

INTRODUCING IMPROVISATION PIANO (HARMONIC STIMULUS)

GRADE 3



Grade 3 - Introducing chord ii

Chord progressions - C Major. As Grades 1 and 2, plus the following:

C Dm G C

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

C Dm F C

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

In earlier grades, we met chords I, IV, and V - the **primary** chords, which are all **major** (in major keys).

Chord ii is known as a **secondary** chord. It is a **minor** chord (in major keys). We write it here as Dm (for D minor) and the chord numeral ii in lower case.

Tips:

Adding the 7th in the LH makes the chord sound less 'bare'...

...and use the full scale in your RH (an octave higher)

C Dm Dm⁷/C

I ii ii⁷d

Grade 3 - Introducing chord ii

Chord progressions - G Major. As Grade 1 and 2, plus the following:

A musical score for piano in G major, 4/4 time. It consists of four measures. The first measure has a G major chord (G4, B4, D5) in the right hand and a G2 note in the left hand. The second measure has an Am7 chord (A3, C4, E4, G4) in the right hand and an A2 note in the left hand. The third measure has a D major chord (D4, F#4, A5) in the right hand and a D2 note in the left hand. The fourth measure has a G major chord (G4, B4, D5) in the right hand and a G2 note in the left hand.

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

A musical score for piano in G major, 4/4 time. It consists of four measures. The first measure has a G major chord (G4, B4, D5) in the right hand and a G2 note in the left hand. The second measure has an Am7 chord (A3, C4, E4, G4) in the right hand and an A2 note in the left hand. The third measure has a C major chord (C4, E4, G4) in the right hand and a C2 note in the left hand. The fourth measure has a G major chord (G4, B4, D5) in the right hand and a G2 note in the left hand.

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

Tips:

Adding the 7th in the LH makes the chord sound less 'bare'...

A musical score for piano in G major, 4/4 time, focusing on the left hand. It shows three measures: G (G2), Am (A2), and Am7/G (A2, C3, E3, G3). Below the notes are the Roman numerals I, ii, and ii⁷d.

...and use the inverted pentatonic scale in your RH (an octave higher)

A musical score for piano in G major, 4/4 time, focusing on the right hand. It shows the inverted pentatonic scale: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5.

or the full scale, if you prefer!

Try vamping techniques in your LH...

A musical score for piano in G major, 4/4 time, focusing on the left hand. It shows a G chord (G2) being held in the first measure, followed by three measures of a G chord (G2) being moved up the scale: G3, G4, G5.

Grade 3 - Introducing chord ii

Chord progressions - F Major. As Grade 1 and 2, plus the following:

F Gm C F

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

F Gm Bb F

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

Tips:

Adding the 7th in the LH makes the chord sound less 'bare'...

F Gm Gm⁷/F
I ii ii⁷d

...and use the inverted pentatonic scale in your RH (an octave higher)

or the full scale, if you prefer!

Try vamping techniques in your LH...

F

Grade 3

Here are some worked examples:

Musical score for Grade 3 piano, first example. The piece is in 4/4 time and features a melody in the right hand and chords in the left hand. The chords are C, Dm, G, and C. The dynamic marking is *mf*.

Musical score for Grade 3 piano, second example. The piece is in 4/4 time and features a melody in the right hand and chords in the left hand. The chords are C, Dm, G, and C. The dynamic markings are *dim.* and *p*.

(using full scale and Dm⁷ chord)

Musical score for Grade 3 piano, third example. The piece is in 4/4 time and features a melody in the right hand and chords in the left hand. The chords are F, Gm, C, and F. The dynamic marking is *mf*.

Musical score for Grade 3 piano, fourth example. The piece is in 4/4 time and features a melody in the right hand and chords in the left hand. The chords are F, Gm, C, and F. The dynamic marking is *mf*.

(as shown on Grade 3 video at 08:25, using full scale and Gm⁷ chord)

Grade 3

Here are some worked examples (continued):

Musical score for the first example, showing a first LH vamping technique. The piece is in G major, 4/4 time, marked *mp cantabile*. The right hand (RH) plays a melodic line with slurs over the notes G, A, B, C, D, E, F#, G. The left hand (LH) plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment of G, B, D, G, B, D, G, B, D, G. Chords G, Am, D, and G are indicated above the staff.

Musical score for the second example, showing a first LH vamping technique. The piece is in G major, 4/4 time, marked *mp cantabile*. The right hand (RH) plays a melodic line with slurs over the notes G, A, B, C, D, E, F#, G. The left hand (LH) plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment of G, B, D, G, B, D, G, B, D, G. Chords G, Am, D, and G are indicated above the staff.

Using first LH vamping technique and avoiding movement in RH when LH is busy

Musical score for the third example, showing a second LH vamping technique. The piece is in G major, 4/4 time, marked *mp cantabile*. The right hand (RH) plays a melodic line with slurs over the notes G, A, B, C, D, E, F#, G. The left hand (LH) plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment of G, B, D, G, B, D, G, B, D, G. Chords G, Am, C, and G are indicated above the staff.

Musical score for the fourth example, showing a second LH vamping technique. The piece is in G major, 4/4 time, marked *mp cantabile*. The right hand (RH) plays a melodic line with slurs over the notes G, A, B, C, D, E, F#, G. The left hand (LH) plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment of G, B, D, G, B, D, G, B, D, G. Chords G, Am, C, and G are indicated above the staff.

Using second LH vamping technique and avoiding movement in RH when LH is busy

Grade 3

Here are some worked examples (continued):

Musical score for Grade 3 piano, first system. Treble clef, 4/4 time, key of G major. Chords: G, Am, D, G. Dynamics: *mf*. The right hand plays a melodic line with eighth notes and rests, while the left hand plays a bass line with chords and single notes.

Musical score for Grade 3 piano, second system. Treble clef, 4/4 time, key of G major. Chords: G, Am, D, G. The right hand continues the melodic line, and the left hand continues the bass line.

(inspired by rhythm of 'Tango-Prelude II' from Piano 2018-2020: Grade 3 and using inverted pentatonic position)

Musical score for Grade 3 piano, third system. Treble clef, 4/4 time, key of G major. Chords: G, Am, D, G. Dynamics: *mf*. The right hand continues the melodic line, and the left hand continues the bass line.

Musical score for Grade 3 piano, fourth system. Treble clef, 4/4 time, key of G major. Chords: G, Am, D, G. Dynamics: *mf*. The right hand continues the melodic line, and the left hand continues the bass line.

Using second LH vamping technique and rhythm of 'Tango-Prelude II' from Piano 2018-2020: Grade 3

Grade 3

Here are some worked examples (continued):

Musical score for Grade 3 piano, first system. It features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The piece is marked *p* (piano). The melody in the treble clef consists of dotted rhythms: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter). The bass clef accompaniment consists of chords: G3 (quarter), Am3 (quarter), D3 (quarter), G3 (quarter). Chord symbols G, Am, D, and G are placed above the treble staff.

Musical score for Grade 3 piano, second system. It continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system. The melody in the treble clef consists of dotted rhythms: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter). The bass clef accompaniment consists of chords: G3 (quarter), Am3 (quarter), D3 (quarter), G3 (quarter). Chord symbols G, Am, D, and G are placed above the treble staff.

Using dotted rhythms in $\frac{3}{4}$ time

PUTTING PERFORMANCE FIRST

TRINITY
COLLEGE LONDON

trinitycollege.com/piano