent a fair amount of time discussing what chords are and why it is important for a piano player to understand them. We discuss the types of chords, including the major and minor chord, and how to enhance chords with advanced techniques.

We covered all of this for your benefit because I designed this book to not only take you past the phase of being a beginner piano player but also to set the stage for more advanced study.

We have reached the end of this book, and I take this opportunity to thank you for downloading this wealth of information. This book was written to help beginner players move through the hardest stage of playing the piano, which is getting started and to help this person see the value in learning to play such a diverse and well-received instrument.

Every piano player deserves the best guidance when getting started because this sets the foundation for future learning. I have compiled a lot of information to help you see that anyone can be a great piano player as long as this person has developed the right mindset for approaching learning and researching such a complex instrument. I hope that you found the motivation within yourself to keep on learning more about the piano. Take the time to read this book more than once and as many times as you need to. Bookmark sections that you need to go over once more and do more research to find out about each topic. Your adventure in learning to play the piano does not stop at this book. In fact, it has only just begun. Speak with other piano players. Research the habits and techniques of great piano players. Read more books. Read blog posts and articles. Watch videos. There are tons of ways that you can put increase your knowledge of the instrument itself and of techniques that you can use to master it.

I wish you the best of luck in this journey to learning such a beautiful instrument and sincerely hope that this book has given you the value that it was designed to give each person who reads it. I encourage you to be

consistent and persistent in learning to play the piano. Again, thank you for picking up this book, and good luck!

References

- Alves-Pinto, A., Ehrlich, S., Cheng, G., Turova, V., Blumenstein, T., & Lampe, R. (2017). Effects of short-term piano training on measures of finger tapping, somatosensory perception, and motor-related brain activity in patients with cerebral palsy. *Neuropsychiatric disease and treatment*, 13, 2705–2718. doi:10.2147/NDT.S145104
- Bangert, M., & Altenmüller, E. O. (2003). Mapping perception to action in piano practice: a longitudinal DC-EEG study. *BMC neuroscience*, 4, 26. doi:10.1186/1471-2202-4-26
- Barrett, K. C., Ashley, R., Strait, D. L., & Kraus, N. (2013). Art and science: how musical training shapes the brain. *Frontiers in psychology*, 4, 713. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00713
- Clark, C. N., Downey, L. E., & Warren, J. D. (2015). Brain disorders and the biological role of music. *Social cognitive and affective neuroscience*, 10(3), 444–452. doi:10.1093/scan/nsu079
- Furuya, S., Nakamura, A., & Nagata, N. (2013). Transfer of piano practice in fast performance of skilled finger movements. *BMC neuroscience*, 14, 133. doi:10.1186/1471-2202-14-133
- Jäncke L. (2009). Music drives brain plasticity. *F1000 biology reports*, 1, 78. doi:10.3410/B1-78
- Satoh, M., Evers, S., Furuya, S., & Ono, K. (2015). Music in the Brain: From Listening to Playing. *Behavioural neurology*, 2015, 927274. doi:10.1155/2015/927274
- Schaefer H. E. (2017). Music-Evoked Emotions-Current Studies. *Frontiers in neuroscience*, 11, 600. doi:10.3389/fnins.2017.00600

Schäfer, T., Sedlmeier, P., Städtler, C., & Huron, D. (2013). The psychological functions of music listening. *Frontiers in psychology*, 4, 511. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00511

Seinfeld, S., Figueroa, H., Ortiz-Gil, J., & Sanchez-Vives, M. V. (2013). Effects of music learning and piano practice on cognitive function, mood and quality of life in older adults. *Frontiers in psychology*, 4, 810. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00810

Trimble, M., & Hesdorffer, D. (2017). Music and the brain: the neuroscience of music and musical appreciation. *BJPsych international*, 14(2), 28–31. doi:10.1192/s2056474000001720

PIANO LESSONS FOR BEGINNERS

*A Comprehensive Guide of Tips and
Tricks to Learn Best Ways of Using Piano Chords
for Melodious Music*



Introduction

The piano is one of the most rewarding and impressive musical instruments. It looks elegant and sounds glorious. If you are interested in learning the piano but are not sure where to begin, you are in the right place. This book contains tips, tricks, and strategies that will help you learn the piano and play it like a champ. It is a thorough book that contains chapters on the types of piano, the history of the instrument, basic tutorials, and an in-depth guide about piano chords.

If you follow the instructions given in this book, you will become decent to the good pianist in no time. It will guide you through the difficult path of becoming a good musician, but you need to remember that no amount of guidance will help you if you do not practice enough. To learn an instrument, you need to practice a lot.

Chords are extremely important if you want to learn how to play the piano perfectly. You need to have a thorough knowledge of chords, which will make you a good pianist who understands harmonies, melodies, and the theory of music well. It is recommended for a beginner to practice the chords as much as possible. But, as stated above, mere knowledge won't help you; you need to practice regularly. The combination of hard work, practice, and knowledge will help you become a great pianist.

If you are dedicated enough and strive hard, you are sure to become an expert pianist in no time.

Chapter 1

Piano Basics



The piano is one of the most popular instruments and really needs no introduction. Before we start the learning process, every beginner needs to understand his or her instrument. The piano is an intricate and complex machine, and perhaps one of the most revered of musical instruments. It is versatile and has been used in songs spanning genres and generations.

A piano can be defined as a musical instrument that has hammers and strings. These two interact with each other to create harmonious and melodious music. When you strike a key on the piano, the strings present in the box get hit by the hammers. Different keys control different hammers.

The keyboard is where you 'play' the music. It is a long row of generally black and white keys, which, when pressed in various combinations, create music. When the keys are pressed, certain hammers strike the strings. These strings vibrate and transmit the vibrations to a soundboard. The soundboard amplifies the sound, and what you hear is the classic intricate music created on the piano.

Bartolomeo Cristofori was an Italian genius who invented the piano in the city of Florence at the beginning of the 18th century. The name piano is actually a shortened version of its original name 'pianoforte.' Pianoforte is a shortened version of Gravicembalo Col Piano E Forte, which roughly means a harpsichord that can produce loud and soft sounds. To form the word pianoforte, two different words are combined. These are 'piano' and 'forte.' Piano means soft, and forte means loud. In most pianos, if you press the keys gently, a soft sound is produced, but if you hit them hard enough, a loud sound will be created.

The piano is quite a unique instrument and has a distinct appearance. While amateurs may get confused between a violin and viola, no one ever

confuses a piano for another instrument. In the early days, pianos were solely built using wood. With time, other frames were introduced, such as metal. When the keys are pressed, a significant tension is generated in the strings. Metal frames are better suited to handle the tension as compared to wooden frames. Metal-framed pianos are sturdier and thus can be played with newfound vigor. They are also louder as compared to the older models.

A normal, modern piano has 88 black and white keys in all. Its keyboard consists of seven complete octaves with a few extra keys. Cristofori is thought to have been the creator of the piano, but there have been instruments similar to the piano in the past as well. In fact, the earliest instruments with keyboards are dated back to the 15th century. However, Cristofori is considered to be the father of the piano because he took the old instruments and enhanced them until the modern piano was born. His techniques form the basis of the modern piano even today.

The piano gained rapid popularity around the middle of the 18th century. It was manufactured in a variety of forms and styles. The Germans came up with a lighter and less costly model known as the 'square piano.' It was not only cost-effective, but it took comparatively less space than the regular piano. Amadeus Mozart and Muzio Clementi started their music careers with this model. As they achieved more and more success, the piano became popular as well. It soon became a staple used in chamber music, concerts, and salon music along with many other musical gatherings and forms.

By the year 1860, the square piano became outdated, and it was soon replaced by the upright pianos. The upright piano had a similar design to the upright harpsichords. This is why these pianos were tall and elegant. John Isaac Hawkins saw these pianos and realized that the tallness of these pianos was hideous, so he made some internal settings, and a more compact piano was born.

With time more and more innovations happening. The string tension was increased to 30 tons from the earlier 16 tons. The new pianos were able to hold tones that they were unable to in the past. The piano continued its evolution throughout the next century, and electronic pianos changed the world of music forever. They were (and are) able to generate sounds that were deemed impossible once. The piano became even more versatile and louder than before. Many different types of pianos came into being; some of them will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 2

Types of Piano



The previous chapter was a basic introduction to pianos, but no introduction to a musical instrument can be complete until its various types are considered.

As the piano continued to evolve, different and more sophisticated models of the humble old wooden piano started to come up. In the beginning, there were only two kinds of pianos - the grand piano and the upright piano. But now many different types are available on the market; let's have a look at each of them.

Grand Piano

The grand piano is perhaps the most famous of all models of pianos. It consists of a horizontal frame and horizontal strings. The direction of the strings and the keyboard are opposite; hence these pianos are easily identifiable. They are often featured in concerts, movies, music videos, etc. The hammer (also known as the action) in this piano is placed under the strings so that it can go back to its original position after hitting the strings naturally with the help of gravity. Grand pianos are extremely popular because they produce rich and luscious sound. These pianos are generally used for concerts and similar places where sound quality is essential. There

are some other sub-categories that fall under this title, and they are the concert grand, the petite grand, the semi-concert grand i.e., the ballroom grand, the medium grand, the baby grand, and the parlor grand.

Upright Piano

The second type of piano is the upright piano, also known as the vertical piano. It was created because the grand piano was not suitable for smaller houses. While the strings of a grand piano are horizontal, the strings of this model are vertical. The hammers in this model are horizontal and regain their original position with the help of springs. This is quite different as compared to a regular piano.

Upright pianos, too, are classified according to their size. The pianos that are tall and have long strings are known as 'upright grand pianos. These pianos are mostly seen in music schools, churches, homes, and similar institutions.

Electric, Electronic, and Digital Piano

These are some of the latest models invented, first made in the 20th century due to technological advances. Electric pianos were first displayed to the public in 1929, the electronic pianos were invented in 1970, and then the digital pianos came into existence in the mid-'80s.

The original 1920s model employed metal strings along with an amplifier, a loudspeaker, and a magnetic pickup. These strings were then replaced into metal tines while the pickup was modified into an electromagnetic pickup. The sound generated with the help of these was then amplified using a keyboard or a piano. These models were mainly used for funk, jazz, and rock music. Beginners who wanted to learn to play the instrument also used it, but it was almost never used in concerts.

Electronic pianos do not have any acoustic parts. They just employ a synthesizer with filters and oscillators that mimic the sounds of a regular piano. This model, too, was mostly used for learning and practicing music.

As they generally have a headphone option, people can practice in their own privacy.

After the electronic pianos, digital pianos led to a revolution in the world of pianos. Like electronic pianos, digital pianos, too, do not have any acoustic parts; they use the digital sampling technology through which sound is generated. These instruments also use a speaker and an amplifier. Like electronic pianos, these too can be used with headphones. Digital pianos have pedals, MIDI options, and a variety of voices as well. The sound from these models can be recorded and can be used later. These pianos are versatile and can be modified with the help of computer software.

Hybrid Pianos

Hybrid pianos are just regular upright or grand pianos that have a few features of the electronic piano. So, in a way, they are a combination of both acoustic and digital pianos. These have become quite common since the 2000s and are often preferred by performers because they can be used to record music.

Specialized Pianos

As the name suggests, these models have specific usage. A variety of specialized pianos have been introduced for the past few years, for instance, the prepared piano, the mini piano, the toy piano, the player piano, etc.

It does not matter which piano you play or which genre of music you play, the mechanism of the piano and the modus operandi remains the same. A lot of things such as the combinations, the articulation, the tempo, the expression, etc. may change, but the chord never changes. A D major chord will be the same irrespective of the genre or instrument you use. This is why it is essential to have an in-depth knowledge of chords. If you learn your chords properly, you will be able to play across genres and instruments.

Playing Across Genres

To play any musical instruments successfully, you need to produce sounds that are melodious and pleasurable to the ears. This is why you need to understand the relation between chords and melody. They should complement each other well enough. If you want to play chords for melodies, you need to learn a chord progression. In chord progression, you will learn about chord tones, which chords are complementary, which chords do not fit with each other, etc.

Chapter 3

Piano Chords

As said above, chords are an integral part of the music, and they are present in all genres and types of musical instruments. When a person plays a song using an instrument, he or she plays a melody line played using many different chord progressions. Melodies and chords both work together to make music. This is why melody and chords are both essential to create music.

Generally, when music is produced, one instrument is used to create the melody, while the other is used to generate the chords. The octave at which both of these instruments work can be the same or different. While generally, two different instruments are used to produce chords and melody, certain musical instruments allow you to produce both in one instrument. The piano is one such instrument. However, to play chords and melodies simultaneously, you need to have an in-depth knowledge of both the elements.

If the player does not possess this, it is impossible to produce them simultaneously and make them sound good on one single instrument. Melody can be generated from an instrument; a vocalist can also generate it. It means that the chord is generally a supporting element for the melody. Chords are almost always played with melodies, but they can also be played alone.

Chords are a combination of two or more notes that are played together simultaneously. For instance, when you press the keys of a piano, hammers strike certain strings of the piano, and sound is generated. To play a chord, the pianist just presses multiple keys together, and thus a chord is generated.

Chords are predefined groups of notes that are played together to create harmony. Harmony can only be created when notes complement each other.

If they do not complement each other, noise (or experimental music) is produced. Chords are important because they give the melody a texture and rhythm. A lot of two-note chords are considered to be power chords; they are also known as diads. Three note chords are known as triads, which are quite basic and generally contain minor as well as major chords. Along with these, there are chords with more than four notes.

The most commonly used and play chords on the piano are triads. In triads, three different notes are combined together to produce harmony. Most of the time, these three notes are different from each other. All the chords have a root note node and two other nodes. These are present at a distance of a third and fifth away from the root note. Although the notes are different, they still complement each other and produce harmony.

Chord Knowledge

The knowledge of which notes complement each other and go together, and which notes are present in which chords are known as chord knowledge. There are many chords in music, and it is difficult to know all of them, especially for beginners. For this purpose, this chapter will focus on some major chords only. Here is a small table that can be used to understand basic chords. This table will also help you learn how chords are studied.

Name	Formula	Examples of Notes (in Key C)	Emotion evoked
Major	I – III – V	C – E – G	Pleasure, fun, Happiness
Minor	I – bIII – V	C – Eb – G	Depression, sadness
Major 7	I – III – V – VII	C – E – G – B	Melancholy, flow

Different Types of Chords

There are many types of chord and different ways of classifying them as well. The two major categories are dissonant chords and harmonious chords. The harmonious chords are pleasant to the ears, while the dissonant chords are not so pleasant to the ears. Along with these two categories,

there are other categories, such as diads, triads, etc. In this section, let's have an in-depth look at these categories.

Two-Note Chords

These chords are also known as intervals. People who are experts in musical theory know that intervals stand for the difference present in two pitches. The nomenclature of intervals is focused on their number and the quality of the intervals. For instance, let's take a 'major-third' as an example. In this, major is its quality, while the third is the number of the interval. The number refers to the number of notes that are present in this interval. To calculate this number, you need to check the spaces, the lines, and other technicalities of music. You also need to know the position of the notes. For instance, imagine playing notes G and C. The number of intervals in this example is 'fifth.' This means five notes lie between C and G. These notes assume the five staff places in order. As the nomenclature of the intervals is dependent on number and quality, the number of this note will be accompanied by a 'quality.' These qualities include augmented, perfect, diminished, minor, or major.

Chords with More Than Three Notes

Chords can also have more than three notes. These chords are known as tetrads or tertian. These notes contain tone chords, added tone chords, altered tone clusters, seventh chords, and extended chords.

Major Chords

Most of the chords used nowadays are either minor or major. Almost all music played nowadays uses these two types of chords. Major chords are composed of three notes, which are root note, third note, and fifth note. When a chord is named, it is named after its root note. This means if a chord is called C major, its root is C. The root note will also be the lowest note of the chord. After the root note comes to the third chord. It will generally be a third tone of the C major, but it can also be an E. Later comes

the fifth tone. The fifth tone will be the fifth tone of the C major scale, or it can be the G tone as well.

Major chords always possess a major sound, because the number of half steps present in these chords from one note to another is always the same. The interval between the root note and the third note is known as a major 3rd. The interval between the third and the fifth notes is referred to as a minor third. This is true in the case of all the twelve tones that are responsible for the chromatic scale of the piano.

For example, if you try to play a D major chord, the following things will happen. You will realize instantly that the root note of this chord is the D. After this, you just need to count four half steps, and you will reach the third note, which will be F-Sharp. Next, count three half steps from the third tone to reach the fifth tone, which will be the A tone.

Minor Chords

Minor chords are considered to be the opposite of the major chords. To play a minor chord, you need to begin from the root and then move away three half steps to reach the minor third. Then you need to take four half steps to reach the minor fifth. So, for instance, if you want to play a C minor chord, you will begin with the C note i.e., your root, and then take three half steps to reach the third note, which is the G tone. This is your major third. This means that if you want to play a minor chord, you need to just lower the middle tone by half a step. It will create a minor tone.

Diminished Chords

This chord is very common in certain musical genres, such as jazz. To play a diminished chord, you need to utilize two minor thirds. This means if you want to play a C diminished, you need to play the C i.e., the root tone, then an E-Flat tone, and finally the G-flat tone.

Augmented Chords

To play these chords, you need to play two major thirds. These are present in two opposite directions as compared to the diminished chords. Diminished chords use two minor chords.

Dissonant Chords

The quality of the sound produced by a dissonant chord is distinct. This means that the sound produced by dissonant chords are rarely harmonious. They are either diminished or augmented. These chords are unpleasant to hear and sound strange.

These chords are unpleasant and odd, but they can be used for a variety of purposes. For instance, certain musical geniuses have used these chords in certain places to make their music more enticing and captivating.

Broken Chords

Broken chords are quite interesting because they are spilt. This means that they are not played together or simultaneously; rather, they are broken down and played in order. These chords contain notes that are broken down in a sequence. When a broken chord is played in ascending order it is known as an arpeggio. So, all arpeggios are broken chords, but not all broken chords are arpeggios.

Chord Progressions

Chord progression means the organization of chords in an order. It is a series of chord present in order and not in a chaotic manner. Many people also call chord progressions harmonic progressions because chord progressions play a crucial role in the generation of harmony. This is true in the case of any form of music, whether classical or modern.

Why Should You Have Knowledge About Chords?

You cannot be a successful musician (or pianist) if you do not know your chords. Without the knowledge of chords, notes, and the notes in which particular chords are played, it is almost impossible to play music. These

are considered to be the base of any form of music, and if you do not understand the base, you will surely not understand the theory built upon it.

Here are some examples that prove how crucial it is to have in-depth knowledge about chords and how it can help you become a genius pianist.

Music Theory

People who want to learn a musical instrument just for the sake of it do not care about music theory. However, that is a wrong attitude, as music theory can help you understand music in a better way. It allows you to appreciate music and play in a better manner. If you want to learn music theory, you need to learn chords. It is impossible to learn about music theory if you do not learn chords, as chords form the basis of music theory. Similarly, you will not be able to learn and understand what other musicians (including past and contemporary geniuses) have done. You will not be able to communicate through music in the right manner, and your ideas and plans will not work out. Music theory provides you a language through which you can understand music and your instrument better and can communicate this understanding with others.

Arpeggios

As mentioned above, arpeggios are broken chords, which are played in ascending order. Arpeggios are played one note after another. If you want to understand arpeggios properly, you need to understand chords and musical forms properly. Arpeggios and chords are quite similar; in fact, some people call arpeggios a version of chords. For example, it is possible to turn any chord into an arpeggio by simply playing the notes present in the chord one by one. This process is known as deconstruction. Similarly, if you want to convert an arpeggio into a chord, you just need to combine all the notes present in the arpeggio (individually) and play them together.

Accompaniment

If you want to become a professional pianist and want to play it commercially either in a band, at church, in an ensemble, or with a singer or

with another musician playing a different instrument, then you need to possess a proper knowledge of chords. Chords are absolutely essential if you want to become an accompanist. You will not be able to play the piano if you do not understand the chords.

Chapter 4

Strategies to Play the Piano



If you want to become a good pianist (or a guitarist, etc.), you need to be dedicated and patient. You also need to develop a clear and well-defined strategy that can help you learn the intricacies of the instrument. This chapter will provide you some easy tips, strategies, and tricks that are essential if you want to become a good piano player. Always remember these strategies and keep them at the back of your mind and remember them whenever you practice or play.

Chalk Out a Goal

It is recommended to have a goal if you want to become an expert. This goal should be short and well defined. It should also be medium-hard, i.e., it should be achievable with hard work and patience, and the process should be step by step. Spend time to achieve each step and do not hurry. Do not go looking for substitutes for hard work, as there are none.

Warm-Up is Important

Always warm-up before you play. Sometimes you may feel impatient and just jump into the thing, which is okay once in a while, but if you make a habit of it, you will suffer later in your life. If you do not warm up before playing, you may develop severe problems such as tendinitis and carpal tunnel in the future.

Don't Ignore the Basics

You need to practice your basics well enough if you want to proceed towards the next level. Basics include timing, accuracy, scales, etc. and are important because ultimately, they form the base of any instrument. You need to practice your basics on your instrument every day if you want to become an expert someday.

No Need to Rush

Learning to play an instrument is a complex process. Do not expect to pick up an instrument and be good at it, leave alone mastering it in a day or two. It is a long process, and you need to be dedicated; otherwise, you will never learn. If you really want to learn the piano and become a master, avoid rushing in by trying to learn everything at once, instead take things slow. Learn the basics, practice them, master them, and then move to the next step. Until your step one is perfect, do not move on to the next one.

Learn From the Legends

If you want to become a good artist, you need to know the history of art. Similarly, to become a good pianist, you need to listen to master pianists from time to time. This will help you learn and discover a lot of things and find inspiration to come up with something unique as well. It will also help you understand the intricacies of music and how people created and innovated music.

Take Time Off from Playing

All work and no play make Jack a dull boy! If you have decided to learn a musical instrument, it is most likely because you found it interesting and 'fun.' Do not let this fun part disappear. Don't let music practice become a chore, or else you will soon get bored. It is important to mention this because this happens with most people. When they realize the hard work and practice that goes into playing an instrument, their interest fizzles out.

You need to enjoy music and your instrument if you want to learn how to play it properly. If you continue to look at your music practice as a chore, you will not enjoy it, nor will you make good music. There is a good chance you might start to hate it. You need to have as much fun as possible, and the best way to do that is to challenge yourself to learn a new thing every time you play. Also, if you feel bored or frustrated, just stop and take a break. Remember, music is always supposed to be enjoyable and fun and should not feel like a task.

Chapter 5

Important Piano Related Terms



Before you begin your practice, here are certain terms related to the piano you need to remember. These terms come up almost every time when you learn and talk about the piano.

Tone

Tone is a crucial aspect of musical sounds. It is essential to understand the appropriateness of any sound as compared to the music based on the sound. Many people believe that the musician i.e., the player of the instrument - cannot influence the tone of the note they play. It is also believed that no two instrumentalists can play the same note in the same way ever even if they use the same instrument and play the same composition. This happens due to the outside factors that influence instrumentalists. These outside factors include a variety of things such as the build of the instrument, the tuning of the instrument, the instrumentalist. Instead of arguing whether an instrumentalist can influence or change the tone of a note, it is crucial to check whether a person is playing a group of notes or a single note.

When a person hears a variety of notes, he or she gets a real sense of a different group of notes. It is crucial to understand this fact, as it will help you to understand tones properly. It will help you understand how the player influences musical notes and how a tone is produced. For a large number of instrumentalists, the musical content of the note played, and the experience and control of the player are essential to control the production of the tone.

It is, therefore, clear that tone is nothing, but a function of musical notes combined with the level of perception of the instrumentalist.

Many different things can influence a single musical note. A note can be altered with the help of the harmony, which in simple terms means that it

can be played either softer or louder. Another method that can be used to change the tone is by using the pedals. If you understand musical notes and music well, you will realize that both the methods mentioned above control the timbre of the note. Timbre is a functional component of tone.

It is possible to change the timbre of a tone with the help of a tuner. There are two ways to do so; the first option is changing the tune, and the second option is changing the density of the covers of the hammers. By changing the density of these felt covers, you can make the tones brighter. Similarly, by changing the tuner, you can change the detuning aspect. To produce brighter sounds, you need to use a large stretch. If the piano makes a noisy sound, it is because of a narrow or incomplete/short stretch.

You may be wondering whether the tone of a note can be changed using the downstroke effect or not? The downstroke effect is considered to be one of the key parts of the piano keystrokes. It is a necessary step in the creation of a sound. It controls the mechanism present inside the piano.

As hammers are supposed to be in free flight, many pianists believe that the down-stroke plays an integral role in the control of tone. This is why people who believe that a tone cannot be controlled proclaim that only the speed of the hammer is responsible for the generation of a musical note. But this is just a theory and has not yet been proved. The bend of a hammer shank plays an important role in the production of tone and has a huge effect on it. If you produce a loud note, the shank gets bent as the hammer moves into a free movement.

What is Rhythm?

A rhythm can be defined as a music terminology that finds its roots in the Greek word *rhythmos*, which stands for flow. So, rhythm, in a way, is a recurring arrangement of melodious or musical sound in time. Most manuals and books related to music have made rhythm a complex and confusing element that needs to be either inborn or is to be learned with a lot of practice, dedication, and hard work. This is a myth.

While it is true that music requires dedication and hard work, rhythm is nothing but the reading of the music in a precise manner, along with proper counting within the right time. Rhythm is crucial and does take a lot of practice and talent to create sophisticated rhythmic sounds. But it is not that complex, and anyone can learn it with practice and dedication.

The art of making rhythmic sounds is not easy and has a few problems, but the majority of problems associated with rhythm are generated due to misinformation or insufficient information about music and rhythm. These two make it a bit difficult to read rhythm and music properly. Rhythmic information is not represented properly. When you begin to make an error while reading, it continues to happen until the very end of the piece. Rhythm is often an integral part of the music. A musician changes vary and manipulate it to produce music.

Rhythm is generally divided into two parts, time and accents. It has two forms, formal and logical, and both these forms are used in music. The logical form of rhythm is rather difficult to explain. The formal part is simpler but still crucial. A lot of beginners often forget about the formal part of the rhythm and do not consider it important enough. This is why they find the learning process difficult, and their music isn't pleasing to listen to.

Dynamic Terms

Dynamics or dynamic terms are used to describe the softness or loudness of the music. Dynamics are used to convey expression in sheet music and to enhance the emotional experience of the music with the help of intensity and volume.

Dynamics can also make the strength of a note more intense or faded. Certain notes in a piece of music are supposed to be played lightly, while others are meant to be played with force.

Dynamic terms are used in many different kinds of music genres, including movie soundtracks, symphonies, popular music, etc. They can be used to enhance the effect of a movie scene. For instance, louder dynamics work well with battle and other similar scenes.

Piano

Many people believe that the term piano is only used to refer to the instrument, but that is incorrect. Even today, the term 'piano' is used to refer to an important instruction in the world of piano. As mentioned earlier, 'piano' is a short form of the word 'pianoforte,' which means soft and loud in Italian.

'Piano' is a dynamic command used to instruct the player to play particular notes in a soft way. This is generally used in passages of music that are supposed to be more nuanced and delicate. Playing the 'piano' is not difficult. You just need to put less weight on the keys as compared to your normal pressure. On sheet music, this term is represented with the help of a lowercase italics 'p'.

If the composer wants the player to play the notes in a silent manner, he or she may denote it using two or three lowercase 'p's.

Piano sections can be used to denote silence, serenity, and solemnity.

Forte

Forte notes are the opposite notes of piano i.e.; they are supposed to be played with force. The piano is truly one of the most powerful and loudest of all musical instruments, and composers often use this factor for their benefit. If a player wants to play forte notes, he or she adds more controlled pressure on the keys and power as compared to his or her normal pressure. Like dynamic piano markings, forte notes are represented with the help of a slant, lowercase, 'f.'

Just like the piano notes, if a composer wants the player to play the notes at extreme force and volume, he or she will denote this using two or three 'f's.'

Forte sections are often used in music because if used properly, they can represent fright, power, triumph, and joy.

Mezzo

Mezzo is an Italian word that means moderately or half. It is one of the major dynamic markings and is combined with other markings. For instance, if you use mezzo with forte, it means that you are supposed to play the passage with medium intensity to produce a moderately loud sound. The dynamic mezzo mark is useful to create control and nuance in a music piece. It acts like brakes on a vehicle. If you play a passage or note with too much or too little intensity, it ruins the effect and nuances of the piece. The mezzo can save such a piece by making the music moderate and beautiful.

Crescendo

Crescendo is a passage of music that becomes louder gradually. It has a specific symbol on sheet music of an acute angle pointing to the left. It shows excitement and anticipation.

Decrescendo

This is the exact opposite of a crescendo. It is used when the composer wants to make a piece silent gradually. It creates a serene or emotional tone. It is denoted using an acute angle pointing to the right.

Staccato

Staccato is an Italian word for detached or short. It is used by composers to denote a quick 'play.' The notes are played in a quick and detached manner, which creates a sound different from the regular sounds and even sounds detached. For instance, jabs, raindrops, etc. are all different kinds of staccatos. These notes can cut through any kind of music to add an interesting texture to any piece. Playing a staccato is easy; you just need to press your finger on a key and then remove it immediately. A kind of bounce is created, which leads to an interesting effect. It is possible to play

these notes loudly or in a quiet manner. This is denoted using a staccato symbol, i.e., a small dot over any single note.

Legato

Legato notes are considered to be the opposite of staccato notes. These are connected, long, and seamless. Legato means 'tied together' in Italian. When the composer puts in this instruction in the notes of legato, he or she wants you to hold the note longer by pressing the keyboard key for a long time. There should be no break when you play a series of notes. This is generally used for musical pieces that are supposed to be emotional, lyrical, and impactful. Legato is often represented by using a curved line that connects the first and the last note. All the notes between these are supposed to be played smoothly.

Accelerando

Musicians use this term to represent the slowly 'quickenning' tempo of a particular piece. The tempo of this passage increases gradually i.e., it accelerates. This is generally used when a composer wants to create drama or excitement in a piece. It can also be used to change the music. A musician changes the tempo because he or she wants to grab the attention of the listener. Rhythm is normally the most stable and predictive part of any musical piece, so by changing the tempo in between, the composer can disrupt the 'slight' repetitiveness and make the piece far more interesting. The symbol for accelerando is a horizontal dash.

Decelerando

This piece is supposed to be the opposite of the above. It is used when the tempo of a piece decreases gradually. The passages in this piece are used to change the mood and settle it down slightly. It is also used to disrupt the 'regularity' of the piece. The symbol of

Ritard

While decelerando is used to denote a gradual slowing down of the tempo, Ritard or Ritardando is used to denote an immediate drop in tempo. When a songwriter or a composer wants to put an emphasis on a piece of music or melody, he or she uses a Ritard. This is represented using a dashed line in sheet music

Grave

This is a solemn sounding term, which is used to mark an intense piece. A musician is supposed to play a piece in a serene, serious, and slow manner when he or she sees this mark. It is used to create a contemplative, solemn, or highly emotional music. Two wavy lines are used to represent this term in sheet music.

Energico

Energico is used to instruct the musician to play a particular piece with zest, energy, and enthusiasm. It is the opposite of the grave.

Rubato

Rubato is a dynamic instruction that was often used in the romantic era of music in the 18th century. It is a section of music that can be played without a 'strict' or proper tempo. In Romantic times, emotions mattered more than anything, and Rubato is a vibrant example of this idea.

Coda



A coda is the ending of a movement. Codas are generally full of resolution and heady music. They serve a similar cause like climaxes or resolutions serve in a novel or a movie. This term is represented using a crosshair like a symbol.

Da Capo

Da Capo is an Italian phrase for 'from the head.' It is often used in sheet music. It is used to tell the musician to repeat the beginning of the piece before he or she halts on the final chord. Da Capo and other similar terms make it easy for musicians to read music. Instead of writing the whole piece once again, writing De Capo can help the musicians and composers to save a lot of paper, as they do not have to rewrite the instructions.

DC Al Fine

This is used to denote 'from beginning to the end.' It is used to tell the musician to play the piece of music until he or she reaches the end of the piece. This end can be marked using 'Fine.'

DC Al Coda

This means 'from head to tail.' It is used to tell the musician to return the beginning and repeat the music and continue until he or she reaches the first coda symbol. Hereafter he or she is supposed to jump to the coda and finish the piece. In sheet music, DC Al Coda is denoted with 'DC.'

DS Al Coda

This is used to direct the player to return to a particular part of the musical piece, which is marked by a special symbol. When it is reached, he or she is supposed to jump to the coda symbol. In sheet music, DS Al Coda is denoted with 'DS.'

Other Piano Terminology

Musical theory is a complex field. It consists of many different terms and symbols. In the last section, some of the most important dynamic symbols were explained in brief, but due to the sheer size of musical theory, there are many more terms that need to be covered. This section will cover most of them.

Impromptu

This is used to denote a short piece of music that is generally improvised. Songwriters and composers often make impromptu pieces that are then converted or developed into fully-fledged pieces. Musicians often improvise certain directions given in the guidelines, instead of just following them to a T. For instance, the 12 Bar Blues chord progression is one of the most famous progressions, and many musicians play it in an impromptu style.

Motif

A motif is the musical theme of the piece that develops over time. For instance, the Overture to William Tell by Rossini uses a motif well known in the world of music. Some other examples include Rachmaninov's Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, John Sibelius's Finlandia, and Machaut's Mass. It is created in such a way that the listener stays interested and engaged for a long time, even if the piece is complicated and long.

Pentatonic Scale

In terms of music and piano, any scale that has five notes is known as a pentatonic. For instance, the five black keys together make a pentatonic. Pentatonic scales are often used in Asian music and jazz. Pentatonic is easy to learn and can be learned even by young kids easily.

Reprise

This term is used when the musician is supposed to play a part in the piece that he or she has played already. Reprises are important because they help to create a sense of 'remembrance.' Reprises are also used when a particular character is assigned a particular piece as his or her theme.

Homophony

It is used to define the music composed in a way that many different musicians and singers can play or sing it together in unison. Homophony can be used to create interesting and jarring effects.

Fermata



This tells the musician to hold a rest on a tone beyond what has been written on the sheet. It is often used to generate focus on a moment or is used to make a particular section of the piece stand out. Fermata is often a commonly seen element in the works of Guillaume Du Fay and Josquin des Prez.

Fugue

This is a piece of composition that is deliberately written for more than three but less than six voices. Each voice enters the piece at a different time. These entrances are supposed to create different counterpoints with one another. These are often used in old pieces but can be used in modern music as well.

Deceptive Cadence

When an audience expects a chord progression at the end of a piece, but it does not appear, a deceptive cadence takes place. It is often seen in major keys. When a player plays a minor 6th chord instead of playing the dominant 5th chord, it is often used by songwriters and composers to surprise their audience, especially when they expect a specific flow of melody. It is also used to develop and extend the musical ideas of the composers and audience alike.

Etude

This is used to refer to a piece of music written to enhance and improve the technique of a musician. It is neither a stand-alone piece nor a musical exercise. Etudes are significant exercise tools because they can help you develop rhythm, muscle memory, and other factors related to music.

Interval

As the name suggests, the interval is the distance between notes. In music, chords are created by playing various notes at changing intervals at the same time. Students are often made to identify intervals in music to learn them. For instance, you can hear the major 2nd interval in the second and third notes of 'Happy Birthday.' You can also find a minor 2nd interval in Frere Jacques and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer.

Atonal

Atonal is a piece of music that has not been created with regard to a specific key. A lot of modern and contemporary music pieces are considered to be atonal, and many times these pieces are written using complex mathematical equations. Atonal music is often considered to be off-putting, noisy, and jarring by people who prefer conventional forms of music.

Polyphony

This term is used to refer to the mix of many different melodies that harmonize well together. Like polyphony, polyrhythm is quite the same, except it is a combination of rhythms and not harmonies. Many different and interesting music pieces have been created using polyrhythm and polyphony.

Ostinato

Ostinato stands for repetition. Ostinatos are used in modern as well as classical music. For instance, Gustave Holst and Maurice Ravel have used it many times to create their own styles of music. Contemporary electronic music uses a lot of ostinatos to create interesting effects.

Piano terminology may seem quite difficult in the beginning, but with time and practice, you will be able to understand and remember the ideas, terms, and concepts with ease. There are many terms that are not easy to remember, but if you want to become a successful musician, you need to remember them, as they are important for reading sheet music.

Chapter 6

Finger Exercises

Playing the piano takes a lot of work if you want to do it properly. Like an athlete needs a lot of practice and warm-up, a piano player too needs to exercise his or her fingers from time to time to keep them healthy and in shape. There are a variety of reasons why it is necessary for a piano player to do finger exercises. For instance, it can reduce the chances of injury and also help to improve the technique of playing.

To play the piano, you need to use more than your fingers. You need to use your wrists, arms, hands, etc. and all of these need to be positioned properly. Proper posture ensures correct and tireless playing capacity. It can also enhance your efficiency. Having correct posture is especially important if you want to play the piano for a longer duration. If you use a proper piano playing technique, it will help you to stay comfortable and allow you to enjoy the process of playing. It makes a lot of difference if you want to become a professional pianist because professionals are required to play for long hours.

While all the parts mentioned above are necessary for playing the piano properly, fingers play an integral role, which cannot be ignored. They are responsible for the quality, volume, and tone of the sound the piano can produce. This is why regular finger exercises help you to become a better pianist. By doing finger exercises regularly, you can improve your coordination, the strength of your fingers, flexibility, and dexterity. This, in turn, will help you to become more confident and bold and also improve your musicality, speed, and overall performance. Simply put, finger exercises are a must if you want to become a good pianist. You cannot rely just on mere knowledge of playing the instrument; your body should be fit too.

This chapter will deal with many different finger exercises that you can do to make your fingers work better. The exercises are explained in detail to make it easy to understand.



Proper Finger Technique

Before going into the exercises, it is necessary to get a proper understanding of what a good piano finger technique is. The base of a proper piano playing technique is that the fingers need to be responsible for controlling the power while playing the piano. This is quite an easy concept to understand for people who have learned from a teacher, but self-learners may find it slightly more difficult.

To make the idea simple, this section will cover certain concepts related to the piano finger technique. If you have played the piano for a long time and still do not have a proper finger technique, then it is possible that you may find this difficult. You will have to forget your incorrect finger technique and adopt a new, proper one. With ample practice and time, you will be able to do it efficiently.

A proper piano finger technique consists of these four elements:

- Ensure that the fingers are not floppy or flat. The knuckles should not be straight.

- All the fingers, barring the pinky, should be bent at the knuckle right after the fingertip. You can keep the pinky straightened sometimes.
- Remember and ensure that your fingers are always the power source. Do not let your hand, wrist, or arm become the power source.
- Keep your elbows, arms, and shoulders relaxed. Keep your fingers and thumb ready so that you will not be caught with surprise when the playing begins.
- To play the piano, you need to employ a lot of muscles in the fingers. Normally, the muscles of the other parts of your limbs are not used as much as the muscles of the fingers.

Common Mistakes in Finger Technique

While anyone can make mistakes, it is common for beginners to make them. Many beginners often commit a lot of mistakes, especially in the case of finger techniques. Here is a list of some common wrong finger techniques. Keep a close eye on these techniques and avoid them as much as possible.

While playing the piano, beginners often move their wrists too high or too low instead of moving their fingers to get the proper technique. It does not matter which direction your wrists move in; they will become tense. Tension is bad for your wrists and fingers because it will reduce your accuracy and speed. To avoid this, you should always employ the proper playing technique and position.

A lot of beginners who have just begun to play the piano tend to play with their arms instead of their fingers. As it has already been said, playing with your arms is the wrong technique that will ultimately lead to stress and loss of accuracy and speed. Playing with your arms will also produce an excessively rhythmic sound. This sound can then generate beats and accents, which have no place in notes.

Finger Exercises

Let us now move on to the exercises.

Warm-up Exercises

Warm-up exercises are particularly good as they can help you relax and get your fingers ready. They also help you to create the necessary mindset to play the piano.

Simple Warm Up: Rub your palms together and stretch your fingers as far as possible. Repeat ten times.

Extended Warm-Up: Extend your arms straight in front of you. Slowly, make claw-like shapes with your fingers. Quickly extend your finger. Gently make them claws again. Repeat five times.

Speed Exercises

Speed exercises are exercises that can help you to improve your speed of playing. Certain music pieces and passages ask for a lot of speed and swiftness. You need to exaggerate circular and rotational motions to play a normal passage in a quick tempo. You need to practice a lot if you want to play a piece at great speed.

To play a piece at a quick pace, you need to form a proper habit and learn correct hand motions as well. You may have noticed that pianists draw circles quite a lot. In fact, their right-hand draws circles constantly, even while playing a scale. So, when the player plays the notes, and it starts to ascend, the wrists of the hand begin to scoop down. And the notes start to go in the opposite direction. The left-hand starts to move in a rotational manner, and the wrist gets rocked in a forward and backward motion. To play at a higher velocity, it becomes necessary to make as little movement as possible. This will help you move forward as quickly as possible. Drawing circles will also provide a natural grace to your wrists, which is necessary while playing difficult chords.

Finger/Hand Independence Exercises

These exercises can help you strengthen your fingers and make them bolder.

Exercises

In this section, let's have a look at some of the most popular and potent piano finger exercises that you must learn to become a good piano player. It is recommended for you to perform these exercises at a proper tempo. It does not matter what speed you can perform these exercises.

5 note pentacles

In this exercise, the pianist is forced to use one finger to play, and that finger is used for each note (C D E F G). He or she is then asked to listen to the output of what they are playing. It is necessary to change the dynamic ranges only with the muscles of your fingers. Do not use your shoulders or arms to do so. This exercise is quite easy and quick, but if you have weak hand muscles, you may find it difficult in the beginning.

Ascending and Descending Pentacles

Once you become an expert in the first piano exercise, you need to move to this one, which is a tad bit difficult compared to the first one. To do this, start playing in a descending and ascending pentacle. Just begin with your lowest finger and then continue doing it with your next finger until you reach your highest finger. Repeat this with your other hand. Remember that pianists need both the hands to play the piano properly, so all ten fingers are important for you. This means that the fingers of both your hands need to be well developed. Do not favor any one hand; you need to be ambidextrous. You may find it difficult in the beginning, but you will soon become accustomed to it.

Try a different combination. Use all your fingers equally so that all of them become accustomed, strong, and flexible. Always strive to stick to proper

finger techniques, and whenever you notice that your finger technique is not right, just start from the beginning again.

Skip Every Other Note

Once you become accustomed to the first two exercises, you can move on to the next one. In this exercise, you are supposed to play a pentacle in thirds. This means that you need to skip every second note and play the next one instead. This will help you discipline your fingers properly.

Once again, this exercise may seem to be too simple, but it is not so straightforward. You need extra effort and time to master it. It may seem a bit confusing at first, but do not stop practicing. Stay dedicated; the more you practice, the better you will get. Becoming an expert takes time and patience. Keep practicing; do not beat yourself if you find it difficult to do.

Use a Firm Finger Position

You need to do this exercise after the one mentioned above. To do this, you need to first put your fingers in a playing position. Do not put your fingers on the keys yet. They should be carefully arranged in such a way that your knuckles and other parts are in the proper position.

Now slowly raise your hand completely but continue to maintain proper piano finger technique. Now let your hands drop onto the keyboard. If your knuckles separate and the position that you had held changes, just repeat the process once again, except this time, lower the height.

This exercise is important because it will help you to develop a firm finger position. Once you master this exercise, you will be able to play the piano properly without any extra arm tension or weight, which generally happens in these cases. The 'letting your arms fall' part is important because it will help you keep your focus intact, and soon, you'll develop an unshakeable and solid finger position.

Over-Legato

In this exercise, play each of the notes in a sequence while letting each of them overlap one another. For instance, let's assume that you are practicing with the C major pentacle. When you begin to play this one, your thumb will press a certain key. Now you must hold the key with your thumb until your index finger plays the next key. Now release the thumb and hold your index finger and keep it pressed until your middle finger presses the next key. Repeat this until you run out of fingers on one hand. Then repeat it with the other hand.

The Over-legato is particularly rewarding for people who want to make their fingers more 'aware' and active. This exercise will also help you maintain and understand the controls of all the fingers simultaneously and individually as well. Due to this, you will be able to control all your fingers independently, and you will be able to play even complex pieces with ease and grace.

This exercise needs a lot of patience and effort and is not easy, so if you are not able to do it in the beginning, don't worry. Just keep on practicing. With proper practice, you will soon get the hang of it.

Full (1 Or 2 Octave) Scales

This exercise will help you increase the accuracy and speed of your playing. To do this, you are supposed to practice full scales with 1 or 2 octaves while preparing your thumb to play. Let's use the C major scale as an example of this. The first note on this scale is supposed to be D. To practice the full scales, play the first note with the index finger and keep your thumb ready. Then press the F note. Repeat this with every scale until you become comfortable with all the scales and can play them without having to look or think about them.

As said above, this exercise is great if you want to learn to play the piano at a swift and accurate speed. So, it is recommended to practice and master

this exercise as much as possible. It will help you become a faster and better pianist.

Use the Same Hand to Play Two Notes at the Same Time

To become a good and expert pianist, you need to play two notes simultaneously. But this can prove to be quite difficult in the beginning. You just need to practice with a lot of dedication to learn how to play two notes together without your fingers feeling tired. Your fingers should not interfere with each other, either.

Generally, our fingers are connected to each other, and it is difficult for them to work independently. This is especially true when more than one finger is involved. Due to this, it is excessively necessary to do finger exercises with full dedication until you become a master. You need to learn how to use your fingers properly and independently.

The finger that many people find the most difficult is the pinky finger. This is one of the most difficult fingers to maneuver, and it often interferes with other fingers. This is why you need to pay more attention to the pinky while doing this exercise. Remember, constant vigilance will help you become a great pianist.

Chapter 7

Chords and Music Theory



What is Music Theory?

Music theory is the study of the language of music. It contains practices and guidelines that can be used to detect different emotions that are expressed through sound. Music theory is also required to translate musical compositions in intelligible terms so that people can read and understand it. It can also be used to communicate your music with other musicians. If you want to increase your creativity and develop a sense of musical awareness, it is necessary to learn musical theory. It may seem a bit challenging in the beginning, but with the time you will be able to understand it well enough to start producing your own music.

Here some major components of music:

Notes

A musical note is a symbol used to mark a musical sound. It denotes the duration and pitch of a specific sound and even the class of the pitch. It is considered to be the smallest element of a musical sound. When a string is plucked or hit, it vibrates and sets the particles present around it in the air into motion. This vibration is captured by the human ear and then processed by the brain. Our brain relates specific sounds to specific vibrations.

Musical notes can be called the building blocks of music. Melodies and musical chords are all built using these blocks.

Various letters are used to identify musical notes. This makes it easy to identify them, read them, and write to them. These marks and identifiers are used all around the world, which makes it easy for musicians everywhere to identify and communicate with each other.

In most popular and western music, there are in all 12 musical notes in an octave. These notes are mixed and integrated into a variety of ways to make music that sounds melodious to the ears. There are seven basic notes with which you can create music. These seven notes are A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. It is possible to modify each of these notes a bit to make them sound slightly different to their normal sounds. To do this, the pitch of the note is either increased or decreased. This can make the note sharp, which is marked by #, or it can make it flat, which is marked by a b. So, it is possible for you to have an A note, an A# note, and an Ab note. These notes are considered to be enharmonic notes. The way they are written solely depends on the key they belong to. The symbols next to the letters are also known as accidentals.

All these twelve notes together make an octave. They also create a chromatic scale. It is crucial to note that some notes may have different names, but they may still produce the same sound. For instance, the sound of A sharp and B flat are the same. This may sound a bit confusing, but ultimately music moves through scales, which is why some notes sound the same.

When a pianist plays the piano, he is presented with the following notes:

A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. These notes are present in the white portion of the piano. If you want to make a note sharp, just press the black key next to the note. If you want to make the note flat, then you need to move in the right direction. Every single movement is known as moving in half steps.

The black keys on the piano have two different functions and names. The first black key is generally a C# or C sharp or a D flat note. So, when you begin, you're playing with the white key representing C, you need to go up one key to the right to make it sharp. This will be the first black key, but if you are on the white key representing D and want to make it flat, you will have to move a step toward the left, which will be the same black key yet

again. It may sound confusing in the beginning, but with practice and time, you will understand it.

Musical Scales

The word scale comes from the Latin word scale, which means ladder. A scale is like a ladder where each rung is known as a staff.

Musical scales are a group of notes that are collected together for a cause. Scales form the tone base through which harmonies and melodies can be created. The main motive to identify scales is that it allows players to understand musical notes in a better way. It will give you a proper base to improvise and experiment with music. Notes based on the same scale almost always sound natural and beautiful if played together.

It does not matter if you cannot read notes before you start to learn scales, but if you are accustomed to notes and know how to read them, it will make the whole process a lot easier. You do not need to learn a lot of chords while learning the scales, but knowing a few will help you immensely. Knowing chords will help you memorize and relate to scales because scales form the base of chords.

In most of the cases, a scale is comprised of seven notes. These notes can be minor or major. Scales are known to be octave repeating. This means that the pattern of notes that they possess is always the same. The position of the notes does not matter on the keyboard i.e.; they can be in the middle of the keyboard or on the right or the left. While a regular full-scale piano has 88 keys, there are only twelve scales on it; the number never changes. These notes get repeated from bass to treble and low to high tones.

Musicians use the enharmonic notes to play the piano. Many times, two flats or sharps are used along with adjunction to the already described note in a piano score. These are known as double flats or double sharps.

Specific Items to Note

Key

A key is a note on which the scales are built. This is generally the first note in any scale.

Tonic

This is the first or the lowest note on a scale.

Mode

This is another way of using the scale. Melody type is added to a scale in this method.

Enharmonic Equivalents

This is just a complex term for similar notes. For instance, a C sharp note is the enharmonic equivalent of a D flat note.

Scale Degrees

Scale degrees define the connection between all the constituent notes present on the scale on a general basis. They are defined using Roman numerals as follows:

Tonic (I)

As the number suggests, this is the first note on the scale. Every scale is constructed on the base of this note. Some people also call it the root.

Supertonic (II)

This is the second scale degree. It is just one step above the root.

Mediant (III)

As the name suggests, this the third scale degree. It is present between the dominant and the tonic portion.

Subdominant (IV)

Subdominant is the fourth degree, which is situated near the dominant. It is below the tonic in the fifth position.

Dominant (V)

This is the fifth scale degree.

Submediant (VI)

This degree is the sixth scale. Many people also call it super-mediante.

Subtonic (VII)

This is the seventh degree. It goes back to the tonic. It is often known as the leading tone.

Natural Scales

There are two types of scales, major and minor. The difference between these two scales is seen in the third, sixth, and seventh degrees. Major scales employ major intervals. Minor scales utilize minor intervals. These scales are also known as natural scales because they are the most basic and primitive form of study of music.

The natural minor and natural major scales are also known as diatonic minor scales and diatonic major scales, respectively. Diatonic means are moving or shifting in tone. When a composer uses this word, he or she wants to denote that the note is supposed to be a part of the natural minor scale or natural major scale. In a diatonic scale, seven pitches are present. Out of these, five are whole steps, and the remaining two are half steps.

Examples of Music Scales

C Major

In this scale, the C note is the root key or the tonic key. The scale of this note is Major. This is why it is known as the C major scale. If a scale exists without any other things, then it ends up as a heptatonic scale. Heptatonic scales mean scales with seven pitches or notes.

Pentatonic F# Minor

In this instance, the F key is the tonic or root key. In this key, a different version of the minor scale is used. This variation is known as the pentatonic minor. This makes it almost similar to the heptatonic or natural minor. Only the pitch is different on this scale.

Musical Intervals

Intervals are a crucial and inseparable part of any piece of music, which is why it is absolutely necessary to learn them. Intervals are the distance between the pitch of two tones. Intervals are denoted with a numerical value, and they are represented by the quality they possess. The number indicates the number of tones present in the diatonic scale. Each interval is unique and has its unique name and sound.

If the distance between two intervals is a lot, the difference between their pitches will be significant as well. Similarly, if the distance between two notes is small, the difference between their pitches will be small as well. If you want to understand intervals in a proper manner, it is necessary to understand three major aspects related to them. These three things are as follows:

- The total length or distance of the interval
- The harmonic or melodic quality of the interval
- The type or quality of an interval

Before moving on to these, let's first check out the different types of intervals. There are two types of intervals, they are known as the half step interval and full step or whole step interval.

Half Step and Whole step intervals serve as the construction blocks of scales and intervals. When a variety of whole steps and half steps are combined with each other, a variety of different scales are formed, which are used frequently in music.

What are the Half Steps?

Half steps are considered to be the smallest interval present in Western music. It is also considered to be a semitone, which is always situated near a low note or a high note. For example, if you move from C to C sharp or if you move from E to F, you are making a half step move.

There are two varieties of half steps, they are:

- Diatonic Half Steps
- Chromatic Half Steps

In this section, let's have a close look at both half steps:

What are Chromatic Half Steps?

Let us begin with Chromatic Half Steps. Chromatic half steps are also known as chromatic semitones. A half step interval exists between two notes that have a similar letter name. For instance, this interval exists between G and G Flat note and C note and C sharp note. Both these steps are chromatic half steps. A chromatic scale is made up of twelve different notes. Each of the notes is a half-step higher than the note that came before it.

What are Diatonic Half Steps?

The diatonic half steps are also known as diatonic semitones. These are present in half step intervals when two notes have different letter names. For example, the distance between the C note and the D flat and the distance between the F sharp and G note contains this interval.

The diatonic half steps and chromatic half steps are both the same notes. They are enharmonic equivalents of each other.

What are Whole Steps?

The word 'semi' stands for half, and so many times, semitones are known as half steps or half a tone. The distance between two semitones is denoted using a whole step or a tone.

The function of Half and Whole Steps

There are many reasons why tones are necessary for music. Two of them are:

- To work out and understand intervals
- To produce musical scales

For example, a major scale contains the following combination of half steps and whole steps in this order:

Whole step, Whole step, Half step, Whole step, Whole step, Whole step, Half step.

Intervals and Distances

As mentioned earlier, intervals are described with the help of numerals. These numbers are dependent on the number of letter names used in the music alphabet present between the notes. For example, the difference between the number of letter names between the notes C and D comes to two. As the distance is two, so the interval will be a second or 2nd. Similarly, the difference between C and E notes includes three-note letters. This means the interval between them is of a third or 3rd.

The distance between the notes C to A is six in all. This means that the interval between them will be of sixth or 6th.

Octave

If a pianist plays notes from C to C, then the note forms an eight-letter note. The interval here will be of an 8th or eight. This interval is very common and is known as an octave. Some people also call it 8ve. As this interval is eight notes higher, it is known as interval octave.

A Unison Interval

It is possible to have intervals on different and similar notes. This is quite similar to having two different instruments play the same notes denoted on a piece of paper. This form of the interval is also known as Unison. While writing the harmonic unison, the notes are written near each other.

The Types of Music Interval Quality

In all, there are five basic types of quality of intervals. Here is a list of all these intervals:

- Augmented intervals
- Perfect Intervals
- Minor intervals
- Major intervals
- Diminished intervals

The learner must understand that every note in a major scale is either a major interval or a perfect interval. This includes the root or the tonic note as well.

Harmony

Harmony can be defined as the sound of two or more notes heard simultaneously. This may include a few notes that are played one after another. If the notes played remind a person of a chord that he or she is familiar with, his ear and brain would produce simultaneity on its own. This is quite similar to the phenomenon in which the eyes are able to see the motion in a motion picture or in animation. Harmony is one of the most important and basic elements of music, but it is not as important as melody or rhythm.

Textures of Musical Harmony

Implied Harmony

Implied harmony stands for a melody that is complete on its own and does not require notes that sound similar. It is often known as monophony. The melody of this kind of harmony is created in such a way that it itself suggests that harmony should be present to accompany it. For example, if someone sings a melody only, implied harmony would force you to hear the chords that accompany the piece even if the chords are not present.

In some cases, when certain melodies are played, they do not imply any melody. In fact, they are not meant to be played with harmony at all.

Drones

One of the easiest ways to add harmony to a melody is by using drones. A drone is a note that never (or very rarely) changes. They are generally used in Indian Classical music, bagpipes music, and various other forms of music that use instruments.

Parallel Harmony

In parallel harmony, two different lines in the same arrangement move simultaneously in the same direction. The direction can be upward or downward, which happens when the lines follow the melody.

Homophony

This is a texture of music that features only one line. This line is the melody.

Polyphony

This is also known as a counterpoint. It is generally used to denote music where more than one melodic line is present at the same time. In this, each melodic line is almost similar and equal to the next line.

Types of Musical Harmony

Harmony is present in a variety of forms in music. Here is a list of some of the most common forms of harmony present in the music.

Diatonic Harmony

This is the point where chords and notes both go back to the master scale. For example, if you play the key A flat major, then all the chords and notes that you play will be taken from the seven notes that are present in the A flat major scale.

If you don't know the key that you are playing in, it is possible to find the signature. This is a list of all the flats and sharps present in each of the systems.

Non-Diatonic Harmony

This includes all notes that are not present in the same master scale. It is mostly used in jazz but can be found in other music styles and forms too.

Atonal Harmony

This harmony does not have a tonal center. It is not produced on a minor or a major scale. It does not have a scale that has an identifiable root.

Each kind of music that has a pitch has harmony. It does not matter which way or manner the harmony manifests. So, it does not matter whether it is a single instrument or a huge orchestra.

Chords

Most of the harmony is based on the chords present in Western music. Chords can be defined as a collection of notes built on minor and or major triads. In traditional chords, the minimum number of notes present in a chord is generally three. But it is not a hard and fast rule; there can be more notes as well. The notes of a chord can be played individually with some overlap, or it can be played simultaneously as well. This is known as a block chord. It is also possible to play the chords separately one after another in quick succession. This is a form of the chord as well.

Chord Progression

If a series of chords are played one after another, they are known as a chord progression. Some musicians tend to use specific chord progression, while others change it from time to time.

The Rules of Chord Progression

In all, there are four basic rules that musicians need to follow while developing a chord progression. They are as follows:

- Choose a key that you want to write in. If this is your first attempt, it is recommended to go with easy options such as A minor, C major, E minor, or G major.
- Identify the primary chords immediately and construct the progressions over these. Once this is done, you can move on to use the secondary chords to make your chord progression better.
- Do note that you need to start and finish your chord with the root or the tonic chord.
- You can also use the circle or common progressions.

Chord Inversions

Chord inversions take place when the constituent notes of a specific chord are mixed up and changed in any specific manner. In this process, the reshuffling generally keeps the chord the same, but it does not remain in the root position anymore. Inversions can help you make chord progressions sound rich and attractive.

Chord inversions are normally made of three notes, i.e., a triad. The base note of a chord inversion is the tonic note. The top note of the chord inversion is the fifth note, while the middle note is known as the third note.

If you decide to use a triad note with the help of the notes given above, then you will be playing the notes in the root position.

But again, it is quite common to play a triad in a circle or common progression.

The Three Primary Colors of Chords

The chords I, IV, and V, are known as the tonic, subdominant, and dominant. These chords are considered to be the base of harmony in most Western music genres. They form the spine of most of the songs and music we know and appreciate as an audience.

The Tonic (Or Root) Chord

The root chord or the tonic chord is the 'I chord,' also considered to be the home chord. It is generally the beginning point of a musical piece. In many cases, it is the endpoint as well. The feelings associated with the home key are equilibrium and stability.

The Subdominant Chord

This key is the IV chord. It allows you to move onto the next most crucial part of the harmony. Here the good things begin. Once you reach the subdominant key, you can either move forward or go back to the home key once again.

The Dominant Chord

The dominant chord works like a pivot. This chord can help you go back to the root or the tonic chord. This can happen at the end of the piece, or it can even be used to begin a new sequence.

Secondary Chords

After primary chords, the most important chords are secondary chords. They are used to provide support to the primary chords. They can also provide a multitude of options to create musical harmony and to make things more interesting. There are two kinds of primary chords viz. II chord and VI chord. These are also known as the supertonic chords and the submediant chords, respectively. Both these chords are minor chords. Let's take a brief look at both.

The II or Supertonic Chord

This chord can be used to create a way for the chord considered to be dominant or superior, if it is used properly, right before the dominant chord. As it is a minor chord, it is possible to move into a major and dominant chord, and the overall effect created with this will be a positive one. If a seventh tone is added to this, the effect gets magnified.

The VI or Submediant Chord

The submediant chord is used as an option or alternate to the subdominant chord. It is often present right before the subdominant chord. It is a minor chord that creates a way for a more potent major chord.

The power and potency of the second chord are dependent on the relationship this chord has with the tonic key or the root key.

The Circle of Fifth

Some people believe that it is absolutely necessary for the musician to stay in the same key throughout his or her performance. No such hard and fast rule exists. It is possible to change the root key of the song whenever you feel like it; this method is known as transposing. Many times, it is used with the help of the pivot chord, as mentioned above. It changes the root chord and allows the music to move forward. The key that gets transposed becomes the next in the "Circle of Fifths." It can either be in the clockwise or anti-clockwise direction.

Harmonic Analysis

Functional Harmony

Harmony is much more than a variety of notes played simultaneously just to give some gravitas and texture to a composition. Functional harmony is the harmony in which each chord does a specific thing while being in the key.

Harmonic Rhythm

The form in which the chords change is known as harmonic rhythm. If the chords of a musical piece do not change or change less, then the song is said to have a slow harmonic rhythm. When the chords in a particular piece change quickly, then the musical piece is said to have a fast harmonic rhythm.

This factor is not related to rhythms and tempos.

Cadence

When the music reaches a permanent or temporary stopping point, it is known as a cadence. It is closely associated with harmony in Western music. For example, the majority of the audience can understand and feel the strong and powerful end of a composition when it features a dominant chord, which is then followed by a root chord.

Diatonic

The diatonic harmony generally prefers to stay in a specific minor or major key.

Chromatic

This includes a variety of chords and notes that are not present in the key. Chromatic generally contains many accidentals.

Dissonance

An interval, a note, or a chord that does not fit into regular triadic harmony is known as dissonance. It may sound jarring, strange, unpleasant, and harrowing and often used to surprise the audience.

Accompaniment

Accompaniment refers to the different parts of music that are not melodic. This includes harmonies, bassline, rhythmic parts, and chords.

Melodic Line

The melodic line is just another phrase for all the varieties of notes that come together to form a melody.

Bassline

The lowest notes that can be played or sung are known as a bass line; it is responsible for the harmonics. The bassline is an important part of the musical piece as it is responsible for harmony and tuning. Many times, the bass line can outline and delineate the progression of the chords. This is why it is considered to be the most present and visible line of

accompaniment. If used properly, this line can work wonders for your pieces.

Inner Parts or Inner Voices

This is related to the accompaniment part. It fills the gap between the bass line and the melody. This means that it fills the lowest and highest part of the music.

Descant

The melody is rarely the highest line in any song. But many times, the attention gets drawn to these high notes, which are higher than the melody. These notes are known as a descant.

Musical Rhythm

Musical rhythm is one of the most important and basic elements of music. It is the positioning of sounds in time and is denoted using one or more of its components. These include meter, accent, tempo, etc. It is never shown as a separate element. Rhythm is an important element present in all kinds of music. Rhythm can survive without a melody, but a melody cannot exist without rhythm.

Rhythm is determined by the types of notes or beats present in each measure or bar. It is also determined by the time signature. A bar or measure means a single phrase of music produced using many different beats or notes. Types of notes are used to refer to the beats used or the length of the notes. There are many different types of notes, and they are the same on all instruments. Here is a list of the notes.

- Whole Notes (1)
- Half Notes (1/2)
- Quarter Notes (1/4)
- Eighth Notes (1/8)
- Sixteenth Notes (1/16)

In extreme and rare cases, $1/32$ and $1/64$ notes exist as well. They are only used in advanced pieces of music, which are extremely difficult. Only an experienced musician can handle them.

Beats

The beat is the unit of division in musical time. Our heartbeats are crucial for our lives and bodies; they need to be steady else our health suffers. Similarly, a musician uses beats as the periodic succession to make the music 'healthy.' The beats in music need to be 'steady' as well.

Tempo

This is the pace of any fundamental beat. It is the basic structure that makes a musical piece moving forward. Tempos are highly varied; they vary as per the need of the song, and the likings of the performer. They also vary according to the size of the hall, the instruments being used, the quality of the instruments, the reverberation of the hall, and the size of the ensemble. This is why the tempo mentioned by the composer is not followed quite often. If the musician changes the tempo within limits mentioned above, the rhythm stays constant. The tempo of the song is denoted using BPM or beats per minute.

Rhythm Section

The rhythm section is the name given to all the instruments that are used to produce background chords and rhythm. These generally include percussion and bass. They also include a keyboard, a piano, etc. This section never includes vocalists, wind instruments, and bowed strings (exceptions exist.)

Music Melody

The most identifiable and easily recognizable part of a musical piece is the melody. It can be quite varied. For instance, it can be a loud and quick saxophone run, a soulful and solemn vocal passage, or a dashing guitar riff. Melodies can be infinitely simple and drastically complex. In simple words,

melodies are just a collection of various musical tones that come together to form a single piece.

Many of the musical compositions contain different melodies that work simultaneously or in conjunction. When a composer combines a multitude of melodies together, he or she creates a polyphone. If a melody contains a number of different elements, then it is known as heterophony. The combination of chords and melody together is known as homophony.

The melodic line consists of a contour, a scale, and a range.

The contour of melody is used to refer to the line that rises, moves, arches, undulates, and falls in a characteristic way.

The range of melody is used to define the space used by the melody in the spectrum of pitches audible to the human ear.

You can separate the scale of melody from the melody by ordering the tones in the order of their pitch.

Melody is a combination of two major components. They are as follows:

Pitch

Pitch is the audio vibration generated by playing an instrument. The pitches are generally arranged in the form of a series of notes. They have names such as D sharp five or C four, etc.

Duration

This is the length of time required for each pitch to sound. These are divided into half notes, whole notes, quarter-note triplets, etc.

Types of Melodies

In this section, let's have a look at some of the commonly seen types of melodies.

Instrumental Melodies

These melodies are generated with the help of pitched instruments. These include solos, riffs, and musical material that works well and responds to the vocal parts in a musical piece.

Vocal Melodies

Vocal parts of a musical piece are most closely connected to humans because people sing these parts.

How is Melody Used in Music?

There are many different ways in which melody can be used in music. For example, each and every musical instrument uses some form of melody. For example, solo singers use melody to sing. They generally sing the main theme of a piece.

The chorus singers or vocalists are supposed to sing melodies in a group. Most of the choruses use similar notes together.

Along with this, there are other instruments that use melodies. Many people believe that percussion instruments do not use melodies, but that is not true. Percussion instruments use melodies as well, except their melodies are not focused on the pitch, rather they are focused on rhythmic durations.

Melodic Resources

Theme

A melody that is not complete and is created for a set of variations is known as a theme. It is often a clause or a compounded phrase. Fugue subject is a theme, and the expositions and episodes of a sonata are themes too.

Figures or Motives

Small parts or fragments of themes are known as motives or figures. Figures turn into melodies when they are collected and combined together to form a sonata.

Graces or Ornaments

There are many different types of ornaments or graces; these include slides, tremolo, appoggiaturas, grace notes, and minor changes in standard pitch. These are used as ornaments to make a melody more beautiful with the help of embellishment.

Chapter 8

Practice



Having mere knowledge about the piano and the various terms related to it will not help you play the piano. It is crucial to study and practice the knowledge from time to time if you want to become an expert piano player. Only with ample practice can you achieve success.

In this chapter, we will learn about some strategies that can help you practice without getting bored or tired.

Piano Chords and Melodies

Music cannot survive without melodies and chords. They are two extremely important elements of any musical piece. Musical pieces played on multiple instruments generally have a melody line played using a series of chord progressions.

Melodies and chords are mixed together in a piece of music where one instrument generally plays the melody while the other one plays the chords. The piano is a versatile and remarkable instrument because it allows musicians to play both the parts i.e., chord and melody simultaneously. The pianist just needs to have the right knowledge of chords and melodies and should have ample practice to play the chords and melodies. If he or she does not possess the knowledge and has not practiced enough, they will not be able to play the melody and chord together in a harmonious manner.

Chords are combined together to form sound pitches; the sound pitch uses at least three different pitches. A series of chords is responsible for the chord progression. When a chord is made up of various half steps and complete steps, basic chords incorporate three notes only, and these notes are known as a triad. Chords are generally based around the notes, and they begin at the root or the central note.

A melody can be defined as a line of pitch that can be played with one or more instruments. A melody is normally high in pitch, so to make music, chords and melodies are essential and should be played together. The piano allows you to play the chord and melody simultaneously on one instrument. Pianists generally play the chords with their left hand and the melody with their right hand. It is possible to create a variety of melodies by changing and altering things and combining them with different chords.

Chord tones are created in such a way that they are made for the same chord progressions. You need to detect the chord tones that sound good in the chord progression if you want to make a melody sound good. Melody and chords are connected together, so it is always recommended to base the melodies on the piano chords.

Expert pianists can also design melodies that are not based on chord tones and have step movements instead. These melodies need to have a fluid transition base and need to be different from the chords that are being played. One significant difference between chord progression and melody is that melody is based on a single line while chord progression is based on many lines of pitches.

If a pianist wants to experiment with chords and melodies, he or she needs to have a lot of experience and knowledge of piano theory because certain chords can clash with certain melodies.

How to Memorize

As said above, it is absolutely crucial to learn to memorize. It is one of the major tools that can help you become a master of playing the piano. Here are some easy methods that can help you memorize chords.

Right from the first day of your practice, try to memorize whatever you learn and play. The process of internalizing needs to begin on the first day itself. Some people tend to begin the memorizing process after finishing the whole piece. But this is a time-consuming process and may cause a problem

in the internalizing process as well. If you start the process right from the first day, it will give you a head start. It will also help you form a habit of learning and make the whole process easy.

It is recommended to use the right finger technique whenever you can. This process needs to be constant and consistent. There is a good chance that you may pick up wrong techniques in the beginning, but with practice, you will learn all the right ones. If you want to learn a piece quickly, you need to do it by incorporating the right finger techniques. Instead of using different finger techniques every time, use the correct techniques. This will help you stay consistent and will make the process easier at the end of the day.

Internalize and memorize all the dynamics, articulations, and all other markings on the page. Let things happen simultaneously. If you think that you will pick up other things once you master the notes, then you are wrong. You may find learning at the same time a bit difficult or boring, but it is far more rewarding than doing it later.

Once in a while, try playing the piece you are learning without the sheets in front of you. Avoid relying on the sheets all the time. Sheets are supposed to help you, but if you get too used to them, you will start to lose your creativity. Putting the sheets away from time to time will also help you to memorize the pieces in a far better way.

Slow but steady wins the race. When you start, try to take things slowly. If you try to memorize a song with a fast tempo, you may find it difficult to do. Taking things slowly will help you develop your tactile, visual, and intellectual memory. It is also far more rewarding than starting with faster pieces and will allow you to chart your progress properly.

Instead of memorizing both the hands together, do them separately. Many times, people tend to concentrate on their main hand only and forget the other one. For instance, if your dominant hand is right, you may neglect the left. As piano requires coordination and strength of both the hands, you

need to concentrate on both properly. Don't think that simply practicing regularly will make your hands stronger; you will have to pay extra attention to your non-dominant hand. You will need to exercise your fingers and wrists and switch between your dominant and non-dominant hand frequently.

Analyzing music is a great way to learn its intricacies and to memorize it. It is recommended to use different methods to analyze music. Start by analyzing the form and then move to label the sections present in a score. This will help you create a mental map in your head. You should also do a harmonic analysis from time to time.

How to Play a Song by Ear

Playing by ear is a crucial skill for all types of musicians. This is not an innate talent (although some people are indeed born with it.) Anyone can learn how to play music by ear. To do so, you need to gain certain skills and understand techniques, both of which are possible to do with dedication, practice, and time. Some people are born with the innate talent to play songs by ear, but if you have not been gifted with this talent, you can still learn it with hard work. To do this, you need to listen to music often and understand the keys and chords used. Feel the melody and rhythm, and you may be able to play it by ear once you get a hold on how you feel the music. If you are passionate and dedicated, you will surely learn how to play by ear.

Here are some skills that can prove helpful for you:

- If you have a strong absolute pitch, you will be able to hear the key of the music with ease.
- If you possess ample interval skills, you will be able to pinpoint notes.
- If you have chord ear training, you will be able to identify progressions efficiently.

- You will be able to identify any syncopation or strangeness if you do rhythm ear training.

How Do You Play the Piano by Ear?

If you want to play the piano by ear, you need to learn to pick and identify pieces that you have heard or know from a piece without reading the sheet music for it. This allows you to experiment, and you will be able to improvise and create your own music as well. This is why playing by ear is a highly recommended technique for all musicians.

As said above, some people are naturally blessed with this talent, but if you do not have this ability naturally, just stay dedicated and work hard. With practice, you will soon be able to play the piano by ear like a pro.

Listening to Music

This is the easiest first step ever. To learn how to play music by ear, you need to listen to a lot of music and then analyze it. For instance, pick up a very simple song and listen to it multiple times. It is recommended to pick up the simplest song you can think of; it can also be a nursery rhyme. Once you pick a song, listen to it multiple times. Then slowly follow the steps below.

1. Listen to the song multiple times. Once you have finished listening, listen to it again, don't stop until at least you identify the melody and chords.
2. Once you become well accustomed to the song, you can start the next step. Press each key of the piano one by one until you find the first note of the song that you heard.
3. Repeat step number 2 for the next few notes. You can play the song in the background to make things easier for you. You can also hum the song or can listen to the parts of the recordings from time to time.

4. Identify the melody and note until you finish the whole song. Do not focus on the background accompaniment; ignore it. For now, you only need to focus on the main melody.
5. Don't feel frustrated if you make any mistakes. You are learning a new skill, and mistakes are bound to happen. In fact, make as many mistakes as you can. Rectifying mistakes is the best way to learn a new skill. Fiddle around until you find the correct notes.

Once you discover the whole melody, play it multiple times so that you learn it properly. You can play it with both hands or with one hand. Just remember to do ample practice. Once you are fairly comfortable with this song, move on to the next one. Soon you will be able to dissect a song in your mind, with all the steps mentioned above. The process will become quick and efficient if you practice properly.

Easy Songs to Play by Ear

There are many simple songs and melodies that are recommended for beginners. Here is a list of few songs that will get you started:

Row, Row, Row, Your Boat

Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star

Silent Night

A Thousand Miles

When the Saints Go

Chapter 9

Tips and Tricks

In this section, we will look at some simple tips and tricks that will help you get started.

Understand How Music Works

Many people believe that you do not need to understand the intricacies of music if you want to play it by ear. This is absolutely not true; rather, it is perpetuated to make playing by ear sound like an immature practice.

A lot of people can play beautiful music without having to study it or knowing the theory behind it. However, that is not the case with everyone. If you want to become a successful musician, it is necessary to learn and understand music properly. Playing by ear will take you only so far. After that, you will have to learn music, especially if you plan to take it up professionally. Professionals are supposed to know their theory and terms well.

It is necessary to understand how scales are formed and how they form chords and eventual progressions. This is perhaps the most important thing about music that all music lovers need to learn. It is a chain where scales create chords; chords lead to the formation of progressions and progressions create the songs that you and I love to listen to. If you can understand the basics of music and can answer the 'how' and the 'why' questions, you will become an excellent musician, even a professional, for that matter.

Master the Patterns

Many people think that to become an excellent and professional musician; you need to memorize songs. It is no wonder that professional musicians often get asked, 'How do you memorize so many different songs?' The

simplest answer to this question is that they do not memorize the songs. Professional and expert musicians learn and understand the patterns instead.

Most songs follow almost the same pattern. So, while regular and amateur musicians will learn dozens of different songs, a professional will understand the pattern behind these songs. This means that he or she will be able to play dozens of songs without memorizing them thanks to the patterns. Some of the songs that follow the same pattern may be in different keys (out of the 12 available), but once you understand the patterns and scales properly, you will be able to play all songs in all the twelve keys efficiently.

The songs may have different melodies, but most of them will be based on basic patterns and chords. This way, you will be able to play multiple songs without any problem.

Learn to Listen

Not only geniuses can play by ear, but even beginners can also do so if they master the technique. To master the technique, you need to start listening. While listening to music pieces and songs, check whether the tones are going down or up. Also, check whether the chord is a minor or major and whether it sounds sad, happy, solemn, or pleasant. It may even be diminished and sound spooky and scary. It could also be a dominant chord, which sounds very jazzy and soulful.

Music has a lot of feelings, and each chord has a feeling associated with it. The people who can play chords without much issue understand this. This is a secret that you need to unlock to become an excellent piano player.

Recognize Intervals

The distances between notes are intervals. There are large intervals and small intervals in music. For instance, fifths, sixths, and sevenths are considered to be large intervals while unison, seconds, and thirds are considered to be small intervals. These intervals are important because they

can help you identify and name the chords being played. So, for instance, when you say that a musician is playing a 'major chord,' you are actually talking about the interval that provides the chord with its sound and sound quality. The same is the case with the rest of the chords, including minor chords as well.

There are two kinds of intervals:

- Harmonic
- Melodic

The distance between notes that are played simultaneously is the harmonic interval, also known as chords.

The interval between a single note in a sequence is called a melodic interval, also known as melodies.

A song is made up of both harmonies i.e., chords and melody. If you want to learn how to play music by ears, you need to understand and analyze both these elements. If you do this successfully, you will be able to identify the intervals and link them. By doing this, you will identify the progressions and chords quickly and can play immediately.

Practice and Get Some Real-World Experience

If you want to become a successful musician, you need to practice a lot. There is no alternative to hard work and practice. You can study a lot and gain knowledge about the piano and music in general, but if you do not practice, you will remain an amateur or a beginner. You need to put everything you learn into action. This may sound a bit hackneyed, but it is the ultimate truth.

Practice will make you perfect, but only correct and perfect practice will make you perfect. If you practice the wrong stuff and techniques, your base itself will be weak, and you will develop and learn the wrong playing techniques, which in the long run, will prove to be counterproductive.

There are two things that people should follow in life - do things in the right manner, and do the right things. While these two may sound similar, there is a huge difference between them. You can do the wrong things in the right way as well. So, instead of focusing on doing things the right way, just do the right things. The sooner you learn this, the better you will become.

How to Play by Reading

Learning how to read sheet music unlocks new horizons for any musician. If you become proficient at reading sheet music, you can play with more efficiency and panache. Learning piano and learning how to read sheet music should happen simultaneously. If you want to play any piece of music, you need to memorize the notes first. Once you learn the sheet music, you will be able to improve your playing and piano skills immensely.

Here a few things that can help you become proficient in reading sheet music:

Any white space present in the sheet is labeled FACE. For treble and clef, the categorization is EGBDF. The treble clef marking denotes that these notes need to be played with the right hand. You need to become familiar with all the letter names and the names of the lines and the spaces when you start. Label the white blanks with FACE right from the bottom of the page and slowly go up and label the lines starting from the bottom line. Do this until you reach the top line. Label the top line as EGBDF.

Write down the letter names of the notes. Always write the letter names right below the music notes on the right hand in the treble clef. This is required only in the beginning when you are a novice, with the time you can forgo this practice.

Memorize all the letter names. Once you are finished with them, you can move on to the bass clef. Once you memorize all the letter names present for the right hand, move on to the notes of the left hand i.e., the bass clef.

Name the spaces GBDF A and ACEGB. The spaces at the bottom of the page are supposed to be ACEGB, and the lines from the bottom to the top are GBDF A.

Label each finger with numbers 1 to 5. Label both the hands with these numbers. Write the numbers near the letter names.

Advanced Songs

Once you start to play and practice the piano, you will surely want to proceed to play your favorite songs and musical pieces. It doesn't matter what the song is; it could be a popular mainstream song or a classic. Many times, these pieces are advanced, and a beginner may struggle a bit while playing them. Therefore it is important to practice and have a strong base. But once you master the basics and practice enough, with the time you will be able to play difficult and advanced pieces with the same ease.

Here are some tips that can help you play advanced music with ease.

Motivation

Choose a song that motivates you. Even if it is not a motivational song, find motivation in it. Motivation acts like fuel to your efforts. Once you are motivated enough, you can use the motivation and brush your fundamentals. Use these fundamentals and play. Choose a song and start playing immediately.

Instead of choosing something easy, go for something difficult, but it has to be something you like. You need to have the will to learn the piece, and that will only come if you truly enjoy the piece.

Do not choose an extremely difficult piece, or you may give up if you don't get it right after trying a few times. First, listen to the song or piece that you have chosen multiple times. You can also watch YouTube videos and check out how experts play that song.

Deconstruction

When you choose a song or piece of music to play, analyze it, and break it down immediately. Breaking down a piece of music means deconstructing it. The brain can get overwhelmed if you throw an advanced piece of music at it, especially if you are not used to advanced music.

To make things easy for your brain and yourself, deconstruct and break down the music passage into multiple pieces of 5-15 seconds. This way, you will be able to focus and learn in a better way. Never bite off more than you can chew. Take things slow and one step at a time.

Once you are comfortable enough with a few sections, link them and play them together. Play it several times until you get it right. Once you are satisfied, repeat it with the next piece. Soon you will be comfortable and efficient enough to play the whole piece with ease.



Both Hands

Be sure to use both hands while practicing. You need to be able to play different things simultaneously with both hands. This is crucial because advanced pieces often call for advanced techniques. If you are not comfortable with your hands, you will find it impossible to play advanced songs and music.

Practice: Practice as much as you can. Practice will help you get results. It will also help you maintain the essence of learning. If you practice

dedicatedly and frequently, you will be able to learn a lot of new pieces in a significantly short time. Even practicing the scales with both hands helps you to synchronize the movement of your fingers.

Chapter 10

Melody and Harmony Tips



To understand harmony and melody, you need to understand that both factors are the building blocks of any musical piece.

What are the components of a great tune? Or rather, what makes a musical piece great? Why do we like certain songs a lot while we like others, not as much? Why can we listen to certain songs on repeat many times while we can barely tolerate others once?

There is no simple or short answer. All the above questions are complex and involve a lot of fields such as music, emotions, psychology, social conditioning, technology, etc. If these questions were so easy to answer, all composers would create pieces that would always be popular and played on a loop. However, it is impossible because music is not a straightforward science. It is an art, and like all arts, it is organic, and it grows and develops. This does not mean that it cannot be studied and 'hacked' for the lack of better terms. It is possible to make your life and music production easy by spending time to learn as much as possible about harmony, melody, and rhythm. Having knowledge about these three can surely help you understand and create music in a much better way and show you results that are unmatched.

Chords and melody are the building blocks of any musical piece or track. It is recommended to study these as closely as possible. Study the melodies and chords present in the tracks that you love and the ones you don't like. Compare them and try to see what might be the reasons behind you liking one song and disliking the other. By analyzing this result, you will be able to understand how crucial chords and melodies are for music and how they can alter and manipulate the feelings, moods, and emotions of the listener.

In this section, we will look at some tips that will help you understand melodies and harmony in a better way, which will allow you to write beautiful and everlasting tunes.

Understand the Fundamentals

You need to first understand the fundamentals carefully if you want to know what they entail. To begin with, let's just start with a melody. Melody can be referred to as the tune of a track. Harmony is much more complex than a melody. In simpler terms, it can be defined as the notes that support a melody and make sense of it. So, for instance, let's assume that we have a melody that goes from C to D then D to E and finally E to F. The first note in this melody is C. It has many different chords right from C major, A major, F major, and A flat major. This means that if a player plays any one of the above chords under the 'C' melody, they will sound pleasing and natural.

This was easy, but things become difficult in the next stage. It is not mandatory to use only the above mentioned four chords under a 'C' melody. You can use any other chords as well. But the chords mentioned above will sound more natural as compared to any other chords. The connection between the 'C' melody notes and the above mentioned four chords are stronger than other chords.

If you choose any of the above chords and then choose a melody note of 'D,' you will have to change the harmony as well. You will have to find a chord that has a strong bond with it. It is not necessary to study a rulebook or a guidebook to do so; you can also use your ears.

Use Chord Inversions

The notes of C major include E, C, and G. Most of the time, 'C' will be the basis of this chord. This 'C' is obviously the root of the chord 'C major.' But it is also possible to use the other two as the supporting bass notes individually. If you do this, they become more fixed and 'rooted.' This can create a really interesting effect. This practice is known as playing inverted

chords. Inverted chords are fun because they are often used to make the chord more rugged and 'less finished.' It is a brilliant musical device that should be used properly.

Bone-up on Your Theory

The tips given in this section promote using your ears to choose your notes properly while identifying harmonies and melodies, it is recommended to study music theory as well. Learning musical theory can bring in some dramatic changes to your understanding of music. Many people, especially beginners, tend to ignore musical theory because they are either scared of the theory or of the hard work. Formal or semiformal training in music can work wonders. It will help you understand music in a better manner. By understanding music properly, you can appreciate and create music in a better way. It can help your creative juices flow freely. Understanding music and musical theory can help you become more 'original.'

Contrary Motion

If you find thinking about harmonic and melodic combination a bit difficult, you need to study more. In fact, most of the combinations involving these two do not work in sync; rather, they have a contrary motion. This means when your melody starts to go up, let the bass note of the chord progression go down gently. Similarly, when the melody line starts to go down, bring up the bass notes and the chords associated with the bass notes.

While this is true in most cases, there are some exceptions as well. Not all melodies and chords work in the same direction (or in this case, the opposite direction.)

Hold the Bass

It is not necessary to change the bass note each and every time you make a chord change. Many times, holding the bass can create a lot of interesting effects. It is known as 'pedal.' It can help you build up tension and suspension using a chord progression.

Choose Your Instruments Properly

The relationship between instruments and your melody notes is important. For instance, if you write a longer piece, the melody line may playback on many different orchestral sections. The qualities of these instruments will be different according to the context of the different scenes. Remember to partner with your scenes, instruments, and melodies carefully.

Build Anticipation

You can build anticipation and suspense in the track by stretching the root chord as much as possible. Many musicians feel tempted to drop the root chord and then begin the chorus immediately. However, postponing the chord for as long as possible can help to build a kind of anticipation that the audience loves and appreciates.

Break the Rules of Harmony

Each and every key that you write has a certain group of chords that are supposed to sound 'right' with it. These chords are the expected chords, and they sound right with the keys. But it is recommended to break this rule and back away from this expectation from time to time. This will help you create a more interesting and memorable tune.

Chapter 11

Common Mistakes

The piano is a complex instrument. It is forgiving, but it still takes a lot of time, practice, and dedication if you want to learn it properly and become an expert. There is a lot to learn about the piano as well as playing it. This also means that there is a lot of room to make mistakes. However, such mistakes while learning a new thing are common. In fact, they are often required because you learn from your mistakes. The knowledge learned by correcting your mistakes stays with you forever. Commit a lot of mistakes in the beginning, but do not forget to rectify them.

Here is a small list of mistakes that are most commonly seen in the initial stages of playing the piano. Read these carefully and avoid them in the future.

Not Paying Attention to Correct Fingering

One of the most frequently seen mistakes that most beginners tend to make is not paying proper attention to fingering or not considering it important enough. Incorrect finger technique can make your piano playing experience uncomfortable and tiring. While learning these techniques may seem time-consuming and boring in the beginning, they can prove to be an asset in the long term. They make a huge difference in the later stages of piano playing when things get difficult. If you do not adopt a proper fingering technique, you may not be able to play complex musical pieces with ease.

Assuming that the Clefs Refer to Hands

A Clef does not refer to hands. On each page of a sheet music paper, there are two lines. One line denotes the left hand, and the other denotes the right hand. These lines determine what parts are to be played with which hand, but clefs denote the octaves, which the player is supposed to play. It does not denote the hand that he or she should use.

Not Distinguishing Between Notes and Keys

It is crucial to remember that keys and notes are different. Many beginners make this rookie mistake due to confusion. The notes are present on the pages of the sheet music, whereas the key is present on the keyboard of the piano. Keys are constant, but notes can be written in a variety of ways and methods.

Sticking to C Major

Beginners often start to learn and play with C major. It is the easiest key to play songs, as you don't need to worry about sharps and flats. However, not all songs are supposed to be in the C key. It is recommended to learn other keys and play songs meant for other keys using their appropriate keys. If you continue to stick to C major, you will never become a professional.

Assuming Sharps and Flats are Black Keys

It is true to a certain extent, but there are a few keys that are an exception to this rule. The F flat and B sharp keys are white keys. So, do not think that all black keys are flat and sharp.

Neglecting Scales

Many beginners find scales boring and pointless, especially in the beginning. However, learning them is extremely important if you want to learn how to play the piano properly. Anyone who wants to play the piano like an expert needs to learn the scales and become proficient in them. Practicing the scales will not only help you to read and play music; it will increase your dexterity and flexibility.

Playing Everything Too Fast

This is another mistake made by a rookie. If you believe that playing fast means playing well, then you are mistaken. Playing fast may require certain skills, but it is not always suitable for songs. A skilled musician understands how, when, and what to play. He knows that not all pieces should be played fast. Certain pieces may sound garnish if you play them too swiftly. The

audience will feel let down if you ruin their favorite pieces by playing them at the wrong speed. It is recommended to use a metronome to get your tempo right and play the musical pieces at the right speed. Maintaining precision is a must.

Playing with Flat Fingers

Many students often play with flat fingers. They keep their fingers flat, and only their first knuckle collapsed. Playing with flat fingers may seem to be comfortable in the beginning, but in the long run, it will ruin your technique and cause a lot of unnecessary tension on your fingers. Always remember to use curved fingers to play the piano. This will help you avoid unnecessary stress and fatigue.

Sitting Too Close to the Piano

Where and how you sit while playing the piano is important because the wrong posture and wrong position can make you tired quickly. If you sit too close to the piano, you will not be able to place your arms in a comfortable and suitable position. It will limit your movements and create tension in your wrists. To avoid this, find a comfortable stool and try different positions until you feel perfectly comfortable.

Not Using Arm Weight

Good piano players always use the weight of their arms and torso while playing the instrument. This helps them to prevent unnecessary stress. Fingers are responsible for the keys, but if you play only using your fingers, you will not be able to generate the right 'quality' of tone. You need to learn how to channel your body and arm weight through your arms so that you can generate a bigger range of tones and sounds. It will also help you avoid stress in your fingers.

These mistakes discussed in this section are easy to make as beginners, but if you don't correct yourself, in time, you will form habits, which will make your playing experience difficult and stressful.

Chapter 12

Piano Maintenance



Pianos are costly instruments and a major investment. Therefore, it is necessary to take proper care of the instrument. This will help you keep the instrument well maintained for a long time. Regular maintenance will make the instrument durable and long-lasting. It also ensures greater performance and sound quality.

In this chapter, you will find a variety of tips, techniques, and methods that will help you maintain your piano properly and take good care of it.

Protection from Humidity

The piano is an intricate instrument that has many different parts. To ensure good function, it is necessary to take proper care of the instrument. One of the most important things about a piano, other than knowing to play it, is where to place it. The position and placement of your piano is crucial because the atmosphere around the piano will determine the lifespan, the quality, and the sound of the piano.

Always put the piano in an ambient room. The temperature should neither be too cold nor too hot because pianos are susceptible to humidity. They

need to be placed in a room that has the perfect (or near-perfect) levels of humidity.

Humidity is essential for pianos because they are mostly made of wood. Wood is excellent for producing sound as compared to any other material. Along with wood, the piano also has other materials such as cloth and felt. Like wood, these materials are susceptible to humidity as well. Replacing these materials is almost impossible as they produce the richest and natural sound. This is why even a slight change in the humidity can have a huge reduction in the quality of the sound produced by the instrument.

For instance, if the air becomes too damp, the wood of the piano will start to expand, similarly, if it becomes too dry, it will compress. Both expansion and contraction are bad for the sound quality produced by the piano. They are also bad for the lifespan of the piano; therefore, it is necessary to maintain proper humidity levels in and around the piano. This can be done by placing the piano properly in the perfect place. The area needs to be properly ventilated, and the relative humidity of the place should not be below 40 and above 45 percent.

As it has been said earlier, humidity can affect your instrument in different ways and can lead to negative repercussions. Here is a list of some of the many problems that may plague your instrument due to excessive humidity.

- The felt becomes too hard.
- The piano keys expand.
- The action parts swell and produce sluggish and sticky notes.
- The tuning pins of the piano become loose.
- The internal and external metallic parts of the piano may rust. This includes crucial strings.
- Tuning may become unstable.

Problems associated with pianos are seasonal, which means different problems arise in different seasons. This is why you need to have an

environment that can accommodate and be adjusted according to all seasons. For instance, many people use heaters in the winter to avoid getting too cold. Heaters warm up the atmosphere, but while doing that, they also remove the precious humidity, which may make the atmosphere too dry. Too dry or too humid, and the atmosphere is equally bad for your piano. This is why you need to undertake certain steps to keep your piano in perfect condition.

Here are some basic steps that you can follow to make sure that your piano is placed in an atmosphere that has ideal humidity.

- Do not put your piano near a heating vent.
- Do not put your instrument near space heaters or gas heaters.
- Do not put your piano near a drafty window. Windows may increase humidity.
- Keep your piano as far away as possible from a stove, radiator, or a fireplace.

Along with the tips mentioned above, you should also check out the level of sunlight and heat the area receives. You may place your piano where it receives no sunlight at all, but as the day passes, the sun changes its position, and ultimately your piano ends up being in the sun for some time. Therefore it is important to spend time and find a location that is bright but does not receive direct sunlight throughout the day.

Similarly, always pay attention to the changes in humidity, especially if you live in these locations:

- An area near the ocean
- An area with a lot of rainfall
- An area that has drainage problems
- A valley or a house that faces the hills
- A room that has air exhaust openings
- A dark room that faces North

- A new concrete house (not older than two years)

Like humidity, excessive dryness too can be a huge problem for the piano and its maintenance. This is particularly true if you use some sort of cooling or heating system to keep your room dry. Wood contains some amount of moisture naturally. When the atmosphere becomes too dry, the moisture in the wood evaporates, and it starts to compress. This shrinking is bad for the sound quality and the lifespan of the instrument. It puts a lot of stress on the soundboard of the piano and causes problems to the joints and laminated areas of the piano. If the problem becomes too severe, it may even force the piano to fall apart.

The problem becomes even more severe when the temperature and weather fluctuate, as it will make the wood of the piano expand and contract all the time. This constant change is even worse and will increase the chances of your piano breaking down completely.

You can avoid extreme dryness by placing the piano in a room that has a humidifier. This will help you maintain the humidity level of the room with ease. You can also invest in a good leafy plant. This plant will not only look good, but it will also provide the piano with much-needed natural humidity. Another method of maintaining humidity near and inside the piano is by using a humidity control system.

A humidity control system is a device that contains a humidifier as well as a dehumidifier. It is a specially designed product for pianos. A humidity control system is great because it allows you to control and regulate the humidity inside the instrument. By controlling the level of humidity within the instrument, you can ensure a long life, durability, and quality. As the device can reduce and increase humidity, it can help you to maintain the ideal conditions with ease.

Maintaining the Finish

While there are many different things that come under the label of piano maintenance and care, finish care is quite important. The quality of the instrument's finish determines its value and worth. The finish of the piano is important because it is not just a musical instrument. As pianos are huge and crafted beautifully, they serve as an item of luxury décor for your room. So, if your instrument is scratched or scarred, it will not be as valuable as a clean, pristine, and beautiful instrument. This is why you need to take ample care of your piano.

Maintaining the finish of your piano is not difficult; you just need to keep your instrument clean, wipe it clean of dust, and avoid keeping it in a place with direct sunlight.

Here are some instructions that can help you:

- Always keep your piano in the same spot and avoid moving it a lot. Excessive movement may lead to cracks, as the piano is a fragile instrument.
- Always keep your instrument in an area that has even temperature. It should not be too high or too low.
- The room should not have dampness, air drafts, or heat from appliances such as stoves, heaters, or fireplaces.
- Do not keep your piano in direct sunlight. This will fade out its color and finish and can make your piano look unattractive and dull.
- Keep a soft pad or a piece of felt handy. It is recommended to avoid keeping anything on your piano (especially anything heavy.) If you must put something on it, then first put down a piece of felt and put the object on this pad.
- Putting heavy objects on the piano will lead to a poor tone. It can lead to noisy vibrations as well. So, avoid putting anything on the piano except your sheet music and metronome.
- Never put a plant, a drink, or any other similar object that contains liquid on the piano, as any liquid spill will ruin your piano. Even if

you avoid spilling liquid, it can still evaporate and will lead to condensation. Any kind of moisture (including condensation) is bad for your instrument. Remember to avoid humidity and moisture at all times.

Dust Regularly

Dust is bad for your piano. It can not only make it look dull and unattractive, but it can also cause problems on the inside by directly affecting the sound quality. This is why you need to dust your instrument from time to time. You can do it using a vacuum cleaner. It is also recommended to dust your piano using a soft cloth. Do not use any abrasive or rough cloth. Using a coarse and excessively dry cloth will ruin the finish of your piano. You can also use feather dusters to dust your instrument. They work just as well.

Use Good Quality Cleaning Products

Pianos are often made of wood, and it is necessary to polish them from time to time. Do not use any ordinary polish for your piano as it can not only ruin the finish of the surface but can also cause other problems. Do not use any common or household products to polish your piano. Many people tend to use furniture polish and or lemon oil to polish their instruments, but this can ruin the finish. Only use polishes that are specifically meant for the instrument.

Many people recommend not polishing the instrument at all unless it is absolutely needed. Do not use any aerosol-based products as they can ruin your tuning pins, strings, and other moving parts.

Additional Tips for Maintaining your Piano

Right from the invention of the piano, many different kinds of woods and wood finishes were used on pianos. Some of the finishes include polyester, lacquer, varnish, etc. It is not easy for a beginner to identify and understand the kind of varnish used on their piano. As all different kinds of varnishes

require different kinds of care, it is necessary to determine the type of varnish that coats your piano. You can also use certain general cleaning instructions that are suitable for all kinds of finish. Here are some common tips that you should remember as well as following the maker's recommendations.

- Avoid using silicates to clean the piano.
- Do not let any material made of plastic come in touch with the piano.
- Never use any product made of alcohol on the piano.
- Do not use any insecticide, cosmetics, or any chemical on your instrument.
- Never use petroleum-based products such as paint thinners on your instrument.
- Never use aerosol-based products on your instrument.
- Do not use polish on your instrument unless it has been designed especially for the piano.
- Do not put the piano in direct sunlight.

Regulation

Regulation is an important procedure that keeps your piano well maintained. In this process, each key of the piano's action mechanism is adjusted 37 times. This allows the player to play the instrument with a particular desired specification, which is important for a variety of reasons. Even if you tune your piano regularly, it can still ruin the feel of the piano. Here is a list of some of the most common reasons why your piano may deteriorate and why you need to regulate it.

- Neglect the piano or not use it for a long time
- The regular wear and tear that happens on the piano
- The damage dealt with the compression of the felt over time.
- Damage dealt with by bugs and insects.

- Too much contraction and expansion that happens due to a constant change in the weather.
- Reduced strength of the strings.

All these things will change the feeling of the keyboard and will also alter the way the instrument plays. So, it is necessary to regulate the piano every once in a while to keep it in its ideal and well-maintained condition. A well-maintained piano will not only last longer, but it will sound great as well.

It is recommended to service your piano from time to time; it will help to keep your instrument in a sprightly condition. It can also help you check whether your instrument needs regulation or not. The tuning technician will check whether the piano is in need of regulation when they tune it.

Since the piano is a complex instrument with different parts, regulation is a costly and time-consuming affair. You need to schedule it carefully to avoid any problems in the long run. Do not try to cut costs on this process as it will ensure a long life for your instrument and will make your instrument almost like new. Regular maintenance will ensure that your piano performs well and for a long time too. So, get your instrument regulated regularly and always contact a professional to do so. A professional tuner knows what they are doing.

Cleaning

If you want to maintain your piano properly, you need to clean the exterior as well as the interior of the piano. You need to keep the keys and the interior of the piano clean and free of dust. This will ensure a long and pleasant life for the instrument.

Keyboard

Cleaning your keyboard regularly will help you to extend its life and durability. If your keys get extremely dirty, mix some light soap in lukewarm water, and clean the keys using a cloth dipped in the soap solution. Then wipe off the keys using another dry and clean cloth. Do not

use the cloth that you used to clean the piano's surface to clean the keys. Do not use cleaners, chemicals, or solutions containing alcohol to clean the keyboard as this may crack the surface.

If you want to ensure a long life for your keyboard, never play it with dirty hands or fingers. Wash your hands clean and dry them before you touch the keys of your piano; this will help you prevent stains and other impurities. Many different materials are used to make the keys, which include walrus, ivory, celluloid, etc. A lot of different types of glues are used to hold the keys and parts of the piano together. This is why it is recommended to use only mild soapy water to clean the keys, as it is impossible to predict what effect a particular chemical may have on the material of the keys and the glue. This is why you need to avoid chemicals and use light and gentle soap and water instead. Do not use a lot of water, though. Excessive moisture will prove to be fatal for other parts of your instrument. Always wipe off the excess moisture with a clean cloth. When you buy your piano, the maker may provide a dust cover for the keys, which should be put in place when you are not using the instrument.

Interior

While cleaning your piano, never neglect the interior. Dust goes everywhere, and it will enter the interior of the piano as well. Dust does not only affect the internal mechanism of a piano, but it can also bring down the sound quality drastically. Always keep the interiors of the piano clean. Also, keep the areas under the strings clean and dust-free. The best way to get rid of dust from the interior of a piano is by using a heavy-duty vacuum cleaner. To clean the area under the strings, buy cleaning tools available in a music store. These are inexpensive and are made explicitly for this purpose. This will help you avoid any possible damage.

Voicing

With time, you may notice that your piano hammers have become hard, which makes the playing labored. This happens due to compression of the

felt on the hammers. The more you play, the more compressed the felt becomes. Along with this, the grooves present at the point of the felt that comes in contact with the strings get old as well. When the hammers of a piano become hard, the tones may sound too bright. This makes the sound too harsh and unpleasant. It also ruins the mellow tones. To solve this problem, you need to do a process called voicing. If you see one or more of the following things happening with your piano, it needs a voicing immediately.

- The sound had changed drastically as compared to when the piano was purchased.
- The sound produced even after tuning sounds erratic.
- The tone varies a lot from one note to another.
- Mellow and soft melodies on the piano sound harsh and unpleasant.

In the voicing process, the tone quality of each of the notes of the piano is altered. This changes the tension of felt of the hammer. Technicians use special needles to make the felt more tense or pliable until the perfect tone is achieved. Along with these needles, technicians also use certain chemicals to achieve the same results. The motive of both these methods is to improve the compression of your felt.

Before you decide to get your piano 'voiced,' check whether it needs the procedure or not. Check whether you have tuned the piano carefully and whether the hammers are in their proper position. Voicing is essential because it can help you to maintain and preserve a perfect tone. Voicing and tones can be subjective to the taste of the musician; therefore, different pianos sound so different from each other.

It is recommended to get your instruments serviced from time to time. Keeping your instrument well serviced will ensure long and healthy life and help the instrument perform at its best. Regular servicing is like a regular physical; it will also help you find any bigger problem in its infancy and allow you to nip the problem in the bud. Always contact a professional

piano expert to service your instrument. Do not allow an amateur to handle your piano, and do not try to service it yourself; you may end up ruining it.

Chapter 13

FAQs



In the previous chapters, the basic and advanced information about the piano and playing it is covered. You may still have some questions about it as a beginner. This chapter will answer most of your queries related to the instrument, vis-a-vis buying it, playing it, practicing it, etc.

Q: How Long Will it Take Me to Be Good at The Piano?

A: This is a subjective question, and there are multiple criteria that decide this. If you are a beginner, you need to consider a few things. The first is, how much time are you willing to put into learning the piano every day? If you want to learn the piano as quickly as possible, you need to practice dedicatedly for at least an hour every day. The more you practice, the better (and the quicker) you will get. If you cannot find enough hours to practice your skills, you can also break your sessions into smaller sections. This way, you will be able to practice for more than an hour with ease.

The second thing you need to consider is 'goodness.' 'Good' is a very subjective term. For instance, some people think that being good at the piano means being able to play a few songs well enough. Some people think that once they can play Fur Elise properly, they are good enough. However, some people consider good being able to play in a concert in front of a massive audience. Therefore, being good is quite a subjective topic.

If you only want to play for yourself and do it for your own happiness, then it is okay. You will be able to do this and play things that thoroughly satisfy you in a couple of years. But if you want to become a concert pianist, then you must practice hard and for many hours every day for many years. Some people take even decades to do so. But if you are dedicated, determined, and confident, you will surely achieve your goal.

Q: How Many Keys Are There on a Regular Piano?

A: There are in all 88 keys on a full-size regular piano. There are some small keyboards with only 64 or fewer keys. There are bigger pianos with more than 100 keys too, but a standard piano has only 88 keys.

Q: Will I Need a Piano Teacher in The Future?

A: This solely depends on what you see yourself doing in the future. For instance, if you plan on becoming a concert pianist or joining an orchestra, you will have to get a teacher and ask him or her to analyze your playing regularly. While there are many different courses available online that can teach you to play this grand instrument, (this book being one of them), no book can compare to a real teacher who sits next to you and teaches you.

If you want to become a concert-level professional, you will have to get help from a teacher sooner or later. But if you want to learn the piano for personal reasons, it is fine if you do not get a teacher and refer to books such as this. You will be able to play decent piano with the information available in this guidebook.

If you do decide to hire a teacher, do not hire any random person. For instance, many beginners hire the oldest teacher they can find because they believe that he or she is more experienced and thus better than others. This is a wrong method of choosing a teacher. Each teacher has a unique style of teaching and playing. They have their own personality, and many times their teaching style may not match your learning style. It is your job to check out all the teachers and their experience, teaching style, attitude, etc. before hiring one.

Teachers have different price ranges as well. A high price does not necessarily equate to a good teacher. Always try to find a teacher who makes you feel comfortable and who is knowledgeable. Learning an instrument should not feel like a task. Try to find a teacher that suits your wants and needs.

If you decide against hiring a teacher, this book can still help you get started with playing the basics, and from there, you can practice and play it by ear. If you are serious about learning the piano and do not want to invest a lot of money in the beginning, it is recommended to use this book as a guide and learn and practice, and then decide if you want to further your education by getting a personal teacher. Some people may not need a teacher at all and can become good with basic guidance from books. The decision is ultimately up to you.

Q: Are Small Hands a Bane for Piano Players?

A: A lot of people who want to learn the piano have this question on their mind. Will I be able to play the piano properly with small hands? You may be surprised to know that many professional and famous piano players have small and dainty hands. Many people with small hands have become masters of the piano, and they perform professionally.

To check whether you can play the piano properly or not try this test. Stretch your hands out and now try to play the C key using your thumb and the C above your pinky. If you are able to do so with ease (or otherwise), you have big enough hands to play the piano well. If you cannot do this, don't give up. You can still play many beautiful pieces with your hands. Do not let a physical aspect get between you and your dreams.

Q: What If I Can't Play Both Hands Together?

A: If I can't play with both hands at the same time, is this normal, or am I doing something wrong? This is a perfectly normal thing, and you are not doing anything wrong, and there is nothing wrong with you either. Almost all beginner pianists go through this problem. The problem becomes especially apparent when beginners are made to play complicated rhythms. Playing with both hands is often compared to learning to use a third hand.

Many people think that learning the hand movements individually can help you play simultaneously. You just need to combine both the hands.

However, it is not a simple task, and many people fail to do it. The best way to learn to play with both hands is with practice and patience. Don't rush; take things slow. Keep your pace steady and be patient. There are many books for sale with easy tunes that help students to learn to use both hands together.

If you cannot play with both the hands yet, just practice doing it with separate hands, slowly, let both hands come together and practice gradually. You may not get it right the first few times, but if you keep at it, there is no reason why you will not get it right. Soon enough, your brain will combine both the hands, and you will be able to play with both of them simultaneously.

Playing with both hands will seem a tad difficult for everyone in the beginning, and there is a good chance you will struggle a lot. But with time and patience (and lots of practice), you will be able to do it without any stress in the future. Just remember to take things easy and relax. Do not beat yourself up if you cannot do something right in the first few attempts; some people need longer than others. But it is not about how fast you gain the knowledge; it's about gaining that knowledge eventually and not giving up midway.

Q: When is it Too Late to Learn the Piano?

A: No age is too late to learn an instrument, especially the piano. If you can move your hands and fingers, you can learn and play the piano at whatever age you want. It is equally true that only a few people have become a concert pianist after starting to learn the piano after the age of 15. However, only 0.5% of the total number of pianists in the world become professionals anyway, so don't beat yourself up.

Playing the piano is a great hobby. It is recommended to learn it whenever you want. As with playing any musical instrument, playing the piano can actually help to keep your brain strong and sharp and improve motor skills, memory skills, thinking, and reading skills. You are never too old to learn to

play the piano if you are healthy enough and have hands and fingers that work well. Do not care for what others might think; just do what you love and want to do.

Q: Is it is Necessary to Learn Notes to Play the Piano?

A: Many people have asked me; can I play the piano without learning the notes? The answer to this question is a bit confusing because it is yes as well as no. Many people play by ear and never learn any music or notes. While it is an easy and organic method, it is not reliable. Ask any musician, and he/she will tell you that it is always better to learn how to read notes. It is almost like learning to read words and then reading a storybook as compared to never learning a word and just listening to somebody reading the book and making your own story in your mind. The first method is far more practical as compared to the second one.

Learning how to read music is not difficult. Many students start reading music properly in a couple of weeks. Once you are comfortable enough to read musical notes, you can practice it on your instrument. You need to have passion, dedication and should put in the effort, and you will surely succeed. There are so many different ways of learning music, use them wisely. Even if you are a slow learner, you will be able to read music notes in a month or two properly. So instead of beating yourself up, get down with the books and start learning.

Q: Why do Certain Numbers Such as 4/4 or 2/4 or 6/8 Appear at The Beginning of Certain Pieces? What is The Relevance of These Numbers?

A: This is simpler than it looks. When you see 4/4 in front of a line, it has 4 quarter notes per bar. If the number is 2/4, then it has 2 quarters per bar. The numerator in the above fractions represents the number of beats present in each bar. The denominator in the above fractions represents the type of notes that will be counted as one single beat. So, for instance, if $\frac{3}{4}$ is written next to a piece, then the bar has 3 beats each.

Here the number 4 represents that one single quarter note is equal to one beat. If the ratio is 3/8, then the 3 will show the number of beats in the bar like the above example. But here the 8 denotes that it needs 8th of a note for one beat. It is now obvious that the bottom number tells the reader about the kind of note that is equal to one beat.

In simple terms, the top number will tell you the number of counts for every bar. The bottom number tells you what type of note you are supposed to count as the 1 count.

Q: How to Stay Motivated?

A: Motivation is a subjective concept, and there are many different things you can do to keep yourself motivated. But then what motivates one person may not always work on another. Keeping that aside, here are some relevant questions you need to ask yourself when you start to learn the piano; they will help you get clarity about your intent, which in turn will help you to motivate you.

Why the piano? There are hundreds of other instruments out there, some easier than the piano while others more accessible, so why the interest in this instrument?

What do you want to learn it for? If you just want to play the piano for yourself and then move on to more difficult things, then you will find the motivation as you progress.

Will I enjoy playing the piano? This answer again is subjective. You will never know until you try, so try it, and as you progress, you will get your answer.

If you ever get bored while practicing, you can spice things up. For instance, play around notes and rhythms. Experiment a lot. This experimentation will help you make new discoveries and may even lead to new developments.

If you are a purist and feel that excessive experimentation is bad, then you need to get over this illogical idea. All masters and expert composers experimented a lot, and that is how they came up with new pieces all the time. Most of the old musicians did not have any rules, and they just played around with the instrument until they found things that they liked and tunes that sounded good.

Instead of only sticking to the rules when playing music, try to experiment and do things in a different manner. Choose whatever music you like and have fun with it. Everyone can relate to music and enjoy it. It is recommended to try out new styles that you haven't tried before. There is a multitude of options available for you; sometimes, it is better to play easier songs that help you relax and have fun instead of practicing difficult numbers all the time. Divide your difficult tasks into multiple pieces and do them one by one. Whenever you finish a session, reward yourself with a tiny gift or mark on the music sheet the date of your achievement.

Once you get the hang of playing a tune or two, it will motivate you to strive more and learn different new things.

Q: As a Beginner, is it Better to Buy a Keyboard or a Piano?

A: This is one of the most frequently asked questions, and it has a lot of different answers and opinions. There is no straightforward answer to this question. To simplify things, if you have a lot of space, money and are serious about learning this instrument, then it is better to invest in a decent piano right away. If you do not have any one of the things mentioned above, then stick to a keyboard.

The keyboard is recommended for beginners, especially if you are not sure whether this is a passing phase of obsession or a long-term commitment with your instrument. You will be able to determine your real motive only after you start playing the piano.

A low-cost keyboard will not last you long and won't give you the same quality output as a regular piano, but it is better than not having an instrument at all. The keyboard you buy should not be too expensive or too cheap, either. Invest in a good brand. Read a lot of reviews, take the expert opinion into consideration, take advice from someone who has used a piano/keyboard, and understand from their experience. After you consider all of these options, go with what your gut says about the instrument. Buy the best instrument that you can afford. Think of it as an important investment for yourself. After all, your aim is to play and make music, and that should be fulfilled.

Q: Why Should I Learn Intervals?

A: It is necessary to learn how to read intervals because it can improve your playing abilities dramatically. It will also improve the way and the speed at which you read sheet music. As mentioned in the earlier chapters, an interval is a distance between two notes. There are many different ways to help you learn to read intervals at a quicker and swifter pace.

The best way to do so is to practice them, but you can also remember them using some tricks, such as how all the odd-numbered intervals have the same kind of placement. For instance, a 3rd, a 5th, and a 7th note will be a space note, or they both will be line notes. If the notes are not of the same type, then they must be even-numbered intervals such as 2nd, 6th, 4th, etc. Reading intervals can help you read the distances quickly instead of trying hard to recognize each note by individual letter name.

Q: How Will Playing the Piano for Long Affect Me Physically?

A: Many beginners complain of stiffness and pain when they play the piano for a long time. This makes them worry if there will be long-term repercussions of that and how they can be avoided.

Stiffness, stress, and pain are quite common when you start learning the piano. One of the best methods to reduce pain is by sitting in a proper

stance without putting pressure on your back. Another important thing is using a proper playing and finger technique.

Here are a few other tips that can help you avoid pain and stiffness.

Stay relaxed and keep calm and serene at all times. Only stiffen yourself for a second when you begin to press the keys down. Once the keys are pressed down, gently let go of the stiffness and relax once again. Let the weight of your arms drop.

Never make some weird positions with your arms and fingers. Do not contort them. If you find a particular chord position painful, just modify it in such a way that it becomes more comfortable. If you cannot play any chord without causing pain to your hands, then it is recommended to find an alternative chord instead. If you ruin your arms, then you will not be able to play the piano.

Study the difference between short-term pain and long-term pain. This will help you identify which kind of pain you are going through.

Many times, playing may make your arms and hands hurt for a while due to fatigue. This pain is normal and goes away on its own soon and is caused because you are not used to using that part of the body in specific positions for a long time. Long-term pain, on the other hand, is a result of severe damage. The intensity of long-term pain is much more than short-term pain. If you feel a throbbing, spasmodic, zapping pain, then it might be a sign of a more serious problem than just fatigue. There are many different kinds of pains, and every individual experience pain in a different manner as well. If you feel that you are suffering from long-term pain, consult your doctor immediately, and follow their instructions.

Playing with soft-touch can help you reduce pain and strain on your body. Whenever possible, play softly.

It is also important to take as many breaks as you can. Do not play for long periods. Avoid extended playing time. Do not practice for hours on end at one sitting. Instead, divide your practice into smaller sessions. This will have dual benefits; you will be able to reduce fatigue, and you will be able to practice for more time because you will not get bored or stressed.

Q: Are Scales Really That Important?

A: The short answer to this question is yes, scales are important. A lot of people, especially beginners, try to avoid scales because they find scales boring and time-consuming. People find scales boring because they have not developed the proper mindset required to study scales.

Playing scales is like gymnasium training for your arms and fingers. There is a multitude of benefits that can be reaped by playing scales. Playing scales can help you enhance your strength. More strength allows you to play the piano more accurately and with more intensity. It can also help increase the dexterity level of your fingers. This will help them move in a quicker and swifter fashion. It will also make them more controlled. Scales can also help you develop stamina so that you will be able to play for long periods. It can also make you ready to play difficult pieces with almost no effort.

If you ever feel that your fingers do not pay to heed your orders, then you need to learn scales as soon as possible. Scales will make your fingers more flexible and allow them to fly and flow with ease and freedom. This happens because there are a lot of synapses present in your brain that have strong bonds or connections with other synapses. When a pianist plays scales, he or she directly makes the brain synapses stronger, which in turn allows them to control their fingers.

This is why playing scales is important. Many people find playing scales 'boring'. Even if you find them boring, practicing scales will help you become a better pianist over time.

If you want to avoid boredom while learning scales, just look at them as a challenge. This will make things less boring and far more enjoyable. It will help you generate good sounds from your scales. Your scales need to be controlled, fast, and smooth. Keep the scales as smooth as possible, as there should be no harsh bumps.

You can also play scales for just five minutes at one go. You can increase the time of practice when you get more accustomed to it. Purchase a scale book and continue to practice different scales gradually. When you are well accustomed to scales, increase the speed slowly. Keep playing the scales daily and keep yourself challenged to avoid boredom.

Q: Why Does The Piano Have 88 Keys?

A: You will be surprised to know that once upon a time, the piano only had 60 keys. It was almost like a harpsichord. However, Cristofori decided to add hammers to the harpsichord, and thus the first piano was born. He simply replaced the plectra with a hammer.

The piano was invented somewhere around 1700, and soon, it became popular with composers and musicians alike. As soon as it started becoming popular, composers started coming up with new and complex compositions. It became impossible for them to play these on the 60 keys; therefore, the piano was extended from both sides.

Around the mid-19th century, the piano had 85 keys. Then the last three notes were added. There are different varieties of pianos available even now. For instance, some pianos have 96 keys too. The bigger the piano, the greater its size and weight.

Q: How Many Strings Does a Piano Have?

A: This is subjective to the piano. Each note has two strings in tenor, three strings in the treble, and one in the low bass. Some pianos have 230 strings, but many large grand pianos have many more than this.

Q: What Are Pedals and Why Are They Used?

A: The soft pedal i.e., the left pedals, works in a different manner on upright and grand pianos. Some of the most commonly used upright pianos include large uprights, spinets, studio uprights, and consoles. In these models, the left pedal controls a bar inside that presses the hammers towards the strings, which makes it easy for the musician to play notes in a soft manner. If you want to observe this, just open the top of the piano and observe when you push the pedal.

The mechanism in a grand piano is much different. It is far more complicated than an upright piano. The soft pedal slides the keys and everything else to the right so that the hammers only press two out of three strings that are connected to each of the notes. This mechanism makes the sound softer. It also changes the tone slightly because you end up hitting only two or one strings with different surfaces of the hammer. To observe this, just use the soft pedal and check how the whole keyboard shifts.

The middle pedal is known as the sostenuto pedal, and it is often used on grand pianos. It is used to capture the notes that are held with the help of the fingers. It is also used in the console and upright pianos, which have a muting strip made of felt. This is known as a practice pedal.

Some vertical pianos only have two pedals, but some may possess the true sostenuto mechanism. On older models of upright pianos and consoles, the middle pedal is generally used to sustain the base. It works like the right pedal. In some cases, it is linked to the left pedal lever.

The right pedal is known as the damper pedal because it is used to raise the dampers. Dampers are strips of felt that put pressure on strings to stop the sound. Each key has its own damper. This way, the tone keeps on playing. The right pedal raises all of them at once, so all the strings become free immediately. You can check out the functioning of the dampers by pressing the right pedal.

Q: Is A "New" Piano Better Than A "Used" Piano?

A: The short answer to this question is no. There are many new manufacturers like Steinway and Yamaha that make excellent new pianos, but the quality of wood available nowadays, along with the high labor costs, make new pianos costly and not a viable affair. It is far better to buy a well-refurbished or properly rebuilt old piano. It will be more valuable and provide you better sound quality as well.

Each piano has a different sound, which is often quite subtle, but an expert ear may notice it immediately. For instance, some pianos have 'bright' tones, which are not suitable for rooms with gypsum board walls. A piano model with deep and resonating sound quality is more suitable for such a room and environment. Ultimately, along with quality, the personal taste of the player matters a lot as well.

For instance, out of the many new brands, Yamaha makes high quality and sophisticated tools and pianos, and therefore they sell the highest number of acoustic pianos around the world as compared to any other brand. If you like the sound of a Yamaha, go ahead and buy one without a doubt. But if you don't like the sound of Yamaha, then finding another piano will be difficult because most of them sound the same. You will have to look high and low to find a better piano.

Q: Is Getting a Piano From a Good Manufacturer Worth It?

A: This is again, a convoluted question. If you have seen the previous work of the manufacturer and liked it, then check what they are selling. Companies change all the time, and the CEOs and the staff of the companies change all the time as well. For instance, Mason and Hamlin were supposed to lead the world of pianos and manufacturing in the early 20th century, but due to the great depression of the 1920s, it was soon taken over by Chickering, Knape, and other companies.

Nowadays, many companies still hold their old names and brand value, but as the production and owners have changed, they cannot maintain their original quality. The companies that manufacture by keeping their integrity intact often suffer a lot of loss. Most of the older brands are now companies. Instead of buying an instrument just on the face value of the brand, choose wisely, and check everything.

Q: Should I Buy a Spinet Piano to Save Space?

A: If you do not have enough space and you have no other options, then go for a spinet, but if you can work around the space option, then it's best not to rush to buy a spinet. Spinet pianos have a 'drop action' to save space, because of which they become lighter and compact. This makes the piano look good and space-efficient; however, this compromises a lot of things. It makes the action parts tiny and the keys small. It becomes difficult to control these because of their size. Similarly, the length of the string and the area of the soundboard are tiny as well. This makes the tone sound bad, especially in the case of low registers and bass.

Spinet pianos are generally made of poor quality because the products are meant for buyers who are more into styling as compared to music. If you do not want to compromise the quality of music, you can buy a console piano. These are small too, but thanks to their direct blow action, they have a better sound as compared to spinet pianos.

Conclusion

The piano is one of the most versatile and rewarding instruments to learn. Learning the piano can be a lot of fun if you do it in the right way. The guides, instructions, and various methods given in this book will help you get started with playing the piano and teach you about the basics of the notes.

Only knowledge is not important when you want to learn to play a musical instrument; you need a lot of practice and dedication to become good at it. Reading this book has covered the knowledge aspect of the learning process. It also contains instructions that will help you practice the piano, but unless you practice often, you will not be able to learn it. If you really want to master an instrument, you need to first understand its basics, then its history, and then practice its theory. The strategies given in this book have covered the basics and the history of the piano.

All the knowledge given in this book will prove to be useless if you do not use it properly and practice enough. So, without any further ado, get started with your piano/keyboard and apply what you learned from the book.

If you do not have a piano right now, don't wait for one, just download a piano app on your tab or your smartphone and start your practice. As long as you get the keys right, it is no different from a real piano. Once you get the hang of it, you can invest in a keyboard or piano and begin your musical journey on a real instrument.

References

<https://www.musicradar.com/how-to/8-essential-melody-and-harmony-tips>
<https://www.hearandplay.com/main/5-getting-started-tips-to-playing-piano-by-ear>
<https://www.onlinepianocoach.com/play-piano-by-ear.html>
<https://www.musikalessons.com/blog/2016/11/piano-terminology/>
<https://howtoplaypiano.ca/piano-faq/>
<https://bestdigitalpianoguides.com/piano-chords-and-melodies/>
<https://takelessons.com/blog/reading-piano-notes>
<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/legato>
<https://www.flowkey.com/en/piano-tips>
<https://www.musical-u.com/learn/topic/how-to/play-by-ear/>
<https://www.voicesinc.org/piano-learning-mistakes/>
<https://www.liveabout.com/chord-definition-2701891>
<https://makingmusicmag.com/chord-knowledge/>
<https://takelessons.com/blog/piano-technique-mistakes-z06>
<https://www.hoffmanacademy.com/blog/read-chord-symbols-piano/>
<https://www.britannica.com/art/piano>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piano>
<https://colorinmypiano.com/2010/03/02/12-tips-for-memorizing-piano-music/>
<https://bestdigitalpianoguides.com/piano-chords-and-melodies/>
<https://www.dummies.com/art-center/music/piano/great-left-hand-accompaniment-patterns-for-the-piano-or-keyboard/>
<http://www.zebrakeys.com/lessons/beginner/musictheory/?id=12>
<https://www.pianoeducation.org/pnopnfaq.html>

PIANO
LESSONS
FOR BEGINNERS

*Simple and Effective Strategies for
Optimizing Piano Chords*



Introduction

Learning how to play the piano can be extremely beneficial, especially for young children. While many people look at crafts and sports to develop their children's concentration and motor skills, playing a musical instrument is also a great way to improve their abilities. It also offers the same benefits that sports provide. Moreover, playing the piano enhances one's coordination skills. But who says only kids can be taught how to play the piano? Regardless of your age, learning how to play a musical instrument is always recommended. It offers a myriad of benefits such as improving brain function, alleviating stress, and can relax the mind.

Playing an instrument requires effort and sustained practice. Our muscles need to be taught new and often intricate movements, and this can only be attained with diligence and patience. Muscle memory is the act of an automatic action of muscles, requiring little to no thought. Take the example of walking. We know exactly which muscles need to move for this activity, and we don't need to consider them before we walk.

In the same way, muscle memory can be developed when learning to play the piano, but it is not automatic – it requires time and practice. This does not need to be for long periods of practice. Small and often is generally the best way. 15 to 20 minutes per day is a good amount to aim for when first beginning to play.

Learning the piano is not just a matter of finger calisthenics. It is a means of improving the brain as well. Developing this skill improves your memory in the long run, leading to greater success in school, and a greater ability to cope with everyday problems. These memory benefits are the main reason why it is so important to include memorization within the scope of the technical exercise.

Read more!

Chapter 1

The Basics of Piano

Before we proceed to the more complicated explanation, let's start with the very basics. Beginners may find music notes intimidating upon their first encounter with them. However, music notes are the ABCs of music the same as with the ABC of our language. You will see plenty of letters as music notes are indicated by a letter.

The piano is a musical instrument that needs no introduction. It is one of the most popular musical instruments in the world and can be heard in several songs that cut across several genres. Besides, having this book in your hands, you are sure to know what this instrument is, even if you are not conversant with it. To cover our bases, however, and fulfill all queries on the subject, let us define what that instrument is.

A piano is a musical instrument that has strings and hammers - the interaction of which produces melodious and harmonious music. The piano is a musical instrument with a large keyboard in a wooden case that encloses metal strings and a soundboard. The piano is a keyboard instrument, which means each physical note (key) is pressed manually to trigger a sound. The sound is created by hammers inside the piano, which hit metal strings tuned to specific frequencies. Two or three pedals are used for regulating the length and volume. In this way, all traditional keyboard instruments are also percussion instruments. Though we might think of pianos as culturally closer to traditional orchestral instruments, such as violins and cellos, the piano is closer to glockenspiels and xylophones! To generate the sound you hear when the piano is played, the strings inside this boxed instrument are struck by hammers, controlled and directed by the pianist via the keyboard. The keyboard is basically a long row of several keys (hence the term, keyboard), which a pianist plays by pressing down with the particular fingers in a certain order. This action then results in

hammers (which are at the end of the row of keys) striking the rows of strings inside the piano with the subsequent generation of sounds. The strings don't result in sound directly. When the hammers controlled by the keyboards strike them, they vibrate. This vibration is then transmitted to a soundboard to which the strings are connected via a bridge. The soundboard amplifies the sound influenced by the string and also modifies the quality of the tone produced.



<https://pms.wikipedia.org/>

The piano was invented by an Italian named Bartolomeo Cristofori, in the city of Florence, sometime in the early 18th century (around 1709, to be precise). However, nobody is sure of the exact year. The name piano is but the shortened form of pianoforte, which was the name the initial instrument was called. The name, pianoforte, was obtained from the Italian phrases, *gravicembalo col piano e forte*, and *fortepiano*. The sentence “*gravicembalo col piano e forte*” means *harpsichord with soft and loud*. Two distinct words come together to form *fortepiano*, forte, and piano. These two words are the last in the sentence above, and they connote two different meanings. For instance, forte means loud, while piano means soft. This, in turn, refers to the force of the sound produced when a pianist plays

the piano, as the magnitude with which you play this instrument will produce a reaction (sound) that is commensurate. That is to say; if you press the keys heavily, then the hammers will hit the strings heavily and, in turn, produce loud and heavy sounds. On the other hand, if you press the keys softly, then the hammers will strike the strings subtly, thereby producing soft sounds.

The piano has a structure that is quite unique, and which cannot be mistaken for that of any other musical instrument. Early versions had frames that were entirely constructed from wood. Modern ones, however, utilize a cast-iron frame. When the piano is played, the strings generate a large amount of tension. The modern version of the piano can withstand more tension than the earlier versions as a result of this. Due to this sturdiness, modern pianos can be played more vigorously, and they sound louder than their predecessors.

The modern version of the piano has 88 different keys, as well as a keyboard that is comprised of seven full octaves along with a couple of extra keys. And, while Bartolomeo Cristofori is widely credited as the inventor of this wonderful device, he was not the first to devise a musical instrument that utilized keyboard-striking actions; this had been in existence since the 15th century. What Cristofori did, however, was to build on and advance the principles of these ancient instruments to a point at which they were perfect. It is this perfection that virtually every piano from that moment on was modeled even to this day.

The piano (or pianoforte) grew in popularity sometime in the middle of the same century in which it was invented. Even then, it was manufactured in several different styles and forms. The German manufacturers of this instrument, however, went with a lighter version, which was also less expensive than most of the other versions. This lighter piano was known as the “square piano.” It was with this version that Muzio Clementi and Amadeus Mozart began to compose pieces that would lead to the

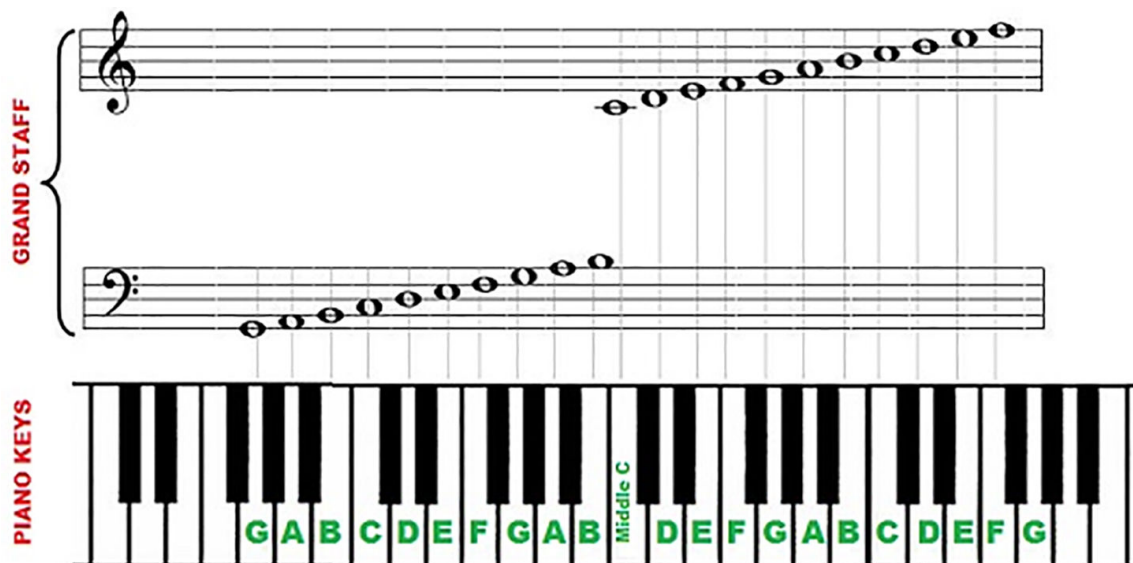
development of a distinct style and tune of piano composing and playing. The success of these musicians helped establish the piano as an elite musical instrument. The piano started being linked to chamber music, salon music, concerti, and other musical performances that the elite preferred.

And as a result of their success, the instrument became the option for music that the elite preferred; it became associated with concerti, salon music, chamber music, and several other musical performances.

In around 1860, the square piano, which was favored by German piano makers, went out of favor, and upright pianos became the rave. The design of the upright pianos of this time was not unlike that of an upright harpsichord as they had their strings extending upward from the keyboard. As a result of this, the pianos were extremely tall, although a lot of effort was put in to ensure that they looked elegant. A man by the name of John Isaac Hawkins, however, recognized the problem these pianos posed because of their height. As a result of this, he lowered the strings to the floor, and this made them look less grotesque and out of place within homes and small rooms.

For us to better understand the piano, below are its basic parts and components that we must familiarize ourselves with.

Keyboard Layout - unlike what many think, you don't actually have to memorize the names of each note. The graphic below shows the piano keys and their corresponding notes in music's staff. Press the key that corresponds to the note on written music.



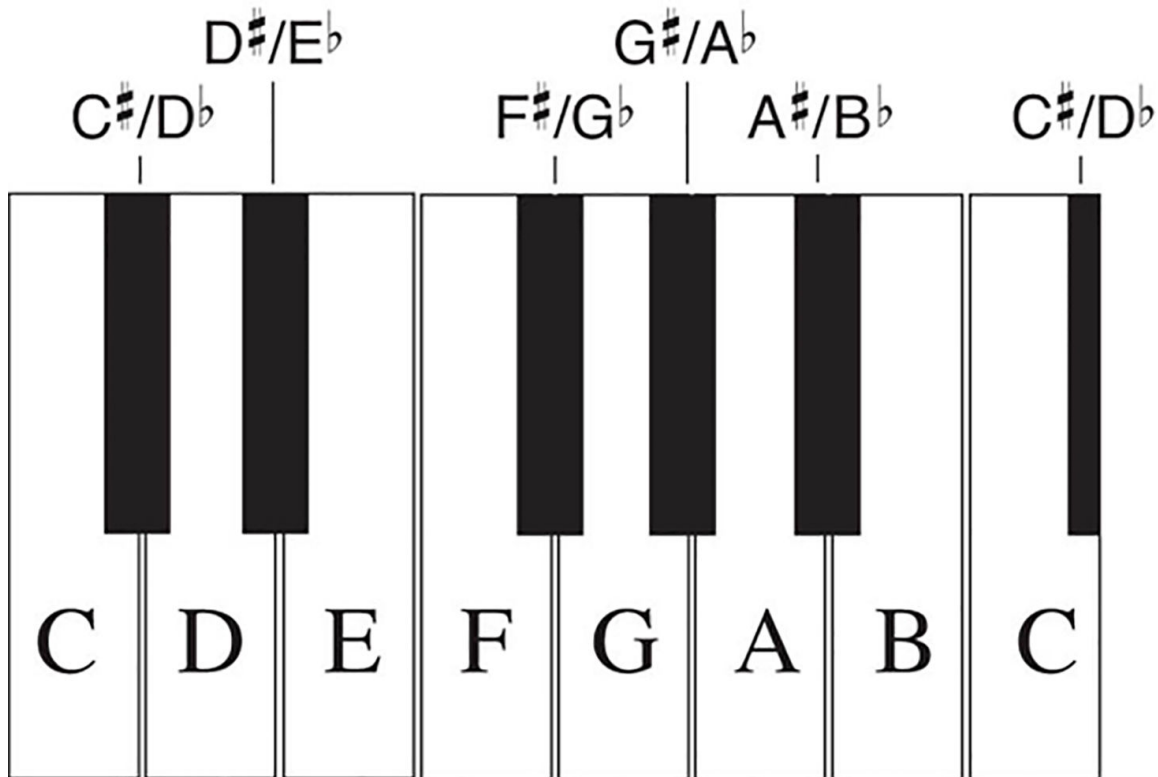
Be sure to have access to a piano several times a week to practice.

How to Use Your Hands

Sheet music for beginners usually has numbers below every note. The numbers represent the fingers on our hands. Each finger has corresponding numbers. For the left and right hand - 1 (thumb), 2 (index finger), 3 (middle finger), 4 (ring finger) and 5 (little finger).

The piano's keyboard has two types of notes, white and black. You can see the black note sits higher than the white ones. Also, they are spaced out in groups of 2 and 3.

In playing the keyboard, a black and white note that lies side by side are semi-tone apart. Likewise, playing side by side, two white keys with a black key in between gives you tones that are apart.



The white keys are referred by letters A, B, C, D, E, F, G while the black notes use the same letters but contain either a flat (b) or a sharp (#) sign.

The Piano Signs and Terms

Here are some of the most common signs and terms you will definitely encounter as you learn to play the piano. Play each key while reading the book to hear their sounds.

C sharp (C#) - this indicates that the sound is raised in a semi-tone from the key of C. Looking at your keyboard, you can see that C# is the black note lying beside the C key.

B flat (Bb) - this means that from the B key, the sound is lowered to a semi-tone. Again looking at the piano keyboard, noticed the Bb or the black key just below the B key.

Key of C - this does not include black notes; thus, newbies start playing tunes by placing both of their thumbs on middle C then placing their finger

on every subsequent white note.

Middle C- this is the C note that you can find in the middle of the piano keyboard.

These can be overwhelming for you to take in at once, but once you start to play the piano, these will all make sense. Hence, it is highly recommended you are in front of a piano while reading this guide so you can also execute each step. Start practicing on the scale of C.

Chapter 2

The Benefits and Obstacles to Learning the Piano



There are thousands of reasons why you might want to learn the piano, and there are plenty of excellent benefits too. Most of these benefits have been scientifically proven, so before we look at some of the obstacles you will face, cast your eye over these.

It can Increase Your Creativity

Piano playing is one of the most creative activities there is, not surprising when you consider that the primary purpose is to interpret music that could have been written around 200 years ago. In doing that, you must learn how to read a score, how to analyze it to understand it, and how to use creativity to pass that score onto your audience while respecting the original composer's personality.

You need to have a great imagination, a good deal of creativity, and no small amount of inspiration to accomplish this, so learning to play the piano can definitely help to bring out your artistic side and help develop the creative side of your brain.

It Can Help You Gain Confidence

When you play the piano, you need to make decisions, and that can help you to increase your confidence levels. Creating your own piece of music and hearing it is incredibly rewarding, as is mastering a difficult piece written by a famous composer. When you are first learning to play the piano, your tutor will help you make decisions but, as time goes by, you will make more and more by yourself.

It really is a fantastic process, learning a new piece of music. You start from the bottom, knowing nothing. You practice, you improve, and gradually you

begin to reap the rewards of your hard work. It's a fascinating progression, and the rewards certainly give you a real sense of achievement and significantly more confidence than you started with.

It Can Help Relieve Stress

Lots of studies show that playing the piano can help to improve your mental health and reduce stress levels. Piano players tend to experience less depression and fewer bouts of anxiety than non-musical people. Just a few minutes playing the piano every day can boost your self-esteem, leave you with a more positive outlook on life, and, even more important, it can lower blood pressure. In fact, it might interest you to learn that learning to play the piano is one of the most common forms of therapy for ADHD/ADD.

It Teaches You Split Concentration

Otherwise called 'divided attention,' this is an important part of learning to play the piano and can significantly sharpen concentration. When you play the piano, you must use both of your hands, read the music, listen to what notes you play, and work those pedals – all at the same time. Once you learn to do all this, you'll find that you can easily multitask in everything else you do.

The Piano is Easy to Play

The piano is one of the easiest of all instruments to play, whether you believe it or not. Unless you position yourself badly, there is no pain in learning it. For example, when you learn the guitar, you must build calluses up on your fingers; when you learn a woodwind or brass instrument, you must train your lip and facial muscles so you can produce a sound. Both of these can be quite painful and can put people off learning. With the piano, all you do is sit down and press the keys.

It Helps Neuroplasticity

This is a process that takes place in the human brain, the recognition of and ability to form synaptic connections, particularly after an injury or when

you are learning something new. In simple terms, it is how the brain changes its function and form in response to stimulation by physical activity.

When you play the piano, it effects a positive change in your brain. Studies have shown that music provides unique stimulation to the brain, quite different from how any other activity affects us. Each time you play a piece of music, new neural connections are formed, and these prime your brain to be receptive to other communication forms. You might think that you are just plowing through a hard piece of music, trying to learn it, but it's more than that. You are improving your attention, memory, language, speech, math, and spatial skills, all while learning how to convey emotions better vocally. Start learning early enough, and your brain can structurally change in ways that stay with you for life.

It Can Improve Your School Performance and Test Scores

Grade school students learning the piano are better developed in terms of spatial and general cognition than those who are not learning. Studies showed that middle school and high school students had better scores on standardized tests than those who weren't learning a musical instrument. If you started learning the piano as a child, then you will find it much easier to retain the information you learn in college.

As the pace of life increases, it is critical to have good focus, and piano playing has been shown, as we discussed earlier, to improve concentration skills, and that helps in every area of life.

In Texas and Georgia, university studies showed that there were significant links between the length of time a person had been learning to play a musical instrument and their achievements in academic studies.

It Can Help Your Physical Health

When you play the piano on a regular basis, you benefit from both physiological and physical advantages. It can sharpen your fine motor

skills, improve your hand-eye coordination, and your dexterity. Studies have also shown that music can reduce heart rate, respiratory rate, cardiac problems, lower your blood pressure, and boost your immune response. And it strengthens your arm and hand muscles more than non-players.

It Can Improve Your Aural Awareness

Some people are tone-deaf; others have a musical ear. When you play the piano, even if you are tone-deaf, you can improve your aural awareness significantly. Piano playing helps train you to recognize intervals, tones, and chords better, and it can help you to develop a good sense of pitch. It really doesn't matter what age you start, either.

But is aural awareness useful anywhere other than playing an instrument? Absolutely! It can help you to identify sound patterns in foreign languages and understand them. It can help fight off dyslexia while it is in the development stage and, if you struggle to hear against background noise, aural awareness can help you.

It Increases Levels of HgH – Human growth Hormone

The pituitary gland is responsible for producing HgH, triggering off growth in both children and young adults. It can help to regulate body fluids, body composition, bone growth, muscle growth, fat, and sugar metabolism, and, potentially, heart function.

Studies have shown that students learning to play the piano had higher levels of HgH than those who weren't. This is one of the more positive benefits of taking lessons, especially at a young age but, even older students will notice their energy levels increasing and fewer aches and pains as they age.

It Can Teach You To Accept Constructive Criticism

Piano students receive feedback from their teachers, and some of that is constructive criticism. Nobody likes being criticized, but constructive criticism can help you to learn to accept feedback positively. It can teach

you to respond to it and learn from it, and this can help you in other areas of your life.

It Can Help Improve Your Social Playing Skills

When you learn with other students or take part in duets or chamber music sessions, you can develop listening skills and learn to become far more aware of your surroundings. When you perform alone, it might be acceptable to make the odd error in timing or dynamics, but when you play as a group, it isn't acceptable. You learn to adapt to how you play according to your environment, improve your own performance, and socialize at the same time. It really is one of the very best ways to help you improve.

It Can Help You to Discover and Understand a Whole New World

Musical culture is critical to ensuring great performance and learning to play the piano will develop and advance your knowledge, helping you to discover a truly wonderful world. Not only will you get an introduction to the languages used by the composers, but you also get an introduction to the beautiful language of music, learning harmonies, melodies, and rhythms.

It Can Help You Stay Young – In Cognitive Terms

Sadly, piano playing cannot stop you from aging but, because it is so complex, requiring several parts of your brain at the same time, it can help you to stay young in cognitive terms. Learning to combine physical and intellectual capacities simultaneously is one of the most challenging things you will do and demands that you remain alert and focused all the time. If you lose concentration, it can cause problems and set you back. This is true multitasking, and it can help you to remain cognitively young.

You Get to Meet Like-Minded People

Piano-playing can be a bit lonely at times, so joining an academy or taking lessons with others can help you meet other like-minded people. Not only do you get to bounce ideas off one another, but you also offer another set of ears and the ability to offer constructive criticism – so long as you can take

the same. And many academies and groups also offer social activities on a regular basis, allowing you to get to know your fellow players on a more personal level.

You Get to Play All Your Favorite Tunes

How fantastic is it to sit at the piano and play your favorites whenever you want? Rather than having to listen to how others interpret a piece, you can interpret it your own way, adding your own personal touch. It really doesn't get any better than that.

You Get to Live a Better, More Beautiful Life

Ok, so this is somewhat subjective, but stay with me. Music is powerful; no-one can deny that. In particular, playing the piano can bring string emotions out, not just on you as you play but in those who are listening. The piano was designed with human emotion in mind, so it really isn't a surprise that piano music can make people react with strong emotions – joy, wonderment, sorrow, and so on.

And perhaps the best thing is that you can share your piano playing with your friends and your family. The musical language breaks down all barriers of ethnicity, age, and so on, and is a great way of bringing people together, be it small or large groups.

Those are just some of the many benefits gained from learning to play the piano. Many players also face several obstacles along the way, and some of those obstacles could be enough to tempt them into packing it in and quitting playing. Below, we look at some of those obstacles in a bit more depth.

On occasion, it can seem that obstacles just cannot be gotten around, especially when you play the piano. Follow the tips below, and you will find it much easier to overcome whatever gets thrown in your way.

Let's say that you started learning the piano three years ago. It seemed such an easy thing at the time. You breezed through your graded exams and are now fast heading for grade 4.

The trouble is it all seems so difficult now. You have to know how to play scales, broken chords, and arpeggios much faster (and with both hands), and the compositions are so much harder!

You might even get to the stage where you think, "Is this worth it?" Can I even do this?"

You know what? Most piano players have been there, even the top players in the world. It's no bad thing, either, because it can give you the push you need to improve and take your playing to the next level.

In the words of the illustrious Winston Churchill – "Never, Never, Never Give Up!"

Progress is NOT a One-Way Street

Not very often, anyway. Along the way, your learning will go through twists, turns, and lots of difficult moments. The secret? Sticking it out, staying the course, and getting past the frustrations so you can move on.

Most people think that piano progress is a nice straight line – it isn't. Sometimes, it is when you are at your lowest that the best improvements happen. If you keep on knocking at that door, it will open – eventually. It might take weeks, it might take months, even years, but it will open.

Lots of students get to grade 5 and go no further because they have not learned the secret of pushing on. Continuation is the key to success, and the only people who will succeed are those that continue, irrespective of the frustrations they face.

Accept That You Will Musically Stagnate on Occasion

When everything is wonderful and going to plan, it's great to perform, especially when the audience shows their appreciation. But you must accept that sometimes you will stagnate. You'll feel like you're going nowhere. But, you know what? That happens with anything in life, not just piano-playing.

Beethoven's greatest symphonies didn't happen smoothly, not to start with anyway. At first, he put the hours in, working hard to get where he got. He went through ups, downs, fantastic times, and stagnant times.

Again, the secret is just to pick yourself up, give yourself a shake, and keep going. If you put in the time and effort, it will all come good for you in the end.

Remember Why You Started Learning to Play the Piano.

When you feel like you are going nowhere, just stop for a minute. Don't berate yourself for your lack of progress. Instead, think about why you wanted to learn how to play the piano in the first place.

Go for a long walk, or go to a piano recital. Listen to one of your favorite pianists and look back at how much you really have achieved.

Most humans are illogical when it comes to the here and now, and, more often than not, we allow emotions to overtake us. Explain to your tutor how you feel, perhaps see if you can do something different for a couple of lessons. Often, this can help you see past the frustrations and let you see the light ahead once more.

Take a Break

While graded exams are a great way for learning to play the piano, they are not the be-all and end-all of everything. Take a break. Step back, clear your mind, and come back, fresh, and with the zest you had when you first started learning.

You can also stop with the lessons, and just sit at the piano, play a few of your favorite tunes and lose yourself in them.

Small changes can work wonders for freshening you up.

Count Your Successes

Think about your successes, and you might just find the black cloud lifts, and the sun comes shining through again. When you do that, you might be surprised at just how you have come, how much you will be throwing away if you give up now. It can put you back in the right frame of mind and help you significantly improve.

Sit down with a pen and paper and write down everything you have achieved. Keep it to hand and add to it every time you achieve something else. Refer to it whenever you feel a bit down.

Rekindle Your Passion

Attend a few piano-playing seminars and workshops. According to Brian Tracy, a success expert, those who do this rise to the top much quicker than those who don't. Learning to play may be a hobby, but going to these workshops and seminars can help you become one of the best amateur pianists around.

Success Comes to Persistent People

If you are not diligent and persistent, practicing daily, you will stagnate, and you will go nowhere. To be the best you can be, you must insist and persist until you get to the level you want to be at.

It's no secret that the most successful people in the world work harder than anyone to get to where they are, Take action, get inspired and be bold – you can reach the lofty goals you set for yourself.

Yes, You Can!

It's not some tired old cliché; this is the absolute truth. You can achieve anything you set your mind to, and that includes playing the piano. You have the talent; all you need to is put the effort in and keep telling yourself you can do it.

If you believe in yourself, you can achieve exactly what you set out to do.

With all that in mind, it's time to start learning.

Chapter 3

Piano Postures

Do you have your piano, or will you be going to purchase one? Is there an instrument right across the room waiting for you to play it? The long-awaited dream to be a pianist could start right now. It's time to take a seat, ready your fingers and embark on this journey to becoming a competent pianist. You only need to know where to start, and you will figure out the rest as you proceed.

You should worry less because from this test you will learn the most without the need to rush. You must develop a proper technique, but you will need time to be able to accomplish it. It can be very destructive to rush through the basics of the piano lessons due to sheer excitement or impatience, which can lead to wrong learning of the technique. It is true, at some point, you will find it challenging to reverse the effects of rushing, and you may end up with lots of frustrations. You might even find yourself giving up and terming it as not worth the effort. With such a mistake, you end up letting go of your treasured desires and dreams to be a great pianist.

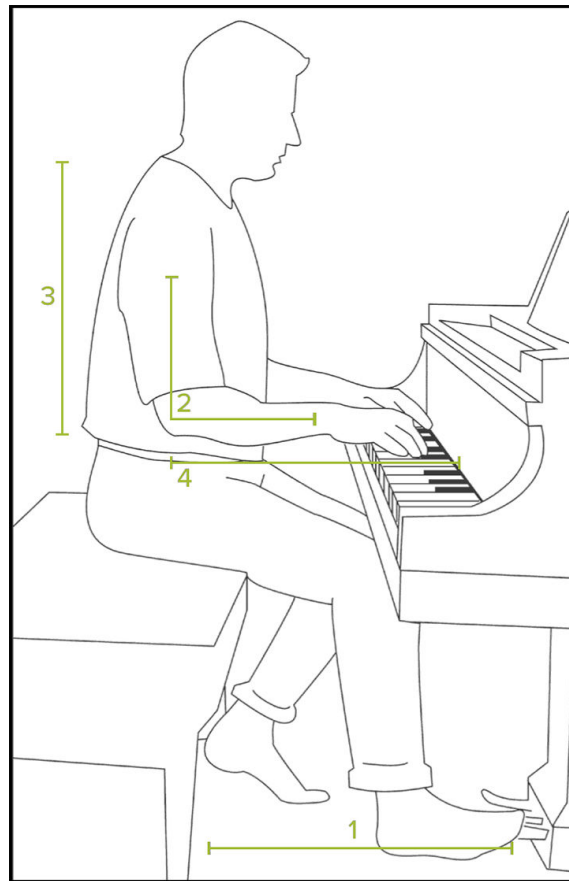
Now, this is the point that we slow down a bit and go step by step. It may feel dull and limiting thanks to the excitement and adrenaline that comes with first time learning. The fun stuff will soon come, just be patient. For now, we will be focusing on the things that will guide us so as not to harm our bodies or techniques.

Posture

Posture is always the first point of focus to preserve the body. One of the best techniques of an excellent pianist is to know how to position yourself around an instrument to enable you to reach all the critical sections without straining or hurting yourself. Your posture should also allow you to play for long hours comfortably. For example, any person that continually works

with a laptop or computer will be able to tell you that an unfortunate sitting position could cause tension in the shoulders, back, and arms, which in turn will slow you down. It may also cause discomfort on your wrist, which could lead to long term chronic pain if you don't address it immediately.

Before beginning to play the piano, it is important to have the correct playing posture. Relax your body by standing away from the keyboard, letting your hands fall loosely to your side. It is advisable to purchase an adjustable stool, to ensure your playing position is relaxed and you are seated at a comfortable height. When seated, lay both hands on the keys with your hands curved. The natural curve of the hand should be maintained while playing. Your forearms should be straight and without tension. The illustration below shows the correct seating and hand position.



Sitting

What is the best way to sit at a piano? When it comes to sitting down, there are a few fundamental things to keep in mind. First, you will need to sit at that point where you can directly face the position of the instrument. Sitting in the middle will enable you to reach both ends of the organ without straining. Also, make sure that you are sitting in an upright and relaxed position. A piano skill does not go well with tension. Music should be fun, so let loose and enjoy playing the piano. Ensure that your feet are flat on the floor. You might have trouble with this if the student is a very young kid. You will, from time to time, be using your feet to control the pedals when need be, so the feet should be in a position where you can move them quickly. But for beginners, you might not need to worry much about the pedals since you will rarely use them, or your instrument will not have any. Simply ensure you're sitting facing the focal point of the organ, that you're not lounging and that, most importantly, your body is free. If you feel awkward in any way whatsoever that has nothing to do with apprehension or vulnerability, modify yourself in a better position. You may even have a go at inclining forward a bit.

Distance, Angle, and Height

The piano stool's job is to put you at the right height comparative with the instrument. It ought to be flexible so you can ensure things are perfect. Your arms ought to be about an inch over the keyboard. That should be comfortable. The critical thing to keep in mind here is that your wrists ought not to bend either downward or upward to reach the keys comfortably. If either is the case, you are either excessively high up or too low. Think 90 degrees, pretty much. Once more, the critical thought is not to have your wrists bending to contact the keys. Drawn out utilization of such a procedure will cause damage in the wrists after some time. With that, it's essential to keep your wrists adaptable and free. By and by, a strain isn't your companion.

In case you are playing an electronic instrument, the best situation is to have a movable stand for the piano so that you can raise it or lower it whenever you need to adjust its position. Failing to have such, you will need a level surface (like a table or desk) that is neither too high nor excessively low and a stool or seat that puts you at a suitable position to match the height of your instrument. Once more, on any occasion, if you cannot comfortably sit around the piano, that is an issue.

The distance between you and the instrument is additionally significant. You will see that neither sitting excessively far from nor too near the organ will permit your hands to be directly at a 90-degree edge from your body. And in this manner, you will be parallel to the floor and to arrive at all the keys proficiently. You'll additionally see that both positions will truly drive you to twist your wrists here and there to play. That is an issue.

In this way, ensure you sit facing the inside, that you are sitting up straight while your feet are level on the floor, that your hands and wrists don't have to bend at awkward angles to reach or touch all the keys and you are not feeling any physical uneasiness.

Hand Position

One new thing while we are on the matter of hands, precisely how to play the keys, is straightforward. You need to bend your fingers, so the very tips of them tumble down on the keys to play them. Here is the place your creative mind proves to be useful. Take a close view of your hands at present. Envision holding something like a tennis ball freely in each. See that slight bend? Hold that set up and turn your hands over as though you are going to play the piano. That is the correct hand position when playing the piano, and there should be no strain in your fingers. Simply keep up that slight, simple bend that permits your fingers to just drop down onto the keys underneath them.



You will see how I stress the bend of the fingers and the resulting utilization of the fingertips for them to play the piano keys. Why would it be a good idea for you not to play with your fingers level, you wonder? Because playing like that will make it significantly harder for you to accomplish the essential mobility on the instrument. The objective is to have the option to move about the piano unreservedly, effectively, and, in time, rapidly and precisely. That is the sign of an incredible piano player. You do not need accuracy or speed; you need both simultaneously and consistently. In music, if your brain can think it, there should be no reason why your hands are not able to execute it. That is the purpose of this discussion about positioning. We are attempting to accomplish a point of most proficiency around an instrument, and the best way to do this is to rehearse a stance that promotes mobility, comfort, and simplicity.

You can attempt it for yourself at this moment. Attempt to play with your fingertips dropping down on each key directly from above. Ensure that the tips are your place of contact with the instrument. Then attempt to play with leveled fingers, no bends included. Do you notice the difference between

the two? Do you feel or see how hard one is and how the other one is natural?

Piano playing has a language of its own, and once you learn that language, you will find playing the piano becomes easier. Many of the terms associated with piano playing are written in Italian, French, German, Spanish, or Latin, but you don't need to learn multiple languages to understand it.

The more you play the keyboard, the more familiar you will become with these terms, and, to help you, the next chapter is a list of common piano terms that you need to learn.

Chapter 4

Terminology and General Musical Concepts



These are some of the fundamental building blocks for playing the piano.

Articulation

You can write with words or symbols that are typically Italian on a music sheet. It depicts the style of playing the tones or segments. They can be heavy or light, smooth or rough, or short or long.

Dynamics

It indicates the volume of the musical piece. Symbols show the tone of the music, softness of section, or loudness tones of music on the melodic sheets known as dynamic markings.

Harmony

It invokes a specific state of mind. It is a collection of tones that you play around with or underneath the song. You can change the harmony regardless of whether the song continues as before. Subsequently, the state of mind the harmony summons can change totally. It is a case of this harmony transforming from an upbeat state of mind to a furious mind-set.

Melody

A melody is a group of single melodic tones that you can play within a steady progression to make one complete unit. It can be a theme that you can sing to or play an instrument.

Rhythm

It is the depiction of how a melodic piece moves through time. It advises the course of action of how to tone duration and lengths with time.

Tempo

It is a representation of the speed at which one is playing the music. Is it moderate or quick? The beat gets commonly demonstrated toward the start of a musical tune and when the speed needs to change.

Terms for Scales and Keys

Minor and major scales and keys are one of the first things you will need to learn as you figure out how to play the piano.

Arpeggio

It is a harmony that you separate so that the tones can play at once rather than together simultaneously.

Chord

It is three tones playing simultaneously.

Chord Progression

It depicts a progression of chords played successively.

Chromatic Scale

It is a scale made up of half steps.

Dominant

It is the fifth level of a scale. It is also the second most significant tone of a range and is likewise known as scale degree 5. The keys are the ones that identify them.

Key

It is the connection between tones. It focuses on a focal sound. A key is essential for the capacity of the concordance of a melodic piece or segment.

Minor/Major

These are two sorts of groupings for keys, scales, and tones. You can write the keys, scale, and sounds in a minor mode, which is sad, dark, and serious

in the mood while those that are in major are generally happy, light, and positive.

Minor Scale

It is a scale including half steps and whole steps and has all the tones of any minor key. They go from most noteworthy to least or least to most noteworthy. There are varieties of the minor scale that incorporate harmonic minor, melodic minor, and the natural minor.

Major Scale

It refers to a scale involving half steps and whole steps and has all tones of any significant key that plays. They go from most noteworthy to least or most minimal to most noteworthy.

Octave

The Latin word for this is octaves, and it implies eighth. So, it is the eighth tone in the whole step. It is regularly utilized in scales and used as a marker of separation. Scales get isolated into octaves. An ordinary case of playing a one-octave scale involves playing while starting with one C then onto the next most elevated C on the piano.

Scale

It is a progression of extraordinary tones that one can play in steady progress. You arrange them in descending or ascending order. Scales typically have 8 to 12 notes. A-C significant scale has such records.

Scale Degree

It depicts tones numbered from one to seven on the scale. Also, the eighth tone is known as the octave; thus, it is not usually counted.

Tonic

Additionally called the scale degree 1 or keynote, it is the principal tone of any scale. You can identify it with the keys and is the most significant tone

of a range. For instance, if you are in C Major, the tonic is C, while G is the tonic of G minor.

Triad

It is a chord that has three notes. It is the most widely recognized kind of harmony.

Half Step/Whole-Step

It is the separation between two back to back notes. A whole step is likewise known as a whole note. It is the separation between one white key and the following white key or between one dark key and the next dark key on a piano.

A half step, on the other hand, is also known as a semitone, and it portrays the separation between one key and the following key on a piano. It likewise represents the least distance between the two different tones. The two kinds of notes are utilized a lot in scales.

Terms of Musical Form and Notation

These terms depict how you ought to play a piece. Understanding and knowing this idea will assist you in exploring your way through playing and learning musical compositions. They help you with moving toward piano playing in a progressively educated manner.

8va

It is something that shows that an artist should play the provided passage one octave from the printed notes. If you find the symbol written underneath the printed letters, at that point, you should perform these notes an octave lower than the one published. You should play an octave higher than the one written. If there is a symbol with the inscription over the printed notes, it should be represented.

Accidental

These are icons that demonstrate the raising or bringing down the pitch. They show up close to the notes on the organ.

Bass Clef

It is a melodic symbol that you place on the staff bottom line of a piano score. The line is also known as the bass line. Additionally, the bass clef is known as the F clef since the fourth line tallying up from the base is the note F.

Clef

It is a melodic symbol that you set toward the beginning of a staff. It decides the pitches of the notes put on the staff.

Binary Form

Also known as AB form, which involves two distinct areas of a piece of music known as A and B. Regularly, you play each area twice before heading off to the following segment.

Double Bar Line

It is a set with two bar lines with the subsequent one being thicker than the other one. The symbol is an indication of the conclusion of a particular piece.

Flat

It is an article that you compose on the left half of a specific note to show that you ought to play the note a half step less than its average volume as recorded.

Form

It is the general organization and structure of a melodic piece.

Grace note

It goes with a first note, and you can write it in a smaller kind than the first note.

Grand Staff

It is specific to piano playing and is where you connect two staves (the plural of staff) using a curved line known as a brace, set on the extreme left side, as well as a vertical line on the extreme right side. The two lines range the whole length of the two staves.

Key Signature

It is an arrangement of sharps or flats that you will find on the furthest left of each staff to show which pitches you need to play for a specific piece or section.

Leger line

It is an expansion of the staff. You can use it to show pitches that don't fit into the five staff lines since they are excessively low or excessively high.

RH and LH

RH represents the right side, while LH represents the left hand. You write the abbreviation in a passage and is a sign of which hand you ought to use, either the right hand or the left hand.

Measure and the Measure lines

Measures are additionally known as bars. They are an assortment that has a specific set number of beats. You isolate each group from the others by a slender vertical line known as a bar line or a measuring line. Each measure has its number. One typically positions the numbers positioned around a square. For the most part, these numbers are in an alternate textual style from different numbers on the page. The numbers work as a kind of perspective point to permit the performer to discover their place on the score rapidly.

Natural

It is an article that is composed on the left of a specific note to demonstrate that one ought to play. The note ought to remain with no subsequent

modification.

Note

It is an article that is put on staff to demonstrate pitch, which is known as tone and length, or rhythm.

Repeat sign

It is an article that shows an area of music one ought to play again right away. It usually shows up toward the finish of the A and B area in paired structure. It may be shown by a first or a subsequent consummation.

Score

It is the proper term for a music sheet that contains a song or musical piece.

Sharp

It is an article that is composed on the left half of specific note to demonstrate that the note ought to play a half step higher than its standard tone, as documented.

Staff

On a score, this territory is a set of 5 lines straight alongside four breaks where one composes melodic notes. Vertical lines put at the left and right corners link the lines. You can either write the notes on a line or in space.

Ternary form

It is also known as the ABA form and contains three sections. The A area presents the original tune and is, at times, rehashed before setting off to the B segment. The B segment involves an alternate form. When you highlight the B segment, you reintroduce the A segment to finish the melodic piece.

Variation and theme

The melodic structure has an original tune, which usually presents toward the beginning of the piece, which is the theme. Next, you add a progression of variations to the song, which adds various characters to the tune.

Treble clef

The treble clef is a melodic symbol that you can set on the line at the staff or top of the score or the piano. The line is otherwise known as a treble line. You can also refer to the treble clef to as the G clef as it additionally looks like the letter G, and since you will find it on the line coming in second, up from the most minimal line. It is also the note G.

Trill

Its abbreviation is Tr and is a gadget you use for quick rotation between the note of that half step and whole step apart.

Dynamic Terms

These are ideas used to pass on how loud or soft a given entry of music ought to play. How delicate or how noisy is not entirely clear as there exists no decibel esteem for it.

Crescendo

It means a melodic piece that ought to get stronger through the span of a given entry. Its abbreviation is cresc.

Decrescendo

It means a melodic piece ought to get gentler through the span of a given entry. Its abbreviation is decresc.

Forte

It means you ought to play a piece at a very high volume.

Its abbreviation is f.

Mezzo Forte

It means you need to play a piece at a medium boisterous volume. Its abbreviation is mf.

Piano

It means you need to play the piece at a delicate volume.

Its abbreviation is p.

Subito Piano

The word subito is Italian for out of nowhere, and in this way, this articulation means that a musician should out of nowhere play a given passage or note quietly. It brings a component of surprise into the melodic piece and regularly comes after loud passages and notes.

Terms for Rhythm

The accompanying terms and ideas are valuable with regards to getting the capacity to peruse music as they show how much time a given piece to play for or to what extent a quietness ought to be.

32nd note and 32nd Rest

32nd note goes on for one-eighth of a beat, which is half up to a sixteenth note. 32nd rest shows one-eighth of a rhythm of quiet.

3/4

It is a collection of 3 beats for each measure. You can consider them as 1-2-3, with the most grounded rhythm being 1.

6/8

You can refer it to as the compound meter in which the eighth note gets the beat.

Beat

It is additionally known as a heartbeat. It isolates the cadence into regular and equivalent units of time.

Common Time

You may consider this group of four beats as 1-2-3-4 while focusing on 1 and 3.

Cut Time

It is a collection of two beats that represented 1-2 while focusing on 1.

Dotted Half Note

It is a sound for three beats.

Downbeat

It is a solid beat. It is the initial of a measure.

Eighth rest and eighth note

The eighth note counts a half of a beat, while the eighth rest implies one-half beat of quiet.

Fermata

It shows that you ought to hold a rest or note longer than is printed. The image resembles a 10,000 foot and shows up over rest or note.

Half Rest and Half Note

A half note is likewise known as a minum. It goes on for two beats. A half rest is additionally called the half bar and demonstrates two rhythms of quiet.

Pickup Note

It is a note that precedes the primary full measure.

Quarter Rest and Quarter Note

A quarter note represents a full beat, as the quarter rest shows a full beat of quiet.

Rest

It is an article that shows quietness for a specific period.

Sixteenth Rest and Sixteenth Note

The Sixteenth note sounds for half up to an eighth note while the sixteenth rest shows one-fourth of a beat of quietness.

Syncopation

It is the de-emphasizing or stressing of a beat.

Time Signature

It is organizing beats into groups. It is additionally known as a meter. It shows toward the beginning of each piece, and whenever there should be a change.

Whole Rest and Whole Note

A whole note is additionally known as a semibreve. It goes on for four beats. A whole rest is additionally known as a whole bar and demonstrates that quiet ought to watch for the measure or entire bar.

Terms for Tempo

These terms help a piano player to understand the relative speed at which the individual in question should play a specific piece. These ideas generally show toward the beginning of each melodic piece.

Accelerando

It means the speed should increment throughout a given entry of music.

Allegretto

It is a modestly quick speed play.

Allegro

It is a brisk tempo that is faster than allegretto.

Andante

It is medium-slow speed.

Decelerando

It is an indication that one needs to slow down the speed gradually throughout a particular passage of music.

Energio

It means the melodic piece or area ought to play with excitement and vitality. It is something contrary to a grave stamping.

Grave

It means the music ought to play slowly and genuinely. It is something contrary to an energio stamping.

Largo

It means the piano player should play at a moderate speed.

Ritardando

It is an Italian expression that implies getting a bit slower, and all things considered, the pianos ought to continuously hinder the pace over a given entry of music. It is an articulation that works toward the finish of a piece or segment of music.

Rubato

The piano player gets the chance to set the rhythm when this articulation is utilized and can back off or Accelerate freely.

Articulation Markings

They are a reference to melodic style and articulation. Each musician unexpectedly expresses themselves. However, realizing these articulations permits this piano player to carry adaptability to their style.

Accent

Like a marcato and the staccato, this article shows that a specific note ought to receive more vigorous focus.

Accompaniment

It is a melodic selection utilized underneath the principle topic to either bolster the fundamental problem or make it all the more fascinating. It is usually a harmony. However, it can now and then be a song.

Con pedale

It means one can use the pedal to play a given entry.

Dolce

Straightforwardly deciphered, this is an Italian expression that implies sweet. It means that the passage ought to play in a delicate and friendly way.

Dots

These are signs intended to appear if notes should be played short or with spaces between them. They show up as markings underneath or above notes.

Leggiero

It means a melodic entry ought to play quickly yet with a fragile touch.

Marcato

It means notes should play short, seeming as though a slight space isolates them. It is generally printed as a word or truncation and is somewhat more cumbersome than a staccato.

Slur

It means notes ought to play smoothly, seeming like they are associated with one another. The print of the symbol is a bent over a cluster of notes.

Staccato

It means you need to play notes short, seeming as though they are isolated from one another by a small space.

Tenuto

It shows a melodic piece that ought to act in a supported and a smooth way that is holding longer than the printed duration.

Other Piano Terminology

Break

It is an interruption in a melodic piece. It is regular in jazz pieces and regularly demonstrates that the piano player ought to ad-lib.

Coda

It is an Italian word that implies tail, and it depicts a small area of music that happens toward the finish of a melodic piece.

Da Capo

It is an Italian expression showing that the musician should come back to the start of the piece.

Dal Segno

Imprinted in the abbreviation DS, this term shows that the musician should repeat a particular section of music.

Duet

It is a melodic piece performed by two piano players. It is also known as four-hand, named after the utilization of four hands.

Etude

It is a French expression that signifies “Study.” It is a melodic session intended to build up a specific melodic ability.

Fine

It is the Italian word for completion. It demonstrates the finish of a melodic piece, and a twofold bar line indicates the fine.

Gavotte

It is a performance piece to be performed by the piano player with an ensemble.

Improvisation

It is principally essential in jazz exhibitions and shows that the entertainer should play a piece on the spot without using recently composed notes.

March

It is a quick melodic piece that is regularly cheery. It is a regular performer at military processions.

Nocturne

It is a moderate, intelligent sort melodic piece that intends to conjure evening time symbolism.

Opus

It is an arrangement of numbering as the work of the arranger.

Refrain

It is additionally known as a chorus and is a tune that rehashes at unique occasions of a melodic piece or song. It shows the utilization of “chorus” or “refrain” over the melodic piece.

There are, obviously, scores of different terms that should figure out how to be a talented piano player, yet those sketched out above set an incredible establishment for you.

Chapter 5

The Different Types of Pianos

– Does it Matter?



The last section was an essential prologue to pianos, yet no prologue to an instrument can end until you consider some examples of its types.

As the piano continued developing, extraordinary and increasingly modern models of the modest old wooden piano began to come up. In the first place, there were just two sorts of keyboards, the upright piano, and the grand piano. Now a wide range of types are available; how about we view each one of them?.

Grand Piano

The grand piano is probably the most well-known of all models of pianos. It comprises a level casing and flat strings. The heading of the lines and the console are inverse; consequently, these pianos are effectively recognizable. They highlight them regularly in shows, motion pictures, music recordings, and so on. The hammer (otherwise known as the activity) is set under the strings; it returns to its original position after hitting the lines, generally with the assistance of gravity. The Grand pianos are incredibly mainstream since they produce luscious and rich sounds. These pianos are suitable for shows and other similar spots where sound quality is a requirement. Some other sub-classifications fall under this title, and they are the semi-concert grand, petite grand, and concert grands, i.e., the parlor grand, the baby grand, the medium grand, and the ballroom grand.

Upright Piano

The other sort of piano is the upright piano, otherwise called the vertical keyboard. Its creation was because the grand piano was not appropriate for little houses. While the strings of a grand piano are even, the series of this model is vertical. The hammers in the upright model are even and recapture

their unique positions with the assistance of springs. It is exceptional when you compare it with a customary piano.

Upright pianos, as well, are grouped by their size. The keyboards that have long strings and are tall are known as 'upright grand pianos.' These pianos are, in most cases, found in homes, churches, music schools, and comparable organizations.

Digital, Electronic, and Electric

These are the most recent invented models and first made in the twentieth century. Electric pianos first appeared in public in 1929. The electronic keyboards were developed in the 1970s, and afterward, the computerized pianos appeared in the mid-'80s.

The first 1920s model utilized metal strings alongside an intensifier, an amplifier, and an attractive pickup. These strings were then supplanted into metal tines while the pickup changed into an electromagnetic pickup. The sound produced with the assistance of such upgrades was then enhanced utilizing a piano or a keyboard. These models are mostly suitable for rock music, jazz, and funk music. Apprentices who needed to figure out how to play the instrument would also make use of the model, yet it was never for use in shows and concerts.

Electronic pianos don't have any acoustic parts. They utilize a synthesizer with channels and oscillators that copy the sounds of an ordinary keyboard. The model, as well, was, for the most part, used for learning and rehearsing music. As they have an earphone choice, individuals can rehearse in private.

After the electronic pianos, advanced pianos prompted an upset in the realm of pianos. Similar to electric pianos, digital pianos as well, don't have any acoustic parts; they utilize the computerized testing innovation through which they create the sound. These instruments additionally use an amplifier and a speaker. Like electronic pianos, these too can be used with

earphones. Digital pianos have pedals, MIDI choices, and an assortment of voices. The sound from these models can be recorded and utilized later. These pianos are adaptable and can adjust with the assistance of the program.

Hybrid Pianos

These pianos are ordinary grand or upright pianos that have a couple of highlights of the electronic keyboard. Thus, as it were, they are a blend of both acoustic and computerized pianos. These have gotten very basic since the 2000s and are regularly favored by entertainers since they are perfect for record music.

Specialized Pianos

As the name recommends, these models have explicit use. An assortment of particular pianos has been presented for as far back as a few years ago, for example, the player piano, the toy piano, the mini piano, the prepared piano, and so on.

It doesn't make a difference in which piano you play or which type of music you play, the instrument of the piano, and the usual way of doing things continue as before. A lot of things, such as the blends, the verbalization, the beat, the articulation, and so forth, may change. However, harmony never shows signs of change. A D significant harmony will be the equivalent regardless of the class or instrument you use. It is the reason it is fundamental to have an inside and outside information on chords. You will have the option to play across classes and instruments if you get familiar with your harmonies appropriately.

Playing Across Genres

To play any instruments effectively, you have to create sounds that are resonant and pleasurable to the ears. It is the reason you have to comprehend the connection between harmonies and tune. They should supplement each other all around. If you need to play concerts for songs,

you have to gain proficiency with a harmony movement. In harmony movement, you will find out about harmony tones, which harmonies correspond, which chord don't fit each other, and so forth.

Chapter 6

Chords



Chords are one of the most important parts of any music. They come in all varieties and genres of music played or created with instruments. The melody line is played with several chord progressions whenever a song is played using any instrument. The basic needs to fulfill when you write music are the melody and chords.

What is a Chord?

A chord is a mix of tones or notes which, when played together, mixes in agreement.

Chords are a group of notes that you play in a synchronized way so that you produce a harmony. But the harmony is generated only when these notes complement each other; chords give melody to the music and rhythm to a song as well. Two note chords are referred to as dyads, for example, power chords. Triads are quite basic and can include both major and minor chords. Also, there are four-note chords that go the major seven or minor seven chords.

The most commonly played chords on the piano are the Triads. It means three different notes are played together, and each of these notes is distinct and quite different from one another. There are only one root note and the other two chords which fall at intervals of a third and a fifth away and above of that root note. It should always be kept in mind that the chords have to be in synchronization and balance one another to produce a pleasing sound.

The tone combination comes in different forms which include the following:

A three-tone chord referred to as the triad

A piece of four-tone music referred to as the seventh

A five-tone chord referred to as the ninth

A six-tone chord referred to as the eleventh

A seven-tone chord referred to as the thirteenth

What is an Interval?

The difference between two notes in a pitch in music is known as an interval. Stretches are tallied from the least to the highest notes with the principal lower note considered 1 while the last top note before the octave is regarded as 7.

Classifying Intervals

Harmonic/Melodic intervals:

Intervals are supposed to be melodic when every note is played independently. At the point when you play them together, it is known as a harmonic interval.

Our primary concentration in this book will be on chord intervals since it manages the chords.

Major/Perfect Intervals

A perfect interval is an interval that is between the octave, fifth, or the fourth and the unison on the Ionian scale. For instance, when you use the key C Ionian scale, it is the distance between a similar note referred to as the perfect unison, from C to the eighth note called the ideal octave, from C to G referred to as the perfect fifth, and from C to F referred to as the perfect fourth.

The span between the first note and the seventh, sixth, third, or second note of the Ionian scale is referred to as an Ionian scale. We denote the separation between chords as follows:

- From C to D is referred to as the major second
- From C to E, is a major third
- From C to A is a major sixth
- From C to B is a major seventh.

Minor Intervals

It is the point at which the interval that separates two notes of a major stretch is diminished by a half step.

For instance, a major second when decline by a half step turns into a minor second. In the C Ionian scale, a major second is from C to D, when changed to a minor second by diminishing it by half step becomes C to Db. A minor third would be from C to Eb rather than C to E, a minor sixth would be from C to Ab rather than C to A, and a minor seventh would be from C to Bb rather than C to B.

Note: just the major interval might be changed over into minor spans.

Increased/Lessened Intervals

An interval is supposed to be an increased interval when a major or a perfect interval is made more prominent by a half step. For instance, raising the sixth scale level of a C Ionian scale half step, from A to A#, provides you an increased interval (enlarged sixth).

An interval is referred to as a diminished interval when a perfect interval or minor interval is made littler by a half step.

For instance: A perfect fifth in the C Ionian scale is from C to G. By diminishing it from G to Gb, you lessen the interval, making it a reduced span (lessened fifth).

Chromatic Interval

It is the point at which the keynote or reference note and the top note are not from a similar Ionian scale.

For instance, C to Eb is a minor third and is not of a similar Ionian scale. Where C is the keynote or the reference note, and Eb is the top note.

Increased, decreased, and minor intervals are on the whole chromatic intervals on an Ionian scale.

The general relationship between diminished intervals, diminished, perfect, major, and minor

If you need to get a clearer comprehension of intervals, this section will show you the connection between every one of these intervals.

The connection between augmented, major, minor, and diminished intervals

Beginning from the major second, lessening it by half step will give you a minor second, decreasing this minor second by half step will give you a reduced second. Expanding a major second by half step gives you an increased second.

The above example additionally applies for a major third, sixth, and seventh of an Ionian scale.

The connection between reduced, vast, and expanded intervals:

Beginning from the ideal fourth and lessening it by a half step gives you a reduced fourth, and expanding it by a half step gives you an increased fourth. It likewise applies to a perfect fifth.

The Triads or Major Chords

Major chords, which are additionally the essential harmonies in any key on the keyboard, are based on the first, fourth, and fifth scale levels of an Ionian scale. These are essential chords that are denoted by the Roman

numeral such as I, IV, V. The chords contain all notes found on an Ionian scale. Utilizing the C Ionian scale that has eight notes, of which three (the G, F, and C note) were used for frame essential/major chords. When you play each of the chords, you will be able to see all the notes in the Ionian scale denoted. We will gain proficiency with the rest of the notes and their particular chords throughout this book.

The main significant chord on the C Ionian scale is the C significant harmony comprised of the perfect fifth and major third and a root.

A major third and a perfect fifth or a minor third on a major third gives you the major chord.

We will learn significant harmonies in two unique manners

Taking the first, third, and fifth of any Ionian scale on the keyboard or piano:

In this technique, you must be acquainted with Ionian scales to such an extent that you can play without much of a stretch search for the first, third, and fifth note of any Ionian scale. For instance, using G major key, G is the root note or first note, B is the third note, and D is the fifth note, giving you a G major harmony D+B+G.

Adding a minor third interval to a third major interval

The primary measure for this strategy is to comprehend that a minor third equals three half steps and a third major interval equivalent to two entire steps or four half steps. In light of this, one can without much of a stretch make up a major tune by adding a minor third interval to a major third.

For instance, to create an F major harmony, you would begin with the F key, which is the root note. Then include a third major interval by moving four half steps to reach A. From A, add a minor third interval by moving three half steps to reach C. It, in turn, gives you an F major chords of “F+A+C.”

Using the C major key, the I, IV, V harmony would then be the C major tune, the F major harmony, and the G major harmony individually.

Note: you could likewise utilize a major third and the perfect fifth.

Chapter 7

The Different Types of Chords



There are various types of harmonies and a few different ways of grouping them. There are dissonant harmonies, which are not charming to tune into, and those that are agreeable, which implies that they are satisfying to the ears. There are additionally two-note chords, three-note chords, etc. There are even broken harmonies. Below, we are going to take a look at a portion of the various kinds of chords.

Two-Note Chords

These kinds of harmonies are referred to as intervals. For individuals familiar with the music theory, an interval is a distinction that exists between two separate pitches. The naming of intervals relies upon what number of there are just as on the quality. For instance, an interval known as the major third has superior quality and is in the third position. The number here refers to the number of notes that specific intervals incorporate.

What's more, to compute this, you will consider the lines and spaces of the melodic staff, alongside the places of the notes which build that interval.

To illustrate, envision playing notes C and G. The quantity of the interval note is a fifth. It is the number of notes in a chord that lies in the middle of these two notes G, F, E, D, and C. These notes take up five staff positions alongside that of the notes that played which is the G and C. The name of the interval relies upon both the quality and the number. The number will be joined by any of the accompanying terms: minor, major, diminished, augmented, and perfect.

Chords That Contain More Than Three Notes

Harmonies can likewise have notes in as much as three, which are known as the tetrads or tertian. These names incorporate seventh chords, extended chords, added tone chords, tone chords, and even altered tone clusters.



Major Chords

The greater part of the chords that are played today in the world is either naturally minor or major. Indeed, around 99% of all music played depends on these two harmonies. Major Chords have a synthesis of three notes. You have seen this previously - a root note, a third note, and a fifth note. You should take note of the fact that, during the naming of tunes, the root becomes the main focus. In other words, harmonies are named for the root note. Along these lines, a harmony that is named C major has a C root, which will be the most reduced note it has.

The chord will, at that point, have a third sound, which will be either an E or the third tone of the C Ionian scale. It will likewise have a fifth tone, of which will either be the fifth sound of the C significant scale or a G tone. Major harmonies will consistently have a superior sound, regardless of the note that frames the root. The reason behind this is the number of half steps that will be available from one note to the next will continue as before. The half step is three while progressing from the third to the fifth while it is four from the root note to the third. The interval between the third and the root is a significant third. Also, the interval between the fifth and the third is referred to as the A minor third. It applies to all the twelve sounds that make up the chromatic scale of a keyboard.

To illustrate, envision needing to play a D major harmony. From its name, we notice the root tone is D. We will then tally four half steps reach the third, of which it will be F-sharp; we will, in this manner, check three half steps from F-sharp. It will wind up being the A tone.

We should do this for another key, a dark one this time. Let's assume we are attempting to play an E-level key. The initial tone is E, three half steps from it will be the B-level tone while four half strides from it will be the third, which will be the G tone.

Minor Chords

Minor harmonies resemble the opposite of major harmonies. To play a minor harmony, we will begin from the root, move three half steps away, to the minor third, and afterward four half steps away to the minor fifth. For example, envision us attempting to play a C minor harmony. We will begin with C as the root tone. We will, at that point, move three half steps from C, which will take us to the E-level tone, four half steps from this, and we will wind up on the G tone, which is alluded to the major third.

In other words, to play a minor harmony requires an easing off of the center volume by one half-step. The straightforward change will bring about a minor harmony being put out by the piano.

Minor Chords	Finger	Key	Finger	Key	Finger	Key
C Minor	Thumb	C	Index	E^b	Ring	G
D Minor	Thumb	D	Index	F	Ring	A
E Minor	Thumb	E	Index	G	Ring	B
F	Thumb	F	Index		Ring	C

Minor				A ^b		
G Minor	Thumb	G	Index	B^b	Ring	D
A Minor	Thumb	A	Index	C	Ring	E
B Minor	Thumb	B	Index	D	Middle	F[#]

Diminished Chords

It is the kind of chords that is used in particular musical types and genres, such as jazz. To play a reduced chord, you will use the utilization of two minor thirds. In other words, if you need to play a C diminished, you will need to play the C tone, which is also the root tone, the E-flat tone, and afterward the G-flat tone.

Augmented Chords

They are chords that you play using two major thirds. You will find the augmented chords in the opposite direction of the diminished chords that use two minor chords.

Dissonant Chords

They are chords with their quality varying from the sound created. In other words, harmonies whose sounds are not friendly. Their characteristics are alluded to as either augmented or diminished. Harmonies, for example, can sounds odd and horrendous. And keeping in mind that these harmonies are not lovely to tune in to, they do have their special application in music. Some music experts use them at vital points in music to make the music all the more enamoring and tempting.

Broken Chords

The reference broken harmony pretty much portrays what this sort of harmony is. Broken chords are harmonies with a note of that are not played all the while. In other words, the notes that make up this kind of harmony are split into a grouping of notes. You will here and there hear the term arpeggio in music; this alludes to the playing of broken harmonies in rising order. In that capacity, arpeggios are broken harmonies. However, the contrary is not the situation, as broken harmonies are substantially more than just arpeggios.

Chord Progressions

It refers to how the chord has been organized. In other words, a progression of harmonies that are all together. Harmony progression is also known as symphonious progression, and the explanation behind this is not difficult to make sense of since chord progression is basic to the generation of harmony in music, both classical and American.

The Significance of Knowing the Piano Chords

There are a few reasons why a hopeful piano player must possess as much information as possible about piano chords. The significant explanation is that, without information on notes and the harmonies that these notes are played in, it will be difficult to play music, as these are the basic components at which point music is constructed. Having extensive knowledge of harmonies is essential and imperative to being a piano player and a performer. Below is some way in which you can improve your piano knowledge.

Music Theory

The music hypothesis is one of those pieces of learning music that assist you with increasing a more profound comprehension and valuation for music. What's more, chords are fundamental to learning music. They are the very foundations at which point music theory is fabricated. Without a piece of information on harmonies, it would be difficult to:

- Get the hang of anything in music hypothesis
- To comprehend what artists that have preceded you and even those currently present here with you right now are saying to you
- To convey your thoughts and considerations to different artists on the planet today

Arpeggios

Arpeggios, as has been stated, are broken harmonies that are played in a climbing tone. Arpeggios are harmonies that you play one note at a specific time. What's more, to all the more likely comprehend this melodic structure, you have to know harmonies. Arpeggios and harmonies can be viewed as twins, which can be changed over to one another. For example, you can transform an arpeggio into harmony by playing the notes that make it up together rather than independently as arpeggios are wont to be played. Then again, you can turn harmony to an arpeggio known as a deconstruction essentially by playing it as single notes instead of playing them together.

Accompaniment

If you want to be a piano player or you need to have a career in piano playing, you can choose to play as an accompanist. Regardless of whether you are playing in a band, for another instrumentalist, as a part of a group, in the chapel, and so on, there is a need to have extensive information on harmonies. It is because harmonies are pivotal to playing the piano as an accompanist, and this makes information on them critical to play as an accompanist.

Chapter 8

Playing Chords

Since we have a complete understanding of what harmonies are, the critical sort, and how you note them, we should learn how you can apply this to practical piano playing.

Learning the piano is a superb technique to add to your side advantages and fine arts. Every piano student should get comfortable with the harmonies of the piano. At the point when we stop to think about it, piano music is not the primary type of music that includes harmonies and tones. All music comprises everything. Harmonies are a huge part of learning the piano. Also, when you have aced learning, you will be on your way to being a piano expert! Knowing the sort of music that you have to play helps when you are playing piano harmonies. Would you prefer to play jazz or well-known music? If you don't have the foggiest idea what kind of music you have to play, learning a wide scope of sets of harmonies is likely your most solid choice. Also, learning different harmonies will, in like manner, help you with figuring out how to play piano music significantly in an easier manner.

What is the amazing clarification for learning chords on the piano? Chords are fundamentally the foundation of any tune when we are playing Western music. Western music has fundamentally prepared for your piano playing and your piano activities; along these lines, you become proficient with the right harmonies. The more you learn concerning harmonies, the more straightforward it will be to play the piano. If you don't have the foggiest thought of how to get music yet, acknowledging harmonies will make it basic for you to extemporize. In case you have focused on your acing and murmuring, playing harmonies will be progressively direct for you to manage without the use of a music sheet. We will explain all the different ways that you can get some answers concerning playing harmonies.

The remarkable thing about the harmonies on pianos is that they derive their names from the order in which the letters are. You had a review that is close to the beginning of the book. When we play different arrangements of harmonies, we are playing harmonies on the piano. These harmonies help us to ad-lib and to help us with learning progressively about examining sheet music. We will talk dynamically about harmonies. We will take the learning of harmonies on two different levels, which are hypothetical and natural.

The normal level of harmonies infers that you will try to improve as a result of the way the harmonies sound. These are the common ways that harmonies sound to you, and this is a critical headway in making sense of how to improve. The hypothetical level is making sense of how to play harmonies legitimately. Exactly when we make sense of how to do the two levels, you are on the way to acing the harmonies of the piano.

There are some standard harmonies that you can learn on the piano. Major harmony is one that you will, in all likelihood, learn first during your activities. The original music is C, F, and G. You may have heard it in tunes, for instance, Calm Night. The G significant chord includes G, B, and D.

We see numerous huge harmonies on the piano, for instance, A Major, C Major, and E Major. Learning these chords is the perfect course for you to make sense of how to extemporize, and a short time later move onto playing by using sheet music.

You can locate the Minor harmony in various mainstream songs. It is not as lively and perky as the Major chord, nonetheless. The music is between the time of three halftones, and a while later, it follows with the acting of four halftones. It is how to confirm that it is a Minor chord. There is, in like manner, the seventh harmony that is, in any case, known as the seventh supreme harmony.

Learning the harmonies is a strict methodology, and we have to address it a little more in this book since it is for beginners. If you have more queries concerning the entire piano harmonies, this book is perfect for getting some knowledge about them. Having some knowledge will give you a savvy thought on the ideal approach to play the piano and read sheet music.

Chapter 9

Chord Inversions

Inversions in piano playing assist with bringing dynamic and makes a harmony progression sound better when applied accurately. We will be taking a look at the inversions of significant harmonies.

A chord inversion is a point at which we re-organize or revise the notes of a chord.

We should use a “C Major Chord” for instance. Regularly we play a “C Major Chord” as:

C – E – G

It is known as the Root Position, implying that the Root note is on the base.

Alternatively, the Root note is the most reduced.

We could likewise play a “C Major Chord” this way:

E – G – C

It is a “C Major Chord” in initial inversion.

All that occurred was the notes were re-organized.

Rather than the base note being C, such as in the Root position, presently, C is the top note.

To alter any harmony, just move the base note 1 octave higher.

In this way, you could play a C Major Chord as:

C – E – G the root position

E – G – C the first inversion

G – C – E the second inversion

If you somehow happened to alter it once more, it would turn into a root position harmony once more.

Here is a chart of every likely reversal of a C Major Chord:



You can invert each type of chord.

We should take a look at another model utilizing a D Major Chord:



As should be obvious, it does not make a difference what chord you are playing.

You can play any chord in any inversion.

Your next objective is to figure out how to play the entirety of your chords in each inversion.

We have the three-tone, four-tone, five-tone, six-tone, and seven-tone chords. The number of tones will give you the number of ways in which you can play the chords. The three-tone chord or group of three can be played in three different ways. For example, it has three reversals. You can also play the four-tone in four different ways, the five-tone in five different ways, the six-tone in six different ways, and the seven-tone in seven different ways.

Since we are as of now considering sets of three, we will concentrate on the inversion of a significant set of three chords. The set of three, as before expressed, can be played in three unique reversals, which include: the root chord, the initial inversion, and the second inversion.

The Root Chord

You can consider a major chord to be in its root or original position if the primary tone (or note) of an Ionian scale is the most reduced note of the chord.

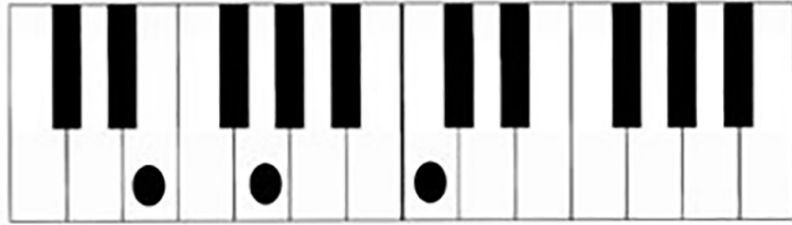
For instance, when playing the C major chord, the harmony is supposed to be in its root note if the most minimal note is a C note.



Note: a note is said to be in an inverted position if the C note is not the least note in the C major harmony.

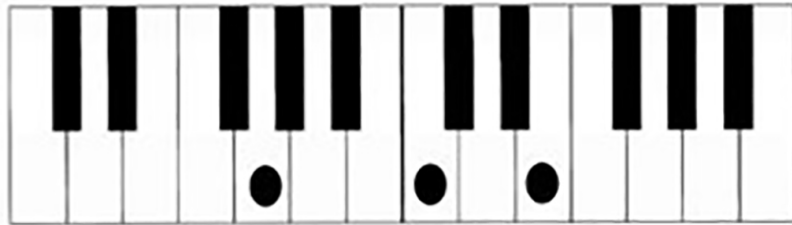
First Inversion

You consider a chord to be in its first inversion the point the second note of the root chord turns into the most minimal note. You can accomplish this by taking the most reduced note of the root harmony an octave higher.



Second Inversion

A harmony is supposed to be in its second inversion when the third note of the root harmony turns into the most reduced note. You do it by taking the third note of the root harmony an octave lower or by taking the root note and the second note of the harmony an octave higher.



To learn major harmonies and their inversion for the 12 keys found on the piano, you will need to know the Ionian scale for the twelve keys, which would empower you to gain proficiency with the major harmonies for each key. I would encourage you to learn only the major significant harmonies based on the first scale level of an Ionian scale as the fourth and fifth scale degrees are additionally the first scale level of another Ionian scale.

For instance, the C significant scale has its C major chord based on the first scale degree, while its fourth and fifth scale degree has its harmonies based on the key of F and G major individually. It then implies that the F chord is

based on the first scale level of the F Ionian scale, and the G harmony is additionally based on the first scale level of the G Ionian scale.

One more thing:

Even though there are three inversions the chords we have learned till now, there are multiple approaches to play each.

There are six unique approaches to play every one.

Consider it. There are three slots, which include: the base note, center note, and top note.

The first slot will contain any of the three notes of the harmony.

The second slot will contain any of the two residual notes.

The third slot will be the one residual note.

It gives us the accompanying condition: $3 \times 2 \times 1 = 6$ approaches to play harmony.

Along these lines, a C Major harmony could be played in these manners:

E – G – C

C – E – G

G – C – E

G – E – C (the notes will be progressively spread out)

C – G – E (the notes will be progressively spread out)

E – G – C (the notes will be progressively spread out)

The last three models may require two hands to have the option to play, except if you have large hands.

Try not to stress a lot overplaying each harmony in every one of the six different ways at this time.

For a start, simply get familiar with the root position, first and second inversions.

More often than not, there is a simple method of moving between different chords by utilizing Inversions.

Notice that there is less development of the hand if you generally utilize the closest inversion.

Ordinarily, there will be a typical note that is contained in the present chord, just as the following harmony. At whatever point this occurs, consistently keep the regular note and move different notes to accomplish insignificant development.

Patterns

Learning more left-hand accompaniment patterns is important when you want to play the piano.

Fixed and Broken Chords

Chords are the simplest accompaniment (left-hand) regardless of whether one plays them as arpeggios or straight chords. You can start with elementary chords and then discover what inversions work better for you without necessarily having to move the left hand to all places of your keyboard. Additionally, try experimenting with diverse rhythmic patterns. The texture can be changed, and you can add a certain variety to the left hand. Use the octave, fifth, and root notes of the chord scale for every chord symbol. Now, create an up and down pattern all through the piece that you are playing. This pattern can be played for fast as well as slow music.

Chord Picking

When it comes to country music, chord picking using the left-hand is well suited. However, this pattern can be applied to any other music as well. A

lot of chords include root notes with third and fifth intervals. The three elements have to be known if you want to try chord picking successfully. For the pattern to be played, you should break a given chord into root note with two related top notes. On beat 1, you should ensure the root note is played, and on beat 2, you should play the two top notes. You can try something different while playing on beat three so that it sounds more impressive. Try using this pattern on some piece of music to try it out. You will see the bouncy rhythm it creates without you having to keep looking at your hands.

Octave Hammering

It is a fun and straightforward groove if you are only playing chords with the right hand. However, this pattern is not practical if you are playing something more complicated, like a melody with the right hand. For octave hammering, you have to place the left hand in the octave position. Your thumb and pinky finger should be prepared on your two notes, and your wrist should be loose enough for it to bounce with the right rhythm. Your hand should remain in the octave position when the chord changes, and you are moving to the next octave set. You can try anything from half notes to whole notes or eighth notes while playing the octaves and see what sounds best to you. When you familiarize yourself with harmony, you have a chance to add some octave patterns for the left-hand with octaves on the chord notes.

Bouncy Patterns

You can also try a rock type of sound pattern. This uses the fifth, octave, and 6th intervals of the chord, you can create a good bass pattern.

Melodic Bass

Some widely used patterns are even more famous than the leads that they accompany. You just need 3 notes from every chord scale, and these are the root, fifth, and sixth. These can be played back and forth repeatedly.

Chapter 10

Scale Fundamentals

It is a scale that comprises of eight shades. A scale goes from a key to the key that is an octave over that key. There are various kinds of scales. Some of them are Ionian scales, while some of them are Aeolian scales. Significant scales have been portrayed as sounding upbeat, while minor ones are said to sound dismal or desolate.

If you invest some portion of your training energy playing scales, you create muscle memory in your grasp. It then implies that after quite a while of rehearsing, your hands go all the more effectively to the notes on the scale you will be playing as you please. You need to see the printed sheet of music or select a tune, and your hands will automatically know what to do.

If you want to discuss scales, you should review the keys. There are two kinds of keys when you are figuring out how to play the piano. They are made of wood and physical blocks of ivory. There are likewise keys on which songs or scales are played.

Have you once been in an enclosure where a vocalist is giving an unexpected execution? She could lean towards the musician and state something like, “in the key of C.” That tells the piano player the point on the piano to begin. It likewise advises the piano player which physical keys to start and which harmonies to utilize. It is essential to know which key to use when playing a particular type of music.

At the point when you are learning scales, you can do it without mastering all the key marks. The Key marks are the notation of keys written on the keyboard, for example, the key of C or the key of G. You can begin by playing a C scale. An essential C scale is done on the white keys. Start with the correct key from Home keys position. Remember that your fingers are numbered in the order of 1 to 5, starting with the thumb as one.

Play 1-2-3 obviously, which is CDE on the piano. At that point, rather than playing the following note with your ring finger, use your thumb by sliding it under your fingers and reach the F key. Reposition your arm with the goal that your thumb is first in F and your pinky is fifth in C over-center C. At that point keep playing the scale. Hence, you are playing CDEFGABC or 1-2-3-1-2-3-4-5. You played your first scale. Practice it a couple of times.

If you want to play a C scale with your left arm, put your small finger on the C below the center C. Spot fingers 1 to 5 moving the piano up from each key to the following. Tap 5-4-3-2-1. At that point, arrive at the top with the center finger and spot it on the following key—Play 3-2-1 from this position. Subsequently, you are playing CDEFGABC or 5-4-3-2-1-3-2-1.

In the wake of rehearsing for some time, try putting your left hand and right hand together. Play the C under center C with your left little finger simultaneously. You contact center C with your left thumb. Keep on lifting the scale with two hands. It very well may be somewhat dubious from the start since you go with the center finger of the left hand and the base with the thumb of the right hand on various occasions. Practice for some time, and it will easily fall into place.

When the central system is gotten down, it is anything but difficult to contact other principle scales. It would be best if you remember the succession of steps and half steps for a bigger scale. The right arrangement up an Ionian scale is: starting note-step-step-half step-step-step-step-half step. You should know that since there are no dark keys between them, the EF and BC interval are each half step.

You can play a scale anyplace on the piano. Pick a note to begin. It does not make a difference if it is a black key or a white key. Utilize the given arrangement of half steps and steps to go from that point up an eight-note scale. You can also begin from the left of the piano and proceed with the

scale to one side. With some regular training, you will be able to play enormous scales.

The Basic Technique used in Playing Scales

It is never about what notes you play, yet it is about how you play them. Having a robust method and structure will improve your speed, tone, and help forestall injury.

1. Smooth Tone

Have you at any point heard somebody play scales, and they were not smooth? They were playing quite a few notes. However, the cadence was unstable, or a few notes truly stood out as opposed to having a pleasant, even tone?

It would be best if you had predictable scales, which means you can play them with all the notes at a comparable volume and an even cadence. That is the thing that makes them sound velvety! What's more, it is something that isolates great piano players from the extraordinary player.

2. Speed

A magnificent structure permits you to play quickly. It puts the points of your elbow, wrists, and fingers ideal positions, so the most effective utilization of movement is conceivable. Without great structure, your scales will feel ungainly and messy, because you will need to reshape your wrist at weird points to arrive at the notes.

When you ace this structure, you will notice an immediate improvement in the entirety of your playing! Out of nowhere, quick entries will be altogether simpler to play, and you will feel "at home" on the console.

3. Injury Prevention

Piano injuries are more typical than the vast majority think. Many piano players get harmed from excessive movement, and there's a ton of slow progress in scales!

The pressure is the thing that prompts injury. When you are playing tense, the ligaments and tendons in your fingers and wrists are continually under strained, and in the end, they will get injured. That is the reason for the injury. The key is to remain loose and strain-free as well as having a great structure will permit you to do that.

Step by Step Instructions to Have a Great Structure: The Over-Under Technique

The most fundamental structure on a piano is the over-under wrist movement. Here's the significant standard:

Roll your wrist down for in a crescent movement at whatever point you are leaning from your body.

Roll your wrist up and in, in a crescent movement, at whatever point you are going towards your body.

So, for instance, suppose you are playing C B A with your left hand or C D E with your right hand, and your hand is moving ceaselessly from your body, so your wrist will be going out for the count. In actuality, in case you are playing C D E with your left hand or C B A with your right hand, your hand is moving towards your body. So your wrist ought to be going up and in.

When you play the scales, in transit up, your right hand will go out and down. On the other hand, your left hand will go up and in, and it turns around in transit down.

At the point when you play scales, each time your thumb crosses under, you will need to complete a smaller than usual "reset" to set up the hand for the following movement. At the point when you first beginning rehearsing, you need to over overstate the progress. Truly make large half circles with your wrists, it is anything but challenging to mitigate it later once you get its hang.

A decent method to rehearse this is to utilize the Five Finger Drill. Necessarily play C D E F G F E D with fingers 1 2 3 4 5 4 3 2 and rehash, making a point to utilize the right wrist movement. Your wrist ought to be moving well in a complete circle, extremely a more considerable amount of an oval for this drill.

So at whatever point you are rehearsing scales, center around utilizing this structure, you will get results a lot quicker. I guarantee you, and the posture will begin saturating all that you play, making you a significantly more balanced piano player.

Utilizing Correct Fingering

Utilizing the right fingering from the beginning is BIG! Muscle memory is critical when learning scales. What's more, you drill in muscle memory by redundancy.

The issue with utilizing an inappropriate fingering is you are genuinely showing yourself an improper muscle memory.

Trust me, when I was first beginning, I would speculate the best possible fingering. I'd learn it wrong, and it was a tremendous torment amending it since I had prepared my fingers to play the scales falsely, and they usually needed to go to an inappropriate note!

At that point, when you return and attempt to play it effectively, you need to unlearn an inappropriate muscle memory and relearn the scale the correct way. There is a possibility that it may take you twice as long to become familiar with the scale appropriately!

Here are all the Minor and Major Harmonic scales with the right fingering. These are the two most regular kinds of scales, fingering for common/melodic minor will be equivalent to the fingering for a symphonious minor.

Scale Fingerings

Major Scales

Note: These are the scale fingerings going UP. To go down, simply start from the right side
Note: For 2+ octaves, repeat the pattern but whenever you see a "5" replace it with a "1"
(except at the top and bottom of the scale)

C Major

Note	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
RH	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
LH	5	4	3	2	1	3	2	1

E \flat Major (D \sharp)

Note	E \flat	F	G	A \flat	B \flat	C	D	E \flat
RH	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3
LH	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3

G Major

Note	G	A	B	C	D	E	F \sharp	G
RH	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
LH	5	4	3	2	1	3	2	1

E Major

Note	E	F \sharp	G \sharp	A	B	C \sharp	D \sharp	E
RH	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
LH	5	4	3	2	1	3	2	1

F Major

Note	F	G	A	B \flat	C	D	E	F
RH	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
LH	5	4	3	2	1	3	2	1

A \flat Major (G \sharp)

Note	A \flat	B \flat	C	D \flat	E \flat	F	G	A \flat
RH	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3
LH	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3

D Major

Note	D	E	F \sharp	G	A	B	C \sharp	D
RH	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
LH	5	4	3	2	1	3	2	1

B Major

Note	B	C \sharp	D \sharp	E	F \sharp	G \sharp	A \sharp	B
RH	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
LH	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1

B \flat Major (A \sharp)

Note	B \flat	C	D	E \flat	F	G	A	B \flat
RH	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	4
LH	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3

F \sharp Major (G \flat)

Note	F \sharp	G \sharp	A \sharp	B	C \sharp	D \sharp	E \sharp	F \sharp
RH	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2
LH	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	4

A Major

Note	A	B	C \sharp	D	E	F \sharp	G \sharp	A
RH	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
LH	5	4	3	2	1	3	2	1

C \sharp Major (D \flat)

Note	C \sharp	D \sharp	E \sharp	F \sharp	G \sharp	A \sharp	B \sharp	C \sharp
RH	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2
LH	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3

Scale Fingerings

Harmonic Minor Scales

Note: These are the scale fingerings going UP. To go down, simply start from the right side
 Note: For 2+ octaves, repeat the pattern but whenever you see a "5" replace it with a "1"
 (except at the top and bottom of the scale)

A Minor

Note	A	B	C	D	E	F	G#	A
RH	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
LH	5	4	3	2	1	3	2	1

C Minor

Note	C	D	E \flat	F	G	A \flat	B	C
RH	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
LH	5	4	3	2	1	3	2	1

E Minor

Note	E	F#	G	A	B	C	D#	E
RH	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
LH	5	4	3	2	1	3	2	1

C# Minor (D \flat)

Note	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A	B#	C#
RH	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3
LH	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3

D Minor

Note	D	E	F	G	A	B \flat	C#	D
RH	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
LH	5	4	3	2	1	3	2	1

F Minor

Note	F	G	A \flat	B \flat	C	D \flat	E	F
RH	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
LH	5	4	3	2	1	3	2	1

B Minor

Note	B	C#	D	E	F#	G	A#	B
RH	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
LH	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1

A \flat Minor (G#)

Note	A \flat	B \flat	C \flat	D \flat	E \flat	F \flat	G#	A \flat
RH	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3
LH	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	3

G Minor

Note	G	A	B \flat	C	D	E \flat	F#	G
RH	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
LH	5	4	3	2	1	3	2	1

E \flat Minor (D#)

Note	E \flat	F	G \flat	A \flat	B \flat	C \flat	D	E \flat
RH	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3
LH	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	2

F# Minor

Note	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D	E#	F#
RH	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3

B \flat Minor (A#)

Note	B \flat	C	D \flat	E \flat	F	G \flat	A	B \flat
RH	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	4

Please print it out, put it in the front of your cover, and use it frequently! It has the specific notes recorded for each scale as well. Each time you get familiar with another scale, the initial step is taking out the sheet and investigating the fingerings. Do it directly from the first run-through, and you will spare heaps of time over the long term.

The Three Golden Rules to Efficient Piano Practice

These standards are valuable for rehearsing scales, yet for working on anything! So tail them whether you are rehearsing scales or your pieces.

1. Precision Over Speed

Continuously, consistently, and promptly play with precision over speed. It is most likely the primary misstep I see amateurs make. It is enticing to need to attempt to play quicker because it sounds cool; however, oppose the enticement and consistently play moderate enough where you are playing the correct notes.

If you are boring in inappropriate notes, it will be a lot harder to unlearn inappropriate ones and become familiar with the right ones.

2. Practice Hands Separate First

It is another one of the many errors I see regularly. It is enticing to need to assemble hands immediately. Listen to this: if you cannot play two hands accurately independently, you will not have the option to play them effectively together.

Before you go on to hands together, have each hand steady on its own. Not “really great,” Not “almost there,” but unshakable. That way, when you set them up, you will have the muscle memory worked in to play them precisely as of now.

3. Continuously Play Expressively

That is right. Indeed, even scales can be the driest, most exhausting activity. However, they do not need to be. Try with the elements and tone to make your scales enjoyable. Take a stab at crescendoing up to the top and afterward decrescendoing down.

It makes rehearsing significantly more agreeable. Yet, it causes you to learn quicker. The more passionate something is, the more your mind holds it. It

is similar to your first kiss or what you had for lunch on a particular day. Playing with consistency will give you a little lift to learn scales quicker.

So there you have it, the basics of rehearsing scales. Put forth a conscious attempt to follow these consistently. It may be a smart thought to reflect after the training and honestly consider whether you followed these steps and how you can be better for next time.

Chapter 11

Dynamics and Articulation



This section is about terms relating to volume and how certain notes/phrases are played. Loudness and softness is an important part of musical performance as it implies structure and helps in communicating emotion.

Dynamics

Dynamics add a lot to a piece, so knowing to perform it properly is important. The following are just a few often used dynamic terms and their short form abbreviations.

Piano (*p*): quiet **Forte (*f*):** loud

The prefix ‘mezzo’ meaning medium is added to a dynamic to make it less extreme:

Mezzo piano (*mp*): a little quiet **Mezzoforte (*mf*):** a little loud

If in doubt, play a piece *mf* because that’s considered a ‘normal’ volume.

The suffix ‘issimo’ is added onto the end of dynamics to exaggerate something.

Fortissimo (*ff*): Very loud **Pianissimo (*pp*):** Very quiet

You can technically extend ‘issimo’ infinitely but twice is already considered over the top (you can only go so loud realistically). One issimo (*ff/pp*) is considered the most you can reasonably go in a normal context.

The following terms related to how to move from one dynamic to the other:

Crescendo (*cresc*): gradually get louder. You should be able to mark what dynamic you start at and where you end. It’s visually marked with a

‘hairpin’ (a common slang for it, especially amongst American musicians) that grows larger. See the following:



Decrescendo (*decresc*)

This term means gradually getting softer. Like the crescendo, what dynamic it starts with, and what it ends with should be properly marked. Visually shown with a ‘reverse hairpin.’ See the following:



Articulation

Articulation is a general term that defines how a note or phrase is played. Articulation change how fast a single note is played, how hard and can also mark where phrases start and end. Though separate from tempo (speed) and dynamics (volume), articulation interplays heavily with both elements of music.

Staccato

Marked by a small dot above the note, staccato means short and detached. Notes marked staccato are jumpy and fast, often featuring heavily in pieces with a lighter or whimsical feel, though, is one of the most commonly used articulations, is present in almost all genres and emotions of music.



Accents

An accent is like an exclamation mark; it makes a certain note louder, thereby ‘accenting’ it. You have to tell within a piece itself how loud your accents should be. Sometimes you have to play the note a lot louder to make it stand out in terms of volume; other times, it just has to be separated from the rest of the phrase.



Tenuto

The Tenuto is a contextually changing articulation that’s related to the accent. Normally it means to hold the note to its full duration and is often performed as a light accent. The note, therefore, stands out from the rest of the phrase but doesn’t become much louder, unlike the accent. The contextual usage of the Tenuto allows it to be combined with contrasting articulation like the staccato.



Unlike tempo or dynamics (which we’ll get to right below), articulation can stack meaning that you can get things like accented staccatos – a heavy jump; or a tenuto accent – further accenting the accent.



Accented Staccato

Slur

A slur marks a musical phrase. You'll find two main uses of slurs. Firstly, if you use a slur over a long series of notes, it means the composer has marked out a phrase for you. The second usage is between two notes, and this means that those two should be joined as much as possible, then separated before the next phrase. This is often used to create sighing gestures.

Explaining in text how to play a slur is not simple, but the analogy usually used to think of it as a sentence, so instead of playing each note separately, you should try and 'slur' them together. At the end of the slur, take your fingers off slightly so that it separates phrases.



So if we take the above two images, they're played slightly differently even though they're both slurring the same four notes. On the left, all four notes

are slurred as one phrase (one sentence), whereas in the right, the one phrase is broken into two halves. You can even slur over slurs, which would make the composer's intentions even clearer.

Chapter 12

Taking Care of your Instrument



Let's assume you purchased a piano to play and never got around to playing it. Progressively, after quite a long time, say a year, it just sits in your room, and in the end, the sound begins to go off. You'll realize what the issue is, and it is left turned off if you play some other instrument. That might be an issue because the piano is an acoustic instrument, and it's influenced by the breeze and the downpour, implying that as the years pass by, the keyboard isn't simply off-key. It's beginning to turn out badly. In the end, following a lengthy stay without playing it as well as disregarding it, the piano starts to leave tune to an ever-increasing extent. And you may even locate that a few keys have quit working inside and out.

The model above is somewhat extraordinary (you wouldn't leave a piano only staying there). However, the issues are genuine. You will frequently discover old pianos in outrageous need of fix because of general mileage. The spring activity debilitates, which means your keys don't bounce back as fast, a few hammers that have reached to the point where they are not hitting the strings, making a few keys quiet and top everything, the piano gets increasingly more off-tune. The issue is a basic one. The keyboard is an instrument that needs round-the-clock support if you need to keep it fit as a fiddle.

In this next piece, we'll see approaches to decrease the impacts of mileage on your piano:

Store the Piano Properly

Regardless of being a few hundred kilograms, the piano is a fragile instrument made of, for the most part, wood that can decay and rustable metal wires. As the years move by, changes in temperature and dampness

extend and contract the instrument's numerous components, in some cases causing enduring harm.

One of the initial steps that you can take to postpone this procedure is to store your piano in a space with less incessant swings of humidity and temperature. Keep away from heat/AC vents just as rooms with huge windows that permit inside climate swings. A perfect place would be around 21 C (70 F), with moisture of approximately 50 percent.

These rooms are challenging to find. Except if you have an exclusively fabricated studio, you're likely merely decking out a space to store a few instruments. For this situation, consider purchasing humidifiers or dehumidification cylinders to control; however, much as could reasonably be expected, the mugginess in a room as moistness will harm both the wood and metal a lot quicker.

Tune Professionally and Often

The piano is just an acoustic instrument like some other and will go off tune like some other because of gravity and rubbing pulling or extricating the strings. Returning to the named graphs, you can see that the piano is a complicated instrument where each part influences another part – and basically, there are numerous parts. An unnatural piano can be the extricating of strings from the utilization or indicate progressively issues that can be noted. Tuning the piano frequently implies that the most critical problems are found and sifted through ahead of schedule. For instance, similar to a guitar, the tuning pegs on the piano hold the strings that the hammer will hit when you press a key. The pegboard is inclined to splitting from mugginess and abuse. Now and again, an old piano with a split pegboard is not, at this point, usable.

While it is conceivable to purchase instruments and tune the piano yourself, this is profoundly discouraged since it is quite easy to get an injury while playing the piano through improper care. It's a lot more secure and simpler

to call an expert tuner for a routine check and tuning more than once per year. It costs approximately \$50 per single visit in the United States of America as a rule.

Another advantage of tuning expertly and tuning is that keeping your piano in order decreases the times you have to tune each year and, in this manner, also costs less. A keyboard that has been left empty for some time is inclined to require more work, for example, pre-tuning planning and two-fold tuning (also different issues that can emerge). A very much kept piano will require routine inspections at regular intervals to keep it in order.

Keep the Piano Dry

The piano's fragile internal parts can be influenced intensely by moisture, as we have just discussed in the above section. Envision then the extent the keyboard would suffer damage by an unusual glass of coke that spills on the keys!

Keep the Piano Clean

For many people, wiping and dusting the piano is sufficient to keep your piano fit as a fiddle. A development of residue on the keys or close to the soundboard can cause obstructing of spring instruments, so keeping your piano as residue-free as conceivable isn't just a stylish exercise.

Start by taking a duster or a wet fabric and cleaning down the keys. Make a point not to utilize a material that is too wet as fluid leaking between the cores is probably going to harm the inward component. Abstain from using grating cleaners; the most secure thing to utilize is just a minuscule piece of water to wet a towel. In the wake of cleaning the keys, wipe the surfaces. For this, additionally using a clammy material is exceptional. You don't need to reapply the piano's completion except if it is essential, but if you wish to make a point to purchase clear piano polish, do so and request directions from your dealer. You can, in fact, dust the internal parts of a piano, yet doing it without anyone's help without preparation isn't

suggested as you could inadvertently harm the inside. Proficient tuners frequently fill in as general servicemen and can clean it for you during an ordinary tuning meeting.

Chapter 13

Would You Like to Play the Piano?



So maybe you have a youngster or young lady where they have exhibited that they have to figure out how to play the piano, or potentially you are kicking yourself for not having taken the time before in life to figure out how to play piano yourself? Not to worry, considering the way that the present technological advancement acted as the legend by allowing you to figure out how to play quickly and easily using the web resources and demonstrated speedy outcomes masterminded exercises.

Is it safe to state that it is not better than average when you are at a party or a social event at someone's home, and some individual sits down and expertly whips out some traditional tunes on the piano? You watch the individual playing, who seems to do as such with little effort, and you find yourself stacked with both significant regard and desire. Now imagine that you are in that position, that everyone is feeling that regard and passion about your piano-playing.

In case you are thinking about this for the benefit of your kid or young lady or how old will they be to be considered mature enough to begin taking piano exercises? There is not a set figure similar to age. A couple of children are enrolled a lot sooner than others. Yet one thing that stands clear is that the accomplishment of a child figuring out how to play is altogether influenced by their yearning to learn and improve. What's more, the consistent analysis they get from their caregivers as they are practicing. At progressively energetic ages, adolescents are fundamentally increasingly influenced and enabled by positive counsel they get from people concerning any task, and figuring out how to play the piano is no exception to managing everything.

A couple of people, adolescents, and increasingly settled people alike, have a keen ear for music, and this way, some will feel that it is more straightforward than others, yet everyone learns at their own pace. A couple of people can tune in to a touch of music on the radio and have the ability to rotate and play a reasonable type of it on the piano, where others do not have that equivalent ear and oblige music before they can play it. It is only an issue of preparing yourself and figuring out how to envision the notes in your mind and being familiar with basic congruity movements. It is not as jumbled as it might sound.

If you start taking classes, be reasonable with yourself about it. You will not play Bach toccatas and fugues in your subsequent week, yet with training, you should start seeing constant upgrades in seconds. Like whatever else, a lot of your success will go with the proportion of time you can allocate to sharpen.

Do whatever it takes not to allow yourself to continue with necessarily wishing you could figure out how to play piano, yet make a move and take an essential part in figuring out how to play. It is something you will never regret.

Various people I have encountered had the vision to play the piano. There is something in particular about this instrument that triggers the imaginative vitality.

Step-by-Step Directions to Figure out How to Play the Piano

Before I reveal how to figure out how to play the piano, I should teach on finding some sort concerning the system you can work with that will explain most of the focal points I will form. It should not be a real physical teacher, yet a learning structure is required.

Procedure:

When you start to concentrate on piano, processes can be the most daunting when you set your time to handle the instrument. It comes down to

sharpening reliably. There are no simple courses regarding muscle memory. Sharpen basic finger strategies reliably, and you will over-the-haul play any melodic types you need.

Stance:

Sitting in a precise position corresponding to the console is basic. I see various people who stay away from this step to get odd injuries and torments as they progress. It is considerably less involving to figure out how to sit adequately than changing a terrible position penchant.

Theory and Harmony:

Disregarding the way that it tends to be genuinely tiring from the outset due to the numerous particular phrasings, theory and harmony are hugely crucial. Despite the way that you most likely need to get directly to the business, understanding the foundations at which point music is built, and the method of reasoning behind it is fundamental for your future improvement.

Ear Training:

Ear preparation was one after another, my dreaded foe. Tuning in to tunes and playing them on the keyboard had all the earmarks of being something inconceivable. Again like with each subject, if you practice it step by step, you will start playing music without the need for any piece of paper to tell you what to do.

Right when concentrating on how to figure out how to play the piano, it genuinely comes down to practice and relentlessness. In case you have to value playing your original tunes, you ought to find a structure that will tell you and give directions the best way to do it. Practice it reliably for no less than one hour, and before you know it, you will play like an authentic star.

Learn and Play Piano Chords

Here is a remarkable manual to help you with learning and play piano harmonies quickly. I will give a list of the major and minor chords for you to learn. Learning these harmonies will assist you with playing the piano soon, and will, in like manner, help you to invent your music when required. I have to make this as clear and as direct so you can gain proficiency with this quickly if you are a beginner piano player, anyway it will in like manner fill in as essential assistance for the more progressive performer. It is an uncommon hotspot for those of you who improvise. You can, without any strain, recollect these harmonies to make better your keyboard aptitudes.

Above all, we should start by perceiving the complexity between the minor and major harmonies. You can play Major chords by using them to begin with, third, and fifth notes on the scale. For example, the notes in the C significant harmony are C, E, and G. you can as well play Minor harmonies unequivocally like the significant harmonies, beside the middle note. The middle note in the minor harmonies is reliably a fixed note. For example, the notes in the C minor harmony are C, Eb, and G.

At the point when you are adapting to get familiar with the piano's lion's share harmonies, start the major chords first. These are the most direct to learn, and you can hold them quickly. At that point, it will be less demanding to understand and recall the minor harmonies. Also, when you learn another harmony, have a go at playing it over two or multiple times, and a short time later, you start making moves everywhere throughout the piano in that one harmony. Regular practice of the chords this way will help you with figuring out how to make better your music, and to add different styles to your piano playing.

Here are a major chords once-over piano harmonies:

G#/Ab: G#, C, Eb

D: D, F#, A

E: E, G#, B

B/Cb: B, Eb, F#

G: G, B, D

An: A, C#, E

F#/Gb: F#, A#, C#

C: C, E, G

D#/Eb: Eb, G, A#

A#/Bb: A#, D, F

C#/Db: C#, F, G#

F/E#: F, A, C

As I stated some time in some text above, the inside note in the minor harmonies is continually leveled. To avoid perplexity, I have to give some progressively unpretentious components. If the middle note in a major harmony happens to be a level or a sharp, you need to change that note a half step down. For example, if the inside note is an Eb, you need to go down a half step to E, if it is a G#, go down to a G, etc. At the point when I think about playing minor harmonies, I like to consider it being horrid harmonies finding the way that you are cutting a note down, consequently making it play a sad sound. The minor harmonies are anything but difficult to learn, especially once you have the major harmonies down. Toward the day's end, I encourage you to play the minor harmonies over two or multiple times to learn them quickly; moreover, doing moves to a great extent the piano with the minor harmonies will help you with improving your piano capacities remarkably. Here are the minor's once-over piano harmonies:

C#/Db: C#, E, G#

B/Cb: B, D, F#

G: G, A#, D

E: E, G, B

F/E#: F, G#, C

A#/Bb: A#, C#, F

C: C, Eb, G

F#/E#: F#, A, C#

A_n: A, C, E

D#/Eb: Eb, F#, A#

D: D, F, A

G#/Ab: G#, B, Eb

There are what I would refer to as three phases to figure out how to play the piano, and when you hear someone play a song, then they are using these three phases. The three aspects to any kind of music on the keyboard include the following: chord progression, structure songs, chord structure chord progression, and scales structure chores. So within every song, you have those three essential perspectives that are making up that tune.

So consider the possibility that you be learning if you have to figure out how to play piano, well first you have to create the beginning from an early stage. Let us talk about scales.

Scales are the most straightforward bit of figuring out how to play the piano to me. That is in a general sense where the seven notes I was talking about are explained. Take the note C; everyone has heard the C scale played I am sure it is the scale with every white note in it. It involves C D E F G A B C. Now, if you include every single one of those notes on the C scale, then you would see it is seven notes. Also, it is not so much that once you get more pushed, you can't use even more than basically these notes to shape your harmonies off. In any case, on a fundamental level, you must have an idea of the seven notes in a scale. It is because those are the notes that are

imperative to the scale you are playing in, and that will give you when and why you are allowed to get new now and then.

So, what plausible reason would you give for saying that you are simply stressed over those seven notes? Since when you are playing a tune, the seven notes in the scale you are playing the song in are the notes that you will use, in your right hand, and you are cleared out. So, the principal thing you should learn on the piano is the formula for how a scale is molded, and that condition is incredibly essential.

Now, from scales, you have just seven notes that you need to worry over when you pick what key you are playing in, or which scale you are using. So you take those seven notes, and you will learn harmonies that you will play off of each note. It is the subsequent structure square. Scales are the foundation. Presently we are building harmonies dependent on each note in the scale. So if you are on the C scale, you will get familiar with a harmony of the C the B, A, G, F, E, and D.

Moreover, when you get familiar with these harmonies, you will see the off of each note in the scale, you will use an absolute harmony, either major or minor, or diminished. Also, those harmonies will contain only those notes in the scale. It is easy to remember the formula of how to review what kind of harmony is off of each note on a particular scale.

So you should figure out how to outline Major, Minor, and Diminished harmonies and get them down amazingly well. You should have this leveled out, and in time with the training, you will get it right. Since when you are playing a harmony off of every one of the seven notes, you will be either playing a significant, minor or decreased harmony. Dependent on what sort of harmony is vast to the scale you are playing in.

Like for example, if you are playing a harmony off of C in the C scale, it is the first note of that scale, so its number is one. Additionally, if you realize how to shape a C significant harmony, you will know its C E and G.

Likewise, it's important to the scale considering the way that all of the notes in that harmony is in the scale. In most cases, the real smart - the principal tone is significant, second is minor, third is minor, fourth is major, the fifth is major, 6th is minor, and seventh is diminished. So considering the way that the second note is D, at that point, a D major would be D Gb and A. Well, the Gb is not in the size of C, so the D major can't be used. If you take a D minor, DF, and A, then all of those notes are in the scale, so it is imperative to the scale. Furthermore, that is the explanation; each tone is a substitute kind of harmony, yet after you get this recalled that you would have it down in each scale. The second note on each scale will reliably be minor, and the rest will be the equivalent.

So after you get to know and understand your harmonies and how to shape them, and what kind of harmony you should use off of each note as a piece of the scale, you move to harmony progression. Additionally, what is harmony progression? All it is the advancement beginning with one harmony then onto the following. Also, the improvement progresses from each note of the scale and the harmony you will use in each note of a particular scale. Like in case you were playing a tune and the harmonies moved from the one chord to the four chords. If you were on the scale of C, then it would be a C significant harmony moving to the F harmony. That is a harmony movement when the harmonies progress, beginning with one then onto the following.

Likewise, the fundamental thing about this is you become familiar with the most notable harmony movements. By then, you will see that you are reiterating similar changes over and over in every song. Like for example, an ordinary harmony movement is the sixth to the two, to the five, back to the one. That is a 6, 2, 5, 1 harmony movement. Likewise, that similar pattern is used as a piece of various melodies. Like structure moment amazing style, it is used and most all old hymn melodies. So after you learn harmony progression, then where do you go starting there?

Well, you are playing tunes to their fullest note. In case you have to figure out how to play the piano, you should become familiar with these three things. Besides, these are the things you ought to practice. At the point when you learn scales practice until you get each scale on the piano leveled out. The same with harmonies, you gain proficiency with each kind of harmony. At that point, starting there, you will be moving those harmonies to each other, which is called harmony movements, and you will play any tune you have to on the piano.

Chapter 14

Finger Exercises

Going back to my guitar playing days, I found the guitar fairly easy; once I had learned the strumming techniques and the right chords. Learning the chords on a guitar is a lot harder than the piano. You often need all four fingers, across six strings, and perhaps cover three frets of the guitar all at the same time. The first few hundred times you play a new chord, you automatically look at your hand to make sure it is covering the right strings at the right places. After a while, muscle memory kicks in, and the brain recognizes the fingering for a 'C' chord, and your fingers automatically cover that spread of the fingers. It takes practice and practice, but it does eventually become second nature. For about ten years, I never picked up a guitar, but when I did, the fingers still retained the muscle memory and automatically went to the right strings. Muscle memory is an amazing thing!

One plus of playing the guitar chords is that you don't have to try and play the actual melody line, so you don't have to remember which individual note the song starts on.

With the piano, unfortunately, you do have to play some form of individual notes with the right hand. I wonder if there is a trick for that, I can pass on?

Learning how to play the piano comfortably takes a great deal of work if you need to do it appropriately. Like a competitor needs a great deal of training and warm-up, a piano player too needs to practice their fingers. You should practice every once in a while to keep them as fit as a fiddle. There are several reasons why a piano player needs to do finger works out. For example, it can lessen the odds of injury and help to improve the method of playing.

To play the piano, you have to utilize more than your fingers. You have to use your hands, arms, wrists, and so on, which should be situated appropriately. An appropriate stance guarantees the right and indefatigable playing limit. It can improve your proficiency. Having the correct position is particularly significant if you need to play the piano for a more extended period. If you utilize an appropriate piano playing procedure, it will assist you with staying pleasant and permit you to appreciate the way toward playing. It has a great deal of effect if you need to turn into an expert piano player since experts are required to play for extended periods.

While all the parts referenced above are essential for playing the piano appropriately, fingers assume a critical job that can't be overlooked. They are answerable for the quality, volume, and tone of the sound the piano can deliver. It is the reason standard finger practices help you to improve as a musician. By doing finger practices, you will be able to enhance your expertise, adaptability, and coordination. In this way, it will assist you with becoming increasingly sure and intense and improve your musicality, speed, and execution. Finger practices are an unquestionable requirement if you need to turn into a decent piano player. You can't depend just on minor information on playing the instrument; your body ought to be fit.

In this section, we will analyze various finger practices that you can do to make your fingers work better. The activities are disclosed in detail to make it straightforward.



Legitimate Finger Technique

Before going into the activities, getting an appropriate comprehension of what a decent piano finger method is vital. The base of a legitimate piano playing method is that the fingers should be liable for controlling the force while playing the piano. It is a significant simple idea to comprehend for individuals who have gained from an educator, yet self-students may discover it somewhat progressively troublesome.

This area will cover specific ideas identified with the piano finger procedure. If you have played the piano for quite a while and still do not have an appropriate finger strategy, at that point, it is conceivable that you may find this troublesome. You should overlook your off-base finger method and embrace another, legitimate one. With sufficient practice and time, you will have the option to do it proficiently.

An appropriate piano finger method comprises of these four components:

- Ensure that the fingers are not floppy or level. The knuckles ought not to be straight.
- All your fingers, excepting the pinky, ought to be bowed at the knuckle directly after the fingertip. You can keep the pinky fixed once in a while.

- Remember and make sure that your fingers are consistently the source of energy. Try not to let your hand, wrist, or arm become the force source.
- Keep your shoulders, arms, and elbows loose. Keep your fingers and thumb prepared so that you will not be gotten with a shock when the playing starts.
- To play the piano, you have to utilize a lot of muscles in the fingers. Regularly, tissues of different organs of your body do not have as much as the muscles of the fingers.

Regular Mistakes in Finger Technique

While anybody can commit errors, it is routine for apprentices to make them. Numerous fledglings regularly submit plenty of missteps, mainly on account of finger procedures. Here is a rundown of some basic wrong finger strategies. Watch out for these methods and maintain a strategic distance from them, however, much as could reasonably be expected.

While playing the piano, novices frequently move their wrists excessively high or excessively low as opposed to moving their fingers to get the best possible method. It does not make a difference in which course your wrists move in; they will get tense. A strain is awful for your wrists and fingers since it will decrease your exactness and speed. To maintain a strategic distance from this, you should consistently utilize the best possible playing strategy and position.

A lot of newbies who are most recently starting to play the piano will, in general, play with their arms rather than their fingers. As it has just been stated, playing with your arms is an inappropriate method that will, finally, lead to pressure and loss of exactness and speed. Playing with your arms will likewise create an unnecessarily cadenced sound. The sound would then be able to create beats and accents, which have no spot in notes.

Finger Exercises

Let us currently proceed onward to the activities.

Warm-up Exercises

Warm-up practices are exceptionally acceptable as they can assist you with unwinding and prepare your fingers. They help you to make a great outlook on playing the piano.

Straightforward Warm Up: Rub your palms together and stretch your fingers beyond what many would consider possible. Rehash multiple times.

Broadened Warm-Up: Extend your arms straight before you. Gradually, make paw-like shapes with your fingers. Rapidly expand your finger. Tenderly make them hooks once more. Rehash multiple times.

Speed Exercises

Speed practices are practices that can assist you in improving your speed of playing. Certain music pieces and entries request a great deal of speed and quickness. You have to misrepresent roundabout and rotational movements to perform an ordinary entry in a snappy rhythm. You have to rehearse a lot if you need to play a piece at extraordinary speed.

To play a piece at a brisk pace, you have to frame a legitimate propensity and learn right-hand movements as well. You may have seen that piano players draw circles a considerable amount. Their right-hand draw circles continually, even while playing a scale. Along these lines, when the player plays the notes and begins to climb, the wrists of the hand start to scoop down. Furthermore, the notes start to go the other way. The left-hand start to move in a rotational direction, and the wrist gets shaken in a forward and reverse movement. If you have an interest in playing at a higher speed, it gets crucial to make as meager development as could reasonably be expected. It will assist you with pushing ahead as fast as could reasonably be expected. Drawing circles will also give your wrists a natural effortlessness, which is essential while playing troublesome harmonies.

Hand/Finger Independence Exercises

These activities can assist you with fortifying your fingers and make them bolder.

Exercises

In this segment, we should examine the piano finger practices that you should figure out how to turn into a decent piano player. It is prescribed for you to play out these activities at an appropriate rhythm. It does not make a difference what speed you can play out these activities.

Five Note Pentacles

In this activity, the piano player is compelled to utilize one finger to play, and that finger is being used for each note (C D E F G). The person is then solicited to tune in to the yield from what they are playing. It is crucial to change the dynamic ranges just with the muscles of your fingers. Try not to utilize your shoulders or arms to do as such. The activity is straightforward and fast, yet if you have weak hand muscles, you may think it is troublesome when starting.

Climbing and Descending Pentacles

When you become a specialist in the first piano exercise, you have to move to this one, which is a tiny bit troublesome contrasted with the first. To do this, begin playing in a slipping and climbing pentacle. Simply start with your most reduced finger and then keep doing it with your next finger until you arrive at your most noteworthy finger. Rehash this with your other hand. Recall that musicians need both the hands to play the piano appropriately, so every one of the ten fingers is significant for you. It implies the fingers of both your hands should be all-round active. Try not to support any of your hands. You may think that it is troublesome in the first place, yet you will before long become familiar with it.

Attempt an alternate blend. Utilize every one of your fingers similarly with the goal that every one of them become acclimatized, solid, and adaptable.

Continuously endeavor to adhere to appropriate finger methods, and at whatever point you notice that your finger strategy is not right, simply start from the earliest starting point once more.

Skirt Every Other Note

When you become acquainted with the first two activities, you can proceed onward to the following one. In this activity, you should play a pentacle in thirds. It implies that you have to avoid each subsequent note and perform the following one. It will also aid you in conditioning your fingers appropriately.

By and by, this activity may appear to be excessively basic. However, it is not so clear. You need additional exertion and time to ace it. It might appear to be somewhat befuddling from the start, yet you should not quit rehearsing. Remain committed; the more you practice, the better you will get. Turning into a specialist requires some serious energy and persistence. Continue repeating; do not beat yourself if you think that it is hard to do.

Utilize a Firm Finger Position

You have to do this activity after the one referenced previously. To do this, you have first to place your fingers in a playing position. Try not to put your fingers on the keys yet. They ought to be deliberately orchestrated so that your knuckles and different parts are in the best possible position.

Gradually lift your hand completely. However, keep on maintaining appropriate piano finger procedures. Directly let your hands drop onto the console. If your knuckles discrete and the position that you had held changes, simply rehash the process once, aside from this time, bring down the tallness.

The activity is significant because it will assist you in developing a firm finger position. When you ace this activity, you will have the option to play the piano appropriately with no additional arm pressure or weight, which occurs in these cases. The ‘allowing your arms to arms’ part is significant

because it will help you maintain your center perfect, and soon, you will build up an unshakeable and strong finger position.

Over-Legato

In such an activity, play each of the notes in an arrangement while letting each of them cover the other. For example, we should expect that you are rehearsing with the C significant pentacle. At the point when you start to play this one, your thumb will press a specific key. You should hold the key with your thumb until your pointer represents the key that follows. Directly discharge the thumb and hold your tip and keep it squeezed until your center finger presses the next key. Rehash this until you no longer have fingers to use. At that point, rehash it with the other hand.

The Over-legato is exceptionally compensating for individuals who need to make their fingers progressively ‘mindful’ and dynamic. The activity will assist you with keeping up and comprehending the controls of the considerable number of fingers all the while and separately. Because of this, you will have the option to control every one of your fingers freely, and you will have the opportunity to play even intricate pieces easily and with beauty.

The activity needs a great deal of persistence and exertion and is not simple, so if you cannot do it initially, do not stress. Simply continue rehearsing. With appropriate practice, you will get its hang before long.

Full (1 Or 2 Octave) Scales

It is an activity that will assist you in expanding the precision and speed of your playing. To do this, you should rehearse full scales with one or two octaves while setting up your thumb to play. How about we utilize the C Ionian scale, for instance, of this. The central note on this scale should be D. To rehearse the full scales, play the first note with the forefinger and keep your thumb in a prepared state. At that point, press the F note. Rehash

this with each scale until you become okay with all the scales and can play them without looking.

As said over and over again, this activity is extraordinary if you need to figure out how to play the piano at a quick and exact speed. In this way, it is prescribed to practice and ace this activity; however, much as could be expected. It will assist you with turning into a quicker and better musician.

Utilize the Same Hand to Play Two Notes at the Same Time

To turn into a decent and master piano player, you have to play two notes. In any case, this can end up being very troublesome in the first place. You simply need to rehearse with a lot of commitment to figure out how to play two notes without your fingers feeling tired. Your fingers ought not to meddle with one another, either.

Generally, our fingers are associated with one another, and it is hard for them to work freely. It is particularly apparent when more than one finger is included. Because of this, it is exorbitantly important to do finger practices with full commitment until you become an ace. You have to learn how to utilize your fingers appropriately and autonomously.

Most individuals have a problem with the pinky finger. It is one of the most troublesome fingers to move, and it regularly meddles with different fingers. It is the reason you need to give more consideration to the pinky while doing this activity. Keep in mind that steady attention will assist you with turning into an incredible piano player.

Chapter 15

Harmonizing Melodies

The piano can be comprehensively arranged into harmony and melodies. A melody has to do with playing notes independently, while harmony manages to play notes together. In this segment, we will be looking at how one can harmonize the tune of any melody.

Suppose we have a tune which involves the I, II, and III tones of an Ionian scale, fitting this tune would mean playing harmonies that would go with every one of the notes in this song. The I, IV, and V harmonies can be utilized to go with a lot of songs because these significant harmonies contain all the notes found on a significant scale.

SCALE DEGREE	CHORD
1, 3, 5	I Major Chord
2	II Minor Chord
1, 4, 6	IV Major Chord
2, 4, 5, 7	V Major (or V7) Chord

Showing Tones of a Major Scale and their Accompanying Chords

To figure out what harmonies to use to go with a song, you will need to investigate the notes that make up the tune. If the notes are the I, II, and III tones of an Ionian scale, at that point, the harmonies we will be utilizing would be the ones that have these tones as a feature of their chordal makeup. Using the C major key, the I, II, and III notes would be the C, D, and E notes. The C note can be joined by the C major harmony, A minor harmony, and F major harmony. Note that every one of the three harmonies has the C note as a tone in their chordal makeup.

For straightforwardness, it is better and simpler to utilize significant harmonies in blending a song. In the wake of doing this, you may then search for approaches to improve the harmonization by using increasingly suitable harmonies. For instance, the II tone can be orchestrated utilizing the V harmony, yet in some cases, the II harmony might be progressively fitting.

Utilizing Chord Inversions to Harmonize Melodies

In orchestrating tunes, it is vastly improved to utilize a harmony inversion, which makes the song tone attain its most important note. I do this for the most part when I am playing harmonies with my right hand and need to solo or play tunes utilizing that equivalent right hand. For instance, a C significant harmony can be played in its root structure, first reversal, or second reversal relying upon the song tone you wish to hear.

Let us consider the harmonization of a significant scale. The picture underneath shows a C significant scale that is blended utilizing the I, IV, and V significant harmonies.

The image displays a musical score for a C major scale. The top staff is labeled 'Melody' and contains eight notes: C, G, C, F, C, F, G, C. Above the notes are the chord symbols C, G, C, F, C, F, G, C. The bottom staff is labeled 'Harmony' and shows the corresponding chords for each note: C, G, C, F, C, F, G, C. The chords are written in a way that shows their structure, including the root and other notes. The time signature is 4/4.

We will be applying inversion to these harmonies. Note the distinction between these upset harmonies and the root harmonies while fitting a song. You ought to have the option to see how these reversed harmonies keep up the tune or for this situation, the significant scale as the most significant note of the harmonies.

C G C F C F G C

Melody 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Harmony

Note: the melody note is the highest note of each chord

The picture underneath shows the harmonies I utilize when blending tones in a song.

SCALE DEGREE	CHORD
1, 3, 5	I Major Chord
2	II Minor Chord
1, 4, 6	IV Major Chord
7	V Chord
1	VI Minor Chord

Tones of a Major Scale and the Most Common Accompanying Chords

Harmonizing the Melody of a Song

For simple comprehension, I have separated this portion into two stages:

Stage One: making sense of the tune of the melody

To do this, you should initially pick a key Center, in which the significant key the song would be played. For instance, you could choose a C major as your key center.

Besides, the notes of the tune must fall inside the Ionian scale of your picked key, which implies that you need to experience seven notes to make sense of the song of most melodies. Suppose I need to play the tune “Mary had a Little Lamb.” Since I’ve just picked C major to be my key center, I

should utilize the C Ionian scale to get the song by using my ear. The subsequent song is E-D-C-D-E-E-E-E-D-D-E-D-C.



Melody of "Mary had a Little Lamb" in C Major

Stage Two: Orchestrating the Tune You've Quite Recently Made Sense of Utilizing the I, IV and V Harmonies

Right off the bat, you should figure out what harmony to use in blending a tone in tune, and in circumstances where you have more than one harmony choice to look over, you ought to have the option to choose the more fitting harmony.

Furthermore, you ought to have the option to apply inversions to the harmonies you will utilize to accomplish the smoothest progress starting with one harmony then onto the next where vital, and to have the option to apply the proper cadence to your harmony.

The last and most significant piece of this progression is to have the option to search for passing and neighboring tones. As these tones do not require a going with harmony (for instance, the expression "Mary had a little sheep, her wool was white as a day off" the tune "Mary had a Little Lamb" has the song "E-D-C-D-E-E-E-E-D-D-E-D-C." If a harmony joins each of these

tones in the melody, it would be heaps of harmonies to play for such a little piece.

Passing and Neighboring Tones

To have the option to fit a tune, you should initially have the opportunity to recognize a non-symphonious tone (or non-harmony tone) from a consonant tone (or harmony tone). Since most tunes incorporate non-harmony tones, having the option to kill these tones makes orchestrating significantly simpler.

What are the Passing Tones?

They are tones that sometimes show up between two distinctive harmony tones and are typically part of the tune. In this way, when a song progresses from one harmony tone to an alternate harmony tone with a non-harmony tone in the middle, such a non-harmony sound is known as a passing tone.

The image shows a musical score for the song "Mary had a Little Lamb" in 4/4 time. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The score is divided into four measures. The first measure is labeled "1" and contains the notes C4, D4, E4, and F4, with the label "Passing tones" below. The second measure is labeled "2" and contains the notes C4, E4, and G4, with the label "Chord tones" below. The third measure is labeled "3" and contains the notes G4, A4, B4, and C5, with the label "Upper neighboring tone" below. The fourth measure is labeled "4" and contains the notes C5, B4, A4, and G4, with the label "Upper neighboring tone" below. The chords for each measure are indicated below the bass line: C maj, C maj, G maj, and C maj.

Showing Passing and Neighboring Tones using "Mary had a Little Lamb"

What are Neighboring Tones?

At the point when you have a tune going from one harmony tone back to a similar harmony tone with a non-consonant tone in the middle of, such a non-symphonious tone is called a neighboring tone.

Picking What Tone to Harmonize

We have been looking at neighboring and passing tones and how they lead to harmony tones. These passing and neighboring and passing tones should not be fit. Suppose you've quite recently made sense of the song for "Mary had a Little Lamb," how at that point do you blend this tune? We will be seeing a few hints that will help you eliminate passing and neighboring tones by helping you make sense of harmony (or consonant) tones.

Tip One

That equivalent harmony can fit a song that ends up being an arpeggiated harmony. For instance, suppose I made a song "E-A-C-D-F" in the key of F major. When you investigate this tune, you will see that I arpeggiated an F major harmony (i.e., I played notes of an F significant harmony independently). Some other note in this tune would either be a passing or neighboring tone.

The D tone in this tune is viewed as a passing tone since it was utilized to start with one harmony tone then onto the next. The whole song is played over an F major harmony.

Tip Two

At the point when a note is played more than once on a scale, it is probably a harmonious tone. Looking at the tune of the tune "Mary Had a Little Lamb," you would notice how the "E" tone seemed multiple times in the subsequent measure. It does not make the "E" tone a harmonious tone. Like this, the scale is played over a C significant harmony.

Tip Three

At the point when two unique tones of a harmony show up in a measure, that harmony is destined to be the backup. Investigating the tune of the primary proportion of the song "Mary Had a Little Lamb," you'd notice that the tones which make up the C significant harmony showed up twice (the "E" and "C" tone). Consequently, this measure is played over a C significant harmony. Additionally, taking a look at this equivalent measure,

you would notice that the “D” note showed up twice. Following Tip Two, this D tone would appear to be harmonious. However, since the D tone is just yet one tone in harmony, it is seen that having two tones of harmony in a song, has a more outstanding possibility of going with harmony. Along these lines, the D tone turns into a passing tone since it is in the middle of two harmony tones.

Tip Four

The lion’s share of melodies settles, utilizing the V-I harmony movement. As found in the last two proportions of the melody “Mary had a Little Lamb,” at whatever point we have a tone from a V harmony directly before a tune reaches a conclusion, that tone can be joined by the V significant harmony (or V7 harmony) which at that point prompts the tonic. Since the D tone appears multiple times in the third measure, it is destined to be joined by a G major (or G7) harmony. The E tone is a neighboring tone for what it is worth in the middle of a similar harmony tone.

Utilizing Advanced Chords

With regards to using advanced harmonies, it is best to begin underlying harmonies and, afterward, stir your way up. Presently, I will be taking the straightforward harmony movement of the tune “Mary had a Little Lamb” and will make it to something somewhat further developed utilizing the harmonies you have only learned in this book. We will be making a couple of acclimations to the second and third proportion of the above descriptions.

In the subsequent measure, we saw that the tune had four E notes, which makes this tone a harmonious tone. The sound (the E tone) is found in an Amin harmony, Emin harmony, and a Cmaj harmony. Rather than orchestrating this measure with a Cmaj harmony, we will be utilizing an Amin and Emin harmony. It gives us an III-VI harmony movement that would later prompt an II-V-I harmony movement.

For the third measure, we will not exclusively be fitting it with a G harmony. However, we will additionally be including a D harmony. It gives us an II-V harmony movement that prompts the I-harmony. Note that the D tone can be fit utilizing the Dmin harmony and the G harmony.

The picture underneath should give a clearer image of the alterations made to the melody “Mary had a Little Lamb.”

Mary had a lit tle lamb her fleece was white as snow

The image shows a musical score for the song "Mary had a Little Lamb" in 4/4 time. The melody is written in the treble clef. The left hand accompaniment is written in the bass clef and features several advanced chords: Cmaj7 (measure 1), E7(b9 #5) (measure 2), D7 and G7 (measure 3), and Cmaj (measure 4). The chords are numbered 1 through 4. The title "Using Advanced Chords in 'Mary had a Little Lamb'" is written below the score.

I utilized Amin7 rather than an Amin9 harmony since I needed this harmony movement to be somewhat simpler to play using the left hand.

The above picture shows an I-III-VI-II-V-I harmony movement. Take a stab at playing these harmonies by utilizing your right hand while keeping up the harmonies' root tone as the bass tone. Likewise, have a go at applying all the changes you have concentrated up until this point. I am confident you will love it!

Chapter 16

Tips and Tricks



In this part, we will be looking at some straightforward tips and tricks that are essential in your journey.

See How Music Works

Numerous individuals accept that you don't have to comprehend the complexities of music if you need to improvise. It is in no way, shape, or form valid; instead, it is sustained to make improvising sound like a juvenile practice.

Many individuals can play lovely music without examining it or knowing the hypothesis behind it. Notwithstanding, that is not the situation with everybody. It is essential to learn and comprehend music appropriately if you need to turn into a capable performer. Improvising will take you just up until now. From that point forward, you should learn music, particularly if you intend to take it up in an expert way. Experts should know their hypotheses and terms thoroughly.

It is essential to see how scales are framed and how they structure harmonies and possible movements. It is possibly the most significant thing about music that all music darlings need to learn. It is where scales make harmonies; harmonies lead to the arrangement of movements and movements make the tunes that you and I love to tune in. You will end up being a fantastic performer, even an expert, as far as that is concerned.

Master the Patterns

Numerous individuals believe that to become a brilliant and expert performer; you have to cram tunes in your memory. It is no big surprise that proficient artists frequently get asked, 'How would you retain such a large number of various songs?' The least complex response to this inquiry is that

they don't remember the melodies. Expert and master artists learn and comprehend the examples.

Most melodies follow nearly a similar example. In this way, while ordinary and novice performers will learn many various tunes, an expert will comprehend the case behind these tunes. It implies that the individual in question will have the option to play many songs without remembering them because of the examples. A portion of the melodies that follow a similar model might be in various keys (out of the 12 accessible). Yet, once you comprehend the examples and scales appropriately, you will have the option to play all tunes in all the twelve keys productively.

The tunes may have various songs, yet a large portion of them will be founded on fundamental examples and harmonies. Along these lines, you will have the freedom to play numerous tunes with no issue.

Learn to Listen

Geniuses can improvise. However, even newbies can also do as such if they ace the strategy. To ace the plan, you have to begin tuning in. While tuning in to music pieces and tunes, check whether the tones are going down or up. Additionally, check whether the harmony is a major or a minor and whether it sounds tragic, glad, serious, or excellent. It might even be reduced and sound creepy and unnerving. It could likewise be an absolute harmony, which sounds energetic and heartfelt.

Music has a lot of sentiments, and each harmony has an inclination related to it. The individuals who can play harmonies without a lot of issues can easily comprehend this. Such is a secret that you have to unlock to turn into a magnificent piano player.

Perceive Intervals

The separations between notes are known as intervals. There are huge intervals and little intervals in music. For example, the seventh, sixth, and fifths are seen as enormous intervals, while harmony, seconds, and thirds

are seen as small intervals. These spans are significant because they can assist you with recognizing and naming the harmonies being played. In this way, for example, when you state that a performer is playing a major harmony, you are discussing the intervals that give the harmony its sound and sound quality. The equivalent is the situation with the remainder of the harmonies, including minor harmonies as well.

There are two sorts of intervals:

- Harmonic
- Melodic

The separation between the notes being played simultaneously is known as the harmonic interval, otherwise called chords.

The stretch between solitary notes in succession is known as a melodic interval, otherwise called melodies.

A song is comprised of the multiple harmonies, the melody, and chords. If you need to figure out how to play music with your ears, you have to comprehend and examine both of these components. If you do this effectively, you will have the option to recognize the stretches and connect them. By doing this, you will appreciate the chords and progressions swiftly and can play right away.

Practice and Get Some Real-World Experience

If you need to turn into a fruitful musician or performer, you have to rehearse and practice a lot. There is no option in contrast to challenging work and practice. You can concentrate a ton and increase knowledge about the piano and music when all is said in done. However, if you do not rehearse, you will stay a novice or an amateur. You have to put all that you learn energetically. It may sound somewhat worn out, yet it is the definitive truth.

Practice will make you a great player. However, taking the right and flawless method of practice will make you an exceptional player. If you practice inappropriate stuff and procedures, your base itself will be powerless, and you will create and get familiar with unsuitable playing strategies, which over the long while, will end up being counterproductive.

There are two things that individuals ought to follow throughout everyday life: getting things done correctly and doing the right things. While these two may sound comparable, there is a significant contrast between them. You can successfully do inappropriate things also. Thus, rather than concentrating on doing things the correct way, do the right things. The sooner you get familiar with this, the better you will turn into a great pianist.

The Most Effective Method to Play is by Reading

Figuring out how to read and understand sheet music opens new skylines for any performer. If you become capable of perusing sheet music, you can play with more proficiency and panache. Learning piano and figuring out how to read sheet music ought to happen at the same time. If you need to play any bit of music, you have to retain the notes first. When you become familiar with the sheet music, you will have the option to improve your playing and piano aptitudes enormously.

Tips to Learn How to Read and Peruse Sheet Music Easier

Any white area present in the sheet is marked FACE. For treble and clef, the arrangement is EGBDF. The treble clef checking means that these notes should be played with the right hand. You have to get comfortable with all the letter names and the names of the lines and the spaces when you start. Name the white areas with FACE directly from the base of the page and gradually go up and name the lines beginning from the primary concern. Do this until you arrive at the top edge. Mark the top line as EGBDF.

Record the letter names of the notes. Continuously compose the letter names directly underneath the music notes on the right turn in the treble clef. It is distinctly required at the outset when you are an amateur, but with time you can do without this training.

Retain all the letter names. When you are done with them, you can proceed onward to the bass clef. When you remember all the letter names present for the right hand, proceed onward to the notes of the left hand, such as the bass clef.

Name the spaces ACEGB and GBDF A. The areas at the base of the page should be ACEGB, and the lines from the bottom to the top are GBDF A.

Mark each finger with numbers one to five. Tag both the hands with these numbers. Write the numbers close to letter names.

Advanced Songs

When you begin to play and practice the piano, you will unquestionably need to continue to play your main tunes and melodic pieces. It does not make a difference what the song is; it could be a well-known standard melody or a work of art. Ordinarily, these pieces are progressed, and beginners may battle a bit while playing them. Accordingly, it is critical to rehearse and have a solid base. In any case, when you ace the nuts and bolts and practice enough, with the time, you will have the option to play troublesome and advanced pieces with much ease.

Tips to Help You Play Advanced Music

Motivation

Pick a song that inspires you. Regardless of whether it's anything but a persuasive tune, discover inspiration in it. Inspiration acts like fuel to your endeavors. When you are sufficiently inspired, you can utilize the inspiration and brush your essentials. Utilize these essentials and play. Pick a song or tune and begin playing right away.

Rather than picking something simple, go for something challenging. However, it must be something you like. You need the will to gain proficiency with the piece, which will possibly come if you genuinely appreciate it.

Try not to pick an excessively complicated piece, or you may surrender if you don't get it directly after attempting a couple of times. Initially, listen to the tune, song, or piece that you have picked on numerous occasions. You can watch YouTube recordings, as well, and look at how specialists play specific songs.

De-construction

At the point when you pick a song or bit of music to play, take your time to explore it and divide it right away. Breaking the song into small bits implies deconstructing it. The brain may become overpowered if you toss complex bits of music, particularly if you are not used to cutting edge music.

To make things simple for your brain, deconstruct and separate the music section into numerous bits of five to fifteen seconds. Along these lines, you will have the freedom to center and learn in a superior manner. Avoid taking on more than you can realistically handle. Approach things moderately, slowly, and carefully.

When you are comfortable enough with a couple of areas, connect them, and play them together. Play it a few times until you get it the correct way. When you are fulfilled, rehash it with the piece that follows. Before long, you will find it comfortable and proficient enough to play the entire part effortlessly.

Two Hands

Make sure that you utilize two hands while rehearsing or practicing. You should have the option to play various things at the same time with two hands. It is vital because complex pieces frequently require cutting edge

procedures. If you are not happy with your hands, you will think that it is not easy to play sophisticated melodies/songs and music.

Practice

Practice more under any given circumstance. Practicing assists you with getting wonderful results. It will also aid you in maintaining the importance of learning. If you practice loyally and maintain good consistency, you will have the option to get familiar with a lot of new pieces in a short timeframe. In any event, practicing the scales with two hands causes you to synchronize how your fingers move.

It takes a lot of work to learn the piano. There is a lot of room to learn, make mistakes, and grow in the beginning. Most beginners make a lot of mistakes while playing and practicing. We have put together some of the common mistakes that tend to occur and some tips on how you can avoid them.

Not Paying Attention to Correct Fingering

This is a common mistake a majority of beginners seem to repeat. They feel that it is unnecessary and uncomfortable, so they ignore the fingering. However, in the long run, it makes a lot of difference because it becomes much harder to play complex music pieces.

Assuming That the Clefs Refer to Hands

On a page of music, there will be two lines. One is for the right hand, and the other is for the left. For the most part, this is how to determine what you should play with each hand. However, clefs denote the octave that you will be playing and not the hand that you have to use.

Not Distinguishing Between Notes and Keys

You have to remember that notes are not the same things as keys. The keys are on the piano, and notes are on the page. Notes may take many different forms and are written in various ways.

Sticking to C Major

C major is probably the easiest key to play in songs since you don't have to bother with flats or sharps. However, all songs are not in C. you have to learn to play other keys properly as well.

Assuming Sharps and Flats are Black Keys

While this is usually the case, B sharp and F flat are white keys. So don't assume that every sharp and flat is a black key.

Neglecting Scales

Although scales can feel a little pointless or boring, they are essential in learning to play the piano. Anyone who wants to play the piano moderately well has to be proficient in the scales. Practicing the scales will help to improve dexterity and the ability to read and play.

Playing Everything Too Fast

Most people feel that being able to play the piano makes them an advanced player. However, this is not true. Not every musical piece is meant to be played fast. If you play a slow piece too fast, it does not sound pleasing to the audience who has to hear it. You should always count and use a metronome so that your tempo is right.

Playing with Flat Fingers

A lot of students start playing the piano with flat fingers. This means that their finger flatly extends from their hand, and this first knuckle is collapsed. If you play with flat fingers, it slows down your technique and can cause tension. You should always pay attention to this and play with curved fingers.

Sitting Too Close to the Piano

Be careful with the distance at which you set from the piano. If you sit too close, you won't have enough space for your arms. It limits the range of motions and causes tension on your wrists as well.

Not Using Arm Weight

When you play the piano, you should be using the weight of your torso and arms. Fingers control the keys, but playing solely with finger strength will not produce the right kind of tone. You have to learn to channel your arm and bodyweight efficiently through the arms so that you can produce a large range of sounds and tones. It will also help to reduce the strain exerted on the fingers.

Keep all of the points mentioned above in mind so that you don't make these beginners' mistakes while playing the piano.

How Do You Become a Good Pianist?

For those who have been playing the piano for a long period, they have come to the realization that there are some things that assisted them in enhancing their piano playing skills. On the contrary, learning the piano can be fun when you decide to focus on it. Likewise, the techniques and practice methods are guidance and should not limit your prowess. Here are a number of proven learning techniques to help you become better compared to what you are now.

Learn about the music theory. – study the music theory to get an edge in connecting chords and making sense of the music you intend to play. You don't require a degree on this, but basic knowledge and understanding about music theory can help you to realize such patterns as triads, chord progression, or forming and recognizing the key signatures and chord.

Practice classical pieces- unlike what most individuals think, classical music is not such a boring genre. It may not be the most interesting genre for today's generations; however, such pieces are technically demanding; hence, practicing these pieces can help you improve your technical abilities.

Similarly, learning classical pieces can also give you a solid foundation of piano basics where you can start. Choose pieces that can help you enhance

your technical abilities, such as Bach's preludes and fugues. Moreover, choose other pieces that will constantly challenge your piano abilities.

Actively challenge yourself – this is an obvious one, but many students fail to do this. To get better in playing the piano or in any other musical instrument, one must compete with their selves to improve, and this includes playing difficult musical pieces. Playing songs that are common doesn't contribute to your piano skills since you are already familiar with how to play it. Of course, you can always play songs that you like, but once in a while, try other hard pieces to get familiar with the techniques used in this piece.

Playing songs that are out of your league can help you overcome your struggles in piano playing.

Slow it down – perhaps we would all want to learn as fast as we can; still, it is advisable for every beginner or newbie to take it slow and practice accordingly. Keep in mind that the greatness of your sound does not depend on how fast you play it. Likewise, playing the piano fast increases your chance of missing the notes and playing sloppy. Hence, practicing it slow can aid you in mastering each note and play it repetitively. Remember that accuracy and speed comes from the act of repeating an action.

Practice more often – apparently practice is what makes us better in almost everything we do thus;, beginners and professional pianists alike should frequently practice. Instead of contemplating how to be a better pianist, go and practice at least two hours a day. Consistency is important for you to notice improvements.

Dedicate a time for your piano lessons and training and stay committed to it. Do not allow other activities to hinder you from practicing as schedules.

Enjoy it – the more we enjoy what we are doing, the more we become excited about doing it again and practicing it more. The same goes for

playing the piano. Make sure that you are enjoying rather than feeling frustrated whenever you cannot get a technique or missed notes. If you are feeling bored with your current piece, switch for other genres. Let your emotions and memories as well to fill your music. Play the piano because you love it.

Conclusion

Learning how to play the piano is not something you can fully master in some practice sessions or lessons. However, it's nice along the way if you find ways to keep the excitement going. From the moment you start playing, you never have to give up while you can sit down, move your hands, and keep your mind working. That is a long time for most people.

As you start to play around on the keys, keep in mind that you're a beginner. Don't try to play Beethoven before building the necessary skills. It will take time to learn and perfect the songs you want to play, so be patient with yourself. Make time to study the basic techniques and practice the beginner skills so you can begin working up to playing the songs you want.

Once you have a grasp of what to do, practice. Adults tend to think that we don't need to practice to get good at things, but that's not true. If you don't practice playing an instrument, you don't have the opportunity to make the connections in your brain that make your skills stick.

Certain skills are paramount to successfully playing the piano. Luckily, you can start learning them right away! The basic skills are easy to learn but take significant practice to master. You'll need to spend time understanding the theory behind the skills and why they are important to music. Things such as reading sheet music, playing on tempo, and knowing how to move your hands around the keyboard are things you can start to develop as a beginner to make more advanced pieces easier as you get to them.

Learning to play the piano can be one of the best decisions you will ever make. It can change your life and your outlook in many different areas of your life. Universities and scholars from all over the world have conducted studies on the benefits of learning to play the piano. The emotional, mental,

and social benefits they have found alone are enough to make a compelling case for becoming a piano aficionado.

I'd like to encourage you to practice daily. If not daily, practice a few times a week. Don't let several days or a week pass before you do.

Have fun with your practice. It's a mind thing. Piano playing is one of the most exciting activities one can ever engage in.

You will not grasp everything instantly; it takes time. The greatest piano players have gone through the same struggles and battles that you have. Many have cried on certain days when everything seemed unattainable. But they kept moving forward.

The joy that you will get from playing the piano is unmatched. Take it one day at a time, and you will get there. You can do it!