

Chord Study

four note chords in root position

Practice placing all 4 notes of the chord all at once. Repeat the pattern over and over until you hand has this shape memorized. You will learn a C major chord first, place your 4th finger on the red C, while your thumb also plays a red string.

Right hand practice:

Musical notation for right hand practice. The piece is in 4/4 time. The right hand (treble clef) plays a C major chord (C4, E4, G4, B4) in root position, held for the duration of each measure. The left hand (bass clef) plays a whole rest in each measure. The notation consists of four measures, each containing a C major chord in the right hand and a whole rest in the left hand.

Left hand practice:

Musical notation for left hand practice. The piece is in 4/4 time. The left hand (bass clef) plays a C major chord (C3, E3, G3, B3) in root position, held for the duration of each measure. The right hand (treble clef) plays a whole rest in each measure. The notation consists of four measures, each containing a C major chord in the left hand and a whole rest in the right hand.

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Now you are ready to arpeggiate the chord. Place at the beginning of each measure exactly like you did on the first page, but instead of playing all 4 strings at once, play them one after the other, starting with the bottom note first.

The first system of musical notation is in 4/4 time. The treble clef staff contains four measures of music. The first measure shows a four-note chord with fingerings 4, 3, 2, and 1. Brackets indicate the arpeggiated sequence: 4, 3, 2, 1 in the first measure, and 1, 2, 3, 4 in the subsequent three measures. The bass clef staff contains four measures, each with a whole rest, indicating that the bass line is silent during this exercise.

The second system of musical notation is in 4/4 time. The bass clef staff contains four measures of music. The first measure shows a four-note chord with fingerings 4, 3, 2, and 1. Brackets indicate the arpeggiated sequence: 4, 3, 2, 1 in the first measure, and 1, 2, 3, 4 in the subsequent three measures. The treble clef staff contains four measures, each with a whole rest, indicating that the treble line is silent during this exercise.

Practice alternating the patterns you know. Place at the beginning of each measure the same way, grabbing all 4 notes at the same time. Keep the shape of this chord memorized in both hands.

Right hand practice:

Musical notation for right hand practice in 4/4 time. The piece consists of four measures. In the first measure, the right hand plays a whole chord (a triad with a suspended fourth) on a treble clef staff. In the second measure, the right hand plays a quarter-note scale starting on the second line of the treble clef (D4) and moving up to the second space (F4). In the third measure, the right hand plays the same whole chord as in the first measure. In the fourth measure, the right hand plays the same quarter-note scale as in the second measure. The left hand plays a whole rest in every measure.

Left hand practice:

Musical notation for left hand practice in 4/4 time. The piece consists of four measures. In the first measure, the left hand plays a whole chord (a triad with a suspended fourth) on a bass clef staff. In the second measure, the left hand plays a quarter-note scale starting on the second space of the bass clef (D3) and moving up to the second line (F3). In the third measure, the left hand plays the same whole chord as in the first measure. In the fourth measure, the left hand plays the same quarter-note scale as in the second measure. The right hand plays a whole rest in every measure.

Practice alternating hands. Remember that the chord you'll play in each hand feels the same. Place at the beginning of each measure the same way, grabbing all 4 strings at the same time. Keep the shape of this chord memorized in both hands.

Right hand practice: Left hand practice:

Musical notation for the first practice section. It consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) in 4/4 time. The first two measures are labeled "Right hand practice" and show a treble clef staff with a 4-note chord in the first measure and an ascending 4-note scale in the second. The last two measures are labeled "Left hand practice" and show a bass clef staff with a 4-note chord in the first measure and a descending 4-note scale in the second.

Right hand practice: Left hand practice:

Musical notation for the second practice section. It consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) in 4/4 time. The first two measures are labeled "Right hand practice" and show a treble clef staff with a 4-note chord in the first measure and an ascending 4-note scale in the second. The last two measures are labeled "Left hand practice" and show a bass clef staff with a 4-note chord in the first measure and a descending 4-note scale in the second.

The next step is to learn to find the chord shape you now have memorised, on any set of strings. Start with a C major chord, which you now know well, and move up one step to a new chord each time you place. Start with right hand, then learn it with your left hand.

Right Hand practice

Musical notation for Right Hand practice, measures 1-4. The piece is in 4/4 time. The right hand plays chords in the treble clef, and the left hand plays whole notes in the bass clef. The chords are: C major (measure 1), D minor (measure 2), E minor (measure 3), and F major (measure 4).

Musical notation for Right Hand practice, measures 5-8. The piece is in 4/4 time. The right hand plays chords in the treble clef, and the left hand plays whole notes in the bass clef. The chords are: E minor (measure 5), D minor (measure 6), C major (measure 7), and C major (measure 8). In measure 7, the right hand plays a melodic line: C4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F4 (quarter).

This page gives you a chance to practice with your left hand.

Left hand practice

C Dm Em F

Em Dm C

Now you are ready to play the chords with both hands. Remember, the shape of the root position chord never changes. Practice this often enough to keep it memorized. Learn to recognize it in the context of the music you are learning.