

Learn to Play the

Learn all the notes on the piano! Play right hand melodies, and left hand chords!



Piano

Why learn to play the piano?

The piano is one of the most common musical instruments in the world. Pianos and keyboards can be found in homes, churches, orchestras, schools, and public places. A knowledge of the piano provides an incredible basis for understanding music and music theory. Learning to play melodies and chords for favorite songs can be wonderfully satisfying. Once you have learned how to correlate written music with the various keys on the piano, you are on your way to a lifetime of musical expression and enjoyment.

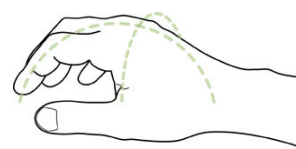
About the piano



The piano was invented in the 1700's by Bartolomeo Cristofori in Italy, as an improvement on the harpsichord, an instrument which could not be played louder or softer. The *pianoforte*, which in Italian means “soft-loud,” gave the performer the ability to change volume by changing the force with which he struck the keys. The modern piano has a total of 88 keys (52 white and 26 black) and covers a range of over 7 octaves.

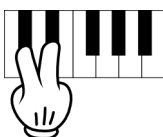
How to sit at the piano

When sitting on the piano bench, keep your back straight and tall, with a slight lean towards the piano. Your hands should be held relaxed and curved above the keys. Be sure the bench is the right distance from the piano. When sitting tall, with your fingers on the piano keys, your arms should be comfortably bent, neither reaching too far forward, nor with your elbows behind you.

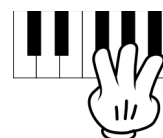


How to find your notes

To find your way around on the piano, you must learn where each note is in relation to the black keys, which form a repeating pattern of:

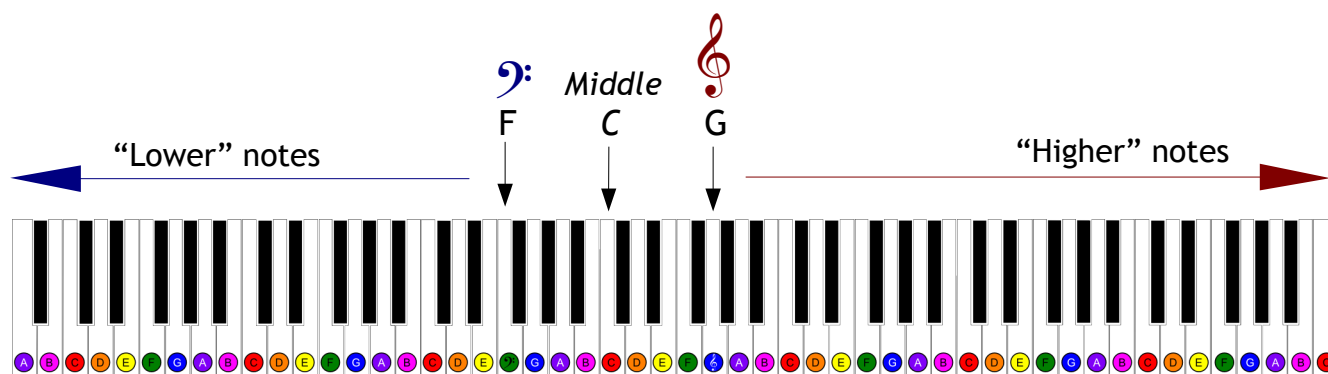


2 keys in a group,



then 3 keys in a group,

across the entire keyboard. We will start by finding each of these groups. Next, we will learn that the white key in between each group of 2 black keys is the note “D.” Knowing that the musical alphabet goes from A to G, then repeats, will help us identify all the rest of the white key notes.



How to read the songs



Right Hand

Play the notes in the top staff with your right hand, using the indicated fingers



Left Hand

Play the notes in the bottom staff with your left hand, using the indicated fingers



Sing the melody notes written on the top staff

The image displays a musical score in 4/4 time with two staves. The top staff (treble clef) contains a melody of notes C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C. The bottom staff (bass clef) contains a bass line of notes C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C. Below the staves is a piano keyboard diagram with keys color-coded to match the notes: C (red), D (orange), E (yellow), F (green), G (blue), A (purple), B (pink), and C (red). Arrows connect the notes on the staves to their corresponding keys on the keyboard. A copyright notice 'Copyright © 2013 mnnoteman.com' is visible on the keyboard diagram.

The clef secrets



The treble clef sign is just a fancy “G,” telling you where the note G is on the staff



The bass clef sign is just a fancy “F” telling you where the note F is on the staff

20 Steps to Playing the Piano

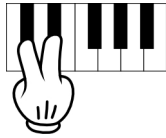
1. ☐ Demonstrate sitting tall at the piano.
2. ☐ Learn that the low notes are to the left and the high notes are to the right.
3. ☐ Name all the white keys using the musical alphabet - A B C D E F G.
4. ☐ Find all the groups of two black keys, then all the groups of three black keys.
5. ☐ Find the D's - sing "I am D, I am in the middle of the two black keys."
6. ☐ Find the C's - "Point to D, thumbs on C."
7. ☐ Find all the A's, B's, C's, D's, E's, F's, G's.
8. ☐ Identify middle C.
9. ☐ Learn the music alphabet backwards - G F E D C B A.
10. ☐ Name the black keys chromatically going up, using their # (sharp) name.
11. ☐ Name the black keys chromatically going down, using their b (flat) name.
12. ☐ Identify all piano keys by location relative to black keys
13. ☐ Identify all piano keys by SHAPE ALONE! (C's & F's, E's & B's, D, G, A)
14. ☐ Learn your finger numbers.
15. ☐ Learn to play triads in key of C (C, Dm, Em, F, G, Am Bdim), playing 3 white keys skipping one piano key between each note in the triad.
16. ☐ Learn music notation for notes middle C up to G
17. ☐ Play simple right hand melodies in C, demonstrating proper finger usage.
18. ☐ Play C block chord while singing familiar melodies.
19. ☐ Play G chord, and demonstrate switching between C chord and G chord
20. ☐ Play right hand melody with left hand chords on simple two chord songs.

Piano Songbook



1. Two Black Keys

2-3



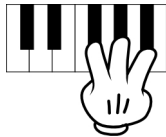
Two black keys, two black keys, one, two, one, two, two black keys.

2 3 2 3 2-3



2. Three Black Keys

2-3-4



Three black keys, three black keys, one, two, three, one, two, three, three black keys.

2 3 4 2 3 4 2-3-4



3. Twos and Threes

2-3

2-3-4

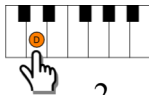
2-3

2-3-4

Two black keys, three black keys, I can find my notes with ease.



4. I Am D!



I am D. I am D. I am in the middle of the two black keys.

2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2

5. Point to the D's

6. Sail the C's

7. Busy B's

8. Awesome A's

9. Every E

10. Fun F's

11. Pulling G's


12. Finding Middle C

(No) (No) (No) YES! (No) (No) (No) (No)

13. Point to D. Thumb on C

Point to D, thumb on C. C D C D C D C.

14. Playing C to G




Right Hand

1 2 3 4 5

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

C D E F G G G, I can play right up to G!

15. Playing G to C




Right Hand

1 2 3 4 5

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

G F E D C C C, I can play back down to C.

16. Hot Cross Buns




Right Hand

1 2 3 4 5

3 2 1 3 2 1 1 1 1 2 2 2 2 3 2 1

Hot cross buns, hot cross buns, one a pen-ny, two a pen-ny, hot cross buns.

17. Mary Had a Little Lamb



Right Hand

1 2 3 4 5

3 2 1 2 3 3 3 2 2 2 3 5 5

Ma - ry had a lit - tle lamb, lit - tle lamb, lit - tle lamb,

3 2 1 2 3 3 3 3 2 2 3 2 1

Ma - ry had a lit - tle lamb, its fleece was white as snow.

18. Joyful. Joyful. We Adore Thee

1 2 3 4 5

Right Hand

3 4 5 4 3 2 1 2 3 2

Joy - ful, joy - ful we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love,

3 4 5 4 3 2 1 2 3 2 1

Hearts un - fold like flow'rs be - fore Thee, op' - ning to the sun a - bove.

19. Jingle Bells

1 2 3 4 5

Right Hand

3 5 1 2 3

Jin - gle bells, jin - gle bells, jin - gle all the way.

4 3 2 3 2 5

Oh, what fun it is to ride in a one horse o - pen sleigh. ____

3 3 5 1 2 3

Jin - gle bells, jin - gle bells, jin - gle all the way.

4 3 5 4 2 1

Oh, what fun it is to ride in a one horse o - pen sleigh.

20. When the Saints Go Marching In

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

Oh, when the saints go march-ing in, oh, when the saints go march-ing in, oh, how I

1 3 5 4 3 4 5 3 1 2 1

want to be in that num-ber, when the saints go march - ing in.

21. I See G chords!

5-3-1 5-3-1 5-3-1 1-3-5 1-3-5 1-3-5 1-3-5

Left Hand

Right Hand

22. Row, Row, Row Your Boat

SING

Row, row, row your boat gent - ly down the stream._____

Left Hand

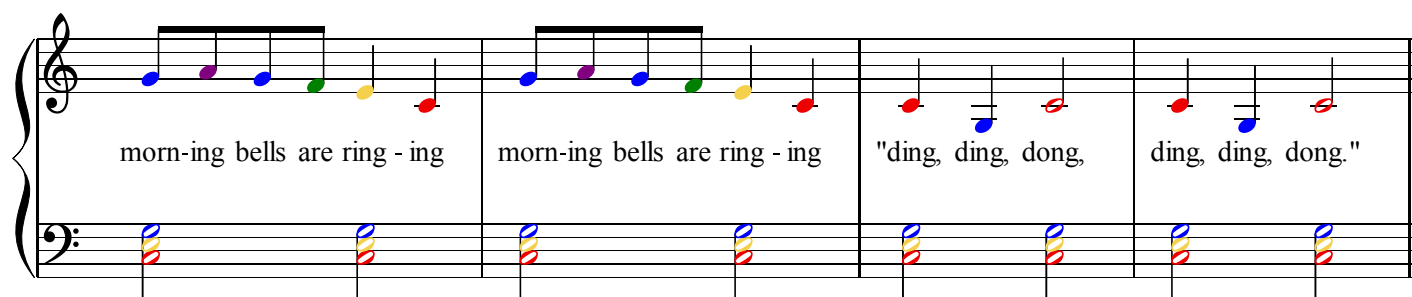
Mer - ri - ly, mer - ri - ly, mer - ri - ly, mer - ri - ly, life is but a dream._____

23. Are You Sleeping (Frere Jacques)

SING

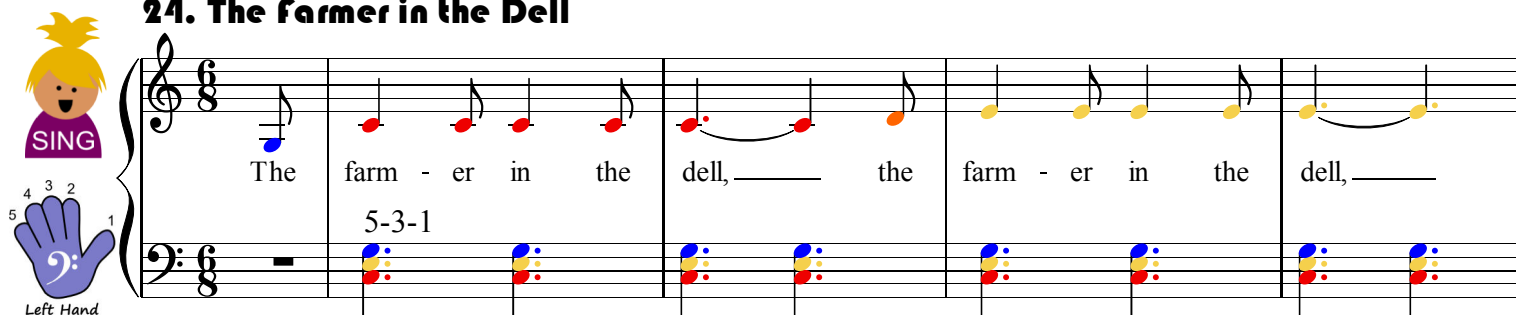
Are you sleep - ing are you sleep - ing Bro ther John, Bro - ther John,

Left Hand



morn-ing bells are ring - ing morn-ing bells are ring - ing "ding, ding, dong, ding, ding, dong."

24. The farmer in the Dell

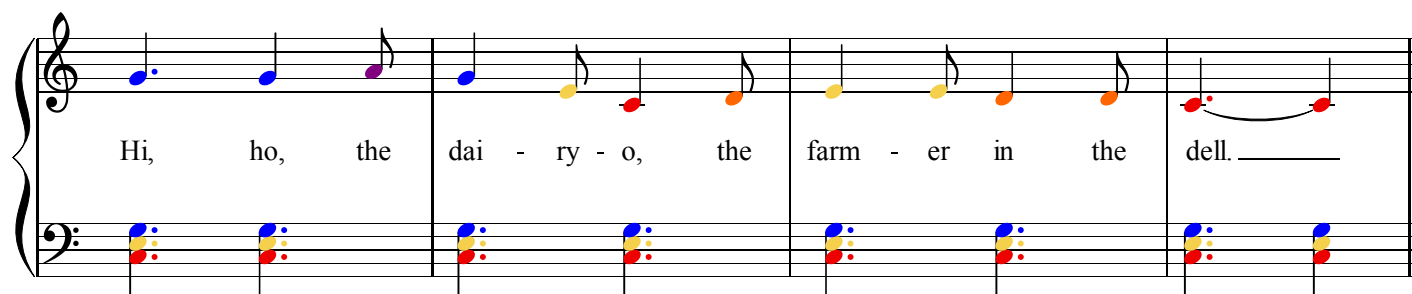


The farm - er in the dell, _____ the farm - er in the dell, _____

5-3-1

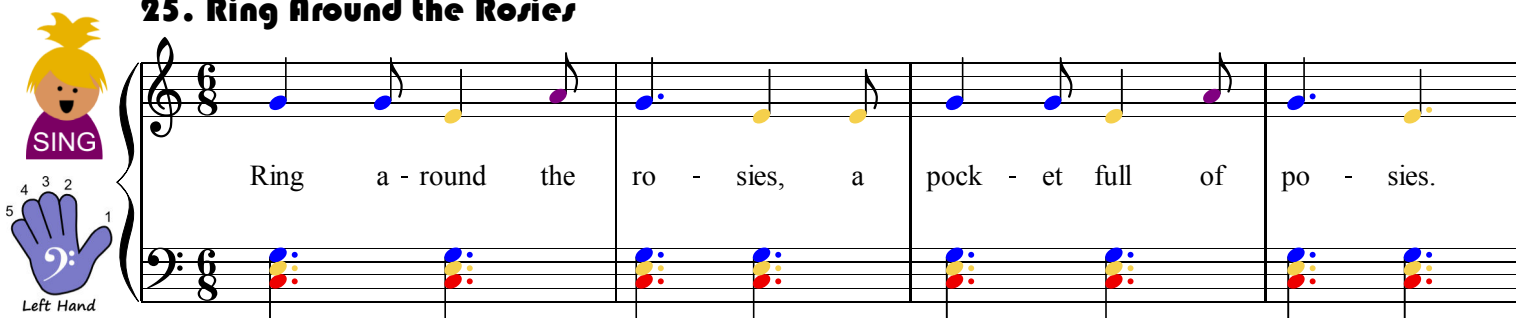
SING

Left Hand



Hi, ho, the dai - ry - o, the farm - er in the dell. _____

25. Ring Around the Rosies



Ring a - round the ro - sies, a pock - et full of po - sies.

SING

Left Hand

Ash - es, ash - es, we all fall down.

The first system of the song features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is: Ash (quarter), - (quarter), es, (quarter), ash (quarter), - (quarter), es, (quarter), we (quarter), all (quarter), fall (quarter), down. (half). The bass staff provides a simple accompaniment with chords: Ash (Bb2, D3, F3), - (Bb2, D3, F3), es, (Bb2, D3, F3), ash (Bb2, D3, F3), - (Bb2, D3, F3), es, (Bb2, D3, F3), we (Bb2, D3, F3), all (Bb2, D3, F3), fall (Bb2, D3, F3), down. (Bb2, D3, F3).

25. G Chord Quest

This exercise focuses on finding the G chord. It consists of four measures in 4/4 time. The left hand (blue) plays a sequence of chords: 5-3-1 (Bb2, D3, F3), 5-3-1 (Bb2, D3, F3), 5-3-1 (Bb2, D3, F3), and 5-3-1 (Bb2, D3, F3). The right hand (red) plays a sequence of chords: 1-3-5 (Bb2, D3, F3), 1-3-5 (Bb2, D3, F3), 1-3-5 (Bb2, D3, F3), and 1-3-5 (Bb2, D3, F3). Hand diagrams show the fingerings for each hand.

26. Swapping Chords - C & G


This exercise alternates between C and G chords. It consists of seven measures in 4/4 time. The left hand (blue) plays a sequence of chords: 5-3-1 (Bb2, D3, F3), 5-3-1 (Bb2, D3, F3), 5-3-1 (Bb2, D3, F3), 5-3-1 (Bb2, D3, F3), 5-3-1 (Bb2, D3, F3), 5-3-1 (Bb2, D3, F3), and 5-3-1 (Bb2, D3, F3). The right hand (red) plays a sequence of chords: 1-3-5 (Bb2, D3, F3), 1-3-5 (Bb2, D3, F3), 1-3-5 (Bb2, D3, F3), 1-3-5 (Bb2, D3, F3), 1-3-5 (Bb2, D3, F3), 1-3-5 (Bb2, D3, F3), and 1-3-5 (Bb2, D3, F3). Hand diagrams show the fingerings for each hand.

27. Hot Cross Buns. Both Hands!


This exercise combines the melody and accompaniment for 'Hot Cross Buns'. It consists of five measures in 4/4 time. The left hand (blue) plays the accompaniment chords: Ash (Bb2, D3, F3), - (Bb2, D3, F3), es, (Bb2, D3, F3), ash (Bb2, D3, F3), - (Bb2, D3, F3), es, (Bb2, D3, F3), we (Bb2, D3, F3), all (Bb2, D3, F3), fall (Bb2, D3, F3), down. (Bb2, D3, F3). The right hand (red) plays the melody: Ash (quarter), - (quarter), es, (quarter), ash (quarter), - (quarter), es, (quarter), we (quarter), all (quarter), fall (quarter), down. (half). Hand diagrams show the fingerings for each hand.

The second system of the song features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is: one (quarter), a (quarter), pen - (quarter), ny, (quarter), two (quarter), a (quarter), pen - (quarter), ny, (quarter), hot (quarter), cross (quarter), buns. (half). The bass staff provides a simple accompaniment with chords: one (Bb2, D3, F3), a (Bb2, D3, F3), pen - (Bb2, D3, F3), ny, (Bb2, D3, F3), two (Bb2, D3, F3), a (Bb2, D3, F3), pen - (Bb2, D3, F3), ny, (Bb2, D3, F3), hot (Bb2, D3, F3), cross (Bb2, D3, F3), buns. (Bb2, D3, F3).

28. Mary Had a little lamb. Both Hands!



Right Hand



Left Hand

Ma - ry had a lit - tle lamb, lit - tle lamb, lit - tle lamb,

5-3-1

Ma - ry had a lit - tle lamb, its fleece was white as snow.

29. Joyful. Joyful We Adore Thee. Both Hands!



Right Hand



Left Hand

Joy - ful, joy - ful we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love,

5-3-1

Hearts un - fold like flow'rs be - fore Thee, op' - ning to the sun a - bove.

Keyboard Overlay

Print this page on card stock.

Cut all around the outside of the keyboard overlay.

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Fold down
along this line.

Snip the heavy black lines separating the rectangles.

Insert the folded down white rectangle behind the keys, allowing the colors to lie on top of the black and white keys.