

Year 8 Skills

The Piano Keyboard

The piano keyboard is based on a pattern that is repeated along its entire length.

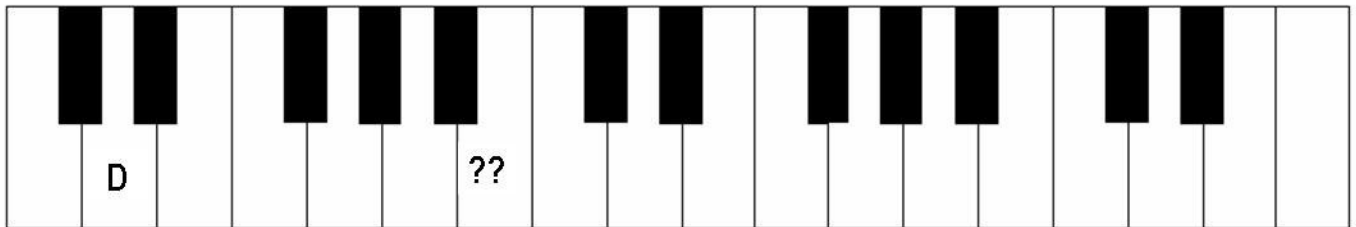
How many black notes are there in the pattern?

How many white notes are there in the pattern?

The white key notes are named using letters A to G of the alphabet.

When the pattern repeats, so do the note names.

Each note always occurs at the same point in the pattern



The note **D** has been marked in on this keyboard diagram.
It comes between the group of two black keys ~ like the **Dog** in the kennel!

1. Mark the other **Ds** on the diagram. How many are there?
2. What is the name of the white key marked "??"?
- Mark another key that has the same name. (Use the letter-name)
3. Label all the **Cs** on the diagram with their letter-name.

Sharps (#) and Flats (b)

These are important notes. Without them, we wouldn't know which white note was which!

A **sharp** raises a white note to the black note above it . This distance is called a **semitone**.

A **flat** lowers a white note to the black note below it . This distance is also called a **semitone**.

On the diagram, label the following notes (above the black notes):



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The Five-finger Position

Imagine you are holding an orange in the palm of your right hand with your fingers slightly apart and curled around it .

Now turn your hand upside down so that the fingers are pointing downwards.

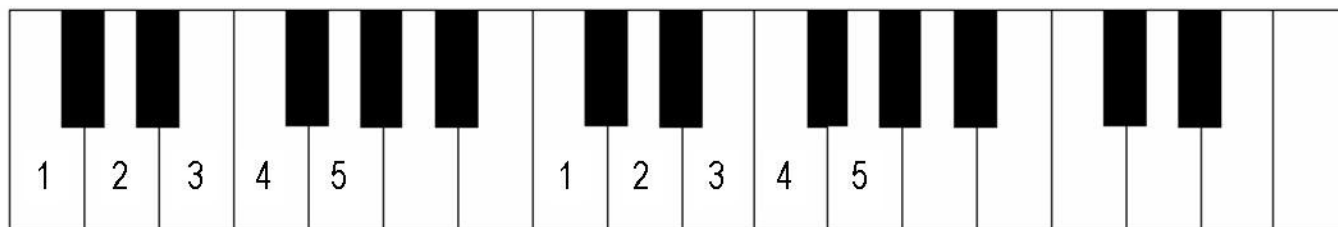
This is the **5-finger position**. You are now ready to play a tune.

Numbers are used to help you know which finger to use for each note of the tune. The fingers are numbered from 1 to 5, starting with the thumb.

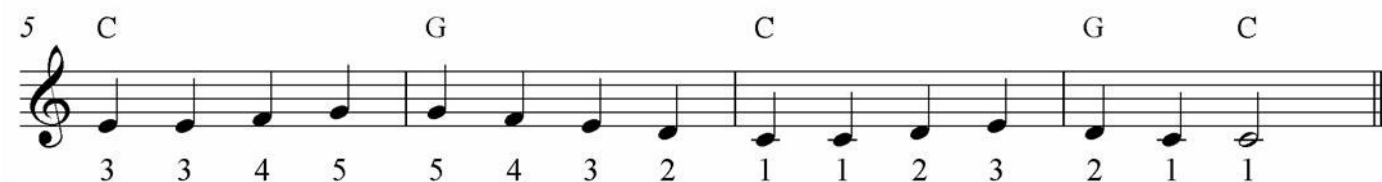
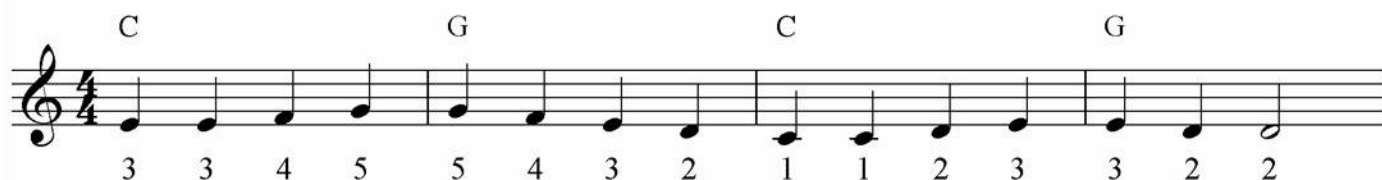


Start by making your right hand into the 5-finger position.

Now find the note **C** and place your right thumb on it. Let your other four fingers rest on the four white notes above **C**. (If there are not enough white keys, move to a lower **C**.)



Now try this tune by Beethoven. It was used in "Sister Act 2" The school choir sang it to the words "Joyful Joyful" at the end of the film.



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Keyboard Chords

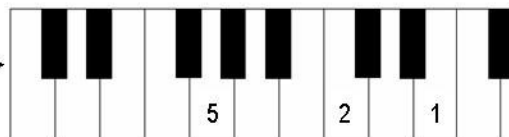
Here's the music to Joyful Joyful again. Notice the letters above the music at the start of each bar. They are chords ~ 3 notes played at the same time to accompany the tune. Each chord starts on the given note and uses the 3rd and 5th notes above it: **C = C E G**; **G = G B D**

Musical notation for the first four bars of the piece. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The notes are: Bar 1: C4, D4, E4, F#4; Bar 2: G4, A4, B4, C5; Bar 3: B4, A4, G4, F#4; Bar 4: E4, D4, C4, B3. Chord letters C, G, C, G are placed above the first note of each bar. Fingerings are indicated below the notes: 3 3 4 5, 5 4 3 2, 1 1 2 3, 3 2 2.

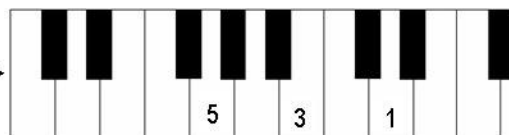
Musical notation for the last five bars of the piece. The notes are: Bar 5: C4, D4, E4, F#4; Bar 6: G4, A4, B4, C5; Bar 7: B4, A4, G4, F#4; Bar 8: E4, D4, C4, B3; Bar 9: C4, B3, A3, G3. Chord letters C, G, C, G, C are placed above the first note of each bar. Fingerings are indicated below the notes: 3 3 4 5, 5 4 3 2, 1 1 2 3, 2 1 1, 1.

Here are the notes you need for each chord. They are played with the **left** hand. The numbers show the best fingers to use. (Remember—the thumb is 1.) Notice that the little finger (5) stays on the same note (**G**).

C major chord



G major chord



- ◆ Practise playing the two chords until you can move easily from one to the other.
- ◆ Play the chords while your partner plays the tune. Count the beats as you play and make sure you change the chord on the first beat of each bar. Watch out for the final bar! Change over and give your partner a chance to play chords while you play the melody.
- ◆ Select a suitable rhythm style (if your keyboard instrument has them) and try playing with an accompanying drumbeat.
- ◆ Can you play the chords with your left hand and the tune with your right. Go on ~ have a go!



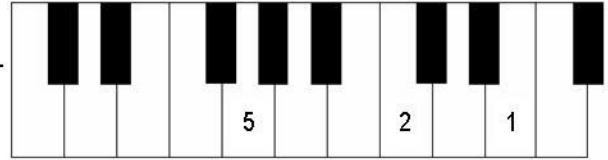
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A Three Chord Song (or two)

It is now time to introduce a new chord—**F major**, which can be used alongside C and G

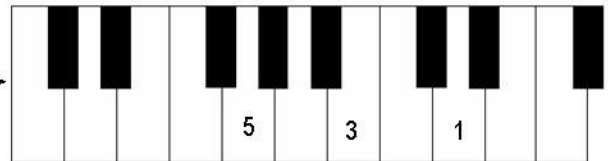
C and G chords are the same as for Joyful Joyful.
F's notes are all one down from G.

C major
chord

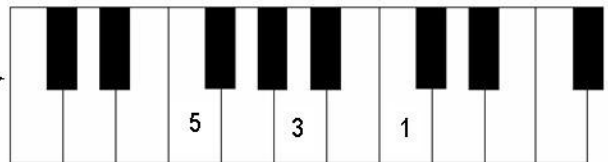


Practice playing them one after another, making sure you practise moving from F to C and F to G and back again.

G major
chord



F major
chord



Now try working on a piece that uses the chords of C, F and G. One of you should practise the tune slowly whilst your keyboard partner plays in the chords. Eventually, you'll be able to do both parts at once.

C

O when the saints go mar-ching in, O when the saints go mar-ching

4 G C F C G C

in, O Lord I want to be in that number, when the saints go mar-ching in.

