

INTRODUCING IMPROVISATION PIANO (HARMONIC STIMULUS)

GRADE 1



Grade 1

Chord progressions - C Major

Chord progression: C, G, C, C

improvise for 8 bars (ie 2 repetitions of the chord sequence)

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improvise for 8 bars (ie 2 repetitions of the chord sequence)

Tips:

Try chord inversions on your LH...

Chord inversions: C (I) and G/B (Vb)

...and the inverted pentatonic scale in your RH

Grade 1

Chord progressions - G Major

A musical score for piano in G major, 4/4 time. The first staff shows four measures of chords: G major (G4, B4, D5), D major (D4, F#4, A4), G major (G4, B4, D5), and G major (G4, B4, D5). The bass line consists of a single G note in the first, third, and fourth measures, and a D note in the second measure.

improvise for 8 bars (ie 2 repetitions of the chord sequence)

A musical score for piano in G major, 4/4 time. The first staff shows four measures of chords: G major (G4, B4, D5), G major (G4, B4, D5), D major (D4, F#4, A4), and G major (G4, B4, D5). The bass line consists of a single G note in the first, second, and fourth measures, and a D note in the third measure.

improvise for 8 bars (ie 2 repetitions of the chord sequence)

A musical score for piano in G major, 4/4 time. The first staff shows four measures of chords: G major (G4, B4, D5), D major (D4, F#4, A4), D major (D4, F#4, A4), and G major (G4, B4, D5). The bass line consists of a single G note in the first, third, and fourth measures, and a D note in the second measure.

improvise for 8 bars (ie 2 repetitions of the chord sequence)

Tips:

Try chord inversions on your LH...

...and the inverted pentatonic scale in your RH

A musical score in bass clef, 4/4 time. The first measure shows a G major chord in first inversion (B4, D5, G4) with the label 'G' above and 'I' below. The second measure shows a D major chord in first inversion (F#4, A4, D4) with the label 'D/F#' above and 'Vb' below.

A musical score in treble clef, G major, showing the inverted pentatonic scale: G4, B4, D5, A4, F#4.

Grade 1

Chord progressions - F Major

A musical score for piano in F major, 4/4 time. It consists of four measures. The first measure has an F major chord in the right hand and a bass note of F in the left hand. The second measure has a C major chord in the right hand and a bass note of C in the left hand. The third and fourth measures each have an F major chord in the right hand and a bass note of F in the left hand. The sequence is labeled 'F', 'C', 'F', 'F' above the staff.

improvise for 8 bars (ie 2 repetitions of the chord sequence)

A musical score for piano in F major, 4/4 time. It consists of four measures. The first and second measures each have an F major chord in the right hand and a bass note of F in the left hand. The third measure has a C major chord in the right hand and a bass note of C in the left hand. The fourth measure has an F major chord in the right hand and a bass note of F in the left hand. The sequence is labeled 'F', 'F', 'C', 'F' above the staff.

improvise for 8 bars (ie 2 repetitions of the chord sequence)

A musical score for piano in F major, 4/4 time. It consists of four measures. The first measure has an F major chord in the right hand and a bass note of F in the left hand. The second and third measures each have a C major chord in the right hand and a bass note of C in the left hand. The fourth measure has an F major chord in the right hand and a bass note of F in the left hand. The sequence is labeled 'F', 'C', 'C', 'F' above the staff.

improvise for 8 bars (ie 2 repetitions of the chord sequence)

Tips:

Try chord inversions on your LH...

...and the inverted pentatonic scale in your RH

A musical score in bass clef, 4/4 time. The first measure shows an F major chord in the right hand and a bass note of F in the left hand, labeled 'F' and 'I' below. The second measure shows a C major chord in the right hand and a bass note of C in the left hand, labeled 'C/E' and 'Vb' below.

A musical score in treble clef, 4/4 time. It shows the inverted pentatonic scale for F major: F, C, D, E, G, starting on the first line of the staff.

Grade 1

Here are some worked examples:

Musical score for Grade 1 piano, 4/4 time, G major. Treble clef melody with notes G4, A4, B4, A4, G4. Bass clef accompaniment with chords G, D, G, G. Dynamics: *mf*.

Musical score for Grade 1 piano, 4/4 time, G major. Treble clef melody with notes G4, A4, B4, A4, G4. Bass clef accompaniment with chords G, D, G, G. Dynamics: *p*, *f*.

(inspired by the rhythm of 'Walking (and Talking)' from Piano 2018-2020: Grade 1)

Musical score for Grade 1 piano, 3/4 time, F major. Treble clef melody with notes F4, G4, A4, G4, F4. Bass clef accompaniment with chords F, F, F, C.

Musical score for Grade 1 piano, 3/4 time, F major. Treble clef melody with notes F4, G4, A4, G4, F4. Bass clef accompaniment with chords F, F, F, C, F.

(inspired by 'Jodler' from Piano 2018-2020: Grade 1)

Grade 1

Here are some worked examples (continued):

(using inverted pentatonic position and G⁷ chord)

This example uses the G⁷ chord, in place of the G chord, for an added 'scrunch':

For G major, you will need the D⁷ chord, and for F major, the C⁷ chord:

Try these in your improvisations for some added variety.

For a further challenge, practise improvising in 3 time as well as in 4 time.

The chord changes are more frequent, so it will be harder at first, but well worth the effort!

PUTTING PERFORMANCE FIRST