

PIANO FOUNDATIONS

Lesson 1: Three Building Blocks of Music

EXPERIENCED BEGINNER GUIDE

A short guide by Kenzo Productions

Welcome to Your Lesson

WORTH NOTING

This guide is not recommended for complete beginners, as some of the words used may be hard to understand if you're brand new to piano. If you're just starting out, look out for a complete beginner course instead.

In this course, we will cover three important topics that will help you understand the piano in a simple and easy to understand way. Music isn't about remembering hundreds of things — it's about learning a few simple patterns. Once you know those patterns, everything starts making sense. So let's learn three of the biggest ones together.

Topic 1 – How to Play Any Major Scale

Here's something that might surprise you: there are 12 major scales, but you don't need to memorise all 12. Seriously — you only need to remember one pattern. That pattern is Tone – Tone – Semitone – Tone – Tone – Tone – Semitone.

Now don't let those words scare you. A tone simply means skip one key. A semitone means go to the very next key. That's it! Let's try it together using C.

Start on C. Skip one key — you're now on D. Skip one key — now you're on E. Move to the very next key — that's F. Skip one key — G. Skip one key — A. Skip one key — B. Move to the very next key — and you're back home at C.

You just played your very first major scale: C – D – E – F – G – A – B – C. Pretty cool, right?

Every major scale follows this exact same pattern. So if you start on G, D, A or any other note, the pattern never changes. Music loves patterns — once you spot them, learning becomes much easier.

FUN FACT

There are only 12 different notes in Western music. Every song you've ever heard — from Beethoven to Ed Sheeran, Mozart to Drake — uses those same 12 notes! Every major scale also has something called a relative minor. Sounds fancy, but don't worry about that just yet — we'll save that little secret for another lesson.

MY TIP

Don't rush to learn every scale. Learn the pattern instead. Once you know the pattern, you can work out any major scale by yourself.

Topic 2 – Why Do We Always Start With C Major?

Have you ever wondered why nearly every piano teacher starts with C major? It's because C major is the easiest scale to see. It only uses the white keys — no sharps, no flats, just nice, simple white notes.

There's another reason too: the piano is actually made from the same pattern repeating again and again. If you look across the keyboard, you'll notice groups of two black keys, then three black keys, then two, then three — it keeps repeating all the way across. Think of it like building blocks; the same little pattern has just been copied over and over.

Want to find C? That's easy! Find two black keys. The white key just to the left of them is always C, every single time. Once you can find one C, you can find every C on the piano!

FUN FACT

A full-size piano has 88 keys, but only 12 different note names! The notes simply keep repeating higher and higher, just like climbing stairs.

So why do we practise scales? Because scales teach your fingers where to go. They help you play faster. They help you learn songs quicker. They help you write your own music. And they make learning chords much easier. Even concert pianists still practise scales every day — if the best pianists in the world still practise them, they must be pretty useful!

MY TIP

Don't think of scales as homework. Think of them as a warm-up before the fun begins.

Topic 3 – What Is a Chord?

Imagine pressing just one piano key. Nice — but it sounds a little lonely. Now press three notes together. Suddenly, it sounds like music. That's called a chord. A chord is simply a group of notes played together.

The two most common types you'll hear are major chords and minor chords. A major chord usually sounds bright, happy and confident. A minor chord usually sounds sadder, softer or more emotional.

So what changes a major chord into a minor chord? Just one note — the middle note. Musicians call this note the third. If the third is higher, you get a major chord. If the third moves down by just one key, it becomes a minor chord. It's amazing how changing just one note can completely change the feeling of the music.

You'll hear major and minor chords in almost every style of music, from pop and rock to hip-hop, drill, R&B and film music.

FUN FACT

Have you ever noticed that happy songs often sound happy, and sad songs sound sad? A big reason for that is the type of chords being used. Changing just one note inside a chord can completely change the emotion of a song.

MY TIP

Don't try to memorise hundreds of chords. Start with major and minor. Once you're comfortable with those, everything else becomes much easier.

Well Done!

You've just learned three huge building blocks of music.

- ✓ How every major scale follows the same pattern.
- ✓ Why everyone starts with C major.
- ✓ How one tiny note can change a happy chord into a sad one.

Remember — nobody becomes a great pianist overnight. Take your time. Enjoy the journey. And most importantly, have fun.

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