

COREPIANO™

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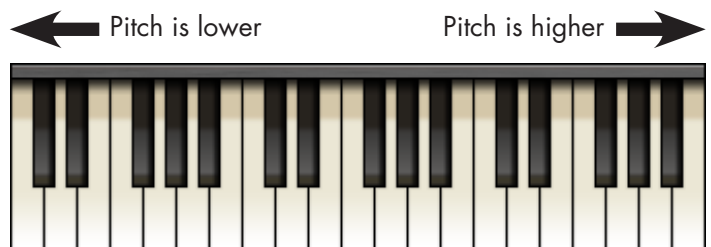
Chapter 1

Finding Your Way Around The Piano

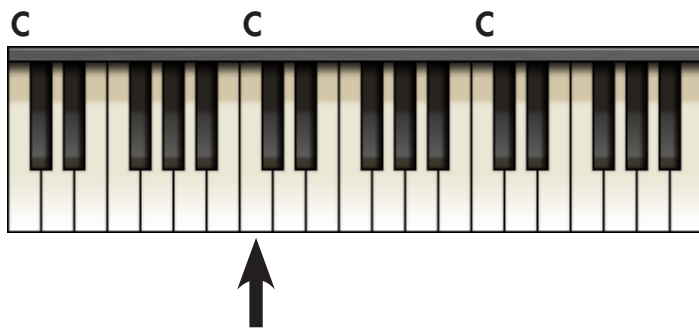
Low vs. High Notes

The piano has 88 notes. They are broken into black notes and white notes. Not all keyboards have all 88 notes. The notes to the left of the keyboard sound lower than those to the right. Remember, lower is not softer.

Think of the left side of the piano sounding like ‘elephants pounding on the ground’ and the right sounding like ‘birds chirping in the trees.’ Elephants live low (ground level) and birds high up in the trees. Voila! Now you know low sounds vs. high sounds.



Finding 'C'



One of the most important notes that we need to find at the piano is the note ‘C’. To find C, first take a look at the black notes of the keyboard. Do you spot the 2-3 pattern? They follow a pattern of 2-3, 2-3, etc. If we play the note to the left of a group of 2 black notes, that note is C.

Where's Middle C?

You might have heard of the note *middle C*. This is a C that is closest to the middle of the keyboard. I like to tell students that it is usually close-to, or directly under the name of the piano.

Here's a tip: try counting up in half-steps from the very far left note on the piano. If you count up 40 half-steps... you have found middle C.

The Musical Alphabet

We use our special *musical alphabet* to name the notes on the piano which goes from A to G. It is easier to see this if we start on C. Notice how after getting to G, we start over at A again. There is no 'H' in music!



C D E F G A B C D etc..

Half Steps

When we move from one note to the very next note, this is called a *half step*. Here are some different examples of half steps. There are two places on the keyboard where two white notes next to each other form a half step. This happens between the notes B to C and E to F.



Whole Steps

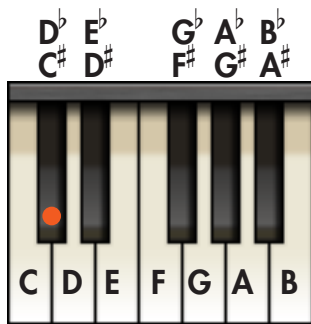
Whole Steps are equal to (2) half steps. Another way to think of this is a whole step moves by 2 half steps. You can also think of a whole as “having a note in between.” Notice in the examples to the right how there is one note sandwiched between each whole step?

Here are some examples of whole steps.



Sharps & Flats

When we raise a note by a half step, we are *sharpening* that note. When we lower a note by a half step, we are *flattening* that note. *Sharps* raise a note by a half step. *Flats* lower a note by a half step.



For now, we can think of sharps and flats as being ‘black key’ notes. This is not always the case, but this generalization will make it easier to understand for now.

Each black key has (2) options. It can be either a white note that is sharped or flatted.

Take a look at the black note with the orange dot. See how this can be a C sharp or D flat? Knowing which it should be is not of upmost concern right now. As you learn more about keys and key signatures, it will become clear.

Lesson Summary

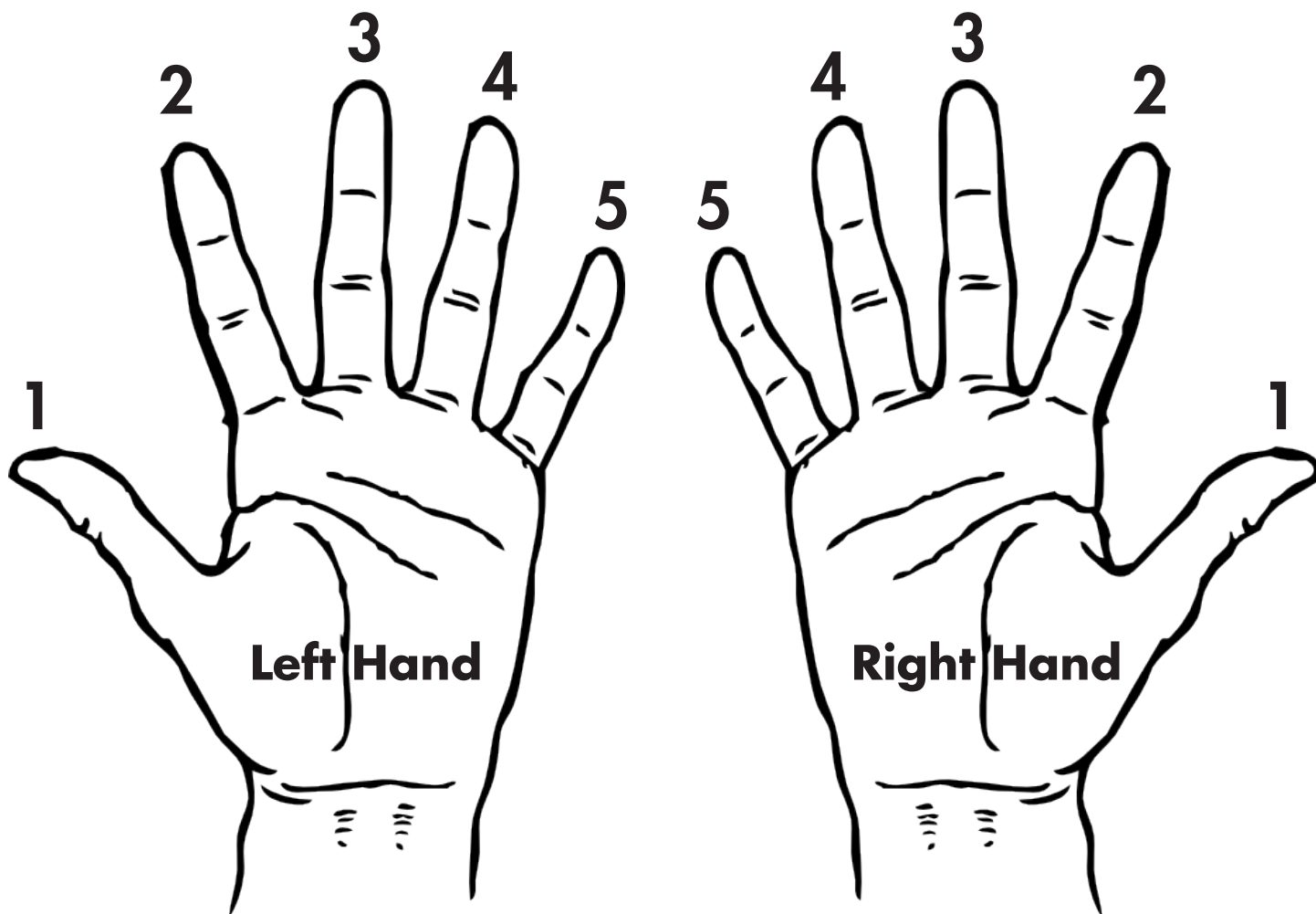
- You should be comfortable finding all ‘C’ notes on the piano
- Review your musical alphabet up *and* down. Start on A and go up the alphabet: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C, D, etc. Next, start on any letter and go backwards: F, E, D, C, B, A, G, F, etc.
- Try identifying different half and whole steps on the piano. Remember, your naturally occurring half steps are between E & F and B & C.
- Play any black note and name both names for that note. For instance, Db can also be C#.

Chapter 2

Fingering basics

Finger Numbers

We number our fingers so that we know which finger goes on which note. The numbering system is simple: thumbs are #1...pinkies are #5. Take a look at the graphic below to see the fingering layout.



When we apply a set finger pattern to a section of music, we call this our *fingering*. Passages of music usually have set finger patterns because that fingering has worked for most people. For instance, if the music went from middle 'C' to 'G', you would most likely use 1 & 5 when playing with your right hand. Now, that is not to say that you can not use your thumb and ring finger, or 1 & 4. When you see a finger number written in the music, it is merely saying "Hey, this fingering works!" You're free to change the fingering as you see fit.

