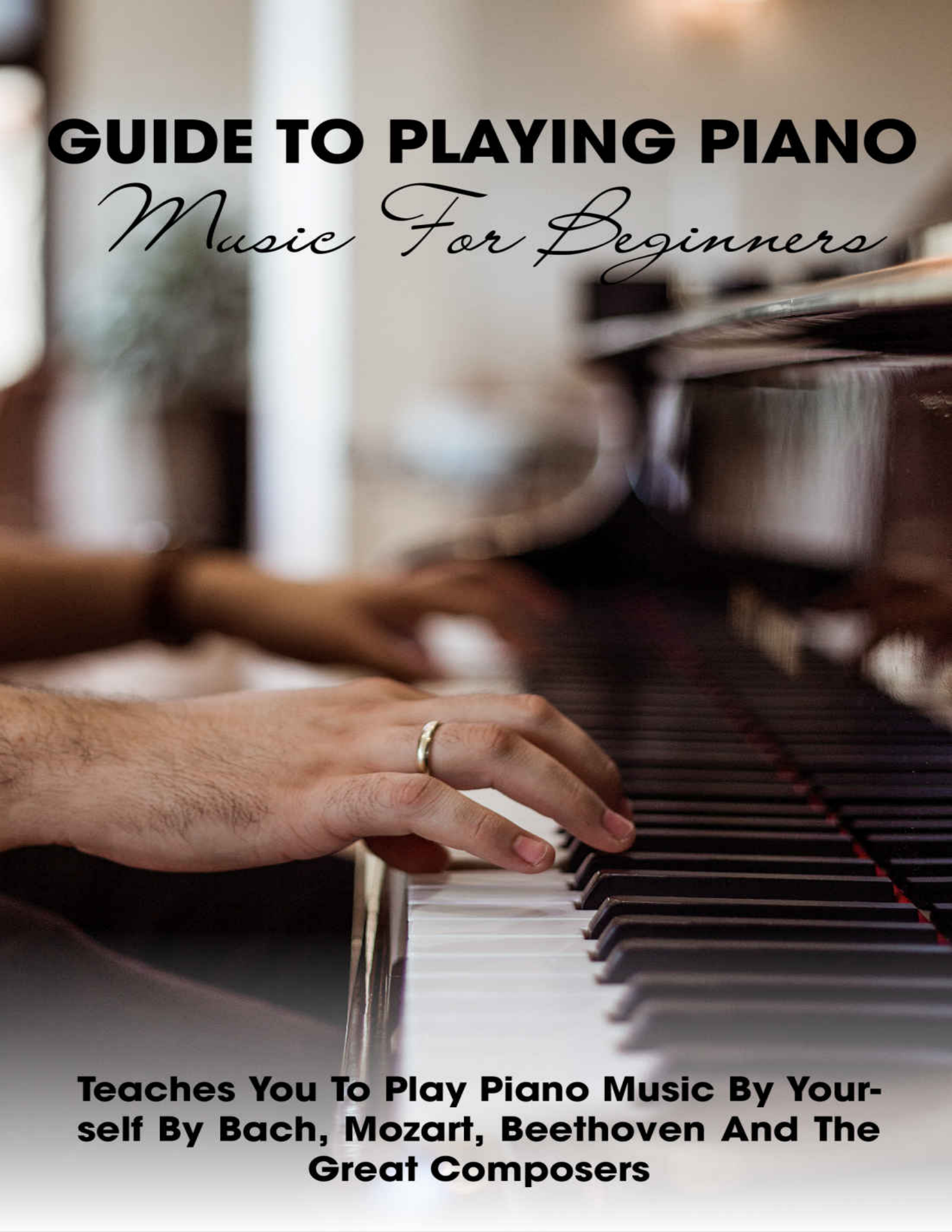
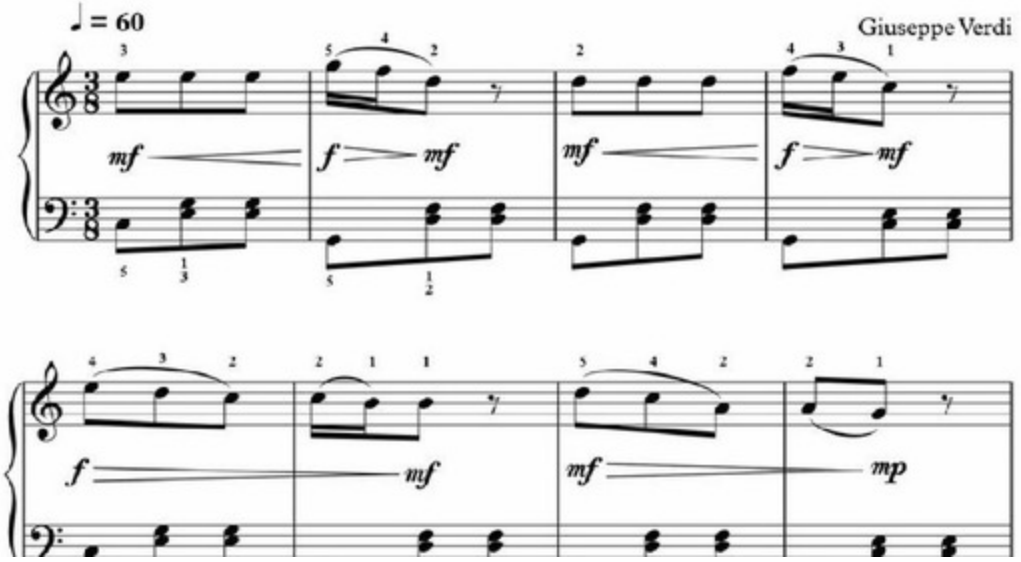


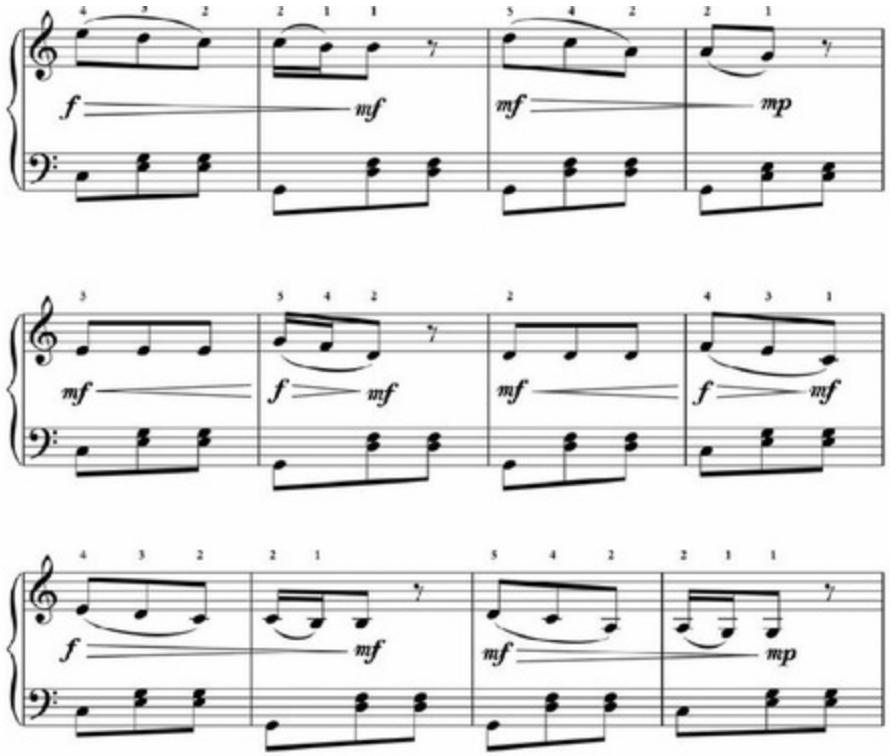
GUIDE TO PLAYING PIANO

Music For Beginners

Teaches You To Play Piano Music By Yourself By Bach, Mozart, Beethoven And The Great Composers

La donna è mobile




f
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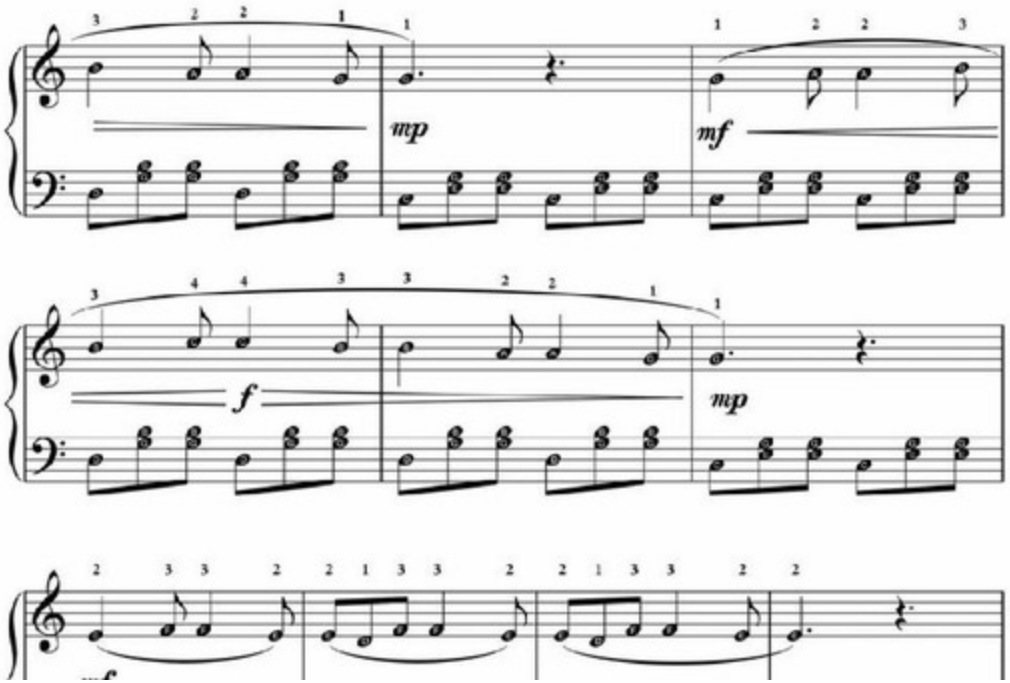
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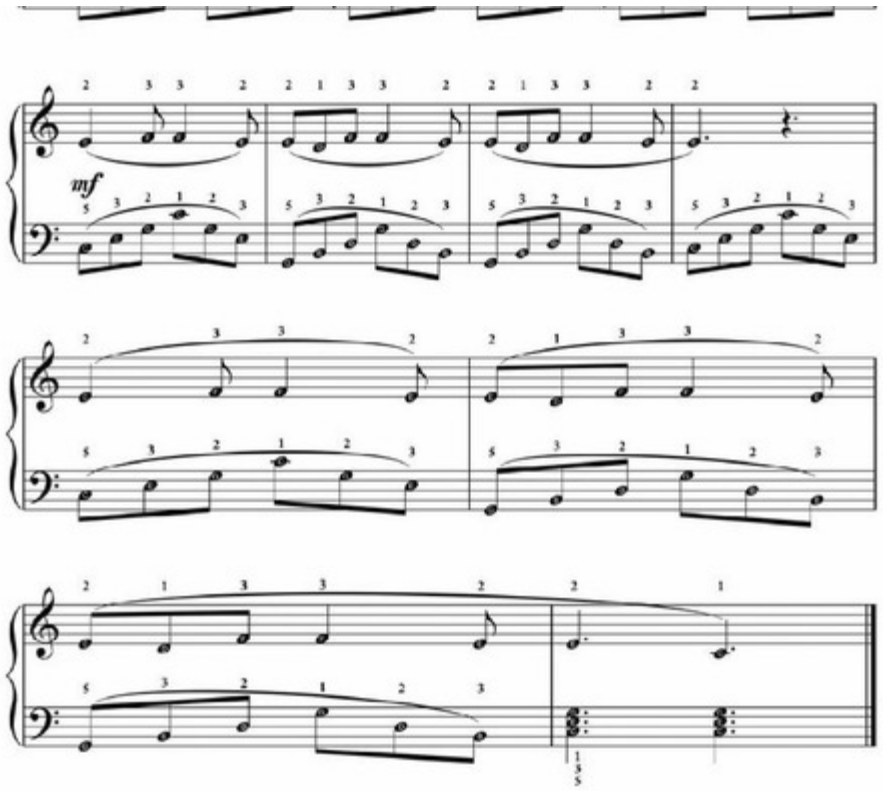
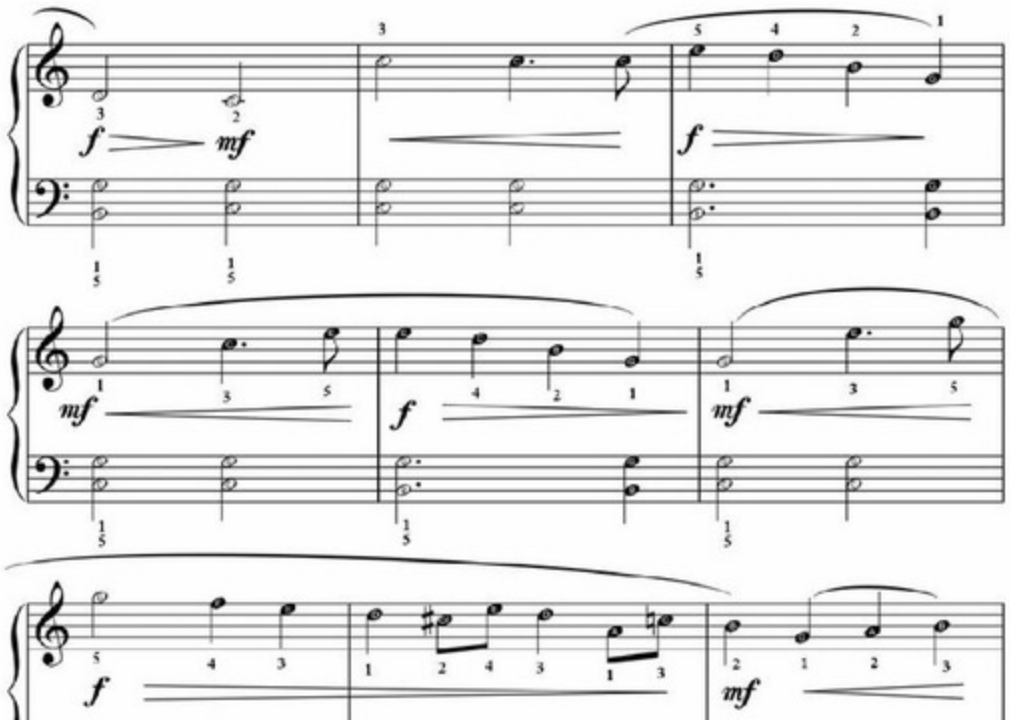

mf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mf
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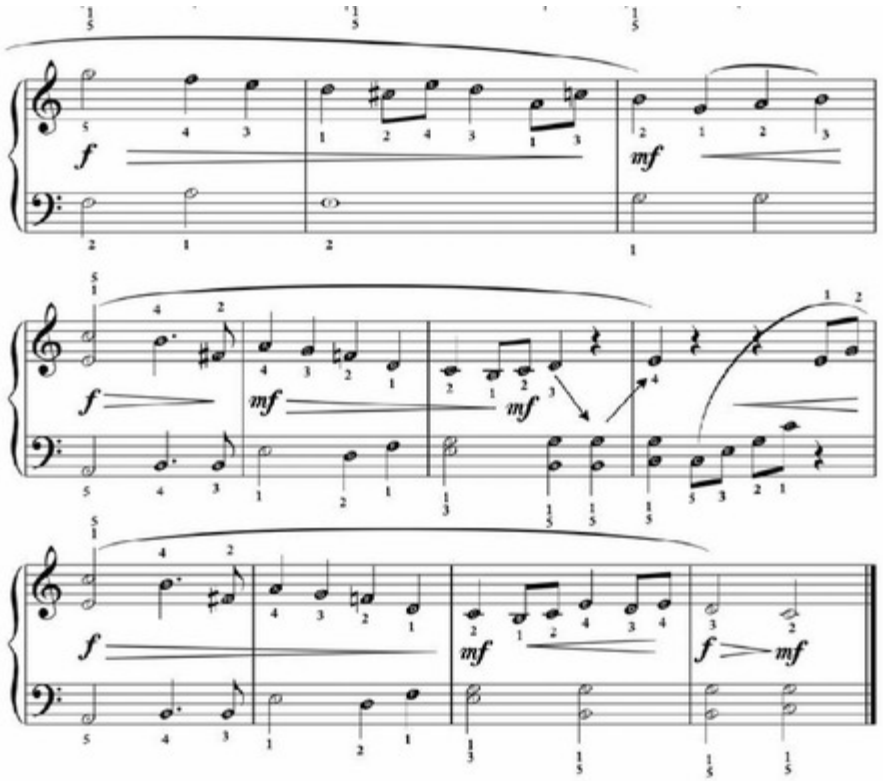
mf
f
mf
f
mf


f
mf
f
mf
mf
mf
f
mf
f
mf

More Treble Clef Exercises: Middle C, D, E & F (RH)

- Let's add the note F, which is on the 1st space of the Treble Clef.
- Remember to find Middle C with the Thumb of your right hand (RH).

F is on the first space of the Treble Clef.

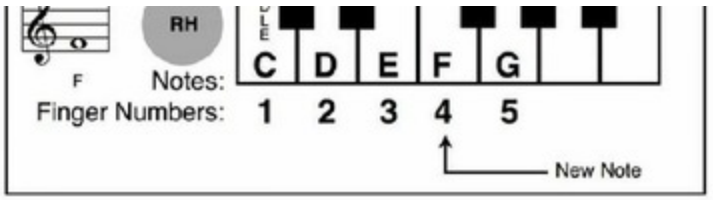
F

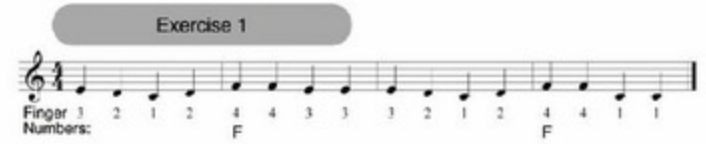
RH

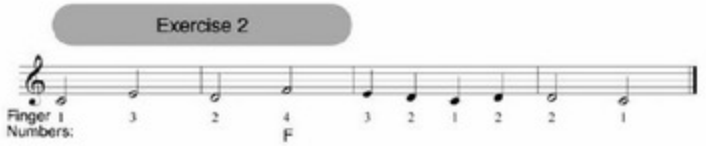
Notes:

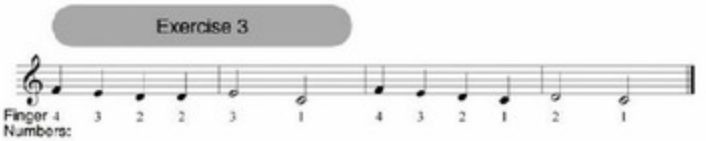
Finger Numbers: 1 2 3 4 5

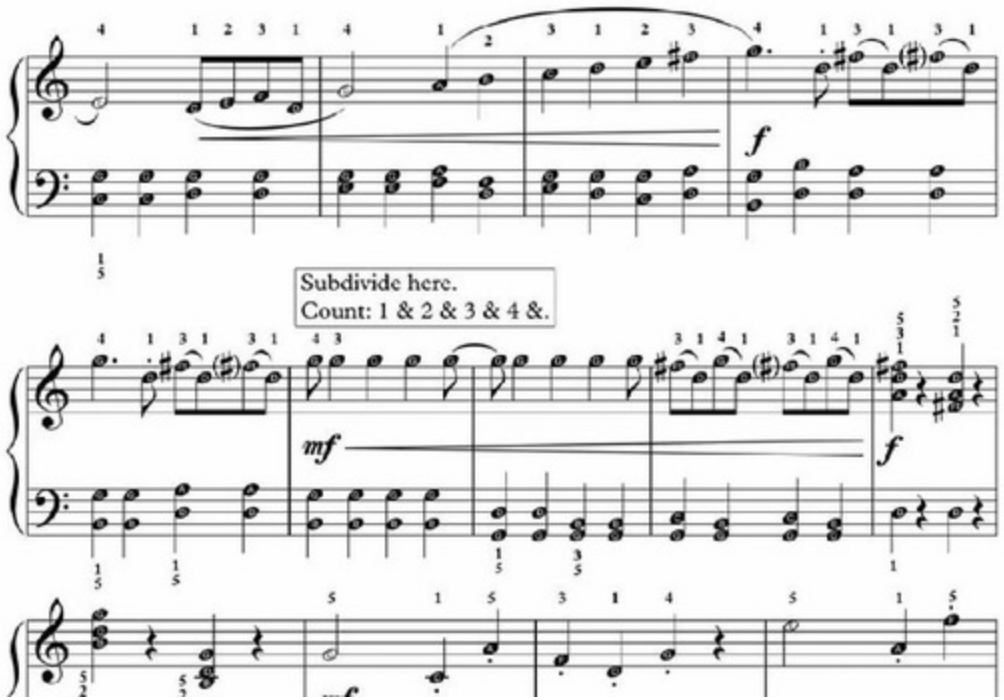
New Note

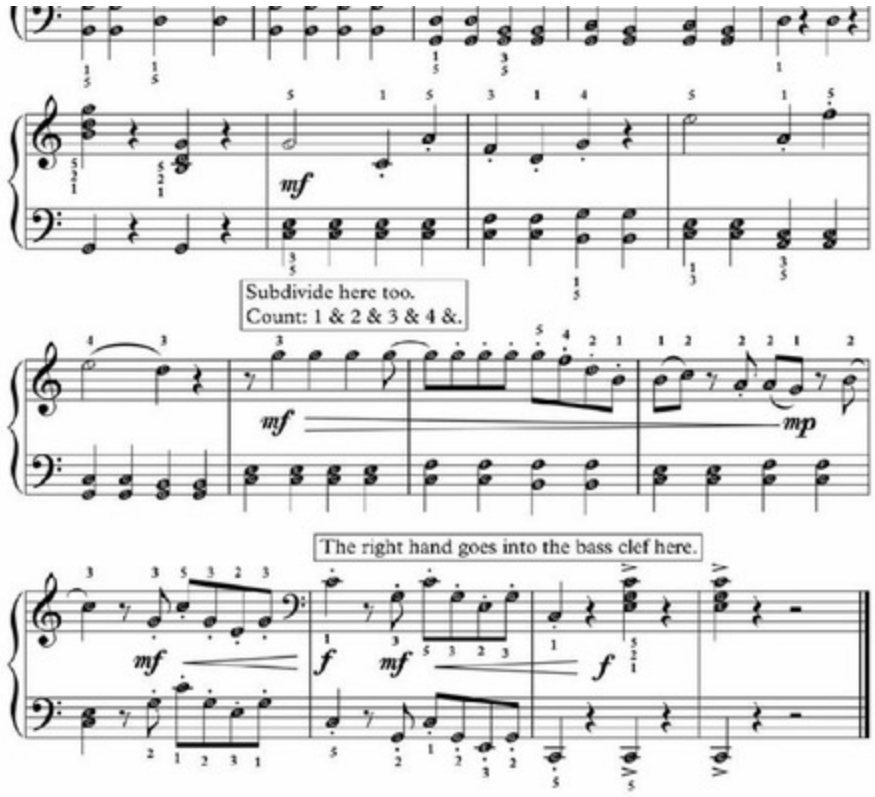

RH
F
Notes:
C D E F G
Finger Numbers: 1 2 3 4 5
New Note


Exercise 1
Finger Numbers: 3 2 1 2 4 4 3 3 3 2 1 2 4 4 1 1
F
F


Exercise 2
Finger Numbers: 1 3 2 4 3 2 1 2 2 1
F

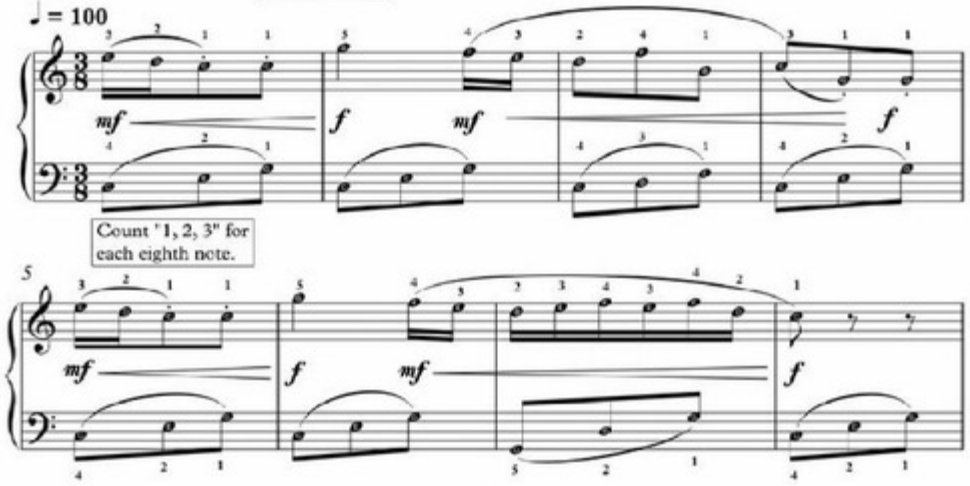

Exercise 3
Finger Numbers: 4 3 2 2 3 1 4 3 2 1 2 1

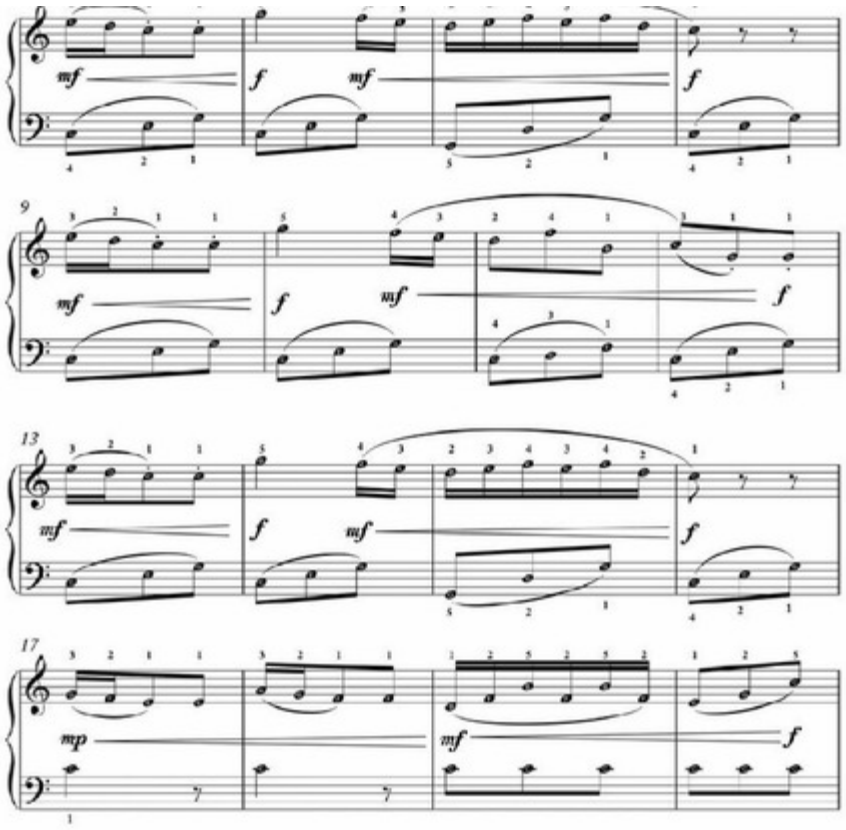

Subdivide here.
Count: 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &.
f
mf
f

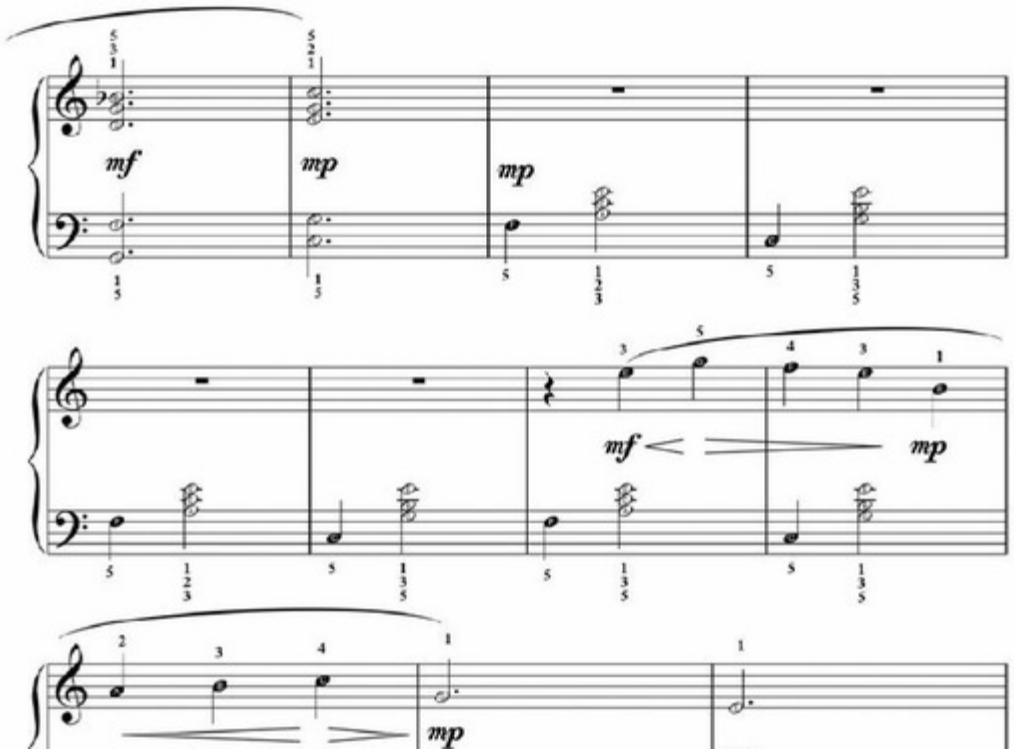

mf
Subdivide here too.
Count: 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &.
mf
mp
The right hand goes into the bass clef here.
mf
f
mf
f

Sonatina in C: Third Movement

Check out Video Lesson 20. Click Here!




mf
f
mf
f
9
mf
f
mf
f
13
mf
f
mf
f
17
mp
mf
f


mf
mp
mp
mf
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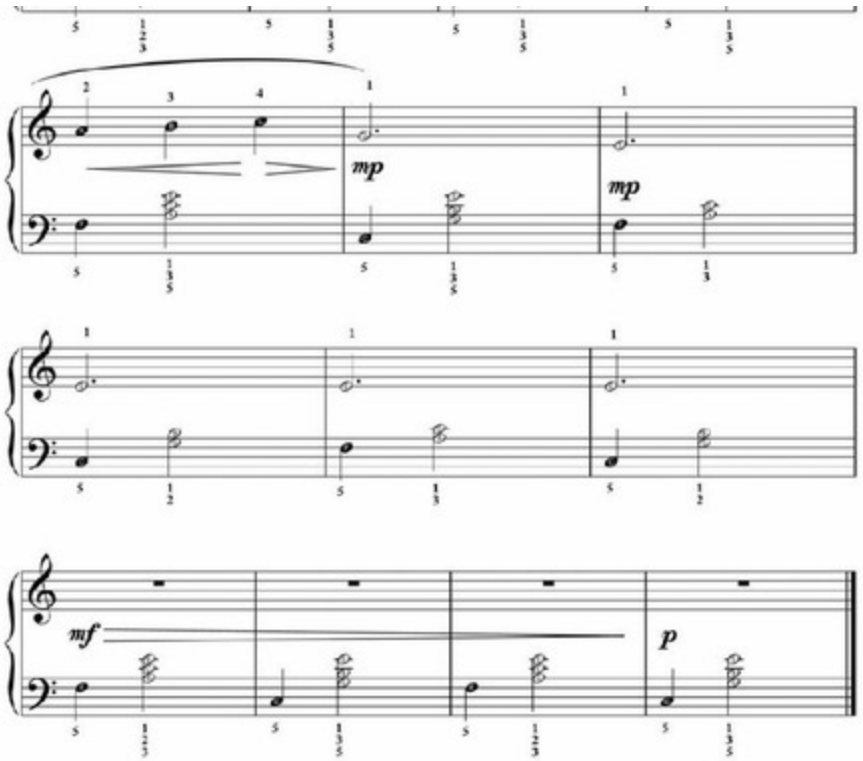

mp
mp
mf
p

Joy to the World Overview & Lesson

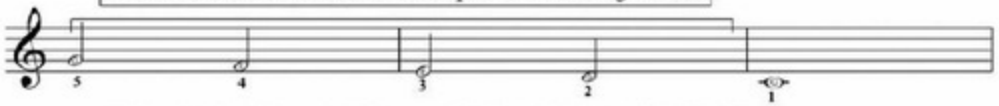
With *Joy to the World*, we are going to learn a new and very useful piano concept: moving the right-hand thumb under and third finger over. This technique will allow us to smoothly connect different finger positions on the piano. In this progression of exercises, we will practice the technique, which is used in *Joy to the World* and many other pieces.

Check out Video Lesson 11. Click Here!

Use these notes for the first hand position in the right hand.

In exercise one, let's practice the first right-hand position: F, G, A, B, C.

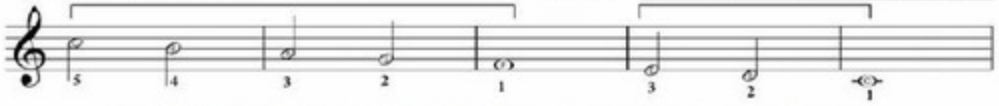
Use these notes for the second hand position in the right hand.

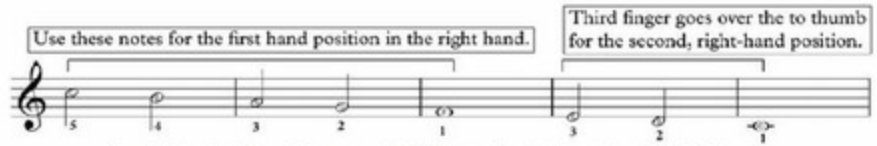


In exercise two, let's practice the second right-hand position: C, D, E, F, G.

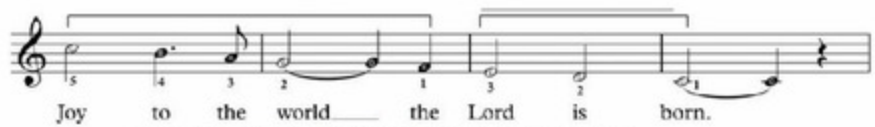
Use these notes for the first hand position in the right hand.

Third finger goes over the to thumb for the second, right-hand position.

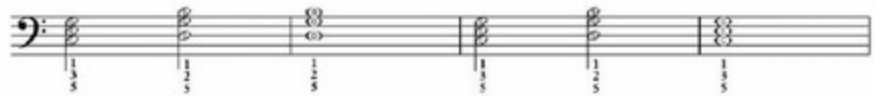




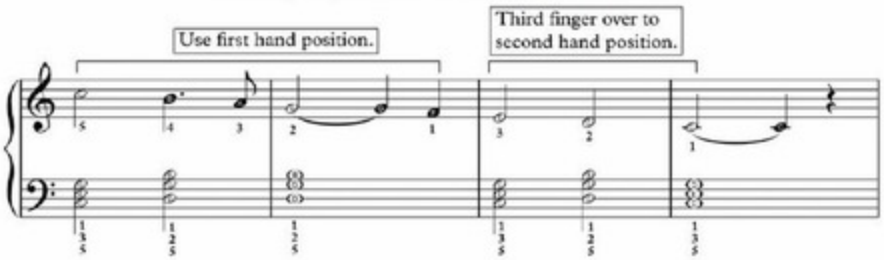
Now, let's go back to position one and shift into position two by moving the third finger over the thumb (from F to E) in measure 4. You may start to hear a little bit of the tune. This is the "finger-over" technique. We will use it many times in the upcoming pieces.



In exercise four, let's now add the melody with the correct rhythm.



For exercise five, let's practice the chords for the left hand.

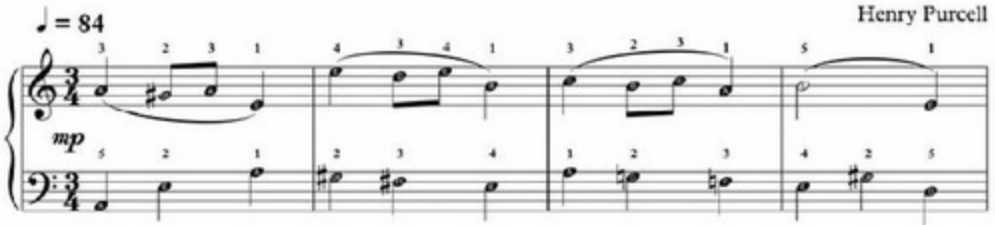


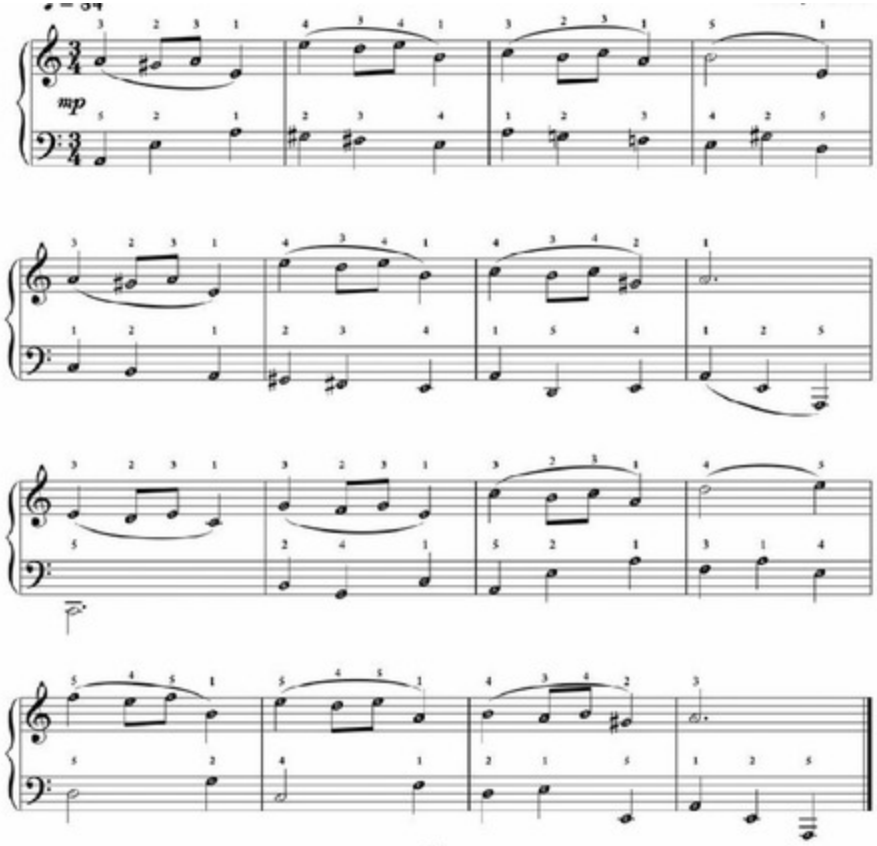
Now, for exercise six, let's put both hands together.

Air

This lyrical piece by Purcell is marked quarter note equals eighty-four. This means that the tempo ("speed") of the piece is at eighty-four beats per minute. If you don't have a metronome, you can find many free or very inexpensive digital metronomes and metronome apps online.

There are four systems ("lines") in this piece. In your practicing, it might be best if you play the first measure of a system (right hand, left hand, then both hands). Once you have the first measure down, follow the same process with the second, third, and fourth measures in the system. Once you have mastered each individual measure, play two-measure groups. For example, play measures one and two. Then, play measures three and four. Then play all four measures.

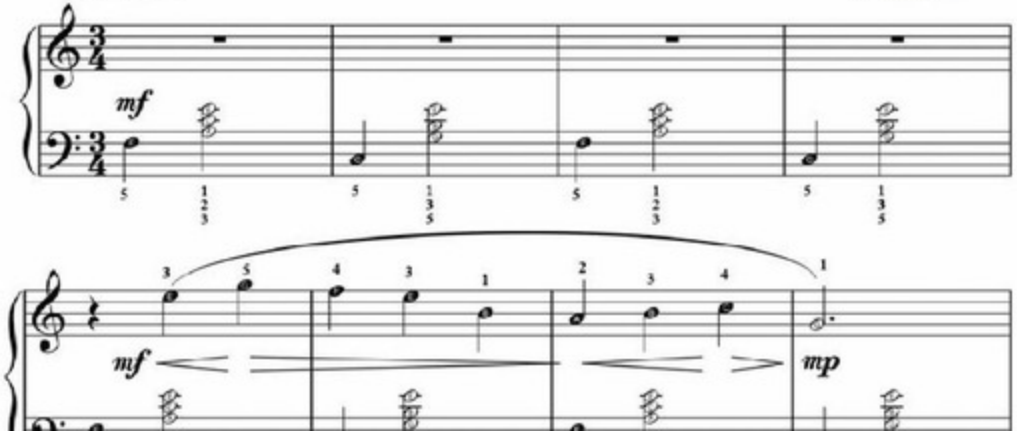


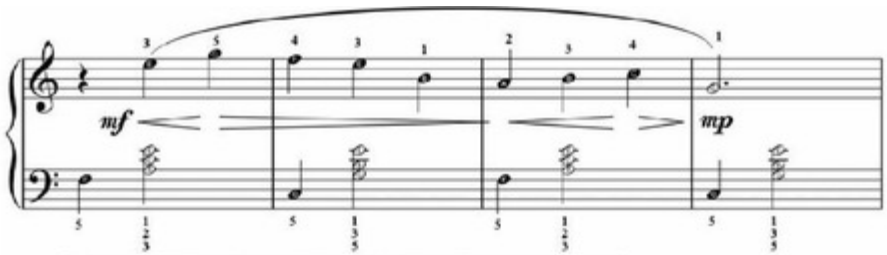

mp

Gymnopedie

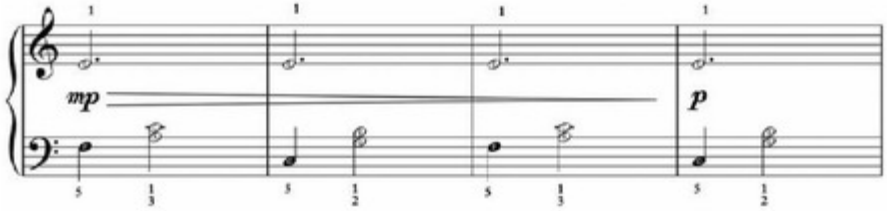
For this gentle piece, remember to count to three for each measure. Try the left hand alone, first. Then, try the right hand alone. Slowly, play with both hands together; it might be best to play hands together for groups of four measures, following the melody.

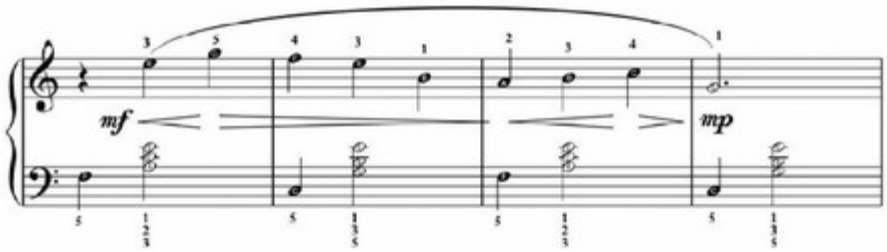
Adagio Erik Satie





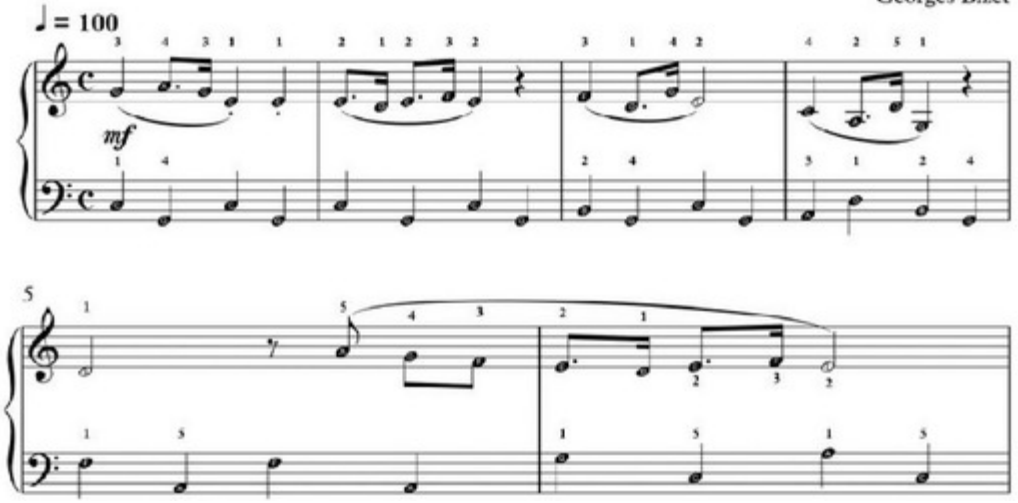
Make the left-hand part a little quieter than the right-hand part.

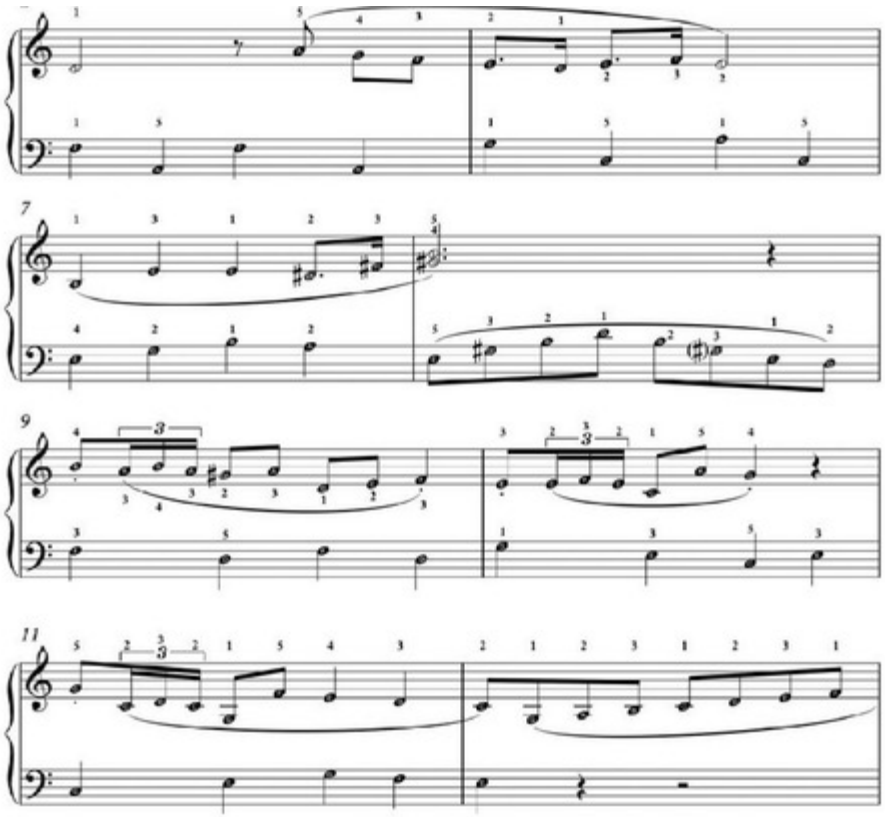


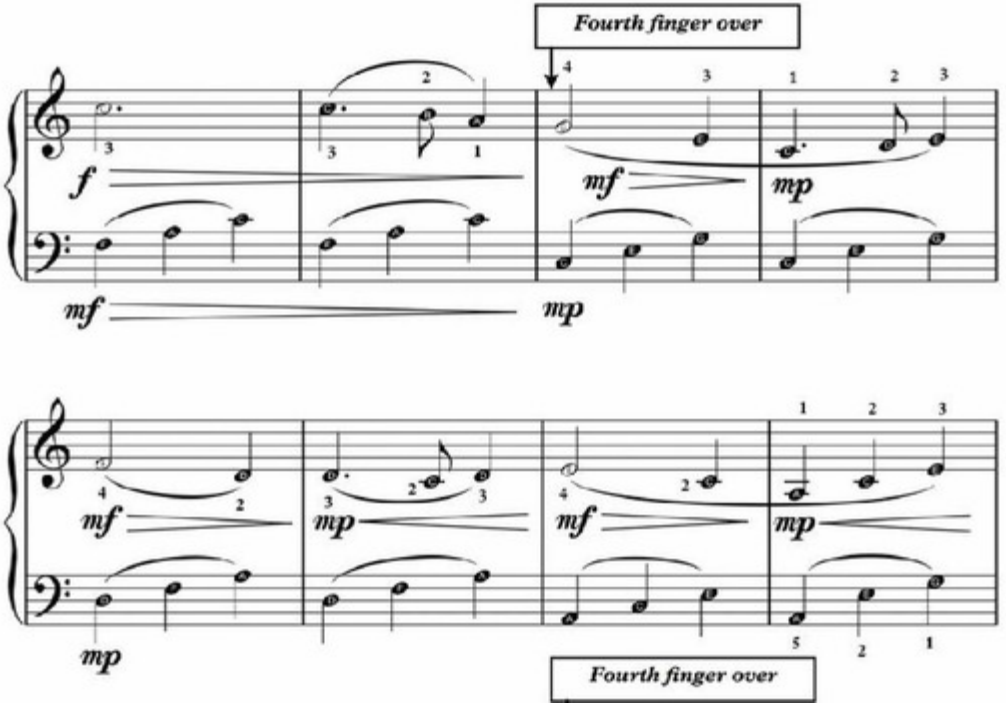


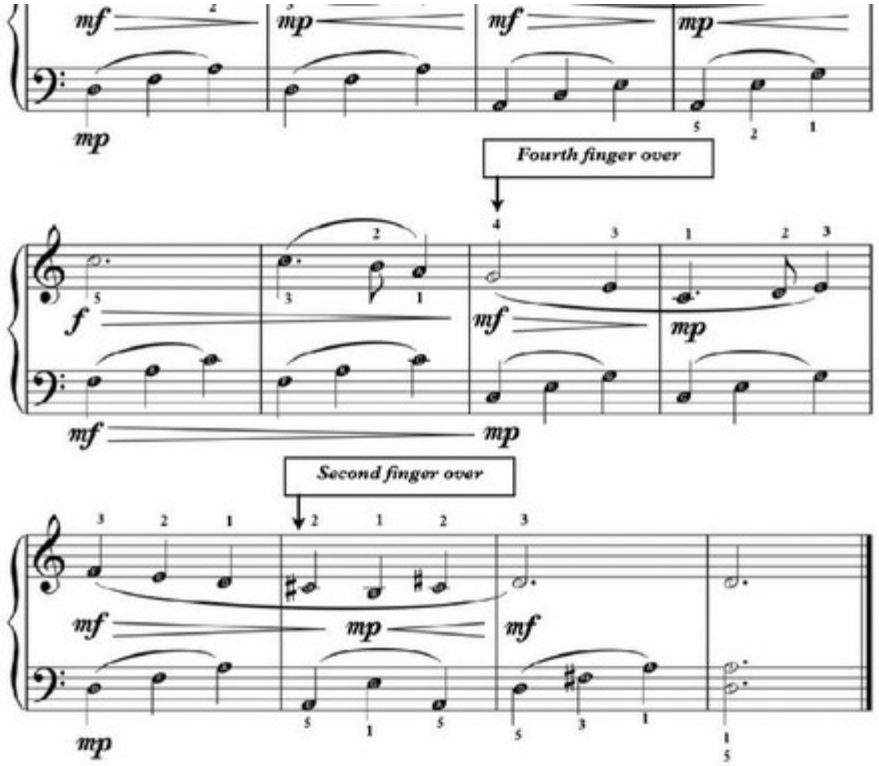
The Toreador Song

Georges Bizet






Fourth finger over
f
mf
mp
mf
mp
mf
mp
mf
mp
Fourth finger over


mf
mp
mf
mp
mp
Fourth finger over
f
mf
mp
mf
mp
Second finger over
mf
mp
mf
mp

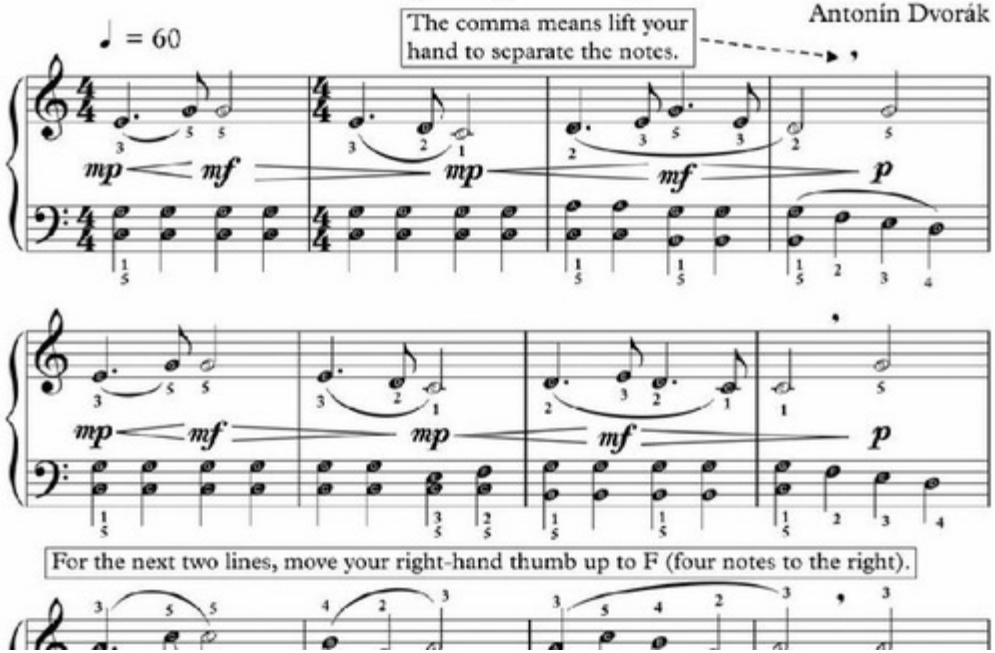
Play hands alone for the whole piece first, then, one system at a time, add both hands.

New World Symphony Theme

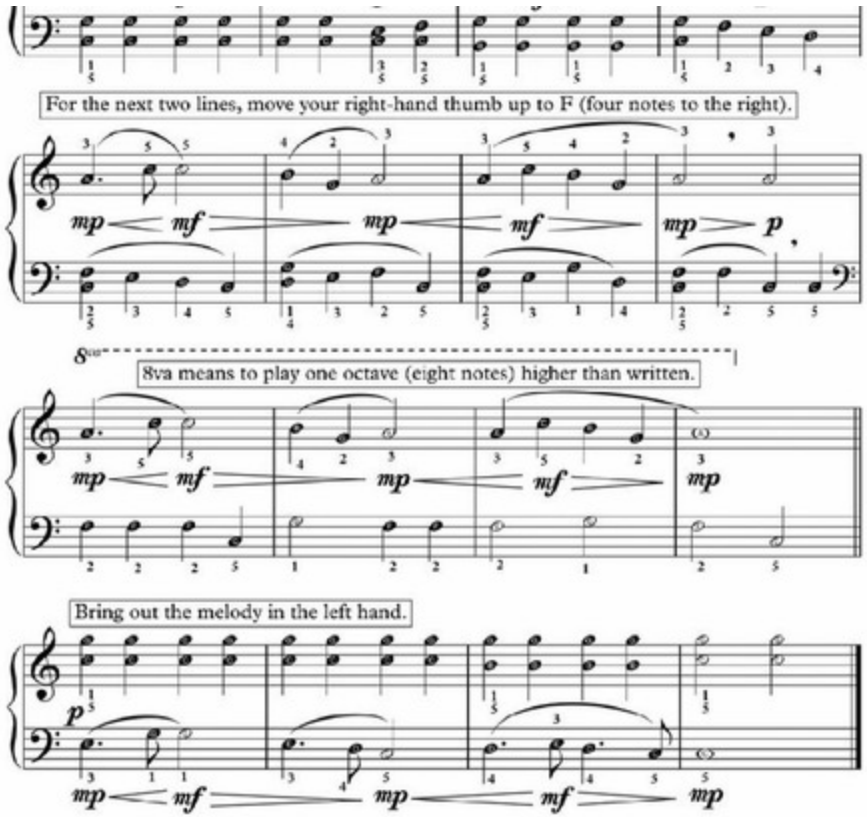
Antonín Dvorák

♩ = 60

The comma means lift your hand to separate the notes.



For the next two lines, move your right-hand thumb up to F (four notes to the right).


For the next two lines, move your right-hand thumb up to F (four notes to the right).
8va
8va means to play one octave (eight notes) higher than written.
Bring out the melody in the left hand.

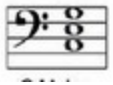
Easy Left-Hand Chords: C Major, F Major & G7

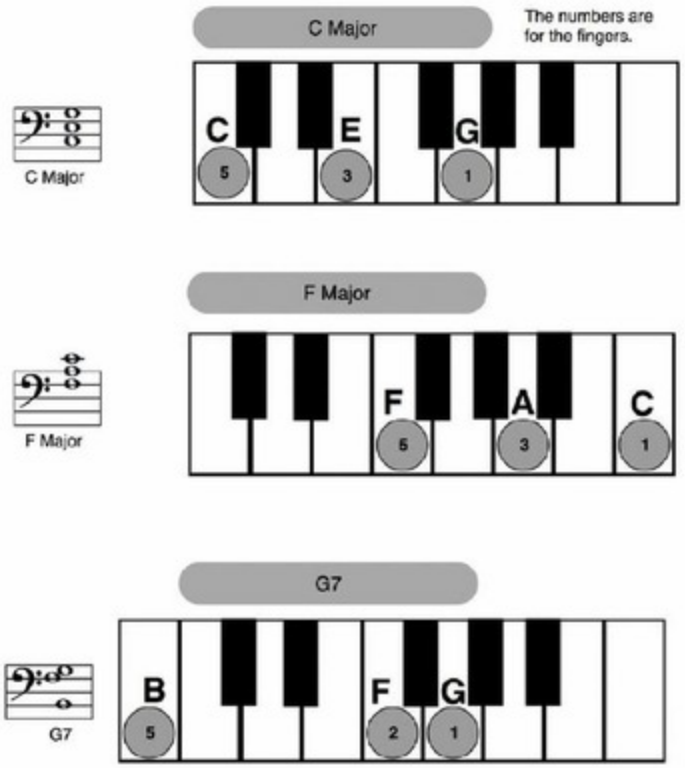
- Chords are 3 or more notes played at the same time.
- In order to play chords well, keep your fingers curved for the notes that you play and lift your fingers that are not being used for the chord.
- Take a look at video lesson 8 to see and hear how these techniques work.
- For these chords, use the Left Hand (LH).
- We are going to look at 3 chords in this lesson.

Check out Video Lesson 8. Click Here!

C Major

The numbers are for the fingers.

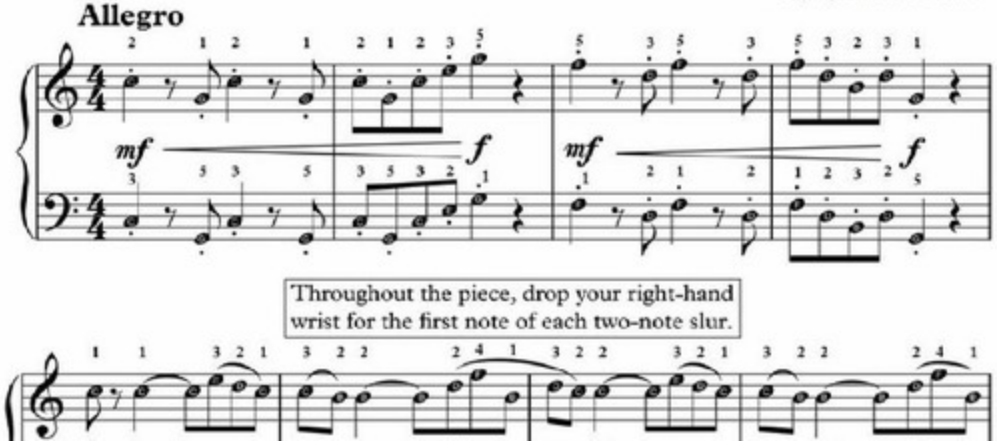


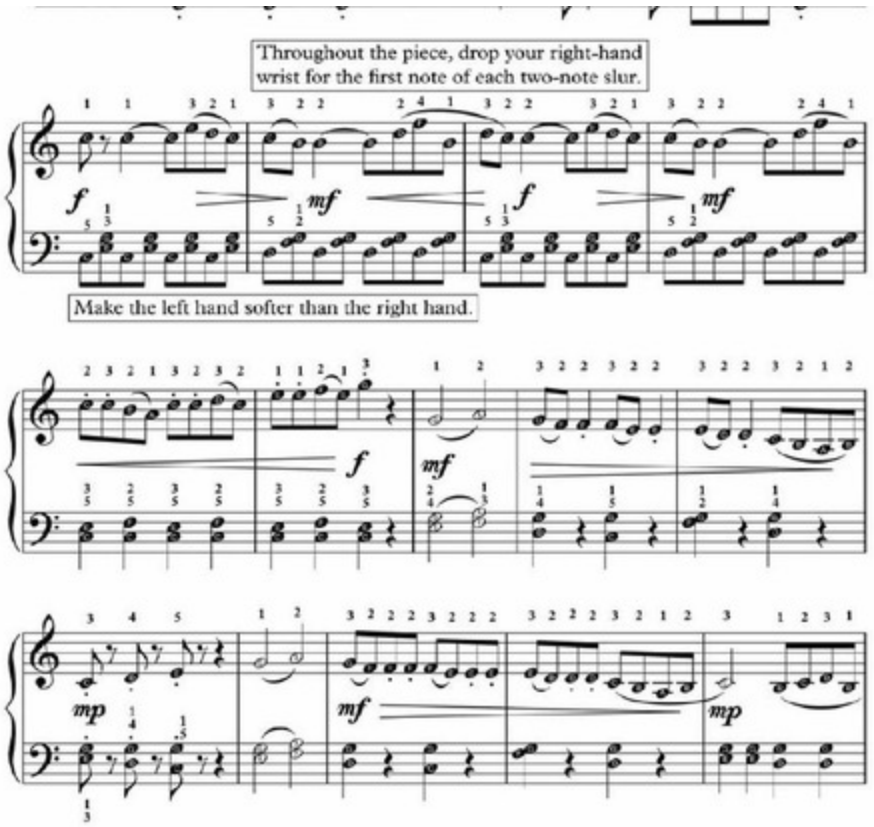

C Major
The numbers are for the fingers.
C
E
G
5
3
1
C Major
F Major
F
A
C
5
3
1
F Major
G7
B
F
G
5
2
1
G7

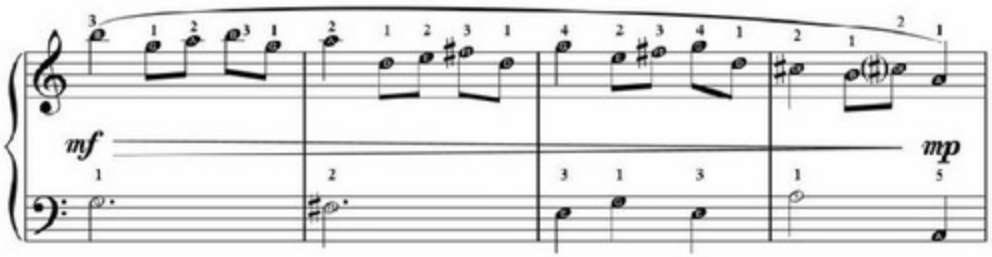
Eine kleine Nachtmusik

To help us play this wonderful piece by Mozart, we are going to focus on subdividing (counting the halfway points between each beat). Since the piece is in 4/4 time, we count, "1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &", for each measure. Practice one measure at a time: right hand, left hand, then both hands. Gradually put two measures together; then, put four measures together and continue in this manner.

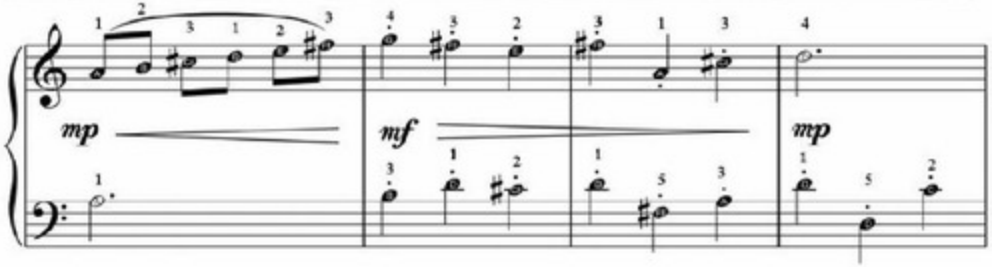
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart




Throughout the piece, drop your right-hand wrist for the first note of each two-note slur.
Make the left hand softer than the right hand.

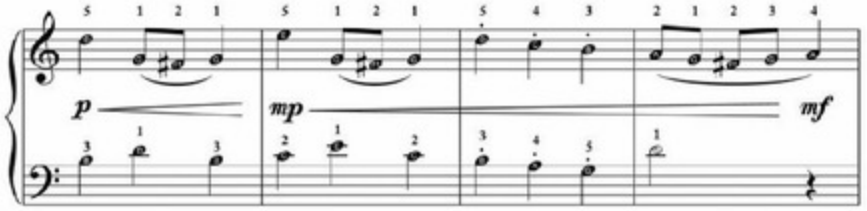


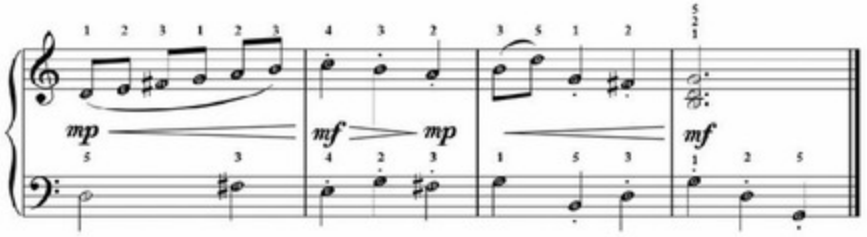
Bring out the contrasting sounds between legato (smooth) notes and staccato (detached) notes.



Drop the right-hand wrist

Drop the right-hand wrist
for the first note of each
three-note group in these bars.





An Overview of Counting and Measures

Check out Video Lesson 2. Click Here!

- Music is composed of groups of beats called measures.
- Measures are set off by vertical lines, called bar lines.
- Measures most commonly contain 2, 3, or 4 beats.
- Below, are examples of sets of four measures in 4/4 time.
- In 4/4 time, you will count 4 beats for each measure.
  In other words, you will count: 1234, 1234, 1234, 1234.
- Try counting aloud and clapping the beats for the exercise below.

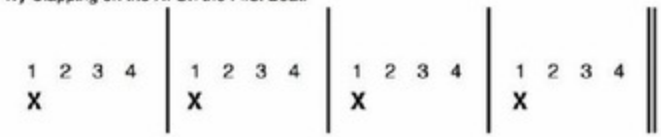
Example 1:

1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 ||

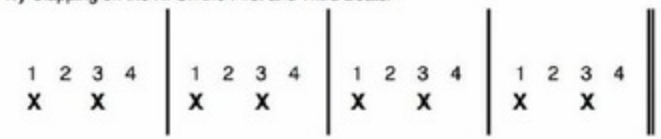
Example 2:

Example 1:

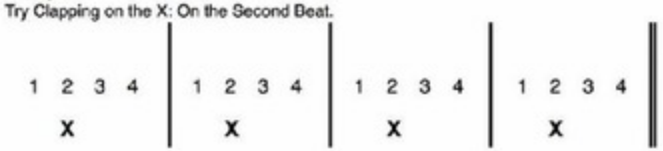
Example 2:
Try Clapping on the X: On the First Beat.

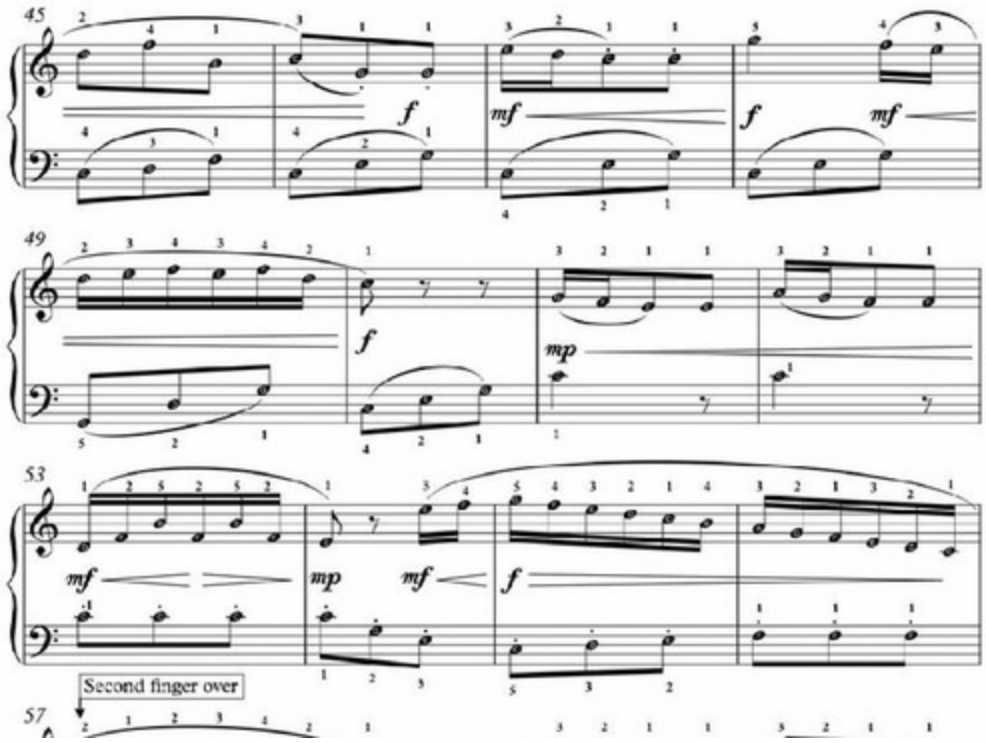


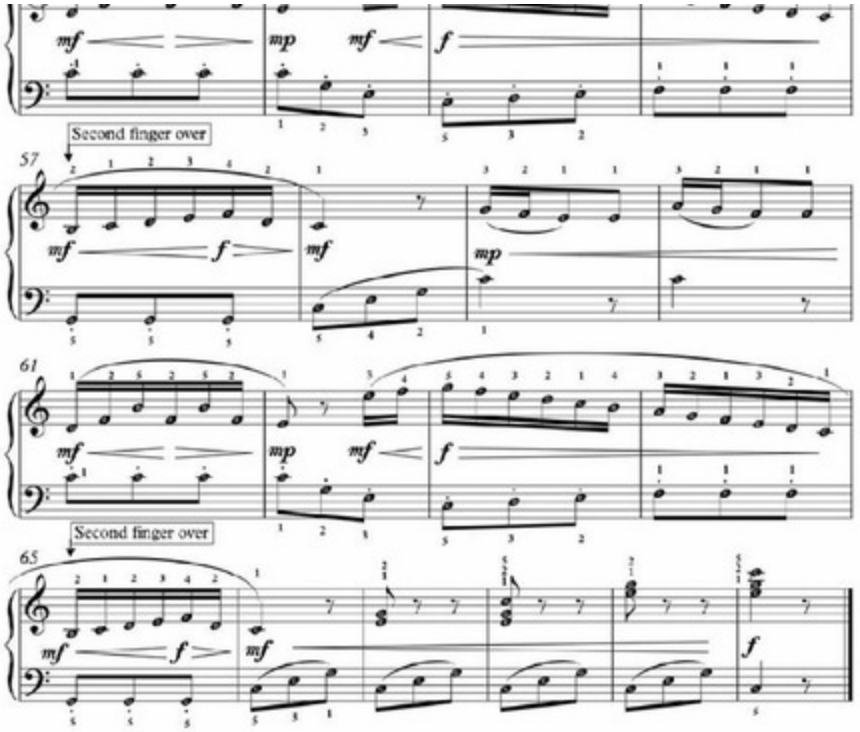
Example 3:
Try Clapping on the X: On the First and Third Beats.



Example 4:
Try Clapping on the X: On the Second Beat.




45
f
mf
f
mf
49
f
mp
53
mf
mp
mf
f
Second finger over
57

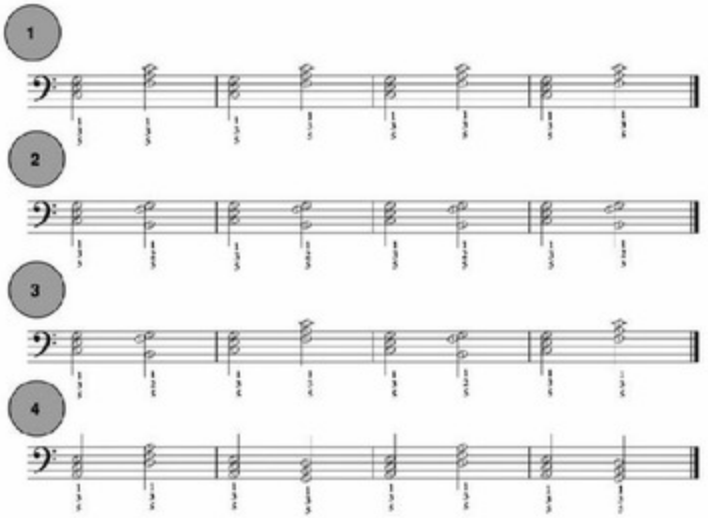

mf
mp
mf
f
Second finger over
57
mf
f
mf
mp
61
mf
mp
mf
f
Second finger over
65
mf
f
mf
f

Left-Hand Chord Studies

In this lesson, we are going to practice playing some of the chords from the previous two lessons. With each of these exercises, take your time to master the transition from one chord to the next. Building up this kind of left-hand coordination will greatly help you, once we start learning the pieces from the next section of the book. If you have a metronome, you might set it to quarter note equals 60 (in other words sixty beats per minute) for this exercise. As a side note, there are many free metronome apps available online. If you have a smart phone, tablet, computer, or similar electronic device, you might take a moment to find a free metronome app for it online; you can use a metronome to help you learn the pieces later in the book.

When you move from one chord to the next, try to form the new chord with your fingers, before playing the keys. This technique will improve your muscle memory for the chords. Along these lines, try to avoid sliding your fingers along the keyboard to find the notes of the chords. This will not only hamper the development of your muscle memory for playing chords, but it will also make it more likely that you will play a few wrong notes.

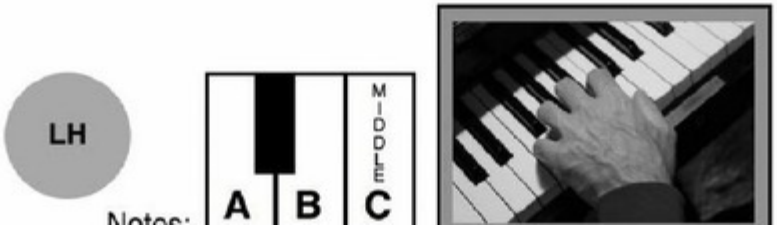
When you move from one chord to the next, try to form the new chord with your fingers, before playing the keys. This technique will improve your muscle memory for the chords. Along these lines, try to avoid sliding your fingers along the keyboard to find the notes of the chords. This will not only hamper the development of your muscle memory for playing chords, but it will also make it more likely that you will play a few wrong notes.



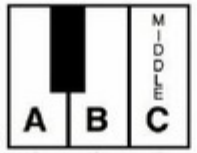
Three-Note Exercises: Studies for the Left Hand ("LH")

- Try these exercises, which use the notes A, B, and Middle C in the left hand ("LH").
- In your left hand, use Thumb for Middle C, use Pointer for B, and use Middle Finger for A.
- Take a look at the keyboard chart and photo below and practice each one 5-10 times.
- As an extra bonus, try saying the letter names aloud as you play each exercise. This will help you associate the note name with the key and finger number.

Have Fun!



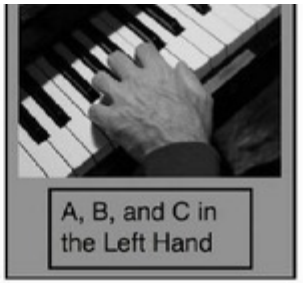
LH



Notes: A B C

Finger Numbers: 3 2 1

The numbers here are for fingers, not beats.



A, B, and C in the Left Hand

Exercise #1

LH:	1	1	2	3	1	1	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	3	3
	C	C	B	A	C	C	B	A	B	B	A	A	B	B	A	A

Exercise #2

LH:	3	2	1	2	3	2	1	2	1	1	3	3	1	2	3	3
	A	B	C	B	A	B	C	B	C	C	A	A	C	B	A	A

Lesson on Dvorák's New World Symphony Theme & Dotted Rhythms

In Dvorák's *Theme from the New World Symphony*, we have a few interesting musical concepts. The first one is syncopation. Syncopation is when notes occur on weaker beats or between beats. The strongest beat in every measure is beat 1, which is called the "downbeat" of the measure. In 4/4 time, beat 3 is the second strongest beat.

When notes occur between beats, we have to use a technique called subdividing to count the rhythm. We talked about subdividing for our lesson on *Simple Gifts*, as well. Subdividing means that we are going to cut the beats into smaller sections. The simplest of these subdivisions is to cut each beat in half. In music, we use the word "and" and the symbol "&" for the halfway point between each beat. For example, if we have a measure of 4/4 time, where we want to subdivide each beat in half we would count: "1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &". Try counting it aloud. The eighth notes (notes with a flag or beam), count as half of a beat. In other words, two eighth notes equal one quarter note.

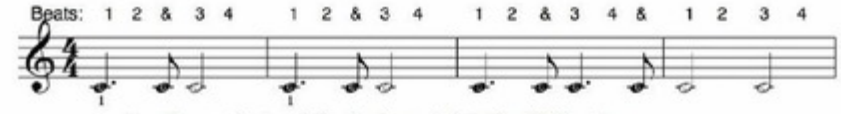
Just to refresh your memory, this is what an eighth note looks like:

In exercise one, we have two rhythms for the melody of the piece.
Try counting these out loud, while playing the rhythms on middle C.

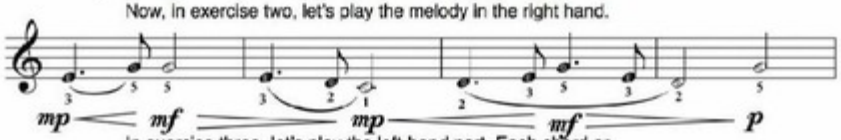
Beats: 1 2 & 3 4 1 2 & 3 4 1 2 & 3 4 & 1 2 3 4

Just to refresh your memory, this is what an eighth note looks like: ♪

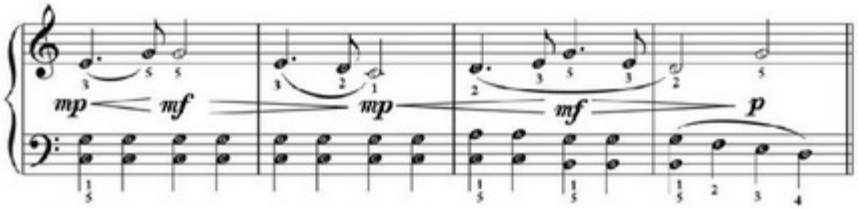
In exercise one, we have two rhythms for the melody of the piece.
Try counting these out loud, while playing the rhythms on middle C.



Now, in exercise two, let's play the melody in the right hand.



In exercise three, let's play the left-hand part. Each chord or
note will occur on a beat. For each measure, count: 1, 2, 3, 4.

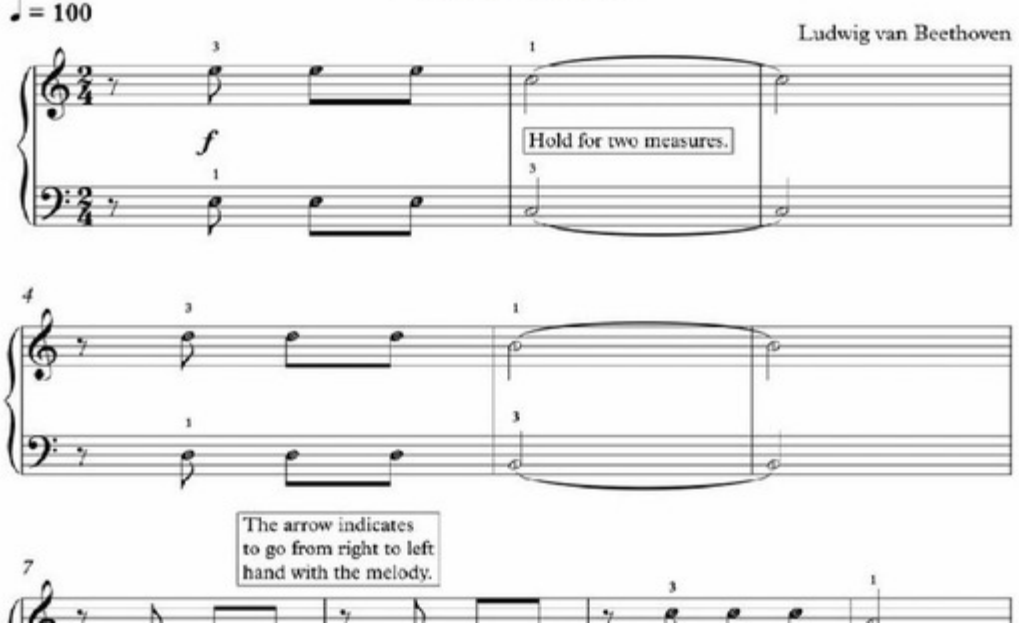


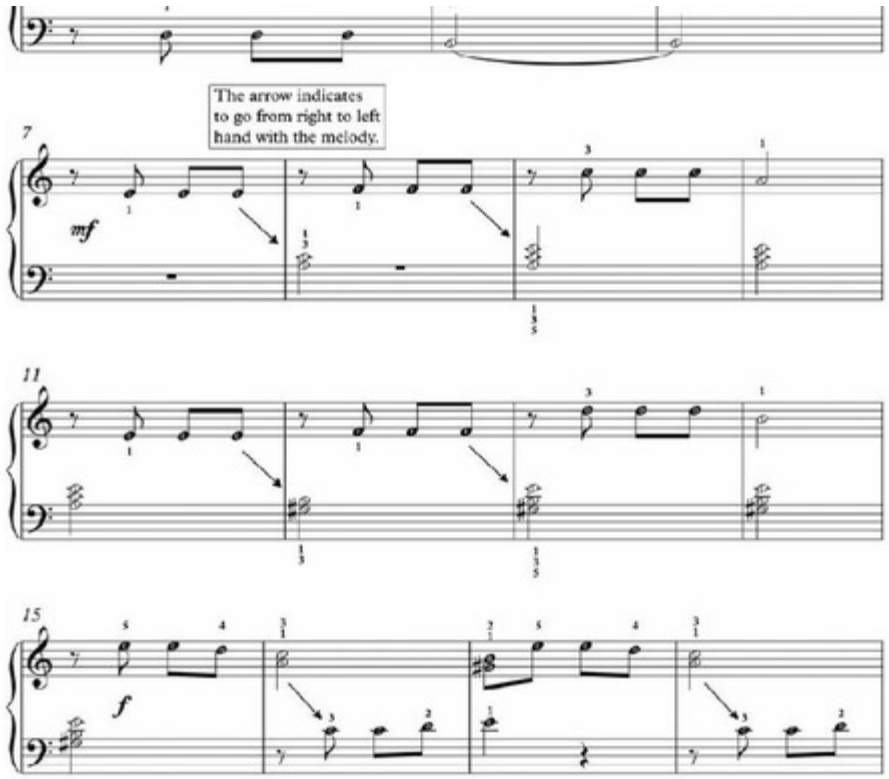
Now, let's put both hands together for exercise four. Listen to how the right hand is
syncopated against the left hand. Remember to subdivide while you are counting.

5th Symphony Theme

♩ = 100

Ludwig van Beethoven




The arrow indicates
to go from right to left
hand with the melody.
7
mf
11
15
f

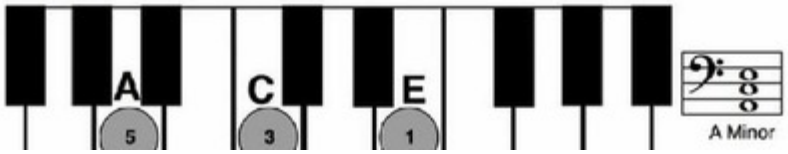
More Easy Left-Hand Chords
A Minor, D Minor & G Major

- Let's look at 3 more chords for the Left Hand: A Minor, D Minor, & G Major.
- Make sure to keep your fingers curved and lift the fingers that do not play.

Check out Video Lesson 8.
Click Here!

The numbers are for the fingers.

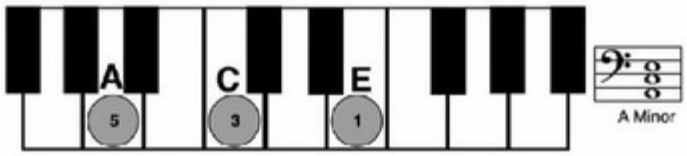
A Minor



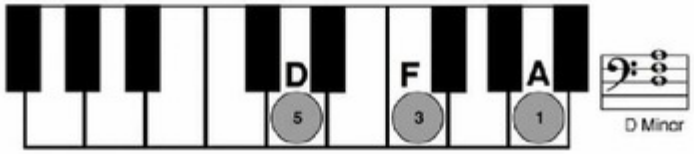
A Minor

The numbers are for the fingers.

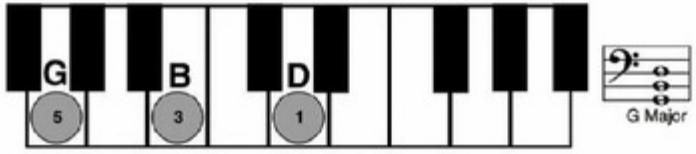
A Minor



D Minor

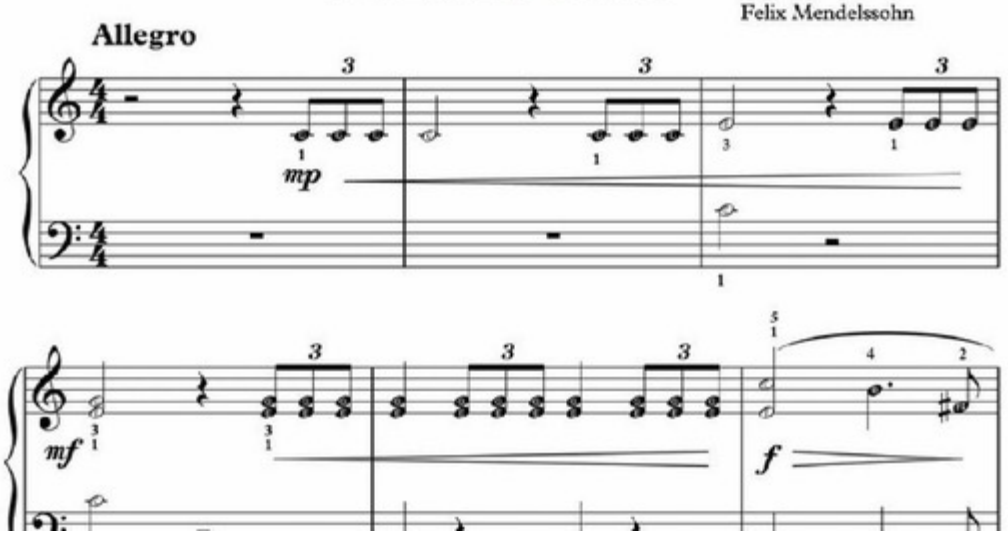


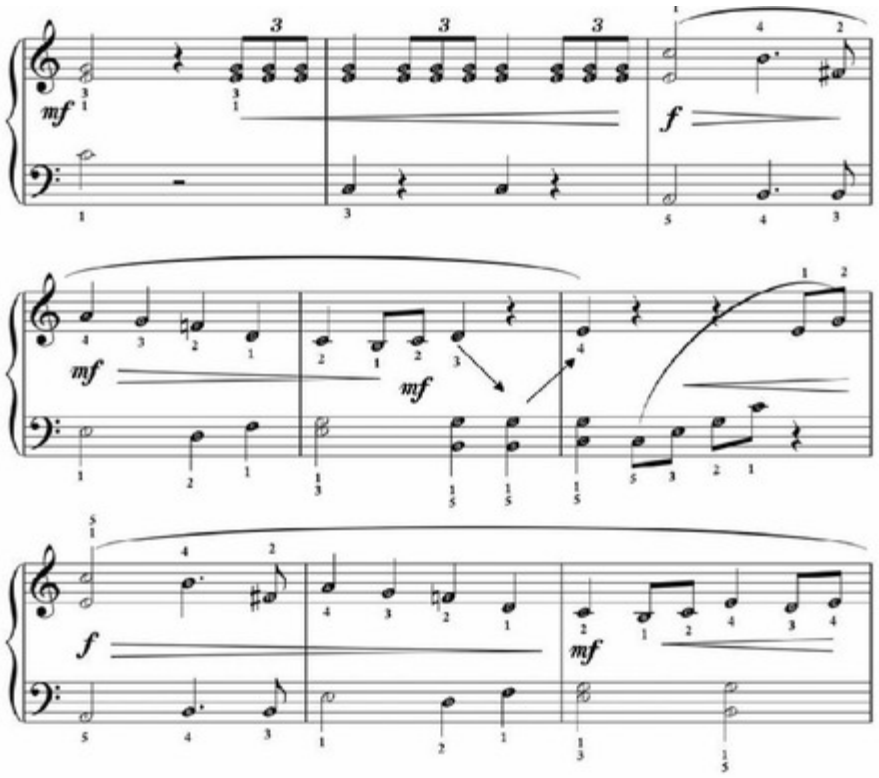
G Major



The Wedding March

Felix Mendelssohn




mf
f
mf
mf
f
mf

Section 1: Introduction and Review of Basic Music Concepts

Section 1 of this book serves as a review of basic music and piano concepts or as an introduction to these ideas for readers who are just beginning to play the piano for the first time. The focus of Section 1, which is about thirty-one pages, is to present some of these beginner-level piano fundamentals, like the finger numbers, names of the notes, the treble and bass clefs, counting and rhythm, and playing with both hands. If you have some experience playing the piano already and can read music, you may want to glance over the lessons in this section as a brief review, before starting on Section 2: Famous Pieces by Great Composers. If you are new to the piano or are not familiar with these concepts, take your time with the lessons in Section 1; they will provide you with a good foundation for playing the music in Section 2.

Although there are some pieces of music in Section 1, the primary goal for this section is to refresh your memory about basic music concepts or introduce you to them, if you are new to the piano. Interspersed throughout Section 1, there are excerpts of famous pieces for the right hand, left hand, or hands together. There are also exercises to help you practice rhythm, counting, learning the notes on the keyboard, and playing with both hands at the same time. Some of the pieces included

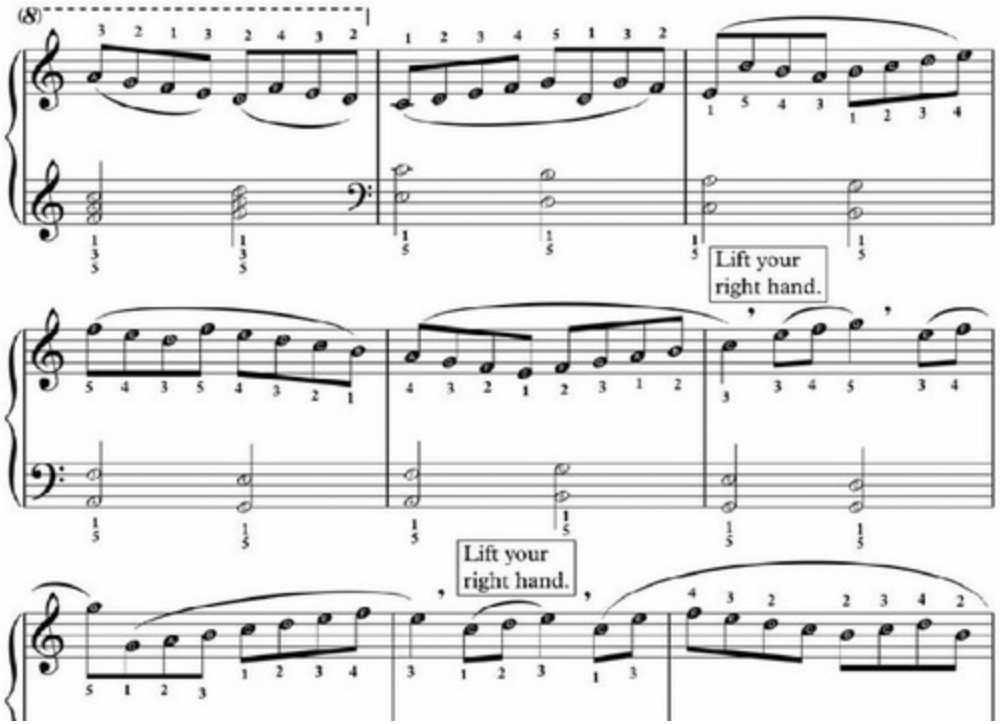
for this section is to refresh your memory about basic music concepts or introduce you to them, if you are new to the piano. Interspersed throughout Section 1, there are excerpts of famous pieces for the right hand, left hand, or hands together. There are also exercises to help you practice rhythm, counting, learning the notes on the keyboard, and playing with both hands at the same time. Some of the pieces included in Section 1 are easier versions of pieces that will also appear in Section 2.

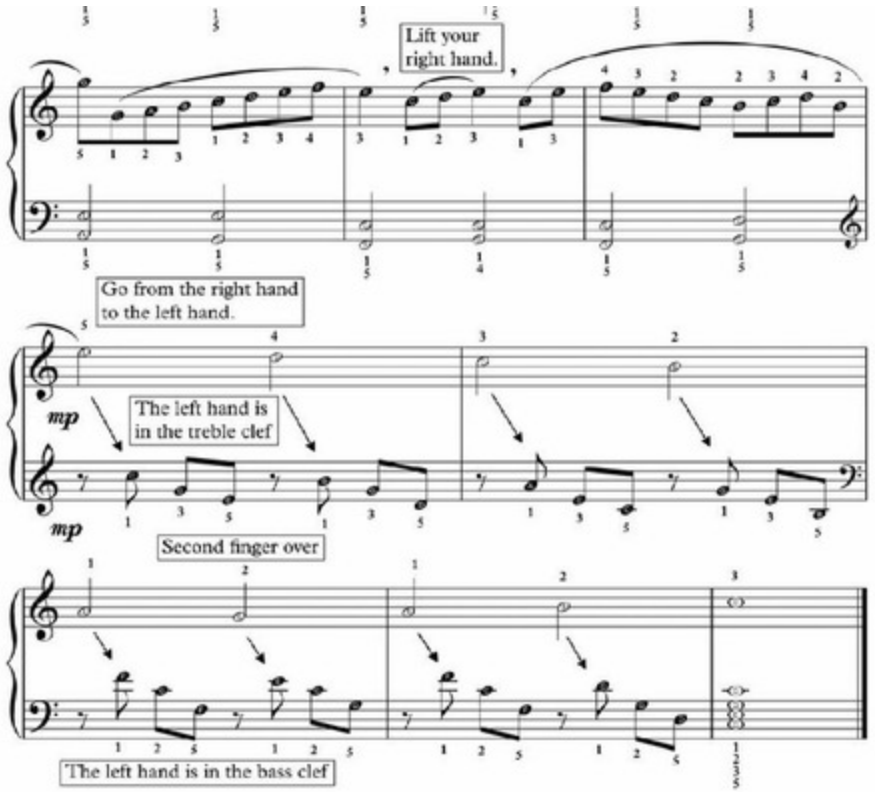
The Video Lessons:

This symbol means that there is a video lesson that corresponds to the material presented on the lesson page. These video lessons cover the concepts presented and also give tips on how to play certain famous pieces from the book.

To access the video lessons, click on the video lesson image (shown above) on selected pages of the book. This will connect you to the video.

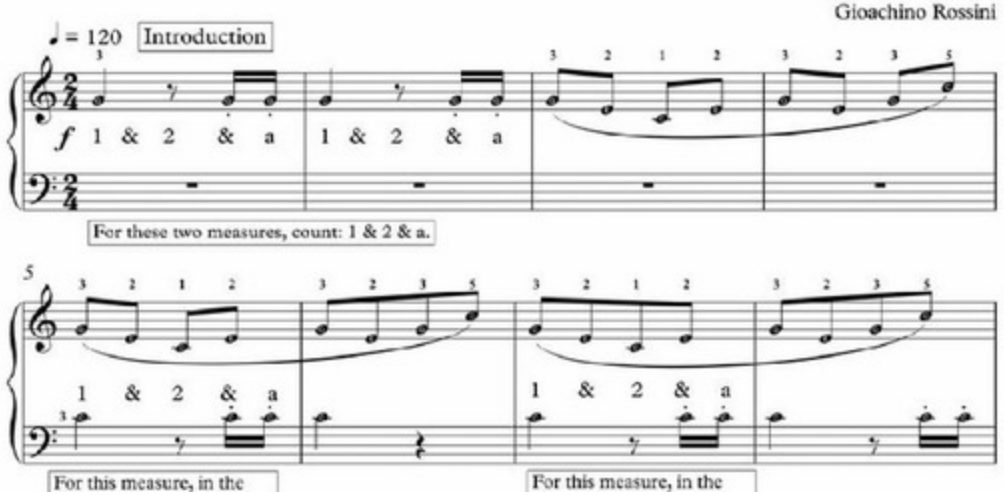
For older devices, without WiFi, go to steeplechasemusic.com and click on the link at the top of the page for Piano Books. Then, from the Piano Books webpage, click on the image for this book, "Beginner Classical Piano Music". On the webpage for *Beginner Classical Piano Music*, you will see a link to Video Lessons. Click that link for the Video Lessons webpage for this book. The video lessons are free and there is no limit on the number of times you may watch them.

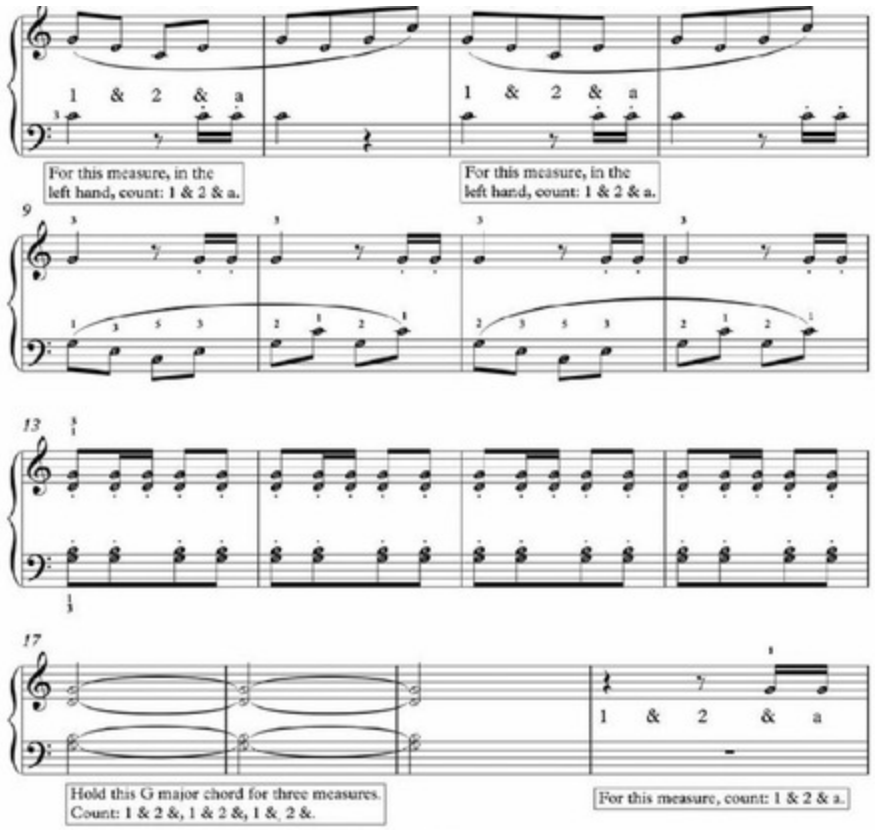

(8)
Lift your right hand.
Lift your right hand.


Lift your right hand.
Go from the right hand to the left hand.
The left hand is in the treble clef
mp
mp
Second finger over
The left hand is in the bass clef

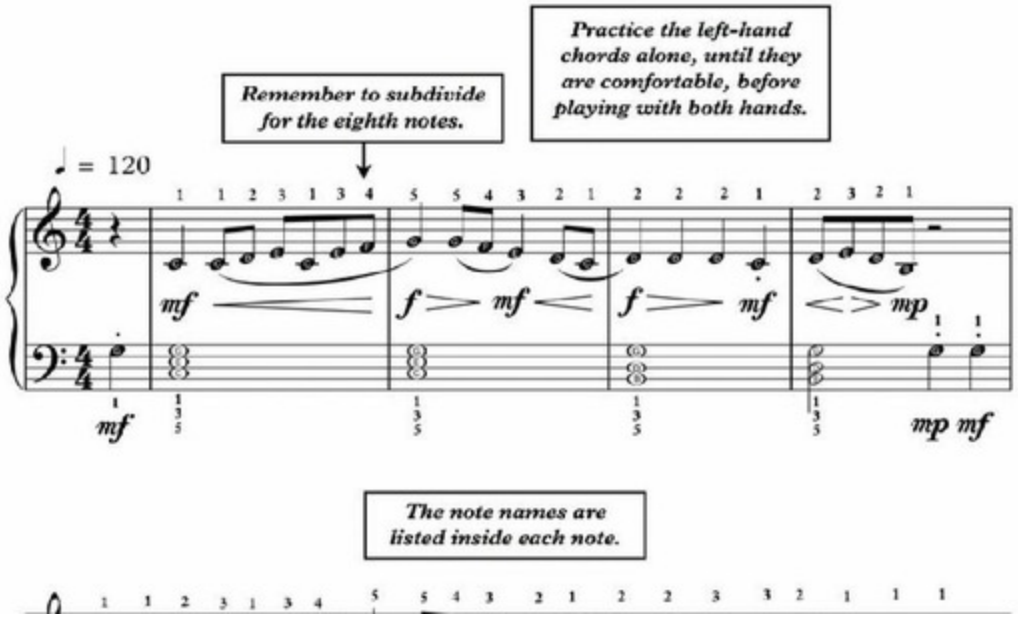
William Tell Overture (Theme from the Lone Ranger)

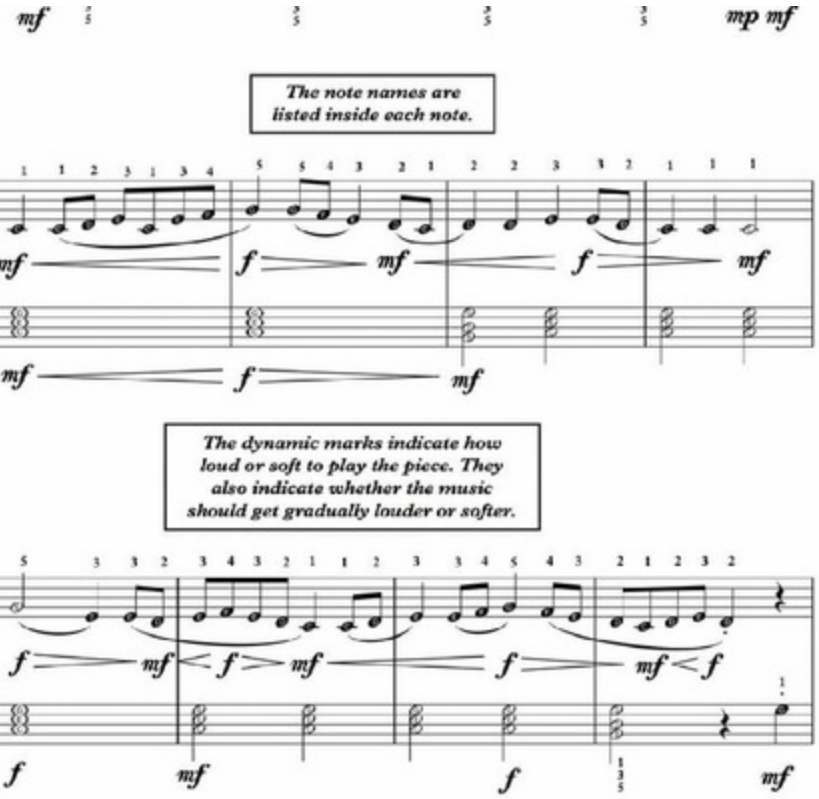
Gioachino Rossini




1 & 2 & a
1 & 2 & a
For this measure, in the left hand, count: 1 & 2 & a.
For this measure, in the left hand, count: 1 & 2 & a.
9
13
17
1 & 2 & a
Hold this G major chord for three measures. Count: 1 & 2 &, 1 & 2 &, 1 & 2 &.
For this measure, count: 1 & 2 & a.

Simple Gifts

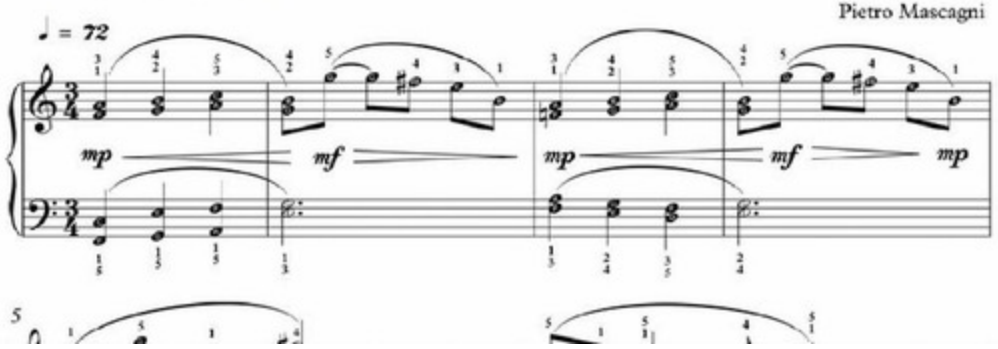


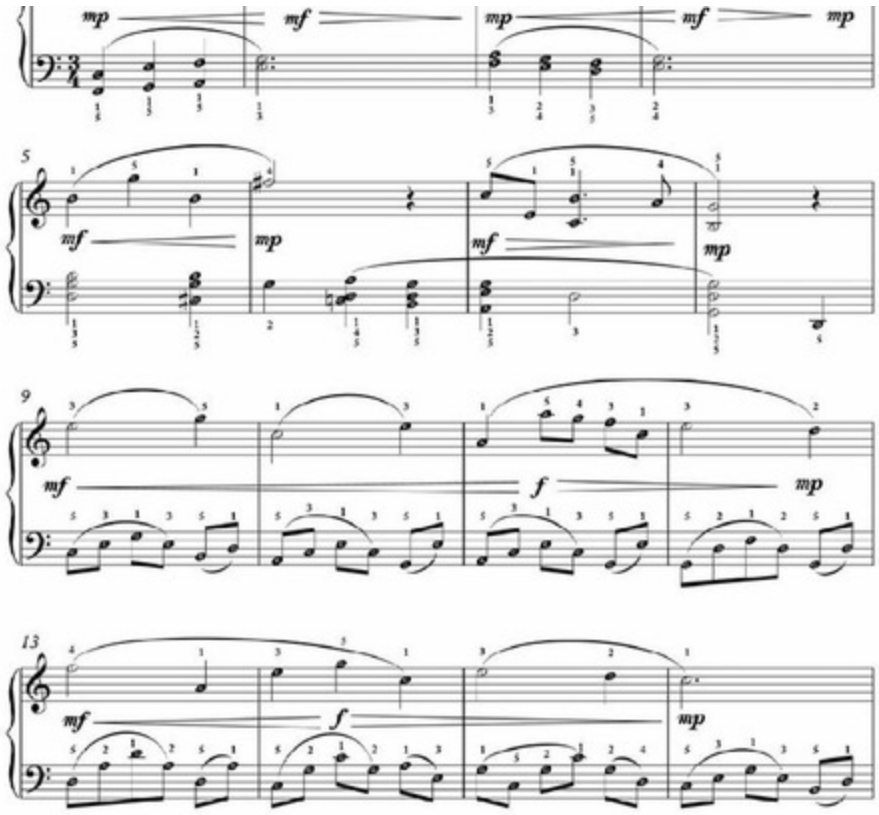

mf
mp mf
The note names are listed inside each note.
The dynamic marks indicate how loud or soft to play the piece. They also indicate whether the music should get gradually louder or softer.

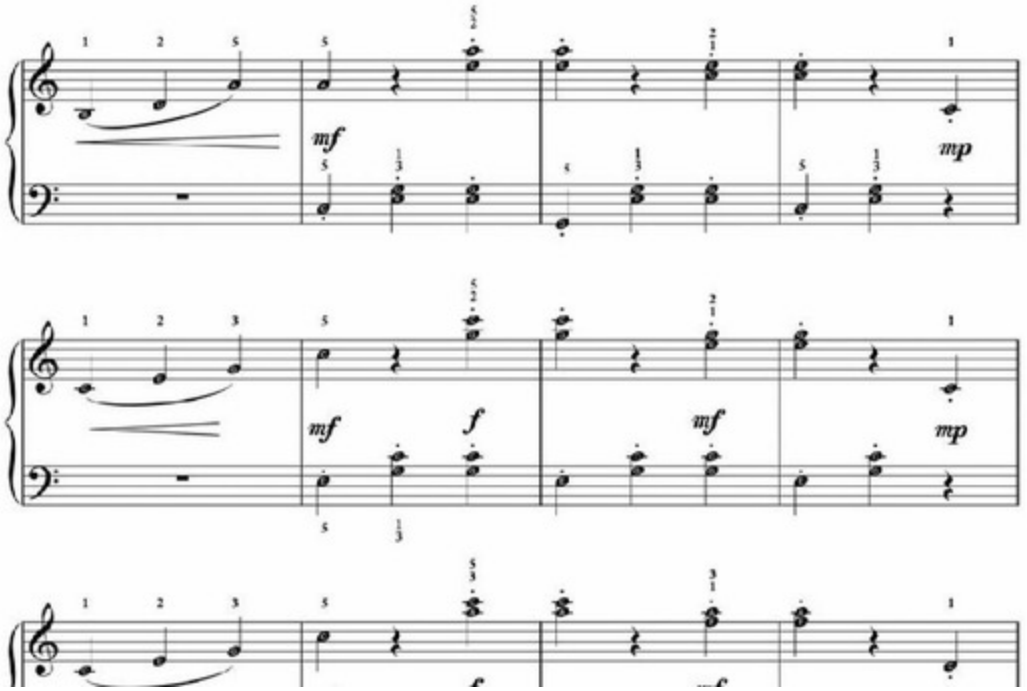
Intermezzo from Cavalleria Rusticana

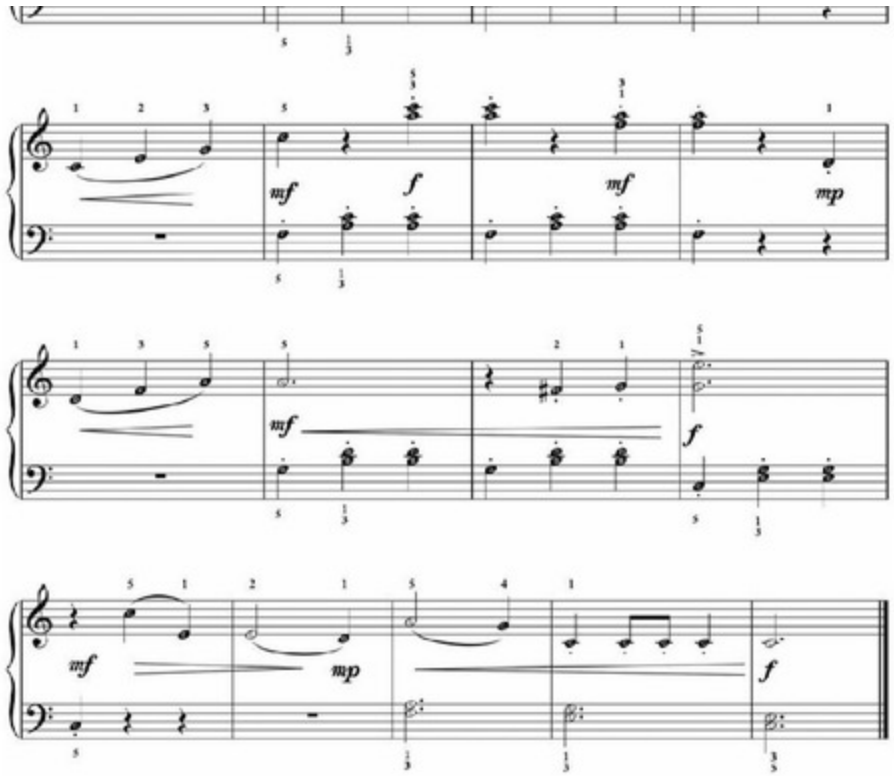
In the first eight measures of this beautifully lyrical piece, you may be a little bit flexible about the rhythm. You may "stretch" the time to follow the flow of the melody in this eight-measure introduction. In music, we use the term "rubato" (which means "stolen" in Italian) to indicate a free, rhythmic feel. It's as if we "steal" a little time. Try it out and have fun!

Pietro Mascagni




mp
mf
mp
mf
mp
5
mf
mp
mf
mp
9
mf
f
mp
13
mf
f
mp


mf
mp
mf
f
mf
mp


mf
f
mf
mp
mf
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mf
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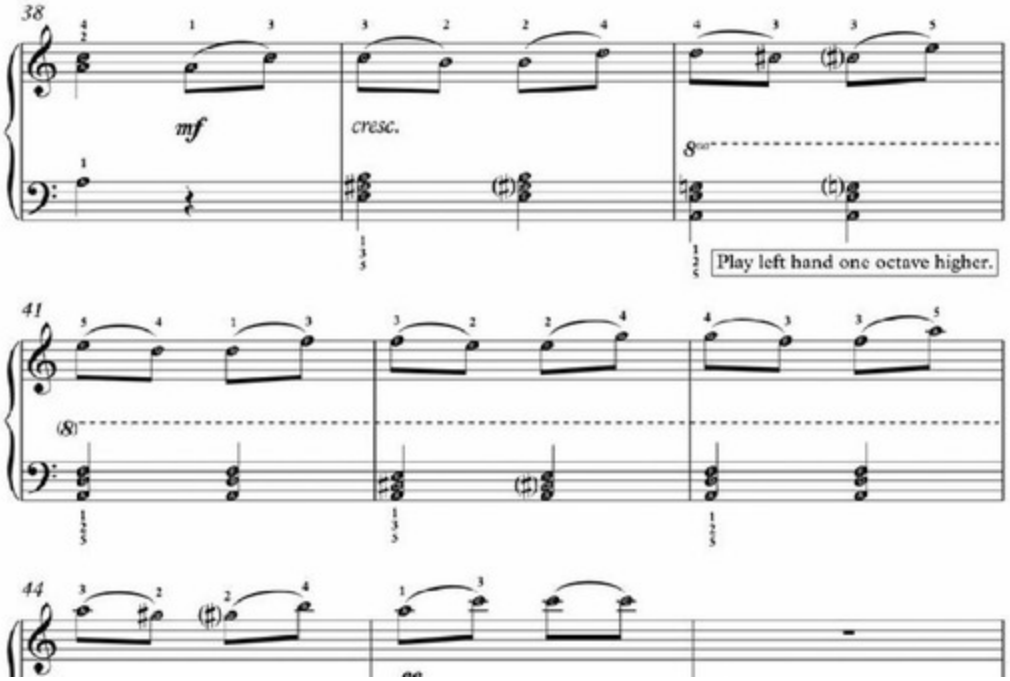
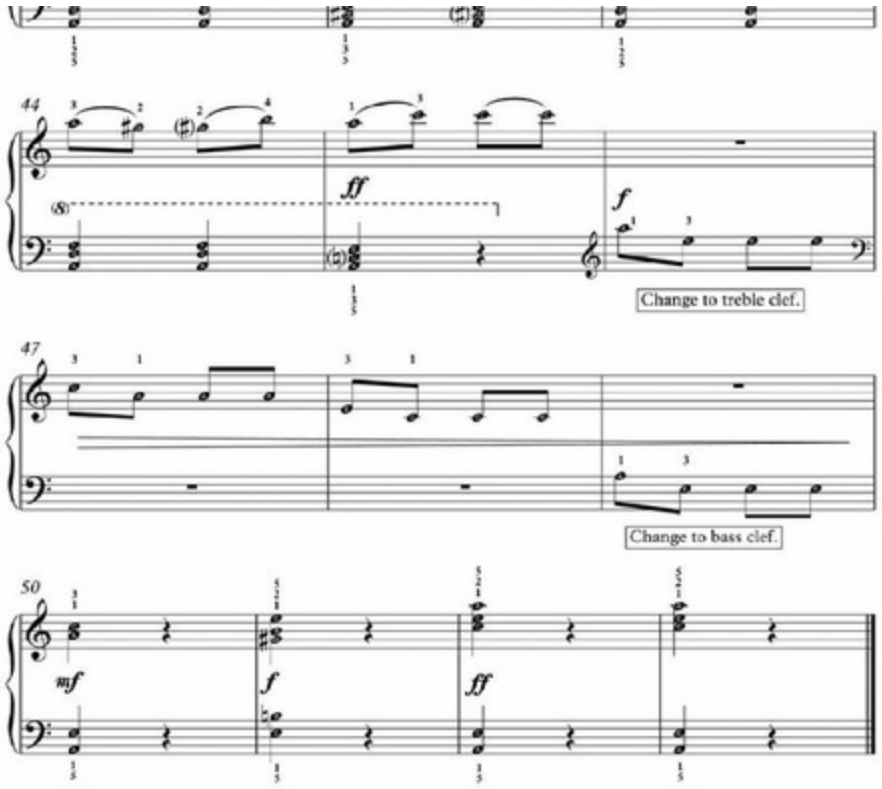
f

Section 2
Famous Pieces by
Great Composers


38
mf
cresc.
8va
Play left hand one octave higher.
41
(8)
44


44
ff
f
Change to treble clef.
47
Change to bass clef.
50
mf
f
ff

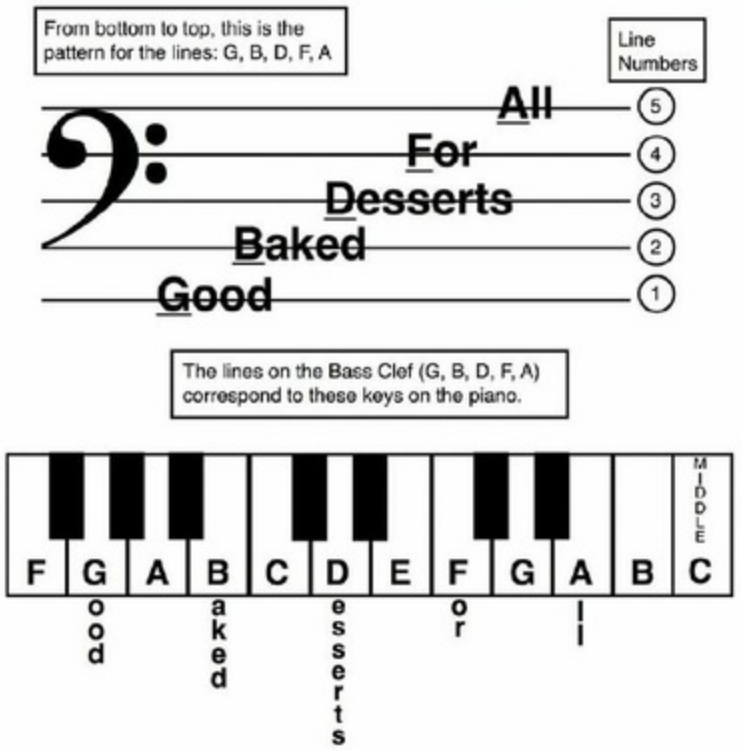
Bass Clef Lines: Overview

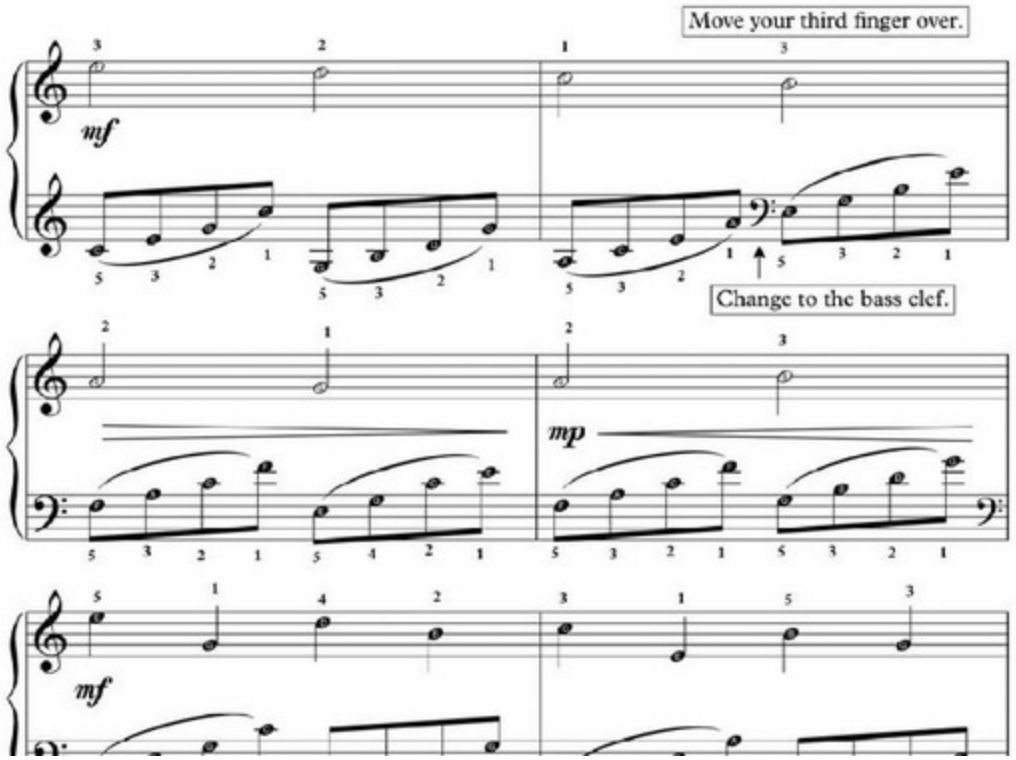
- Each line of the Bass Clef stands for a specific note and key on the piano.
- The lines have numbers that go from 1 to 5. Line 1 is the lowest line. Line 5 is the top line (or highest line) on the Bass Clef.
- To help you remember the note names of each line, memorize the saying below. In the saying ("Good Baked Desserts For All"). "Good" stands for "G", "Baked" stands for "B", "Desserts" stands for "D", "For" stands for "F", and "All" stands for "A".
- The "A" of "All" stands for the "A" piano key two notes below Middle C. See the charts below to better understand these notes.

Check out Video Lesson 7. Click Here!

From bottom to top, this is the pattern for the lines: G, B, D, F, A

Line Numbers


From bottom to top, this is the pattern for the lines: G, B, D, F, A
Line Numbers
All
For
Desserts
Baked
Good
5
4
3
2
1
The lines on the Bass Clef (G, B, D, F, A) correspond to these keys on the piano.
F G A B C D E F G A B C
MIDDLE
Good
Baked
Desserts
For
All


Move your third finger over.
mf
Change to the bass clef.
mp
mf

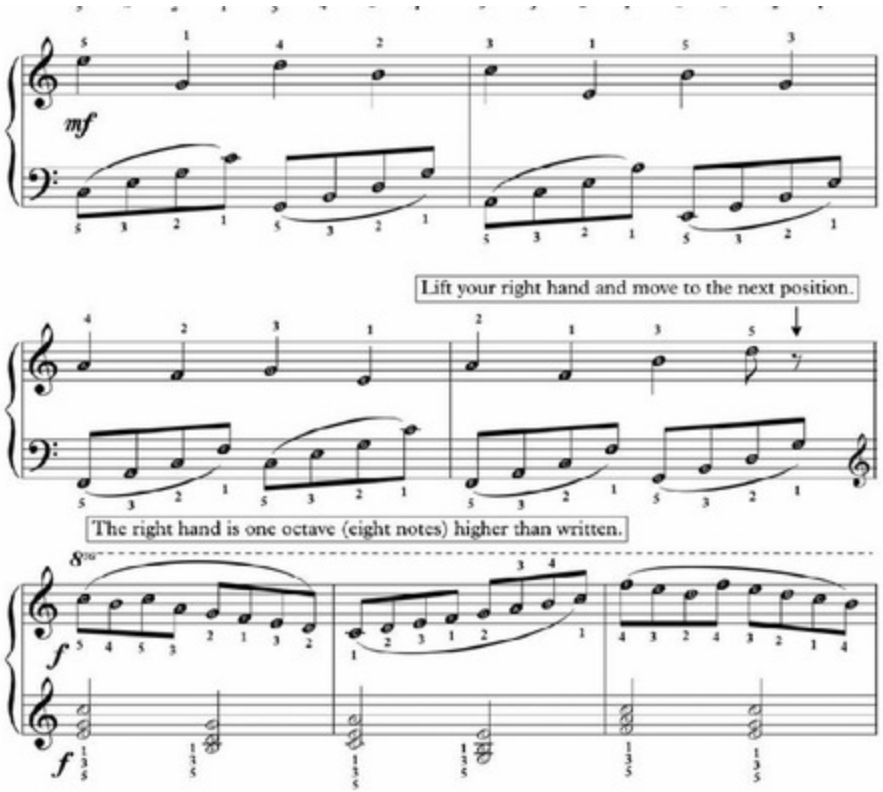

mf
Lift your right hand and move to the next position.
The right hand is one octave (eight notes) higher than written.
8va
f
f

Table of Contents

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3 An Overview of Counting and Measures
4 An Overview of Hand Position & Finger Numbers
5 Three-Note Exercises Using the Right Hand ("RH")
6 Five-Note Studies for the Right Hand: Beethoven's *Ode to Joy*
7 Three-Note Exercises: Studies for the Left Hand ("LH")
8 An Overview of Time Signatures
9 Putting Both Hands Together: Beethoven's *5th Symphony Theme*
10 Mozart's *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* with Both Hands
11 Music Theory: An Overview of Intervals
12 Basic Rhythms: Whole Notes, Half Notes & Quarter Notes
13 Treble Clef Notes: Middle C, D & E
14 Treble Clef Exercises: Middle C, D & E (Right Hand)
15 More Treble Clef Exercises: Middle C, D, E & F (Right Hand)
16 Treble Clef Lines: Overview
17 Treble Clef Spaces: Overview
18 Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake* & Rossini's *William Tell Overture*

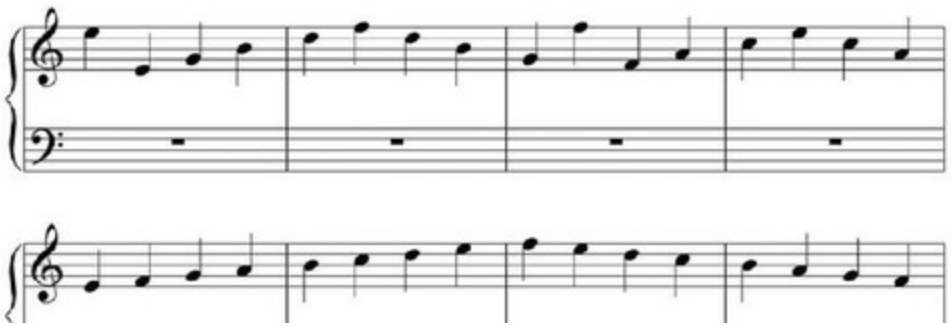
12 Basic Rhythms: Whole Notes, Half Notes & Quarter Notes
13 Treble Clef Notes: Middle C, D & E
14 Treble Clef Exercises: Middle C, D & E (Right Hand)
15 More Treble Clef Exercises: Middle C, D, E & F (Right Hand)
16 Treble Clef Lines: Overview
17 Treble Clef Spaces: Overview
18 Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake* & Rossini's *William Tell Overture*
19 Bass Clef Notes: Middle C, B & A
20 Bass Clef Exercises: Middle C, B & A
21 Bass Clef Lines: Overview
22 Bass Clef Spaces: Overview
23 Grieg's *Hall of the Mountain King* & Pachelbel's *Canon*
24 Easy Left-Hand Chords: C Major, F Major & G Dominant Seven
25 More Easy Left-Hand Chords: A Minor, D Minor & G Major
26 Left-Hand Chord Studies
27 Grand Staff: Overview
28 Naming the Notes on the Grand Staff
29 Music Theory: What are Sharps and Flats?
30 Music Theory: More on Sharps and Flats
31 *Scarborough Fair*

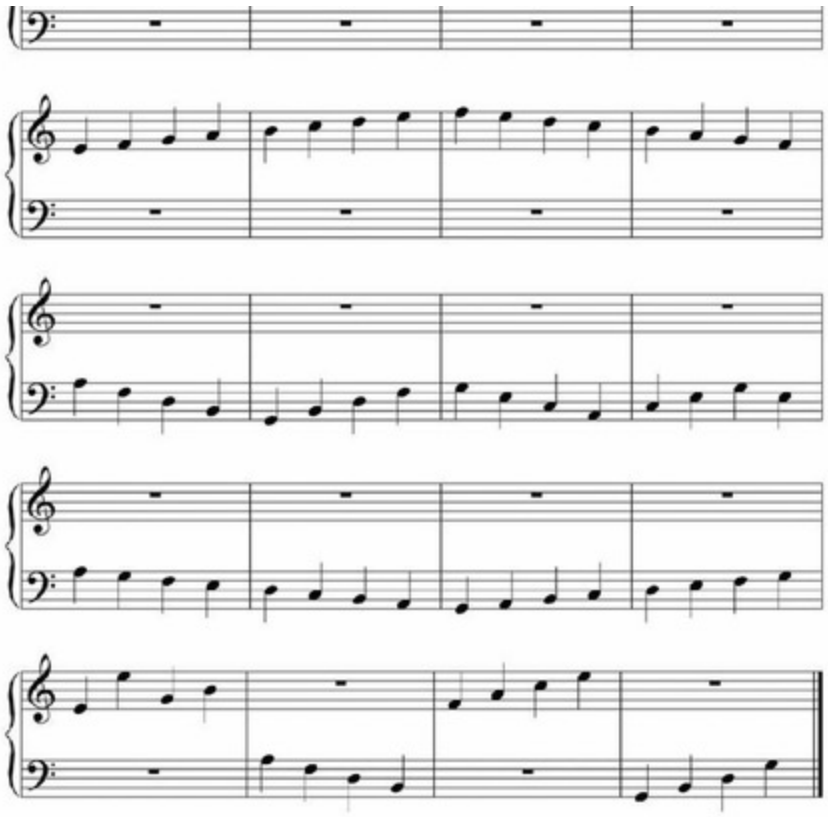
Section 2: Famous Pieces by Great Composers

32 Introduction to Section 2: How Section 2 Works
33 Lesson on Beethoven's *Ode to Joy* & Overview on Dynamics
34 Beethoven's *Ode to Joy*
35 Lesson on Mozart's *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* & Chord Playing
36 Mozart's *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*
38 Lesson on Copland's *Simple Gifts* & Eighth Notes, Subdivision & Slurs
40 Copland's *Simple Gifts*

Naming the Notes on the Grand Staff

For this lesson, let's try naming the notes on the grand staff below. Remember to use your note-name sayings from earlier in the book. You may also refer back to the grand staff on the previous page. Try naming the notes for one measure, then go back and repeat naming the notes for that measure three times. Once you feel confident about the note names, go on to the next measure. After you have finished naming the notes on the entire page, go back to the beginning of the lesson and slowly play each note on the piano. You might also say the note aloud as you play it. This will begin to reinforce your understanding of the notes on the page and the keys on the piano keyboard.





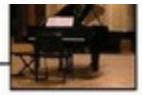
An Overview of Time Signatures

- Measures are composed of groups of beats called Time Signatures or Meter (both terms mean the same thing and are interchangeable).
- The most common Time Signatures (or "meters") are groups of 2, 3, or 4 beats per measure: 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4 Time Signatures.
- 2/4 Time Signature groups the notes into measures of 2 beats. Count: "One,Two" for each measure.
- 3/4 Time Signature groups the notes into measures of 3 beats. Count: "One,Two,Three" for each measure.
- 4/4 Time Signature groups the notes into measures of 4 beats. Count: "One,Two,Three, Four" for each measure.
- Below, are examples of sets of 4 measures in 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4.
- Count aloud and clap on the first beat for the exercises below.

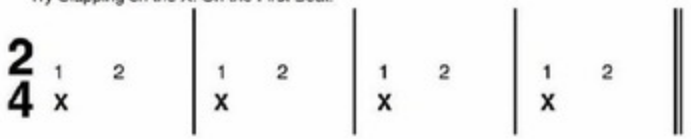
Check out Video Lesson 3.
Click Here!

Example 1: 2/4 Time Signature
Try Clapping on the X: On the First Beat.

Check out Video Lesson 3. Click Here!

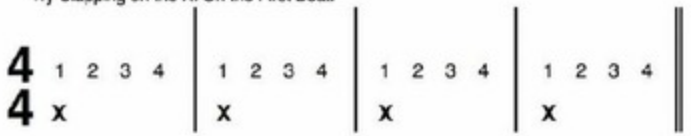


Example 1: 2/4 Time Signature
Try Clapping on the X: On the First Beat.



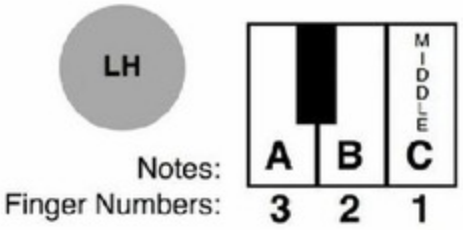
Example 2: 3/4 Time Signature
Try Clapping on the X: On the First Beat.

Example 3: 4/4 Time Signature
Try Clapping on the X: On the First Beat.

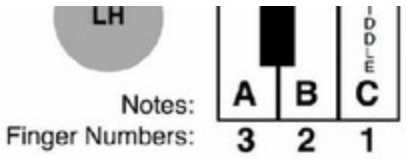


Bass Clef Exercises: A, B & Middle C

- Let's play 4 exercises with notes of the Bass Clef: A, B, and C.
- Remember to find Middle C with the Thumb of your left hand (LH).



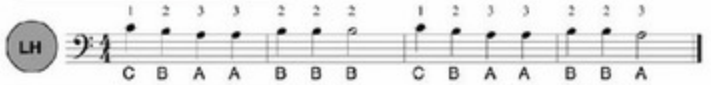
Try saying the notes aloud as you play each exercise.



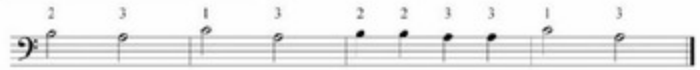
Try saying the notes aloud as you play each exercise.

Exercise 1

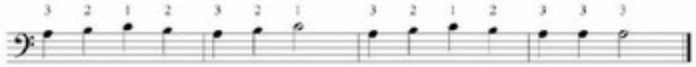
The numbers here are for fingers, not beats.



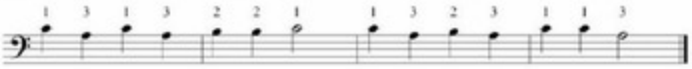
Exercise 2



Exercise 3

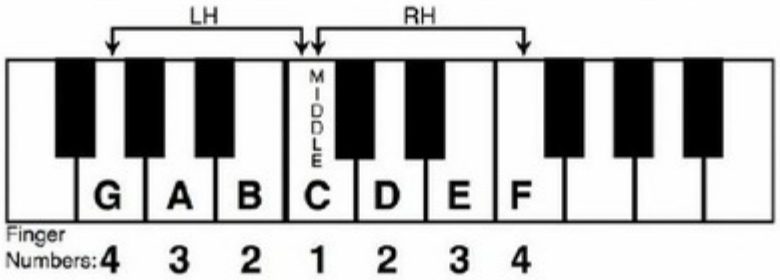


Exercise 4



Mozart's Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star with Both Hands: G,A,B,C,D,E & F

- If you see a blank space, don't play for that beat or beats.
- Remember to place both of your thumbs on Middle C.



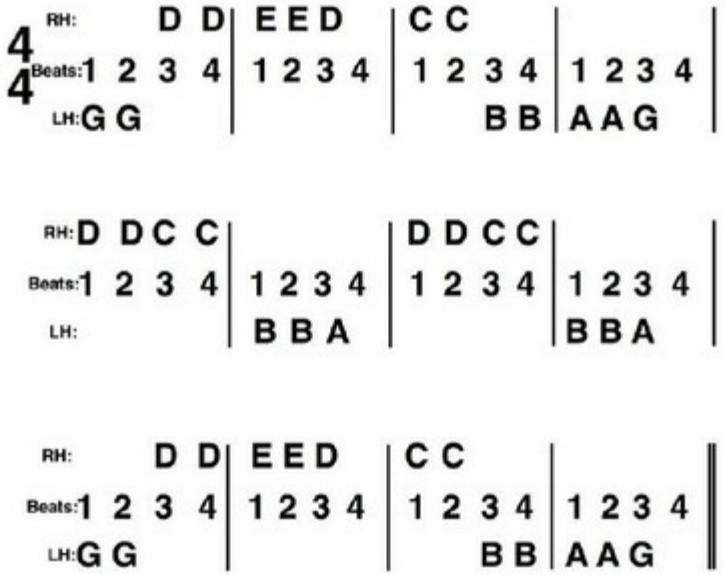
Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

- Try to count the beats aloud, while you play.

RH: D D | E E D | C C | | |

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

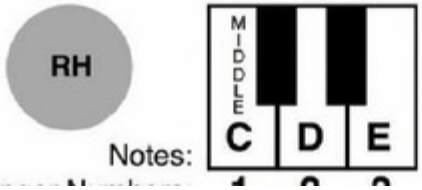
- Try to count the beats aloud, while you play.



We will learn a more advanced version of Mozart's *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star,* a bit later in this book.

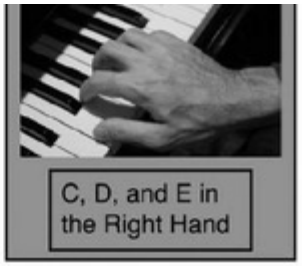
Three-Note Exercises: Using the Right Hand ("RH")

- Try these exercises, which use the notes C, D, and E in the right hand ("RH").
- In your right hand, use Thumb for Middle C, use Pointer for D, and use Middle Finger for E.
- Take a look at the keyboard chart and photo below and practice each one 5-10 times.
- As an extra bonus, try saying the letter names aloud as you play each exercise.
  This will help you associate the note name with the key and finger number.



RH

Notes:
Finger Numbers: 1 2 3



Exercise #1

RH:	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	1	1
	C	C	C	C	D	D	D	D	E	E	E	E	D	D	C	C

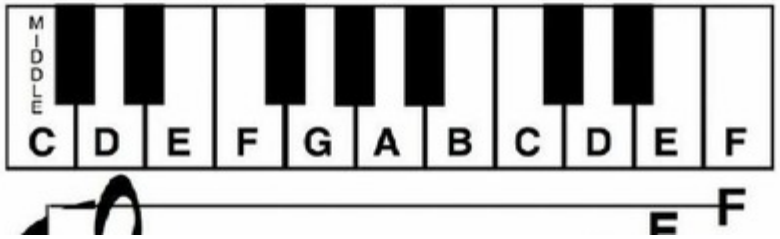
Exercise #2

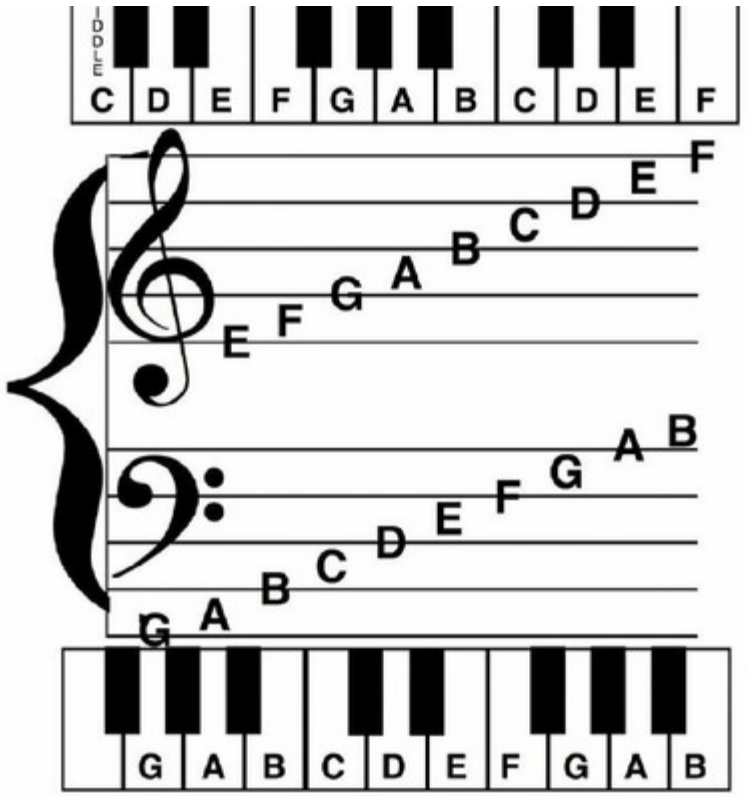
RH:	1	1	2	2	1	1	3	3	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1
	C	C	D	D	C	C	E	E	C	C	D	D	C	C	C	C

The Grand Staff: Overview

- The Grand Staff is formed by combining the Treble and Bass Clefs.
- All of the rules that we have learned so far about both clefs are still true for the Grand Staff. Using the Grand Staff makes it easier to read music written for both hands.
- Study the chart below to understand how the Staff works.

Check out Video Lesson 9. Click Here!

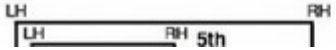



C D E F G A B C D E F
E F G A B C D E F
G A B C D E F G A B
G A B C D E F G A B

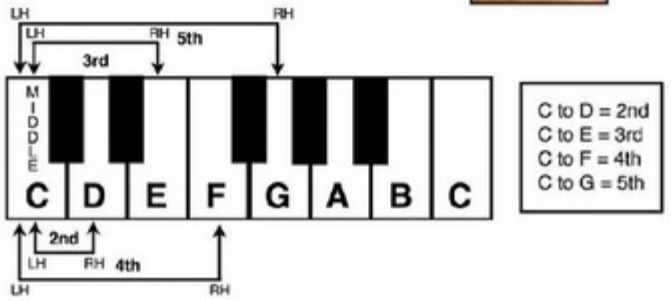
Music Theory: An Overview of Intervals

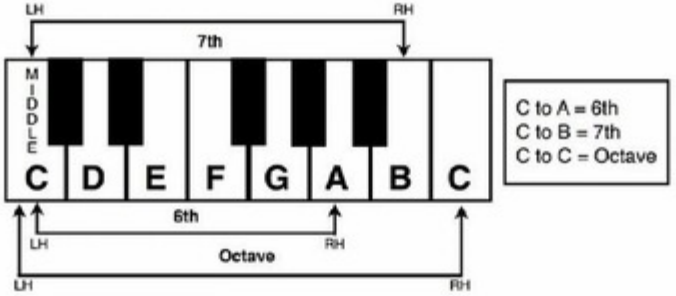
- In music, the distance between any 2 notes is called an "Interval".
- Intervals can be played at the same time, for example, if you press down two piano keys or they can be played one after the other, for example, if you play the note "C" and then the note "D".
- On the piano, the easiest way to understand intervals is to look at the keyboard. Play Middle C with your Left-Hand Index Finger, then play D with your Right-Hand Index finger. This interval is called a 2nd.
- Next, play Middle C with your Left-Hand Index Finger, then play E with your Right-Hand Index finger. This interval is called a 3rd.
- Follow these steps in the 2 diagrams below. Use the Left-Hand Index Finger when you see LH and use the Right-Hand Index Finger when you see RH.

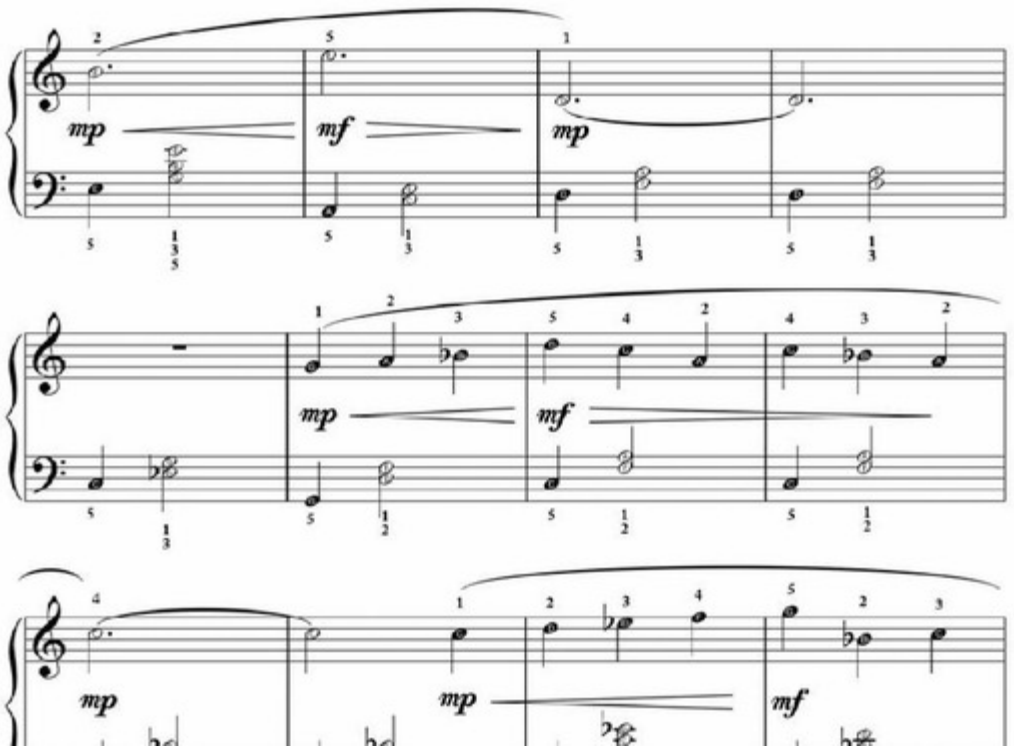
Check out Video Lesson 4. Click Here!



Check out Video Lesson 4.
Click Here!






mp
mf
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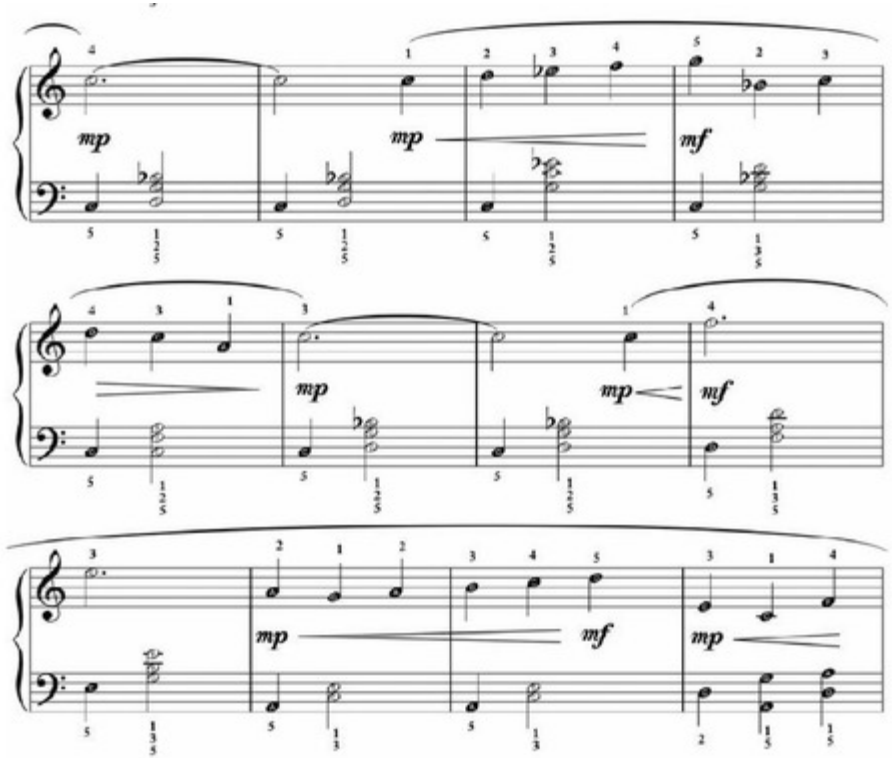
mf
mp
mp
mf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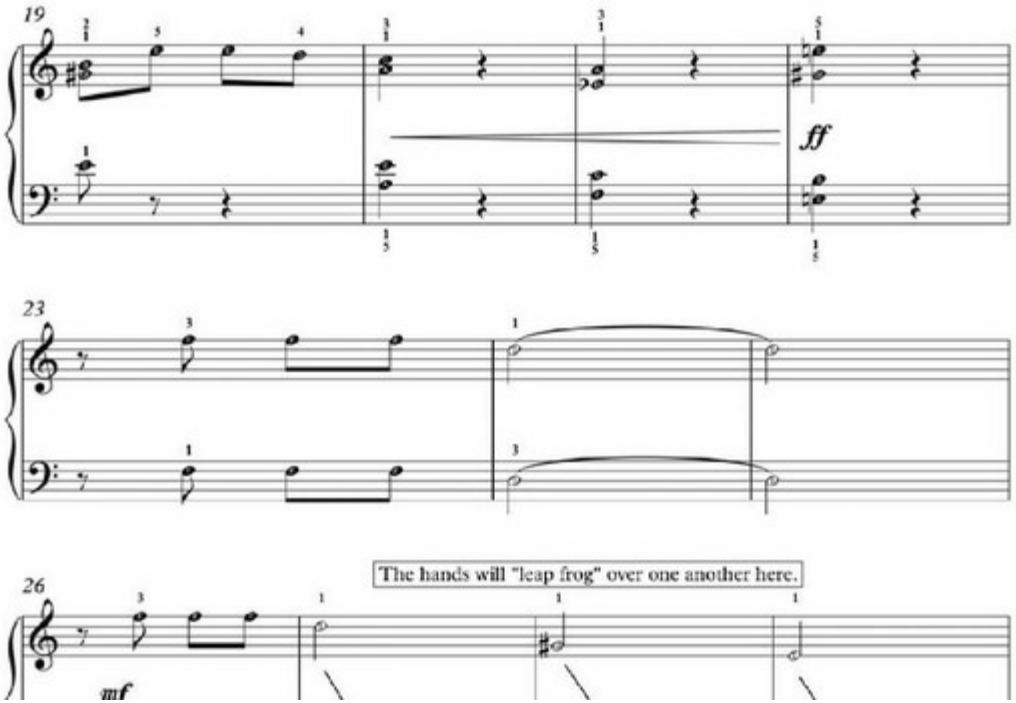
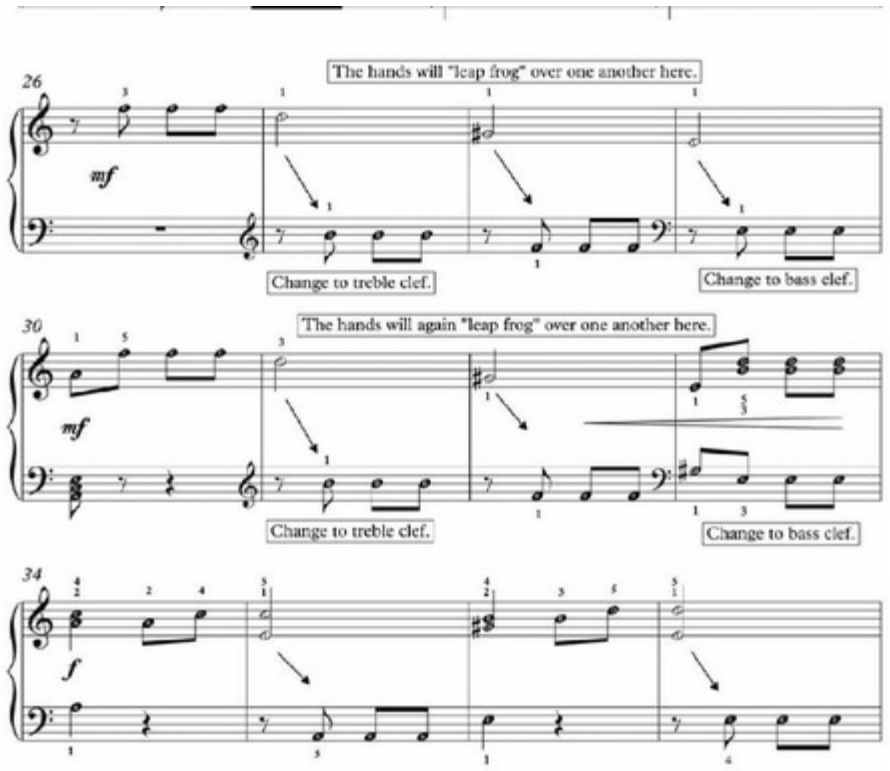
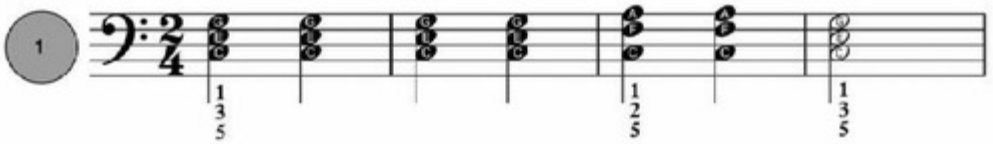

19
ff
23
26
The hands will "leap frog" over one another here.
mf

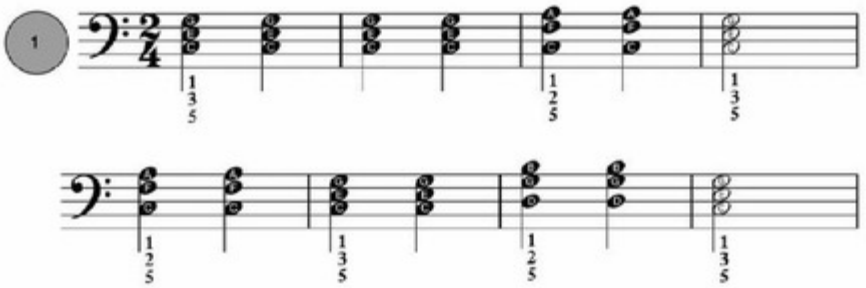

The hands will "leap frog" over one another here.
26
mf
Change to treble clef.
Change to bass clef.
The hands will again "leap frog" over one another here.
30
mf
Change to treble clef.
Change to bass clef.
34
f

A Lesson on Mozart's Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star:

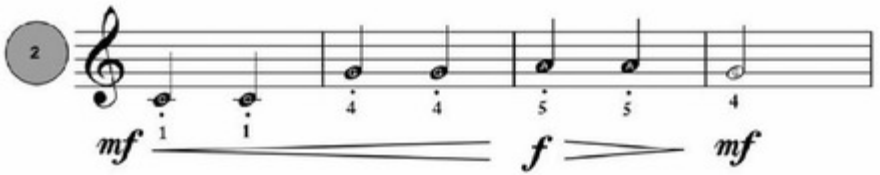
Did you know that Mozart made twelve variations on the famous melody to *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*? In this lesson, we are going to look at the left-hand chords for the piece and also practice playing right-hand staccato notes.

The names of the notes are indicated inside each note. The note names will be included for the pieces at the beginning of this part of the book. However, little by little, we are going to take the note names away. So, start to memorize the notes on the staff. Remember to use the sayings for the treble and bass clefs. You might also refer back to the treble and bass clef lessons from Section 1 of the book. For learning chords, name the notes from bottom to top.





Let's look first at the left-hand chords, in exercise one. We have three chords for the left hand: C major, F major, and G major. The C major chord uses the notes C, E, and G (from bottom note to top). This F major chord uses the notes C, F, and A (from bottom to top). The G major chord we are using for the piece has the notes D, G, and B from bottom to top.



Next, in exercise two, let's practice the first part of the right-hand melody. There will be a little stretch between your right-hand thumb, when you go from C to G. Also, please note that there are staccato symbols (the dots below the notes) for the melody. These staccato symbols indicate that the notes should be played in a bouncy, disconnected manner. Have fun playing the pieces and try to make a lively sound for the melody.

Grieg's Hall of the Mountain King & Pachelbel's Canon: For the Left Hand

These next two pieces are studies for the left hand.

For Grieg's *Hall of the Mountain King*, start with the fifth finger (pinky) of your left hand on the key of D, which is seven keys below middle C. The notes for hand position one are D, E, F, G and A. In measure six of the piece, you will shift your hand position and play the A with the third finger (middle finger) of your left hand. The notes for hand position two are F, A, middle C and D.

For Pachelbel's *Canon*, there are four easy left-hand positions. Each hand position uses only three fingers: thumb, index, and middle finger. You will start on middle C for hand position one. For hand position two, you will move your thumb to G (the top space of the bass clef). In hand position three, you will move your thumb to E (just two notes above middle C). Place your thumb on B (just below middle C) for hand position number four. For the last note of the piece (C), just move your thumb one key higher than B (to middle C).

Remember, you can download the free, MP3 audio files for all of the pieces in this book from the Steeplechase Music website. This way, you can hear how each piece sounds.

Grieg: Hall of the Mountain King

the piece (C), just move your thumb one key higher than B (to middle C).

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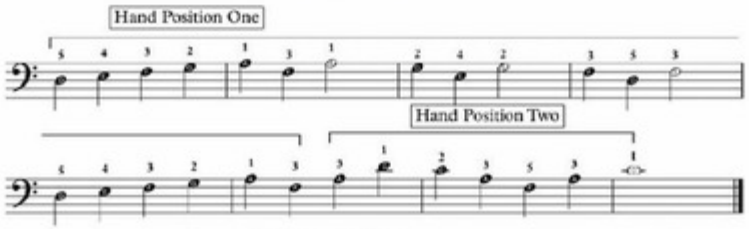
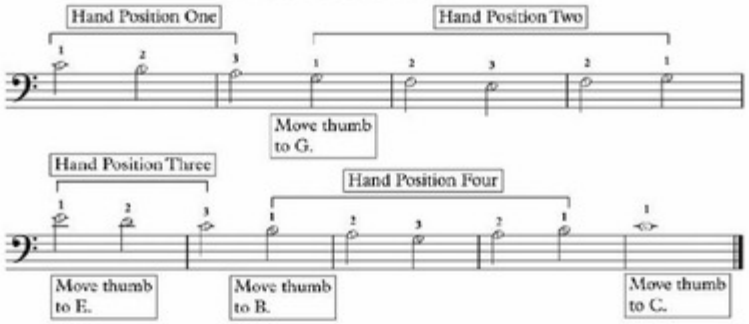
Grieg: Hall of the Mountain King

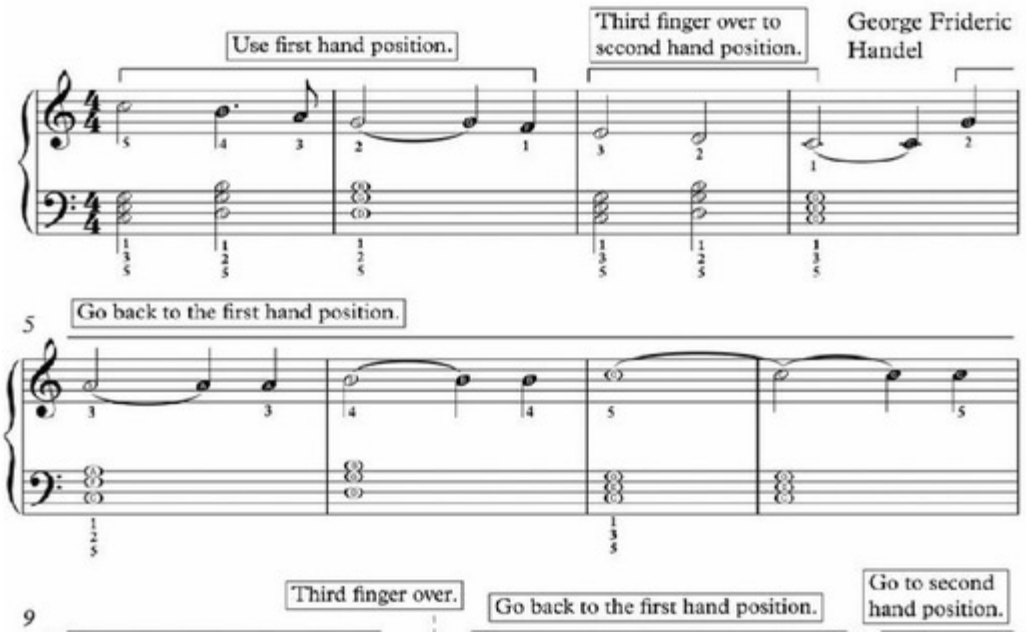


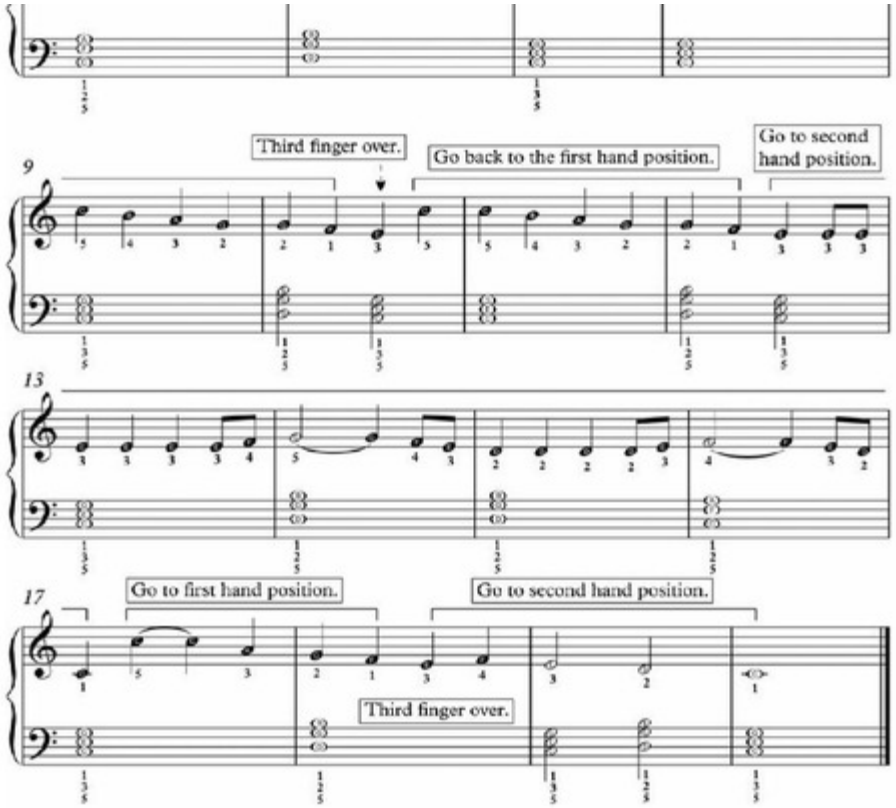
Pachelbel: Canon



Joy to the World

George Frideric Handel



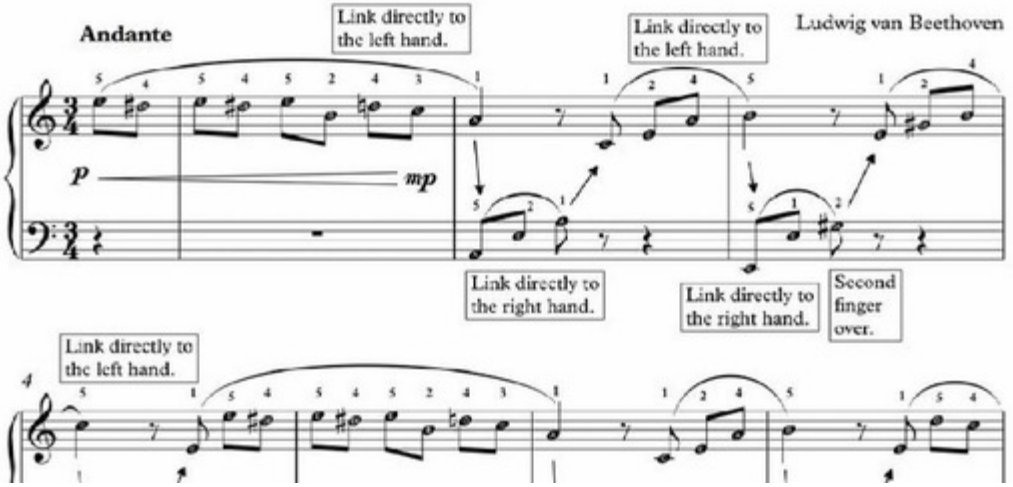

9
Third finger over.
Go back to the first hand position.
Go to second hand position.
13
17
Go to first hand position.
Go to second hand position.
Third finger over.

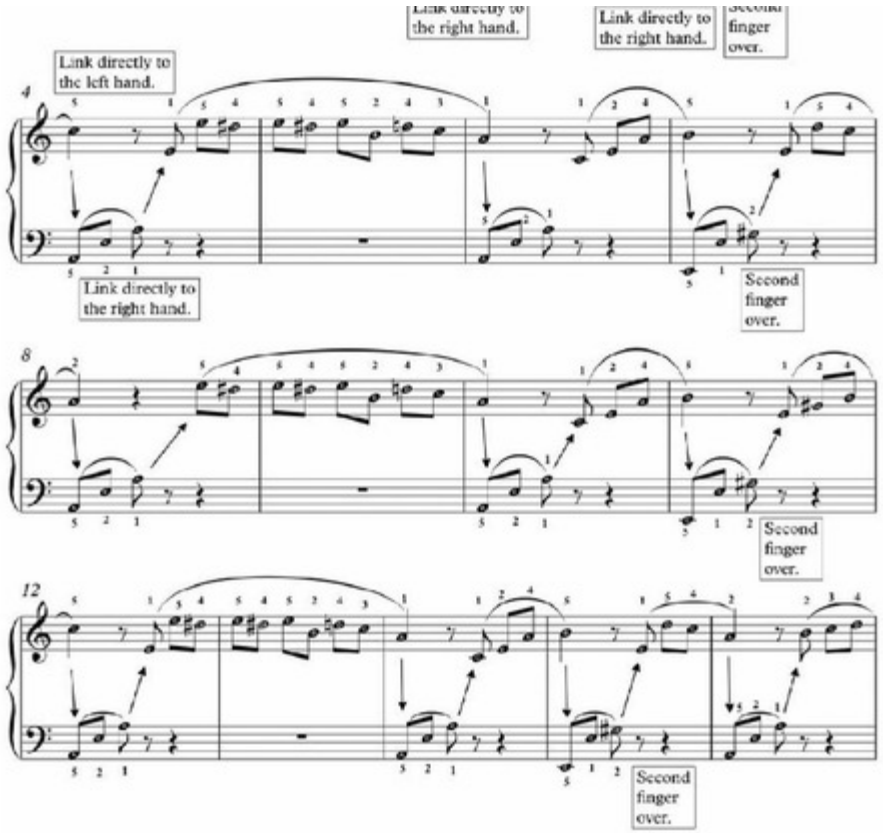
Für Elise

Check out Video Lesson 17. Click Here!

Andante

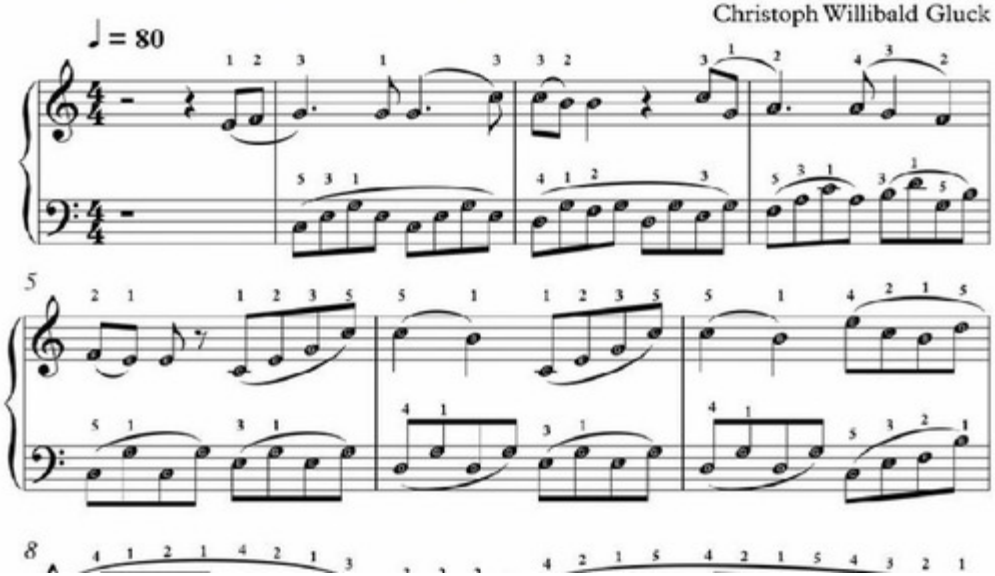
Ludwig van Beethoven

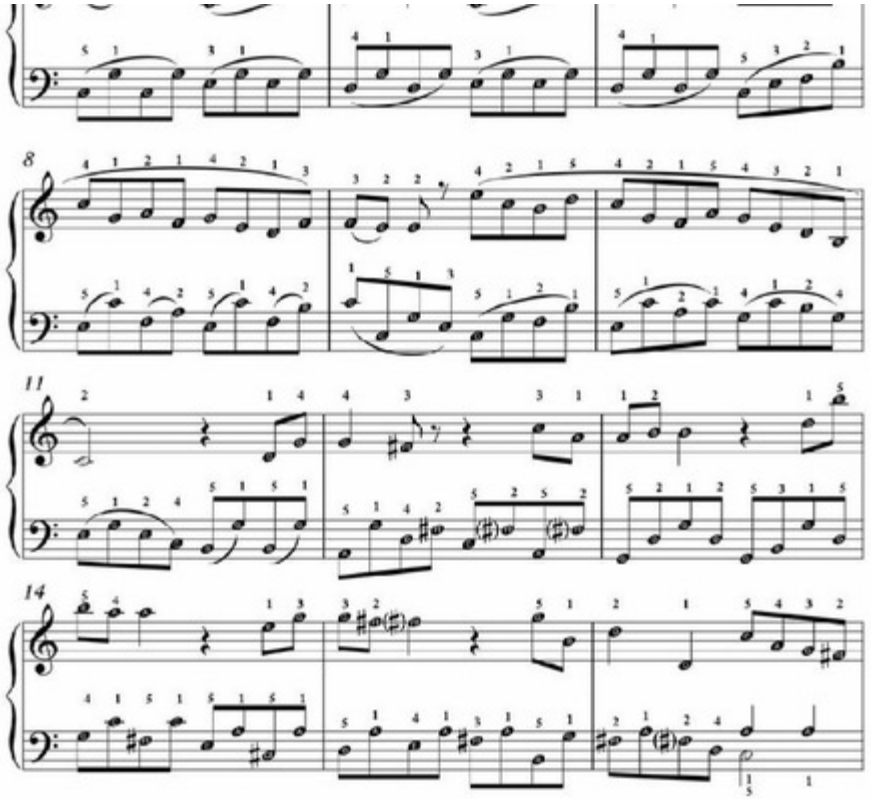


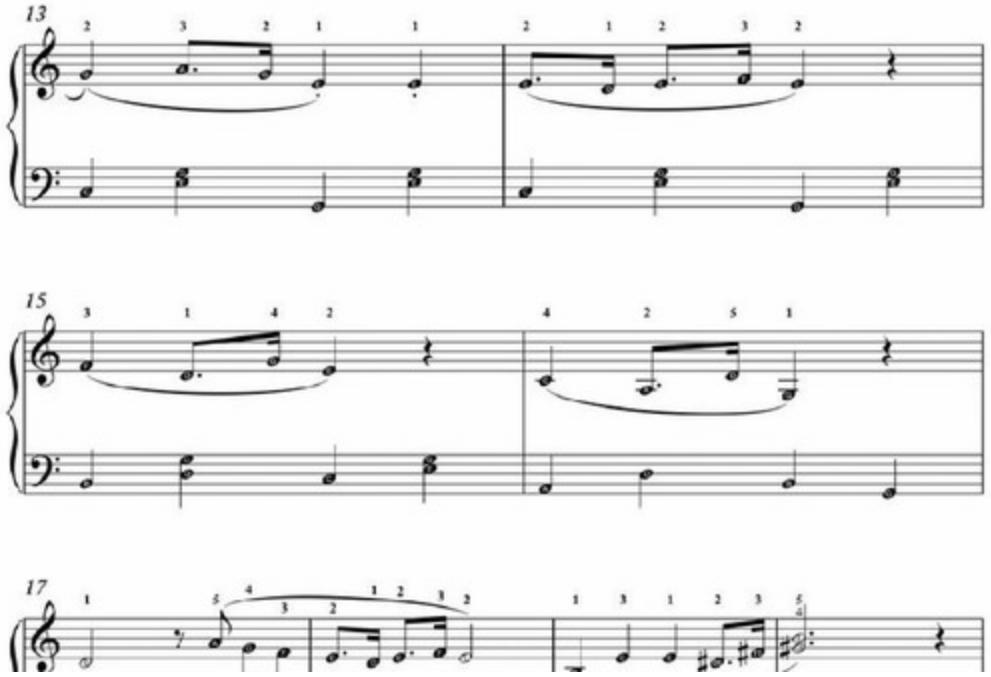

Link directly to the right hand.
Link directly to the right hand.
Link directly to the left hand.
Second finger over.
Link directly to the right hand.
Second finger over.
Second finger over.
Second finger over.

Orfeo ed Euridice

Christoph Willibald Gluck




8
11
14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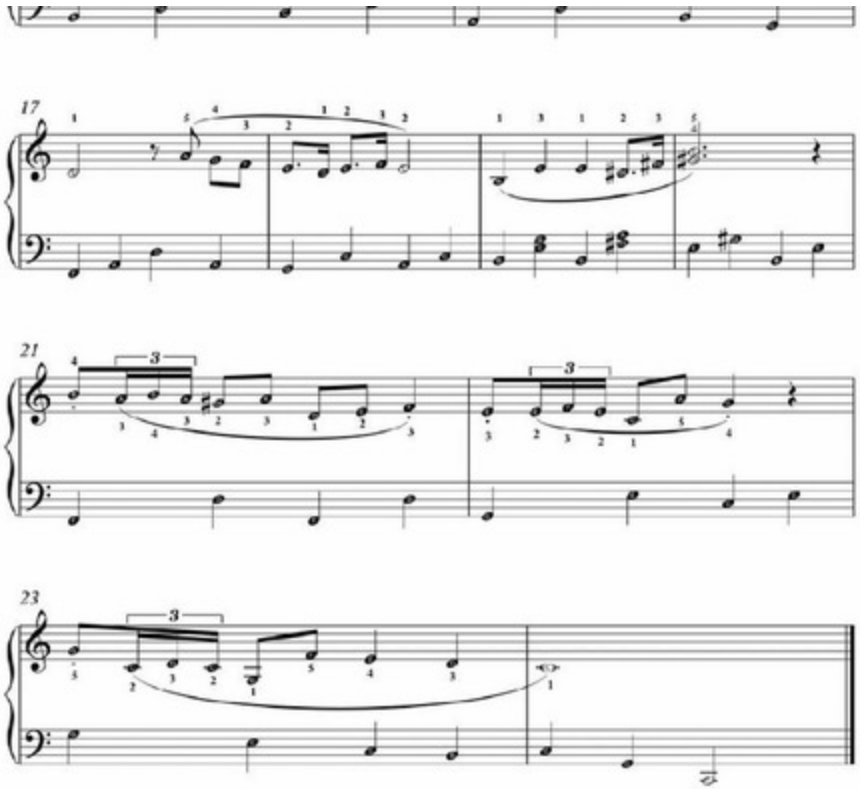
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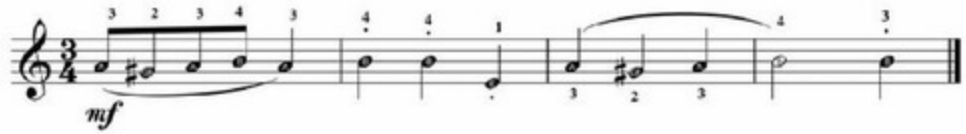
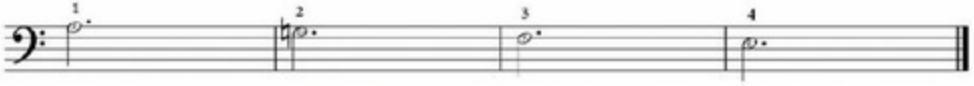
23
3

Purcell Minuet: Overview & Lesson

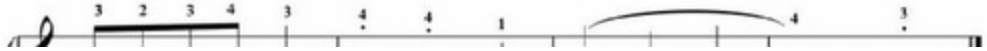
A minuet is a stately dance form in 3/4 time. When you play a minuet, take a moderate tempo: not too fast and not too slow. In exercise one, let's practice the first four measures of Purcell's minuet in the right hand.

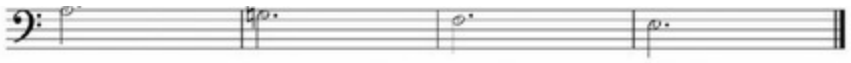


Now, in exercise two, let's practice the first four measures of the left hand.

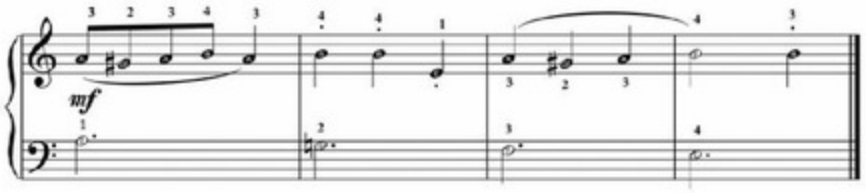


For exercise three, let's put both hands together. Practice this slowly, at first. It is all right if you would like to practice and each measure by repeating the measure several times.

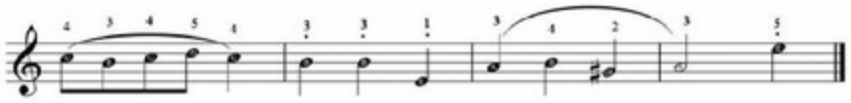




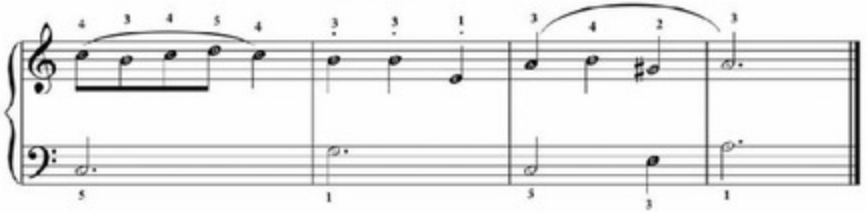
For exercise three, let's put both hands together. Practice this slowly, at first. It is all right if you would like to practice and each measure by repeating the measure several times.



In exercise four, let's work on the right-hand part for the second system of music. You might notice that there are some similar patterns between exercises one and four.



For exercise five, let's put both hands together.

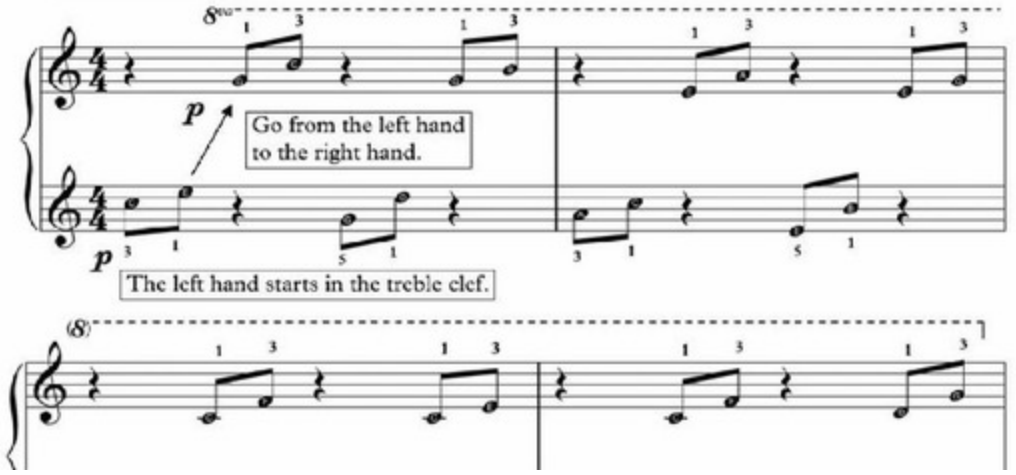


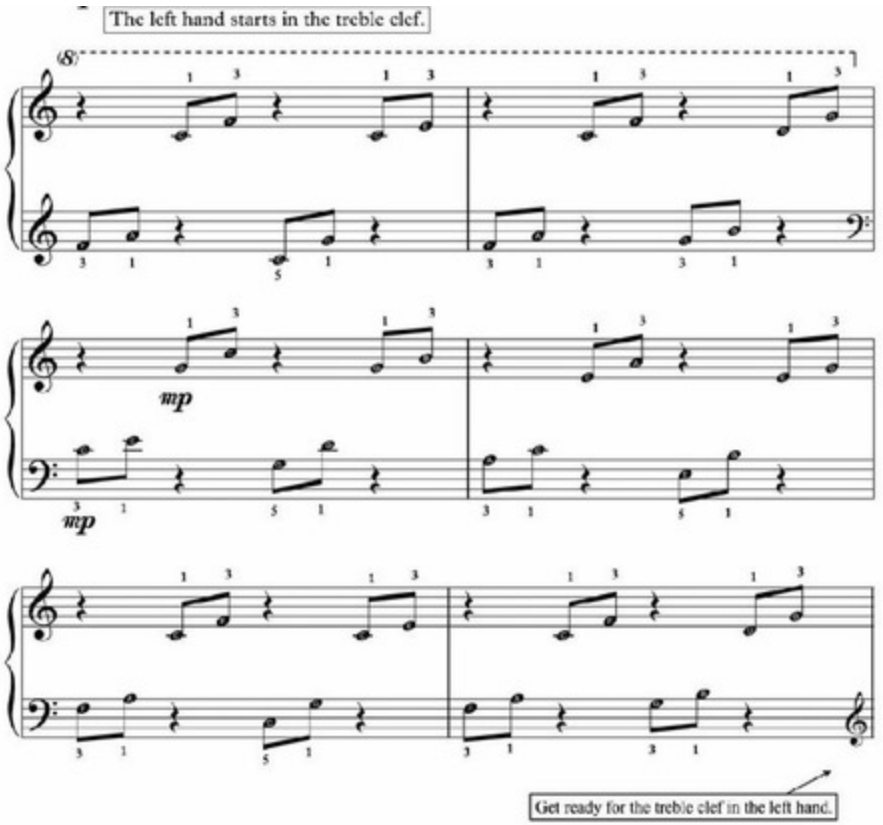
Check out Video Lesson 14.
Click Here!

Canon

Adagio Johann Pachelbel

For the first four measures, the right hand is one octave (eight notes) higher than written.




The left hand starts in the treble clef.
8
mp
mp
Get ready for the treble clef in the left hand.

Beethoven's Ode to Joy: Overview on Dynamics

As our first piece, let's look at this easy, piano version of the famous theme from Beethoven's ninth symphony. The piece starts on the next page. Before we begin, let's look at a few music concepts that will help you play the piece.

Dynamics is a term that we use for the loudness and softness of the notes in music. In pieces and songs you will see dynamic indications represented as letters (F, P, MP, or MF, for example). These letters are abbreviations for Italian words.

p stands for the term "piano", which means soft (like a whisper, but not the quietest whisper).

mp stands for the term "mezzo-piano", which means medium soft (like a quiet conversation).

p stands for the term "piano", which means soft (like a whisper, but not the quietest whisper).

mp stands for the term "mezzo-piano", which means medium soft (like a quiet conversation).

mf stands for the term "mezzo-forte", which means medium loud (like a normal conversation).

f stands for the term "forte", which means loud (like a shout).

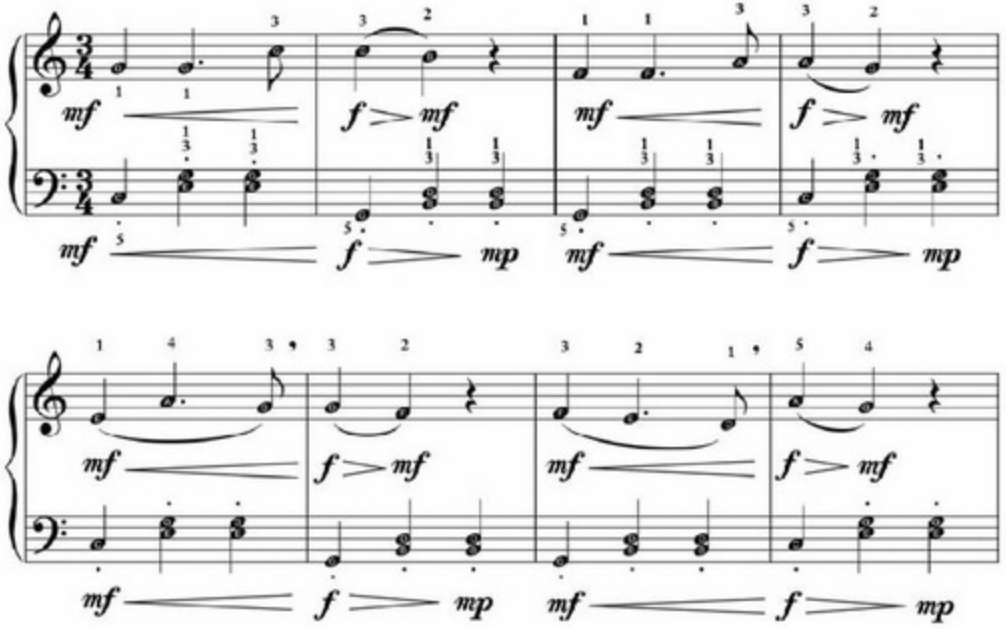
Dynamics are a relative concept in music. In other words, you might consider that each piece has a slightly different range from soft to loud. Forte ("loud") in the context of a Beethoven piece may be a little different than forte in a Mozart piece. So, let's think of dynamics as a general concept that varies slightly from piece to piece. Part of what makes music so exciting and inspiring is finding the nuance and detail in the poetics of each piece. Exploring dynamics on the piano, along with many other musical concepts, will be a big part of this book.

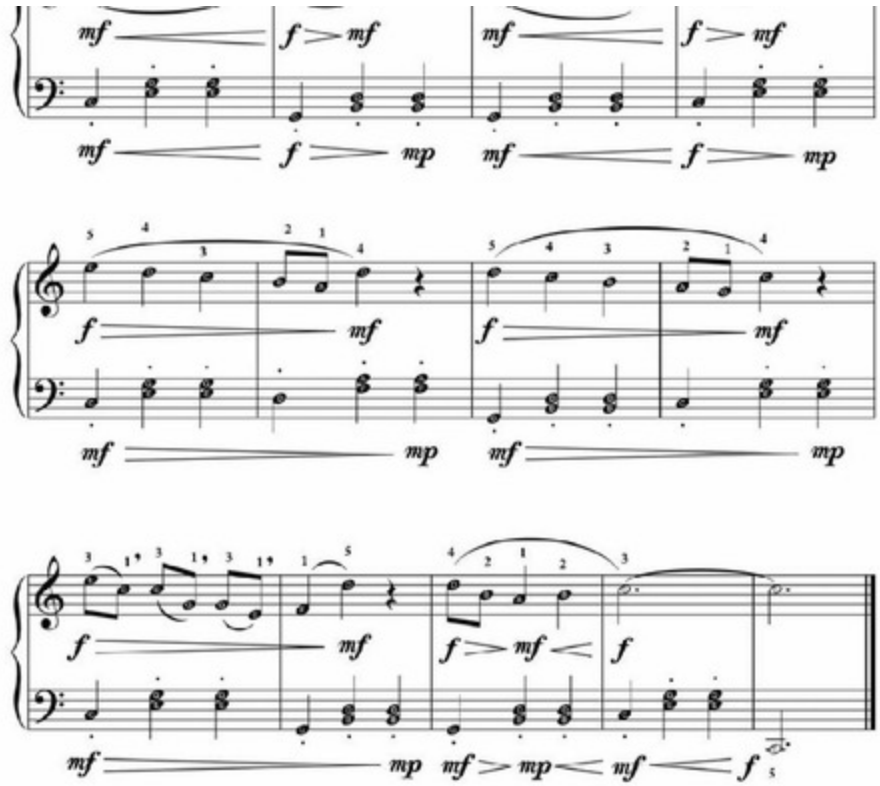
In piano sheet music (sometimes called the "score"), we are given indications on how to make the music gradually louder or softer. In a lighthearted way, you might think of this as the piano version of turning up or turning down the volume on a car stereo, TV, or an audio device. In piano music we use two symbols:

Crescendo means to get gradually louder

Diminuendo means to get gradually quieter

Santa Lucia





Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake Theme & Rossini's William Tell Overture Theme for the Right Hand

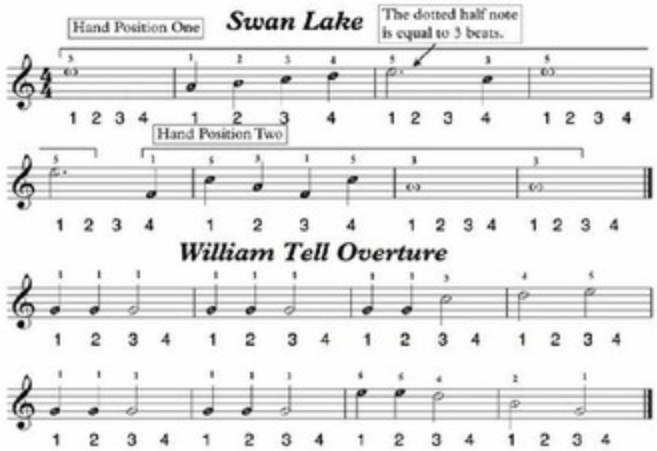
Let's take a look at the theme from Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*. This melody will be in the right hand. There will be two hand positions for the piece. The first hand position will cover the notes A, B, C, D, and E. For this position, place your thumb on the note A, which is six keys above middle C. The second position will cover the notes F, G, A, B, and C. For the second position, place your thumb on the note F, which is four keys above middle C.

For Rossini's *William Tell Overture*, which you might recognize as the theme from the *Lone Ranger*, the right hand will be on these notes G, B, C, D, and E. Place your thumb on the note G, five keys above middle C. There will be one key (the note A) between your thumb and index finger. We will present more advanced versions of each of these pieces later in the book.

The small numbers above the notes indicate the finger numbers. The brackets indicate the hand positions. The numbers below are for the

index finger. We will present more advanced versions of each of these pieces later in the book.

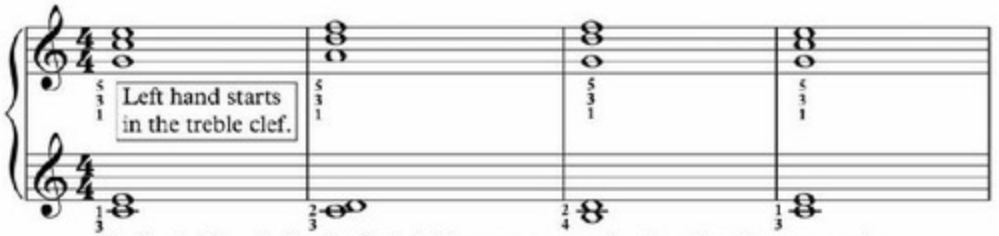
The small numbers above the notes indicate the finger numbers. The brackets indicate the hand positions. The numbers below are for the beats. The letters for each note are indicated inside each note head. As you are playing, try to memorize the notes on the staff and make a connection with the piano keys.



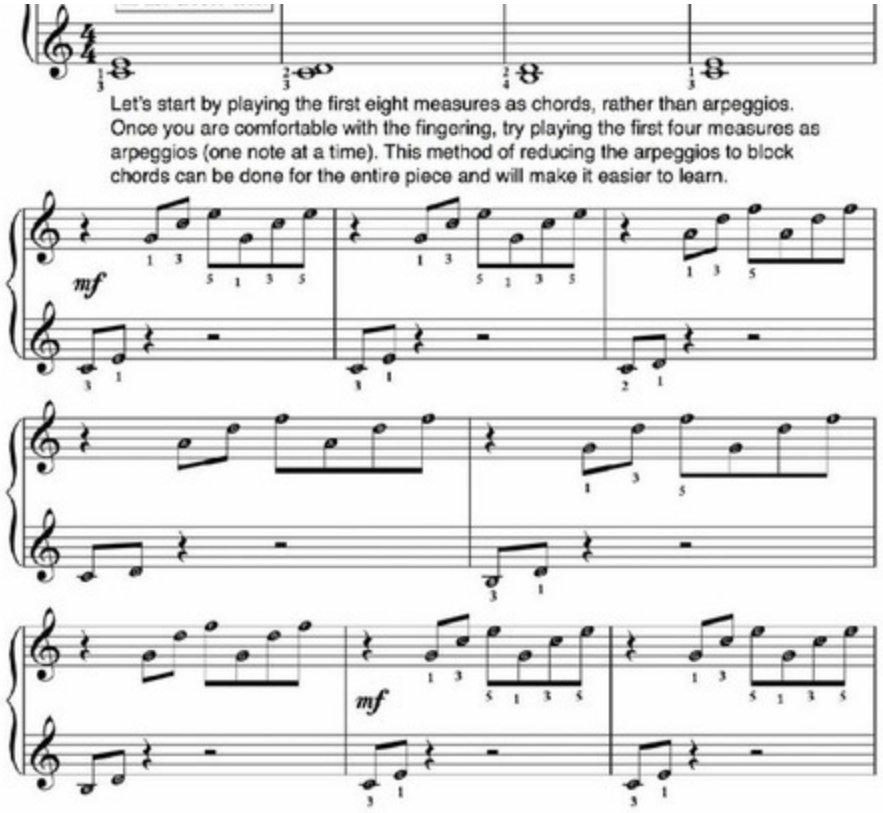
J.S. Bach Prelude in C Major: Overview & Arpeggios

In this lesson, we are going to prepare for playing the *C Major Prelude* by J.S. Bach. Arpeggios are one of the key concepts at work in this piece. The term "arpeggio" comes from the Italian word "arpa", which means "harp". Along these lines, an arpeggio is a chord played one note at a time, instead of a chord where all of the notes are played at once. This style of playing one note at a time mimics the sound of a harp.

Check out Video Lesson 13. Click Here!



Let's start by playing the first eight measures as chords, rather than arpeggios. Once you are comfortable with the fingering, try playing the first four measures as arpeggios (one note at a time). This method of reducing the arpeggios to block chords can be done for the entire piece and will make it easier to learn



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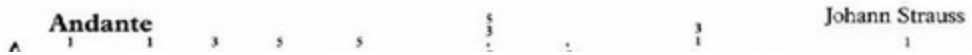
The Blue Danube Waltz

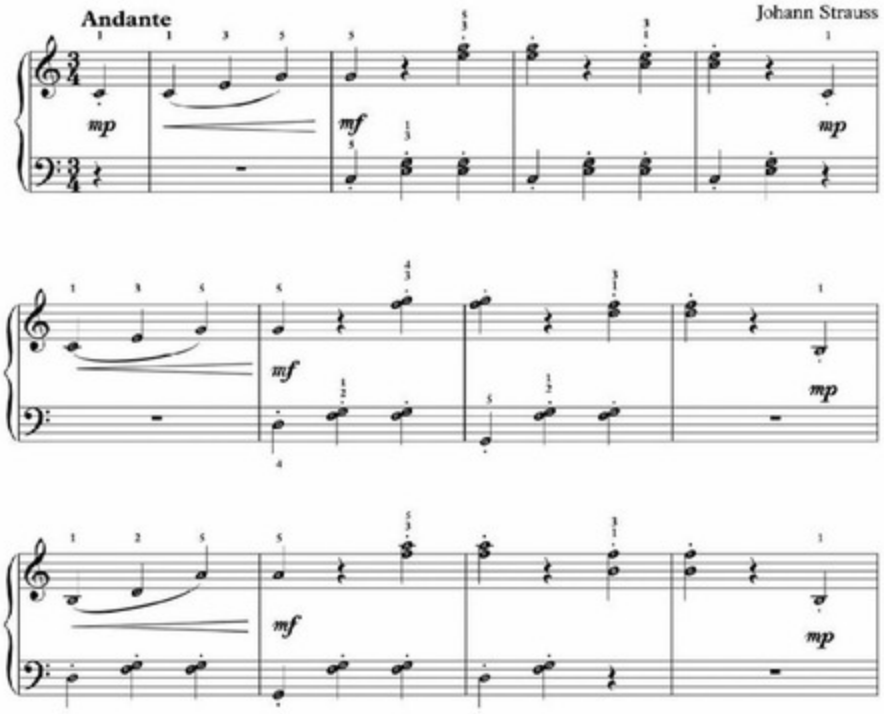
This famous piece is a waltz; so, it is in 3/4 time. Make sure that you count, "1, 2, 3", for each measure. Your left hand will do the job of keeping the time in an "um-pah-pah" style. There are three main types of chords for the left hand: C Major (the notes C, E, G), G Dominant Seventh (the notes G, B, D, F), and F Major (the notes F, A, C). Some of the chord forms for the left hand leave out a note or two, especially the G Dominant Seventh forms.

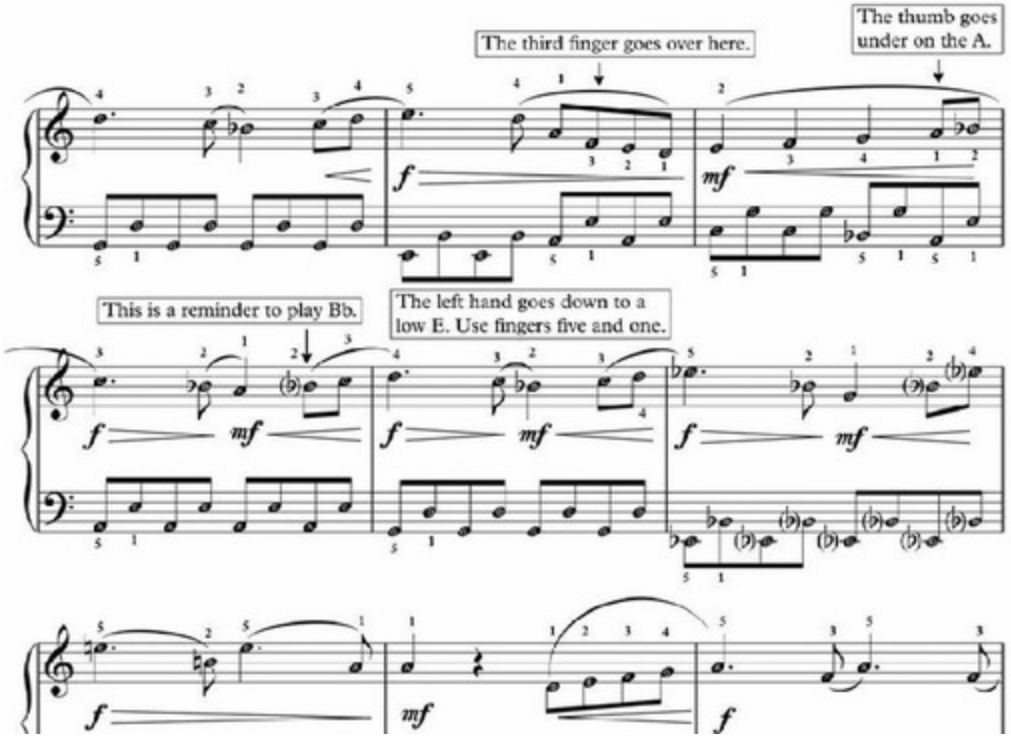
The right hand alternates between staccato (bouncy) and legato (smooth) notes and phrases. Try to bring out the contrast between the bouncy and smooth notes. The legato phrases often outline chords and their inversions played one note at a time, for example C Major (C, E, G) or G Major in first inversion (B, D, G).

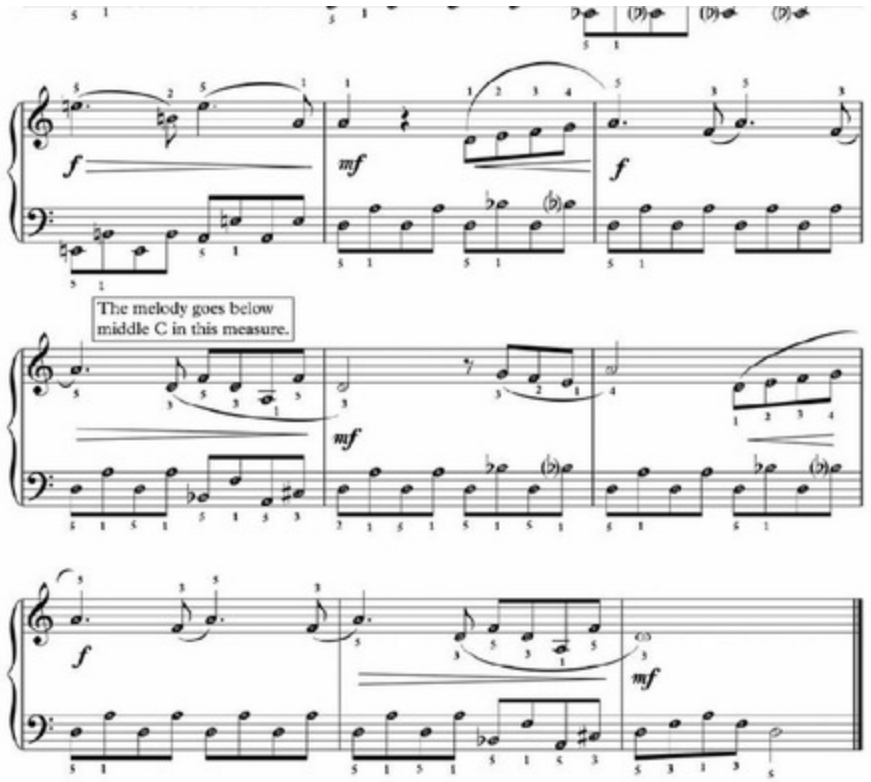
At first, learn one system of music at a time, rather than practicing the entire piece. Listen to the interplay between the right and left hand part. One of the great things about playing the piano is that we can have fun exploring the interaction between the musical figures played in each hand. It's a little like being our own mini orchestra.

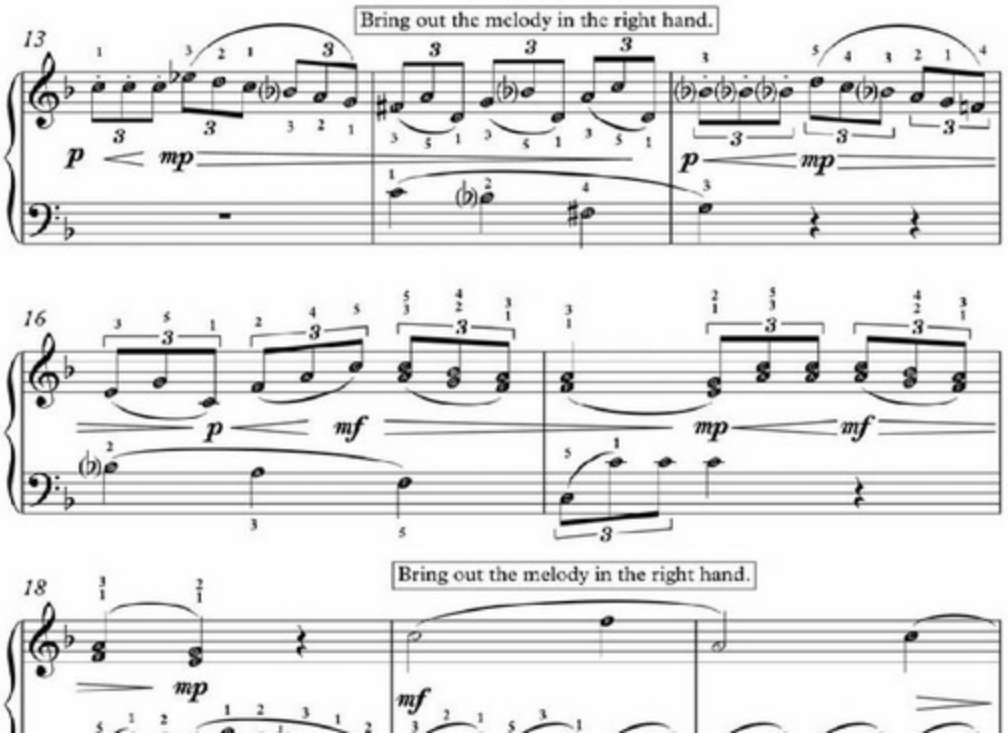


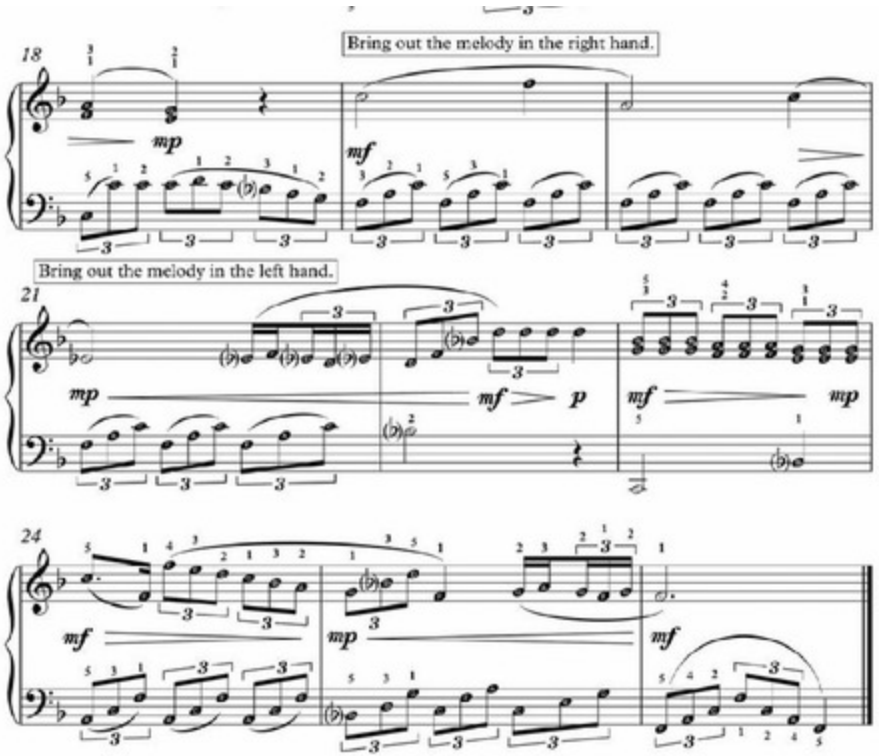
entire piece. Listen to the interplay between the right and left hand part. One of the great things about playing the piano is that we can have fun exploring the interaction between the musical figures played in each hand. It's a little like being our own mini orchestra.




The third finger goes over here.
The thumb goes under on the A.
This is a reminder to play Bb.
The left hand goes down to a low E. Use fingers five and one.


The melody goes below
middle C in this measure.

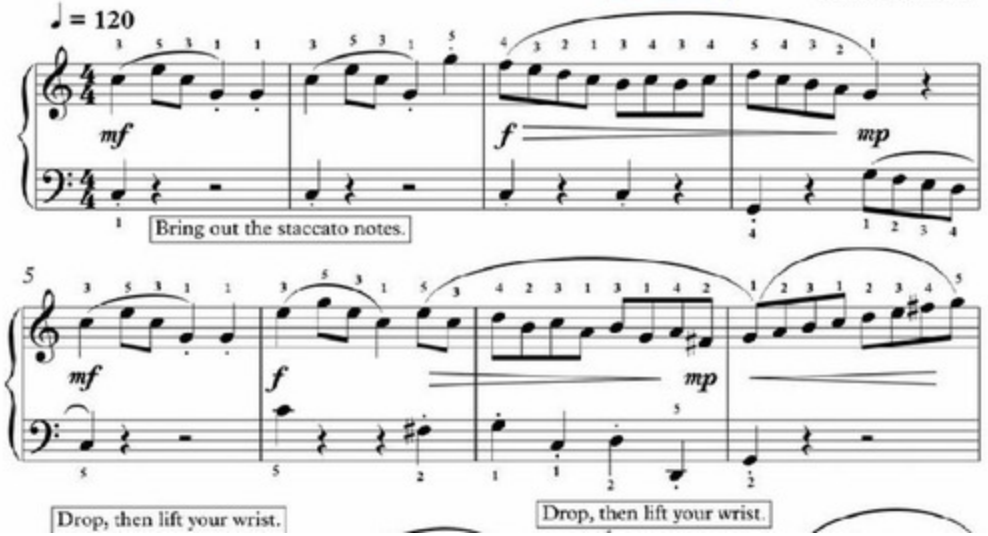

Bring out the melody in the right hand.
13
p
mp
p
mp
16
p
mf
mp
mf
18
Bring out the melody in the right hand.
mp
mf

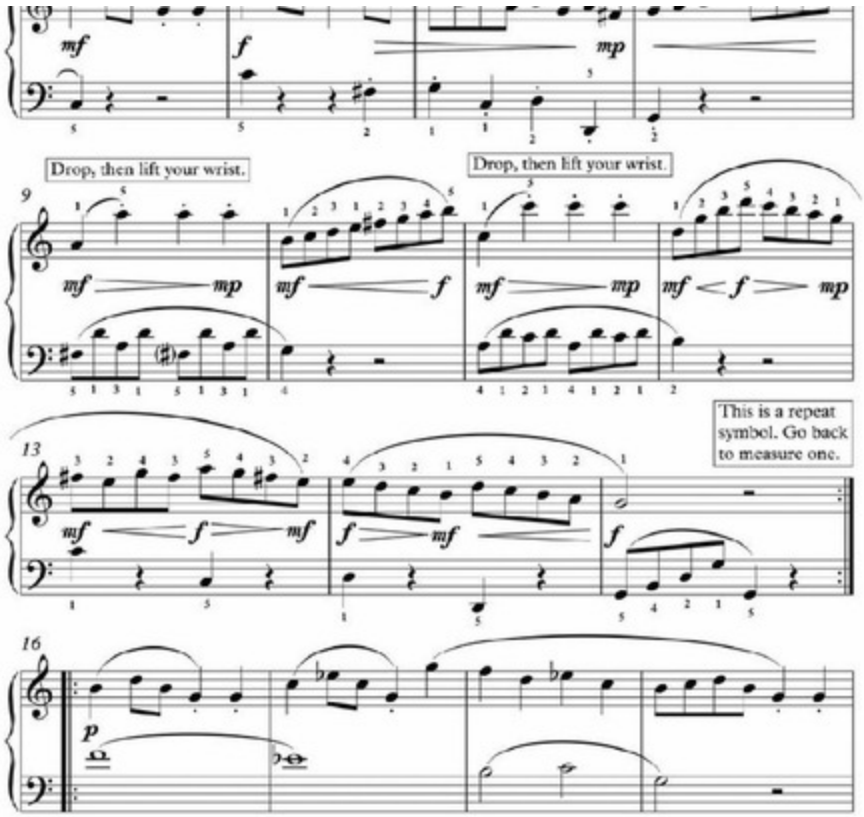

Bring out the melody in the right hand.
Bring out the melody in the left hand.

Sonatina in C: First Movement

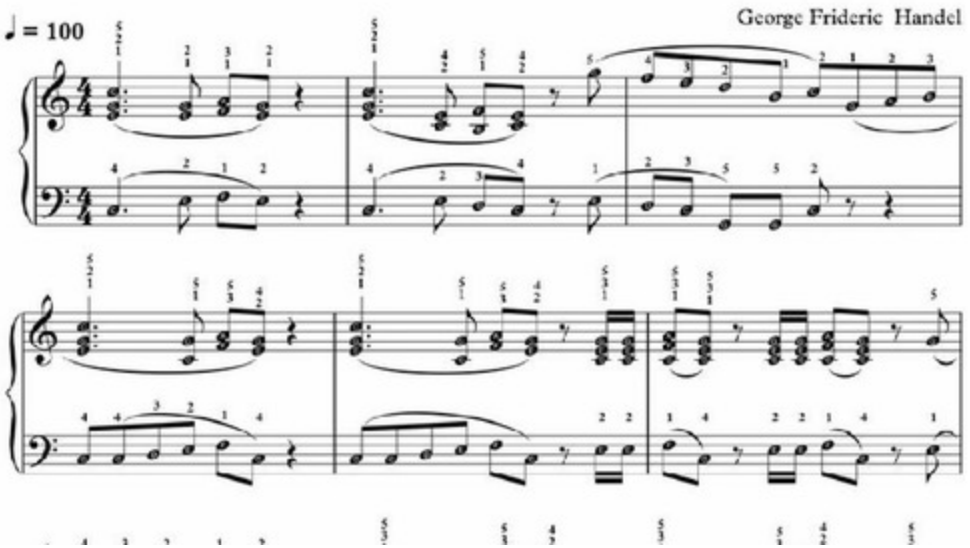
Check out Video Lesson 18. Click Here!

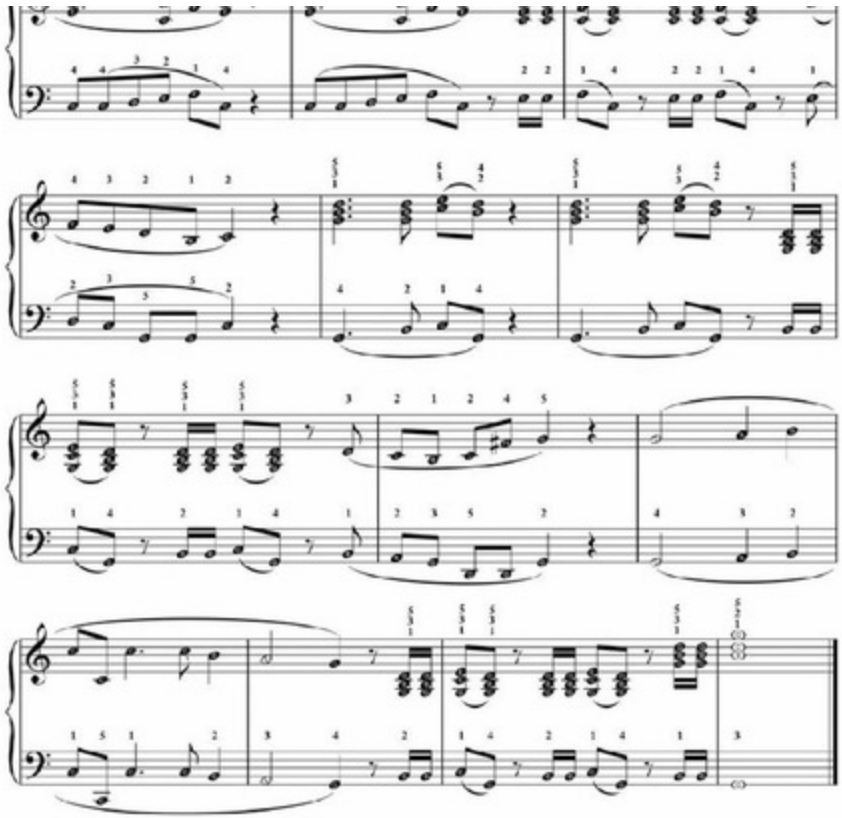
Muzio Clementi




Drop, then lift your wrist.
Drop, then lift your wrist.
This is a repeat symbol. Go back to measure one.

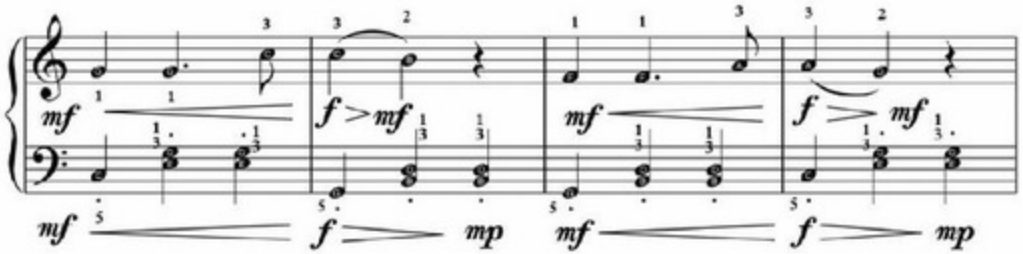
Hallelujah





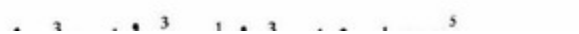
Exercise #3

For exercise three, let's put both hands together. Remember to practice slowly and count the beats aloud or in your mind. Try to make the left hand a little bouncy and the right hand a little bit smooth.



Exercise #4

Exercise four will use a similar wrist technique as exercise two. At the beginning of the slur, drop your right wrist down a little bit. Then, lift the wrist back to the position parallel to the right hand on the second note of the slur (or phrase). There are four slurs in the first two measures: E and C, C and G, G and E, and F and D.



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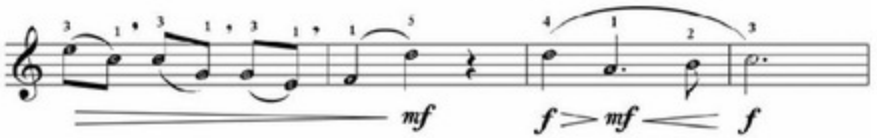
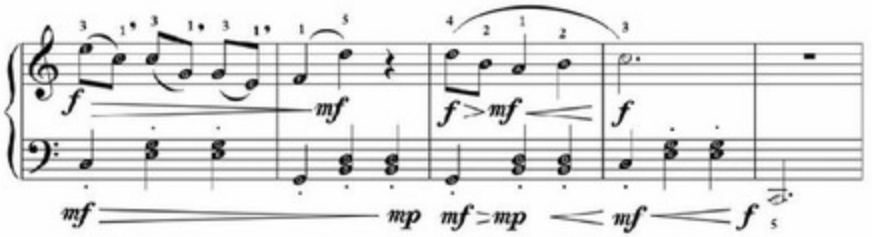


Exercise #5



In exercise five, let's put both hands together. Focus mainly on the right-hand part. The last note of the piece is a low C (two octaves below middle C). You should play it with the fifth finger of your left hand.

Music Theory: What are Sharps & Flats?

- On the piano, there are two types of keys: Black Keys and White Keys.
- The White Keys stand for natural notes, for example, C, D, E, F, G, A and B.
- The Black Keys (also called "accidentals") stand for Sharp or Flat Notes.
- Sharp Notes use this symbol: #
- Flat Notes use this symbol: ♭
- Here are some examples of Sharp Notes: F#, G#, A#, C#, D#
- Here are some examples of Flat Notes: Gb, Ab, Bb, Db, Eb

- On the piano keyboard, Sharp Keys are located directly to the right of their corresponding Natural Key (White Key). For example, F Sharp (F#) is the next key to the right from F (also called "F Natural"). C Sharp (C#) is the black key directly to the right of C (also called "C Natural").
- This pattern, of going to the next key directly to the right, holds true for all of the sharp notes going up and down the piano keyboard.
- Using the chart below, try locating the following sharp keys on the piano: C#,