

PLAYING WITH CONFIDENCE

5 Steps To Confident Piano Playing. Every Time.

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Before we jump in...

I'm so excited to share with you these 5 things you need to know in order to play your favourite pop tunes with ease. Before we dive in though, I need to mention that practice is the most crucial element in quick improvement.

If you're able to carve out 15-30 minutes a day (waking up slightly earlier is preferred) to fit your practice in, not only will your skill improve, but you'll feel a lot better and more accomplished as a result. There's nothing quite like a good practice session, just like a good workout at your local gym.

Keep this in mind as you go through this guide. As you read through each topic, remember to practice it every day, or at least every other day.

I recommend you watch the accompanying video while reading this guide to get the most value out of it.

Enjoy!

Step 1: Major & Minor Scales

The foundation of Western music lies in the major & minor scales. There are 12 different notes on the piano (within 1 octave), which means that there are 24 major/minor scales in total (1 major & 1 minor per key).

To start off simply, **begin with C major**. This scale is ideal because it does not contain any sharps or flats (black keys). Begin by practicing it very slowly in your right hand, following the fingering below. Remember, your thumb is finger number 1, followed by your index (2), middle (3), ring (4), and pinky (5).

RH: C D E F G A B C
1 2 3 1 2 3 4 5

Then, reverse the scale by coming down at the same speed. Repeat this process at least 5-10 more times to really ingrain this into your muscle memory. Here is a link to all 12 major keys, with their respective fingering. You can find the minor keys at the upper left corner.
<https://www.pianoscales.org/major.html>

As you practice each scale, take note of how many sharps and flats you are playing. This is very important.

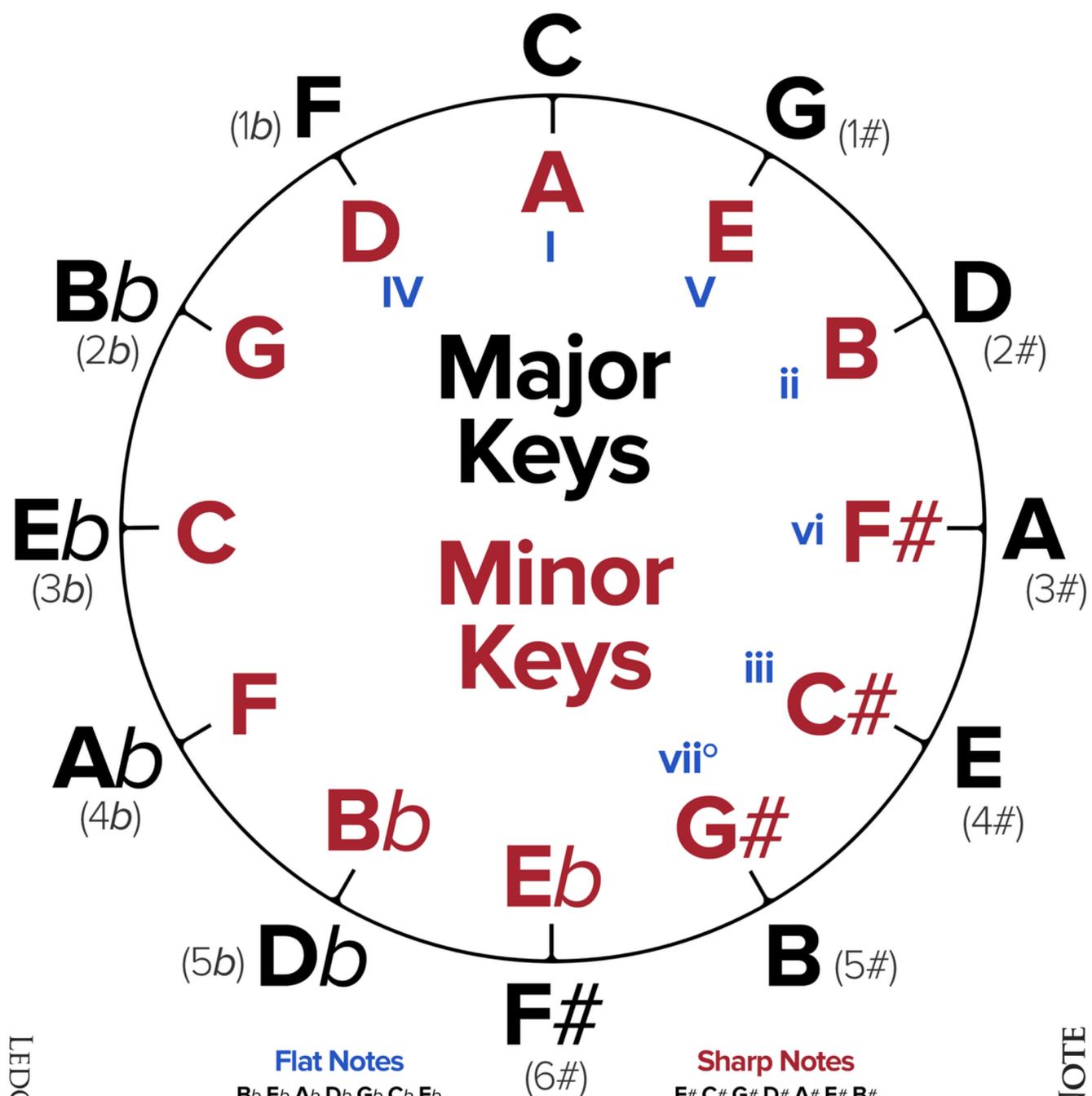
Which leads us to the next step perfectly...

Step 2: Circle of Fifths

The circle of fifths is a diagram that displays all 24 keys, and **how many sharps or flats each key contains**.

Print out this picture below so you can take note of the exact sharps & flats you're playing while practicing each scale. Knowing this is essential.

The Circle of Fifths



Flat Notes	
Bb Eb Ab Db Gb Cb Fb	
F	• • • • • D
Bb	• • • • • G
Eb	• • • • • C
Ab	• • • • • F
Db	• • • • • Bb
Gb	• • • • • Eb
Cb	• • • • • Ab

Sharp Notes	
F# C# G# D# A# E# B#	
G	• • • • • E
D	• • • • • B
A	• • • • • F#
E	• • • • • C#
B	• • • • • G#
F#	• • • • • D#
C#	• • • • • A#

Step 3: Solid / Broken Chords

Chords are blocks of notes played together or separately, and are separated by thirds. These chords are built from the 1st, 3rd, and 5th note of each scale, and we typically find 3 types of chords: major, minor, and diminished.

In a way, playing basic triads (3-note chords) are simpler than scales, as **you only need to know 1 hand position** to play every single root-position chord on the piano.

Simply use your thumb, middle, and pinky fingers (1, 3, 5 in RH, 5, 3, 1 in LH) and place your hands so that your RH thumb is on C, and your LH pinky is on the C an octave below. Your other fingers should be on E & G respectively.

As you begin to feel comfortable with these root-position triads, you will need to practice their inversions as well. Focus on one key (C major for example) per day or every 2 days. Don't rush!

Step 4: Arpeggios

Arpeggios take broken chords a step further. Rather than playing one chord position then going back down to begin your inversions, **arpeggios continue in one direction all the way up** several octaves, and back down in one smooth motion.

For example, a C major arpeggio begins with the chord notes of C (C E G), but instead of using fingers 1 3 5 (RH), use 1 2 3. Now, when you play your G, you should be using your middle finger. Cross the thumb underneath the middle finger to play the next C an octave higher. Repeat the process (1 2 3 on C E G), then play the next C with your pinky! Now make your way back down, reversing the fingers and making sure to keep the finger nice and curved.

As you get more comfortable with this exercise, you will naturally want to speed up. Again, speed is not the goal here. Control is. As you become more in control, you may gradually speed up, and it will sound amazing!

Step 5: Fingering

"What? You already talked forever about how important using the right fingers are!"

Yes, that is true. However, what I'm referring to here is economy of motion. When playing our favourite songs, we need to figure out how to play all the notes while moving the hand as little as possible.

A general rule of thumb: **Only cross over/under when absolutely necessary.**

Most of the time, you will only need 1 hand position to play most pop melodies, as their range is usually quite small (within a 5th). If they extend to an octave, you may need to cross to reach the extra notes.

It's all personal preference, but I firmly believe in simplicity. Don't change hand positions if you don't need to!

You Made It!

That's it! These are what I believe to be 5 absolutely essential concepts that you need to know in order to play the piano with confidence and ease. If you master these skills, you will have mastered the fundamentals.

Of course, it's difficult to cover everything you need to know in a single PDF, but that's why I have my YouTube channel! Stay tuned for new videos every week focusing on a new piano skill.

Thanks so much for reading, and watching the accompanying video. I hope you learned a lot from this, and I'm looking forward to providing you with even more value in the future.

It's my pleasure to serve you. I wish you all the best in your musical endeavours!

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