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“How To Memorize Music, Improve Your Sight Reading And How To Choose The Right Piano”

Special Report By Graham Howard of

<http://www.ukpianos.co.uk>

About This Report

You can use this report in any way you wish as long as it remains intact in its current format.

You can get free piano lessons, learning tips, techniques and more information by getting this 5 part mini course:

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Should You Learn on a Keyboard or Digital Piano?

The keyboard and digital piano market is certainly much larger today than the acoustic piano market. The reasons for this are mainly due to the available space in the modern home, advances in technology that allow you to record your own music on your digital piano or keyboard, and the useful feature of being able to play with headphones.

- - Grand Pianos - -

In an ideal world it is best to learn on a grand piano.

The grand piano produces the best sound, has more weight to the keys which strengthens the fingers more, and has a faster repetition due to the superior horizontal piano action which relies more on gravity than the upright.

The disadvantages of the grand piano are mainly the space they take up and the high price tag.

- - Upright Pianos - -

The upright piano is the next best thing to learn on.

Much less space is required than a grand piano, prices are cheaper and the sound of the tallest uprights are almost identical to the grand piano.

- - Digital Pianos - -

The digital piano comes next in line.

The sounds are recordings from a grand piano and the touch, although lighter than a grand or upright piano, is pretty realistic.

The main advantages of the digital piano are:

- Cheaper to buy
- Easier to move around
- Lots of different instrument sounds to play around with
- Can be used with headphones
- Takes up less room than an upright piano
- Easy to record your own music
- No tuning required

Disadvantages:

- New improved models are brought out every 2-3 years
- They wear out very quickly if played a lot
- The touch is not quite heavy enough
- The sound is easily identifiable as electronic

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- - Keyboards - -

Last in line is the keyboard.

The keyboard is not the best thing to learn on.

Advantages are:

- Much cheaper to buy than any other type of piano
- Easy to carry around
- Takes up limited space. Easily storable
- Record your own music
- No tuning required

Disadvantages:

- The keys are way too light
- Only 61 keys instead of 88
- Poor sound quality
- Harder to play dynamics

- - Conclusion - -

If your budget is tight, then a keyboard will do for the first year of playing only.

Practicing on a keyboard is ok if you are mainly learning the notes and the theory of music. After one year you will need to upgrade to either a digital piano or an acoustic piano.

How to Improve Your Sight Reading

The question I get asked most is “how can I improve my sight reading?”

This is the number one skill that everyone wants to master.

Sight reading is a skill you can attain. I say attain because it can be learned. If you can't sight read, it hampers everything you do. Every new piece is a hassle to learn, requests from your friends to play a simple piece of sheet music falls by the way side, and accompanying is almost impossible.

Fortunately, you can learn sight reading fairly easily. You will need to make a regular commitment to set aside 20-30 minutes of your time per day to practice the sight reading techniques.

If you are a beginner, the best time for you to start a sight reading program is after 6 to 9 months. You should choose music pieces that are at least one level below your ability...

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You should take the following into consideration:

- Examine the piece first for patterns (measures or lines repeated) and traps (key signatures, accidentals, dynamics and fingering). You can study the piece for as long as you like before you play.
- Play the piece very slowly. You must include every detail on the page. Your goal is accuracy, not speed. You have only one chance to get it right.
- Read ahead. Do not be caught by surprise. As you are playing a note, or chord, your eyes should already be on the next one.

Tip/

To keep your mind alert, you should try to start a piece at a different point each day. You can also pick out the most difficult section of the piece and start there. You will never regret the time you spend learning how to sight-read.

How to Memorize Music

Part of the memory problem is being afraid of forgetting the piece and the humiliation that would follow.

Repeat...Repeat...Repeat

This is the most common method of memorizing music. The piece is repeated again and again so that eventually it is almost impossible to forget any part of it. The piece can be broken down in to smaller sections, with each section being mastered before moving on to the next one.

But you will find this method of remembering music very insecure and should be considered only as a fallback to some other memory method.

- - Hand Position - -

You might prefer to remember what your hands look like while playing. You may find this easier to do, but if the fingers slip, your memory has gone.

- - Analysis - -

The best method is analysis.

You should study the whole piece. What key does it start in? Where does it change key or change tempo? If there is a second theme, how does it compare with the first theme? Where are the repeat marks, pauses, or other notation? What dynamics are present and where?

You need to learn the circle of fifths and common cadences. These are essential, as are scales and arpeggios.

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Memory by analysis should start on a small scale. When this has been mastered, larger sections can be tackled.

*** * Memorizing without the piano * ***

If you have an above average familiarity with notes and a good visual memory, you might be able to memorize away from the keyboard by looking at the score.

You should start by playing the piece away from the piano by tapping your fingers on a table. See if you can hear each note and chord as you play them. Can you remember which fingers to put down? If you come across any uncertain areas, you will need to go back to the piano and work on it.

- - Slow Practicing - -

Make sure you play the entire piece slowly.

If you play with a slow speed, this disrupts finger memories because your hands do not move as they are trained to and your ear does not hear quickly enough what it is anxious to hear. Your brain does all the work.

- - Photographic Memory - -

Only a small percentage of the population has a photographic memory. If you have this, you will surely know about it.

- - Final Solution - -

You can also try memorizing large sections at a time.

Now work on the places where your memory breaks down. You should start just before the problem and play just beyond it so that the difficult phrase can easily be remembered and inserted into the flow of things.

What Next?

You can get a free mini course on how to learn piano, read music, recognize rhythms, and how to train your ear by visiting:

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