

How to Play Piano for Beginners

Course Notes

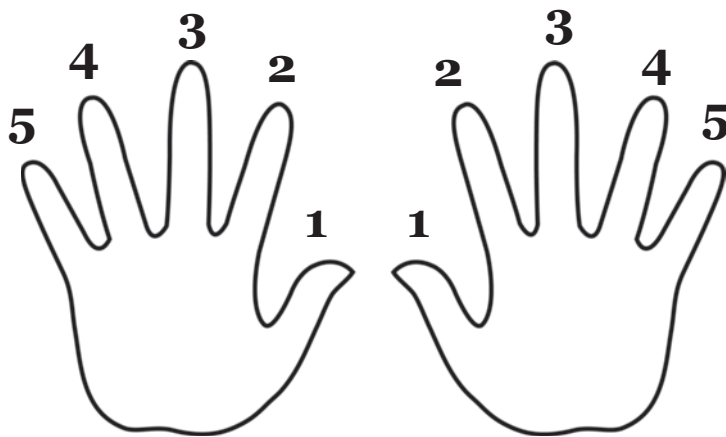
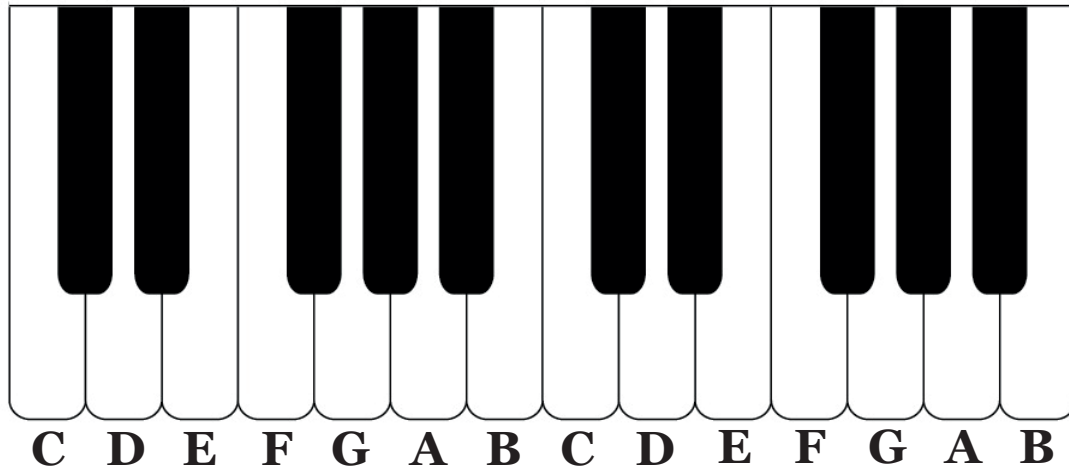
by Bill Hilton

These notes accompany my series of 21-part free piano course on YouTube. The notes for lessons 1-20 (lesson 21 has no notes) are also available as separate PDFs at www.billspianopages.com/beginners. This document simply combines them into a single, easy to download PDF.

If you've come across these notes and you're interested in learning the piano, you'll find a full list of the tutorials in the course at:

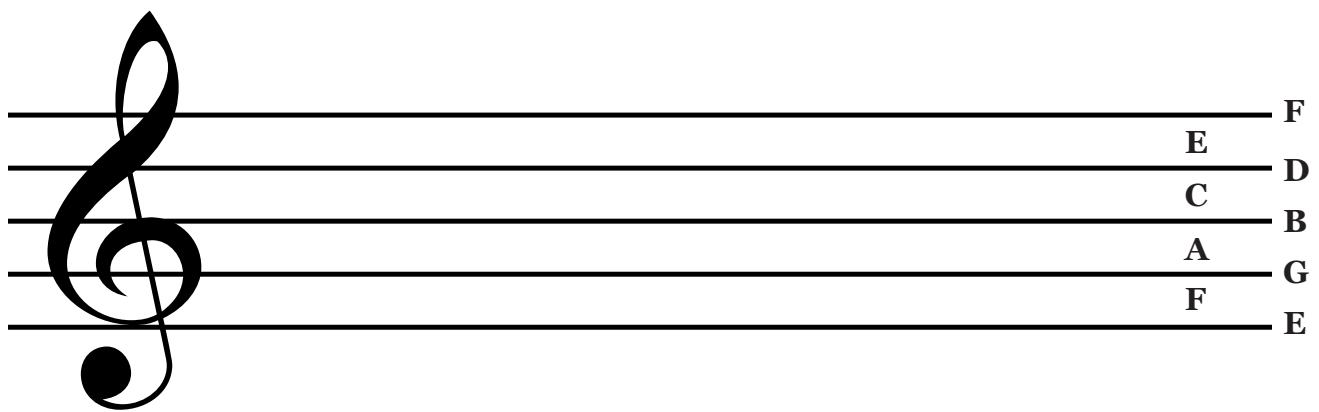
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLpOuhygfd7QnP46wUgQudOySX_z2UOhXs

Beginners' piano course: Lesson 1 notes



Beginners' piano course: Lesson 2 notes

The stave, with treble clef



The lowest line of the stave represents the E above middle C. The highest line represents the F above the C above middle C.

Single note exercise



Single note exercise musical notation in 4/4 time, consisting of four staves. Each staff contains a sequence of eighth notes with fingerings indicated by numbers 1-5 above the notes.

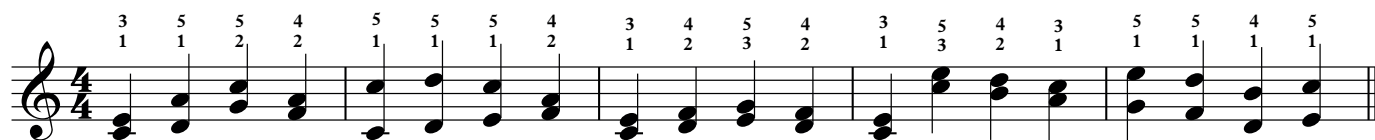
Staff 1: 1 3 5 1 | 2 3 4 5 | 1 5 4 3 | 2 4 3 2 | 1 5 4 3 | 2 1 4 5

Staff 2: 1 1 4 4 | 5 5 4 5 | 4 4 3 3 | 2 2 1 1 | 5 5 4 4 | 2 2 1 1

Staff 3: 5 5 3 3 | 2 2 1 3 | 1 2 3 5 | 1 2 3 4 | 5 3 2 1 | 2 3 2 1

Staff 4: 2 3 5 3 | 1 3 5 2 | 1 3 5 2 | 1 3 5 3 | 1 2 3 1 | 2 3 4 5

Note pairs exercise



Note pairs exercise musical notation in 4/4 time, consisting of a single staff. Each measure contains a pair of eighth notes with fingerings indicated by numbers 1-5 above the notes.

Measure 1: 3 1 | 5 1 | 5 2 | 4 2

Measure 2: 5 1 | 5 1 | 5 1 | 4 2

Measure 3: 3 1 | 4 2 | 5 3 | 4 2

Measure 4: 3 1 | 5 3 | 4 2 | 3 1

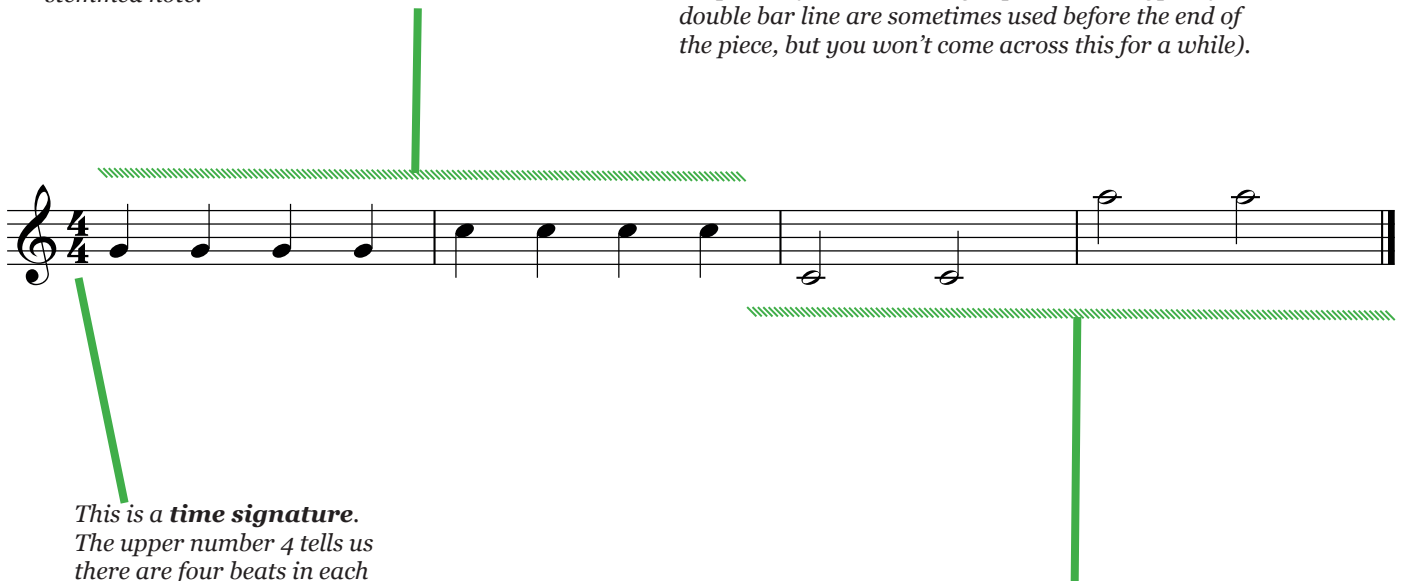
Measure 5: 5 1 | 5 1 | 4 1 | 5 1

Beginners' piano course: Lesson 3 notes

1. Some reminders...

These notes are **crotchets** or **quarter notes**. In 4/4 time each one lasts for a single beat. A crotchet is represented by a solid black note-head and a simple stem, which usually points down if the note is above the B line and up if it is above it. If the note is a B, the note usually takes the same stem direction as the previous stemmed note.

This staff is divided into four **bars** or **measures**, with a thick double bar line at the end, to show that the piece is finished (in longer pieces other types of double bar line are sometimes used before the end of the piece, but you won't come across this for a while).



This is a **time signature**. The upper number 4 tells us there are four beats in each bar, and each beat lasts for the length of a crotchet (represented by the the lower number 4).

These notes are **minims** or **half notes**. In 4/4 time each one lasts for two beats. A minim has a 'hollow' notehead. Like all stemmed notes, minims follow the same stemming rules as crotchets.

2. Exercises

(a) This is the exercise we looked at in the tutorial. Remember andante means 'at a walking pace' - but you have a fair amount of freedom to interpret what that means. Aim to play this, and the other exercises, evenly and smoothly against a steady beat.

Andante



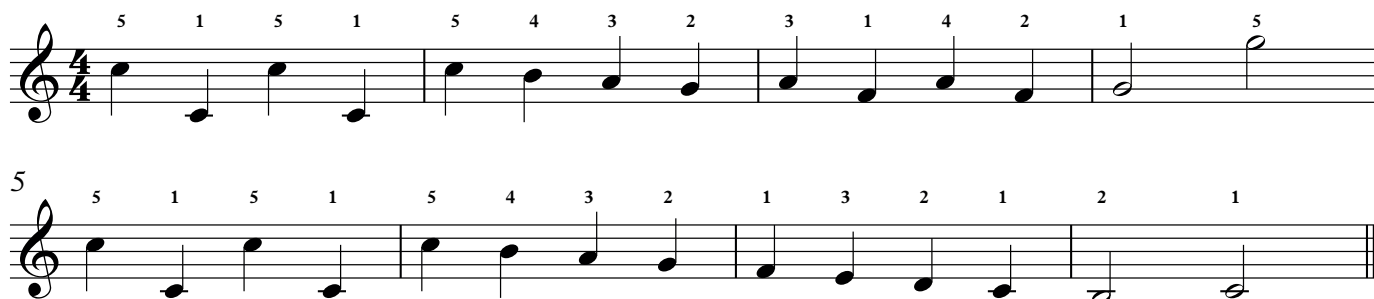
(b) Allegro is usually interpreted as something like 'fast and lively' - but not too fast, and certainly not as fast as possible. Try to play it noticeably quicker than exercise (a), while still being smooth and even. Don't worry if you can't go too quickly: it's more important to play it well, and precisely against the beat.

Allegro



(c) Lento means 'slowly', but that doesn't mean you should stop and start - this should be slower than the andante of exercise (a), but still regular. There's some interesting fingering going on here. We'll discuss this sort of thing more in the next couple of lessons, but for now follow the fingers carefully. Between the G at the end of bar 4 and the C at the start of bar 5 you have to jump (both use fifth finger). But when you get to the F with thumb in bar seven, don't jump to get your third finger on the next note, the E. Instead, move your third finger over your thumb. Likewise with the thumb and second finger on the final C-B-C.

Lento



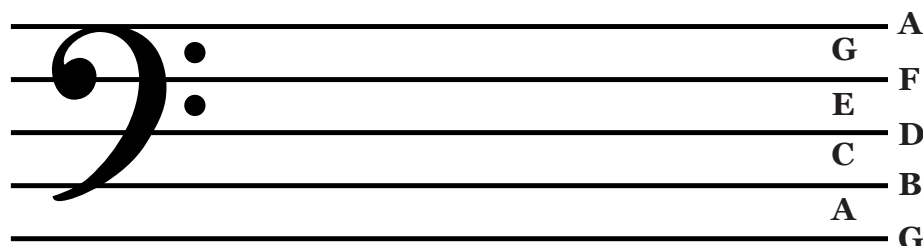
(d) Moderato means 'at a moderate speed' - so not too fast, not too slow. As I said in the tutorial, this tune is a little different because it has three beats in the bar. We won't discuss the implications of that now - just remember to count 1-2-3 rather than 1-2-3-4, and remember that the crotchets and minims still have the same values as they do in 4/4 time. So, for example, in the last bar the minim lasts for beats 1 and 2 and the crotchet is on the third beat.

Moderato



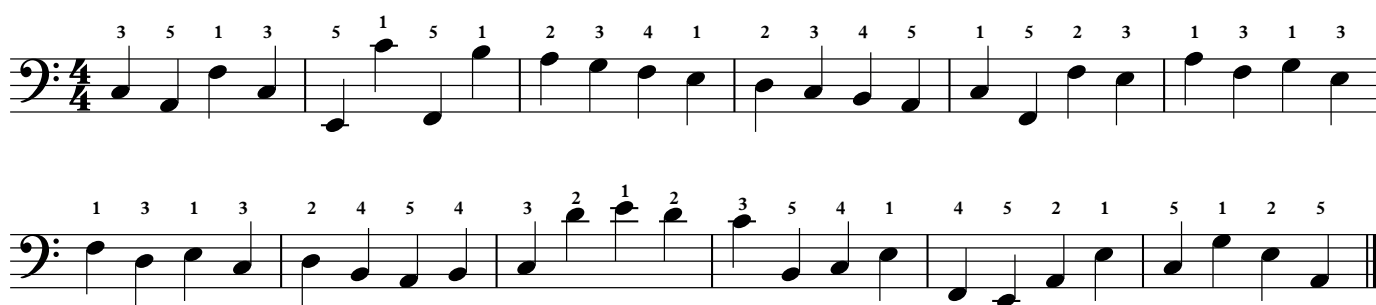
Beginners' piano course: Lesson 4 notes

1. The bass clef and stave



The highest line of the stave is the A immediately below middle C on the piano keyboard.

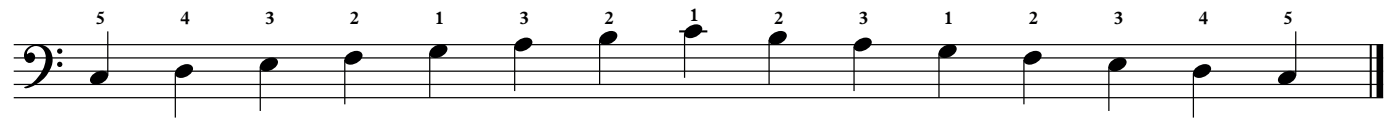
Use the exercise below to help you learn the notes of the bass stave. Play each note with the finger marked (remember, the left hand numbers fingers 1-5, from thumb out to little finger, in a mirror image of the right hand) and name each note as you play it.



Scale of C major, right hand, one octave:



Scale of C major, left hand, one octave:



Beginners' piano course: Lesson 5 notes

Piece 1

Andante

1 4 5 4 1

mp legato

5 3 2 1

5 1 1 5 2 1 3

mf

mp

5 3

Piece 2

Moderato

The musical score is for a piece in 4/4 time, marked 'Moderato'. It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system (bars 1-4) starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic in bar 1 and a piano (*p*) dynamic in bar 3. The second system (bars 5-8) features a crescendo hairpin in bar 5 and a forte (*f*) dynamic in bar 7. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below notes.

System 1 (Bars 1-4):

- Bar 1: Treble (F4, G4, A4, B4) with fingerings 1, 5, 4, 2; Bass (F2, C3) with fingering 5.
- Bar 2: Treble (B4, A4, G4, F4) with fingerings 4, 2, 1, 2; Bass (F2, C3) with fingering 2.
- Bar 3: Treble (E4, D4, C4, B3) with fingerings 1, 2, 3, 5; Bass (F2, C3) with fingering 5.
- Bar 4: Treble (A3, G3, F3, E3) with fingerings 5, 3, 2, 1; Bass (F2, C3) with fingering 5.

System 2 (Bars 5-8):

- Bar 5: Treble (D4, C4, B3, A3) with fingerings 5, 4, 3, 1; Bass (F2, C3) with fingering 1.
- Bar 6: Treble (G3, F3, E3, D3) with fingerings 3, 1, 2, 3; Bass (F2, C3) with fingering 1.
- Bar 7: Treble (C4, B3, A3, G3) with fingerings 1, 2, 3, 4; Bass (F2, C3) with fingering 1.
- Bar 8: Treble (F3, E3, D3, C3) with fingerings 2, 3, 4, 5; Bass (F2, C3) with fingering 5.

This is the piece I didn't play through in the tutorial. Have a go at it for yourself, and we'll look at it in detail at the start of the next tutorial. Couple of things to watch out for:

1. *Moderato* means 'at a moderate speed'.
2. The dynamic change between *f* (loud) and *p* (soft) in bars 3/4 is quite sudden: make sure it's clear without being ridiculously over the top. When you get to the *crescendo* (getting louder) hairpin in bars 5/6 make sure the increase in volume is steady.
3. The fingering in bar 7 might look tricky at first, but it's just the same as a descending C major scale, played two hands together.

Common dynamic terms

pp (Italian: *pianissimo*): very soft

p (Italian: *piano*): soft

mp (*mezzo piano*): moderately soft

mf (*mezzo forte*): moderately loud

f (*forte*): loud

ff (*fortissimo*): very loud

Mezzo is pronounced “MET-zo” and *forte* is “FOR-tay”.

crescendo (pron. “kre-SHEN-doh”, widening hairpin): get louder

diminuendo (“dim-in-you-END-oh”, narrowing hairpin): get softer

Beginners' piano course: Lesson 6 notes

Lullaby

Andante

The musical score for 'Lullaby' is written in 3/4 time and marked Andante. It consists of two systems of piano accompaniment. The first system contains 8 measures, and the second system contains 8 measures, starting at measure 9. The music is written for piano with a treble and bass clef. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below notes. Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *pp* (pianissimo). A repeat sign is present in the middle of each system.

System 1 (Measures 1-8):

- Measure 1: Treble clef, *mp*. Notes: C4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter). Bass clef, *mp*. Notes: C3 (half).
- Measure 2: Treble clef, *mp*. Notes: F4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter). Bass clef, *mp*. Notes: D3 (half).
- Measure 3: Treble clef, *mp*. Notes: B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), D5 (quarter). Bass clef, *mp*. Notes: E3 (half).
- Measure 4: Treble clef, *mp*. Notes: E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter). Bass clef, *mp*. Notes: F3 (half).
- Measure 5: Treble clef, *mp*. Notes: F4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter). Bass clef, *mp*. Notes: G3 (half).
- Measure 6: Treble clef, *mp*. Notes: B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), D5 (quarter). Bass clef, *mp*. Notes: A3 (half).
- Measure 7: Treble clef, *mp*. Notes: E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter). Bass clef, *mp*. Notes: B3 (half).
- Measure 8: Treble clef, *mp*. Notes: F4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter). Bass clef, *mp*. Notes: C4 (half).

System 2 (Measures 9-16):

- Measure 9: Treble clef, *mp*. Notes: B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), D5 (quarter). Bass clef, *mp*. Notes: D3 (half).
- Measure 10: Treble clef, *mp*. Notes: E4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), G4 (quarter). Bass clef, *mp*. Notes: E3 (half).
- Measure 11: Treble clef, *mp*. Notes: A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter). Bass clef, *mp*. Notes: F3 (half).
- Measure 12: Treble clef, *mp*. Notes: D5 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter). Bass clef, *mp*. Notes: G3 (half).
- Measure 13: Treble clef, *mp*. Notes: A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter). Bass clef, *mp*. Notes: A3 (half).
- Measure 14: Treble clef, *mp*. Notes: E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter). Bass clef, *mp*. Notes: B3 (half).
- Measure 15: Treble clef, *mp*. Notes: F4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter). Bass clef, *mp*. Notes: C4 (half).
- Measure 16: Treble clef, *mp*. Notes: B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), D5 (quarter). Bass clef, *mp*. Notes: D3 (half).

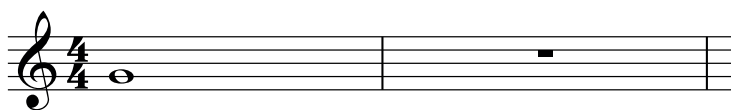
Some important rests...



This bar contains two crotchet (quarter note) rests on beats 2 and 4.



This bar contains a minim (half note) rest on beats 3 and 4.



The first bar of this stave contains a semibreve (whole note), and the second bar contains a semibreve rest, covering all four beats.

An important thing to remember about rests is that, unlike notes, they *almost* always appear in the same position on the staff. So the crotchet rest always stretches from the top space to the bottom, the minim rest always sits on top of the middle line and the semibreve rest always hangs from the second line from the top, whatever clef you are in. Exceptions are possible, especially when two ‘voices’ (i.e., melodies, usually) are being represented on the same clef and one has a rest at a point when another doesn’t. However, these are relatively rare, at least in the kind of music you’ll be dealing with in the early stages of learning to play the piano.

The scale of G major, left and right hands



Note that the F sharp (F#, see video for explanation) is notated in both clefs as a regular F (i.e., top line of the treble stave, second-from-top line of the bass stave) with a sharp sign (#) in front of it.

In music we always call # a 'sharp sign', and never a 'pound sign' or 'hash'. There are other ways of showing that the F is an F sharp (for example, by using a key signature, which we'll learn about soon). If we simply do it by putting the sharp sign in front of the note, as we have done here, we refer to the sign as an *accidental*.

Beginners' piano course: Lesson 7 notes

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star (...sort of)

The musical score is written for piano in 4/4 time. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system starts with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The second system begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic, which then changes back to mezzo-piano (*mp*) in the third measure. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below notes. The piece concludes with fermatas (pause signs) over the final notes in both the treble and bass staves.

NB the little 'hats' over the final Cs in treble and bass clefs the final bar are pause signs. Pause signs tell you that you should pause and linger on the note (or rest) a bit longer than the written length suggests. Pauses can appear anywhere in a piece of music, but I've included these on the final notes to give the piece a more definite and satisfying ending.

The Italian word for a pause sign is *fermata*.

Practise your accidentals

Play through each of the following snippets and work out which notes are natural (i.e. the ordinary white notes) and which are being sharpened by accidentals. Remember that accidentals hold their force for the rest of the bar that contains them, and are cancelled by bar lines and natural signs. I've included courtesy accidentals where relevant.

Answers are on the next page (no peeking!).



Answers

1.



n n s s n n s s

Detailed description: A musical staff in 4/4 time with a treble clef. It contains two measures of music. The first measure has four eighth notes: C4 (natural), D4 (natural), E4 (sharp), and F4 (natural). The second measure has four eighth notes: G4 (flat), A4 (natural), B4 (sharp), and C5 (natural). Below the staff, the notes are labeled with 'n' for natural and 's' for sharp: n n s s n n s s.

n = natural

s = sharp

2.



n s n n n n n n

Detailed description: A musical staff in 4/4 time with a treble clef. It contains two measures of music. The first measure has four eighth notes: C4 (natural), D4 (sharp), E4 (natural), and F4 (flat). The second measure has four eighth notes: G4 (natural), A4 (natural), B4 (natural), and C5 (natural). Below the staff, the notes are labeled with 'n' for natural and 's' for sharp: n s n n n n n n.

3.



n n n n n n s s s s n s

Detailed description: A musical staff in 4/4 time with a treble clef. It contains two measures of music. The first measure has eight sixteenth notes: C4 (natural), D4 (natural), E4 (natural), F4 (natural), G4 (natural), A4 (natural), B4 (sharp), and C5 (sharp). The second measure has eight sixteenth notes: D5 (sharp), E5 (flat), F5 (flat), G5 (flat), A5 (flat), B5 (flat), C6 (natural), and D6 (flat). Below the staff, the notes are labeled with 'n' for natural and 's' for sharp: n n n n n n s s s s n s.

Beginners' piano course: Lesson 8 notes

Dance

Stately but flowing

The musical score for 'Dance' is written in 3/4 time and consists of three systems of music. The first system begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The melody in the treble clef is marked with fingerings: 5, 1, 5, 3, 1, 5, 2, 3, 1. The bass line starts with a 5 in the first measure and a 1 in the second. The second system begins at measure 6 and includes a piano (*p*) dynamic section starting at measure 8, indicated by a double bar line. Fingerings for the piano section are 5, 3, 1, 2 in the treble and 1, 5, 3 in the bass. The third system begins at measure 11 and includes a 'subito *p*' (suddenly piano) instruction and a 'rit.' (ritardando) section. Fingerings for the third system are 1, 3, 2, 1, 4 in the treble and 1, 5, 4, 2, 1, 5 in the bass. The score concludes with a double bar line.

P.S. I didn't say this in the video, but don't forget to keep practising the scales of C major and G major. We'll be learning more scales in lesson 9!

Beginners' piano course: Lesson 9 notes

Moderato

The musical score is for a piece in G major, 4/4 time, marked Moderato. It consists of 16 measures. The first system (measures 1-8) includes fingerings (1, 5, 2, 1, 2, 2, 1, 4, 1, 1, 4) and dynamics (mf, mp, mf). The second system (measures 9-12) includes fingerings (3, 5, 1, 3, 5, 2, 5, 1, 3, 5) and dynamics (f, mp). The third system (measures 13-16) includes fingerings (1, 5, 5) and dynamics (mf, f). The piece features a variety of dynamics including *mf*, *mp*, *f*, and *mp*, and includes fingerings, slurs, and repeat signs.

There isn't anything much here that you haven't seen before. The only slightly new thing are the double repeat marks at the start of bar 9 and the end of bar 16. These show that you play the section within the repeat marks twice (in tutorial 8's piece the repeat started from the start of the piece, and what that happens convention dictates that an 'opening' repeat mark isn't needed). So here you play bars 1-8, then bars 9-16, then bars 9-16 again. You'll also find a couple of dotted minims — I discussed those in the tutorial.

Beginners' piano course: Lesson 10 notes

1. This week's piece:

Flowing

The musical score for 'Flowing' is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system (measures 1-8) begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The right hand plays a melody with eighth and quarter notes, while the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment of chords. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below notes. The second system (measures 9-16) continues the piece, ending with a piano-piano (*pp*) dynamic. The right hand features a melodic line with some slurs, and the left hand continues with chordal accompaniment. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

2. All the scales we’ve covered so far...

As I mentioned in the tutorial, I’m including in this document both the new scales and the ones we’ve already done. I’ve scored them in two octaves, hands together — thought don’t worry if you’re still playing most of them hands separately, or just hands together over one octave, for a while yet.

Because these are scored for two octaves you’ll notice there are some pretty dramatic ledger lines. I’ve scored the scales like this partly out of necessity and partly because I want you to have some practice figuring out notes above and below the stave. If you get stuck, refer to my demonstrations of each scale in the tutorial to figure out which note is which.

Accidentals in brackets are courtesy accidentals - they don’t have to be there (because, if you recall, once a note has been given an accidental it stays in force for the rest of the bar) but I’ve put them in to help you visualise the structure of the scales more clearly.

C major

The musical score for the C major scale is presented in two systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) in 4/4 time. The first system covers the first octave, with the right hand ascending and the left hand descending. The second system covers the second octave, with the right hand descending and the left hand ascending. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below the notes. The piece concludes with a final whole note chord in the right hand.

G major

The musical score for the G major scale is presented in two systems, each with a grand staff in 4/4 time. The first system covers the first octave, with the right hand ascending and the left hand descending. The second system covers the second octave, with the right hand descending and the left hand ascending. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5. The piece concludes with a final whole note chord in the right hand.

D major

The musical score for the D major scale is presented in two systems, each with a grand staff in 4/4 time. The first system covers the first octave, with the right hand ascending and the left hand descending. The second system covers the second octave, with the right hand descending and the left hand ascending. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5. The piece concludes with a final whole note chord in the right hand.

F major

Handwritten musical notation for the F major scale in 4/4 time. The scale is written in two systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system covers the first two octaves, and the second system covers the next two octaves. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below the notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

A harmonic minor

Handwritten musical notation for the A harmonic minor scale in 4/4 time. The scale is written in two systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system covers the first two octaves, and the second system covers the next two octaves. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below the notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

A natural minor

Handwritten musical notation for the A natural minor scale in 4/4 time. The scale is written in two systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system covers the first two octaves, and the second system covers the next two octaves. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below the notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Beginners' piano course: Lesson 11 notes

1. Leaps and Bounds

Moderato

The musical score is written for piano in 3/4 time, marked **Moderato**. It consists of two systems of music. The first system (measures 1-8) features a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a steady accompaniment of chords. Dynamics include *mp* (measures 1-2), *mf* (measures 5-6), and *sim.* (measures 7-8). The second system (measures 9-16) continues the piece, with dynamics including *mp* (measures 9-10), *f* (measure 11), *mf* (measures 12-13), and *mp* (measures 14-16). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, slurs, and articulation marks.

4 1 1

mp *mf*

Red. *sim.*

9 1

mp *f* *mf* *mp*

2. Melody in G

Steadily

The first system of the musical score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of six measures. The right hand (treble clef) begins with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. A slur covers measures 2 through 5, containing eighth notes D5, E5, F#5, G5, and A5. The final measure of the system has a half note B5. Fingering numbers 5, 2, and 1 are placed above the first, fourth, and fifth measures respectively. The left hand (bass clef) plays a steady accompaniment of chords: G2-B2, G2-B2, G2-B2, G2-B2, G2-B2, and G2-B2. The dynamic marking *mf* is placed below the first measure.

l.h. sempre piano

The second system of the musical score consists of five measures, numbered 7 through 11. The right hand continues the melody with quarter notes D5, E5, and F#5 in measure 7, followed by a half note G5. In measure 8, there is a whole rest. In measure 9, there is a half note G5, followed by quarter notes A5, B5, and C6. A slur covers measures 10 and 11, containing eighth notes D6, E6, and F#6, ending with a half note G6. Fingering numbers 5, 2, and 1 are placed above measures 9, 10, and 11 respectively. The left hand continues with chords: G2-B2, G2-B2, G2-B2, G2-B2, and G2-B2. The dynamic marking *f* is placed below measure 7, and *p* is placed below measure 9.

(sempre piano)

The third system of the musical score consists of five measures, numbered 12 through 16. The right hand begins with a half note G5 in measure 12, followed by quarter notes A5, B5, and C6. A slur covers measures 13 through 15, containing eighth notes D6, E6, and F#6, ending with a half note G6. The final measure (16) has a whole rest. Fingering number 1 is placed above measure 13. The left hand continues with chords: G2-B2, G2-B2, G2-B2, G2-B2, and G2-B2. The dynamic marking *mf* is placed below measure 13.

3. Blues in C

Steadily, with medium swing

1

f *p* *f*

4

f *subito p* *f*

8

f

11

1. 2. *p*

Beginners' piano course: Lesson 12 notes

1. Notes and rests - a reminder...



semibreve/whole note



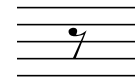
minim/half note



crotchet/quarter note



quaver/eighth note



2. Rhythm exercise

Work out the rhythm of each of the following excerpts. If you need to, print off the sheet and mark in the beats, as I demonstrated in the lesson.

You might find it easier to work them out away from the piano keyboard. If I'm trying to work out a complex rhythm I'll often use my hands on my thighs: the left hand beats time on the left thigh, the right hand beats out the rhythm - try it for yourself.



We usually try to avoid having dotted notes or rests crossing the two halves of a 4/4 bar - that's why we've got a crotchet rest followed by a quaver in question 7, but a dotted crotchet rest in question 6.

3. New scales from this tutorial

I've spaced the right and left hands of the two D minor scales two octaves apart to make reading easier. Play them as written, or, better still, play the right hand an octave lower or the left hand an octave higher than written.

A major:

1 3 1 4 1 3 1 4 5 (#) 5 (#)

5 1 3 1 4 1 3 1

5 1 3 1 4 1 3 1

3 1 4 1 3 1 5

D harmonic minor:

1 3 1 4 1 3 1 5 5 5

5 1 3 1 4 3 1 3 1

5 1 3 1 4 1 3 1

3 1 4 1 3 1 5

D natural minor:

4. Key signatures of all keys covered so far

C major and A minor



G major



D major



A major



F major and D minor



Beginners' piano course: Lesson 13 notes

Steadily

The piano score consists of two systems of music. The first system contains measures 1 through 8, and the second system contains measures 9 through 16. The time signature is 2/4. The first system is marked *p* (piano) and the second system is marked *f* (forte). Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1 through 5 above or below the notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 16.

Single semiquaver (sixteenth note):



Semiquaver rest:



Beginners' piano course: Lesson 14 notes

Moderato

1 5

p *mf*

con pedale

7 1 1 5 4 2 5 1 2 1 4 2 5 4 3 1

p *f*

13 *mp* *p* *mf*

19 *f*

23 *mp*

Bb major:

Piano exercise for Bb major, 4/4 time. The exercise consists of two systems of four measures each. The first system starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats (Bb major). The second system starts with a bass clef and a key signature of two flats (Bb major). The exercise is written for piano and includes fingerings (1-5) and a repeat sign at the end.

Measure 1: Treble clef, Bb4 (finger 2), A4 (finger 1), G4 (finger 3), F4 (finger 1). Bass clef, Bb3 (finger 3), A3 (finger 1), G3 (finger 4), F3 (finger 1).

Measure 2: Treble clef, E4 (finger 1), D4 (finger 3), C4 (finger 1), Bb3 (finger 4). Bass clef, E3 (finger 1), D3 (finger 3), C3 (finger 1), Bb2 (finger 3).

Measure 3: Treble clef, Bb4 (finger 1), A4 (finger 3), G4 (finger 1), F4 (finger 4). Bass clef, Bb3 (finger 1), A3 (finger 3), G3 (finger 1), F3 (finger 4).

Measure 4: Treble clef, E4 (finger 1), D4 (finger 3), C4 (finger 1), Bb3 (finger 4). Bass clef, E3 (finger 1), D3 (finger 3), C3 (finger 1), Bb2 (finger 4).

Measure 5: Treble clef, Bb4 (finger 1), A4 (finger 3), G4 (finger 1), F4 (finger 4). Bass clef, Bb3 (finger 1), A3 (finger 3), G3 (finger 1), F3 (finger 4).

Measure 6: Treble clef, E4 (finger 1), D4 (finger 3), C4 (finger 1), Bb3 (finger 4). Bass clef, E3 (finger 1), D3 (finger 3), C3 (finger 1), Bb2 (finger 4).

Measure 7: Treble clef, Bb4 (finger 1), A4 (finger 3), G4 (finger 1), F4 (finger 4). Bass clef, Bb3 (finger 1), A3 (finger 3), G3 (finger 1), F3 (finger 4).

Measure 8: Treble clef, E4 (finger 1), D4 (finger 3), C4 (finger 1), Bb3 (finger 4). Bass clef, E3 (finger 1), D3 (finger 3), C3 (finger 1), Bb2 (finger 4).

G natural minor:

Piano exercise for G natural minor, 4/4 time. The exercise consists of two systems of four measures each. The first system starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (G natural minor). The second system starts with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat (G natural minor). The exercise is written for piano and includes fingerings (1-5) and a repeat sign at the end.

Measure 1: Treble clef, Bb4 (finger 1), A4 (finger 3), G4 (finger 1), F4 (finger 4). Bass clef, Bb3 (finger 5), A3 (finger 1), G3 (finger 3), F3 (finger 1).

Measure 2: Treble clef, E4 (finger 1), D4 (finger 3), C4 (finger 1), Bb3 (finger 4). Bass clef, E3 (finger 1), D3 (finger 3), C3 (finger 1), Bb2 (finger 4).

Measure 3: Treble clef, Bb4 (finger 1), A4 (finger 3), G4 (finger 1), F4 (finger 4). Bass clef, Bb3 (finger 1), A3 (finger 3), G3 (finger 1), F3 (finger 4).

Measure 4: Treble clef, E4 (finger 1), D4 (finger 3), C4 (finger 1), Bb3 (finger 4). Bass clef, E3 (finger 1), D3 (finger 3), C3 (finger 1), Bb2 (finger 4).

Measure 5: Treble clef, Bb4 (finger 1), A4 (finger 3), G4 (finger 1), F4 (finger 4). Bass clef, Bb3 (finger 1), A3 (finger 3), G3 (finger 1), F3 (finger 4).

Measure 6: Treble clef, E4 (finger 1), D4 (finger 3), C4 (finger 1), Bb3 (finger 4). Bass clef, E3 (finger 1), D3 (finger 3), C3 (finger 1), Bb2 (finger 4).

Measure 7: Treble clef, Bb4 (finger 1), A4 (finger 3), G4 (finger 1), F4 (finger 4). Bass clef, Bb3 (finger 1), A3 (finger 3), G3 (finger 1), F3 (finger 4).

Measure 8: Treble clef, E4 (finger 1), D4 (finger 3), C4 (finger 1), Bb3 (finger 4). Bass clef, E3 (finger 1), D3 (finger 3), C3 (finger 1), Bb2 (finger 4).

G harmonic minor:

1 3 1 4 1 3 1 4 5 (#) 4

5 1 3 1 4 1 3 1

5 1 3 1 4 1 3

3 1 4 1 3 1 5

The image shows a musical score for the G harmonic minor scale in 4/4 time, spanning two systems of four measures each. The first system covers measures 1 through 4, and the second system covers measures 5 through 8. The key signature has one flat (Bb), and the time signature is 4/4. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below the notes. The scale is written in a two-staff format (treble and bass clef). The notes in the first system are: G4 (1), A4 (3), Bb4 (1), C5 (4), D5 (1), Eb5 (3), F#5 (1), G5 (4), Ab5 (5), Bb5 (#), C6 (4). The notes in the second system are: Bb5 (5), A5 (1), G5 (3), F#5 (1), Eb5 (4), D5 (1), C5 (3), Bb4 (1), A4 (3), G4 (5). The piece ends with a double bar line at the end of measure 8.

Key signature for Bb major and G minor:

The image shows a musical staff in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The staff is empty, indicating the key signature for Bb major and G minor.

Beginners' piano course: Lesson 15 notes

Minuet in G

from The Anna Magdalena Notebook

Christian Petzold (misattr. to J.S. Bach)

Andante

mp

8

14

mf

20

mp

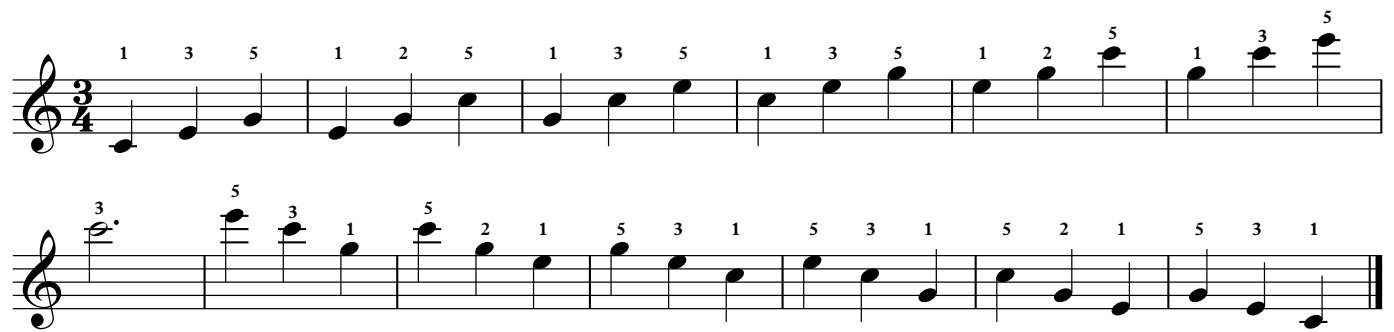
27

p

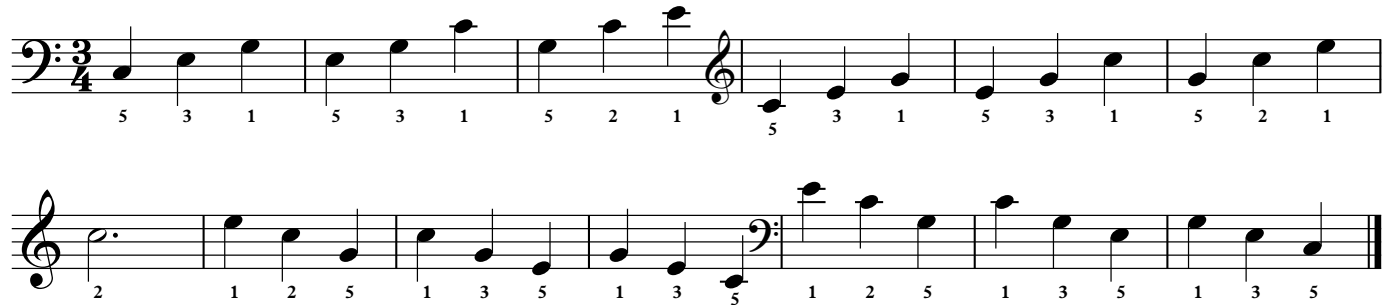
Beginners' piano course: Lesson 16 notes

As I said in the tutorial, when notating some of these broken chords I've changed clef in the middle of a stave to make reading easier. Don't change hands - the right hand can play bass clef and the left treble clef. The only thing you need to do is make the mental switch from reading one to the other when you pass a clef change.

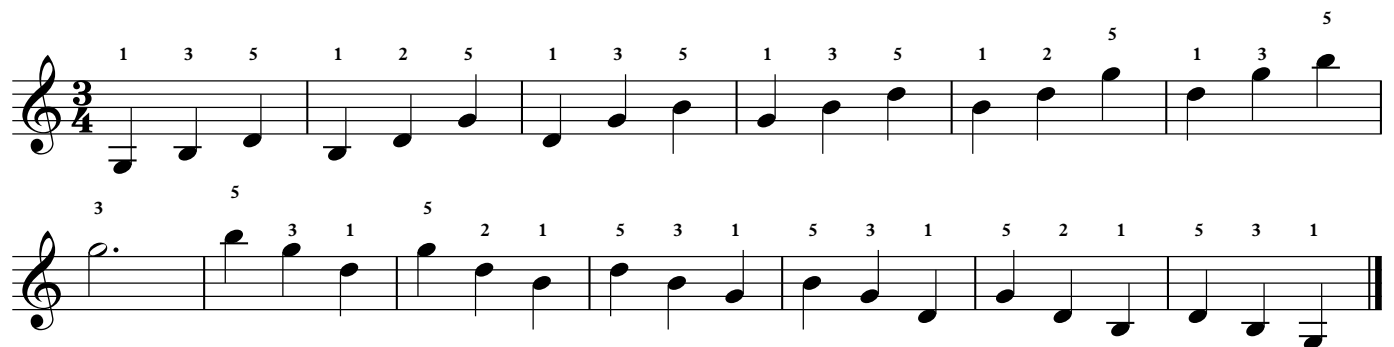
C major right hand



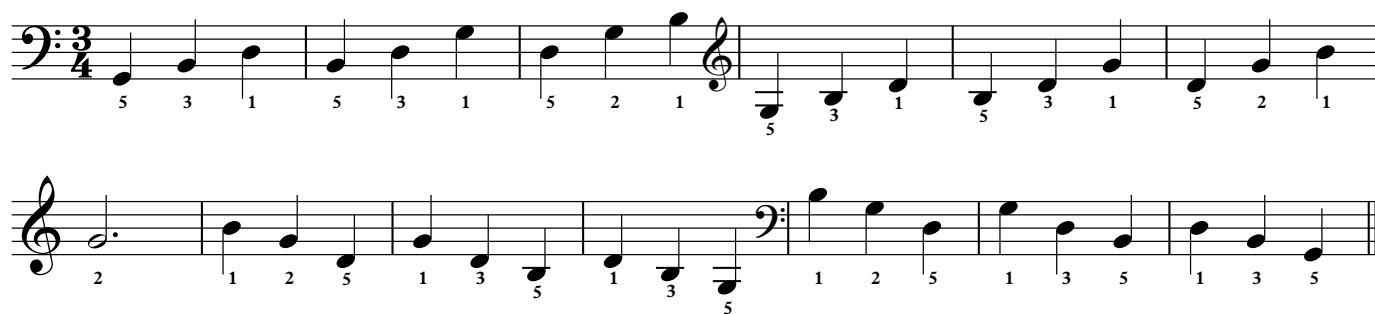
C major left hand



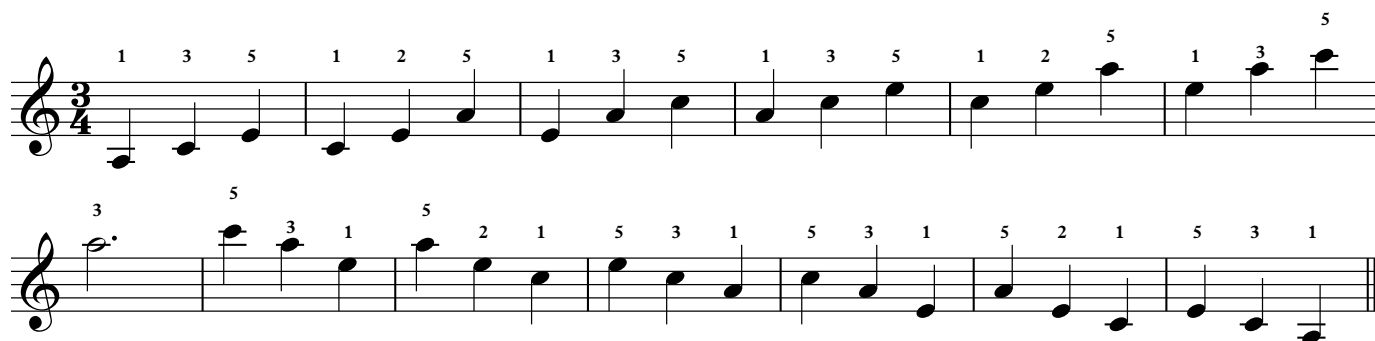
G major right hand



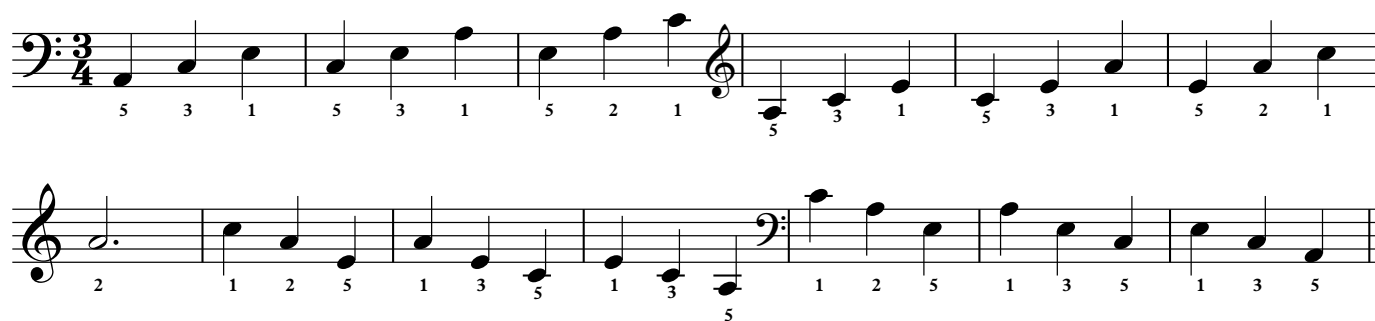
G major left hand



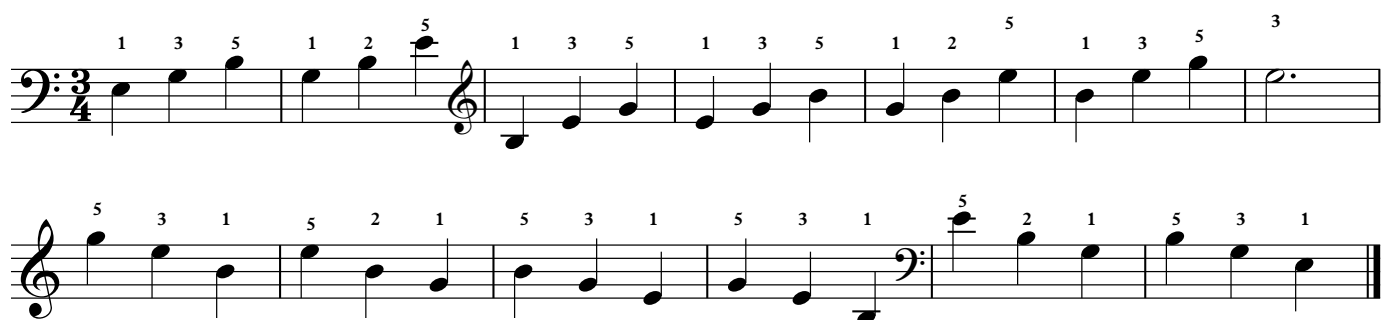
A minor right hand



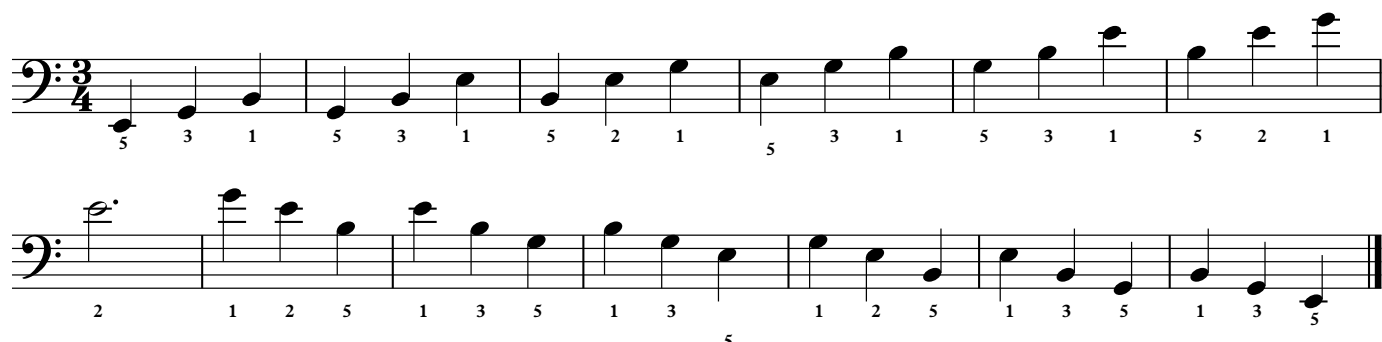
A minor left hand



E minor right hand



E minor left hand



Beginners' piano course: Lesson 17 notes

Thursday Evening Blues

Steadily, with a swing

The musical score for "Thursday Evening Blues" is written in F major (one flat) and 4/4 time. It consists of 12 measures, divided into three systems of four measures each. The tempo/style is "Steadily, with a swing".

Measure 1: Treble clef, F major chord (F), finger 1. Bass clef, whole rest. Dynamic: *p* (piano).

Measure 2: Treble clef, F major chord (F), finger 1. Bass clef, whole rest.

Measure 3: Treble clef, F major chord (F), finger 3, then 1. Bass clef, whole rest.

Measure 4: Treble clef, F major chord (F), finger 4. Bass clef, eighth notes: Bb, A, G, F, E, D, C, Bb. Fingering: 1, 3, 1.

Measure 5: Treble clef, Bb7 chord (Bb), finger 5. Bass clef, eighth notes: Bb, A, G, F, E, D, C, Bb. Fingering: 4, 1, 3, 2, 3, 1, 4, 3.

Measure 6: Treble clef, Bb7 chord (Bb), finger 5. Bass clef, eighth notes: Bb, A, G, F, E, D, C, Bb. Fingering: 2, 3, 1, 4, 3, 1, 4, 3.

Measure 7: Treble clef, F major chord (F), finger 1. Bass clef, whole rest.

Measure 8: Treble clef, D7 chord (D), finger 2. Bass clef, eighth notes: D, C, Bb, A, G, F, E, D. Fingering: 5, 1.

Measure 9: Treble clef, G7 chord (G), finger 1, then 5. Bass clef, whole rest. Dynamic: *mf* (mezzo-forte).

Measure 10: Treble clef, C major chord (C), finger 5. Bass clef, eighth notes: C, Bb, A, G, F, E, D, C. Fingering: 1, 1, 3, 5.

Measure 11: Treble clef, F major chord (F), finger 3. Bass clef, whole rest.

Measure 12: Treble clef, C major chord (C), finger 5. Bass clef, eighth notes: C, Bb, A, G, F, E, D, C. Fingering: 5, 3.

13 F F F⁷

1 2

17 Bb⁷ F D⁷

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

21 G⁷ C F

1 4 1 1 4 5 2

Ongoing scales and exercises

Major scales (hands separately and together):

C, G, D, A, F and Bb major

Major scales (hands separately and together):

A, D and G, both natural and harmonic minors

Broken chords (hands separately, together if you're brave...):

C and G major; A minor and E minor

Tutorial links

As I said in the tutorial, I've included chord symbols in the score for those of you who are interested in blues and jazz improvisation. If you want to get started in those styles, here are some useful playlists:

[Blues piano tutorials](#) (some of these are quite old now, but still worth a look)

[Jazz piano for beginners](#)

[Various tutorials on chords](#)

Useful books

You're now at the stage where you should be able to make good use of my book, *How To Really Play The Piano*.

[Print edition \(Amazon UK\)](#)

[Print edition \(Amazon US\)](#)

[Print edition \(international\)](#)

[Digital edition \(PDF download\)](#)

Beginners Piano Course: Lesson 18 notes

The score for “Für Elise” is on the next page.

Podcast link

As I said in the lesson, I’ve recently appeared on the Musicality Podcast. You can listen here:

www.musical-u.com/learn/how-to-really-play-music-with-bill-hilton/

It’s also available from most major podcast distributors (iTunes, etc.). In it, we touch on quite a few interesting topics, including what it’s like to learn piano as an older beginner, and why more mature learners actually have more advantages than you might think.

Full score of “Für Elise”

If you want a print edition there’s probably a copy of Beethoven’s “Für Elise” in every music store in the world, though you might have to buy it as part of a collection. Likewise, Amazon and other online retailers will have lots of editions. If you want a free digital copy you’ll find several editions at www.imslp.com, the online database of public domain music.

It’s worth having a look around IMSLP, as there’s tons of good music there entirely for free. If you end up using it often, please do consider supporting the site financially if you’re able to.

How To Really Play The Piano

As I said in the tutorial, by this stage you should be more than capable of making use of my book, *How To Really Play The Piano*, which covers all the stuff about chords, improvisation, jazz, blues, pop and so on that I’m deliberately avoiding in the beginners’ tutorials, but which I cover in other tutorials on my YouTube channel. Find out more about the book here:

www.billspianopages.com/how-to-really

Practise, practise, practise!

You’ll find “Für Elise” pretty challenging, but don’t forget to practise the scales and broken chords we’ve learned so far, and any earlier pieces you’re still working on!

from Klavierstück in A-moll ("Für Elise")

Ludwig van Beethoven

Poco moto

The image displays the first 20 measures of the piano piece "Für Elise" by Ludwig van Beethoven. The score is written for piano (pp) in 3/8 time, A minor. It features a treble and bass staff. The music is characterized by its simplicity and the iconic opening melody. The score includes fingerings (1-5), pedaling instructions (Ped.), and dynamic markings (pp). The piece is marked "Poco moto".

Measures 1-6: Treble staff starts with a half note G4 (fing. 5), followed by a quarter note A4 (fing. 4), and a half note G4. The bass staff has a whole rest. Pedaling instructions: Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

Measures 7-13: Treble staff continues with a half note A4 (fing. 1), followed by a quarter note B4 (fing. 1), and a half note A4. The bass staff has a whole rest. Pedaling instructions: Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

Measures 14-18: Treble staff continues with a half note G4 (fing. 1), followed by a quarter note A4 (fing. 1), and a half note G4. The bass staff has a whole rest. Pedaling instructions: Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

Measures 19-20: Treble staff continues with a half note F#4 (fing. 1), followed by a quarter note G4 (fing. 1), and a half note F#4. The bass staff has a whole rest. Pedaling instructions: Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

Beginners Piano Course: Lesson 19 notes

New scales from this tutorial

For the new minor scales from this tutorial (E minor and C minor) I've only scored out the natural minors below. You should now be able to figure out the harmonic minors for yourself: the fingers are the same as for the natural minors. The only difference is that the seventh note of the scale is sharpened by a semitone in the harmonic minors. So the D in E natural minor becomes D sharp in E harmonic minor, and the Bb in C natural minor becomes B natural in C harmonic minor.

E major

The image displays the E major scale in 4/4 time, presented in two systems. The first system shows the ascending scale in both bass and treble clefs. The bass clef starts on E2 (one ledger line below) and the treble clef starts on E4 (first line). The second system shows the descending scale, with the bass clef ending on E2 and the treble clef ending on E5 (second space). Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below the notes. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

Ascending Scale:

- Bass Clef:** E2 (1), F#2 (3), G#2 (1), A2 (4), B2 (1), C#3 (3), D#3 (1), E3 (4), F#3 (1), G#3 (3), A3 (1), B3 (4), C#4 (1), D#4 (3), E4 (5).
- Treble Clef:** E4 (1), F#4 (3), G#4 (1), A4 (4), B4 (1), C#5 (3), D#5 (1), E5 (4), F#5 (1), G#5 (3), A5 (1), B5 (4), C#6 (1), D#6 (3), E6 (5).

Descending Scale:

- Bass Clef:** E3 (5), D#3 (3), C#3 (1), B2 (4), A2 (1), G#2 (3), F#2 (1), E2 (4), D#2 (1), C#2 (3), B1 (1), A1 (4), G#1 (1), F#1 (3), E1 (5).
- Treble Clef:** E5 (1), D#5 (3), C#5 (1), B4 (4), A4 (1), G#4 (3), F#4 (1), E4 (4), D#4 (1), C#4 (3), B3 (1), A3 (4), G#3 (1), F#3 (3), E3 (5).

Eb major

Piano score for Eb major scale in 4/4 time. The score consists of two systems, each with four measures. The first system covers measures 1-4, and the second system covers measures 5-8. The key signature has two flats (Bb and Eb). Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 8.

E natural minor

Piano score for E natural minor scale in 4/4 time. The score consists of two systems, each with four measures. The first system covers measures 1-4, and the second system covers measures 5-8. The key signature has one sharp (F#). Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 8.

C natural minor

Piano exercise for C natural minor scale in 4/4 time. The exercise consists of two systems, each with four measures. The first system is in bass clef, and the second system is in treble clef. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below notes.

System 1 (Bass Clef):

- Measure 1: C4 (1), D4 (3), E4 (1), F4 (4), G4 (1), A4 (3), B4 (1), C5 (4, 5)
- Measure 2: C5 (1), B4 (3), A4 (1), G4 (4), F4 (1), E4 (3), D4 (1), C4 (5)
- Measure 3: C4 (1), B3 (3), A3 (1), G3 (4), F3 (1), E3 (3), D3 (1), C3 (5)
- Measure 4: C3 (1), D3 (3), E3 (1), F3 (4), G3 (1), A3 (3), B3 (1), C4 (5)

System 2 (Treble Clef):

- Measure 1: C5 (1), B4 (3), A4 (1), G4 (4), F4 (1), E4 (3), D4 (1), C4 (5)
- Measure 2: C4 (1), B3 (3), A3 (1), G3 (4), F3 (1), E3 (3), D3 (1), C3 (5)
- Measure 3: C3 (1), D3 (3), E3 (1), F3 (4), G3 (1), A3 (3), B3 (1), C4 (5)
- Measure 4: C4 (1), B4 (3), A4 (1), G4 (4), F4 (1), E4 (3), D4 (1), C5 (5)

Beginners Piano Course: Lesson 20 notes

The score for 'Prelude' starts on the next page.

Ongoing scales and exercises

Major scales (hands separately and together):

C, G, D, A, F and Bb major

Major scales (hands separately and together):

A, D and G, both natural and harmonic minors

Broken chords (hands separately, together if you're brave...):

C and G major; A minor and E minor

Prelude

Andantino con moto



First system of the musical score. The treble clef staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and an *espress.* (espressivo) marking. The bass clef staff features a continuous eighth-note accompaniment. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below notes.

Second system of the musical score. The treble clef staff contains a half-note melody with a slur. The bass clef staff continues the eighth-note accompaniment. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5.

Third system of the musical score. The treble clef staff features a half-note melody with a slur. The bass clef staff continues the eighth-note accompaniment. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5.

Fourth system of the musical score. The treble clef staff contains a half-note melody. The bass clef staff continues the eighth-note accompaniment. The system concludes with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The text "To coda" is written above the staff.

Fifth system of the musical score. The treble clef staff contains a half-note melody with a slur. The bass clef staff continues the eighth-note accompaniment. The system concludes with a key signature change to three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and a final cadence. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5.

21

2

1

2

3 4 1 2 1 4

25

3

1

1

1 3

29

31

D.S. al coda

3

1

p

4 5

34

⊕ CODA

mf

4 1 5 3 1 1

4 1

38

1

1

5

42

3 1 5 2 1 2 1 2 3 2

46

rit.

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

p