

FOREWORD

The necessity of effective control of fingers as an essential part of good, sensitive piano performance cannot be overstated. But it is not merely a matter of exercising the fingers to make them facile, and isolated finger drill will not as such produce sensitive performers. Rather, it is a process of gaining control so that the fingers can respond in the proper manner at any moment to produce whatever musical effects or sounds are indicated by the symbols on the page of music. Therefore good piano technique should not only enable one to sightread better, and learn pieces more quickly, but it should also enable the performer to play more musically.

The beginning exercises on pages 2 through 11 (see notation below*) help the young student get the *feel* of a good hand position as he or she learns to get the correct finger to perform without looking at the keys. Students quickly develop a tactile sensitivity by playing both black and white keys from the beginning. Also, they will have stronger fingers and avoid the collapsed first knuckles if they feel a firm but gentle “pulling” toward themselves (but *not* sliding across the keys, however). They should begin slowly and each day try to increase the speed without losing the good finger and hand position. Fingers should not be lifted off the keys! Rather, by keeping the fingers in contact with the keys, students will learn how to produce a good legato 2- and 3-note pattern.

When the 5-note legato patterns on page 12 are introduced, a slight rotation of the wrist should be used. It is helpful to think: “Down, around, up and over” as the students make a complete counter-clockwise rotation. Wrist rotation helps produce a good legato pattern and avoids punching out each note.

As previously indicated, technical practice should produce a more musical performance. Therefore, practicing one hand loud as the other is soft, or making crescendos and decrescendos are all essential parts of playing more beautifully.

Exercises may be reassigned both to achieve better control and skill and also to do them in still different ways. Technical material must be practiced *thoughtfully* and with attention to detail, and above all never allow daydreaming or mechanical performance.

*p. 2

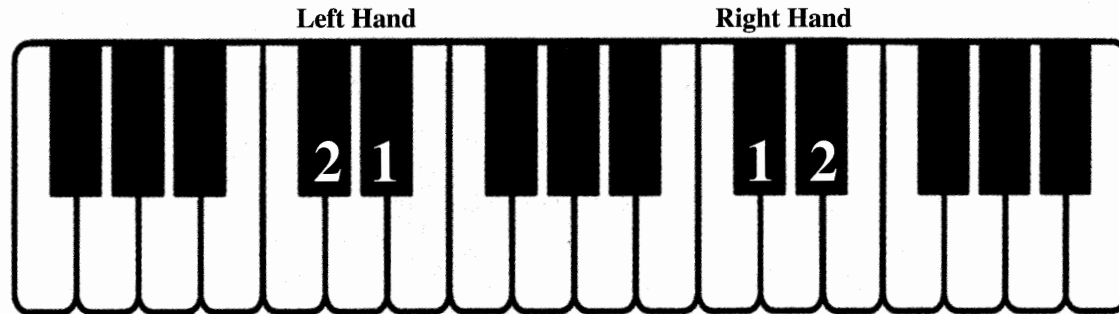
p. 3

pp. 4, 5, 6, 7

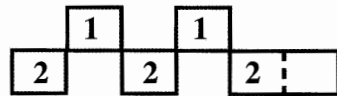
pp. 8, 9, 10, 11

FINGER BUILDER 1

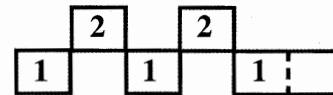
This FINGER BUILDER will help you get better control of your fingers. Begin with either hand and repeat each exercise as many times as you wish. Each day try to make it smoother and just a little faster. Feel the weight in the tips of your fingers as you play smoothly with curved fingers.



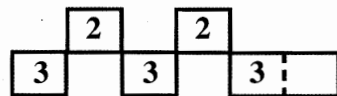
Ex. 1-LH
1st



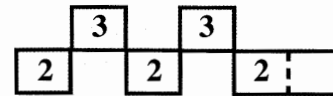
Ex. 1-RH
1st



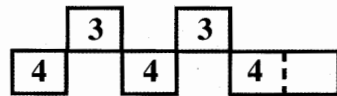
2nd



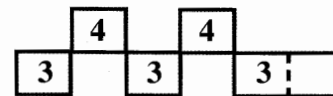
2nd



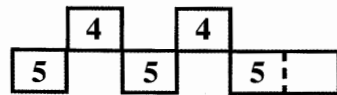
3rd



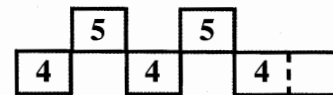
3rd



4th



4th

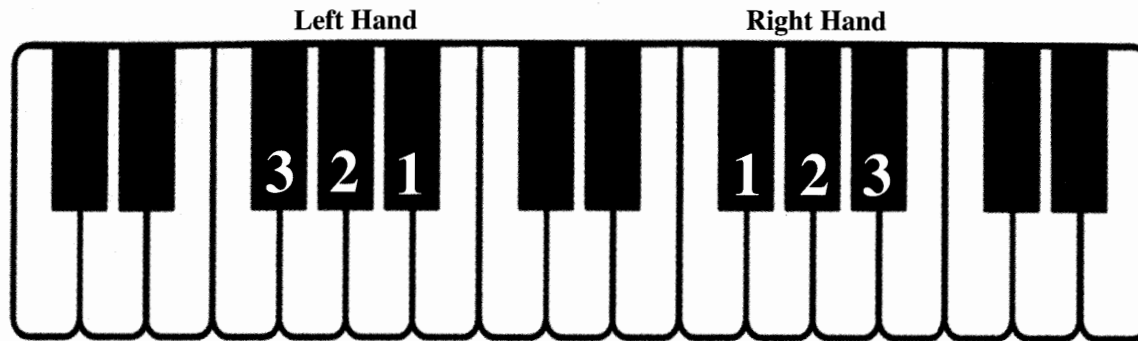


FINGER BUILDER 2

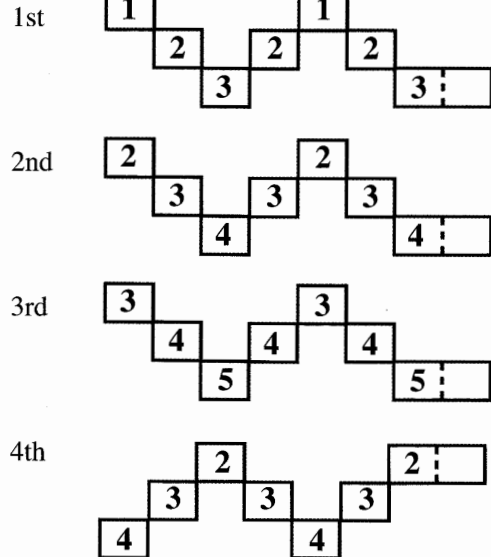
Don't rush, but each day try it a bit faster.

As you play each of these, think:

1. Nicely curved, firm fingers
2. Don't lift them off the keys.
3. Pull slightly as you play the note.



Ex. 2-LH



Ex. 2-RH

