

Piano Playing Docs | Methods

JJ van Zon, 2021

Piano Motion Symbols

Introduction

This is an idea for a notation for that might extend fingering notation from just numbers to additional symbols, indicating how the hands and body might move.

Piano playing may involve:

- move, press, stretch, turn or stationary
- fingers, wrist, arm and torso
- in x, y or z directions.

Not all body parts or motions seem equally involved.

The symbols aim to be a quite literal representation of body and motion, while still schematic and hopefully not ambiguous.




Depicting things in 3 dimensions, the symbols may be like looking down at the hands in a sort of perspective projection. To represent depth, diagonal lines might be used.

Basic elements might be:

	Finger		Move		Loose
	Fingers		Rotate		Tight
	Wrist		Stationary		
	Torso / arms		Press		







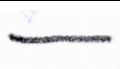

Here is how some things might work in 3 dimensions:

	Move left / right		Rotate X-Y
	Move up / down		Rotate Y-Z







	Move toward face		Rotate X-Z
	Move away from face		

General

These general moves may involve both fingers and wrist.

	Reach sideways	Then let go, move hand back.
	Reach sideways	Then let go, move hand back.
	Stretch sideways	Stretching fingers wider. But trying to release soon.
	Reach black keys	If arpeggiated, might prefer crossing over instead
	Reach white keys	"
	Stretch diagonally	Composite of stretch sideways and reach for black keys.
	Resting on keys	
	Slightly	Moving as indicated between braces, but more slightly.

Jumps

	Hand upward (left)	
	Hand upward (right)	
	Gravity assist (left)	Falling into key with gravity.
	Gravity assist (right)	Falling into key with gravity.
	Bow jump (sideways)	
	Controlled jump (sideways)	Though grace might desire a bowy move, a jump may be rather big, and might need some control, so perhaps move towards first, then press.



Fall in and then
raise out of key

Special case for demonstration.

Crossing Over

May feel semi-smooth.





















	Cross over (large)		Thumb under finger / left hand		With wrist turn (thumb under finger / left hand)
	Cross over (small)		Finger over thumb / left hand		With wrist turn (finger over thumb / left hand)
			Finger over thumb / right hand		With wrist turn (thumb under finger / right hand)
			Thumb under finger / right hand		With wrist turn (finger over thumb / right hand)

Fingers


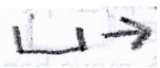
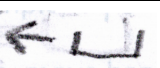



	Flat Fingers	Pronounced Fingers	Curved Fingers
1 Finger			
1 Finger			
2 Fingers			
3 Fingers			
4 Fingers			
5 Fingers			

	Switch finger (in place)	Part of existing fingering notation.
	Switch finger (at different times)	At different times same key with different fingers.
	Finger move into keys	Motion coming out of the fingers.





Wrist

	Wrist with flat fingers		Wrist tilted (flat fingers)		Wrist move (right)		Wrist pivot		Wrist flapping (left)
	Wrist pronounced		Wrist tilted (pronounced)		Wrist move (left)		Wrist pivot (left)		Wrist flapping (right)
	Wrist curved		Wrist tilted (curved)		Wrist move (towards white keys)		Wrist pivot (right)		Wrist rotation
	Wrist high		Wrist tilted (high)		Wrist move (towards black keys)		Wrist pivot (left and right)		Wrist move into keys. Motion coming out of the wrist.

Torso

	Torso (+ arms)
	Torso sway (right)
	Torso sway (left)
	Torso tilt forward
	Torso tilt backward
	Torso pivot sideways (back and legs)

Arm

	Arm outward (left)
	Arm inward (left)
	Arm placing torso in front of right hand
	Arm move into key. Motion coming out of the arm.

Elbow



Elbow sideways

Some Fingers Deeper In Keys

3 fingers:

	Flat Fingers	Pronounced Fingers	Curved Fingers
Mid finger			
Outer fingers			
Right finger			

4 fingers:



Flat / outer fingers deeper in keys



Curved / outer fingers deeper in keys



Curved / 3rd finger deeper in keys

Composites

To demonstrate some possible flexibility using the symbols.



3 fingers: flat, pronounced and curved



Pronounced wrist tight



Curved wrist loose



Curved wrist stationary



Pronounced wrist pressed



Curved wrist flapping, mid finger pressed



Curved wrist hopping. 1st and last note pressed. Middle note moved towards black keys, pressed with 3rd finger.