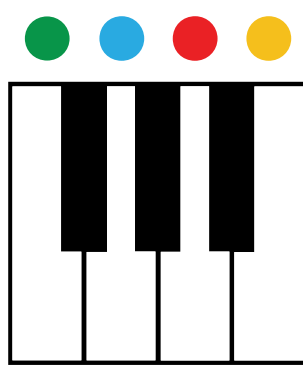
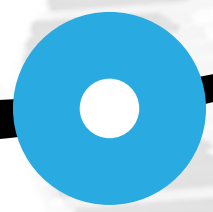


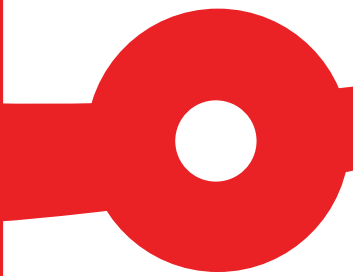
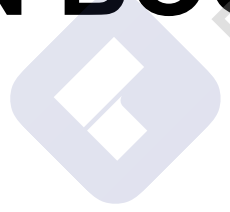
ADVANCED



play

METHOD

LESSON BOOK





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EVERYONE PLAYS

Play Method™ is a piano playing technique designed to meet everyone's needs. Whether you're five or eighty-five, Play Method™ can bring the joy of playing the piano to your fingertips in a matter of minutes. It's fun, easy to understand and gratifying to be able to play actual songs the first time you sit down at the piano. It speaks to kids, teens, parents, seniors and educators alike.

Kids: Easy to understand, even for young children and fun at the same time. Engages children into learning music in a new exciting way.

Teens: Much like Karaoke, PlayMethod™ can be used for social events where they can emulate their favorite artists. Play Method™ can also help those aspiring to be musicians themselves.

Parents: Play Method™ is a learning experience that parents can share with their children or undertake on their own. It's an activity that can enrich family time, without any difficulty.

Seniors: It's never too late to learn how to play the piano. Play Method™ is easy for all ages to understand as well as fun.

Educators: Play Method™ gives teachers a new way to engage students into playing music. Teaching students in a way that will eventually bring them to reading standard music notation.

LESSON 1:

Reading Between the Lines

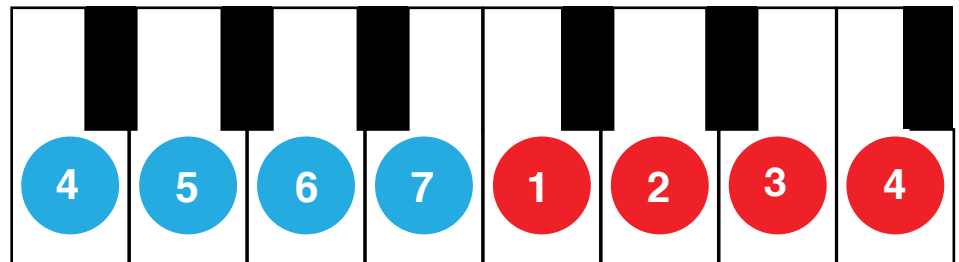
ADVANCED



Welcome to the Advanced Level. You are now at the halfway point of learning how to “sight-read.” This means that by the time you complete the four-level series, you will be able to read and play songs in standard sheet music that you have never seen before.

BEGINNER

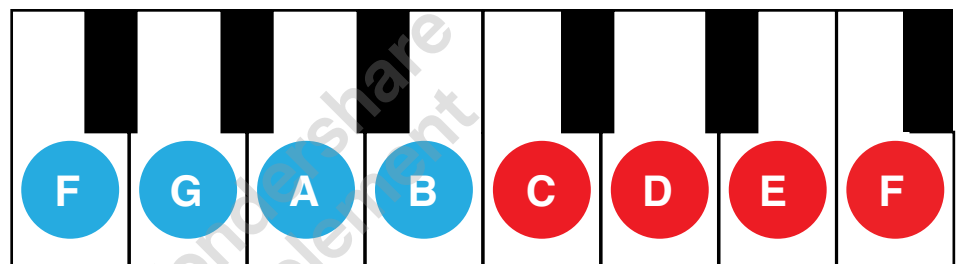
fig. 1.1



In the Beginner Level, we started you off with numbers to follow so you could play right away (fig. 1.1), then in the Intermediate Level moved you to letters (fig. 1.2). Now in the Advanced Level, there is only a dot inside each note (fig. 1.3). This is because standard sheet music doesn't have either letters or numbers, and this is a main reason why it is so difficult for many people to learn.

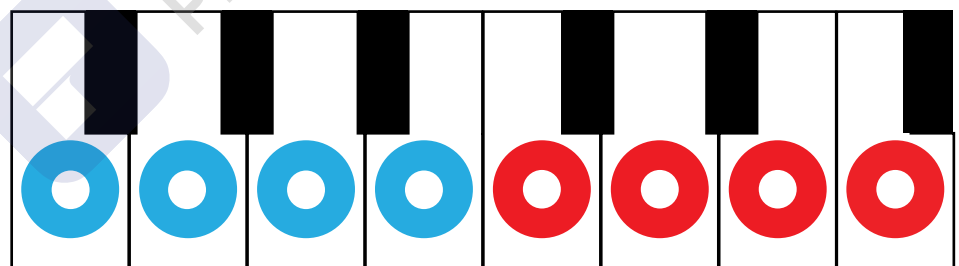
INTERMEDIATE

fig. 1.2



ADVANCED

fig. 1.3



But don't worry, in this level we will give you some practical tools and suggestions to ease the transition for you. And we're leaving the colors in there for now. After all we can't take away everything away from you all at once!

Note recognition is the ability to play a note on the piano just by looking at its location in the staff: (fig. 1.4)

“Ode to Joy” fig. 1.4

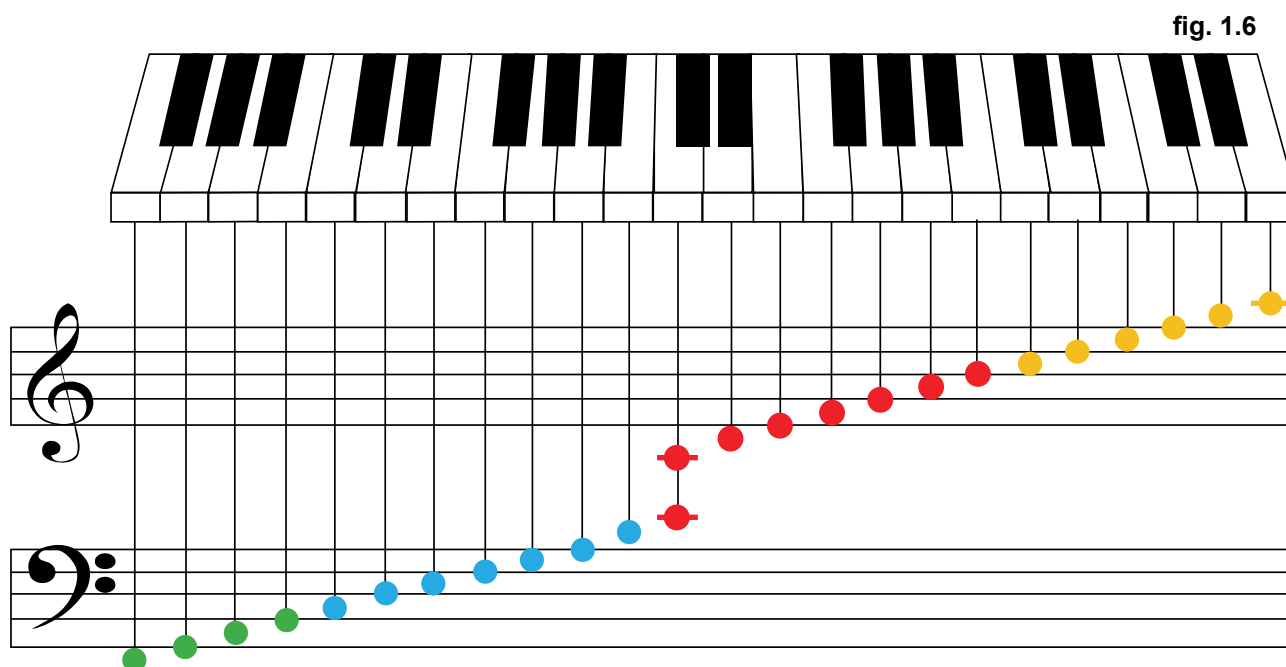
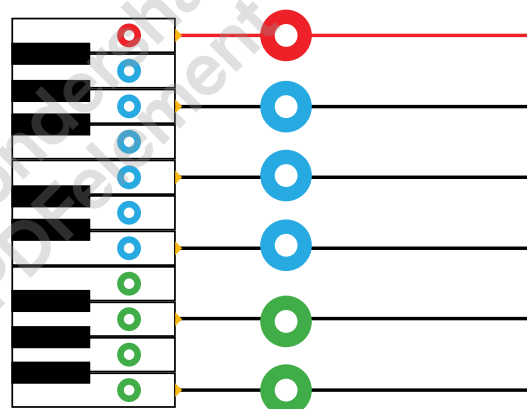
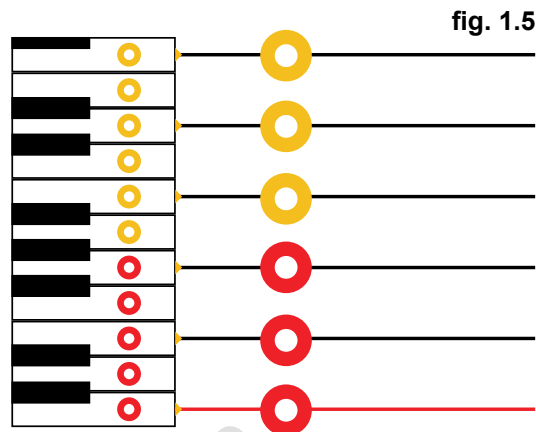
LESSON 1: (continued)

ADVANCED



Here is a chart that you can use that shows you where each dotted note is located on the piano (**fig. 1.5**). At the beginning, it will be a challenge for you, but as you continue to practice, you will gradually learn and memorize the locations of the notes. Start slowly at first, with simple songs, and then gradually move to the more difficult pieces.

Below is another chart that you can use to match each note on the staff to each key on the piano (**fig. 1.6**). With continued practice, you will gradually learn the keyboard location of all the notes. Remember, there are only a total of 28 white notes in the Play Method system. The black notes, as you know, refer to the black key to the immediate upper-right of each white key. Keep practicing, and through the process of osmosis, it will sink in. Before you know it, you will be working your way up and down the keyboard with ease.





Ode to Joy

L.V. Beethoven

The first system of musical notation for 'Ode to Joy' is presented on a grand staff. The upper staff (treble clef) features a melody of red circles connected by lines, starting on the G line and moving in a wave-like pattern. The lower staff (bass clef) contains blue circles representing chords, with horizontal lines indicating sustained notes. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The system consists of 8 measures.

The second system of musical notation continues the piece. It follows the same notation style as the first system, with a red melody line in the upper staff and blue chordal accompaniment in the lower staff. The melody continues its characteristic wave-like movement. The system consists of 8 measures.

The third system of musical notation concludes the piece. It maintains the established notation style with a red melody line and blue chordal accompaniment. The melody reaches its final notes in this system. The system consists of 8 measures.

Mary Had A Little Lamb

Children's

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is a treble clef staff with a red line, and the lower staff is a bass clef staff with a blue line. The notes are as follows:

Staff	Measure 1	Measure 2	Measure 3	Measure 4	Measure 5	Measure 6	Measure 7	Measure 8
Treble (Red)	G4, F4, E4, D4	E4, F4, G4	F4, E4, D4	E4, F4, G4, A4	G4, F4, E4, D4	E4, F4, G4, A4	G4, F4, E4, D4	E4, F4, G4, A4, G4
Bass (Blue)	C3, F2, C3	C3, F2, C3	C3, F2, C3, F2	C3, F2, C3	C3, F2, C3	C3, F2, C3	C3, F2, C3, F2	C3, F2, C3

The second system of musical notation is identical to the first system, showing the continuation of the melody and bass line.

The third system of musical notation is identical to the first system, showing the continuation of the melody and bass line.

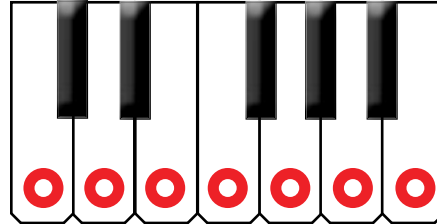
LESSON 2:

Note Patterns

ADVANCED

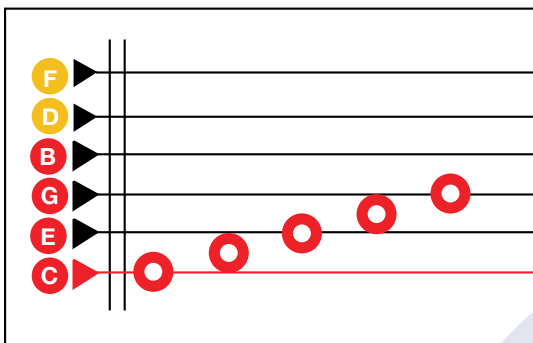


Music is made up of notes in sequences or patterns. Therefore your playing will be faster and smoother if you are able to recognize note patterns rather than thinking about each note one by one. Take a look at this note pattern:



To practice this concept, place your right hand on the piano as shown here, with your thumb on red C and your pinky on red G.

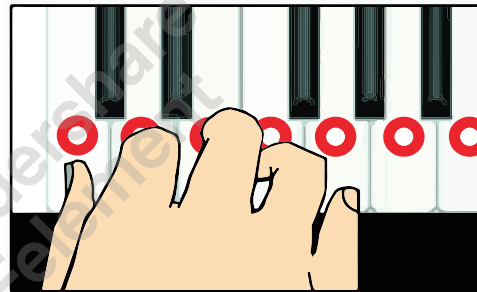
A) STEP UP PATTERN



Right Hand

If you were using only note recognition, you would identify the first note as a 1 or C, either quickly or perhaps needing to take a couple of seconds to remember it. Then you would look at the next note, and need to recall its name, and play that note, and so on. Not only that, but you would have to continually look back and forth, up and down between the music and the piano while you are playing.

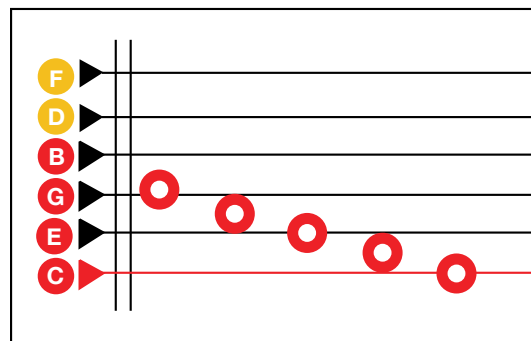
You can easily see that this series of notes moves up (towards the right on the piano) in a "step-wise" pattern. A step is when a note moves from a line to the next space to the next line, etc. The step pattern corresponds to playing the very next white key on the piano.



Now, keeping your eyes on the music (no cheating, no looking down), play those 5 notes. Do you see how easy that was and how you didn't need to look down at your hands?

If you saw the same five notes moving DOWN on the music (towards the left on the piano), you would start with your pinky on G and do exactly what you just did but in reverse.

B) STEP DOWN PATTERN



Right Hand

LESSON 2: (continued)

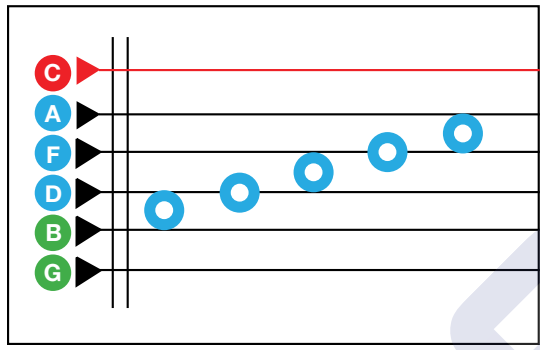
ADVANCED



Next, try the same up and down exercise with your left hand.

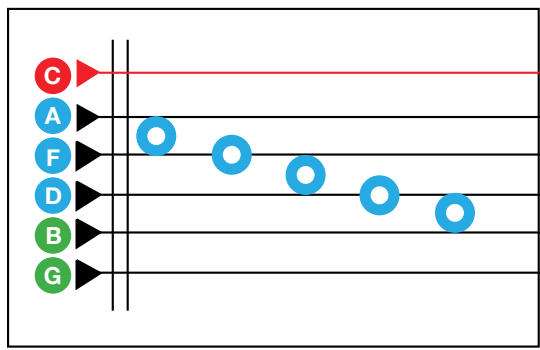


C) STEP UP PATTERN



Left Hand

D) STEP DOWN PATTERN

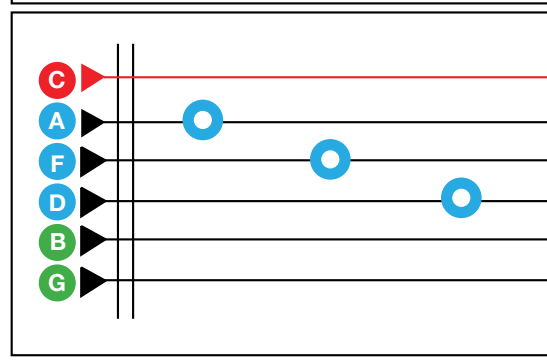
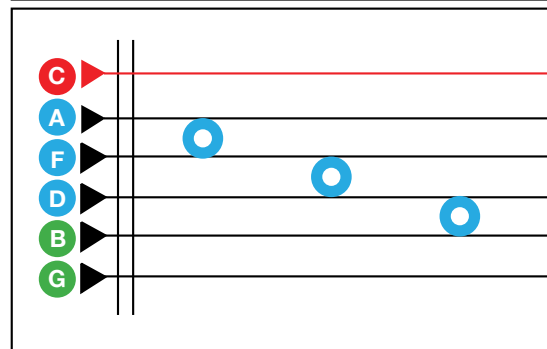
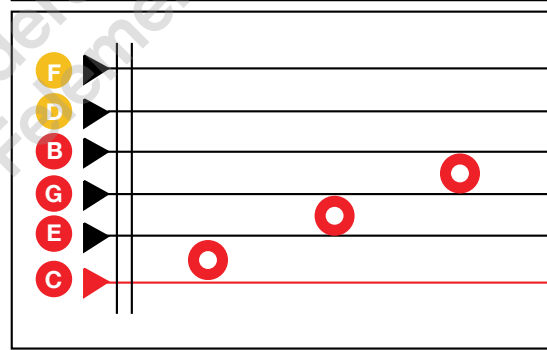
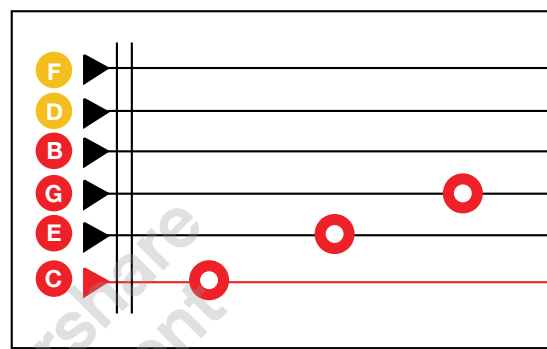


Left Hand

Finally, try both hands together. Now try it in different octaves.

Notes that move from line to line or space to space form a skip pattern. The skip pattern corresponds to playing every OTHER key on the piano.

E) SKIP PATTERNS



When The Saints Go Marching In

Traditional

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat major). The notes are: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The lower staff is an alto clef staff with a key signature of one flat. The notes are: C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2. The piece is in 2/4 time, with a 4-measure phrase. Vertical grey bars indicate the end of each measure.

The second system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat. The notes are: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The lower staff is an alto clef staff with a key signature of one flat. The notes are: C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2. The piece is in 2/4 time, with a 4-measure phrase. Vertical grey bars indicate the end of each measure.

The third system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat. The notes are: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The lower staff is an alto clef staff with a key signature of one flat. The notes are: C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2. The piece is in 2/4 time, with a 4-measure phrase. Vertical grey bars indicate the end of each measure.

LESSON 3:

More on Rhythm

ADVANCED



Rhythm, in simple terms, refers to the repeating pattern of sound we referenced in the Intermediate Level. Examples of rhythm in everyday life are a ticking clock, your pulse, or any song you listen to on your iPod. This time element is very important in music, and can be a bit complicated in standard sheet music. This lesson will serve as a transition for you, and will be fully addressed in the Professional Level..

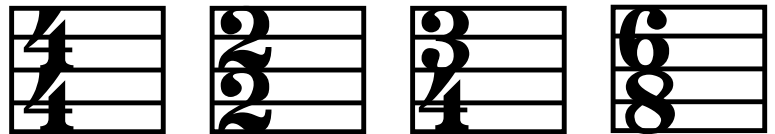


fig. 3.1

Every song has what is known as meter (sometimes called the beat). As alluded to in the Intermediate Level, the meter is the number of beats that each measure equally represents. The meter of a song is most commonly 4 (in most popular music), or sometimes 3 (like a waltz), or in some cases, 6. Another way to think about meter is how one would count along with the song.

In standard sheet music, at the beginning of each song you will see two numbers, one on top of the other, that looks like a fraction. This is called the time signature (**fig. 3.1**). Meter is represented by just the top number. We will address the bottom number in the Professional Level.

Tempo differs from meter in that it refers to the speed of a song. As mentioned in the Intermediate Level, tempo is indicated by Italian words and abbreviations (**fig. 3.2**).

fig. 3.2

ITALIAN	ENGLISH	BEATS PER MINUTE
Presto	Very Fast	168-208
Allegro	Fast	128-168
Moderato	Moderate speed	108-120
Andante	Moderate walking speed	76-108
Adagio	Slow (literally "at ease")	66-76
Largo	Slow and solemn	40-66

To help you keep a steady beat and tempo, you can use a metronome, a device that keeps time at any rate you select. Example: <http://www.metronomeonline.com/>



Jingle Bells

James L. Pierpont

The first system of musical notation for 'Jingle Bells' is presented in a 4/4 time signature. It consists of two staves. The upper staff is a treble clef staff with a red line, containing a melody of red circles connected by horizontal lines. The lower staff is a bass clef staff with a blue line, containing a bass line of blue circles connected by horizontal lines. The notes are arranged in a way that suggests a simple harmonic accompaniment for the melody.

The second system of musical notation continues the melody and bass line from the first system. It maintains the 4/4 time signature and the two-staff format. The red circles in the upper staff continue the melodic line, while the blue circles in the lower staff provide a steady accompaniment.

The third system of musical notation concludes the piece. It follows the same 4/4 time signature and two-staff format. The final notes in both the red and blue staves provide a clear ending to the short piece.

LESSON 4:

Lead Sheet Playing

ADVANCED



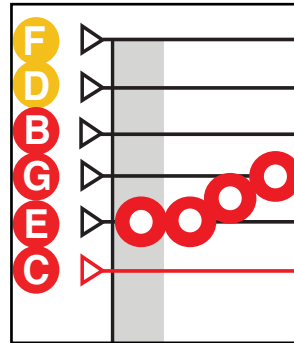
Remember in the Beginner Level when you first started off, you were playing single notes one at a time with your right hand only? You were playing what is known as the “melody”. Melody is a group of notes played one after the other. Melody is the tune; the part that you sing or hum.

Then, when you added your left hand and started playing two notes together (indicated by the gray bar), you were playing “harmony”. Harmony is a group of notes played at the same time. Harmony is the background to a song.

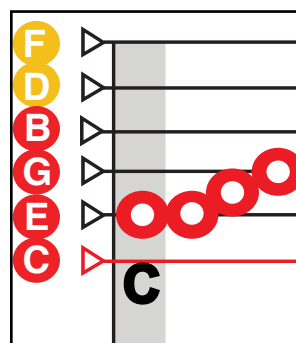
Finally, when you graduated to playing more than two notes at the same time, you were actually playing “chords,” which are three or more notes played at the same time.

Chords show up everywhere in music, even in classical music (although they are sometimes not labeled). This is because music played one note at a time is boring and over-simplistic, but when different notes are combined in different ways, your ears experience a kind of symphony, like an orchestra made up of many instruments all working together harmoniously.

The understanding of chords and chord symbols enables you to use your left hand in a slightly different and easier way. This is known as “lead sheet” playing. Let’s use our trusted “Ode to Joy” as an example. Remember how it starts?



Now, if I told you that the three notes that you are playing together (C, E, and G) make up what is known as a “C Chord”, and completely removed the bass clef but instead put a C chord symbol there, then you wouldn’t even miss the bass clef notes. Simply by recognizing the C symbol you would know to play the C - E - G in the left hand. Your right hand would play the melody as before.



There is a lot more to lead sheet playing, but this should give you the general idea. Keep an eye on our website, www.playmethod.com for lead sheet songs.

Alouette

Traditional Folk Song

The first system of musical notation for 'Alouette' consists of two staves. The upper staff is a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat major) and a common time signature. It contains a melody of red notes with stems, including quarter and eighth notes, and rests. The lower staff is a bass clef staff with a common time signature, containing blue notes with stems, including quarter and eighth notes, and rests. Vertical grey bars indicate the start of measures.

The second system of musical notation continues the piece. The upper staff features a melodic line with red notes and a few yellow notes. The lower staff continues with blue notes. The notation includes various rhythmic values and rests, with vertical grey bars marking the measures.

The third system of musical notation concludes the piece. It follows the same two-staff format as the previous systems, with red notes in the upper staff and blue notes in the lower staff. The notation includes various rhythmic values and rests, with vertical grey bars marking the measures.

LESSON 5:

Sight-reading Tips

ADVANCED

Here are a few pointers to help your sight-reading.

Tip #1 - Focus on rhythm

Rhythm is the most essential part of sight reading. If you play rhythm correctly but not pitch, at least you can stay in the right place. The opposite is not true.

If you don't have a firm grasp of rhythm, this is where you should start. You can practice rhythm sight reading with any sheet music. Just ignore the pitches and only read the rhythms. Later you can go back through and practice reading the rhythms and pitches together.

Tip #2 - Don't stop when you make a mistake

So obvious, and yet surprisingly counter-instinctual. When we make a mistake, especially during an important performance, the temptation is strong to go back and fix it. But everyone knows this is impossible – time in music only moves forward. It's done, shrug it off and move on. (If there's a repeat, you'll get a second chance!)

Not only is it futile, but it's actually counter-productive to stop and try to fix performance mistakes. You draw attention to an error your audience otherwise may not have noticed, and you make a second error by stopping time!

Learn how to plow through your mistakes rather than stopping to lament. Your judges will review you more favorably, you'll better keep up with the ensemble if you're not playing solo, and your audience will enjoy the music better uninterrupted.

Tip #3 - Let the most difficult passage set your tempo

This tip I picked up years ago from a wise band director. It's a smart way to set the tempo when you're sight reading. (You've never heard the piece before, so you can't use your memory of what it sounds like for reference.)

Of course you're going to observe the composer's tempo guidelines, but you'll have room for interpretation as the performer. The most important thing when you're choosing a tempo for sight reading is that it not prohibit you from getting through the piece successfully. And the most common tempo mistake made by inexperienced sight readers is to choose one that's too fast.

The way to ensure that you don't choose a tempo that's too fast is to base it around the most difficult passage. While you're looking over the music just before playing, find the part that looks most challenging. Finger through it on your instrument at the tempo you have in mind and be confident you can get through without making a slew of mistakes. If you don't think you can, slow down the tempo a bit at a time until you have one that works.

LESSON 5: (continued)

ADVANCED

Tip #4 - Learn to look ahead

People are often surprised to learn that advanced sight readers aren't looking at the notes they're playing. Rather they already looked at them, and are always looking at least a few beats ahead of where they're playing.

Think about it. You're sight reading, so you've never seen this music before, save the brief moment you had to look it over before you started playing. If you're just taking in the notes one at a time as you're playing them, you're setting yourself up for disaster. Imagine driving a car and only watching the spot of pavement that's just in front of your front fender.

You need to learn how to be reading one measure while playing the measure that came before it. The coordination is a bit tricky, but it's well worth the time investment to learn this skill.

Canon

Pachelbel



Canon

Pachelbel



WHAT'S NEXT?

Congratulations on completing the Advanced Level. You have jumped your third hurdle and are on your way to reading and playing standard sheet music. Before moving on to the Professional Level, I suggest that you play a variety of songs in the Advance Level, which you can find at www.playmethod.com.

This way, not only will you be better prepared for the next level, but you will be playing lots of songs in different genres and styles. After all, that's what the method is about — having fun playing music. We are a young company, and are always looking for ways to improve the method, so feel free to send us feedback at info@playmethod.com. Best of luck in the Professional Level.