

# **DCKeys Piano Method Book**

## Dedication:

Dear Piano Student,

May you learn to express yourself and sing through this instrument.

To access the online version of this book, scan the QR code below:



# DC Keys - Independent Study Piano Method Book

## Dear Teachers and Students,

This book is designed to take you from the advanced beginner stage to an intermediate level. If you have zero experience on the keyboard, you should go to the appendix and review the *Starting From Zero* section. If you already have a basic repertoire on the piano, you may want to begin by checking out chapter 4 and chapter 8. These chapters contain pieces and exercises contributed by an impressive group of musicians — mostly piano players — from the D.C. area: Iva Ambush, Katrina Doyle Black, Amy Bormet, Jon Carroll, Allison Crockett, Reginald Cyntje, Daryl Davis, Bob Familiar, Pete Frassand, Allyn Johnson, Steve Jones, Dave Kane, Jessica Krash, Dave Marsh, Terry Marshall, Cherie Mitchell-Agurs, John Ozment, Sam Prather, Wayne Wilentz, and Davey Yarborough.

There are pieces from such classical giants as Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, J.S. Bach, Ludwig van Beethoven and Frederic Chopin, a set of four pieces from Alexander Reinagle, an American composer born the same year as Mozart (1756) and two pop songs from 1981 England. There is an entire chapter devoted to D. C.'s own Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington.

Musical exercises are included along with numerous links to videos showing a keyboard performance.

When you begin the study of piano, you become part of a centuries old tradition filled with genius and wonder. Good news: You can continue the journey for your whole life.

*James Levy, January, 2021.*



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This book follows a general musical convention that “Jazz” and “Major” are always capitalized

# Pacing Guide

**The better you are at playing the piano, the more fun you'll have.**

The flip side is that hardest part of learning to play the piano is at the beginning when you start to play and you can't quite play anything that sounds real. While this book assumes you had some introduction to the keyboard, now is when many of you will start to work independently and to practice on your own. The pacing guide below is designed to get you over that beginning hump. While this book has 8 chapters, the pacing guide only covers chapter 1 to the beginning of chapter 4. By the end of chapter 3, not only will you have learned a set's worth of music, you will have learned a practice routine which will carry you through the rest of the book and beyond.

Students learn at different rates, especially depending on how long they practice. This guide is based on a minimum of 30 minutes practice a day. Students may begin with 30 minutes and gradually work their way up to an hour.

- Week 1
- Read and discuss all the subjects in chapter 1.
  - Set up your practice space and make sure that you touch the keyboard every day. Use the 1st Five Finger position, in C major, to warm up your voice and fingers.
  - Watch this [video](#) at least three times.
  - Review *Minuetto* from the previous curriculum and any other concepts you might need to go over in the **Starting From Zero** section in the appendix.

**(Practice routine begins)**

- Week 2
1. Warm up with C & Eb 5-finger positions (chapter 2)
  2. Begin the circle of 5th exercise, Do Re Mi Fa, Fa= Do (chapter 2)
  3. *First Minuetto* and begin listening/watching the videos of other pieces (chapter 3)
- Week 3
1. Warm Up with C, Eb, A 5-finger positions
  2. Continue the circle of 5th exercise, Do Re Mi Fa, Fa= Do
  3. *First Minuetto* continued add *Allegretto*
- Week 4
1. Warm Up with C, Eb, A 5-finger positions
  2. Continue the circle of 5th exercise, Do Re Mi Fa, Fa= Do If you were only doing it with one hand, make sure you are now using both
  3. Review *First Minuetto*, *Allegretto* begin *Second Minuetto*
- Week 5
1. Warm Up with C, Eb, A 5 finger positions, add Finger exercise 1.
  2. Continue the circle of 5th exercise; Do Re Mi Fa, Fa = Do  
(This is a super important exercise)
  3. Review *First Minuetto*, *Allegretto*, and *Second Minuetto*, begin *Andante in D*
- Week 6
1. Warm up with 5-finger positions. Quickly play *First Minuetto*, *Allegretto*, *Second Minuetto*. Finger Ex 1 and 2.
  2. Add the next Circle of 5ths exercise, Do Re Mi Fa Sol Major Triad
  3. *Andante in D* begin *Evening Song*

- Week 7
1. Warm up with a few 5-finger positions and quickly play the four Reinagle pieces, Finger Ex. 1 and 2. Add Finger Ex. 3
  2. Continue with the two Circle of 5ths exercises
  3. Begin *First Improvisation*
- Week 8
1. Warm up with a few 5-finger positions and quickly play the four Reinagle pieces Finger Ex. 1, 2, 3 Begin Ex. 4
  2. Begin with Circle of 5ths Ex. 2, add Ex. 3
  3. Begin *Evening Song*, *First Improvisation*
- Week 9
1. Warm up with a few 5-finger positions. Finger Ex. 1-4 You will alternate and one day you will quickly play the four Reinagle pieces, and the other day play *Evening Song* and *First Improvisation*
  2. Circle of 5ths Ex. 2 and Ex 3, you should gradually increase tempo on Ex 2.
  3. Begin *Pray Fair One*, *Be Kind*
- Week 10
1. Warm up with a few 5-finger position. Finger Ex. 1-4 Alternate the four Reinagle pieces, with *Evening Song* and *First Improvisation*.
  2. Circle of 5ths Ex. 2 and Ex 3, continue to increase tempo" on Ex 2. Add Ex 4.
  3. Begin *Over the Hills and Far Away*, *Pray Fair One*, *Be Kind*
- Week 11
1. Warm up with a few 5-finger position. Finger Ex. 1-4 Alternate the four Reinagle pieces, with *Evening Song*, the two *Beggar's Opera* pieces and *First Improvisation*.
  2. Circle of 5ths Ex. 2, 3 and 4 you should gradually increase tempo Ex 2. Add Ex 5.
  3. Begin *Minuet in F*
- Week 12
- (No new assignment, consolidate)
- Week 13
1. Warm up with a few 5-finger positions. Finger Ex. 1-4 Alternate the four Reinagle pieces and *Evening Song* with *Minuet in F* and the two *Beggar's Opera* pieces.
  2. Circle of 5ths Ex. 2 - 5. Begin Ex. 6
  3. Begin *My Shot Bassline* and *4-bar Improv*
- Week 14
1. Warm up with a few 5-finger positions. Finger Ex. 1-4 Alternate warming up with all your repertoire.
  2. Circle of 5ths Ex. 2 - 5. Begin Ex 6
  3. Begin *Little Blues Etude* (chapter 4)

## Recital Time!

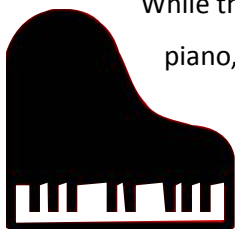
- At this point you should be able to continue using the same practicing pattern:
- 1) Warm up, make plan for cycling through all the pieces you've learned, gradually increasing tempo.
  - 2) Add Circle of 5ths Ex. 7 and keep practicing 2-6, gradually increasing tempo, do creative variations.
  - 3) Continue on in the book and learn more pieces. Try and start something new most weeks.





- A Brief History of the Piano
- Recording Music
- Reading Music and Playing By Ear
- Practicing
- Review

## A Brief History of the Piano



While the history of keyboard instruments is over 2000 years old, this book focuses on the piano, a keyboard instrument developed in the 1700s. The instrument's full name is the **Pianoforte** which, in Italian, literally means **soft/loud**. It was the first keyboard instrument where the volume, loudness, or strength of the sound could be controlled by how hard you played the keys.

In written music this was notated with a range of **six dynamic levels**, from softest to loudest:

***pp*** (pianissimo) to ***p*** (piano ) to ***mp*** (mezzo piano) to ***mf*** (mezzo forte) to ***f*** (forte) to ***ff*** (fortissimo).

The Pianoforte, or piano for short, became crucial in the flowering of musical culture in Europe from the late 1700s (**Mozart, Beethoven**) to around 1900 (**Claude Debussy**). Just as that musical tradition began to lose steam, around 1900, a new flowering of creativity began in the United States with **ragtime**, then **Jazz**, and R&B, led by artists such as **Scott Joplin, Duke Ellington, Art Tatum, Thelonious Monk, Stevie Wonder** and many more.

In 1982, Stevie Wonder recorded a song with former-**Beatle Paul McCartney** entitled “Ebony and Ivory,” containing the lyric “Ebony and ivory live together in perfect harmony, side by side on my piano keyboard, oh Lord, why don't we?”



While the song was written as a plea for racial harmony, it also can be understood as a reference to the history of the piano itself, with its European (Ivory) roots becoming reinvigorated and reinvented by Black Americans, who have been the pioneers of American musical genres from Jazz to rock'n'roll to hip hop, and on.

## Reflections:

**Why might you want to improve your ability on the keyboard?**

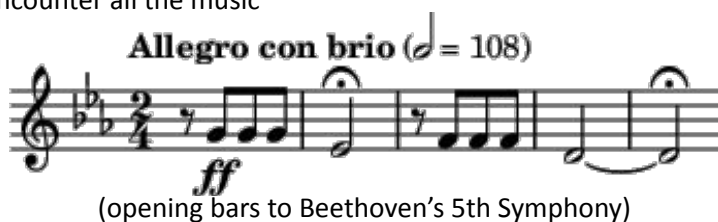
**What hopes or dreams do you have that might be furthered through musical training?**



## Recording Music

The history of the piano runs parallel to the development of modern technology and to the history of the United States, each rooted in the 1700s and developing rapidly ever since.

In the early 1700s, aside from oral tradition, the only way for music to be preserved was to notate it on paper using **staff notation**: this is how we encounter all the music we inherited from Europe.



In the late 1800s, various kinds of recording were developed which allowed people to preserve music in sound rather than just writing down the directions how to play the piece. An early method was **mechanical player pianos**, which housed a mechanism that would play the keys based on a paper roll, or "piano roll," that had braille-like indentations which were read by the mechanism. The speed of playback could be controlled.



The young Duke Ellington learned to play, in part, by using a player piano to learn **James P Johnson's** *Carolina Shout*.

The player piano is the direct ancestor of the **drum machine** and today's digital recording and sequencing software. In the early 1900s, actual audio recording of music began which led to what we call the recording industry today.

## The birth of Jazz in the 1920s

thus coincided with the dawn of the recording industry and the development of radio as a way for people to listen to new music.

Now Jazz artists could use both paper staff notation and recording technology to preserve their music. Audio recording allowed for the preservation of improvisation — a central feature of the Jazz style.

## Reading Music and Playing By Ear

Many **Jazz** musicians learned to play their instruments **by ear**.

**Learning by ear** meant that these musicians also absorbed the expression and phrasing of the recording artist in addition to just learning the notes. Some of these artists learned to read only after they were proficient enough to have begun to work as



professional musicians. Vocalist and trumpet player **Louis Armstrong**, the first significant Jazz artist, is a good example. As a young man in the 1920s, he performed around his home town of New Orleans in marching bands. Then learned to read music, or at least became proficient at it, when he got his first gig playing on a Mississippi River Steamship.

In the earlier DC Keys material, the time you spent singing and playing along with the keyboard was designed to help you be able to **play by ear**.

- One way of understanding playing by ear is that you begin by singing a melody, then continue by being able to play what you sing.

To be a successful musician today, it is best to be able to do both: play by ear and play by reading music.



The famous **Suzuki Method**, which began in the late 1950s, is based on a collection of music that is presented to the student first as recordings, and then as printed music. This book takes the same approach, all the sheet music has links to video performances.

The **Suzuki Method**, also stresses the importance of giving musical recitals. Everyone learns the same repertoire so they can all play the pieces together.

## Practicing

One of the best parts of being a musician is all the musician jokes. There are lots of them. One of the most well known goes something like this:

A young violinist arrives in New York and wants to go see Carnegie Hall, the greatest concert hall in the world where the New York Philharmonic Orchestra performs. Walking around the city, she finds herself lost. Her phone is dead and, walking up the street violin case in hand, she sees this older man. The older man meets her eye and the young violinist feels like she's found a guide. Excuse me, sir, she asks, **"Can you tell me how to get to Carnegie Hall?"** The older man looks up and down, looks at her violin case and and utters the single word: **"Practice."**

**Practice!** If you want to learn the piano, the most important thing for you to know is that you must practice. Spend time every day on the instrument, trying to get better. If you consistently put in the time, you will get results. 2nd - 12th grade it is an especially good time to learn an instrument, your brain is really receptive to musical learning.

**To get started organize your practice time around three sections:**

- 1) Connecting to the keyboard by **matching pitch** and **solfege** warm ups
- 2) Technical exercises based on the **circle of 5ths**
- 3) Repertoire -- learning pieces.

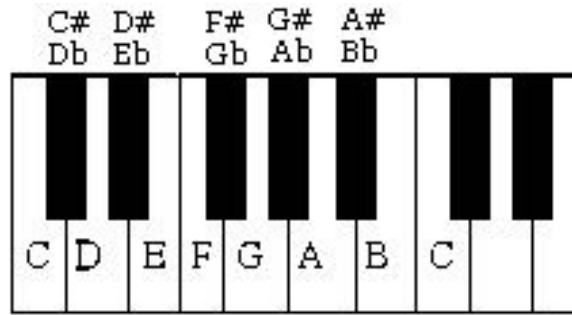
How much time you spend practicing will determine how quickly you move down the path towards becoming a keyboard player. Let's say a minimum of 30 minutes, 45 minutes is better and a whole hour is ideal.

Jazz musicians use the term **"Woodshedding"** to mean practicing. Woodshedding reflects the idea that, at first, you won't sound very good. Learning to play any musical instrument takes dedication, patience and self-discipline. Becoming a musician is a lot like becoming an athlete. You will need to build your musical muscles, learn the rules of the game and spend time checking out the great players.

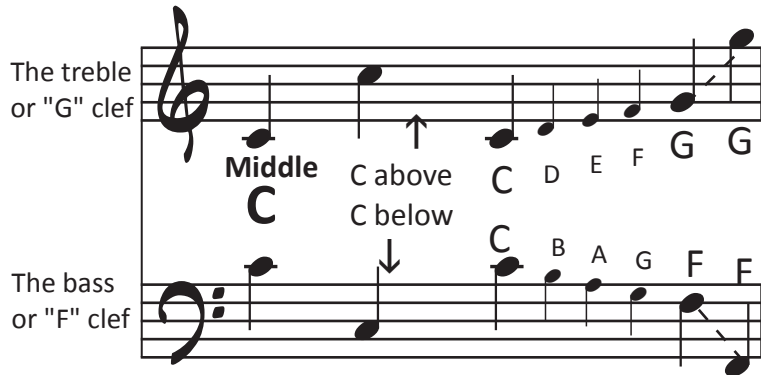


# Review

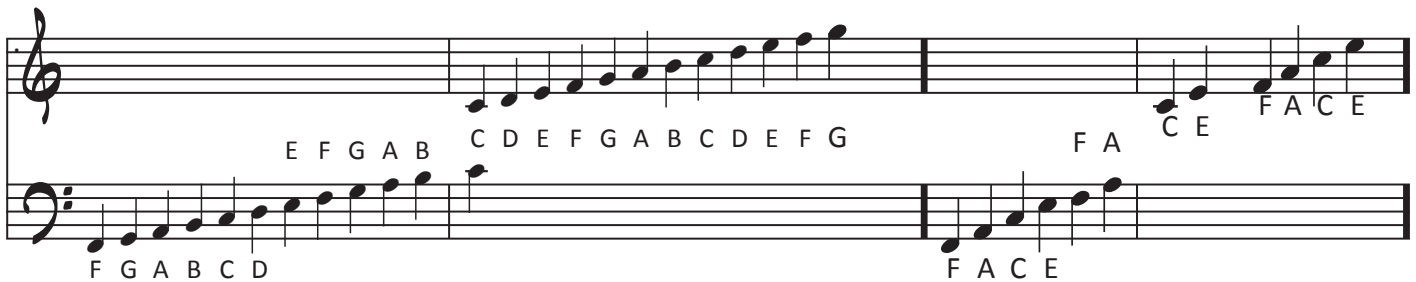
## 1. Letter names of keys



## 2. Notes on the staff



*Three Faces*  
(a skip note pattern)

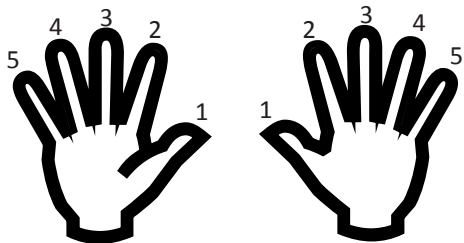


## 3. Solfege syllables for singing: Do Re Mi Fa Sol La Ti Do

A list of songs that you can sing with **solfege**: 1. Mary Had a Little Lamb; 2. When the Saints Go Marching In; etc.

**4. Half steps and whole steps:** A **half step** is two keys on the piano which do not have any other key between them, like E&F or B&C -- the two pairs of white keys which are a half step apart, or like C&Db or A#&B. A **whole step** is two half steps.

**5. Fingers** Most sheet music includes **fingerings**, directions on which finger to use to play a particular note. For both hands the thumb is 1 and the little finger is 5.



• For the basic songs covered in the DC Keys curriculum the right hand fingers also had these beginning jobs:





- [Connecting To The Keyboard](#)
- [Tetrachord Etude](#)
- [Tetrachord Etude, Pro Version](#)
- [The Circle of 5ths](#)
- [Circle of 5ths Exercises](#)

# Connecting to the Keyboard

2.1

Here's how to begin your practice session. You're making a two-way connection to the keyboard:

- 1) Your voice
- 2) Your fingers

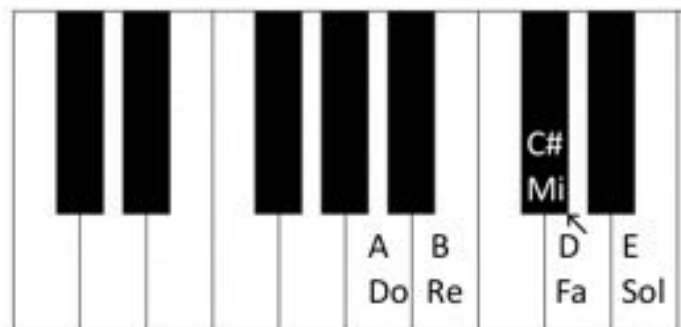
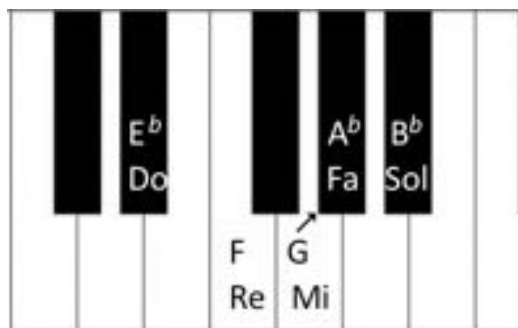
Sing and play! Repeat many times,  
vary it as you repeat.

- Use both hands if you can, but if that is too hard at first, use one hand, then the other hand.
- Play the notes and “play with” the notes.
- Notice that Mi to Fa is a **half step** while all the other notes are all a **whole step** apart.
- Make sure your fingers are curved, like you’re holding a tennis ball. Make sure you watch some videos of people playing the piano and focus on the shape of their hands.

• [Review the concept of half steps and whole steps with this video.](#)

• [Review the dual names of all the black keys with this video.](#)

- After you are comfortable warming up in C add the two new keys/five-finger positions below.



# Tetrachord Etude

2.2

- **Tetrachord** - a group of four neighboring notes such as A B C D; B C D E; Do Re Mi Fa or Re Mi Fa Sol
- **Etude** - a piece that was written to teach a specific concept or skill.
- This short **etude** teaches you three **tetrachords**. You can see they each have the same interval pattern: **whole step, whole step, half step; (WWH), Do(W)Re(W)Mi(H)Fa**
- The dotted lines show how the top note (Fa) of one tetrachord becomes the first note (Do) of the next tetrachord. The final four notes are just the 3rd tetrachord notes rearranged to set up a repeat back to the beginning.

## Tetrachord Etude

Lift the wrist, reposition      Lift the wrist, reposition

C Do   D Re   E Mi   F Fa

F Do   G Re   A Mi   B<sup>b</sup> Fa

B<sup>b</sup> Do   C Re   D Mi   E<sup>b</sup> Fa

You can do this etude with just one hand at first. Once that becomes easy for you, add the other hand.

- If the pattern of making the last note (Fa) of a tetrachord into the first note (Do) of a new tetrachord was continued, it would take you through all 12 keys before you got back to "C" being "Do." That exercise is outlined on the next page.

## Tetrachord Etude, Pro Version.

### THE FOUNDATION

- Notice the two-three pattern of the black keys: in this picture, it repeats three times.
- This can also be described as being three octaves (8ves).
- With 5 different black keys and 7 different white keys, that's a total of 12 different notes!



Fluency in speaking a language and fluency in playing music comes from being able to think in groups. In language that means words, phrases, sentences. In music that means chords, scales, phrases. For fluency a pianist needs to be able to play these groups starting on all 12 notes.

### THE EXTENDED EXERCISE

## Do Re Mi Fa x 12 keys = Musical Fluency

- The extended version begins with the same three tetrachords you played in the *Tetrachord Etude*.
- In this version you'll play each tetrachord twice.
  1. First sing Do Re Mi Fa making sure you follow the WWH pattern.
  2. Then repeat the notes and sing the letter names. Name the black keys by always maintaining alphabetic order — never repeat a letter, never skip a letter.
  3. Move to the new position by making Fa into the new Do.

Here is those directions written as a formula:

For now, start on C.

**|| : Do Re Mi Fa; (letter names) : || Fa ➡ ➡ Do\* : || -12x**

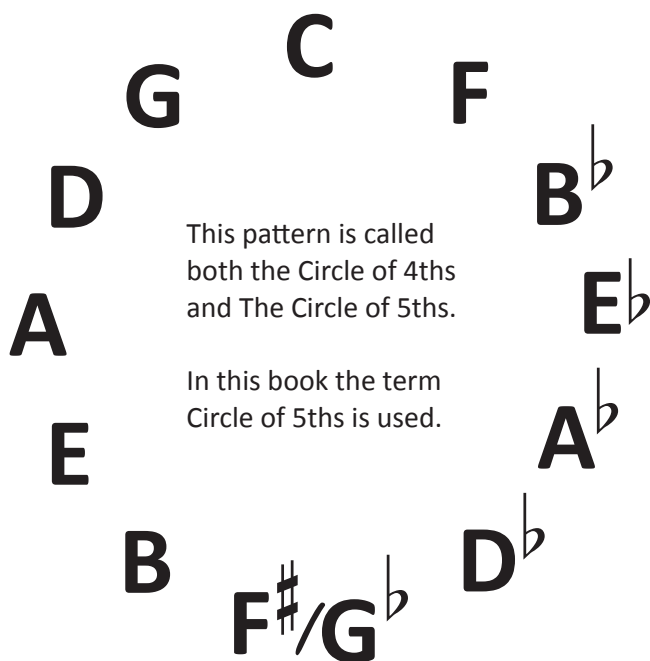
\*The note that was Fa becomes the new Do

- Do it 12x and you'll end up on the same note on which you began.
- Video of this exercise with extra repeats <https://youtu.be/cklr3rLcLeU>



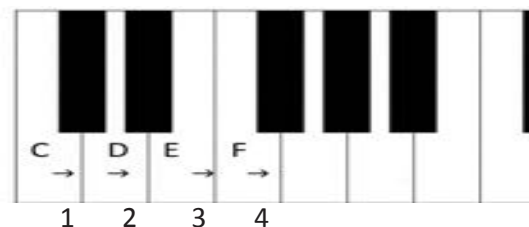
- The order of keys obtained by doing the tetrachord exercise is often represented in a circle, as shown here:

## The Circle of 5ths



### It's a 4th!

- When we went from C up to F, it was like counting to 4 (C/1 D/2 E/3 F/4).



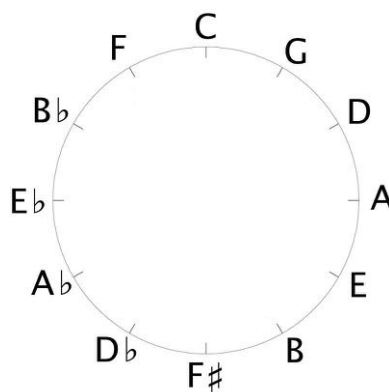
### It's a 5th!

- If we had gone down to F from C, it would have been counting to 5 (C/1 B/2 A/3 G/4 F/5).



- Put another way, from C to F going up, or ascending, is a 4th and going from C to F descending is a 5th. That's why you'll see this circle called both the circle of 5ths and the circle of 4ths.

- You'll also see it written out in mirror image like this:



# Circle of 5th Exercises: Scales and Triads

From now on all Circle of 5ths exercises will be written out in C. It will be your job to put them in the other keys by taking the pattern around the Circle of 5ths. As you do this you will learn two things

- 1) How to play the pattern in every key
- 2) The order of the Circle of 5ths. This order is a very important for understanding chord progressions, as you will see later.

- The way you move from key to key is always the note that WAS **Fa** becomes the new **Do**.

The other patterns don't make it as easy by ending on Fa, but is always **Fa** becomes the new **Do**.

## 2.3

### Circle of 5th Ex. 2

Do to Sol, Major Triad

Do Re Mi Fa Sol [C\*\_Major\_Triad]

\*Whatever letter name Do just was

This one takes you out the major scale notes with Ti flat aka Te (Tay). These notes can easily sound like a Jazz or Rock bassline

### Circle of 5th Ex. 4

Do Te Sol Te Do

### Circle of 5ths Ex. 3

Pentatonic Scale - Right hand to left hand & back

Do Re Mi Re Do La Sol La Do

Full Major Scale

### Circle of 5ths Ex. 5

Do Re Mi Fa Sol Do Ti La Ti Do

**Chord** = three or more musical tones sounded simultaneously. A chord with three notes is called a **triad**. Exercises 6 & 7 introduce you two the two most important triads, the Major triad and the minor triad.

- In these two super-important exercises the two hands play the same notes, but in different ways.

### Circle of 5th Ex. 6

Major Triads

Do Mi Sol Do C\*\_Major\_Triad

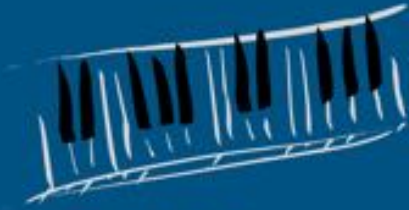
### Circle of 5th Ex. 7

Minor Triads

Do Me(May) Sol Do C\*\_minor\_triad



**Tip:** This is a crucial page. You can spend more time on this page than any other page in the book.



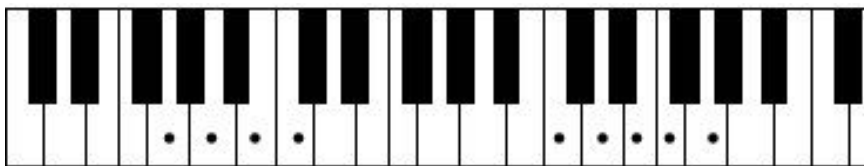
3

## BASIC REPERTOIRE

"The true beauty of music is that it connects people.  
It carries a message, and we, the musicians, are the messengers."

- *First Minuetto*
- *Allegretto*
- Finger Exercises - Thumb Under
- *Second Minuetto*
- Andrew White & The 20-Minute Hour/The Practice Graph
- *Andante in D*
- *First Improvisation*
- *Evening Song*
- Finger Exercise - C Major Scale
- *Pray Fair One, Be Kind*
- *Over the Hills and Far Away*
- *Minuet in F*
- Bassline to *My Shot*
- *Four-bar Improvisation*
- *Recital Time*

## 3.1

*First Minuetto*Alexander Reinagle  
(1756-1809)

In this section you will find many pieces with the title **Minuet** or **Minuetto** (Little Minuet). These first group of four pieces by Alexander Reinagle come to us from a past (1786) when people hadn't discovered electricity (that would happen in the 1880s). There was no recorded music (1870s) or radio (1920).

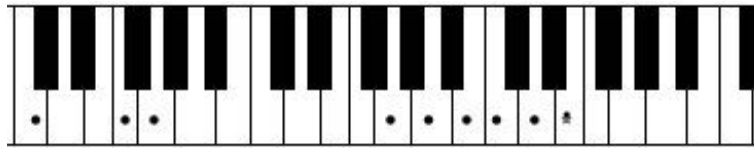
- The **Minuet** was a popular dance and if you could play one on a keyboard, there was probably someone who wanted to dance to it. It is your goal with all these pieces to be able to play them so well that your focus is on the groove, the rhythmic feel that you get when you are playing perfectly in time.

*First Minuetto* still has the hands staying in one place. The right hand has the first five notes you learned: C D E F G and the left hand mirrors the right hand. Your left thumb is on middle C and you play only four notes C B A G. That means that you use every "letter" note.

*First Minuetto* features two kinds of dots! The dots above the first nine right hand notes are called **staccato** marks. Play the notes short, it's like your finger pecks at them and you have a tiny little silence between the notes. The curved line over the notes is a slur and it means no space between the notes, connect them, or play them **legato**, with no silence between, the opposite of **staccato**.

The dots that you see to the right of the half notes means that 50% has just been added to the half note's 2-beat value making it  $2 + (2 \times .5 = 1) = 3$  beats.

## 3.2

*Allegretto*

Alexander Reinagle (1756-1809)

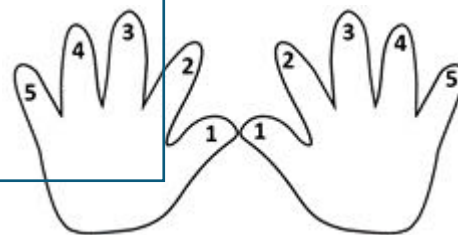
In *Allegretto* (kind of fast), the right hand makes a tiny advance, you use your thumb on two different notes, G and A. Your left hand still stays in one place, but now it is in a different place than before, with your left pinky or 5th finger on C. This piece does not use any staccato or legato markings, play it the way you feel it!

- The second line begins with a pattern which is repeated one note away. In music the term for that is **sequence**. Below is an alternate version, a remix, of the 2nd line where the **sequence** happens an extra two times. In order to keep the line balanced, there is also a new **sequence** of the four-note pattern that followed. Learn *Allegretto* the way it was originally written, then learn the new ending.
- Follow the **fingerings** and you'll see your hand both stretch and contract.

# Finger Exercises

3.3

Your hands are not identical, they are mirror images of each other. As you practice the all-important thumb under move, in order to make the hands match fingers, the notes need to move in mirror image as well. Remember on both hands, the thumb is finger 1 through little finger number 5. In the first exercise you pass your thumb under your 3rd or middle finger.

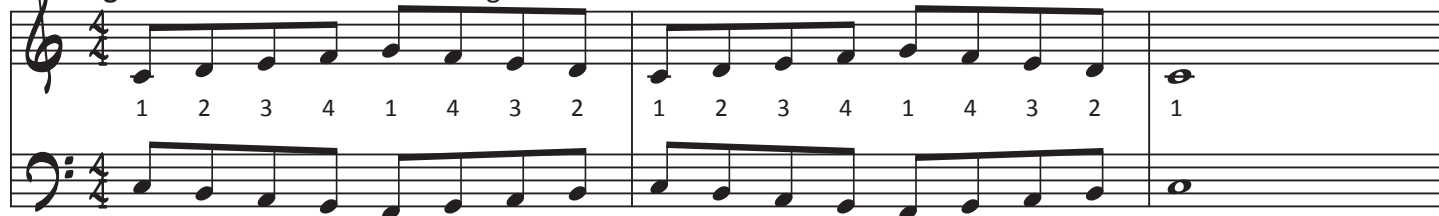


## Finger Ex. 1 - Thumb under 3rd finger



- In this similar exercise, the thumb passes under the 4th finger.

## Finger Ex. 2 - Thumb under 4th finger



- Try varying this exercise by having the left thumb start on B right below middle C.

## Finger Ex. 2a (variation)



- Try some other positions as well.

In *Second Minuetto* the hands start covering more notes and it is important to pay attention to the **fingerings**. Your left hand also plays a new kind of accompaniment; broken eighth notes. You see those in the second half of each line. Play those as softly as you can, hold down the bottom note so that it overlaps the top note, and keep those top notes, all middle Cs played with your thumb, very softly.

## 3.4

Change finger w/repeated note  
Hand moves over

### *Second Minuetto*

Reinagle

The musical score for 'Second Minuetto' is written in 3/4 time. It consists of two systems of two staves each. The first system begins with a piano (p) dynamic in the right hand and a half note in the left hand. The second system begins with a forte (f) dynamic in the right hand and a half note in the left hand. The third system begins with a piano (p) dynamic in the right hand and a half note in the left hand. The fourth system begins with a forte (f) dynamic in the right hand and a half note in the left hand. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, fingerings, and dynamics.

The piece is noticeably more difficult than the two right before it. You will need to spend more time learning it. That means take it slow at first. Practice with the right hand alone and then the left hand alone. Try speeding up each hand alone before you slow it down again and try it hands together. Once you can play it, double check that you are using the correct fingerings or alternates that also work. Only then speed it up.

## Andrew N. White III and the 20-minute hour.



We lost one of DC's all-time greatest musicians in 2020, Andrew N. White III. Take the time to read the Wikipedia article on him. In addition to being a virtuoso saxophonist, he became famous in the 1960s for publishing his transcriptions of John Coltrane's solos. He also found time to perform on **bass** with **Stevie Wonder** and other touring acts.

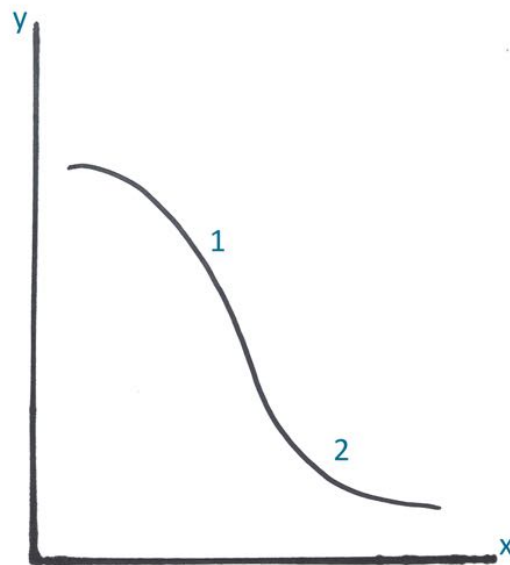
- The part of his genius which is relevant to you is his concept of the **20-minute hour**. The idea is simple: you take an hour's worth of carefully chosen vital music and you start practicing it super slow and every day, over a period of months, you speed it up until you're playing it extremely fast. At that point you are not really practicing that specific music, you are using the music to practice playing fast and with strength and

perfect rhythm. The way you should apply this to your practice routine is with the Circle of 5ths exercises and a small select group of pieces, the ones that you feel fit you.

### The Practice Graph

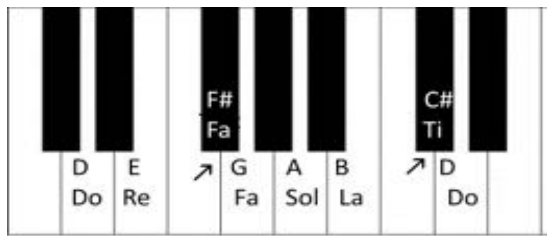
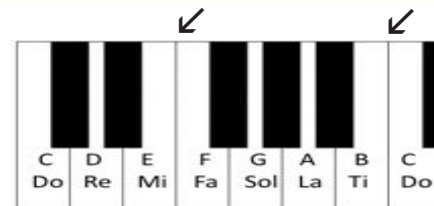
As on a lot of graphs, the X axis represents time, in this case time spent practicing. The Y axis represents how difficult it is for you to play a particular piece or exercise.

- The curve shows that as you practice the piece, it gets easier.
- Point 1 represents when you might start to give up, but don't be discouraged, because
- 2 represents the point when the piece gets so easy to play that you can switch it up, improvise on it and play it not only with perfection, but with your own expression.
- It also represents the point where you are ready to use the piece as a jumping off point to learn a more difficult piece.





Take another look at the top keyboard which shows the key of C or Do = C,. Notice that there are no black keys between e&f which are mi&fa and no black key between b&c which are ti&do. →



← In order to make the pattern happen starting on D, we need change F to F# and C to C# to maintain the same pattern of **W W H W W H**

**3.5**

## Andante

**Finger switch**

**Reinagle**

**2nd finger crosses over**

**Left hand lifts up & moves**

**That natural symbol means don't play C#, play C natural**

**\* Remember this effect, it is Do in the melody over La in the bass. You'll encounter it again in two different pieces by Mozart**

## First Improvisation

## 3.6



- *Jazz is a music based on freedom* -- Wynton Marsalis
- For Christmas they rented [a piano] with an option to buy. If I took to it, they would buy it. I'll never forget the day it arrived. I could hardly wait to touch it. I started to pick out the notes of some songs I knew, and I remember running into the kitchen to proudly exclaim to my mother, "Good news, mom. I won't be needing any lessons. I've already figured out how to play!" Kenny Werner (Effortless Mastery)
- *Your first improvisation should be you at the keyboard just using your imagination. This textbook has a number of structured improvisations, but start by just going for it.*

Music and sports have a lot in common. Musicians need to be dedicated like athletes. Improvisation mostly operates within a set of rules, just like sports use fields with in-bounds and out-of-bounds.

### Pebbles in a Pond

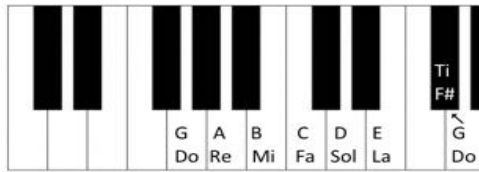


The Improv begins with the left hand playing C to c. If you are on a 61 key keyboard, your first note is the lowest note. If you are on a piano use the **sustain pedal**. Picture a still pool of water.

If you do not have a sustain pedal, your left 5th finger can hold the lower note as your thumb plays the upper note. This is called **finger pedal**.

The right hand enters after the left hand has set the mood. Just use the notes indicated; E D C & A. Begin the right hand part with a single long note. Imagine that note as being a pebble that you've dropped into the pool of water. For your middle section change the E to Eb.





Evening Song introduces the key of G, with F# playing the role of Ti, even though there are just two F#s in the whole piece and both in a single bar. Evening Song has one of the simplest accompaniments: the left hand is mostly what we now call a **power chord**, a root note plus the note a fifth above it, in this case G & D.

- Naming pairs of notes starts with the term **unison (one sound)**; when you have two of the same notes, like when you match pitch. G to A is a 2nd, G to B is a 3rd, G to C is a 4th, G to D is a 5th and so on. G to G is an eighth, or octave (8ve).

### 3.7 *Slow & Dreamy* **Evening Song**

Charles Tomlinson Griffes  
(1884-1920)

The musical score for "Evening Song" is written in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It consists of five systems of two staves each (treble and bass). The melody is in the treble staff, and the accompaniment is in the bass staff. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5. Dynamics include piano (*p*) and mezzo-forte (*mf*). The piece ends with a double bar line.

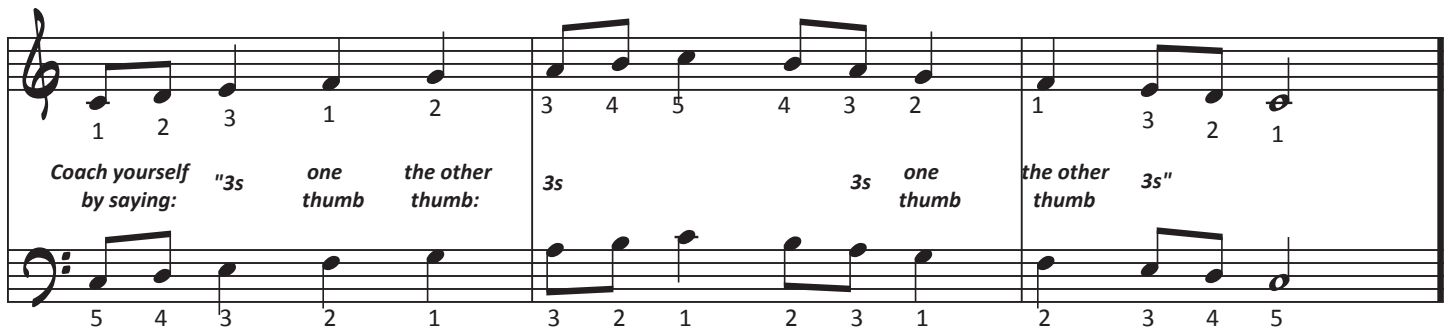
## 3.8

## Finger Exercises - C Major Scale

**Finger Ex. 3** - Passing the thumb under to play a complete scale.

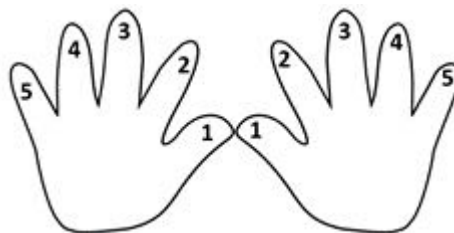


**Finger Ex. 4** - Playing the scale hands together, in parallel motion.

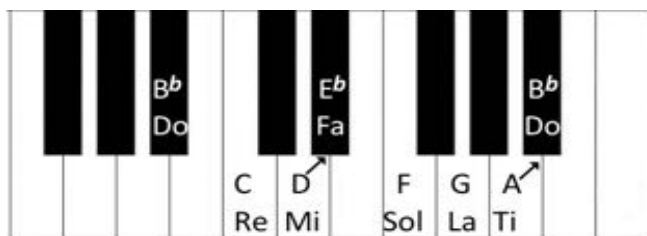


As you play the scale with the hands moving together or in parallel motion notice that:

- The 3rd fingers play together
- 4 in one hand always has 2 in the other
- In the middle the thumbs take turns.



- For more scales and fingerings, see the scale appendix in the back of the book.



The next two pieces are in a new key, **Bb**. **Do** is now a black key! You may have heard someone say, don't use your thumb on a black key. That's a common misconception! You actually can use your thumb on black keys, but not in every situation: What you can **not** do is pass your **thumb under** to play a black

key. For example if you start with your thumb on F, then play F G A Bb, it is awkward to try and play the Bb by passing your thumb under your third finger to land on Bb. What you would do instead is play the Bb with you 4th finger and then pass your thumb under to play C.

### 3.9

## *Pray, Fair One, Be Kind*

$\text{♩} = 80$

*Top hits of 1761*

Note the rising sequence here.....

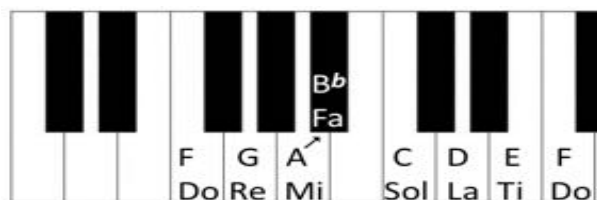
This and the next tune are from the *Beggar's Opera* of 1761 by John Gay. The show was made by writing new words to current pop songs, so these two made the top of their charts, back in the day. Write your own words!

**3.10***Over the Hills and Far Away**Top hits of 1761*

$\text{♩} = 120$

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). The tempo is marked as 120 beats per minute. The score consists of four systems, each with a treble and bass staff. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

System 1: Treble staff begins with a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, Bb4), followed by a quarter note (C5), a dotted quarter note (Bb4), and an eighth note (A4). Bass staff begins with a half note (G3), followed by a quarter note (F3), a quarter note (E3), and a quarter note (D3).  
System 2: Treble staff continues with a quarter note (G4), a quarter note (A4), a quarter note (Bb4), and a quarter note (C5). Bass staff continues with a quarter note (G3), a quarter note (F3), a quarter note (E3), and a quarter note (D3).  
System 3: Treble staff begins with a quarter note (G4), a quarter note (A4), a quarter note (Bb4), and a quarter note (C5). Bass staff continues with a quarter note (G3), a quarter note (F3), a quarter note (E3), and a quarter note (D3).  
System 4: Treble staff begins with a quarter note (G4), a quarter note (A4), a quarter note (Bb4), and a quarter note (C5). Bass staff continues with a quarter note (G3), a quarter note (F3), a quarter note (E3), and a quarter note (D3).



Here is your first piece from one of the undisputed greats of Classical music, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Mozart was a child prodigy who was toured Europe with his father, performing on the piano for royalty at the age of six.

This Minuet introduces you to a new key, F. Since F is Do, that makes G into Re, since it is a whole step above Do and makes A into Mi. Since Mi to Fa is a half-step, the black key Bb is Fa.

*Minuet in F* also has your hands moving around the keyboard. Practice this with your hands separately before you try and put it all together. Notice how you often change finger on a repeated note.

- Emphasize the first note of each bar, keep beats 2 & 3 light.

### 3.11

## *Minuet in F*

W.A. Mozart (1756-1791)

That effect again, melody on Do with the bass on La.

The rhythm of the bass line is based on dividing the beat into four parts. Since there are 4 beats in each bar, that makes 16 divisions and these notes are called **sixteenth notes**. To count every sixteenth in a bar you use these syllabus **1 ee & a 2 ee & a 3 ee & a 4 ee & a**. When you count out a rhythm, just use the syllables you need. See the counting syllables written over the bass line.

Try alternating counting out **1 ee & a 2 ee & a 3 ee & a 4 ee & a** with **1 2 3 & 4 ee**.

### 3.12

## My Shot

From HAMILTON

Excerpt; Bassline

Lin-Manuel Miranda

This is the first appearance in the book of an excerpt from a current song.

**All the pieces you've learned so far have been in the public domain.**

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- **John Coltrane**, saxophonist, composer and one of the most revered Jazz musicians of all time: "When I was with Miles, I didn't have anything to think about but myself, so I stayed at the piano and **chords! Chords! Chords!**"
  - What we should take from Coltrane's statement is that mastery of chords is fundamental to improvisation. That is why mastering the circle of 5ths exercises is so vital.
- Check the table of contents to access the link to the 10-second version of Exercise 6 and the demo of this improv.

- Here you use the same 5 notes that you have been warming up with; C D E F G in their roles as Do Re Mi Fa Sol. There are two textures. The first one has you playing the chords in the left hand and the 5 notes in the right hand. In the second texture the right hand combines melody and chord.
- Recall the practice graph? Practice as written until it becomes so easy you naturally change it up.

### 3.13 4-Bar, 5-Note, 2-Chord Improv

Keep the left hand soft and connected. Use sustain pedal if you have one.

**A Reflection on using just 5 notes and two chords:** *"In art as in everything else, one can build only upon a resisting foundation: whatever constantly gives way to pressure constantly renders movement impossible...My freedom thus consists in my moving about within the narrow frame...I shall go even farther: my freedom will be so much the greater and more meaningful the more narrowly I limit my field..."* Igor Stravinski, Poetics of Music.

- If you were open to play every note in your right hand, could you really make a meaningful choice?
- Is it freedom if you make a choice that you don't really understand?

## Recital Time!

To have a firm foundation to help you build on what you've covered, it is standard practice to have a recital performance. If possible, make it as much of a celebration as you can. If you have a friend who is a dancer, see if they will dance along with some of your pieces.

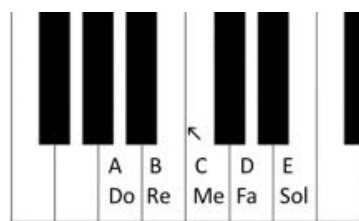
At this point you should be able to play:

- The four Reinagle pieces (*First Minuetto*, *Allegretto*, *Allegretto variation*, *Second Minuetto*, *Andante in D*)
- *Evening Song*
- The Two Beggars Opera tunes (*Pray Fair One*, *Be Kind and Over the Hills and Far Away*)
- *First Improv*
- *Minuet in F*
- The Bass line to *My Shot*
- *4-bar Improv.*
- *Little Blues Etude* (Chapter 4)
- Ideally, be able to play all these pieces from memory (not reading the sheet music) and be able to play them along with other keyboard players playing the same piece. Be able to play them so well that you focus on **how** you play the notes rather than on needing to remember what the notes are.
- All the exercises should be memorized and fluent. **Circle of 5ths exercises 6 and 7, the Major and minor triads are particularly important.** This link is an example of Ex 6 completed in 10 seconds: <https://youtu.be/UUdF04ycheA> Your goal is to be able to do it in at least 40 seconds.

## One more warm up variation:

- Remember that singing is still one of your most important tools. Try and sing as much as you can. Now that you are doing exercise 7, the minor triads, let's add this final warm up variation:

**The key of A minor.** We will lower the middle note by a **half step**. That means the note won't be our



cheerful familiar “**Mi**,” but the traditionally sadder sounding “**Me**” (pronounced “May” just as “Re” is pronounced “Ray”). The half step is now between Re and Me not Mi and Fa. This is the main difference between **A Major** and **A minor**. For some practice sessions make the same change and warm up in **C minor** and **Eb minor**.



- Introduction
- Little Blues Etude
- Everyday Peace
- Two Piano Grooves
- Waltz In The Park
- Sarzamin-e Man
- U Street Reverie
- Beautiful Moment
- Piano Voicings for Bb Blues
- Blues Exercise 1
- Two Short Tunes
- Improvisation: Play the Black Keys

The D.C. Voices chapters represents a musical message to you the student from a cross section of the DC piano and music community. You'll find pieces, exercises and text. It is all presented with love and the recognition that you, the students of the District of Columbia Public Schools, are our hopes and dreams.

*With Love,*

*Iva Ambush, Katrina Doyle Black, Amy Bormet, Jon Carroll, Allison Crockett, Reginald Cyntje, Daryl Davis, Bob Familiar, Pete Frassand, Allyn Johnson, Steve Jones, Dave Kane, Jessica Krash, Jim Levy, Dave Marsh, Terry Marshall, Cherie Mitchell-Agurs, John Ozment, Sam Prather, Wayne Wilentz, Davey Yarborough.*

## Introduction

This is the first of two chapters made up of pieces contributed by D.C. area artists. In chapter 4 you'll find the simpler pieces and in chapter 8 you'll find some that are more challenging.

Many of the contributors based their pieces on the **Blues** form, one of the most important concepts in American music. There are various genres called "The Blues" and it is the "B" in R&B. The **Blues form** is used throughout Jazz and rock & roll. While it has many variations, the most common type of blues is **12-bars** long and breaks into three 4-bar phrases. Even though all the blues pieces in this book are written for piano the Blues is — at its heart — a vocal form.

The vocal form of the Blues is a line, that line repeated, then that line rhymed. Each line takes up roughly the first half of each 4-bar phrase and there is often an element of **Call & Response** in the second half of each phrase. Here is the last chorus of a famous blues song by Billie Holiday, *Fine and Mellow*:

Love is just like a faucet It turns off and on (space for instrumental fill)

Love is just like a faucet It turns off and on (space for instrumental fill)

Some times when you think it's on, baby It has turned off and gone...

In this chapter you will see music with **chord symbols**. As you get to be a more experienced piano player, you will get better at interpreting those **chord symbols**

chord symbol ∟

chord symbol ∟



in a variety of ways. The exact way you choose to interpret a chord symbol is called a **chord voicing**. For now, you can get by just playing the **root** of the chord. For the first piece of music with **chord symbols**, the **roots** are written out for you.

The pieces in this section are not supported by videos. If you've completed all the pieces in chapter 3, you should be able to read these. But if you need help now is the time to look for a mentor or coach or teacher. In most schools there are some students, let alone teachers, who may be able to help you!

## Contributed by Allyn Johnson

About this piece:

This etude is a 12 bar blues in C which focuses on **call and response** between both hands (which builds hand independence) and **counterpoint** (lines moving in opposite directions).

### 4.1

### Little Blues Etude

Allyn Johnson

The musical score for 'Little Blues Etude' is presented in four systems. The first system (bars 1-4) features a call-and-response pattern between the right and left hands. The second system (bars 5-8) continues this pattern with more complex fingering. The third system (bars 9-12) includes a 'wrist lift' instruction and ends with a double bar line. The score uses standard musical notation with treble and bass clefs, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and various musical symbols like slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

Allyn Johnson is a pianist, composer and audio engineer. He is the Jazz Studies Director at the University of The District of Columbia. He also runs Divine Order Studios in Bowie Md.

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## Contributed by Amy K Bormet

Learn the round and play it with friends.  
Like "Row Row Row Your Boat"  
the next person begins at A  
when you get to B, 4 measures behind.

# Everyday Peace

*round in 4 parts*

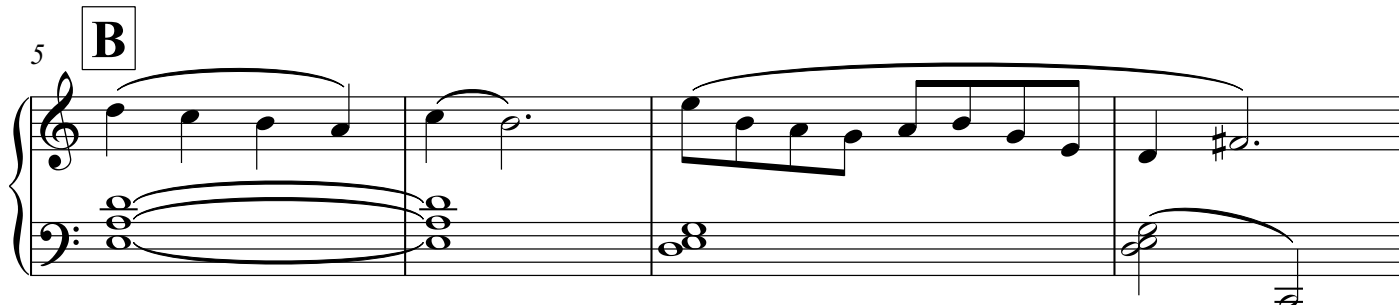
Amy K Bormet  
performing/teaching artist  
DCPS graduate 2006

4.2

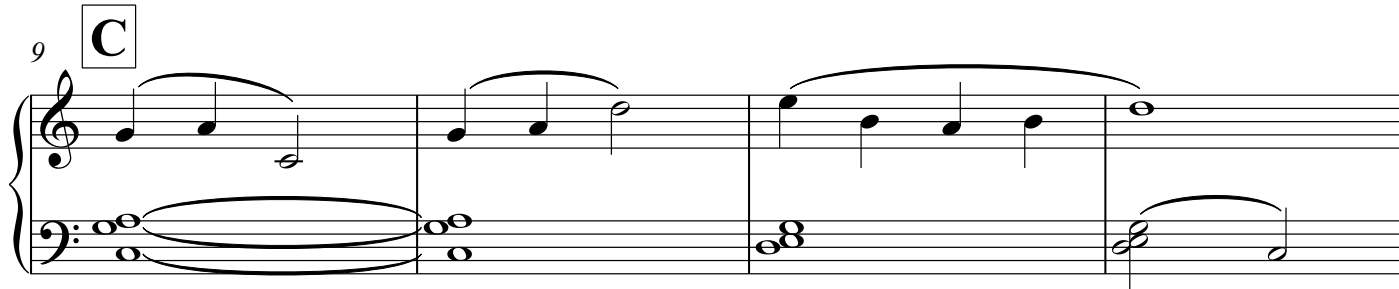
A



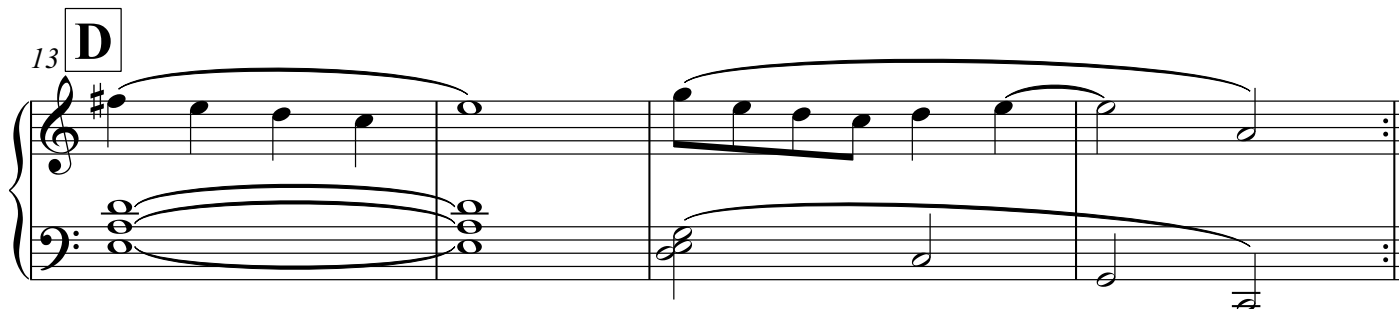
B



C



D



Play and sing this "lydian" scale while listening closely. What sounds different from the C Major scale?

17



Improvise your own melody using notes of the C lydian scale. Try it with: big intervals (ex. D to B) small intervals (ex. F# to G) lengths of notes long (ex. whole note) and short (ex. eighth note) or types of phrases--legato and staccato.

## Contributed by Terry Marshall

- These pieces are based on traditional American blues and gospel music. The structure of the pieces features three chord harmonization (I-IV-V). They are excellent for starting to learn how to play and improvise on popular music. I encourage you to memorize them and improvise on them daily.

### Two Piano Grooves

A Gospel Piano Groove Terry Marshall

End on the opening chord

4.3

- There are two different fingerings you can use for the middle two notes of the Crescent City Groove. Try both and decide which works for you.

slide

#### Crescent City Groove

Composer/Pianist Terry Marshall has performed in concert halls, night clubs and restaurants as far north as Toronto, Canada and as far south as Rio De Janeiro, Brazil. In July of 2014, Terry released a his debut CD which he called 'Arrival'. The CD reached the #25 spot on the CMJ chart of jazz recordings in just 2 weeks! It received rave reviews from critics all over the country.

## Contributed by Steve Jones

Note from the transcriber: I have a piano student who is brilliant - and I was trying to see if I could tie in her family's culture - they are from Afghanistan - and so I found a couple pieces of music sung in the language of Farsi.

- Persian, known to its native Iranian speakers as Farsi, is the official language of modern day Iran, parts of Afghanistan and the central Asian republic of Tajikistan. Persian is one of the most important members of the Indo-Iranian branch of the Indo-European family of languages.

- The words deal with homesickness - in a curious way. - It seems like a love song for a loved one - but it also expands to have meaning as a song of love for the land torn by war someone had to leave.

### 4.4

### Sarzamin-e Man

Farsi Pop Song  
Trans. Steve Jones



(CONT >>>)



mi - sha bey to go za ra he man ganj en So n - an ra boo dan

Az uh Ba yuh Sh rat ver - khod Ma an-da-ful ra sha ta - ga Har ga Pat - sa

Ha - ga - fol. Sar - ze nin - a Man khas - ta khas - ta az - ja fa - ye

Sar - za - min - e - man khas - ta khas - ta Fol do - ri Sar - za - min - e -

man khas - te Tash a Pol go mo - ri Sar - za mi - ni man

If this is the city of grief, it's grief is like your eyes  
 Yesterday's love neighbor, is now apart from us  
 I'm in this side of world, and she is in the land of lovers  
 In this stranger city, all I'm thinking is her black eyes

Girl of my land, my darling forever  
 Your Farhad\* and my Shirin\*, will come back from this journey one day

I'm homesick in here, a land-less compatriot  
 But feeling of your love is refreshing, darling  
 I'm benighted in the city of night, your city is the sun of land  
 My heart has become a patient stone, but it's always your friend

Girl of my land, my darling forever  
 Your Farhad\* and my Shirin\*, will come back from this journey one day

Silence has filled this city  
 Like a spring-less dessert  
 That's my place, that's my place, in the world  
 I can't be (stay) without you, my mate

If I'm still alive over there, that's because of your love  
 In this world, wellness is so disloyal (short lived)  
 Reaching out to you, is the end of our story

## Contributed by Cherie Mitchell-Agurs

This is a piano piece that can be played in many variations.  
The bass chords can be arpeggiated\* and the melody can be harmonized.  
**This piece can be performed in all 12 keys.**

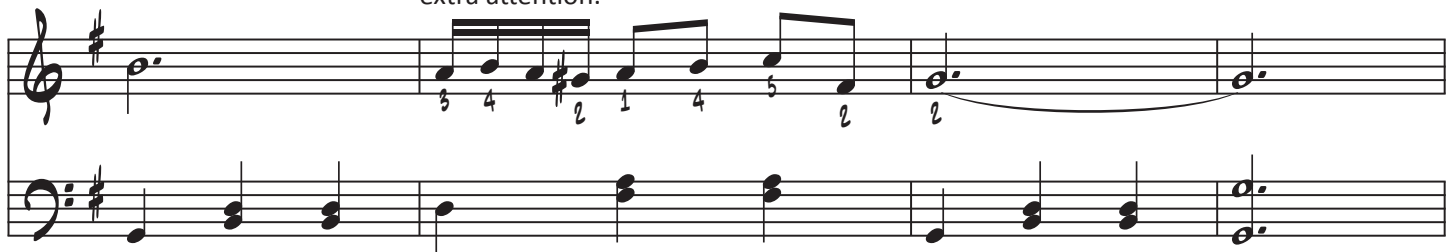
4.5

# Waltz In The Park

Cherie Mitchell-Agurs



This is the hard part! Make sure you give it extra attention.



Block chord changed into arpeggiated chord



Cherie Mitchell-Agurs is a product of DCPS. She's a graduate of Jessie LaSalle Elementary, Bertie Backus JHS, Duke Ellington School of the Arts, and Howard University. She has toured with DC's Godfather of GoGo, Chuck Brown, Pieces of a Dream, Nile Rodgers and Chic and many more National Artists. Currently, Cherie is the Founder and Musical Director for DC's All Female Band Be'laDona

## Contributed by Katrina Doyle Black

### 4.6

### *U St Reverie*

Katrina Doyle Black


$\text{♩} = 95$

6

Note: Extended harmonies give “color” to chords. They are notes that extend a chord beyond the seventh. Ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth chords are examples of extended chords. In this exercise, you should be able to name the root of each chord and its extended harmony. There are three extended chords and one seventh chord in this piece. Keep in mind that the chords are inverted, so the ninth, eleventh, or thirteenth note will not necessarily be the highest. Play the piece smoothly and listen for the “color” in the voicings.

Katrina Doyle Black is an attorney and musician living in Austin, TX. She studied Jazz Performance at the George Washington University in Washington, DC, and played piano in Professor James Levy’s Serfs of Swing. She is a singer, songwriter, pianist, multi-instrumentalist, and band leader.

## Contributed by Jim Levy

*Beautiful Moment* introduces a new symbol  the **Fermata**. You will see the word “**fermata**” in Spanish speaking countries on the bus stop signs, because it means “stop.” That what it means in music too. Sometimes it has an extra meaning. In classical music it can mean stop and then the soloist goes off on a cadenza, an improvised section. Sometimes it comes at the end of a piece and it means hold the last sound longer. In *Beautiful Moment* it can be both:

- 1) Even though the piece has a repeat sign, you can end it at any **fermata**. That means the piece can be 2-bars long or any multiple of 2-bars.
- 2) While you hold out the chord you can either improvise some extra notes, or speak some creative thought out loud or just hold the **chord**.

### 4.7

## *Beautiful Moment*



Like *U St Reverie*, *Beautiful Moment* is based on **extended chord voicings**.

James Levy, the author of this textbook, has been a professional piano player in the D.C. area for over 40 years. In the 1980s, He initiated the Jazz program at the George Washington University where he is Adjunct Professor Emeritus. Levy has taught music in DCPS for over 12 years and is a founding member of DCKeys.

# Contributed by Reginald Cyntje

The following exercises are meant as an aid to teach students about jazz rhythmic and melodic vocabulary.

Simple **piano voicings**; **Two note voicings** - The third and the seventh of the chord are considered important notes. Play through the exercise slowly. When you are comfortable, vary the rhythms.

## 4.8 12-Bar Blues in B $\flat$ : Two-Note Voicings

Reginald Cyntje

Chord progressions for the 12-Bar Blues in B $\flat$ :

- Measure 1: B $\flat$ 7
- Measure 2: Eb7
- Measure 3: B $\flat$ 7
- Measure 4: Fmin7 B $\flat$ 7
- Measure 5: Eb7
- Measure 6: B $\flat$ 7
- Measure 7: B $\flat$ 7
- Measure 8: G7
- Measure 9: Cmin7
- Measure 10: F7
- Measure 11: B $\flat$ 7
- Measure 12: B $\flat$ 7

Reginald Cyntje, the educator, is the Director of Jazz Studies at Duke Ellington School of the Arts, a professor of music at Montgomery College, Prince George's Community College, and a teaching artist with the Washington Performing Arts Society. Cyntje has also worked with Jazz at Lincoln Center's "Syncopated Leadership." He began teaching trombone studies at the age of 15 and has taught in classrooms and conducted workshops for over 20 years.

In 2014, Cyntje authored *Stepping Stones: 15 studies in improvisation*.

# Contributed by Reginald Cyntje

• Practice the following etudes slow then gradually increase the tempo. It will prepare you for playing over the Blues.  
Pay close attention to the musical vocabulary being used over the chords.

• **Approach notes** - notes that are close in pitch to **the target note**.

**Enclosures** - a target note is presided by two or more approach notes. The approach notes surround the **target pitch**.

## 4.9

### Blues Exercise 1

Simple melody -- Enclosures to the root of the chord

R. Cyntje

The musical score for Blues Exercise 1 is written in 4/4 time and consists of six systems of music. Each system contains a treble and bass staff. The key signature has one flat (Bb). The exercise focuses on simple melodies and enclosures to the root of the chord. The chords and fingerings are as follows:

- System 1: F7 (F4, A4, C5, G4), Bb7 (Bb4, D5, F5, Bb4), F7 (F4, A4, C5, G4), Cmin7 (C4, Eb4, F4, G4), F7 (F4, A4, C5, G4). Fingerings: 4, 3, 2, 1, 3, 2, 1, 3, 2, 1.
- System 2: Bb7 (Bb4, D5, F5, Bb4), F7 (F4, A4, C5, G4), D7(b9) (D4, F4, Ab4, Bb4, C5). Fingerings: 4, 3, 2, 1, 3, 2, 1.
- System 3: Gmin7 (G4, Bb4, Db5, Eb5), C7 (C4, Eb4, F4, G4), F7 (F4, A4, C5, G4), Gmin7 (G4, Bb4, Db5, Eb5), C7 (C4, Eb4, F4, G4). Fingerings: 4, 3, 1, 4, 3, 1, 4, 3, 1.
- System 4: F7 (F4, A4, C5, G4), Bb7 (Bb4, D5, F5, Bb4), F7 (F4, A4, C5, G4). Fingerings: 2, 4, 3, 1, 2, 4, 3, 1, 3, 2, 1.
- System 5: Bb7 (Bb4, D5, F5, Bb4), F7 (F4, A4, C5, G4), D7(b9) (D4, F4, Ab4, Bb4, C5). Fingerings: 4, 3, 2, 1, 4, 3, 2, 1, 2, 4, 3, 1.
- System 6: Gmin7 (G4, Bb4, Db5, Eb5), C7 (C4, Eb4, F4, G4), F7 (F4, A4, C5, G4), D7 (D4, F4, Ab4, Bb4, C5), Gmin7 (G4, Bb4, Db5, Eb5), C7 (C4, Eb4, F4, G4). Fingerings: 4, 3, 2, 1, 4, 3, 2, 1, 4, 3, 2, 1.

• Left hand could also be 8ve lower

## Contributed by Pete Frassrand

The two short songs on this page share the same key, C minor, but feel very different rhythmically. Free Spirit is played with a straight eighth note feel, which means each eighth note in the piece is equal and lasts exactly half a beat. Minor Idea on the other hand, has a swing feel, which means when playing a pair of eighth notes, the first note lasts for 2/3 of the beat and the second note only 1/3. The pulse is divided unequally, so that swung eighth notes have the feeling of an eighth note triplet where you play only the first and third hits. As Fats Waller said, "You get that right tickin' rhythm, man, and it's ON!"

### 4.10

*Even Eighth Notes (Rock style)*

### Free Spirit

Pete Frassrand

The musical score for 'Free Spirit' is written in C minor (three flats) and 4/4 time. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system has a treble staff and a bass staff. The treble staff begins with a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, Bb4, and C5, with a '5' (finger 5) under the C5. This is followed by a quarter rest, then eighth notes Bb4, A4, G4, and F4, with a '1' (finger 1) under the F4. The bass staff begins with a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes C3, Bb2, and A2, with a '5' (finger 5) under the C3. This is followed by a quarter rest, then eighth notes G2, F2, and E2, with a '1' (finger 1) under the E2. The second system continues the melody in the treble staff and accompaniment in the bass staff, ending with a double bar line.

*Swing* ♩ =  $\frac{1}{3}$  ♩

### Minor Idea

The musical score for 'Minor Idea' is written in C minor (three flats) and 4/4 time. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system has a treble staff and a bass staff. The treble staff begins with a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, Bb4, and C5, with a '1' (finger 1) under the G4, a '3' (finger 3) under the A4, and a '2' (finger 2) under the Bb4. This is followed by a quarter rest, then eighth notes Bb4, A4, G4, and F4, with a '5' (finger 5) under the Bb4, a '3' (finger 3) under the A4, a '1' (finger 1) under the G4, and a '3' (finger 3) under the F4. The bass staff begins with a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes C3, Bb2, and A2, with a '5' (finger 5) under the C3, a '3' (finger 3) under the Bb2, and a '1' (finger 1) under the A2. This is followed by a quarter rest, then eighth notes G2, F2, and E2, with a '3' (finger 3) under the G2, a '2' (finger 2) under the F2, and a '1' (finger 1) under the E2. The second system continues the melody in the treble staff and accompaniment in the bass staff, ending with a double bar line.

Pete Frassrand is a jazz pianist and composer born in Detroit Michigan.

He has been teaching music to young people and performing in the DC area since he moved here in 1995.

## Contributed by Jim Levy

### Improvisation - Play the Black Keys

The exercise covers two sets of 2 & 3 black keys



4.11

The rule of this improv is simple: **Play the Black keys!**

The music below is just a finger exercise to help you get around. At first just have the left hand play one of the power chords at the bottom of the page. Later on you might try having the left hand play some octaves. Your opening texture is long held notes in the left hand with more melodic action in the right hand. But the only real rule is: **Play the Black keys.**

Use all 5 fingers on the ascending patterns.

Hand contracts as the thumb moves from

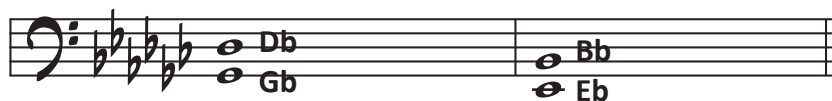
Db to Gb, then expands



as your 5th finger moves to Eb



Two power chords







- *Minuet in G*
- *Minuet in G minor*
- Triad Finger Exercise
- Axis of Awesome Chord Progression
- *Sarabande*
- *Canon in D*
- *Andante in G* (Two Versions)
- *America*
- *Prelude in C*
- *Harlem Rag*

These next two pieces for many years were considered to be composed by J.S. Bach because he included them in a book of keyboard music dedicated to his wife Anna Magdalena and presented to her in 1721. Only in the 1970s did scholarship show that these two pieces were actually composed by Christian Petzold (1677 – 1733).

- Bach thought these two pieces were ideal for beginning keyboard students to learn!

You'll see something new in this sheet music, two ornaments; the **trill** ~ and the **mordent** ~. These symbols mean that you should take the note underneath and turn it into several notes.



5.1

You can decide to interpret the ornaments however you want, but my advice is wait to play them until you can play the piece easily without them.

## Minuet in G

Christian Petzold

Hold the bottom note down as you play the note on beat 2, then hold that down as you play the note on beat 3.

These two minuets, especially the first one, have been among the most popular pieces for piano students for centuries. Go on YouTube and do a search. Add in pianist Lang Lang and you will get a video with a great lecture. The two pieces are designed to be played together. Play the G major minuet, with repeats, then the G minor minuet, with repeats, then the G major WITHOUT repeats. Notice how each minuet is made up for four 8-bar **phrases**.

## 5.2

*Minuet in G Minor*

Christian Petzold

lift your hand

lift your hand

## Triad Finger Exercise

**By this time you should be fluent with all the Circle of 5ths exercises from chapter 2.**

This exercise focuses on physical movements. Play and sing the routine, sing the name of the chord.

- When you are playing the pairs of notes ascending, keep your wrist still and make big finger movements.
- When you are playing two or three notes at a time, use your wrist and make a claw-like shape with the fingers that are marked for you to use.

C C D D E E F F G G 2 notes 2 notes 3 notes 3 notes is a chord. **C MAJOR TRIAD**

D D E E F F G G A A 2 notes 2 notes 3 notes 3 notes is a chord **D MINOR TRIAD**

E E F F G G A A B B 2 notes 2 notes 3 notes 3 notes is a chord. **E MINOR TRIAD**

F F G G A A B B C C 2 notes 2 notes 3 notes 3 notes is a chord. **F MAJOR TRIAD**

G G A A B B C C D D 2 notes 2 notes 3 notes 3 notes is a chord. **G MAJOR TRIAD**

A A B B C C D D E E 2 notes 2 notes 3 notes 3 notes is a chord. **A MINOR TRIAD**

B B C C D D E E F F 2 notes 2 notes 3 notes 3 notes is a chord. **B DIMINISHED TRIAD**

The

Axis

of

Awesome

Chord

Progression

By now you should be comfortable with the idea that notes have two names, the letter names which stay in place and the **solfege** names which move based on what note is considered "Do."

• The same thing goes for **chords**. The **chord** built on **Do** it is called the "one" chord and we typically write these numbers as **Roman Numerals**.

Functional Chord Name	I	ii	iii	IV	V	vi	vii
5th of the chord	Sol	La	Ti	Do	Re	Mi	Fa
3rd of the chord	Mi	Fa	Sol	La	Ti	Do	Re
Root of the chord	Do	Re	Mi	Fa	Sol	La	Ti

• The reason that some of the **Roman numerals** are written with upper case letters and some with lower case is all based on the **whole step/half step** pattern of the major scale:

**Do (W) Re (W) Mi (H) Fa (W) Sol (W) La (W) Ti (H) Do**

Remember the terms **unison**, **second**, **third**? We can now see that there are two sizes of thirds, based on whether they have one of the scale's half step pairs inside. We call the bigger thirds, made up of two whole steps **major 3rds** and the 3rds that are a whole step plus a half step are called **minor 3rds**.

• I IV V all have major 3rds & are called **major triads**.

ii iii vi all have minor 3rds & are called **minor triads**.

The vii chord has both of the scale's half step pairs inside it and it is called a **diminished triad**.

• The Axis of Awesome chord progression is **I V vi IV**

One common variation is starting in the middle, vi IV I V like Beyoncé's *If I Were Boy*.

5.4

The image displays two systems of musical notation for the Axis of Awesome chord progression (I V vi IV) in G major. The first system shows the progression in treble and bass clefs with chord symbols G, D, E-7, and Cadd9. The second system shows the progression in treble and bass clefs with chord symbols G, D, Emin, Cadd9, and Gadd9.

Very incomplete list of songs which use this progression:

Journey – Don't Stop Believin' James Blunt – You're Beautiful The Black Eyed Peas – Where Is the Love Alphaville – Forever Young Jason Mraz – I'm Yours Train – Hey, Soul Sister The Calling – Wherever You Will Go Elton John – Can You Feel the Love Tonight (from The Lion King) Lady Gaga – Paparazzi U2 – With Or Without You Maroon 5 – She Will Be Loved The Beatles – Let It Be Bob Marley – No Woman, No Cry Spice Girls – 2 Become 1 Jill Colucci – The Funny Things You Do (Theme from America's Funniest Home Videos) a-ha – Take On Me Green Day – When I Come Around Eagle Eye Cherry – Save Tonight Beyoncé – If I Were A Boy Kelly Clarkson – Behind These Hazel Eyes Joan Osborne – One of Us Avril Lavigne – Complicated The Offspring – Self Esteem Akon – Beautiful OneRepublic – Apologize Eminem featuring Rihanna – Love the Way You Lie MGMT – Kids Lady Gaga – Poker Face Aqua – Barbie Girl The Gregory Brothers – Double Rainbow Song Andrea Bocelli – Time to Say Goodbye Missy Higgins – Scar Alex Lloyd – Amazing Adele – Someone Like You Christina Perri – Jar of Hearts Crowded House – Fall At Your Feet Daryl Braithwaite – The Horses Alicia Keys – No One Amiel – Lovesong Thirsty Merc – 20 Good Reasons Bic Runga – Sway The Cranberries – Zombie Natalie Imbruglia – Torn Miley Cyrus – Wrecking Ball Imagine Dragons – Demons Idina Menzel – Let It Go Rihanna feat. Calvin Harris – We Found Love Avicii – Wake Me Up

The Sarabande is a slow Spanish dance. This piece is very dramatic and sounds good played loud or soft. Your fingers need to be strong and flexible to take on the different shapes required to play all the **chords**. **Fingerings** given are for the top note of each chord.

## 5.5

*Sarabande in D Minor*

[Excerpt]

G. F. Handel (1685-1759)

*Slow*

Fingers change on top note of chord

rare instance, 4 crosses over 5

Canon In D is one of the most popular pieces from the classical repertoire. Often played for weddings and other processional occasions, it is very flexible because it is based on a repeating 4-bar phrase, so, as a practical matter, it can be ended almost any time. This excerpt is just the very beginning. On my video I repeat the first 4 bars and **break** the chord, adding in to the right hand the note that the left hand plays.

The chord progression is used over and over in popular music.

Practice this until you can play it easily and see if you can improvise on it.



## 5.6

# Canon in D

Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706)

(Theme)

*Repeat ad-lib*

- This gorgeous piece is a great example of Mozart's classical style. Imagine that the melody is being sung by an opera singer. The left hand has what many people consider the most typical Mozart accompaniment, **broken chords** which are sometimes also called an "**Alberti Bass**." You can hold the lowest note down as you play the other three notes, the **finger pedal** effect we covered in *First Improv* in chapter 3. Make sure that the left hand is softer than the right hand.
- **Sempre legato** means always keep all the notes connected, no silences between.
- These musical directions are in Italian and you can see the connection to Latin if think of **Semper Fidelis** the motto of the U.S. Marines, "Always Faithful." **Cantabile** means in a singing style. You see that same word root in the English word "Cantor," the song leader in a religious service.
- Does it look like a lot of notes on this page? Check out the next page where the left hand part is rewritten with **block chords** instead of **broken chords**.

## 5.7

## Andante

W.A. Mozart  
(1756-1791)

Excerpt

*p* *cantabile* *sempre legato*

Here is that effect again,  
Do in the melody with  
La or vi in the bass.

*mp* *mf* *f* *mp*

*crescendo (get louder)*



Here is a version of the Mozart *Andante* where the **broken chords** have been changed to **block chords**. If the original version seems like it has an overwhelming number of notes, start with this page.

The musical score is written for piano in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It consists of four systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff joined by a brace. The score is a simplified version of the original Mozart *Andante*, where broken chords have been replaced by block chords.

**System 1:** The first measure has a treble staff with a half note G4 (finger 2) and a quarter note A4 (finger 4), and a bass staff with a block chord of G2, B2, and D3. The second measure has a treble staff with a half note A4 (finger 2) and a quarter note B4 (finger 4), and a bass staff with a block chord of A2, C3, and E3. The third measure has a treble staff with a half note B4 (finger 2) and a quarter note C5 (finger 4), and a bass staff with a block chord of B2, D3, and F#3. The fourth measure has a treble staff with a half note C5 (finger 2) and a quarter note D5 (finger 4), and a bass staff with a block chord of C3, E3, and G3.

**System 2:** The first measure has a treble staff with a half note D5 (finger 2) and a quarter note E5 (finger 4), and a bass staff with a block chord of D3, F#3, and A3. The second measure has a treble staff with a half note E5 (finger 2) and a quarter note F#5 (finger 4), and a bass staff with a block chord of E3, G3, and B3. The third measure has a treble staff with a half note F#5 (finger 2) and a quarter note G5 (finger 4), and a bass staff with a block chord of F#3, A3, and C4. The fourth measure has a treble staff with a half note G5 (finger 2) and a quarter note A5 (finger 4), and a bass staff with a block chord of G3, B3, and D4.

**System 3:** The first measure has a treble staff with a half note A5 (finger 2) and a quarter note B5 (finger 4), and a bass staff with a block chord of A3, C4, and E4. The second measure has a treble staff with a half note B5 (finger 2) and a quarter note C6 (finger 4), and a bass staff with a block chord of B3, D4, and F#4. The third measure has a treble staff with a half note C6 (finger 2) and a quarter note D6 (finger 4), and a bass staff with a block chord of C4, E4, and G4. The fourth measure has a treble staff with a half note D6 (finger 2) and a quarter note E6 (finger 4), and a bass staff with a block chord of D4, F#4, and A4.

**System 4:** The first measure has a treble staff with a half note E6 (finger 2) and a quarter note F#6 (finger 4), and a bass staff with a block chord of E4, G4, and B4. The second measure has a treble staff with a half note F#6 (finger 2) and a quarter note G6 (finger 4), and a bass staff with a block chord of F#4, A4, and C5. The third measure has a treble staff with a half note G6 (finger 2) and a quarter note A6 (finger 4), and a bass staff with a block chord of G4, B4, and D5. The fourth measure has a treble staff with a half note A6 (finger 2) and a quarter note B6 (finger 4), and a bass staff with a block chord of A4, C5, and E5.

The score includes dynamic markings: *p* (piano) at the beginning, *mp* (mezzo-piano) at the start of the third system, *mf* (mezzo-forte) in the second measure of the third system, *f* (forte) in the second measure of the fourth system, and *mp* (mezzo-piano) in the fourth measure of the third system. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above the notes. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

*America* is one of our culture's main patriotic songs. This arrangement can also be performed by a choir in 4-part harmony. The treble clef notes are performed by the sopranos and altos, the bass clef notes by the tenors and basses.

- Once a pianist can play songs like this, the possibility opens up to provide accompaniment to a wide range of social occasions. If you are interested in taking **AP Music Theory**, you want to get to the point where you can **sight-read** music like this -- that is, be given the sheet music to a piece on this level of difficulty and immediately be able to play it.

## 5.8 *America - O Beautiful For Spacious Skies*

Bates/Ward 1893

Sop  
Alto

Tenor  
Bass

O beau - ti - ful for spa - cious skies. For am - ber waves of grain - For

pur - ple mount - ain maj - es - ties A - bove the fruit - ed plain! A

mer - i - ca A - mer - i - ca! God shed his grace on thee And

crown thy good with broth - er - hood From sea to shin - ing sea!

Play these marked notes  
with your right thumb

This entire piece is based on playing broken chords. These are sometimes referred to as **arpeggios**, or “harp-like.” The bottom two notes are played by the left hand and held down. The top three are covered by the right hand. The right hand notes can be interpreted in different ways. Sometime the right hand notes are played **staccato**, sometimes **legato**, sometimes the right thumb note is held down.

## Prelude in C

5.9

From The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book 1

J. S. Bach (1685 - 1750)

The first system of the musical score for 'Prelude in C' is shown. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is C major (no sharps or flats). The time signature is 4/4. The right hand (treble staff) plays a series of eighth-note arpeggios, with fingerings 1, 3, 5, 4, 2, 1 indicated. The left hand (bass staff) plays a series of half-note chords, with fingerings 1, 2 indicated.

The second system of the musical score for 'Prelude in C' is shown. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is C major. The right hand (treble staff) plays a series of eighth-note arpeggios, with fingerings 1, 3, 5, 4, 2, 1 indicated. The left hand (bass staff) plays a series of half-note chords, with fingerings 1, 2 indicated. The text "Continue breaking chords as before." is written above the first measure of the right hand.

The third system of the musical score for 'Prelude in C' is shown. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is C major. The right hand (treble staff) plays a series of eighth-note arpeggios, with fingerings 1, 3, 5, 4, 2, 1 indicated. The left hand (bass staff) plays a series of half-note chords, with fingerings 1, 2 indicated.

The fourth system of the musical score for 'Prelude in C' is shown. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is C major. The right hand (treble staff) plays a series of eighth-note arpeggios, with fingerings 1, 3, 5, 4, 2, 1 indicated. The left hand (bass staff) plays a series of half-note chords, with fingerings 1, 2 indicated.

The fifth system of the musical score for 'Prelude in C' is shown. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is C major. The right hand (treble staff) plays a series of eighth-note arpeggios, with fingerings 1, 3, 5, 4, 2, 1 indicated. The left hand (bass staff) plays a series of half-note chords, with fingerings 1, 2 indicated.

The sixth system of the musical score for 'Prelude in C' is shown. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is C major. The right hand (treble staff) plays a series of eighth-note arpeggios, with fingerings 1, 3, 5, 4, 2, 1 indicated. The left hand (bass staff) plays a series of half-note chords, with fingerings 1, 2 indicated.

## 5.10

*Harlem Rag*

[Excerpt]

Two Step

Tom Turpin (1871 - 1922)

Allegretto

This piece has a new challenge. Moving your left hand around the keyboard.

Try the exercise below before you learn the phrase from *Harlem Rag*

Hints:

- Stay relaxed, if you tense up you work 3x as hard.
- Lead with your wrist, pretend that your hand has a string attached to it, like a marionette.
- Move in a graceful low arc.
- Watch almost any piano video and watch the left hand.
- Still play with active fingers.

**Circle of 5ths Ex. 8** - Moving your left hand around the keyboard

- Begin by just playing the 1st bass note around the circle of 5ths, the left 5th finger (pinky) plays C F Bb Eb Ab Db F# B E A D G, staying relaxed.
- Then add the next chord, get comfortable with that (all left hand only).
- Add the right hand part, then add the last two left hand chords.



- Duke Ellington
- Piano Introductions
- Jazz Chord Circle of 5ths Exercises
- *C Jam Blues*
- *Take the 'A' Train*
- *Perdido*
- *In a Sentimental Mood*

## Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington (1899 - 1974)

America’s greatest composer and Washington DC’s very own. In D.C. we have a Duke Ellington Bridge, a Duke Ellington Park, a Duke Ellington Plaza, Duke Ellington Building (2121 Ward place, where the house used to be where he was born), Duke Ellington murals and, most importantly, the Duke Ellington High School for the Performing Arts.

Ellington is one of the most respected, most revered musicians in all of Jazz. As Miles Davis said, “I think all the musicians in jazz should get together on one certain day and get down on their knees to thank Duke.”



His importance was not just being a great composer and pianist, but being a genius at getting musicians to work together. Trumpet player Rex Stewart recounts Ellington’s directions from a rehearsal in the 1930s (“Rabbit” was a nickname for alto saxophonist Johnny Hodges and “the leader” is Stewart’s respectful term for Ellington);

“Hey Rabbit, give me a long slow glissando against that progression.” Next, Ellington urged Cootie Williams to try entering on the second bar of the passage with one of his patented trumpet growls. Then the leader turned to trombonist Lawrence Brown. “You are cast in the role of the sun beating down on the scene.”

In this way, using both sheet music and imaginative verbal instructions, Duke pioneered combining the roles of composer and what we now call producer. This was an important part of his genius. It enabled him to get his musicians to do more than just play the notes he wrote down. This led to his most famous review, from his writing partner Billy Strayhorn: “Duke plays the piano, but his real instrument is the orchestra.” Strayhorn, who wrote many of the Ellington band’s greatest tunes, including their theme song *Take the ‘A’ Train*, was a shy creative genius, whose music might have never seen the light of day but for Duke hiring him and producing his music.

The music that follows includes a section of Duke’s piano introductions, short musical fragments that give you a taste of his approach to playing the piano, and four of the band’s most well known songs; *C Jam Blues* (the simplest blues song ever), *Take the ‘A’ Train* (Strayhorn), *In a Sentimental Mood*, and *Perdido* (Juan Tizol).



Above: Portrait of Duke Ellington, Junior Raglin, Tricky Sam Nanton(?), Juan Tizol, Barney Bigard, Ben Webster, Otto Toby Hardwick(e), Harry Carney, William Stewart, and Sonny Greer, Howard Theater(?), Washington, D.C., between 1938 and 1948]

Below: Duke Ellington Big Band, Munich 1963





## Six Duke Ellington Piano Introductions

Transcriptions by David Berger [www.SuchSweetThunderMusic.com](http://www.SuchSweetThunderMusic.com)

These introductions can be used

- As reading exercises and examples of Duke's piano style.
- As introductions to the song, as they were intended.
- As imaginative jumping off points to create your own pieces.

**6.1**

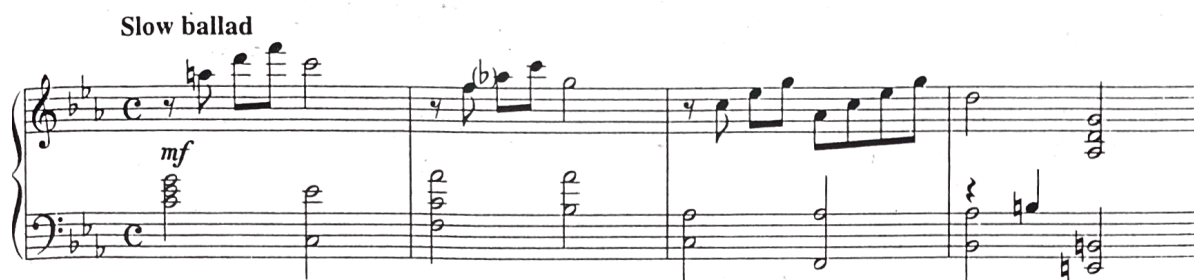
### Conga Brava



### Warm Valley



### Moon Mist





## Lady of the Lavender Mist

Ballad

8va

The musical score for 'Lady of the Lavender Mist' is in G-flat major (three flats) and common time (C). It is marked 'Ballad' and '8va'. The melody is written in the treble clef, starting on a whole note G-flat, followed by a series of eighth and quarter notes. The accompaniment in the bass clef consists of chords and single notes, with some triplets indicated by a '3' over the notes.

## Take the 'A' Train

Medium swing

mf

The musical score for 'Take the A Train' is in G-flat major (three flats) and common time (C). It is marked 'Medium swing' and 'mf'. The melody in the treble clef features a series of eighth and quarter notes, often beamed together. The bass clef accompaniment consists of chords and single notes, with some triplets indicated by a '3' over the notes.

## Things Ain't What They Used to Be

Shuffle

f

The musical score for 'Things Ain't What They Used to Be' is in G-flat major (three flats) and common time (C). It is marked 'Shuffle' and 'f'. The melody in the treble clef consists of eighth notes, often beamed together. The bass clef accompaniment consists of eighth notes, often beamed together, with some triplets indicated by a '3' over the notes.

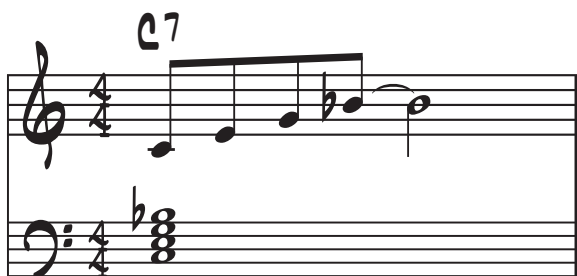
## 6.2

You should be very comfortable playing the **Major and minor triads** around the **circle of 5ths** in order to move on to these next exercises. If not, take a few weeks to go back and really focus on them.

- You need to be able to play the Major and minor triads with ease and fluency, so that knowing those triads can be a strong foundation for learning these new chords.

Your first new chord is **C7**. This chord symbol is the prototype for the entire system in that all the other symbols relate to the basic settings of this chord: **C7 means C [Major triad with a minor] 7**

### Circle of 5th Ex. 9 - The Dominant 7th chords



The name for this chord is a **dominant seventh**. The term "**dominant**" has a number of different meanings in music theory. Classically it means the chord built on the 5th degree of the major scale (Sol), what we call the V (five) chord. Because of the whole step/half step pattern of the major scale, the chord built on Sol is made up of a major triad and a minor seventh. You can

find the minor 7th note by going down a whole step from the octave. In Jazz usage, **Dominant** now also means any chord with this Major triad/minor 7th structure. So there are two meanings to the term **Dominant, the V chord and any other chord with a Major triad/minor 7th.**

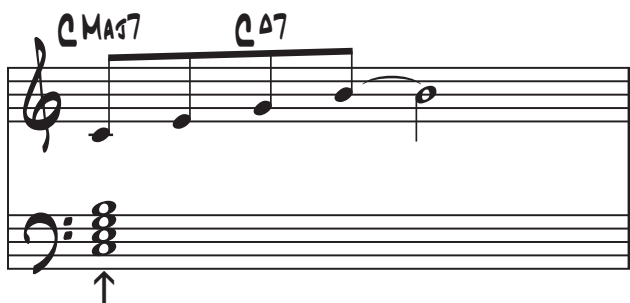
- The next group of chords all have, at a minimum, two different symbols which are used interchangeably.

### Circle of 5th Ex. 10 - The minor 7th chords

The **minor 7 chord** is made up of a minor triad with a minor 7th chord. It has the same root, 5th and 7th as the dominant 7 chord, but it has a minor third.



### Circle of 5th Ex. 11 - The Major 7th chords



The **Major 7th** chord has a **Major triad** and a **Major 7th**. You can find the Major 7th note by going down a 1/2 step from the octave.

### Circle of 5th Ex. 12 - The half-diminished chords



↑ This Chord has two names, **half-diminished and minor seven flat 5**. It is just like a minor 7 chord, but the 5th is a half step lower.

Here is another simple chord symbol, C6, a major triad with a 6th added.

Circle of 5th Ex. 13 the Major 6th chords



In classical music theory the term "6th" chord refers to a triad which has had its notes inverted. CEG, what we call root position and a five-three chord, becomes EGC, or a six-three (six for short) chord:



- The "/" indicates the bass note. Read C/E as C Major triad with an E in the bass. The bass note may be a chord tone as in C/E or an added note as in C/D, C major triad with a D in the bass.



Circle of 5th Ex. 14 - minor triad "rising 5th" progression



This first minor chord progression was covered in the beginning DCKeys curriculum, as the Hamilton/007 Groove.

Circle of 5th Ex. 15 - minor descending progression



This descending progression is new here. You'll encounter it in the Duke Ellington Song *In a Sentimental Mood*.

- Two less common chords:

Circle of 5th Ex. 16 Dominant 7 sus4 chords



Circle of 5th Ex. 17 - The diminished 7th chords



## 6.3

In the style of Duke Ellington's  
*C Jam Blues*

Melody hint:

Entire melody is Sol then the Do above it

The musical score is written in 4/4 time. The piano accompaniment is in the bass clef, and the melody is in the treble clef. The key signature has one flat (Bb). The score consists of three systems of four measures each. The first system has a C7 chord above the first measure, an F7 chord above the second measure, and a C7 chord above the third measure. The second system has an F7 chord above the first measure and a C7 chord above the third measure. The third system has a C7 chord above the third measure. The melody line is mostly rests, with some eighth and quarter notes in the final measures of each system. The piano accompaniment features various chords and melodic lines, including a descending line in the second measure of the first system and a descending line in the second measure of the second system.

- Blues scale exercises-- play each of these (3x) instead of the melody

The "A" Blues Scale exercise is written in treble clef, 4/4 time. It consists of two measures of the scale, each repeated three times (3x). The scale is: A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5. Fingering is indicated: 1, 4, 1, 3, 5, 1, 4, 1, 3, 5, 1, 4, 1, 3, 5, 1.

The "C" Blues Scale exercise is written in treble clef, 4/4 time. It consists of two measures of the scale, each repeated three times (3x). The scale is: C4, D4, Eb4, E4, F4, G4, A4, C5. Fingering is indicated: 1, 4, 1, 3, 5, 1, 4, 1, 3, 5, 1, 4, 1, 3, 5, 1.

## 6.4

In the style of Billy Strayhorn's

*Take the 'A' Train*

Use the intro from the first part of this chapter

Melody hint: Sol (up) Mi Sol Do Mi Si

The musical score is written in C major and 4/4 time. It consists of several staves with chords and melodic lines. The chords are: C6, D7, D-7, G7, C6, D-7, G7, G-7, C7, FMA7, D7, D-7, G7, D7, D7(#11), D-7, G7, C6, G7, C6, Standard ending, G7, Ab7, A7, Bb7, Eb6 (Ascending Scale, Shout Riff), F7, IMPROVISE SOLO, F-7, Bb7, Eb6, F-7, Bb7, Eb7, AbMA7, F7, F-7, Bb7, E7, Eb6, F7(#11), F-7, Bb7, Eb6.

Extended Big Band Ending

Standard ending

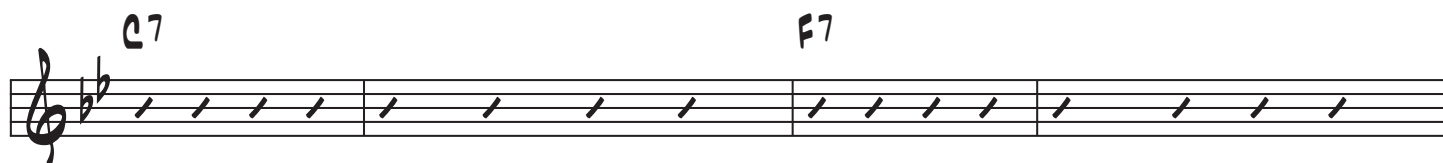
IMPROVISE SOLO

In the style of Juan Tizol's

6.5

Swing or  
Cha-cha*Perdido*

Melody hint: Re Fa Sol



/// Alternate riff for 'A' sections



*Perdido* was another big hit for the Duke Ellington orchestra not written by Duke.

For some guidance on improvising on the song, check out the Jazz lesson by Wayne Wilentz in the **DC Voices chapter 8**. *Perdido* has been recorded countless times by different Jazz artists. One of my favorite versions is on the album *Jazz at Massey Hall*, Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie.

## Soli line by Clark Terry/Jimmy Hamilton

This musical score is for a solo line in a jazz setting, written for a single melodic instrument in treble clef. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats), and the time signature is common time (C). The score consists of nine staves of music. Above the staves, chord symbols are written: C-7, F7, Bb6, and G7. The notation includes various rhythmic values such as eighth, quarter, and half notes, as well as rests. There are also some specific markings like a '5' in a box above a note on the second staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the ninth staff.

## 6.6

In the style of Duke Ellington's

*In a Sentimental Mood*Melody hint: begins with Db  
pentatonic scale

Musical notation for the beginning of the piece. The key signature is three flats (Bb, Eb, Ab) and the time signature is 4/4. The melody starts with a triplet of eighth notes (Bb, Ab, Gb) followed by a quarter note (Fb), then a quarter rest, and a quarter note (Eb). The bass line starts with a half note (Bb), a half note (Ab), a quarter note (Gb), and a quarter note (Fb). The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Jazz Ballad

Melody played with Freedom

First line of chord progression in Bb major. Chords: Bb- (Bb, Ab, Gb), Bb-(MA7) (Bb, Ab, Gb, Fb), Bb-7 (Bb, Ab, Gb), Bb-6 (Bb, Ab, Gb, Fb), Eb- (Eb, Db, Cb), Eb-(MA7) (Eb, Db, Cb, Bb), Eb-7 (Eb, Db, Cb), Cø (C, Bb, Ab), F7 (F, Eb, Db, Cb).

Second line of chord progression in Bb major. Chords: Bb- (Bb, Ab, Gb), Bb7 (Bb, Ab, Gb, Fb), Eb-7 (Eb, Db, Cb), Ab7 (Ab, Gb, Fb, Eb), Db6 (Db, Cb, Bb, Ab), Eb6 (Eb, Db, Cb, Bb), Eb7 (Eb, Db, Cb), E7 (E, D, C, B).

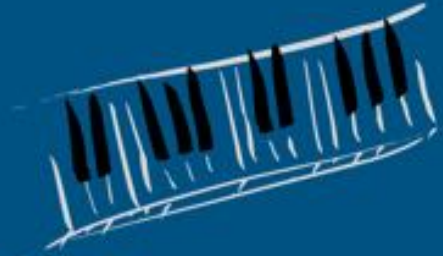
Third line of chord progression in Bb major. Chords: A MA7 (A, G, F, E), F#-7 (F#, E, D, C), B-7 (B, A, G, F), E7 (E, D, C, B), A6 (A, G, F, E), F#7 (F#, E, D, C), B7 (B, A, G, F), E7 (E, D, C, B).

Fourth line of chord progression in Bb major. Chords: A MA7 (A, G, F, E), F#-7 (F#, E, D, C), B-7 (B, A, G, F), E7 (E, D, C, B), Eb-7 (Eb, Db, Cb), Ab7 (Ab, Gb, Fb, Eb).

Fifth line of chord progression in Bb major. Chords: Bb- (Bb, Ab, Gb), Bb-(MA7) (Bb, Ab, Gb, Fb), Bb-7 (Bb, Ab, Gb), Bb-6 (Bb, Ab, Gb, Fb), Eb- (Eb, Db, Cb), Eb-(MA7) (Eb, Db, Cb, Bb).

Sixth line of chord progression in Bb major. Chords: Eb-7 (Eb, Db, Cb), Cø (C, Bb, Ab), F7 (F, Eb, Db, Cb), Bb- (Bb, Ab, Gb), Bb7 (Bb, Ab, Gb, Fb), Eb-7 (Eb, Db, Cb), Ab7 (Ab, Gb, Fb, Eb), Db6 (Db, Cb, Bb, Ab).





7

## ON YOUR OWN

*"If music be the food of love, play on."*

- Learning It On Your Own
- Prelude in A
- Prelude in E minor
- To a Wild Rose
- Traumerie (Daydream)
- Für Elise
- Siyahamba
- Fugue in e minor

## Learning It On Your Own

The sheet music so far has been presented with explanations, fingerings and video links. In this next section we move to a more independent model. The group of pieces in this section are all presented with sheet music directly downloaded from The International Music Score Library Project (IMSLP) at <https://imslp.org>. These are among the most popular pieces in the classical repertoire and you can find multiple performances of them on YouTube. It is good to be reminded now that you need to have patience and self-discipline. It also helps to have a strategy. Here are some tips:

### Tips

1. Check out multiple versions on YouTube and pick the one you like the best. In order to have a preference you will have to engage in close listening. Watch the pianist's hands. Keep watching until you can anticipate what happens.
2. Listen to the piece while looking at the sheet music. Many of these pieces have videos on YouTube with the sheet music as well.
3. Sit down at the piano with sheet music. Look through it and do things like:
  - Play one hand at a time.
  - Take a close look at chords.
  - Identify the parts of the piece which are particularly challenging.

One of my favorite books on music is about practicing, *Effortless Mastery*, by Kenny Werner. The title contains the basic idea, in order to master something, you need to work on it until it become effortless. The practice graph in chapter 3 is based on that same idea. When it comes to reading and playing chords, you want to get to the place where you glance at the chord and can play it effortlessly.

Let's take the opening bar of Chopin's *Prelude in E minor*.



Your first step is being able to spell out the notes in the left hand chord. At first this may be a slow process, but faster the more you do it. You can write in the note names, but my advice is: don't.

- You need to learn to see it and think of it as a **single chord** rather than a **group of notes**. The chord here uses ledger lines, extra staff lines.

That top note, with the line going through it and with the "middle C" line underneath it, is **E**, the same note which is the bottom line of the treble clef. The chord from the bottom up is G, B, E. You want to always notice any overlap between chords and melody. Here the melody note over the chord is "B."

- Practice the chord by playing, saying out loud the names of the notes and then take your hand away from the piano and do it again. Eventually playing the chord should be just as easy as using your hand to hit a drum.

4. Divide the piece into 4-bar overlapping sections. Overlapping means that you end on the beginning of the next section so that there no gaps in playing.

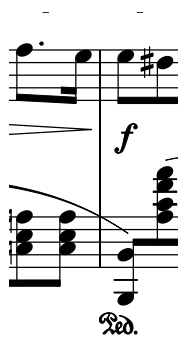
- Begin each section by playing each hand separately and repeat it around 20 times, beginning it slowly and then speeding it up a little bit each time you repeat it. If you make a mistake, slow it down again.
- When you put your hands together take it really slowly and then repeat it around 20 times again beginning it slowly and then speeding it up.

At your next practice section, review what you've played once, but then move on to the new sections. One thing to watch out for is being able to play the beginning of a piece well, but then being shaky on the middle and the end. It is important to practice the difficult parts of the piece until they are effortless.

In the Chopin Prelude these are the most difficult bars:



- About written music: the hard parts usually look hard and are visually obvious as you scan the piece. (In this section the instruction **stretto** means faster/more intense which adds to the difficulty of playing it.) Analyzing this section you can see that a particular challenge is playing the jumpy left hand part:



Practice that by first going over each chord (CEA and ACF#A) until you can play it without thinking. Then practice the hand motion. The act of playing the chord should also be the act of moving to the next position. That is, don't play the CEA and **then** move to the low octave B, make playing the chord the **same action** as moving. Same thing with the low octave: don't play it and then move to the ACF#A chord, make playing the octave into a jump which takes your hand up to the position right above the next chord.

# Prélude

Op. 28, No. 7

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

7.1

*Andantino*

*p dolce*

The musical score is written for piano in 3/4 time, key of D major. It consists of four systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The tempo is marked 'Andantino' and the dynamics 'p dolce'. The score includes fingerings (1-5) and articulation marks (accents and asterisks). The first system (measures 1-4) features a melody in the treble staff with a descending line and a bass line with sustained chords. The second system (measures 5-8) continues the melody with a rising line and a bass line with sustained chords. The third system (measures 9-12) features a melody in the treble staff with a descending line and a bass line with sustained chords. The fourth system (measures 13-16) concludes the piece with a final chord in the treble staff and a bass line with sustained chords.

## 7.2

## Prelude in E minor

Frédéric Chopin  
Op. 28, No. 4

**4** *Largo*  
*p* *espressivo*

**4**

**8**

**12**

**16** *stretto*  
*f* *dim.* *p*

**20** *smorz.* *pp*

## 7.3

## To a Wild Rose

Op. 51 Nr.1

With simple tenderness ( $\text{♩} = 88$ )

Edward MacDowell (1861-1908)

*p* *con Ped.*

10 *mp* *p* *pp* *cresc.*

21 *cresc.* *f* *dim.* *rit.* *a tempo* *p*

31 *p* *mp*

42 *pp* *ppp*

# Träumerei

Rêverie — Reveries

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

7.4

$\bullet = 100(72)$

*p*

*ritard.*

*ritard.* *a tempo*

*(p)*

*(pp)* ri - tar - dan - p - do

The musical score for 'Träumerei' is presented in a standard piano format. It begins with a tempo marking of 100 beats per minute (72 measures per minute). The piece is in F major and 3/4 time. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The score is divided into five systems, each containing two staves (treble and bass clef). The piece starts with a piano (p) dynamic and includes performance instructions such as 'ritard.' and 'a tempo'. The piece concludes with a piano (pp) dynamic and the words 'ri - tar - dan - p - do'.

## CLAVIERSTÜCK

in A moll

von

VOLUME XXXII. N<sup>o</sup> 298.

7.5

Beethoven's Werke.

L. VAN BEETHOVEN.

Für Elise am 27. April (1810)  
zur Erinnerung von L. v. Beethoven.

*Poco moto.*  
*pp*

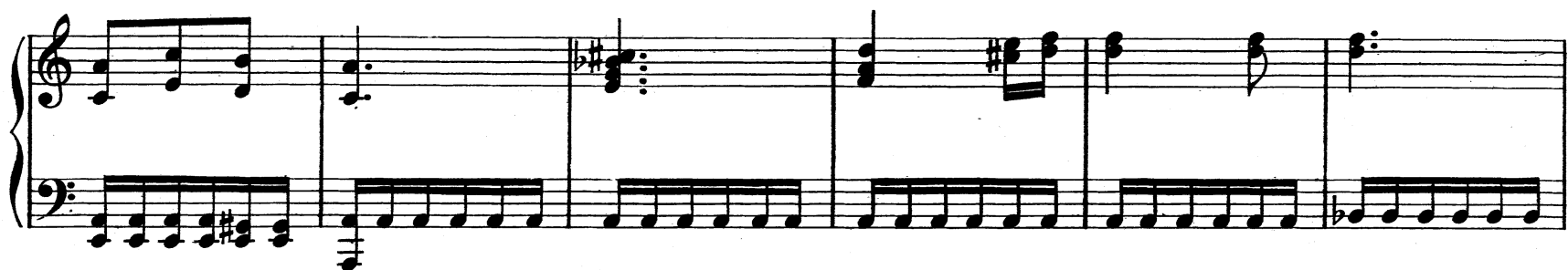
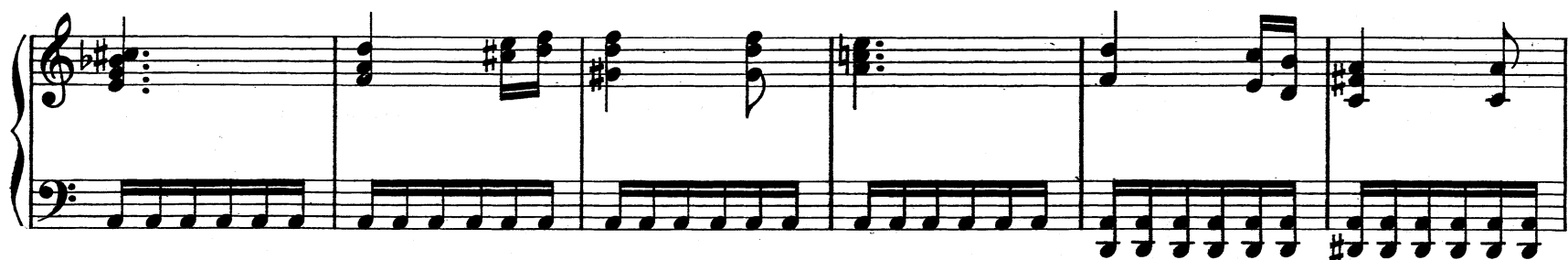
Red. \* Red. \* Red. \* Red. \*

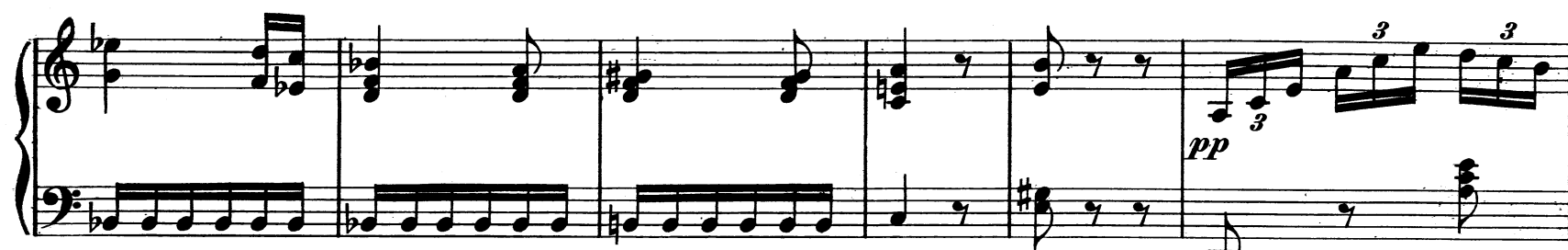
1. 2. Red. \* Red. \* Red. \*

\* Red. \* Red. \* Red. \*

1. 2. Red. \*







B. 298.

7.6

# Siyahamba

(We Are Marching)

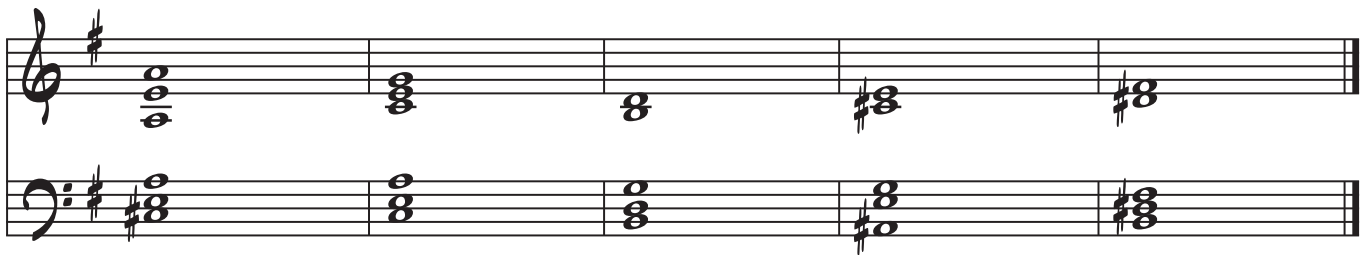
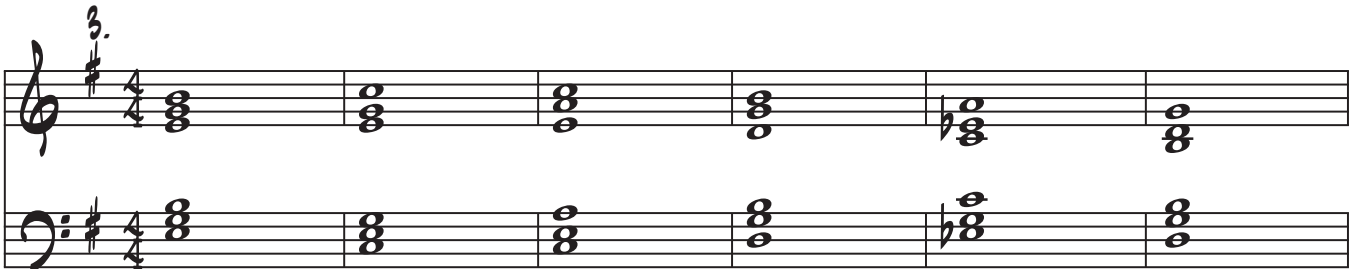
South African Hymn arr, J. Levy

The musical score for "Siyahamba (We Are Marching)" is presented in five systems, each with a treble and bass staff joined by a brace. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The score begins with a repeat sign. The melody in the treble staff features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, and includes a prominent sixteenth-note triplet in the first system. The bass staff provides a steady accompaniment with eighth and sixteenth notes. The piece concludes with a first ending (marked '1.') and a second ending (marked '2.') leading to a final cadence. The word "FINE" is written below the final measure.

## Three E Minor Prelude Formulas

Here are three chord progressions that you can use to come up with your own Prelude, or Intro Piece, to the Fugue in E minor which follows.

- Try different ways of breaking up each chord (See the Bach Prelude in C, Left Hand part of Mozart Andante)
- Try adding in melodies in your right hand based on the notes given.
- Try and do something new every attempt, but also remember things you do that "worked."



# 7.7

## Fugue in E minor

J. C. Fischer (ca. 1665-1746)

First system of musical notation for the Fugue in E minor. The treble staff shows a melodic line with fingerings 5, 4, 5, 2, 1, 4, 3, 1, 5. The bass staff is mostly empty with a few notes and fingerings 1, 5, 2, 1, 4. A 'L.H.' (Left Hand) instruction is present with fingerings 1, 5, 2, 1, 4.

Second system of musical notation. The treble staff continues the melodic line with fingerings 1, 3, 5. The bass staff has a few notes and fingerings 1, 5, 2, 1. A 'Both notes w/right hand' instruction is present with fingerings 1, 3, 5.

Third system of musical notation. The treble staff has a few notes and fingerings 1, 5, 2, 1. The bass staff has a few notes and fingerings 1, 5, 2, 1. A 'Both notes w/right hand' instruction is present with fingerings 1, 5, 2, 1.

Fourth system of musical notation. The treble staff has a few notes and fingerings 1, 5, 2, 1. The bass staff has a few notes and fingerings 1, 5, 2, 1. A 'Both notes w/right hand' instruction is present with fingerings 1, 5, 2, 1.





8

## D.C. VOICES - PART II

*"Music happens to be an art form that transcends language."*

- Blues Voicings
- Blues Exercises 2&3
- Pinetop's Boogie-Woogie
- Sugarchild Groove
- Nostalgia
- Piano Montuno Patterns
- Tootie Fifty One
- Basic ii V Licks
- Land That Time Forgot
- One Handed Polyrhythms
- Blues For Buck
- Reverence
- The Ultimate Vision
- Go-Go Swing
- Short Story
- Leaves
- Concepts for Melodic Improvisation
- Breakable
- Afterward

*The D.C. Voices chapters represents a musical message to you the student from a cross section of the DC piano and music community. You'll find pieces, exercises and text. It is all presented with love and the recognition that you, the students of the District of Columbia Public Schools, are our hopes and dreams.*

## 8.1

This is the second of two chapters made up of pieces contributed by D.C. area artists. In chapter 4 you'll find the simpler pieces and in this chapter you'll find some that are more challenging.

- As in chapter 4, the **Blues** form is well represented. There are also a number of **lead sheets** with **chord symbols** that may be interpreted as simply as just playing **the root**, or with more complicated **chord voicings**.

*Reverence* by Iva Ambush  
"Lead Sheet"  
format, bars 1-2

$B^b M A57$   $E^b M M A57$   $D7$   $G M11$   $G^b7$   $F M11$   $B^b7(b9)$

*Reverence*;  
just the  
roots in the  
left hand

*Reverence*;  
left hand  
plays root  
position  
chords

*Reverence*;  
notes of the  
extended  
chord shared  
in both  
hands

- Some of the pieces are accompanied by a considerable amount of text. Some of the text explains a musical concept and some of the text shines a light on part of the D.C. music scene.
- Several contributors sent short exercises with the comment, "**learn in all the keys.**" This is the real challenge. So far you have had to play **tetrachords, scales and chords** around the **circle of 5ths**, these exercises offer you a small piece of music and say play this starting on every note. This chapter can keep you really busy if you truly engage with it. The flip side is that this chapter can really lift you.
- It is like training with weights to get stronger: the heavier the weight, the stronger you get.



## Contributed by Reginald Cyntje

### 8.2

#### 12-Bar Blues in B $\flat$ : Three-Note Voicings

Three note voicings - allow piano players to create rich sounding chords using only three notes.

Play through the exercise slowly. When you are comfortable, vary the rhythms.

Common **three-note voicings** for V7 chords:

b7, 3, 6

3, b7, b9

Reginald Cyntje

Chord symbols for the first system: B $\flat$ 7(#9), E $\flat$ 13, B $\flat$ 7(#9), FMIN7, B $\flat$ 7(b9), E $\flat$ 13.

Chord symbols for the second system: B $\flat$ 7(#9), G7(b9), CMIN7, F7(b9), B $\flat$ 7(#9), B $\flat$ 7(#9).

Four note voicings - include most of the notes in a chord. Practice **comping** using four note voicings.

Play through the exercise slowly. When you are comfortable, vary the rhythms.

Common **four-note voicings**:

3, 5, 7, 9;

5, 7, 1, 3

7, 9, 3, 5

#### 12-Bar Blues in B $\flat$ : Four-Note Voicings

Chord symbols for the first system: B $\flat$ 9, E $\flat$ 9, B $\flat$ 9, FMIN7 B $\flat$ 7(b9), E $\flat$ 9.

Chord symbols for the second system: B $\flat$ 9, G7(b9), CMIN7, F13, B $\flat$ 9, B $\flat$ 9.

8.3

## Blues Exercise 2

Simple melody

Enclosures to the different **chord tones** (1, 3, 5, 7, or 9)

R. Cyntje

The musical score for Blues Exercise 2 consists of six staves of music in F major. The chords and fingerings are as follows:

- Staff 1: F7 (4, 3, 2), Bb7 (1, 3, 2), F7 (1, 3, 2), C MIN7, F7.
- Staff 2: Bb7, F7, D7(b9) (1).
- Staff 3: G MIN7 (3, 5), C7, F7, G MIN7, C7 (4, 3, 1).
- Staff 4: F7 (4, 3, 1, 2), Bb7 (1, 3, 5, 4), F7 (5, 3, 1, 3, 5), D7(b9) (5, 3, 2, 1, 2).
- Staff 5: Bb7, F7, D7(b9) (5, 2, 3, 5).
- Staff 6: G MIN7 (4, 1, 3, 1), C7 (5, 4, 5, 4), F7 (5, 3, 2, 1, 3, 2), D7, G MIN7, C7.

Do your best with the chord symbols, but remember you may also perform this exercise simply with the left hand playing the root of the chords.

## Contributed by Reginald Cyntje

### Blues Exercise 3

Enclosures plus jazz vocabulary.

R. Cyntje

The musical score for "Blues Exercise 3" is written in B-flat major (one flat) and 4/4 time. It consists of six staves of music, each containing various jazz chords and fingerings. The chords and fingerings are as follows:

- Staff 1: F7 (1 4 3 2 1), Bb7 (1 4 3 2 1), F7 (1 3 2 4), Cmin7 (1 2 5 3), F7 (4 5 3 1).
- Staff 2: Bb7 (1 2 1 2), Bb7 (1 2 1 2), Bb7 (1 2 1 2), F7 (1 4 3 2 1), D7(b9) (1 4 3 2 1).
- Staff 3: Gmin7 (1 2 3 5), C7 (1 4 3 2 1), F7 (1 4 3 2 1), D7 (1 4 3 2 1), Gmin7 (1 2 3 5), C7 (1 4 3 2 1).
- Staff 4: Fmaj7 (1 4 3 2 1), E-7(b5) (1 3 5 4 2), A7(b9) (1 4 3 2 1), Dmin7 (1 4 3 2 1), G7 (1 4 3 2 1), Cmin7 (1 4 3 2 1), F7 (1 4 3 2 1).
- Staff 5: Bb7 (1 4 3 2 1), Bbmin7 (1 4 3 2 1), Eb7 (1 3 4 5 4), Amin7 (1 4 3 2 1), D7 (1 4 3 2 1), Abmin7 (1 4 3 2 1), Db7 (1 4 3 2 1).
- Staff 6: Gmin7 (1 3 5 4 2), C7 (1 4 3 2 1), F7 (1 4 3 2 1).

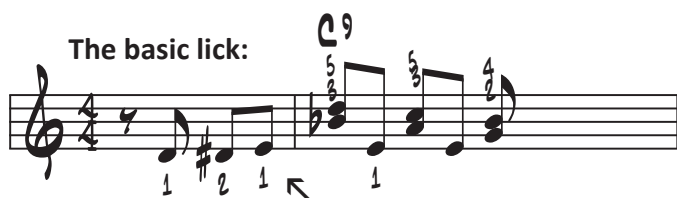
Reginald Cyntje is the Director of Jazz Studies at Duke Ellington School of the Arts, a professor of music at Montgomery College, Prince George's Community College, and a teaching artist with the Washington Performing Arts Society.

## Contributed by Daryl Davis

8.4

### Pinetop's Boogie-Woogie

The basic lick:



2 half steps up to the 3rd  
of the chord

Clarence "Pinetop" Smith

## Contributed by Daryl Davis

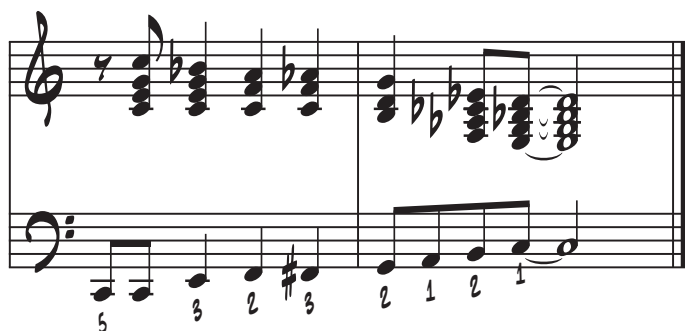
This musical example offered up by **Daryl Davis** is a blues that Mr. Davis learned directly from **Joe “Pinetop” Perkins** (1913 - 2011) a blues pianist, who is in the Blues Hall of Fame and the recipient of a Grammy Lifetime Achievement award. Mr. Perkins learned it from the composer, **Clarence “Pinetop” Smith** (1904 - 1929) who not only wrote the tune, but originated the term “**Boogie-Woogie**.”

**Daryl Davis** was mentored by rock piano legend **Jerry Lee Lewis** and went on to play with many of the top musicians in the world including guitarist/singer/composer **Chuck Berry who is considered the “Father of Rock and Roll.”** As an actor, Mr. Davis appeared in the HBO series “The Wire” and is one of the DMV’s most famous musicians.

In addition to his massive musical achievements, Daryl Davis is famous for his bold action in confronting racism, especially in the state of Maryland. He has told his stories on a number of programs, including TED talks, and most of them are available on YouTube. One of his tag-lines is “I’ve made 200 members leave the KKK.”

Racism, which has been called our country’s “original sin,” is a fraught topic. You may want to watch Daryl’s videos with a teacher or adult family member. It is worth sharing, however, that Mr. Davis came to the conclusion that people with racist views had been “brainwashed.” Using his music and the force of his powerful personality Daryl Davis helped hundreds of people escape that condition.

On June 26th, 2021, as this piano book went through the final edits, Daryl Davis was featured in a front page article in the New York Times. The title is a quotation from Davis: “How Can You Hate Me When You Don’t Even Know Me?” The article addresses what is a major social problem in America today; how to talk with people with whom we disagree.



This turnaround ending can be used on many different songs. Compare it to the end of *Take the 'A' Train*.

## Contributed by Terry Marshall

### 8.5

The Sugarchild Groove is based on a television performance by Frank 'Sugarchild' Robinson. It's so amazing how entertaining the musicians of his period could be with the simplest material.

## Sugarchild 2, Boogie Groove

Terry Marshall

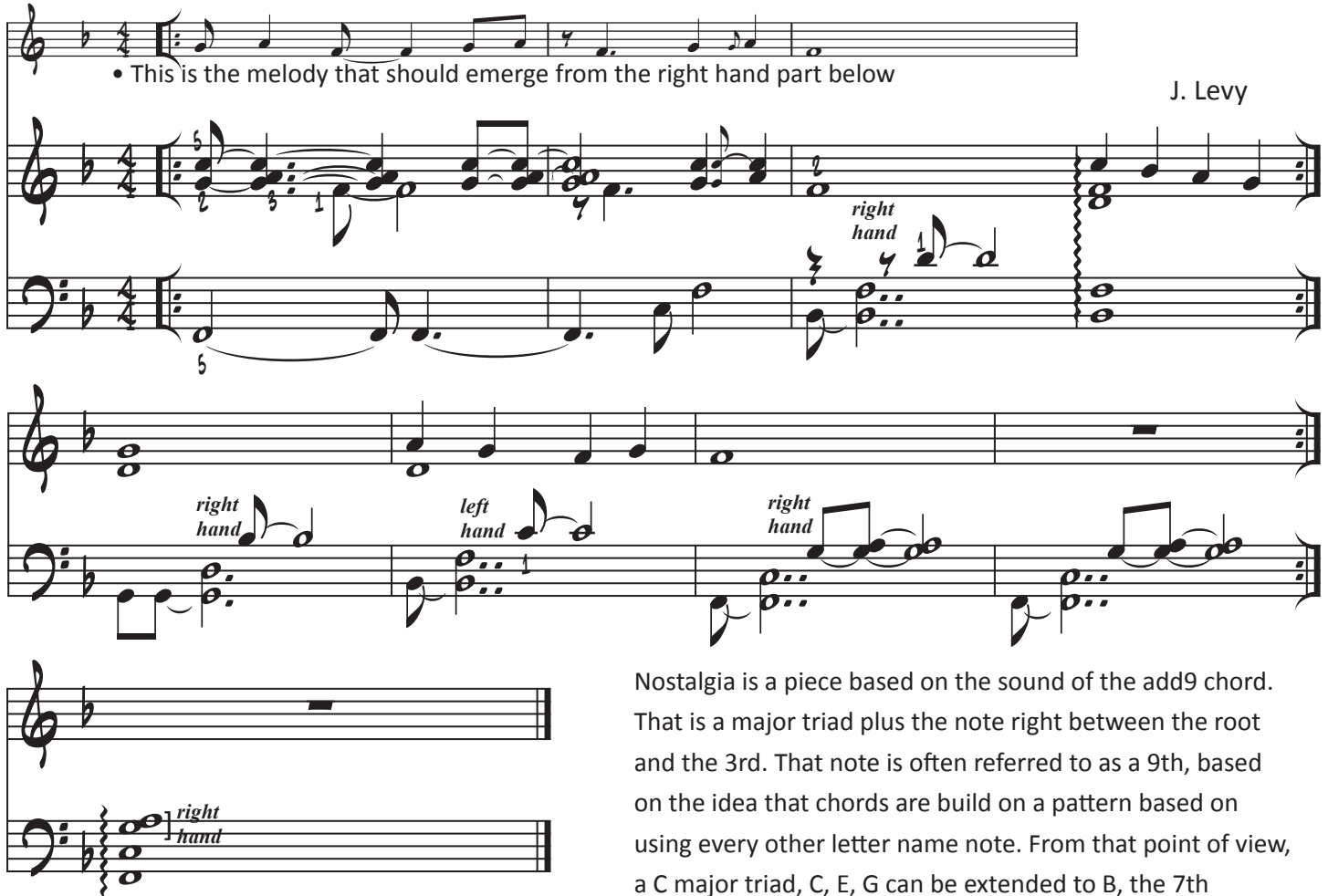
The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of three systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The first system includes fingerings: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 for the treble staff and 5, 3, 1, 2 for the bass staff. The second system continues the melody and bass line. The third system concludes the piece with a double bar line.

8.6

# Nostalgia

• This is the melody that should emerge from the right hand part below

J. Levy



Nostalgia is a piece based on the sound of the add9 chord. That is a major triad plus the note right between the root and the 3rd. That note is often referred to as a 9th, based on the idea that chords are build on a pattern based on using every other letter name note. From that point of view, a C major triad, C, E, G can be extended to B, the 7th and D the 9th. Sometimes you also see this chord named as an “add 2.”



- Using add9 chords rather than plain triads is crucial to getting an authentic sound on New Age music and in Country music as well.

Aaron Copeland’s “Appalachian Spring” was an early and influential piece which used add9 chords.

Just as I was working on this, there was an article in the New York Times talking about the feeling of nostalgia and giving this history of the word: *Though the word “nostalgia” combines the Greek words “nostos” (homecoming) and “algos” (pain), it was actually coined by a Swiss medical student named Johannes Hofer in 1688. First understood as a medical affliction, some of the earliest diagnosed cases were Swiss mercenaries working far from home who were particularly susceptible to pangs of longing when they heard traditional Swiss milking songs.* (Leslie Jamison, March 11, 2021)

# 8.7

## Piano Montuno Patterns

Dave Marsh

The image shows four systems of piano montuno patterns. Each system consists of a grand staff (treble and bass clef) with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first system is labeled 'C-7 (DORIAN)' and 'Dave Marsh'. The second, third, and fourth systems are labeled 'C-7' and 'G7(b9)'. Each system contains two measures of music, with the first measure featuring a C-7 chord and the second measure featuring a G7(b9) chord. The patterns are written in a style typical of Cuban piano montuno, with a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes and rests.

### The Clavé Rhythm

#### 3-2 version

The 3-2 version of the Clavé rhythm is shown in a single staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of two measures. The first measure contains three eighth notes (F#, C, G) followed by a quarter rest. The second measure contains a quarter note (F#), two eighth notes (C, G), and a quarter rest.

#### 2-3 version

The 2-3 version of the Clavé rhythm is shown in a single staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of two measures. The first measure contains a quarter rest, a quarter note (F#), and a quarter note (C). The second measure contains a quarter note (G), a quarter note (F#), and a quarter rest.

- Clave is the name of a rhythm, but there is also an instrument called a clave. It's a set of two wooden sticks, typically with a high pitch that can cut through the sound of a large band all playing together.

- There are lots of interesting definitions of "Clavé" online, try checking out a few of them.



## *Contributed by Dave Marsh*

**Latin music**, or the term we have come to use for music from the Americas, which include countries from Mexico and Cuba to Peru and Brazil and all the countries in between, has been for me (an African American) the hardest music to play with feeling — partly because of my own history. I grew up in Washington D.C. listening to the Jazz and Gospel music in my environment. I say this not to separate these styles from the music of the great American countries but to emphasize my own cultural bubble.

Latin music has within it the deep rhythm of Africa, with it's poly-rhythmic complexity and the motivation to move the human body. (The language of the soul as opposed to the language of its vocal lyrics.) With a background of Jazz and Gospel I began playing music formally in a orchestral setting. This was indeed hard for me in a way because of the high level of discipline and technique required to play in a classical setting. This gave me the ability to advance very quickly in my career as a musician and move forward in my schooling.

But as my career advanced and I took all the gigs coming my way, there would be a brick wall heading my way. A wall of understanding the music from a totally different perspective. I found out, in one night, that I had to play music from not only a technical understanding, but from one of feeling the music as the listener does. Feeling it and reacting to the rhythm of it. Feeling the role that all the different parts have in creating the overall mood.

That night for me was a make or break moment in my career and thankfully the people who hired me that night didn't also fire me. They had a sense that I was trying my best and their compassion gave them the patience to put up with my ham handed approach to **the clavé**.

I was driven to learn more about the style (or styles) of playing required to function in the band. Of course I am still learning but that night was the turning point -- and a moment of humility as well as accomplishment. I was more than willing to give my students the opportunity to have the same experience I had, when I started the George Washington University Latin Band (later known as "Los Gringos"). This group became a bridge for multiple generations of young people (from their own backgrounds in Rock or Jazz etc.) to feeling the music in a more organic way. I encourage anyone who wants to augment their "groove" to listen, play and dance to the music of our great American countries in their totality, not just North America. This approach will challenge the player but ultimately benefit the player and audience alike.

**Dave Marsh is a 1983 graduate of the Duke Ellington High School for the Performing Arts and former Faculty at the George Washington University and Shepherd College.**

## 8.8

Contributed by Samuel Prather

## TOOTIE FIFTY ONE

SAMUEL PRATHER

This piece is designed to teach the student a few approaches to navigating the **ii V I progression** very common in jazz playing.

Aim to play the phrases in a legato manner so that the listener doesn't notice the absence of the sustain pedal.

P.S. For an extra challenge, **try it in all the keys.**

Samuel Prather is a multi-instrumentalist (keys, drums, guitar, bass, percussion, and vocals) born and raised in Washington DC. He's equally comfortable in Jazz, Funk, Gospel, Brazilian, Latin, Soul, and R&B, which has taken him all over the world. He has a masters degree in Jazz Performance from Howard University.

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## 8.9

## Contributed by Cherie Mitchell-Agurs

Practice this exercise in all keys following the Circle of 5ths.

Start very slow and then increase the tempo.

This exercise is very helpful towards jazz solos.

### Basic ii V Licks

Cherie Mitchell-Agurs

The exercise is written in Bb major (two flats). It consists of two systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system shows a C-7 chord (Bb, Eb, G, Bb) in the bass and an F7 chord (F, Ab, C, Eb) in the treble. The second system shows a C-7 chord in the bass and an F7 chord in the treble. Fingerings are indicated for each note.

**Chord voicings** are special ways of playing a **chord**. In order get the chord voicings used in the exercise, first we **extend** the chord, then we **invert** the notes.

C-7 [C Eb G Bb] is extended, adding the 9th, D.  
[R 3 5 7] Then the notes are inverted

F7 [F A C Eb] is extended, adding the 9 (G) 11 (Bb) 13 (D)  
[R 3 5 7] Then the notes are inverted

The **two chord voicings** have the same top 3 notes, the bottom note simply moves from a Bb to an A.

# 8.10

Contributed by Jon Carroll

## Land That Time Forgot

(Jonathan Carroll)

Outro Passage

From the Jon Carroll Album

Love Returns (+2)

ANDANTE

Examples of musical notation and chord progressions:

- Chords:  $FMA7(+2)$ ,  $FMIN(+7)$ ,  $C/E(+2)$ ,  $G/B(+2)$ ,  $D/F\#(+2)$ ,  $RITARD$ ,  $C\#(+2)$
- Instructions: *ANDANTE*, *THUMB BOTH*, *RITARD*

Examples of: • Rhythmic and melodic counterpoint within inner-voices of a chord progression.

- Major Triad add 2s (or 9s) over 3rd in bass
- Key modulation devices: In this case in the penultimate measure, cycle of descending 5th intervals all over the 3rd in the bass achieving, in the ultimate measure, a natural sounding upward modulation of a half step from C major to C# Major.

Jon Carroll (JonCarroll.org) is a writer/arranger/performer who was one fourth of, and vocal arranger for, The Starland Vocal Band, winning Grammy awards for Best New Artist and Best Arrangement for Voices with their single *Afternoon Delight*. His songs have been recorded by Linda Ronstadt & Tom Jones. He works in studio and stage with numerous other artists, including Mary Chapin Carpenter, Peter Wolf and Rodney Crowell.

## ONE HANDED POLYRHYTHMS

DAVE KANE

The musical score is divided into four systems, each representing a different polyrhythm exercise. Each system consists of a treble staff and a bass staff. The first system is in 2:3 time, with a '2:3' label above the treble staff and a '2:3 VARIATION' label above the treble staff. The second system is in 4:3 time, with a '4:3' label above the treble staff and a '4:3 VARIATION' label above the treble staff. The third system is in 3:2 time, with a '3:2' label above the treble staff and a '3:2 VARIATION' label above the treble staff. The fourth system is in 5:3 time, with a '5:3' label above the treble staff. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and repeat signs.

These are a couple of exercises based on listening to jazz pianist John Law play the title track of his album *Ghost in the Oak*. This piece impressed me because John actually plays four simultaneous rhythms in that piece—two in each hand. The right hand played the first rhythm in this exercise. I extrapolated from his idea and created a few new one. These are written for the right hand but it would be a simple matter to invert the hands and develop the skill with both hands- have fun!

## Contributed by Jon Ozment

### 8.12

Roger "Buck" Hill 1927-2017

Buck Hill was a great hard-bop saxophonist, born and raised in DC. He graduated from Armstrong High School, served in the US Army, and worked as a postman for many years while playing clubs and concerts in the area. He composed great tunes such as "Scope" and "The Sad Ones," and recorded stellar albums including "I'm Beginning To See The Light" and "Relax". He is fondly remembered by fans and was an important figure in the jazz life of the city for decades. He is memorialized on the mural at 14th and U St.

### Blues for Buck

Jon Ozment

The musical score for "Blues for Buck" is written in 4/4 time and features a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). It consists of five systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and chords. Chord symbols are written above the staves: Bb-7, Bb-6, Bb-7, Eb-7, Eb-6, Bb-7, G7, Gb9, F7+, Bb-7, Bb7, Eb-7, Ab7(b9), Db9, Gb13, G-7b5, C7ALT, F7+, and D.S. AL FINE. A "FINE" box is also present above the fourth staff. The score ends with a double bar line.

## 8.13

## Contributed by Iva Jean Ambush

## Reverence

IVA JEAN AMBUSH

Ballad

1.

*Last x to Coda*  $\oplus$

2.

*D.S. for solo*

*Coda*  $\oplus$

I woke up one early morning with a song in my mind. I am a jazz vocalist and the easiest way for me to write out the melody line is with a tuner then on the piano. This song reminds of how big the world is and how there has to be something bigger than me. I dedicated "Reverence" to my mother because she was smaller than all of her 5 children but her heart was much bigger.

Iva Jean Ambush, Vocalist/Lyricist/Composer/Actress  
Working on my sophomore CD and my first short film  
[www.ivaambush.com](http://www.ivaambush.com)

# Contributed by Davey Yarborough

8.14

## The Ultimate Vision

Davey S. Yarborough

♩ = 76

8

Chords and notation include:  $E^b \text{ MIN}$ ,  $B \text{ MA}7$ ,  $A^b \text{ MIN}$ ,  $B^b7_{\text{sus}}$ ,  $E^b \text{ MIN}$ ,  $B \text{ MA}7$ ,  $C \text{ DIM}$ ,  $D^b7$ ,  $B^b7$ ,  $D^b7$ ,  $G^b$ ,  $G^b+$ ,  $C \text{ DIM}$ ,  $C^b/O^b$ ,  $D^b7(b9)$ ,  $G^b6$ ,  $B^b7(b9)$ ,  $B$ ,  $B^b-7$ ,  $B$ ,  $B^b-7$ ,  $B$ ,  $B^b-7$ ,  $B$ ,  $B^b \text{ MIN}$ ,  $B^b7(b9)$ ,  $A^b-7$ ,  $B$ ,  $B^b-7$ ,  $B$ ,  $B^b-7$ ,  $B$ ,  $B^b \text{ MIN}$ ,  $A^b-7$ ,  $F \text{ MIN}$ ,  $B^b7$ ,  $E^b \text{ MIN}$ ,  $B \text{ MA}7$ ,  $A^b \text{ MIN}$ ,  $B^b7_{\text{sus}}$ ,  $E^b \text{ MIN}$ ,  $B \text{ MA}7$ ,  $C \text{ DIM}$ ,  $D^b7$ ,  $G^b$ ,  $G^b+$ ,  $B$ ,  $C \text{ DIM}$ ,  $C^b/O^b$ ,  $D^b7(b9)$ ,  $G^b6$ .



## Contributed by Davey Yarborough

**The Ultimate Vision** is obtained through unrestricted insights based on personal experiences of an individual. Human beings have the ability to work outside the boundaries of rules and demonstrate that progress is possible when one chooses to experiment. My first compositions were created before I had any theoretical music training. Music is a form of art that allows one to express their feelings through sound without having to use words. This allows for that expression to be interpreted however the listener chooses.

This composition is based purely on my inspiration and appreciation of child advocacy demonstrated by visionary **Peggy Cooper Cafritz**. She created a world respected support system for aspiring young artists who might never have had the opportunity to pursue, cultivate and create from their innermost personal experiences. Through her vision, **The Duke Ellington School of the Arts** was created. This composition is an unrestricted expression of my experiences inspired by the life and accomplishments of Peggy Cooper Cafritz and her “Ultimate Vision”. After you learn this composition, imagine how it may be improved based on your personal experiences.

*This piece uses a few new chords. The dominant 7 (b9) chords are essentially 5-note chords with the top 4 notes forming a diminished 7th chord. Since diminished 7th chords divide the octave evenly, any note can be the root of the chord. That is why Bb7 (b9) and Db7(b9), a minor 3rd away, have the same top four notes.*



Native District of Columbian Davey Yarborough is the president and artistic director of The Washington Jazz Arts Institute. In 2019, Davey retired from Duke Ellington School of the Arts after 40 years of service as a jazz educator. His lifelong commitment to mentoring young musicians was recognized in 2017 when he was inducted into the Washington, D.C. Hall of Fame, and the following year in the Downbeat Magazine Jazz Educator Hall of Fame.

Davey’s impressive musical career has taken two distinct paths – those of accomplished performer and dedicated educator. Earning bachelor’s and master’s degrees in education and performance, his university studies were augmented by studies on flute with the venerable Frank Wess, and on saxophone with the legendary Sonny Stitt.

As a performer, bandleader, composer and arranger, Davey has worked with Sir Roland Hanna, Keter Betts, Billy Eckstine, Buck Hill, Shirley Horn, Lena Horne and Joe Williams, to name a few. He has also collaborated with trumpet virtuoso Wynton Marsalis, performing on Marsalis’ Making the Music series on National Public Radio (NPR).

# 8.15

## Contributed by Cherie Mitchell-Agurs

GoGo Swing is a smooth GoGo 16 Bar vamp that Chuck Brown repeats until he is ready to knock the socks off of his audience. The ii-V-I progression is very prominent. This is a great opportunity to practice solos.

### Go Go Swing

The musical score for 'Go Go Swing' is presented in two systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 4/4. The first system consists of 8 bars, and the second system consists of 8 bars. The music features a steady bass line and a melody in the treble. Vertical dashed lines are placed at the end of the 4th and 8th bars in both systems, indicating measures where a soloist can enter. The notation includes various chords, eighth notes, and a repeat sign at the end of the piece.

Middle C written on the special treble clef  
and middle C written on the normal treble clef

In this example a special clef has been used for the right hand part. A treble clef with an 8 on the bottom. It means that everything notated is actually played an octave (8ve) lower.

This diagram compares two treble clefs on a single staff. The left clef is a 'special treble clef' with an '8' written below it, indicating an octave lower. An arrow points to the '8' with the label '→ 8'. The right clef is a 'Normal treble clef'. Both clefs have a middle C note written on the first line. An arrow points to the middle C on the normal clef with the label '↑'. The text 'Normal treble clef' is written below the right clef.

**Allegretto** *Short Story* Jessica Krash

The musical score for "Short Story" by Jessica Krash is presented in four systems. The first system (measures 1-4) is marked *mp*. The second system (measures 5-8) begins with a *mf* dynamic and includes a *subito p* marking at measure 8. The third system (measures 9-12) continues the *mf* dynamic. The fourth system (measures 13) concludes the piece. The score features a variety of musical notations, including slurs, ties, and dynamic markings, and is designed to provide a challenging exercise for the left hand while the right hand plays as if it had lyrics.

This piece will give your left hand a lot of exercise. The right-hand part should be played as if it had lyrics, as if you are telling it to someone. The middle section shifts between 4/4 time, and 3+3+2, leaving the meter ambiguous at the end. The modes are also unstable, shifting to keep things interesting.

Jessica Krash was born in Washington, DC. She left for 10 years and then returned. She was trained as a classical pianist and composer, and is happy about the many creative directions classical music has taken in recent years.

8.17

Alison Crockett

Leaves

$\text{♩} = 95$

*mp*

*rit.....*

(Red.)

I wrote this piece many years ago when I was in graduate school. The music's gentle waltz feel made me feel like leaves being blown by the wind as they fall off the trees in autumn. The piece centers in on the essential understanding of a two against three feeling by using dotted quarter notes that are repeated consistently throughout the piece. This practice is an important part of the African base of jazz music as swing itself is the interplay between duple and triple meters working together to make the swing feel that is endemic to jazz. The harmony accompanies the feeling of breathing in and out as the chords move back and forward, circling around each other just like the leaves would in nature. Enjoy!

# 8.18

## Breakable

Bob Familiar

**A**

♩ = 60

**B**

**C**

**D**

The musical score for 'Breakable' is written for piano in 4/4 time. It consists of four sections, A, B, C, and D. Section A begins with a tempo marking of ♩ = 60. The score is written on a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, and includes various fingering numbers (1-5) and circled numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) indicating specific techniques or phrasing. The overall mood is contemplative and delicate.

Breakable uses the sound of both sweet and dissonant intervals to script a conversation about vulnerability. The left-hand melody implies major seven, minor seven, major six, #5 and diminished chords. These implied chords, along with the right-hand melody, outline a harmony that uses chord extensions such as the 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> to create tension and release. The swing between sweet and dissonant intervals allows you to control the conversation. You are encouraged to play the piece delicately, introducing pedal where you wish the right-hand melody to spell out a chord or to let an interval ring.

Bob Familiar is a computer scientist and composer of electronic, ambient and orchestral music.

# Contributed by Wayne Wilentz

## CONCEPTS FOR MELODIC IMPROVISATION

8.19

II V VARIATIONS ON THE SAME LICK

LESSON 84 WAYNE WILENTZ

TAKE ONE SIMPLE IDEA- AN ARPEGGIO DOWN ON A M9 CHORD.. 9, 7, 5, M3, 2, 1

METHOD 1: ADD CHROMATIC PICKUP NOTES BEFORE, ADD EXTRA NOTES AFTER, OR SHORTEN THE IDEA

METHOD 2: TRANPOSE WITH A KEY CHANGE

METHOD 3: RHYTHMIC TRANSPOSITION A) CHANGING THE LENGTH OF NOTES B) CHANGING THE PLACEMENT OF THE LICK

### METHOD 1:

LICK--> C-7 F7 BbΔ CHROMATIC PICKUP ENCLOSURE PICKUP

### EXTENDED LICK

### EXTENDED LICK WITH PICKUP

### EXTENDED LICK WITH PICKUP CROSSING THE MEASURE

### SHORTENED LICK, CLIP BEGINNING

### CLIP ENDING

### CLIP BEGINNING ADD TO ENDING

C-7 F7 BbΔ

### METHOD 2 (CAN AND SHOULD BE USED WITH METHOD 1)

#### (DESCENDING II V I CHANGES)

C-7 F7 BbΔ Bb-7 Eb7 AbΔ

#### (CHROMATICALLY DESCENDING II V CHANGES)

#### ADD PICKUP

#### PICKUP WITH ANTICIPATED 1

C-7 F7 B-7 E7 Bb-7 Eb7 A-7 D7

## CONCEPTS FOR MELODIC IMPROVISATION

## METHOD 3:

## CHANGING THE LENGTH OF NOTES

## ORIGINAL LICK

25

C-7 F7

VARIATIONS USING TRIPLETS

## VARIATION USING THE ANTICIPATED 1 (CROSSING THE BAR LINE)

29

C-7 F7 Bb7 Eb7 Ab7

## VARIATIONS WITH RHYTHMIC DISPLACEMENT ("MONK VARIATIONS")

33

C-7 F7

DISPLACEMENT KEEPING FEEL

DISPLACEMENT FLIPPING FEEL

BACK PHRASING

C-7 F7 Bb7

## EXAMPLE USING FIRST 4 BARS OF "LOVER MAN"

## RIF- FOLLOWED BY:

1ST VARIATION USING PICKUP, ANTICIPATED ONE AND TRIPLETS

2ND VARIATION: TRANSPOSED FOR KEY CENTER, DISPLACED SHORTENED LICK

3RD VARIATION: ENCLOSURE PICKUP AND 1/4 NOTE TRIPLETS

38

G-7 C7 G-7 C7 C-7 F7 C-7 F7 Bb7

WAYNE WILENTZ: PIANIST, COMPOSER, ARRANGER, VOCALIST, EDUCATOR

TEACHES PIANO AND VOICE AT LEVINE SCHOOL OF MUSIC IN WASHINGTON, DC

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LEADS THE CAPITAL CITY VOICES JAZZ CHOIR

COMPOSITIONS HEARD ON MANY TV SHOWS AND FILMS INCLUDING "UNCORKED", "HOMELAND", "NEXT", "BEING MARY JANE"

## Afterward

- If you have learned most of the material in this book, congratulations!
- There is always more to learn.
- While copyright restrictions prevented us from including the top pop tunes of today, you can learn almost any song by using your ear AND your reading ability. If you search under the title you are looking for plus the words “sheet music,” you’ll be able to see the first page of the song to get you started. Then you can use your ear to figure out the rest, and you can also do a search for the title of the song plus “lyrics, chords,” and you’ll get a chord chart. Sometimes people post chords charts with some wrong chord, so you’ll need to always use your ear and listen critically.

While YouTube is an amazing resource - you can see the best players who ever lived perform and you can find all kinds of musical lessons and how-to videos - there is no substitute for seeing live music. When conditions permit, going out and experiencing live music will teach and inspire you.

- If you’re in 12th grade you have an extra responsibility: you are a role model for younger students. Be a good one! Try and help students who are less experienced than you. Be on the look out for younger students who are prodigies. When the school environment is right, open and supportive, with knowledge flowing freely, everybody learns the most.

And remember, for every genre of music,

*“It don’t mean a thing, if it ain’t got that swing.”*









# APPENDIX

- [Major Scale Fingerings](#)
- [Key Signatures](#)
- [Table of Intervals](#)
- [Index of scales and modes](#)
- [Intro Keys: From Zero to Something \(Video Course\)](#)

# Major Scale Fingerings



- The C Major scale fingering is shared by the keys of D, E, G, & A.

The B Major scale uses the same fingering as C in the right hand, and the F Major scale uses the same fingering as C in the left hand.

- The scales which use all 5 black keys, B and Db major use the thumb on the two white keys, so that the two hands play their thumbs together. Use fingers 2&3 on the pair of black keys and 2&3&4 on the group of 3 black keys.



- The scales for Bb, Eb and Ab share some features. In the RH, the thumb goes on C&F. In the left hand the finger goes 321 4321

- The F scale in the left hand has the same fingering as the C scale and in the right hand is 1234 123

# Understanding Key Signatures



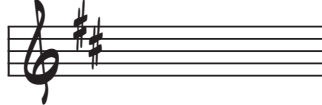
E F# G# A B C# D# E



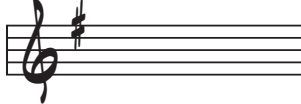
A B C# D E F# G# A



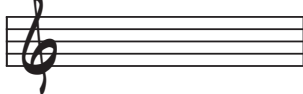
D E F# G A B C# D



G A B C D E F# G



C D E F G A B C



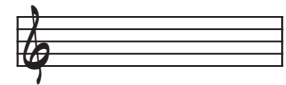
The Major Scale  
is made of two  
Tetrachords with  
the same pattern

Do Re Mi Fa Sol La Ti Do

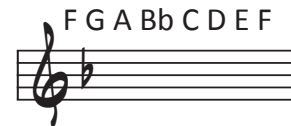
W W H W W W H

- Since the two tetrachords both have the same (WWH) pattern, the top one could also be the bottom one of a new scale. In the key of C, the top tetrachord is G A B C. When we add the notes above, D E F G, the F needs to be sharpened to put the half step between the new Ti and Do. The pattern keeps working the same way. In the key of G, the top tetrachord is D E F# G, when you add the notes above, A B C D, again you need to sharp C to get the half step between the new Ti and Do.

C D E F G A B C



- Since the two tetrachords both have the same (WWH) pattern, the bottom one could also be the top one of a new scale. In the key of C, the bottom tetrachord is C D E F. When you add in the notes below, F G A B, you need to flat the B in order to get the half step between mi&fa. That pattern keeps working the same way.



F G A Bb C D E F

Bb C D Eb F G A Bb



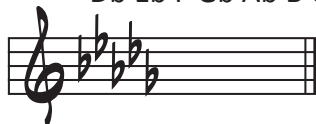
Eb F G Ab Bb C D Eb



Ab B C Db Eb F G Ab



Db Eb F Gb Ab B C Db



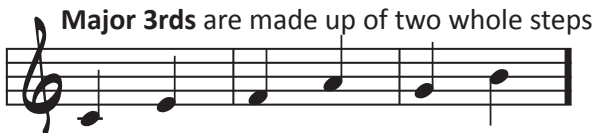
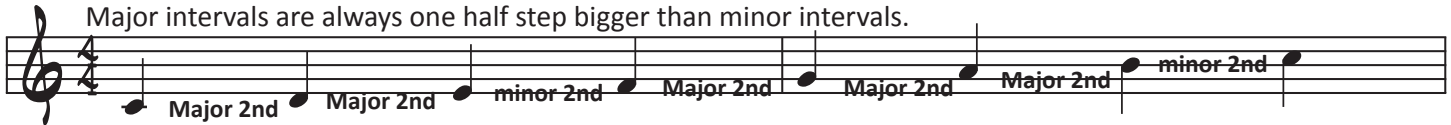
You add # to  
get the new  
Ti and the *b*  
to get the  
new Fa.

# Table of Intervals

**Diatonic Intervals** - this first section lists the intervals found just using the different pairs of notes of the **Major scale**.

**Whole steps** are also called **Major 2nds**. **Half steps** are called **minor 2nds**.

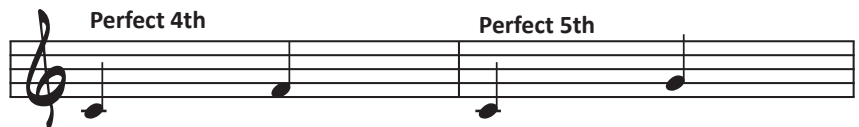
Major intervals are always one half step bigger than minor intervals.



**minor 3rds** are made up of a whole step and half step

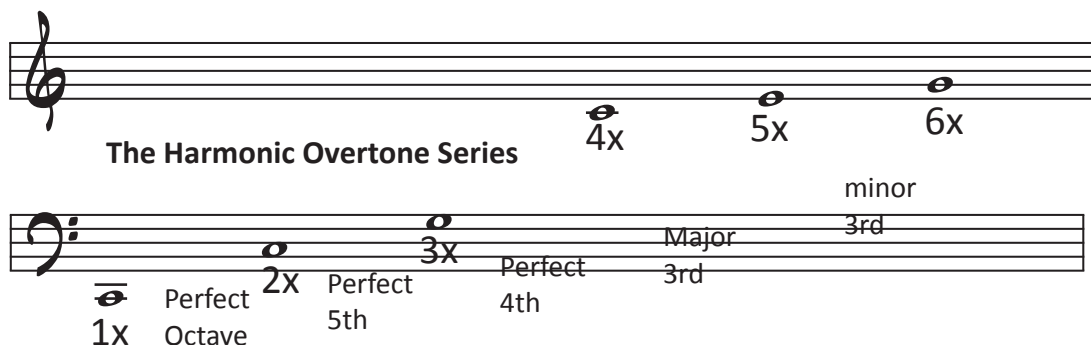


The most common kinds of **4ths** and **5ths** just have one of the scale's half step within them and they are called "**perfect**"



Perfect intervals? That term seems a little odd, where does it come from?

The answer lies in **The Harmonic Overtone Series**. When you hear a musical note, you are not hearing a single frequency, but actually a whole series of frequencies. The note you hear is called the **fundamental**, but mixed in with the basic frequency are frequencies 2x as fast, 3x as fast, 4x, as fast and so on, these are referred to as **partials**. Different instruments sound different in part because of the different mixes of partials. Note that in the harmonic overtone series, the first intervals formed are the **Octave**, the **5th** and the **4th**. These intervals have the simplest frequency ratios, giving them the "perfect quality"



There is one 4th (Fa to Ti) that has no half step inside it. This bigger 4th is called an **Augmented 4th**.

There is one 5th (Ti to Fa) that has both half steps inside it. This smaller 5th is called a **Diminished 5th**.

## Diatonic intervals continued

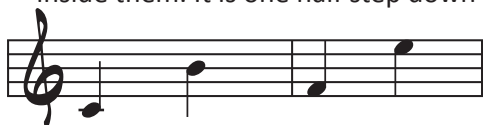
**Major 6ths** just have one of the scale's half steps inside them



**minor 6ths** have both of the scale's half steps inside them.



**Major 7ths** just have one of the scale's half steps inside them. It is one half step down from the scale's half steps inside them. It is one half step down from the 8ve.



**minor 7ths** just have both of the scale's half steps inside them. It is one whole step down from the 8ve.



All those intervals rewritten starting on C



## Chromatic intervals

Using sharps and flats allows the formation of **augmented and diminished** versions of the **Imperfect intervals**: 2nds, 3rds, 6ths and 7ths. Here are those intervals as most commonly found in the key of C.

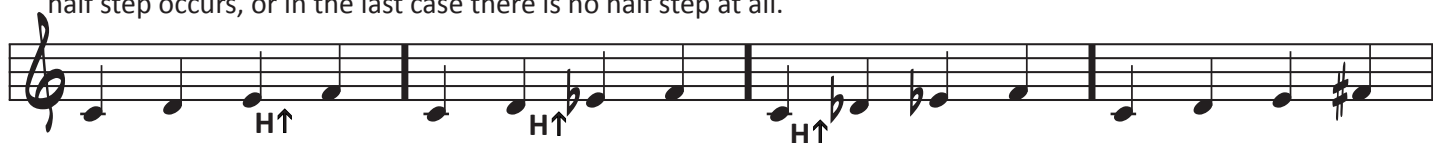


## Scales and Modes (via Tetrachords)

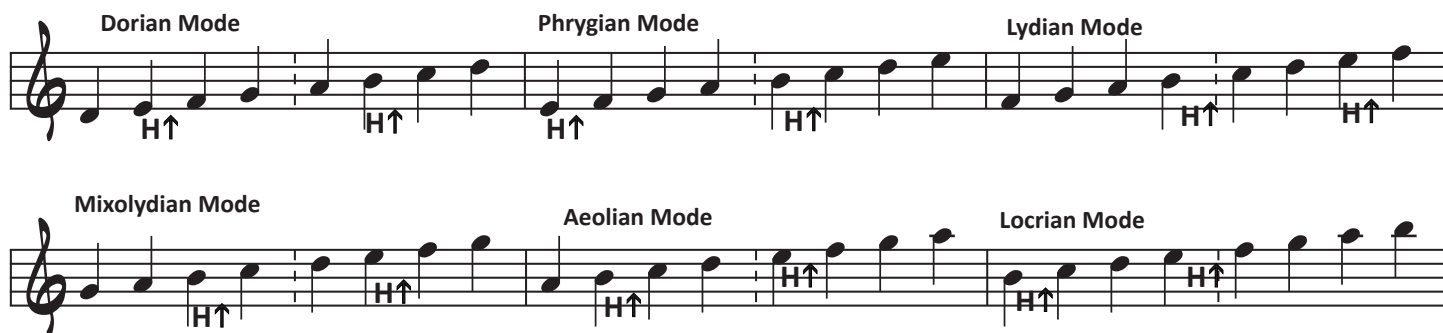
The Major scale is also called the Ionian mode.  
H↑ show the half steps.



**Tetrachords** are a great way to understand **scales**. Using just the white keys of the piano, there are four different tetrachord structures. Below you can see all four written starting on C. The difference is where the half step occurs, or in the last case there is no half step at all.



### The seven traditional modes with their Greek/Medieval Names



### The seven modes all rewritten starting on C

This bottom tetrachord is part of these two modes



The Ionian and Mixolydian modes have the same bottom tetrachord

This bottom tetrachord is part of these two modes

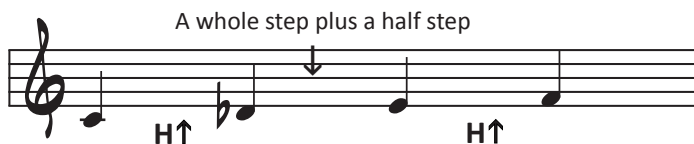


The Dorian and Aeolian modes have the same bottom tetrachord



## More scales

Special tetrachord: most commonly found as the upper tetrachord of a **harmonic minor** scale



**Harmonic minor scale**



The two black key scales, commonly called **Pentatonic**, rewritten starting on C. Two less notes than the Major scale, so there are no half steps and there are two gaps of a whole step plus a half step.



Adding one note to the Pentatonics gives the two "Blues scales"



**Whole Tone scale (all whole steps)**



The two whole step/half step scales. aka octatonic or diminished scales







# STARTING FROM ZERO

Video course

- Getting Started; Watch and Learn; First Assignments
- Call and Response
- Melody Deep Dive
- Half Steps/Whole Steps; Parts for Songs
- Some Jams
- Looking Ahead

### Getting Started

- This section is designed to get you started playing the keyboard even if you have zero experience.
- Even if you have taken piano lessons, but have not sung along with the keyboard using the solfege syllables, Do Re Mi Fa Sol La Ti Do, this is a good place to begin.
- This section is video based, you should be reading this on a device that can access YouTube. Get the best sound quality you can.
- At first you don't even need a keyboard! Use your fingers and your voice. This video shows two students demonstrating their competence using just their voices and the wall of the school. I didn't ask them to do this, they ran up to show me! (0:43) <https://youtu.be/YO6xAeBn2fM>

### Watch and learn

One great way to learn how to play the keyboard is to watch other people playing. If you play basketball or some other team sport, think of how you first learned how to play. It was probably by watching, either pros playing on TV or older kids playing around the neighborhood. Playing piano has a different reputation, “piano lessons,” and instructional books are more what people think of. But watching is a great way to learn.

- First, be inspired by watching a short video of one of D.C.'s finest, [Dwayne Adell](#)
- Now go watch someone you know, ask around and be nice! Thank the person afterwards for playing for you, even if you didn't think it was that great.

### First Assignments

- Watch and do this [Finger exercise](#) (0:24)
- This [Warm up!](#) (0:57)
- If you're in the mood, do this [Art Project](#). (1:36).
- An introduction to the layout of the keyboard with [First look \(2:01\)](#).
- Put it all together with next video! **You can do this video every day for a few weeks until you are comfortable with the entire video:** you sing along, read questions out loud and answer them. At the end you play air piano.
- [7-Minute Piano Intro/VideoWorkout](#).

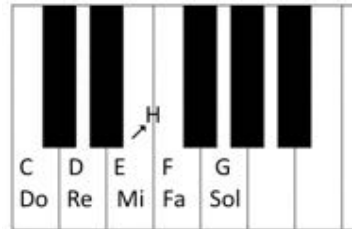


## Call and Response

At this point we're just using the **right hand** on the same five notes. We have two sets of names for these notes, the white keys we're using are **C D E F G**, and we're vocalizing them as **Do Re Mi Fa Sol**.

- "Air Piano" is still almost as good as having an actual keyboard.

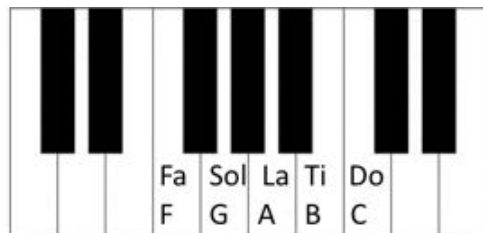
- [First Call & Response.](#) (2:46)
- [Easy version \(4:45\)](#)
- [Full version \(8:37\)](#)
- [Just Pt 2 \(Do-Fa and Do-Sol\) \(5:30\)](#)



- Practice these videos until you feel really comfortable!

**TIP:** Don't write anything down, at this stage: you're working on being to play groups of notes and to keep the group in your head.

**Left Hand** Get the LEFT HAND to work with these [bass lines](#) (3:18)



## Both hands at the keyboard!

[Left thumb on A, right thumb on C](#) (3:22)

[Same thing but on the black keys](#) (3:20)

\*\*\*[Music theory/computer programming project](#) (5:34)

## Melody Deep Dive

Keep singing and playing “Air Piano” until you know [all five melodies \(2:49\)](#)

Practice videos for each song

- [The Easiest Song in the World \(0:26\)](#)
- [Mary Had a Little Lamb \(1:37\)](#)
- [Boundless Mercy \(2:21\)](#)     [Watch this 3rd grade class play it! \(0:43\)](#)

Want a challenge? [Use this video to add the left hand. \(1:10\)](#)

- Now we debut “Fa!” played by your right ring finger!

[When the Saints Go Marching In \(2:15\)](#)     [Learn a left hand part. \(0:37\)](#)

[Beethoven’s Ode to Joy theme from the 9th symphony. \(1:34\)](#) [Left hand \(0:40\)](#)

[A new melody from Mozart: \(2:51\)](#)

## Play the black keys!

This next one is one of my more popular videos! [Oh, Freedom \(2:58\)](#)

[Mo’ Better Blues](#), Branford Marsalis (1:54) [Left Hand \(1:34\)](#)

## Two pieces with both hands:

- Two hands working together to play the melody on [Amazing Grace.\(0:45\)](#)

Here’s the Solfege (left hand notes, sol & la written like this)

Sol | Do Mi Re Do | Mi 1. Re | Do La | Sol : | |

2. Re | Sol 2 3 | 1 2 Mi | Sol Mi Sol Mi | Do Sol | La Do Do La | Sol : | |

3. Re | Do | |

Watch this and learn it! [Minuetto No. 1 \(0:58\)](#)

## Half Steps/Whole Steps Naming the Black Keys

- On this page we move beyond using only white keys or only black keys.
- [Half Steps/Whole Steps explained](#)   [Naming all the notes](#)

## Parts For Songs

- These songs are in different keys, whatever the key is, that note is “Do.” C is still and always will be C.
  - Key of D, then Eb - [Ain’t No Mountain High Enough](#), (4:35) [Now play it with the track.](#)
  - Key of E minor - The chorus to [We Will Rock You](#), by Queen (0:49) [Now play it with the track.](#)
  - Key of Bb - [The ensemble chorus](#) to the Sinatra/Basie version of I Only Have Eyes For You. (1:31)
- Watch some [3rd graders who have mastered it](#) (1:58) [Now play it with the track.](#)

- Key of Eb minor - [Various parts](#) for Superstition 2:45 [Now play it with the track](#)
- Key of C [Various parts](#) for Can’t Buy Me Love 4:00 [Now play it with the track](#)
- Key of F [Intro part for No Surprises](#) by Radiohead 1:54 [Now play it with the track](#)
- Key of E [Parts for 99 Red Balloons](#) (4:39) [Now play it with the track](#)

## Duke Ellington meets Chuck Brown

All the parts to It Don’t Mean a Thing (If It Ain’t Got That Swing)

(Key of E minor, curriculum recording key and the key of Chuck Brown’s live version.)

[A phrase melody \(2:53\)](#)   [B phrase melody \(2:00\)](#)   [A phrase one possible bass line \(1:04\)](#)

[B phrase one possible bass line \(1:03\)](#)   [My whole arrangement \(1:45\)](#)

## Three really easy parts in the key of C

- [This Mi, Re, Do](#) part, I sing on an ooh for an intro to each verse of If I had a Hammer. (0:45)
- This was the [intro to the touring version of Oh What a Beautiful Morning](#). You could use it for any slow song in 3/4 in C like My Darling Clementine. (1:53)
- The [“coming for to carry me home”](#) lines in Swing Low, Sweet Chariot (2:19)

## Some Jams

- [Parts for C minor James Bond/Hamilton groove](#) (1:11)
- [Basic Ensemble Warm-Up Prelude](#) Based on ||: C D E F | G F E D :||

## Three Jams based on chord progressions

Each with a one-hand bass part, a two-hand chord part and a one-hand improvised melodic part.

Could be on three or two keyboards. The improvised solos are given as examples.

- Here's the simplest one [C to F Jam](#) (2:00) C /// /// F /// ///  
4-square version [https://youtu.be/f2l\\_UjOVMeA](https://youtu.be/f2l_UjOVMeA) [Student example with singing and dancing.](#)
- Video to help you learn the "A" Blues scale (end of the first video and in the next two). [Blues scale practice](#)
- Jam in a minor. [A Min \(2:20\)](#) Here a [solo keyboard version](#).
- C G Am F: A super popular chord progression. The best way to get introduced to it is to watch this video made by the Australia group [Axis of Awesome](#). Now that you heard some of the possibilities with that chord progression [watch this video](#) to show you one way of jamming on it.

## The 12-bar Blues

My students sing their first blues song in kindergarten: the [ABC Blues](#), & in 1st grade with [Roll Over Beethoven](#).

Here is my favorite Blues song. It's a little different from ABC Blues and Roll Over Beethoven because it has a couple of phrases in it that are not in the 12-bar blues form, [Every Day I Have the Blues](#). All of the time the lead vocal is singing it is a 12-bar blues. Now if you want to hear something truly amazing listen to this version by [Lambert, Hendricks and Ross](#) where all the horn parts are sung with new words written.

Now learn to play the blues in C - [C Blues \(3:22\)](#)

||: C | F | C | C | F | F | C | C | D-7 | G | C | G :||

Bass part is just the root, except for the walking bass, bars 9&10: D E F F# | G F E D |

After you watch it once, use these videos to help you learn the more complicated parts: [Chord voicings for C Blues \(2:52\)](#) [Walking bass part \(:44\)](#)

# Looking Ahead

Start by watching these videos, 30 minutes in all, preferably with a partner so you can discuss them. The internet is full of other videos explaining these same concepts, check them out too!

[This video on the Rosetta Stone](#) offers perspective on reading new notation (2:36)

[The traditional to approach to reading](#) (5:23)

[Putting notes together](#) (4:07)

[Different ways of notating music](#) (1:57)

[An important keyboard exercise AND a vocal workout!](#) (3:21)

[The more advanced version, with explanation.](#) (6:17)

[A check on your understanding of reading rhythms](#) (2:20)

Now you can try and learn some pieces by reading for the first time. It is a set of nine little pieces, some by me, some by famous composers. You can watch them being played, but there are no rehearsal videos. The link to the sheet music is in the bottom part of the video.

I call the set [First Recital](#) (6:15). A recital is small concert given by a student musician.

# Starting from Zero -- Melodies

## The Easiest Song In the World

This Do When 1 (2) C is re you 3 D the re per 4 D eas mi 1 E - i mi 2 E - est mi 3 E so re 3 D - ng do 4 C in mi 4 E the re 4 D world do best! 1 (2,3,4) C Yeah! 1 C Yeah! 1 C

## Mary Had a Little Lamb

Mi E Re D Do C Re D Mi E Mi E Mi E Re D Re D Re D Mi E Sol G Sol G

Mi E Re D Do C Re D Mi E Mi E Mi E Mi E Re D Re D Mi E Re D Do C

## Mary Had a Little Lamb (Rhythmic Variation)

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 (4) 1 & 2 & 3 (4) 1 & 2 & 3 4

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 4 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 (4)



# *Boundless Mercy*

First system of musical notation for "Boundless Mercy". The treble clef staff contains a melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The bass clef staff contains a bass line with notes C3, B2, A2, G2, F2, G2, C3. Fingerings are indicated above the treble staff: 1, 2, 3, 4 for the first measure; 1, 2, &, 3\_(4) for the second measure; 1, 2, 3, 4 for the third measure; and 1\_(2), 3\_(4) for the fourth measure. Chord labels C, B, A, G, F, G, C are placed below the bass staff.

Second system of musical notation for "Boundless Mercy". The treble clef staff continues the melody with notes D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3. The bass clef staff contains a bass line with notes G2, G2, G2, G2. A box labeled "D.C. AL FINE" is placed at the end of the system.

# *Oh, When the Saints Go Marching In*

First system of musical notation for "Oh, When the Saints Go Marching In". The treble clef staff contains a melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The bass clef staff contains a bass line with notes C3, B2, A2, G2, F2, G2, C3. The notation includes various rests and accidentals.

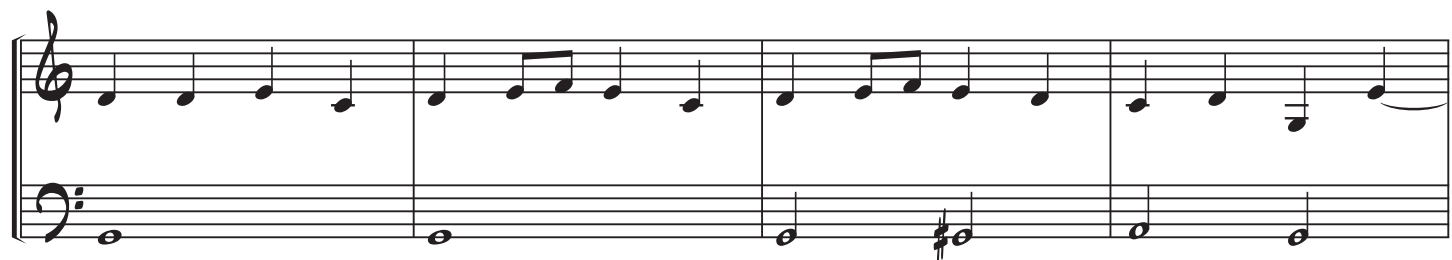
Second system of musical notation for "Oh, When the Saints Go Marching In". The treble clef staff contains a melody with notes D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3. The bass clef staff contains a bass line with notes G2, G2, G2, G2. The notation includes various rests and accidentals.

Third system of musical notation for "Oh, When the Saints Go Marching In". The treble clef staff contains a melody with notes D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3. The bass clef staff contains a bass line with notes G2, G2, G2, G2. The notation includes various rests and accidentals.

*Mozart Piano Theme*

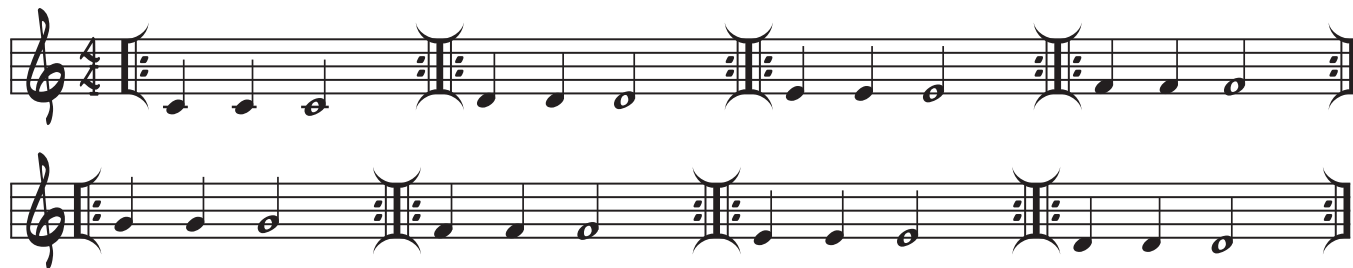


*Theme from Beethoven's 9th Symphony*

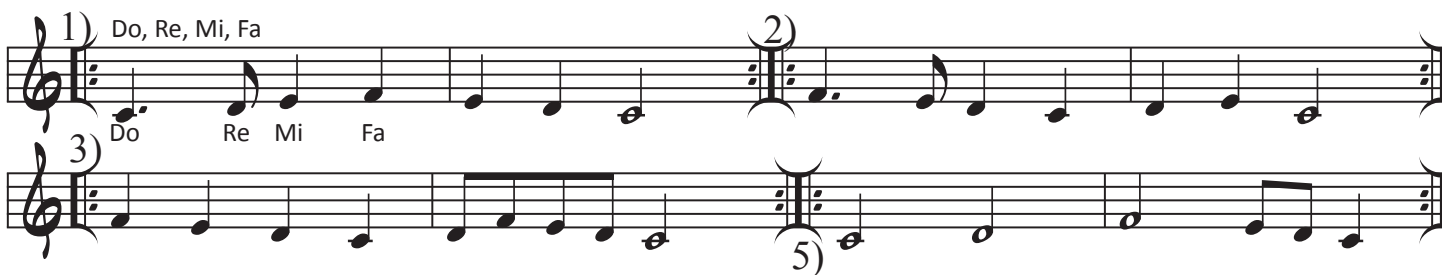
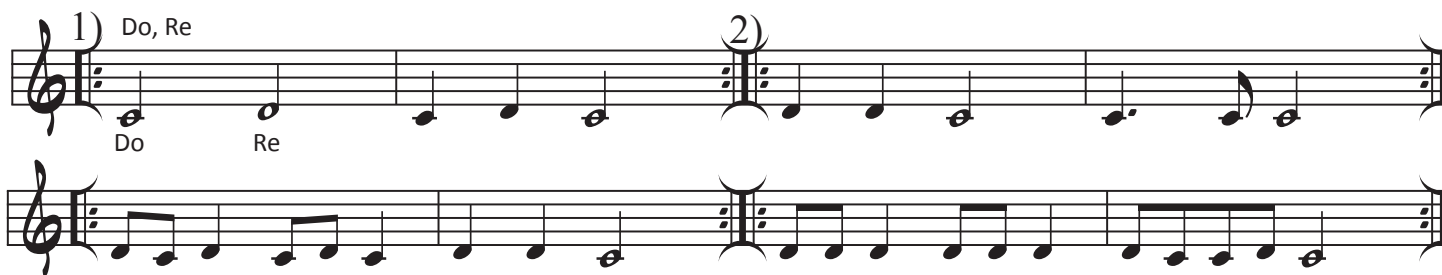


# Keyboard Call & Response

Do Do Do



## Keys C&R



## DCKeys -- Starting From Zero

Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol

## C&R Both Hands at the Keyboard

## Left Hand Bass Lines C&R

