



**Learn HOW TO PLAY PIANO
CHORDS, NOTES, SCALES,
PROPER FINGER TECHNIQUES,
IMPROVISATION, and more!**

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~ This eBook was created by Ruth R Martin ~

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How to Play Piano Chords – Playing a C Chord

- Turn on the keyboard by pressing the button titled 'Power' or 'On/Off'.
- Count up 30 keys to get to middle C.
- Once on the middle, count 4 keys to reach E (the second note of the C chord).
- Next count up 3 keys to reach G.
- Now we have the 3 keys within the C chord C-E-G.
- Look for the key function on the keyboard, titled **Voice**, (This is where you will find different voicing like piano, guitar, violin. Choose a piano sound.
- Press down the C, hold it with your pinky finger.
- While holding the C with your pinky finger, place your middle finger on the E.
- While holding the C and E with appropriate fingers, place your thumb on the G.
- Press all of these notes down together.
- Congratulations, you've just played a C chord! Practice playing a C chord until you can find it automatically and play it smoothly.
- Now you can go to other sounds in the keyboard by simply pressing the button that has a up symbol to experiment with different sounds like guitar, or organ.

For video tutorials on how to play piano chords, visit: [How to Play Piano Chords](#)



How to Learn Faster using a Piano Chord Finder

Individuals who were born with a lot of musical talent don't usually need a *chord finder* because they are good at it naturally. The rest of us can use all the help we can get! Learning how to play keyboard with the right hand alone is quite simple.

However, when it comes to learning how to play with both hands, the left hand playing chords, it gets more tricky. Now the left hand needs to learn how to find chords, and should eventually come to a place where it has memorized them, and can play them automatically.

You need a good musical ear to be able to hear what keys need to be played together to make a proper chord. There are many, many chords you can play, but if you have trouble finding chords, you might appreciate a little extra help.

Lucky for you, there is actually software available, called a **chord finder**, that can make all of it much easier. I wish I had something like this when I first started learning how to play keyboard! It would have saved me a lot of time, headaches, stress, and frustration!

A Review of Duane Shinn's Instant Chord Finder

Duane Shinn from Keyboard Workshop created software called '**The Instant Piano Chord Finder**' which has helped many beginners and advanced piano and keyboard players to find chords more easily.

The digital product is downloaded instantly upon receipt of payment so the information is available immediately with no waiting for a product to arrive in the mail. This is wonderful because when you need to know how to find chords it is better to have this knowledge available quickly.

Duane, a well-known pianist as well as a piano teacher, is the perfect person to learn chords from because he had the experience with the piano, as well as his success as an e-course author and online instructor to pull from when he created this product.

Many individuals will benefit from it, including those who are learning music theory, are interested in playing chords, guitarists, music composers and those writing sheet music. The product has a well-designed interface that is attractive and easy to use.

The Instant Chord Finder Features:

- It consists of three parts: The musical staff, the keyboard layout, the keypad.
- Available on a concise chart right on your desktop.
- The chords are displayed on the keyboard and on the bass and treble clef music staff making it easy to locate and play the chords even for beginner.
- Using the software will help to speed up your sight-reading ability.
- Effective tool for piano players, keyboard players, organ players, and synthesizer player.
- Cheaper than a college education for learning chords.
- It shows major chords, minor chords, augmented chords, diminished chords, 7th chords, minor 7th chords, 6th chords, minor 6th chords, major 7th chords, 9th chords, 11th chords, 13th chords and suspended chords (sus) as well as all the inversions of these piano chords, all the scales including the 12 major scales, 12 harmonic minor scales, 12 melodic minor scales and the 12 major pentatonic scales.



The Instant Chord Finder Pros:

- The product is also available on CD Rom for those who would rather have it in that method instead of an instant download.
- The Instant Chord Finder is a very easy program to use.
- The program functions as a chord dictionary, chord locator and chord finder as well as showing all the inversions of piano chords.

The Instant Chord Finder Cons:

- Does not show minor pentatonic scales.
- Software does not work on a Web TV or Mac computer.

The Instant Chord Finder Recommendation:

The **Instant Chord Finder** by *Duane Shinn* is highly recommended to anyone looking to learn music theory, those in need of finding chords on a piano, keyboard or organ, or those writing sheet music. The software is designed for beginners as well as advanced keyboard and piano players, and is very easy to use.

To download the chord finder software, visit:

[How To Play Keyboard with a Piano Chord Finder](#)

How to Play Keyboard Notes

Assuming that you already have a basic knowledge of how to play keyboard or piano, and are learning how to sight read the **keyboard notes** on the music sheet, a few hints on how to learn to read notes might help. Just like in typing, do not look down at your hands - reading the keyboard notes will become as second nature as reading a book!

1.) Find music books at your local library, borrow books or print keyboard notes sheet music from a website at your skill level or easier. This should be music that you think you would like but have never heard before.

2.) Sit at the keyboard or piano, and open the book to the first page. Look at the **keyboard notes** on the music sheet, say the notes softly, and learn to understand the piece a little bit without actually playing any part of it. Look at the key signature, any changes of clefs, and the dynamics of the piece. Look for chords and try to determine what they are.

Look for the trickiest part of the piece and determine a speed at which you think you can play even the trickiest parts. It is important to **not stop and restart when you make a mistake**. Just keep playing. Look for patterns while you are playing, and always try to read a minimum of one measure ahead.

3.) When you finish one piece, repeat it until you feel comfortable knowing the names of the keyboard notes. Remember, it is like typing — your mind will tell your fingers where to go once you practice it often enough.

4.) Continue with the same piece, and when the keyboard notes are easy to play, learn the timing of the piece. No piece will sound good if the timing is incorrect.

5.) Keep practicing in this manner as often as you can. A few times a week is best. Feel free to go back and study the pieces you played in more depth. The more you practice, the better your sight reading skills will become.

More Tips on Learning Notes:

- You can, if you do not have a keyboard or piano nearby, read the keyboard notes without even playing. Look at their positions and remember what they look like. Get it to memory.
- A very good skill when sight reading is recovering from mistakes. You will make them. Don't let them fluster you; just keep playing. It is almost guaranteed that if the listener isn't familiar with the music, and you don't give it away, they'll never know.
- One of the hardest parts of sight reading music is getting the rhythm correct. It helps to count out loud, "One and two and three and four and..." Of course the numbers that you count depends on the piece.
- It helps to accompany a singer or other instrument while sight reading. This forces you to stay honest.
- Check for sharps or flats, key changes, or changes in the time signature. If you are dealing with any large jumps (i.e., octave jumps), also beware of those. Double and triple check any note that isn't in the staff.
- Do not judge yourself or your ability as you sight read. Remember, you are simply trying to improve your reading skills. Since sight reading **keyboard notes** involves playing continuously (not stopping as if you were practicing to perfect the piece), your focus is important. Getting angry at yourself merely distracts you from the main goal. Smile and play with intent.
- Another very good (and far more enjoyable) way to practice sight reading is to play duets with a friend, as both pianists will be forced to keep in time, play continuously and with correct notes as far as possible.

How to Place Fingers Properly on the Keys

This chapter will guide you through the recommended proper finger placement on the keyboard. Placing your fingers on the keys correctly right from the beginning will make a big difference in learning piano, well and quickly.

First you will need to memorize the fingering number system. Fingers are numbered to make it easier to write down finger placement on sheet music. It also helps explaining proper keyboard finger placement. The numbering of fingers is the same for both left and right hands. The numbering system is as follows:

- The **thumb** finger is number 1.
- The **index** finger is number 2.
- The **middle** finger is number 3.
- The **ring** finger is number 4.
- The **pinky** finger is number 5.

Right-hand fingers placement on keyboard:

- Start at Middle C.
- Put finger 1 on the middle C note key.
- Put finger 2 on D, 3 on E, 4 on F, 5 on G. This is known as the *Going up pattern*.
- Play the notes C-D-E-F-G using the current finger placement.
- Move finger 1 to the right, and below the other fingers just when your finger 5 starts to go down to hit the G note key.
 - Pass finger 1 under finger 5 to play the next A note.
 - Repeat the five finger order outlined before so that finger 2 presses B, 3 on C5, 4 on D5, and 5 on E5.
- Repeat the previous pattern until you reach the end of the keyboard.

Left-hand fingers placement on keyboard:

- Start at Middle C.
- Put finger 1 on the middle C note key.
- Put finger 2 on B3, 3 on A3, 4 on G3, 5 on F3. This is known as the *Going down pattern*.
- Play the notes C4-B3-A3-G3-F3 using the current finger placement.
- Move finger 1 to the left, and below the other fingers just when your finger 5 starts to go down to hit the F note key.
- Pass finger 1 under finger 5 to play the next E3 note.
- Repeat the five finger order outlined before so that finger 2 presses D3, 3 on C3, 4 on B2, and 5 on A2.
- Repeat the previous pattern until you reach the end of the keyboard.



How to Improvise – Methods and Tips

So what is **piano improvisation** and why might you want to learn it? The simple definition of it is performing without preparation. Improvising can improve your piano playing and the sound of your melody/music. It will change an ordinary piece of music into an artful masterpiece! Below are some basics on several different *piano improvisation* methods.

Basic Steps to Piano Improvisation:

- Have a knowledge of a variety of music, so as to not be imitating any one song.
- Learn about scales. Jump in and learn one that has a lot of sharps or flats in it, such as B Major. Practice the scale, just in the right hand at first. You might find these "bumpy" scales are easier to play than C major, since you can "see" how the scale is shaped!
- Learn about chords. It is suggested that you learn triad chords before moving on to quartals and such. Triad chords consist of three notes (1-2-3) and between two notes and the root(1-2 or 1-3) is a distinct interval. For a quick example, a C major triad consists of a C-E-G. Between C-E is a major 3rd, while between C-G the interval is a perfect fifth.
- There are as many ways to improvise as there are people. Here are some suggested techniques to try... give them each a shot!

Method One:

- Sit down and hit notes only of the same key. (F, G, Em, A#, etc.)
- Have your left hand play the background chorus (slow block or broken chords) in the same key.
- Have your right hand playing the melody. Switch keys once you become better at it to give it a broader, more complex feel and to amplify the beauty of the song.

Method Two:

- Play a slow 4/4 piece with each measure getting one chord on the left hand.
- With the right, improve a melody within that chord.
- The next measure switch to a different chord and continue the melody in that next chord. Continue this until you become proficient (or bored).

Method Three:

- Once you've learned how to play some scales in both hands, try improvising with both hands going at once.
- Get your fingers moving in the same scale...it'll sound alright. Try playing a "**question and answer**" game with your hands.
- Play some random phrase in one hand and try to repeat it in your other hand.
- Start simple. Eventually you may find your hands can generate melodic ideas simultaneously that work together!

Method Four:

- Instead of simply playing block chords or arpeggios in one hand, try to make the top or bottom note of that accompaniment form its own melody.
- The pinky and the thumb tend to be most convenient for this way of playing.
- Try playing accompaniments in your right hand with chords or arpeggios and melodies in your left hand.

Additional Tips to Piano Improvisation

As with anything to do with music, practicing is the key. Improvisation cannot be completely spontaneous...it must build on a vocabulary of musical devices. These can include small phrases of melody, rhythms, accompaniments, harmonic progressions, and so on. The more expansive your vocabulary, the more your music will become "your own."

Remember, to do this you should also listen to other people playing other pieces, and listen to other people improvising too, so you get a feeling of how to improvise. Experiment with playing measured rhythms (4/4 etc.) and completely free rhythm. In free rhythm, there are no rules at all.

You may find this helps you come up with new ideas easier than trying to fit all your ideas into a particular kind of rhythm. Record yourself early and often. Listen to these recordings.

When you're starting out, it may be difficult to remember things you played. If you listen to your recordings, you may hear something cool you did that you forgot. Then you can pick out that cool idea and use it again...thus helping to build your musical vocabulary.

Find a quiet spot with a window. This helps you to be yourself and let what things you have cooped up inside flow out onto the keys. Inspiration is many times found when viewing the beauty of the earth.

Relax and be loose with your fingers. If you mess up and accidentally hit a note not in key, go with it and keep going in the new key, don't go back. (EXAMPLE: Key of C→ you play C...E...G...A...F#...C#...D...←now you're in the key of D)

Vary in volume, intensity, speed, and other dynamics to add emotion and beauty. Use improvisation to let out your anger or soothe your worries. Play what your heart tells you to play (cheesy, but true).

If you mess up, pretend it was a part of the song and keep going with it. Learn music patterns. A harsh, short gliss gives the impression of anger and reproach. Arpeggios in the bass voice tend to give a feeling of movement. Observe patterns in speech and music and use those observations to your advantage.

- Do not feel you must learn tons about music theory "before" learning piano improvisation. It is sufficient to begin by learning maybe one scale and a couple of chords within it...you can learn other chords/scales/theory with time!
- Do not have any one piece in mind while playing; let it come naturally.
- Don't be afraid to hit "wrong" notes! There are no wrong notes in piano improvisation—all is freedom!



Keep reading....

How to Play Scales on the Piano

- Your 5th finger should generally only be used for starting or ending a scale, not passing tones. In other words, you should cross your 1st finger under your 3rd or 4th finger, not the 5th.
- For a C scale, right hand example, you will play C, D, and E with fingers 1, 2, and 3, then pass finger 1 under the 3rd to play F, G, A, B, and C with 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Reverse this coming back down. (Note that ending on your 5th finger here is fine.)
- If you are continuing up more than one octave, you will cross your 1st finger under the 4th, changing from B to C ready to start over with the same pattern on the next octave.
- For the left hand going up, you want to cross your 3rd finger over your first going from G to A. Continuing another octave, you'll cross your 4th over the 1st from C to D. It makes more sense to think of the mirrored fingerings, but playing up with your right and down with your left is not the norm. (Note that beginning on your 5th finger here is perfectly acceptable.)
- This crossing under fingers 3 and 4 (or over with fingers 3 and 4) may not seem important on the all-white-keys C scale, but when you start working on other keys, its importance becomes clear. Starting these good habits in this easy scale will pay off in the long run. (In most keys, you will always begin with your left hand on your 5th finger and end with your right hand on your 5th finger.)

Additional Tips:

- Use only the 5 fingers to play either C-D-E-F-G (right hand), or C-B-A-G-F (left hand). Practice playing the notes going upward (to the right), then downward (to the left) then both. After your fingers are loose enough, start practicing going 10 notes up or down.

Tips to Improve Your Piano Skills 101

Starting to learn how to play keyboard or piano but finding it hard to improve? Been taking piano lessons for some time now but feeling no progress? Or maybe you have some piano experience but you need to improve your playing skills? In this chapter, we'll be showing you how to improve your current piano skills.

The chapter takes into account people who learned playing by ear, using instructional materials such as books and DVDs, or using lessons from a professional teacher. So, if you feel that a certain step has already been accomplished, go ahead and skip it to the next step. Dive in and enjoy learning how to play keyboard and improving your playing skills!

Things You'll Need to Improve Your Playing Skills:

- A piano or a digital piano. If you're going to use a digital piano or a keyboard, make sure it's fully weighted with hammer-action capabilities if possible.
- Piano lessons, for those intending to learn utilizing the experience and knowledge of an instructor.
- A piano teaching media-set (such as DVD sets, books, videos, etc.) for those intending to learn by themselves.
- A printer and some musical notation software is not a necessity but can improve the process greatly.
- Time management software (simple spreadsheets applications are enough in most cases) can benefit you greatly too.
- A serious commitment. Learning how to play keyboard or piano is not a job that you can do in a week or two and be done with it. Improvements are done in small steps not huge ones. Without commitment, you won't be able to really improve.

How to Play Keyboard - Steps to Improving:

Manage your learning and practice time. Dedicate a time slot to sessions or training and be committed about it. Try not to allow anything to deter you from your practice.

Commitment to practice is crucial to improving your abilities.

- Use schedules if your time is so full that you cannot dedicate the same time slot periodically.
- Use reminders on any device you usually carry with you to remind you of your sessions.

Plan your practice. Although this is not necessary later, at first, when you're learning new things, it's important to know what you should be learning in the next few sessions so as to be able to measure your progress.

This is supposed to help you keep track of your knowledge and skills progress, not be a tool to disappoint you if you didn't make the progress you hoped for in the time you expected. If you feel some particular concept took a really long time to master, don't worry. The important thing is that, in the end, you do master it.

Improve your musical notation reading skills. Many of the steps and tips to follow will either depend on, or greatly benefit from a proficiency in reading musical notation (sheet music).

You can do this as follows:

- Learn to read piano music if you haven't already done so. Make sure you understand most of the concepts of musical notation. If you want to improve your overall piano playing, you'll need to learn about more advanced musical notations such as dynamics, tempo, key and time signatures, clefs, etc. Knowing only how to read the notes themselves and their intervals won't be enough.
- Learn to sight-read piano music. This will improve your ability to translate what you see and understand on the musical sheet into beautiful piano tunes.

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