

Debra Perez

Will Baily

"Way Cool" Keyboarding! 4 KIDS



Welcome to “Way Cool” Keyboarding 4 Kids

This new piano program was developed for the 7 - 10 year old beginning piano student. In this first experience playing and enjoying the piano, your “Way Cool” students will:

- **Learn** to read music through a natural approach to music notation. The logical sequencing of their new Musical Language will help create a feeling of ease for the process.
- **Enjoy** playing Chord Charts in contemporary styles they are accustomed to hearing and singing.
- **Discover** the joy found in playing duets and ensembles as they make music with others.
- **Play** along with quality CD tracks that will inspire creativity and expressiveness.
- **Explore** improvisation and the fun of creating their own songs.
- **Develop** their listening skills through a variety of styles and orchestrations.

Our hope is that this will be the beginning of a lifelong love of making music at the piano for your students. “Way Cool” Keyboarding 4 Kids was designed to create success for each student at every lesson. So, enjoy the music, have fun and don’t forget to sing!

Debra L. Perez
Debra Perez

Will Bailly
Will Bailly

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Playing and Learning Tips

Learning the language of music is a very natural and enjoyable experience when the Hear-Do-See-Label approach to learning is used. As you read through the following ideas, compare this approach to the natural way children learn to talk. Their language skills begin by listening to others speak. As they grow and develop, children begin to imitate the sounds and words they hear. And lastly, they learn how to read and write what they have been hearing and speaking.



HEAR

We begin the learning experience by hearing the music. This initial listening experience can be accomplished by the teacher playing the piece, the class listening to the CD, or the teacher playing along with the pre-recorded orchestration. Because it is important for students to hear how a piece will sound, we have provided CD's with all student books. Ideas for listening experiences are provided throughout to help the student develop their listening skills. This aural impression will expedite rhythmic, melodic and harmonic understanding of each piece the student plays.



DO

Next activities at the piano, on the closed key cover and at the table are included to help familiarize the student with the physical aspects of each new piece. These activities could also include tapping, clapping, on piano, singing, conducting and imagining. This also will help with any coordination challenges they may experience and aid in internalizing the meter and rhythm. This stage of the learning process will help provide success for each student and should not be omitted. These activities also show students how to become independent learners.



SEE

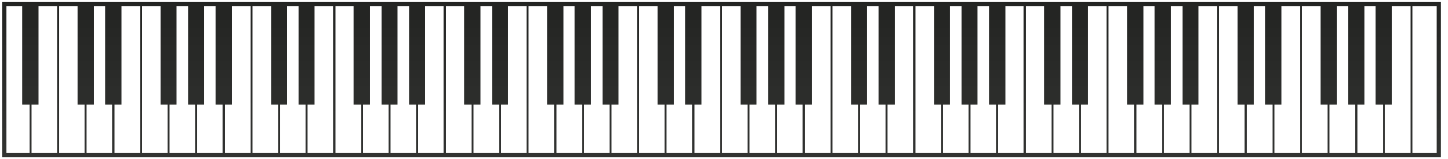
Once they have heard the music and experienced it, seeing and understanding the written page becomes a natural next step in the learning process. The student now has several experiences and reference points to connect the hearing, doing and visual aspects of the musical notation. In this stage of the learning process, directional reading and pattern recognition is the primary focus.



LABEL

Lastly, labels or names are attached to what they see and what they've experienced. This learning approach provides a natural flow and logical sequence for playing piano music.

The diagram shows a sequence of four boxes, each containing the numbers 2, 3, and 4. The first box is labeled 'RH' above it. The second, third, and fourth boxes are labeled 'High' above them. Curved arrows point from the top of the first box to the top of the second, from the top of the second to the top of the third, and from the top of the third to the top of the fourth, indicating a progression or flow.



The diagram illustrates the iterative process of finding the maximum element in an array. It shows three steps:

- Initial array [2, 3, 4] with 'float' pointing to the first element (2).
- 'float' moves to the second element (3).
- 'float' moves to the third element (4).

*RH	2	3	4
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Right Hand

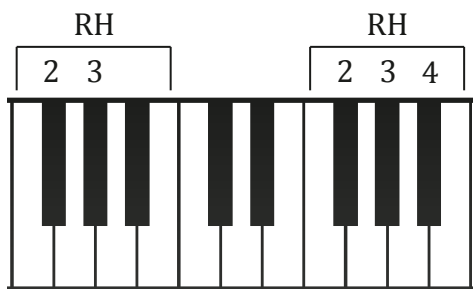
Low High



then, *LH starts on the 3 black keys in the middle of the keyboard and moves lower.

*LH | 2 3 4

Left Hand



Back N' Forth

[CD 2]

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RH | 2 3 2 | 2 3 4 | 2 3 2 | 2 3 4 |

float

float

float

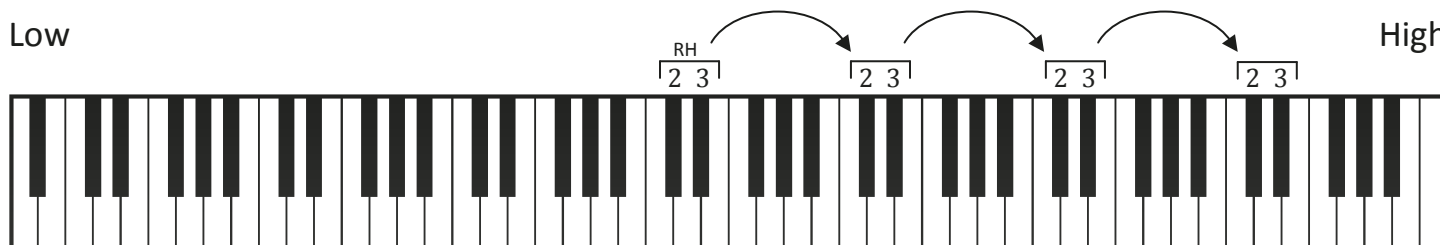
Try This: Try playing *Back N' Forth* on different 3 black key groups on your piano. Which sound do you like best for *Back N' Forth*: Low, middle or high sounds?

Lavender

[CD 4]

Low

High



*RH starts with fingers 2 and 3 on the 2 black keys in the middle of the keyboard. Follow the arrows up and then back down.

SAMPLE

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*RH | 2 3 2 } | 2 3 2 } | 2 3 2 } | 2 3 2 } | 2 3 2 } |

float

Optional Teacher Accompaniment

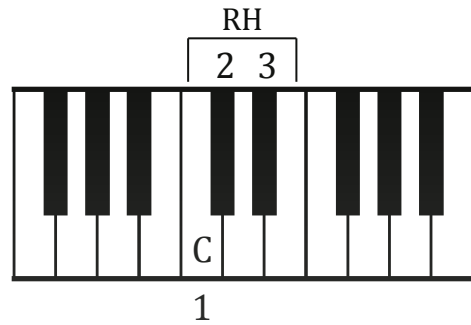
Flowing Calmly

Student enter

Try This: Using the Teacher Accompaniment, play *Lavender* as a side-by-side duet with your students.

Echo

[CD 5]



RH

Play-hold

Play-hold

Play-hold-hold-hold

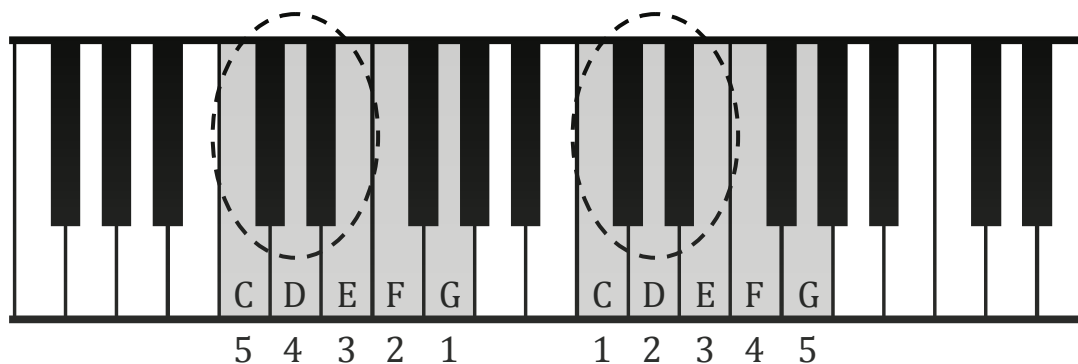
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DO

Using the following chart, clap and speak the rhythm as you listen to *Echo* [CD 5]. As you are listening, notice how *Echo* begins slowing down at the end of the song.





Sittin' by the Lake

Off-Staff
[CD 6]

SAMPLE

LH RH

5 4 3 2 1 1 2 3 4 5

C D E F G C D E F G

Play-hold-hold-hold

P - h - h - h

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HEAR

Listen to the guitar solo before repeating from the beginning.

Let's Dance

Off-Staff
[CD 7]

RH

5 G 4 F 3 E 2 D 1 C 2 D 3 E 4 F 5 G 4 F 3 E 2 D 1 C

P - h - h - h

LH

1 G 2 F 3 E 4 D 5 C 4 D 3 E 2 F 1 G 2 F 3 E 4 D 5 C

P - h - h - h

SAMPLE
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SEE

Once you have played both *Sittin' by the Lake* and *Let's Dance*, turn the page to discover how both pieces look when written on music paper. Talk about what looks the same and what you notice that is different.

Sittin' by the Lake

[CD 6]

Will Bailly

First system of musical notation (measures 1-5) in 4/4 time. The treble clef staff has a whole rest in measure 1, a whole rest in measure 2, and a half note C in measure 3, followed by a half note D in measure 4 and a half note E in measure 5. The bass clef staff has a half note G in measure 1, a half note F in measure 2, a half note E in measure 3, a half note D in measure 4, and a half note C in measure 5. Fingerings are indicated: 1-5 for the treble staff and 5-1 for the bass staff.

Second system of musical notation (measures 6-9) in 4/4 time. The treble clef staff has a whole rest in measure 6, a whole rest in measure 7, and a half note C in measure 8, followed by a half note D in measure 9 and a half note E in measure 10. The bass clef staff has a half note G in measure 6, a half note F in measure 7, a half note E in measure 8, a half note D in measure 9, and a half note C in measure 10. Fingerings are indicated: 1-5 for the treble staff and 5-1 for the bass staff. A large diagonal watermark 'SAMPLE' and the website 'www.musicalmomentsrmm.com' are overlaid on the page. A vertical text on the right side reads 'Stop here the second time'.



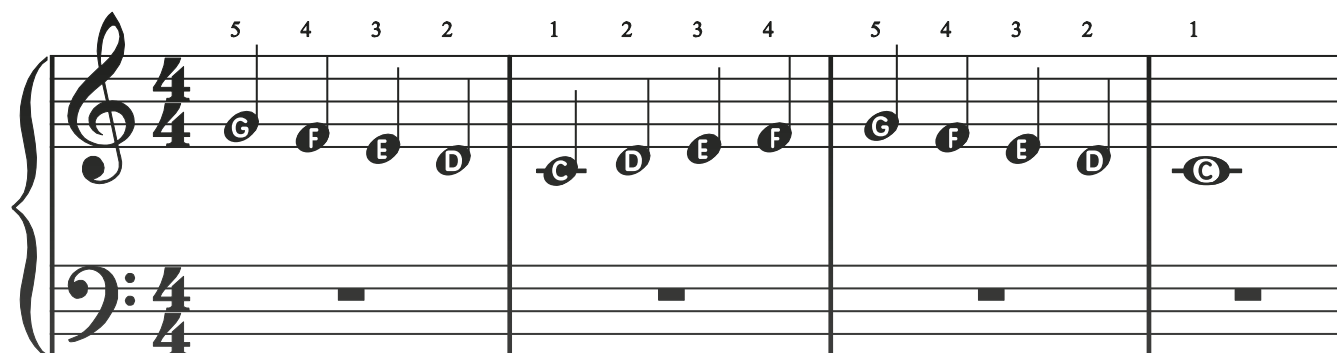
SEE

As you play, watch the music and sing the finger numbers. Next, play again and sing the note names.

Let's Dance

[CD 7]

Will Bailly



It is fun to use different touches to create different sounds when playing the piano. Try playing *Let's Dance* legato the first time through and then staccato when you repeat.



Staccato



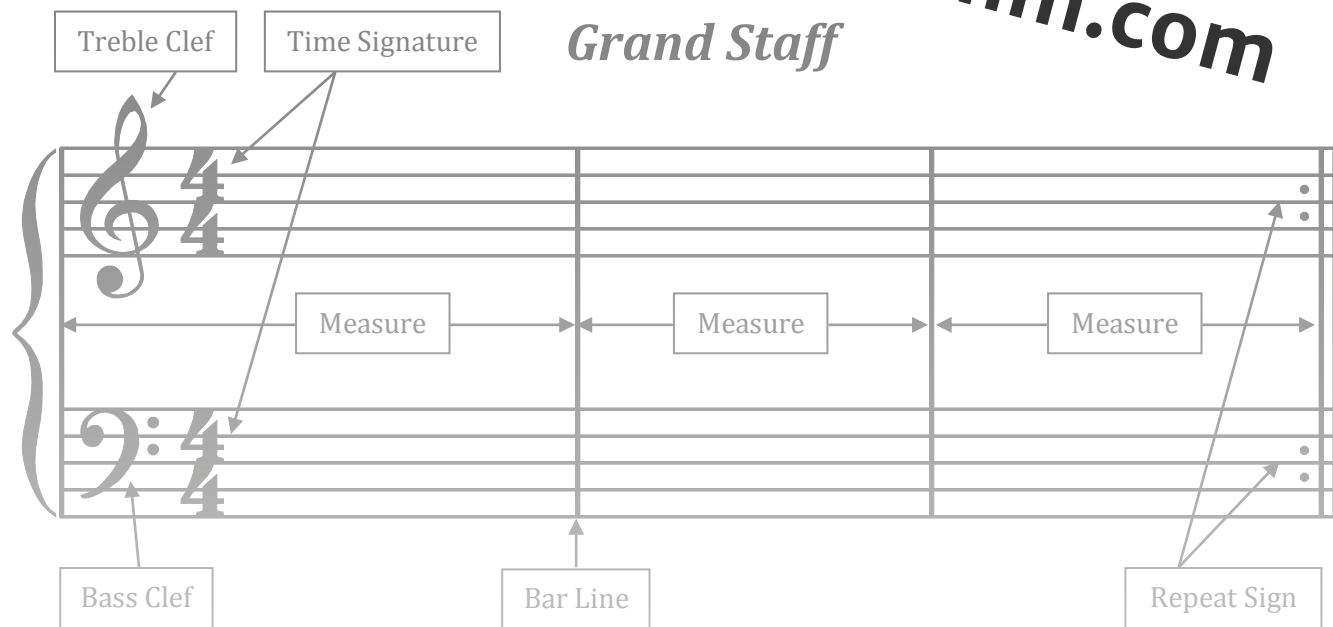
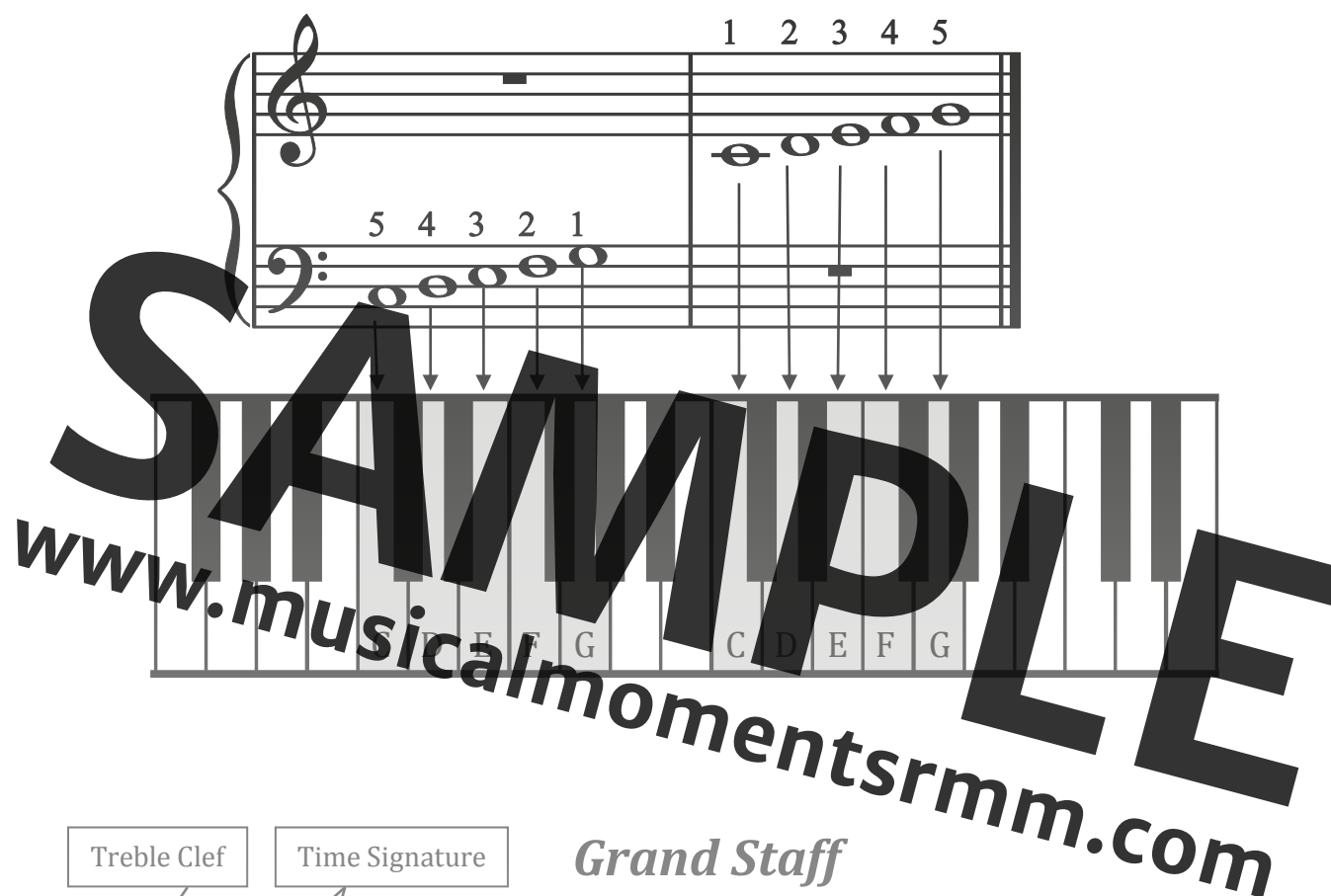
To play a note detached or separated. A dot is placed above or below a note to indicate that it should be played staccato.

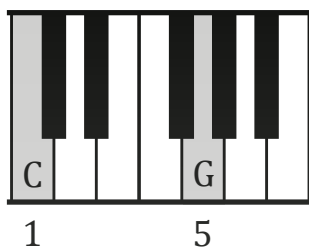
Legato

Smooth and connected with no pause in sound between notes. The opposite of staccato.

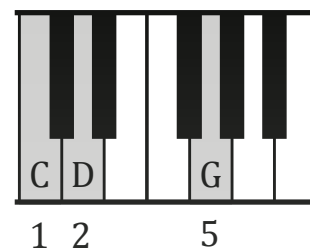


Learning to play the piano is like learning a new language. As you play and learn new songs, you will begin to see words and symbols that make up this musical language. Look back at this page when you need help remembering what the new words and symbols mean.



C⁵***“Way Cool” Chords 1***

[CD 8]

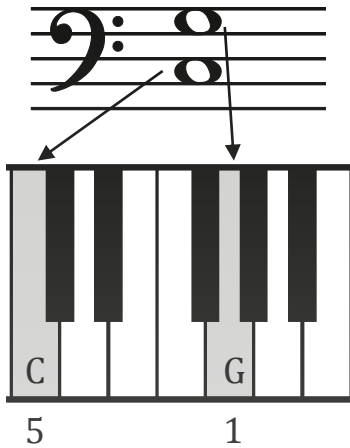
C²

RH

C⁵ / / / C² / / / C⁵ / / / C² / / /C⁵ / / / C² / / / C⁵ / / / C² / / /C⁵ / / / C² / / / C⁵ / / / C² / / /C⁵ / / / C² / / / C⁵ / / / C²**SEE**

When you see slash marks (/), repeat the same chord until the chord symbol changes.

Chord Shell

*I Can Fly*

[CD 9 - Piano Only / CD 10 - Orchestration]

Will Bailly

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1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 2 1

I can fly, I can fly, I can fly a - way

5

Watch me fly, Watch me fly, High up in the sky.



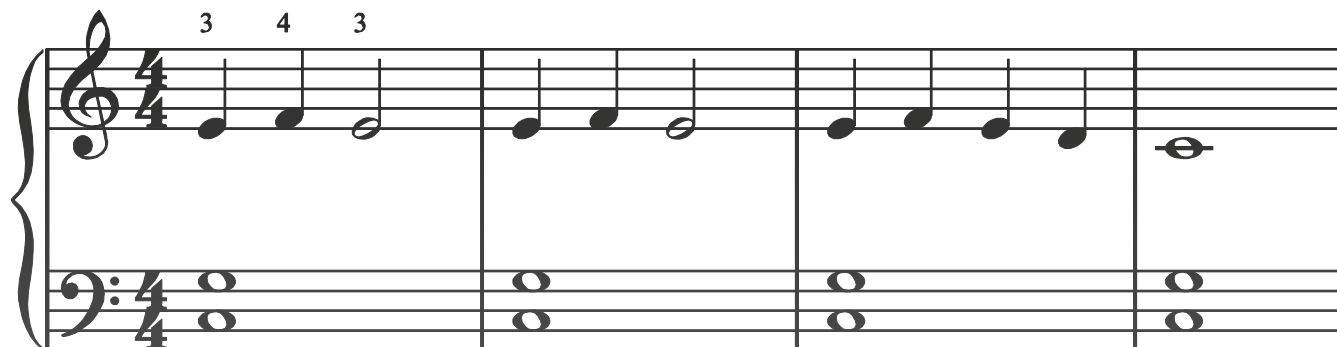
Before playing *I Can Fly* on the piano, pretend to play it on a table or flat surface. As you pretend play, sing the finger numbers of the R.H.

Swingin'

[CD 11 - Piano Only / CD 12 - Orchestration]

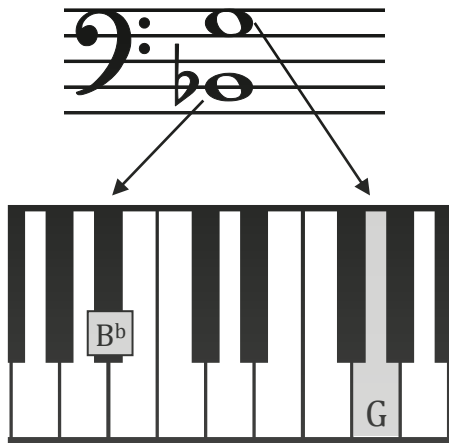
Will Bailly

Both hands play one octave higher throughout



Try This: Have you ever tried to make up a song at the piano?
Use *Swingin'* as a model: L.H. plays Chord Shells and R.H. finds the melody.
Have fun as you experiment with creating your song.

Chord Shell



Island Vacation

[CD 13]

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Play-hold-hold-hold

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5

Play-hold Play-hold

The musical score is for a piece in 4/4 time. It features a large, diagonal watermark reading 'SAMPLE' and the website 'www.musicalmomentsrmm.com'. The score is written in bass clef. The first system shows a sequence of chords: C (C4, E4, G4), Bb (Bb3, D4, F4), G (G3, Bb3, D4), and C (C4, E4, G4). The second system shows a sequence of chords: C (C4, E4, G4), Bb (Bb3, D4, F4), G (G3, Bb3, D4), and C (C4, E4, G4). The score is marked with 'Play-hold-hold-hold' and '5'.



Before playing *Island Vacation*, try finding C-G and Bb-G Chord Shells with your eyes closed. Notice how each Chord Shell feels and how far you have to stretch as you move back and forth.

Chocolate Cake

[CD 14 - Piano Only / CD 15 - Orchestration]

Will Bailly

3 2

Choco late Cake Choco late Cake I like eat-ing Choco late Cake.

5 3 2

Choco late Cake Choco late Cake I like eat-ing Choco late Cake.

9

1 - 2 - 3 - 4 2 - 2 - 3 - 4 3 - 2 - 3 - 4 4 - 2 - 3 - 4



SEE

As you listen to [CD 14] and watch the music, follow the right hand and discover each time:

the notes step down

the notes stay the same

the notes step up

Bell Will Ring Soon

[CD 16 - Piano Only / CD 17 - Orchestration]

Will Baily

Bell will ring soon tick tock tick tock. Here I come! Here I come!

Bell will ring soon tick tock tick tock. Read-y for fun!



DO

Can you sing the words to *Bell Will Ring Soon* while you play?
At first, try singing while playing the R.H. only.
When you are ready, add the L.H. Chord Shells.

"Way Cool" Chords 2

[CD 18 - Piano Only / CD 19 - Ensemble]

C⁵ / / / C⁵ / / / C² / / / C² / / /

5 C⁵ / / / C⁵ / / / C² / / / C⁵

Try This: *Bell Will Ring Soon* and *"Way Cool" Chords 2* can be played together as an ensemble. [CD 19] is one example of how the two songs sound when played together. To create an ensemble, imagine you are in a band with your friends and each friend is playing a different part. If you are playing on digital pianos, have fun trying different voices with each part.

White Key Improvisation

[CD 20]

Improvisation provides a chance to express yourself at the piano. You can create music that is entirely new or you can expand on something you already have played or heard. The fun thing about this *White Key Improvisation* is that there is no right or wrong, just different choices.

Begin by listening to [CD 20]. What instruments do you hear? How does this music make you feel? What style of music would you call this? Now, listen again and begin to play along with your right hand. Stay on the white keys as you play and you will be amazed at how good the music will sound.

Optional Teacher Accompaniment

- The chord progression you hear on [CD 20] is provided below. You may want to play along with the recording, or create your own improvisation with the chords.

If you have a digital piano with built-in accompaniment styles, this White Key Improvisation can become a new experience each time by simply selecting and playing with a different accompaniment style. Your students will love this!

- This is a fun and enjoyable way for your students to discover various styles of music.

CM⁷ / FM⁷

5 Am⁷ Dm⁷ Am⁷ Dm⁷

Repeat and Enjoy.

Piano Band

[CD 21 - Piano Only / CD 22 - Orchestration / CD 23 - Ensemble]

Will Bailly

C⁵ / / / C⁵ / / / C² / / / C⁵ / / /

3 2 3

I play key-board in a band in a band in a band.

5 C⁵ / / / C⁵ / / / C² / / / C⁵

3 2

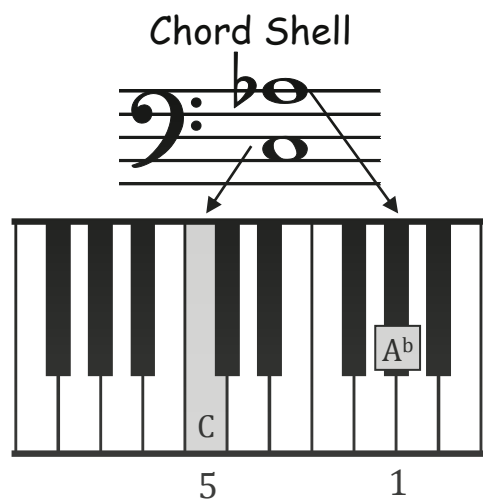
I play key-board in a band Play-ing with my friends.

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Try This: Ideas for making music with your friends.
Each person will play one of the following parts:

- Vamp RH chords on E. Piano
- Play RH melody on Guitar
- RH melody move up an octave and play on Flute
- LH Chord Shells on Bass Strings

Don't forget to sing!



FunkyTown

[CD 24]

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SEE

As you listen and watch the music, follow the arrows as they show you which note of the chord shell is changing. Can you find the notes that change in measures 5-8 and draw the arrows?

Disco Ball

[CD 25 - Piano Only / CD 26 - Orchestration]

Will Bailly

3 2 1

Dis - co ball is light - in' up spark - ling lights turn - in' round

The first four measures of the piece are shown. The first measure has a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (Bb), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody starts on G4, moves to A4, then Bb4, and ends on A4. The bass line is a whole rest. The second measure has a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 4/4 time signature. The melody starts on G4, moves to A4, then Bb4, and ends on A4. The bass line is a whole rest. The third measure has a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is a whole rest. The bass line starts on G3, moves to A3, then Bb3, and ends on A3. The fourth measure has a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is a whole rest. The bass line starts on G3, moves to A3, then Bb3, and ends on A3.

5

laugh - ing laugh - ing loud - er now fast - er fast - er don't fall down

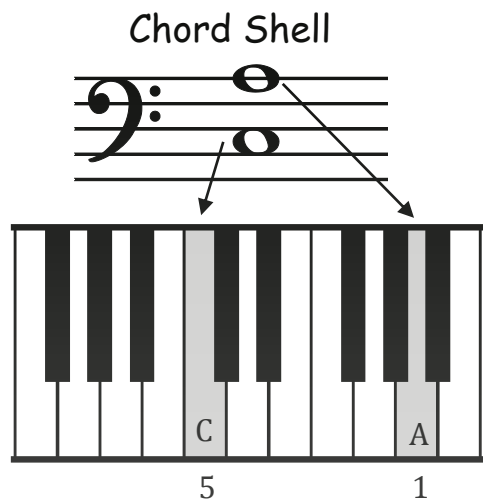
Measures 5 through 8 are shown. Measure 5 has a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 4/4 time signature. The melody starts on G4, moves to A4, then Bb4, and ends on A4. The bass line is a whole rest. Measure 6 has a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 4/4 time signature. The melody starts on G4, moves to A4, then Bb4, and ends on A4. The bass line is a whole rest. Measure 7 has a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is a whole rest. The bass line starts on G3, moves to A3, then Bb3, and ends on A3. Measure 8 has a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is a whole rest. The bass line starts on G3, moves to A3, then Bb3, and ends on A3.

Flat Sign

E^b

The diagram shows a piano keyboard with the flat sign (b) placed on the Bb key. Below the keyboard is a musical staff in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The melody starts on G4, moves to A4, then Bb4, and ends on A4.

The flat remains active for the entire measure, unless otherwise marked.



Major Funky

[CD 27]

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SEE

Compare *Major Funky* to *Funky Town* and discover what is the same and what is different about the Chord Shells in each piece.

Try playing *Major Funky* with your eyes closed.

Hoedown

[CD 28 - Piano Only / CD 29 - Orchestration]

Will Bailly

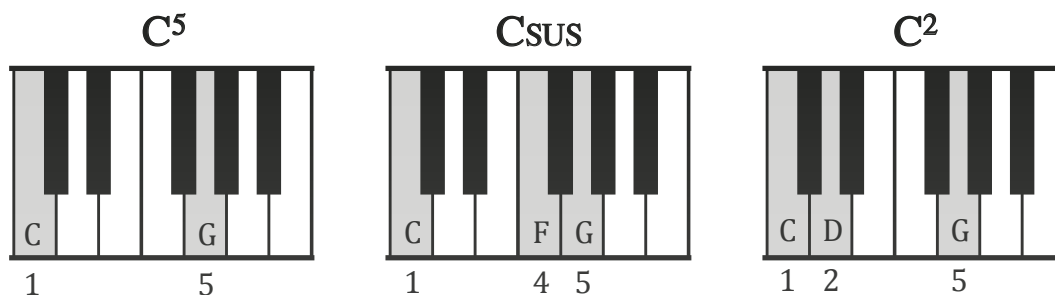


DO

As you listen to *Hoedown* [CD 28], watch the music and pretend to play on a table top or key cover on your piano. This pretend play will help you become familiar with *Hoedown* before trying it at your piano.

"Way Cool" Chords 3

[CD 30]



RH C⁵ / / / C^{sus} / / / C⁵ / / / C² / / /

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C⁵ / / / C^{sus} / / / C⁵ / / / C² / / /

C⁵ / / / C^{sus} / / / C⁵ / / / C² / / / C⁵

In popular music, keyboardists often read from Chord Charts. In this style, the right hand provides the harmony by playing the chords.

Circus Phantom

[CD 31]

When you repeat, move up to the next C and play staccato.



5



9



13



DO

Before playing *Circus Phantom*, discover and write in the best fingering for measures 3 - 4, 7 - 8, 11 - 12 and 15 - 17.

Peace

[CD 32]



Blocked Chord Shell

Notes of the chord shell are played together.



Broken Chord Shell

Notes of the chord shell are played one note at a time.



Blue Sky

[CD 33 - Piano Only / CD 34 - Orchestration]

Will Bailly

First system of musical notation for 'Blue Sky'. The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 4/4. The right hand (RH) starts with a whole rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note Bb4. The left hand (LH) starts with a whole rest, followed by a quarter note F3, a quarter note G3, and a quarter note A3. Fingering: RH (2, 3), LH (5, 1).

Second system of musical notation for 'Blue Sky'. The RH continues with a quarter note Bb4, a quarter note C5, and a quarter note Bb4. The LH continues with a quarter note Bb2, a quarter note C3, and a quarter note Bb2. Fingering: RH (2, 3), LH (5, 1).

Third system of musical notation for 'Blue Sky'. The RH continues with a quarter note A4, a quarter note G4, and a quarter note F4. The LH continues with a quarter note A2, a quarter note G2, and a quarter note F2. Fingering: RH (2, 3), LH (5, 1).

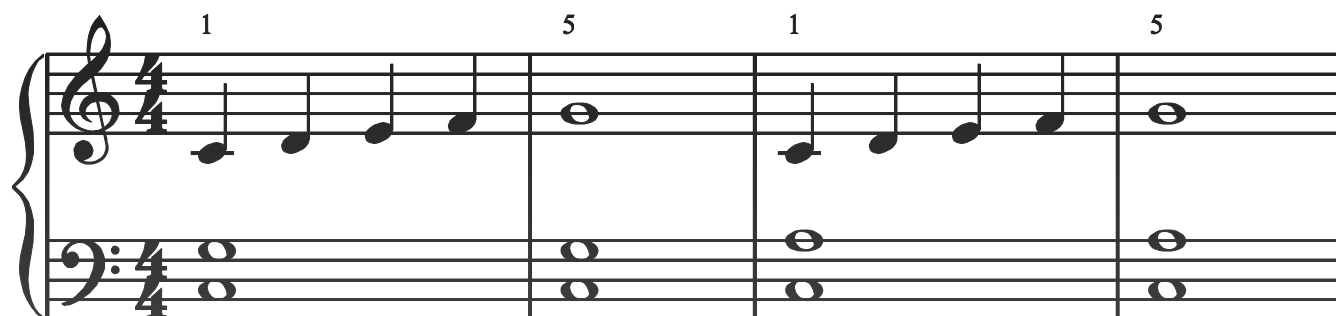
Fourth system of musical notation for 'Blue Sky'. The RH continues with a quarter note E4, a quarter note D4, and a quarter note C4. The LH continues with a quarter note E2, a quarter note D2, and a quarter note C2. Fingering: RH (2, 3), LH (5, 1). The system ends with a double bar line and a final chord in the RH (G4, Bb4, C5) and a final chord in the LH (F2, A2, C3).

Try This: Find a friend and make *Blue Sky* a side-by-side duet. One person plays the LH and the other plays the RH. Have fun!

My Best Friend

[CD 35 - Piano Only / CD 36 - Orchestration]

Will Bailly



"Way Cool" Chords 4

[CD 37]

C⁵ / / / / / / / / C^{sus} / / / / / / / /

5 C⁵ / / / / / / / / C² / / / / / / / /

9 C⁵ / / / / / / / / C^{sus} / / / / / / / /

13 C⁵ / / / / / / / / C² / / / / / / / / C⁵

A *tie* is a curved line placed between two notes that are the same pitch. Play the first chord shell and hold without playing the second.

The two together equal 8 beats.

Animal Clouds

[CD 38 - Piano Only / CD 39 - Orchestration]

Will Bailly

3 4 3 2 3

Ly - in' in the grass star - in' at the sky

This system of musical notation is for the first four measures of the piece. The treble clef staff contains a melody with eighth notes and quarter notes, while the bass clef staff provides a simple harmonic accompaniment with chords. The lyrics are 'Ly - in' in the grass star - in' at the sky'.

5

An - i - mal shaped clouds roll - in' by.

This system contains measures 5 through 8. The melody continues with a mix of eighth and quarter notes. The lyrics are 'An - i - mal shaped clouds roll - in' by.'

Ly - in' in the grass star - in' at the sky

This system contains measures 9 through 12. It repeats the melody and accompaniment from the first system. The lyrics are 'Ly - in' in the grass star - in' at the sky'.

13

An - i - mal shaped clouds roll by

This system contains measures 13 through 16, which conclude the piece. The melody ends with a final quarter note, and the accompaniment provides a simple harmonic ending. The lyrics are 'An - i - mal shaped clouds roll by'.

Try This: Create a duet with a friend by playing
Animal Clouds and *Canoe Ride* together.

Listen to [CD 42] and discover the instruments used in this duet.

Canoe Ride

[CD 40 - Piano Only / CD 41 - Orchestration / CD 42 - Duet]

Will Bailly

Measures 1-4 of the piece. The right hand (treble clef) plays a melody with eighth notes, and the left hand (bass clef) plays a bass line with eighth notes. Fingerings are indicated: 2, 3 for the first two measures and 3, 4 for the last two measures.

Measures 5-8 of the piece. The right hand continues the melody. Fingerings are indicated: 2, 3 for measures 5-6 and 2, 1 for measures 7-8.

Measures 9-12 of the piece. The right hand continues the melody. Fingerings are indicated: 2, 3 for measures 9-10 and 3, 4 for measures 11-12.

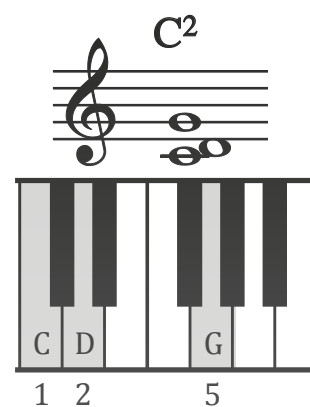
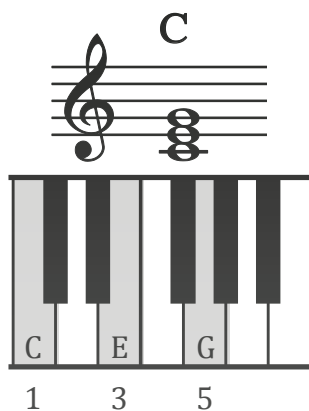
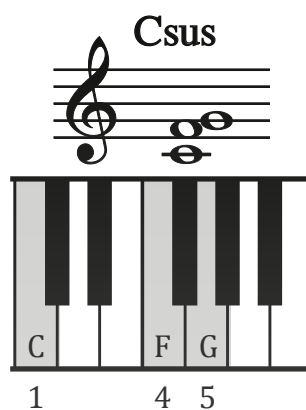
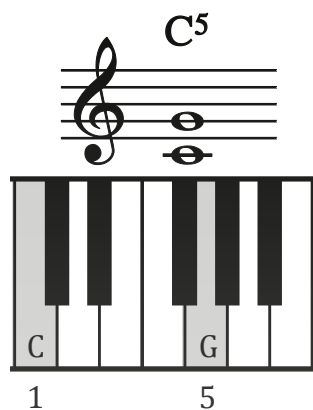
Measures 13-16 of the piece. The right hand continues the melody. Fingerings are indicated: 2, 3 for measures 13-14, 2, 1 for measure 15, and 2, 3, 3 for measure 16. The piece ends with a double bar line.

8^{vb}



SEE

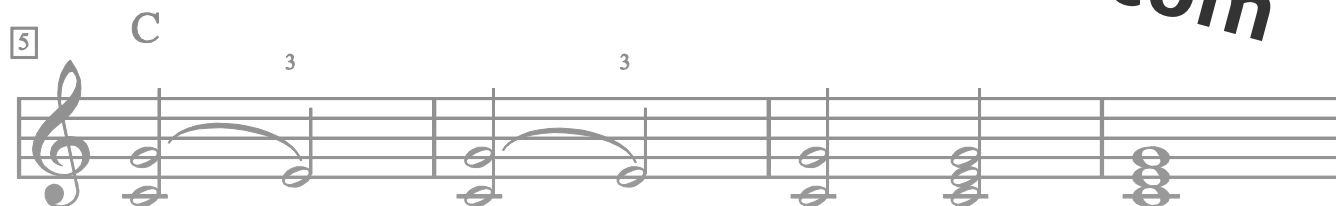
As you listen and watch *Canoe Ride* [CD 40], discover and then label the 3 patterns used to create this piece.

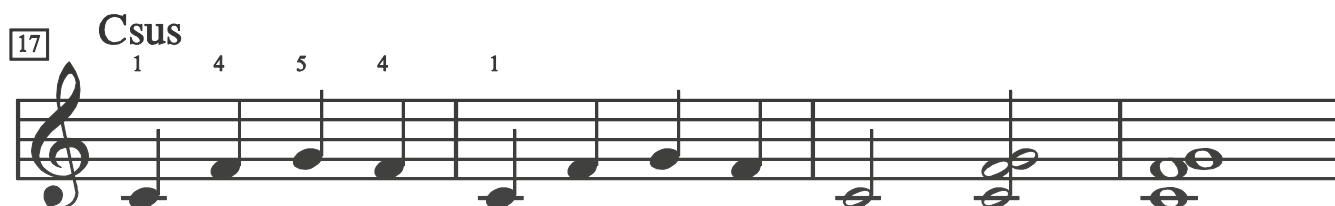
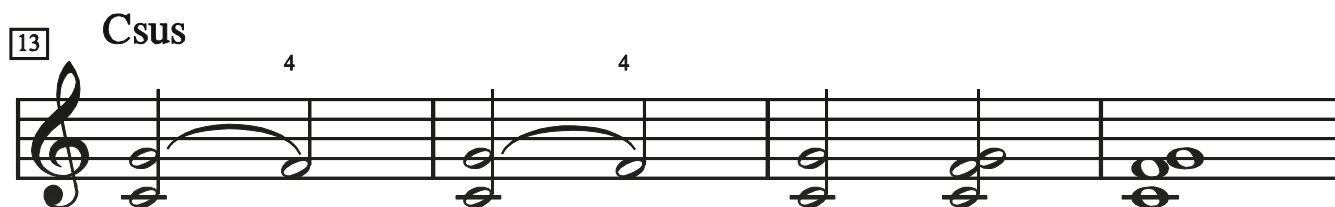


"Way Cool" Chords 5

[CD 43]

Will Bailly



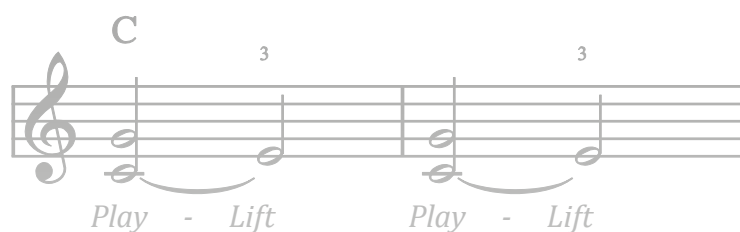


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gradually slow down



A curved line either under or over two notes is called a *two-note slur*. This curved line means the notes are to be played legato (smooth and connected). Try the playing directions below to create this sound each time you see the two-note slur in *"Way Cool" Chords 5*.



Summer Camp

[CD 44 - Piano Only / CD 45 - Orchestration]

Will Bailly

2 3 5 4 3 2

Musical notation for measures 1-4. The piece is in 4/4 time. The right hand (treble clef) plays a melody of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4. The left hand (bass clef) plays a bass line of quarter notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, B2, A2, G2, F#2. Fingering numbers 2, 3, 5 are above the first three notes of the right hand, and 4, 3, 2 are above the last three notes of the right hand.

5 2 4

Musical notation for measures 5-8. The right hand continues the melody: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4. The left hand continues the bass line: G2, A2, B2, C3, B2, A2, G2, F#2. Fingering numbers 2 and 4 are above the first and fourth notes of the right hand in measure 5.

9

Musical notation for measures 9-12. The right hand continues the melody: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4. The left hand continues the bass line: G2, A2, B2, C3, B2, A2, G2, F#2. A large diagonal watermark 'SAMPLE' and the website 'www.musicalmomentsrmm.com' are overlaid on the page.

13 4 3 2 2 3 5

Musical notation for measures 13-16. The right hand continues the melody: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4. The left hand continues the bass line: G2, A2, B2, C3, B2, A2, G2, F#2. Fingering numbers 4, 3, 2 are above the first three notes of the right hand in measure 13, and 2, 3, 5 are above the last three notes of the right hand in measure 14. The piece ends with a double bar line in measure 16. A '8vb' marking is present at the bottom right of the page.

Broomhilda

[CD 46 - Piano Only / CD 47 - Orchestration / CD 48 - Solo Accompaniment]

Will Bailly

Measures 1-4 of the musical score for Broomhilda. The treble clef staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with fingerings 3, 2, 1, 2, 3, and 3. The bass clef staff contains whole notes.

Measures 5-8 of the musical score for Broomhilda. The treble clef staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with a fingering of 3. The bass clef staff contains whole notes. A large 'SAMPLE' watermark and the URL 'www.musicalmomentsrmm.com' are overlaid across the score.

Measures 13-16 of the musical score for Broomhilda. The treble clef staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with fingerings 1, 5, and 1. The bass clef staff contains whole notes.

17



21



25



29



33



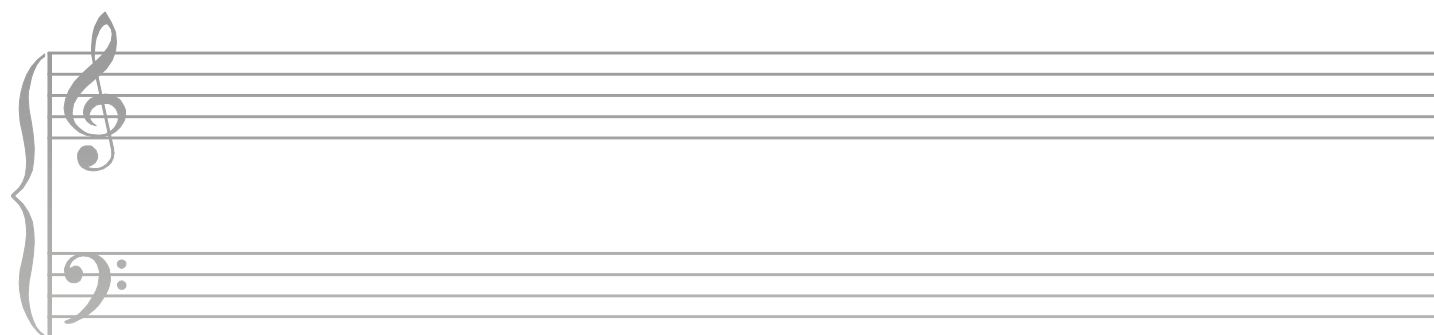
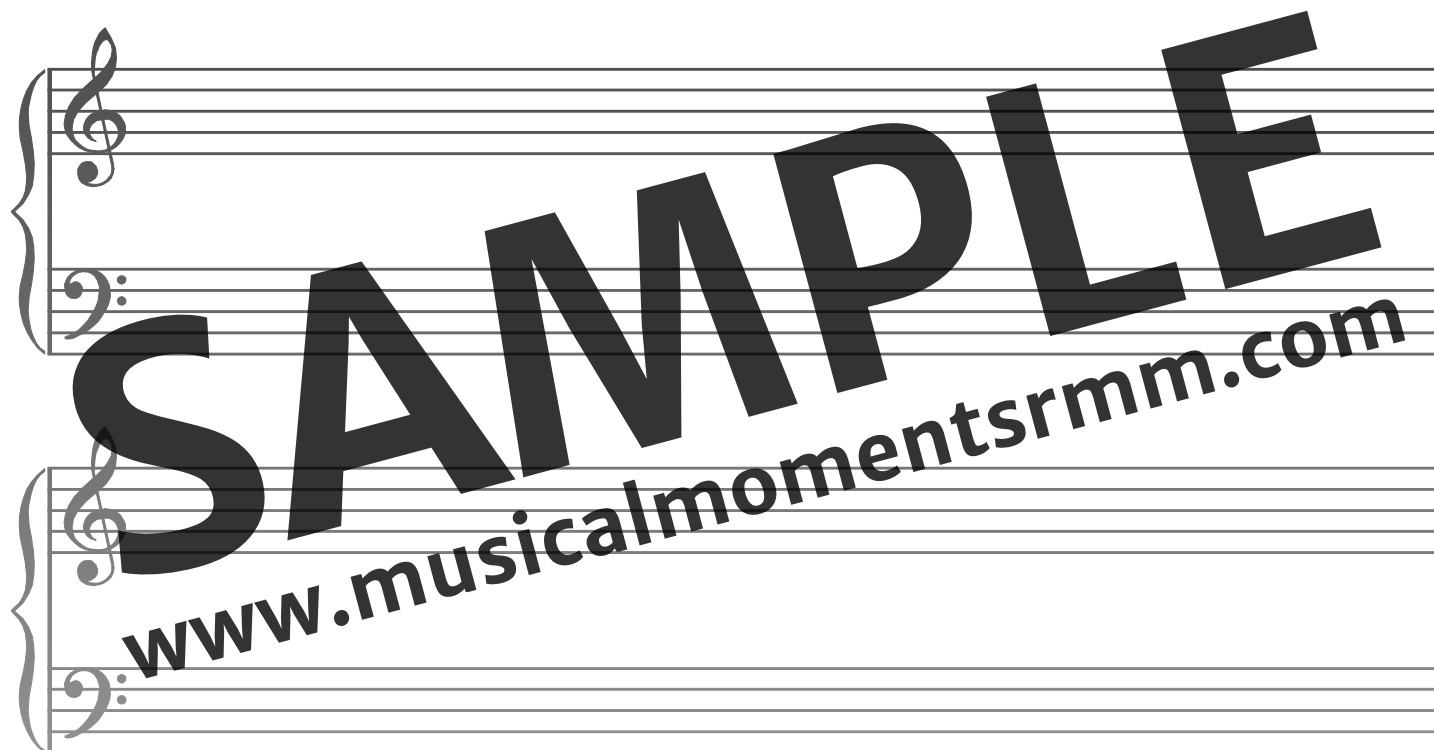
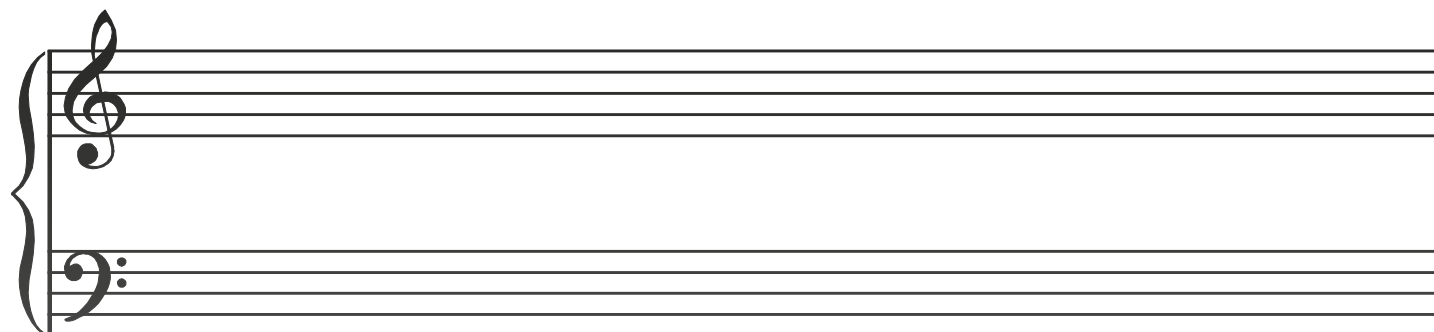
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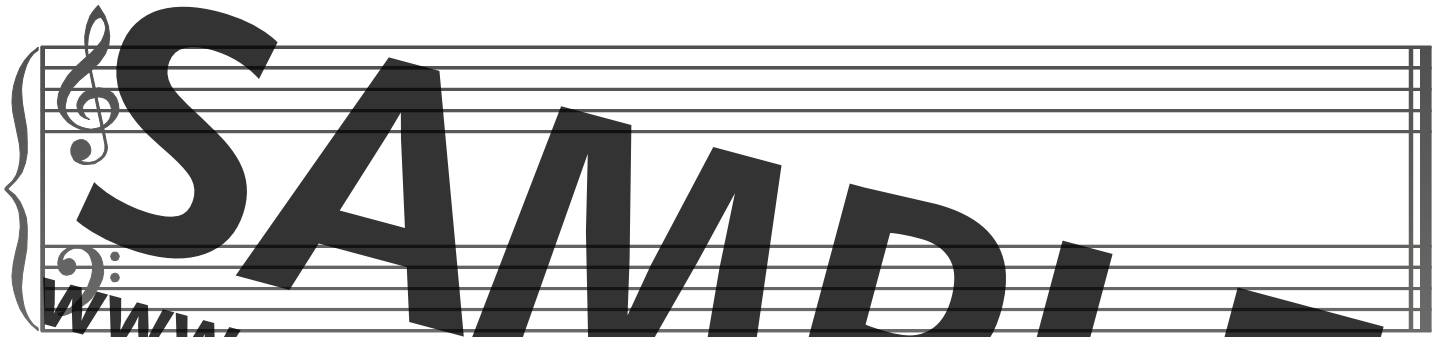
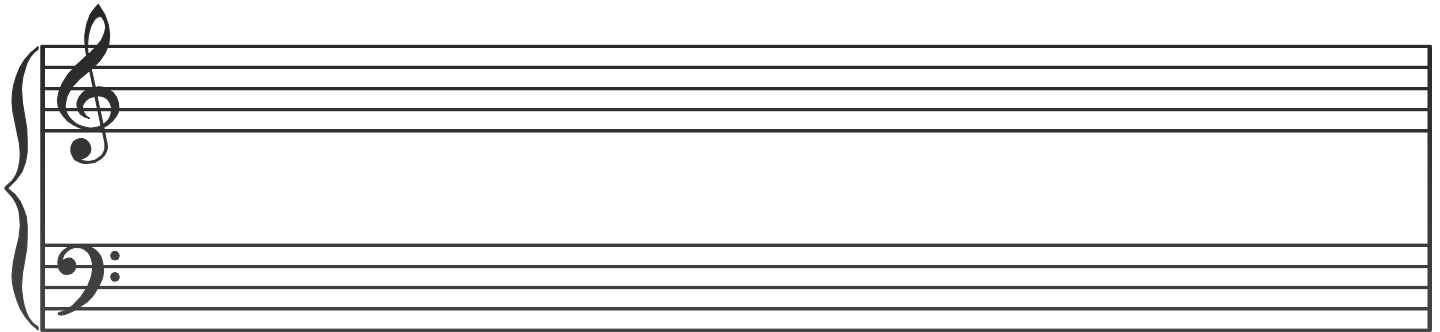


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Try This: The "Solo Accompaniment" version [CD 48] is the band minus the piano part. After you feel comfortable playing *Broomhilda*, try playing along with this version which features you as the solo keyboardist.





Try This: It is your turn to write your own "Way Cool" Keyboarding song.

The following ideas are to help you get started.

- Choose your favorite piece in this book and add on to it to make it yours.
- Write something that uses different ideas from throughout the book, like blocked or broken chord shells, "Way Cool" Chords or a song with words.
- Think of a title for your song.
- If you have a digital piano, record a rhythm track to play along with your new music.

Have fun expressing yourself through your own music. And, please share your "Way Cool" song with your friends and family.

“Way Cool” Tips and Techniques

Whether in a group, partner or solo lesson, you will experience success when you incorporate the following tips and techniques.

1. Creating lesson plans

As you are creating your lesson plan, imagine the classroom, what you will say, and how your students will respond. Along with the songs to cover, the lesson plan also includes:

- how you will prepare a piece in advance
- how you will present the concepts
- how the class will play the piece
- how you will create an experience around the piece

The HEAR, DO and SEE icons at the bottom of the page are examples of activities used to prepare, present, play and create each piece. **The main goal of each lesson is to create a positive musical experience for each student.** These positive musical experiences will motivate your students and cause them to look forward to their next lesson.

At the end of each class, take a moment to write down comments that will help you prepare for the next week. Because each of your classes create a different group dynamic, your notes will help you plan the next lesson. For more ideas and examples of detailed lesson plans, visit our website and explore *Musical Moments Teacher's Manuals*.

2. The beauty of group teaching is the diversity of students

Diverse learning styles, personalities, strengths and skill levels are what create the group dynamic of each class. If you are new to group teaching, embracing this idea of "diversity of students" may be your biggest challenge. But once understood and embraced, this concept becomes the beauty of the group experience.

In group learning environments, your goal is to have all the students engaged at all times. Involve every student in every activity, song and discovery. Your students will quickly form friendships with their classmates and they will look forward to coming together each week to make music at the piano.

3. Open-air group playing

This is simply playing together without headphones. From the first lesson, your students learn how to make music together. With clear and consistent cueing and directions, your students become very proficient playing the piano together without headphones. Practice both verbal and physical cueing. Assigning different instrument voices on the digital pianos will provide your students the experience of playing in a band or orchestra with you as the conductor. This is very satisfying and enjoyable for the students. The majority of each class should be open-air group playing.

4. Demonstrate around the piano

With the students gathered around you at the teacher piano, help them discover what you want them to hear and see. Discovery questions, specific directions and tasks will help keep everyone involved and engaged. It is also a great opportunity to model posture, hand position, touch and tone. Students will enjoy playing games that reinforce learning while at the teacher piano.

5. Echo Play

This is a very effective technique when teaching a new piece of music. When using this technique, the students will simply echo back to you whatever you say, sing, play or do. Examples of this include: singing note names, speaking or clapping rhythms and playing two or four measure phrases. Short sections, repeated, work best when using echo play with your class.

6. Team Play

Team play is simply dividing the class in half and practicing. One team will play right hand, while the other team plays left. Then the parts are reversed. Or, one team will play the first and third line while the second team plays the second and fourth line. Also, one team might play the melody using woodwind instruments while the other team plays the chords using strings. In a solo lesson, the student is one team and the teacher becomes the other team.

7. Ensemble Play

Students enjoy the musical experience of playing in an ensemble. Possible ensemble scenarios include: a true ensemble arrangement where each student reads a different part using a different instrument voice, duet music with parts divided and orchestrated or creating ensemble arrangements from solo pieces. This activity lends itself well to group piano and allows people of various skill levels to make music together. There are several examples of how to create ensembles throughout the program.

8. Celebrations, Jam Sessions, Piano Parties and Recording Events

From the very first lesson, Way Cool students learn to play and share music with others. Playing duets, ensembles and being in the band provides positive and enjoyable experiences for students in this early stage of learning. And in the relaxed environment of a Celebration, Jam Session or Piano Party, children look forward to playing their music with and for others. This sense of musical enjoyment and accomplishment will motivate and inspire everyone involved to make music participation an important component of their family culture.



"Way Cool" Keyboarding 4 Kids



"Way Cool" Keyboarding

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