

Learn to Read Piano Music...This Afternoon!

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**Learn to Read Piano Music...This Afternoon!**

**By Jan Durrant**

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Making Music Now's Mini Course  
A Music Basics Guide for the Beginning Musician

Hello! Welcome to the wonderful world of music. Have you always dreamed of being able to learn how to play the piano, keyboard, guitar or any other instrument? Well, your dream is just about to come true with this Free Music eCourse. This dream of yours is not something so far away that it cannot become a reality in a very short while.

This is not rocket science but it does take a genuine commitment on your part to read all seven chapters of this Free Music eCourse in order to learn the music fundamentals that will apply to any instrument. Be sure to **STICK WITH IT!**

Make it a point to pace yourself. The course has been written with the intention of going through it in order, with one chapter building on the next. Now that you have laid the groundwork for your plan, let us begin! Whatever instrument you are studying or plan to study in the future, each one of those instruments has a history. Let's take a moment to learn a very brief history of keyboard instruments.

Did you know that pianos in some form have been around for over 500 years? Some of the first instruments of this kind were called clavichords. They had a very light, metallic sound because the small hand-pounded 'hammers' were made of very light weight metal-like material. These hammers struck strings of varying lengths to create different tones or pitches. The next cousin to the clavichord was the harpsichord invented by Cristofori in Italy around 1450 A.D. This keyboard instrument had a mechanism in it called the plectrum which 'plucked' the strings and produced a slightly stronger sound than its predecessor.

Whether you are playing an acoustic instrument, which is the closest relative to the history just mentioned, or an electronic keyboard, you are now participating in a centuries old musical art form.

## SOME PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

### Piano or Keyboard?

Does it matter if you have a keyboard or a piano? Certainly not. The only real difference is that a full size piano has 88 keys (counting both the white and black keys). Keyboards come in several different sizes. Some have 60 keys, some even less. There are also 88 key electronic keyboards and digital pianos that produce very realistic acoustic sounds. Whatever size your instrument may be, remember that the ARRANGEMENT of the keys and the ORDER of the KEY NAMES is the same on both instruments. Rest assured that your basic knowledge of the fundamentals of music can be learned quite effectively either on a keyboard or a piano. The only missing ingredient is your own persistence and determination to persevere through the entirety of the material in this course with

regular practice sessions. Do that and your success is assured!

## SELECTING THE BEST LEARNING PLACE IN YOUR HOME

Please take a moment and give serious consideration at to WHERE you practice in your home. Make sure that you are not within earshot of the television. Even if you are used to 'watching TV with your ears' while you do other things, it will definitely be a roadblock to your learning to Play Piano Now! Also, make sure that you can sit down at your piano or keyboard comfortably. If you have a piano and a bench which came with it when you bought it, then you are in great shape. Seating at a keyboard can prove a little more difficult. Just make sure that you are not reaching too high up or stooping down too low for the keyboard. Finding a chair that is the right height is the key. The right height chair will allow your arms to be an almost perfect right angle (45 degree) from your body to the keyboard. Don't worry too much about this. If you have the wrong height of chair your back will start screaming at you to change your position!!! Please make any adjustments to keep your back straight and your arms at a 45 degree angle and you enjoy hours of music in one seating.

## PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Please practice as long and as often as you like. I am not going to recommend a particular practice schedule for anyone. You will find your own pace. Sometimes people ask me how long it will take to learn to Play Piano Now. I simply answer with the question of how much time are you willing to put into it on a daily basis. Since this is an introductory piano course for beginners, I think it would be very effective to work at 30 to 45 minute intervals on a daily basis. The longer you put in, the more quickly you will learn and progress. However, your mind needs a while to 'soak up' the information and will work best when you have some hours or a day or so in between practice sessions. The main thing is to make up a schedule and stick to it! The longest journey begins with the first step! **MUSICAL TERMS**

Let's begin our musical study with a review of the main musical terms you will need to be familiar with to proceed with your music education.

**BAR LINE** – A vertical line which separates notes into groups

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**DOUBLE BAR LINE** – A set of two (2) vertical lines which stand for the end of a piece of music

**REPEAT SIGN** – Double bar with two dots at the end of a section or piece of music which indicates that section is to be played twice.

**MEASURE** – The distance between two bar lines.

**TREBLE CLEF** – The S-shaped symbol which stands for notes played with the right hand.

**BASS CLEF** – The reversed C-shaped symbol which stand for notes played with the left hand.

**STAFF** – The five lines and four spaces of both the bass and treble clefs.

**QUARTER NOTE** – Musical symbol with solid note head and stem which gets one count.

**QUARTER REST** – Musical symbol resembling a sideways W which gets one count.

**HALF NOTE** – Musical symbol with hollow note head and stem which gets two counts.

**HALF REST** – Solid half block sitting on third line of the staff which gets two counts of silence.

**DOTTED HALF NOTE** – Musical symbol with hollow note head, dot and stem which gets three counts.

**WHOLE NOTE** – Musical symbol resembling a circle on the staff which gets four counts.

**WHOLE REST** – Solid half block hanging from the second line on the staff which gets four counts of silence.

**CHORD** – Two or more notes played together.

**BLOCKED CHORD** – Two or more notes played at the same time

**BROKEN CHORD** – Two or more notes from the same chord played in sequence

**INTERVAL** – The distance between two notes on the musical staff

Now that you have had an introduction to musical terms, you are ready to take the next step in your musical education.

All the best in music,  
Jan Durrant, Publisher  
<http://www.MakingMusicNow.com>

Jan Durrant is President of Making Music Now, a music publishing company established in June 2003. Ms. Durrant is a music teacher/composer/publisher interested in helping adult beginning music students learn to read music.

## **Learn A Little More About A Piano Chord Chart**

**By IPRWire Staff Writer**

A piano chord chart is one way you can get to know more about learning to play the piano with confidence and enjoyment. Chords are the basis behind learning how to play any instrument, as they are the building blocks of all music. The more you know about chord structure, the better you are able to learn how to play piano in the comfort of your own home.

Once you know the basic piano chord chart, you will be ready to play all types of music by ear or by reading sheet music. No matter the style of music that appeals to you, playing piano can be a successful adventure when you know your chords. Start with something simple that catches your ear and learn how to play it confidently. Then work your way up to more complex pieces of music until you have a small selection of music to play for your family and friends.

If you are looking for piano sheet music to play at home, there are a variety of places you can find sheet music and many different styles of sheet music to play. If you are interested in playing rock music, you can even find piano music for this genre. Of course classical is the most common type of sheet music available, and you can find hundreds of options for the piano. Sheet music is available online and in music stores.

When you have mastered your piano chord chart, you can tackle any piece of music easily and confidently. Knowing how to play the most common chords from the chart will give you the right tools to be ready to attempt all levels of music.

The holidays are also a great time to play music, whether it be for family gatherings or parties. Knowing the right chords and mastering your piano chord chart means you will have the ability to play any traditional song, hymn, or tune upon request. Once you've polished up your knowledge of chords and scales, you can play anything by ear with just a little practice beforehand.

At Hear and Play, we offer a wide variety of piano tools including a piano chord chart that will help you master everything you need to know in order to become a successful pianist. Our programs focus on giving you the ability to play music by ear based on the chord charts and musical themes that are universal to all songs. Contact us today at

to learn more.

Visit

for more information about a piano chord chart and the various other

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music programs we feature.



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