

HOW TO PLAY PIANO CHORDS

CD included

Book 1
Getting Started

**The fastest and most effective way to learn
popular keyboard accompanying**

Darryl Chute





Piano Chords

Book 1

Getting Started

This book will get you up and running by playing some of the world's most famous songs.

*Fountainhead Music - Sydney Australia
Phone: Sydney Australia (+612) 9398 7375
www.fountainheadmusic.com.au*

Why this book?



Ever wanted to sing your favourite songs and accompany yourself on a keyboard instrument?

Well, this book is the first in a series that will teach you just that!

Pop guitar players have a good time with little or no music theory and now it's the keyboard player's turn.

***Book 1 - Getting Started** gets you up and running with some of the world's most famous tunes.*

***Book 2 - The Chord Book** will teach you all the chords you will ever likely need. From here the huge catalogue of published popular music will be at your fingertips.*

***Book 3 - The Rhythm Book** teaches you in depth how to play chords in various musical styles such as ballads, swing, reggae, etc.*

Each book has an accompanying CD to make your learning more interesting.

Have fun - and enjoy the journey!

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What is chord playing all about?

With classical music the performer is usually told exactly what to play, but with popular music styles such as pop, jazz, country, folk etc musicians sometimes have little more than a chord chart or lead sheet.

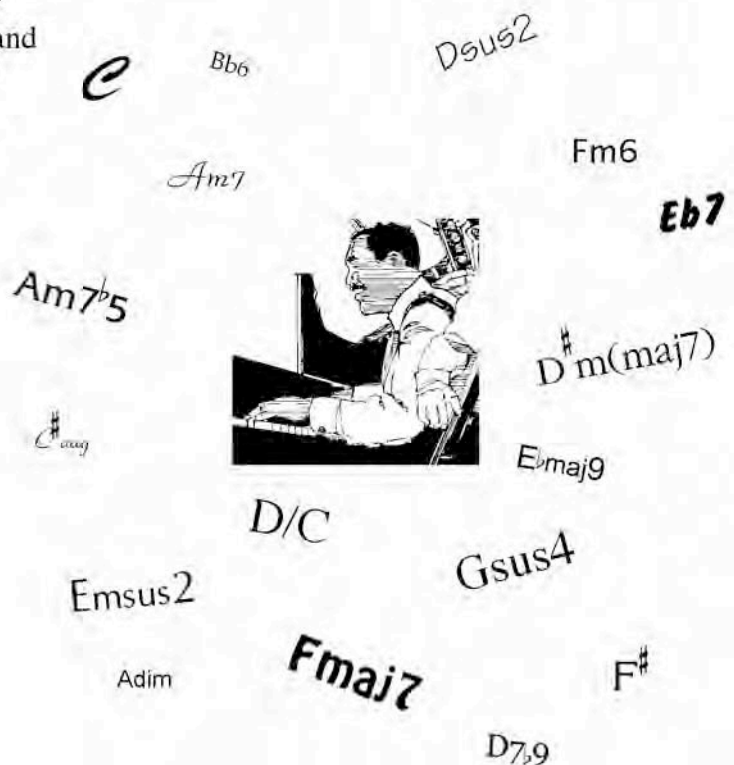
A lot of music books these days (such as busker or fake books) only have the melody line, lyrics and chords. Chords are simply when you play many notes at the same time. They fill up the sound and support the melody line which in popular music is mostly sung.

When you see famous singers and songwriters accompanying themselves on the piano they are playing mostly chords. Take away the singing and you may not even be able to tell what song they are playing.

This book gets you started by learning six of the most common chords found in popular music. You will also learn how to make those six chords sound interesting by playing some well known songs in various musical styles.

Once you have mastered the following pages *Book 2 - The Chord Book*, and *Book 3 - The Rhythm Book* will teach you all the chords and rhythm patterns you are ever likely to need in order to become an accomplished chord player.

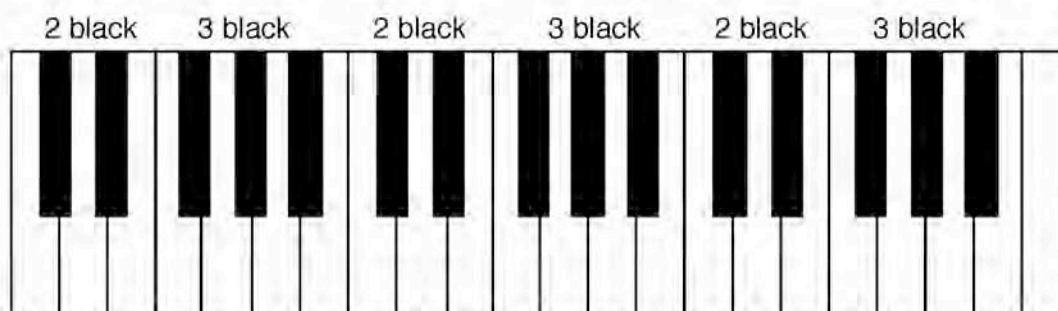
Now - let's begin!



The Black and White Pattern

A piano usually has 88 keys but most keyboards have a lot less. Look at your keyboard and get familiar with the pattern of white and black keys.

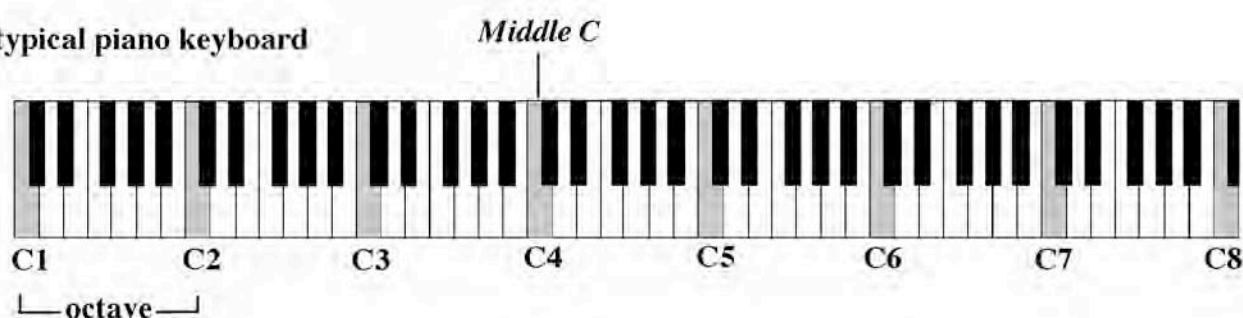
See the pattern?



Middle C

The most *famous* note on the keyboard is **Middle C**. As suggested, it is the C most near the middle of your keyboard. Mark this key with a soft leaded pencil for reference.

A typical piano keyboard



The distance from one C to another C is called an **octave**.

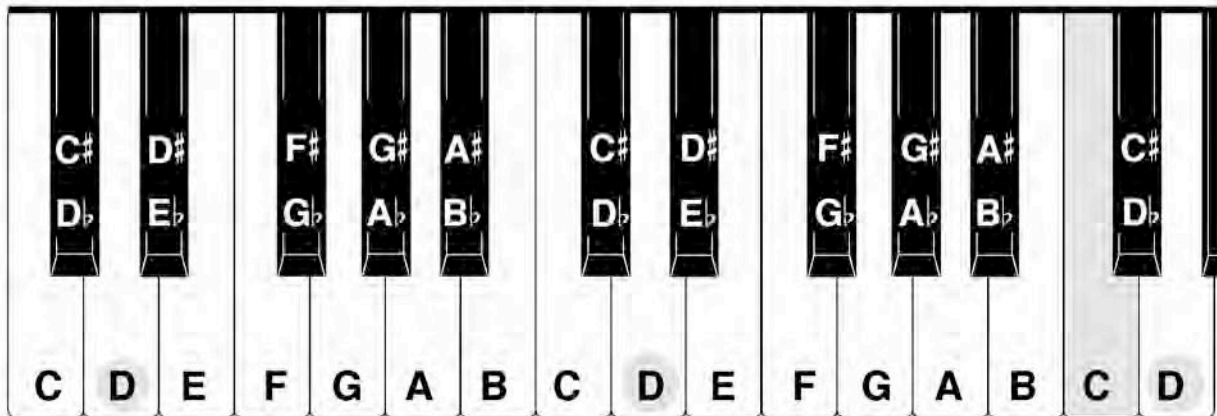
Note - If your keyboard has only 5 octaves, then **Middle C** is probably the third C from the left.

The names of the keys

All the keys have letter names. The black keys have two names.

C \sharp means C sharp D \flat means D flat

It is not all that difficult because the letters are in alphabetical order and the pattern repeats itself all the way along the keyboard.



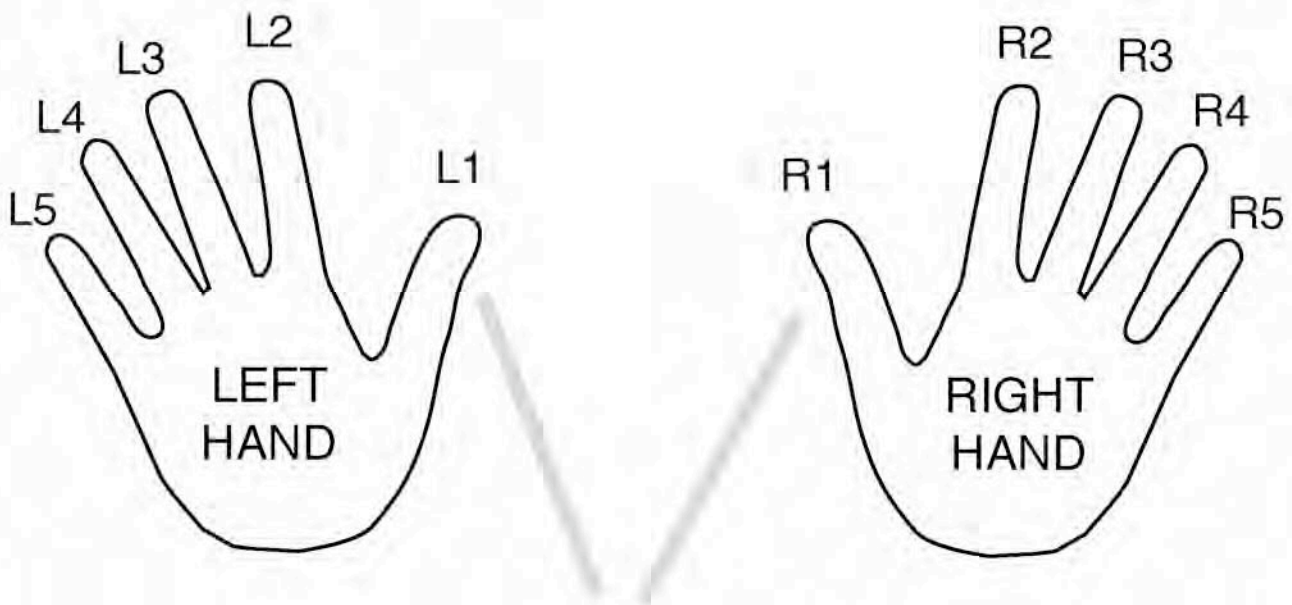
TIP
It may help to remember D
(between the two black keys)
and work out the other
keys from there.



The names of your fingers

Your fingers have names as well.

Hold out your hands in front of you in the position shown below and study the names of your fingers.



TIP - Remember thumbs are 1

TRY THIS

Put R2 on any D ...take it off - now try R3 on Db, R5 on B, L1 on G, L3 on C#

The C chord

Now you will learn your first chord - **C major** (or just **C** for short).

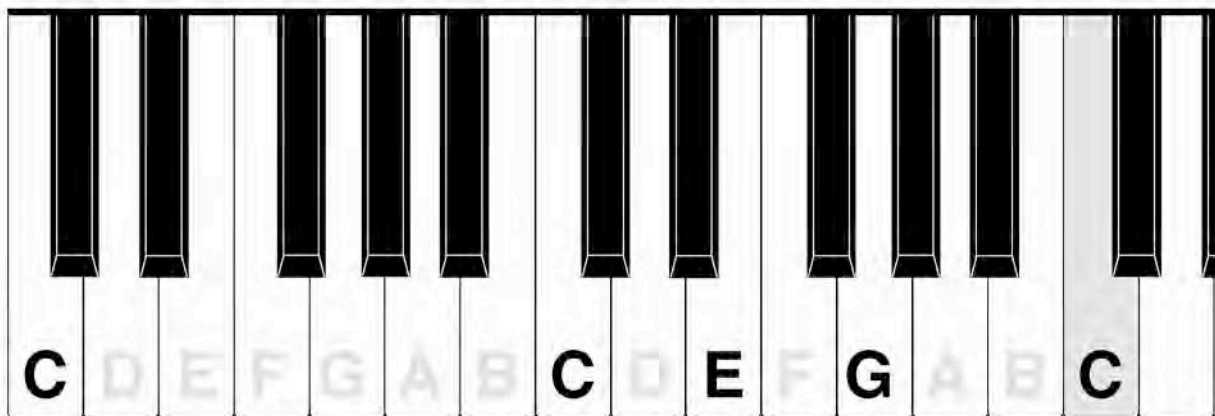
Begin by putting your right hand little finger (R5) on Middle C. Then place your left hand thumb (L1) on the C to the left of that. The other fingers should fall into place from there.

When you are sure all fingers are in their correct position play the chord. Your left hand may tire at first because of the octave stretch. If this is the case just rest every now and then.

PRACTICE TIP
After you have played the C chord, put your hands behind your back, look away from the keyboard, then look back and try again. Do this many times and it will become automatic.



Middle C



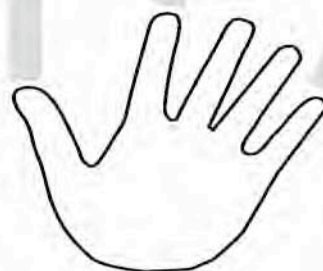
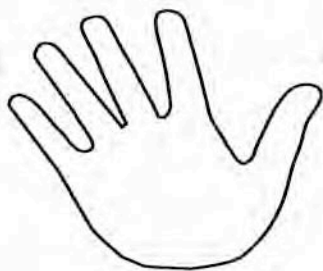
L5

L1

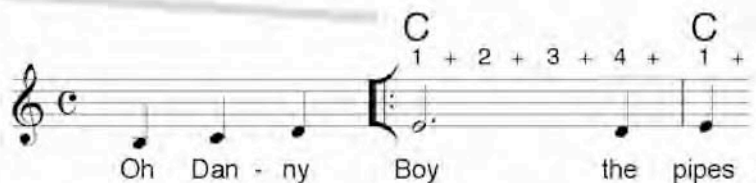
R1

R2

R5



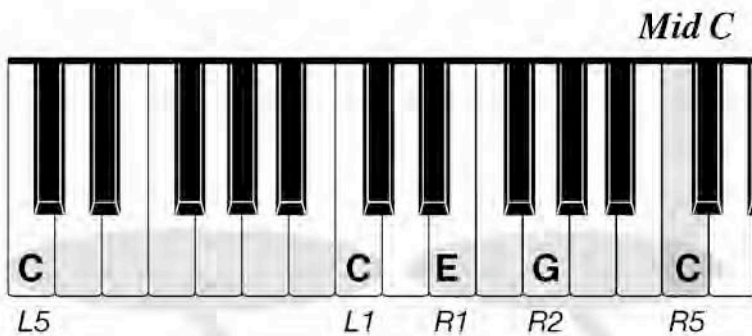
Everytime you see the letter **C** written above the melody and lyrics on a song sheet you simply play what you learnt today.



The C chord on the music staff

This is how the C chord looks using traditional music notation.

NOTE: If you would like to know more about music notation go to the last few pages of the book.



Musical notation for the C chord. The right hand part is in the bass clef (bass clef) and contains three notes: C (on the second line), G (on the second space), and E (on the first space). The left hand part is also in the bass clef and contains one note: C (on the second line). A star symbol (*) is placed above the right hand staff. The notes are labeled with their letter names: C, G, E for the right hand and C for the left hand.

*
Note that both hands are in the bass clef ♮.
Experienced players may be used to seeing the right hand in the treble clef ie. ♪

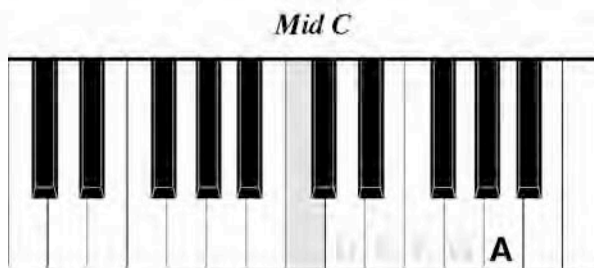
Tuning up

CD - Track 1



Before using the CD you should make sure your keyboard or piano is in tune.

The first track on the CD is A440 (A above Middle C). Play the A on your keyboard along with the track to see if your instrument is in tune.



If you are playing a piano then you may need to call a piano tuner. If you have an old piano that just can't be tuned then you may have to use the CD for reference only rather than as a "play along" facility.

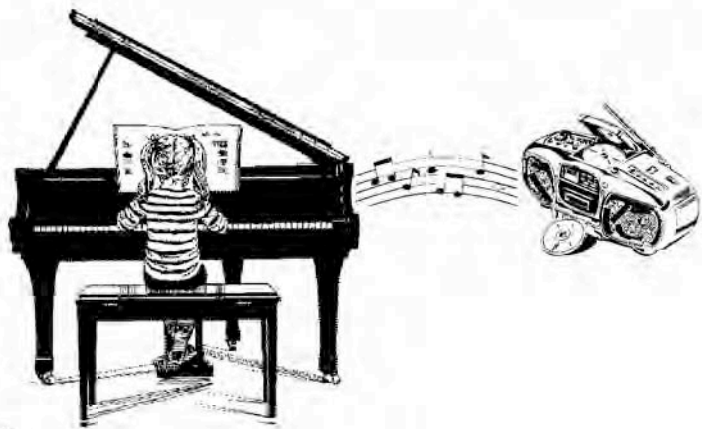


Most electronic keyboards have tuning facilities - see your manual. If you are having trouble tuning then you may have to call a musician friend or a professional.

Using the CD

The CD exists for several reasons -

- So you can hear how the exercises are suppose to sound.
- To help you play in time.
- Each track is a goal for which to aim.
- To help make your learning more interesting and enjoyable.



Here are a few tips to help you get the most out of your CD "play along" experience.

- 1) Place your speakers near the piano or keyboard so you can hear clearly. It would be good if you can have them facing towards you at ear level.
- 2) When learning a new skill play the relevant CD track and try to play along **without** making a sound. Feel the beat as you go.
- 3) You should then practise on your own **before** trying to play along with the CD out loud.
- 4) Play the track again and this time play along out loud. If you find the CD too fast then just turn it off and practise until you feel up to it. **Don't play too loud** or you will end up out of time. Always listen carefully to the sound you are producing. Is it a quality sound?
- 5) Keep the CD safe by replacing it in the jacket provided after each practice session.

On The Sea

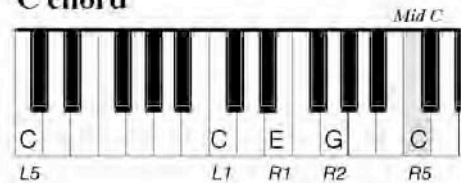
CD - Track 2



Now you will try your first piece - *On The Sea*. It is simply a C chord played **five** different ways. Each of the five sections is played several times.

On the CD a *warm up* period shows you how each section should sound. Place your fingers in position during the *warm up* period and move them in time with the music without making a sound. Begin playing out loud when the drums come in.

C chord



1

All Together

All Together is a C chord played as a block chord (all fingers at the same time). Only play on Count 1 and leave your fingers down until Count 1 comes around again.

Keep repeating until you hear the next section.

2

Up The Hill

Up The Hill is a broken chord (arpeggio). Here the notes are played one at a time beginning with L5. Keep your fingers down as you go and when you reach R5 wait for 4 counts before repeating the pattern.

3

Up and Back is the same as *Up The Hill* except you come back down again. There is no waiting.

Up and Back

Count 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

R1 E R2 G R5 C R2 G R1 E

C L5 C L1 C L1

4

Fast Climb is the same *Up The Hill* except twice as fast.

Fast Climb

Count 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

R1 E R2 G R5 C

C L5 C L1

wait wait

5

Rolling Wave is a very common pattern in pop piano playing. It is simply *Up and Back* played twice as fast.

Rolling Wave

Count 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

R1 E R2 G R5 C R2 G R1 E

C L5 C L1 C L1

Five more chords

Here are five more chords for you to learn. They are called **Dm**, **Em**, **F**, **G** and **Am**.

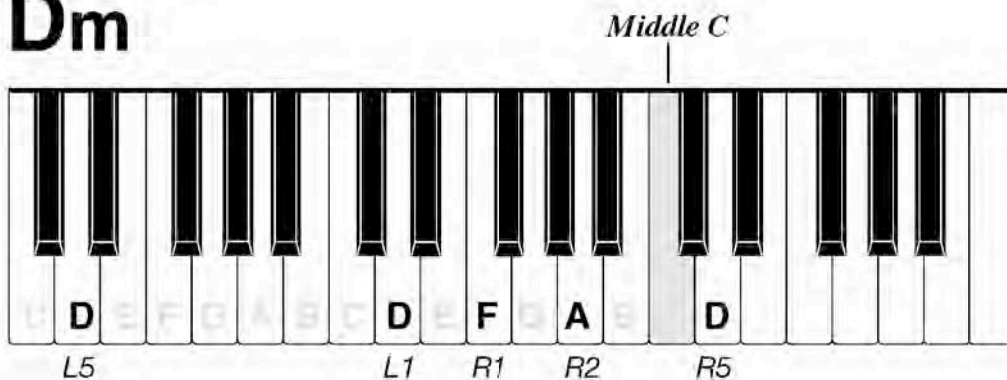
To play a Dm all you do is put your hands on a C chord and move everything **one white key to the right**.

To play the rest just keep moving one white key at a time to the right until you reach Am.

TIP
All these chords have only one white key between your thumbs and R2.



Dm



Now move all your fingers to the **right** one white key. →

Em

