

# LEARN TO PLAY A HYMN *in 10 Minutes!*

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If you've never played the piano before but always wanted to learn, here is your opportunity. All you need is a music keyboard. Even if you don't have one at home, you could take this article with you to a place where there is a piano or keyboard to begin learning.

This lesson is so simple and easy that you will be able to play a hymn by the end of it. In fact, it's possible that you could play the hymn melody in this lesson in about 10 minutes!

Ready? Let's begin!

## Getting Ready to Play the Piano

1. As you sit at the piano and rest your fingers on the keyboard, move the bench back far enough so your elbows are slightly bent.
2. Sit in the center of the bench, directly in front of the center of the keyboard.
3. Sit toward the front edge of the bench with your back straight and your weight forward.
4. Rest your feet on the floor.
5. Sit comfortably, maintaining good posture.
6. Make sure there is good light for you to see the music and the keyboard.





7. Stand. Drop your hands to your sides and relax them. Notice their natural curve, as if they were holding a ball. As you sit again, place your fingers on the keyboard, keeping the same natural curve.

8. Position your hands above the keyboard, letting your fingers touch near the center of the large area on the white keys. Hold your palms above the keyboard, but don't rest them on the keys or on the wood below the keys.

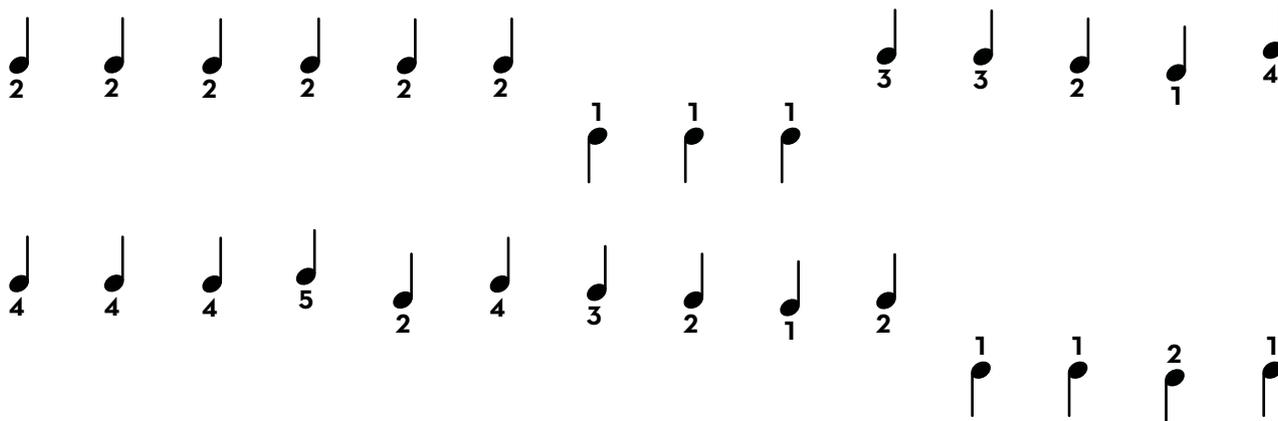
9. Strike the key with the pad of your finger just below the fingertip. Keep each finger curved, lifting it from the knuckle on the back of your hand. As you strike the key, keep your finger joints bent.



**Playing by Finger Numbers**

To help you place the correct finger on each key, the fingers are given numbers as shown here. Finger numbers are written next to the notes on the page.

Place your hand above any group of five keys, holding each finger above one key. Practice the finger numbers by playing the keys with the correct finger as indicated. Notes with stems going up are for the right hand. Notes with stems going down are for the left hand.



### Playing “There Is a Green Hill Far Away”

Place your hands on the keyboard as shown below.

Use the groups of two and three black keys to help you find the correct position.

Play this hymn, following the finger numbers as shown. Notes with stems going up are for the right hand, and notes with stems going down are for the left. Practice the hymn until you are comfortable with it. Use the principles of good fingering

technique listed in the nine-point checklist.

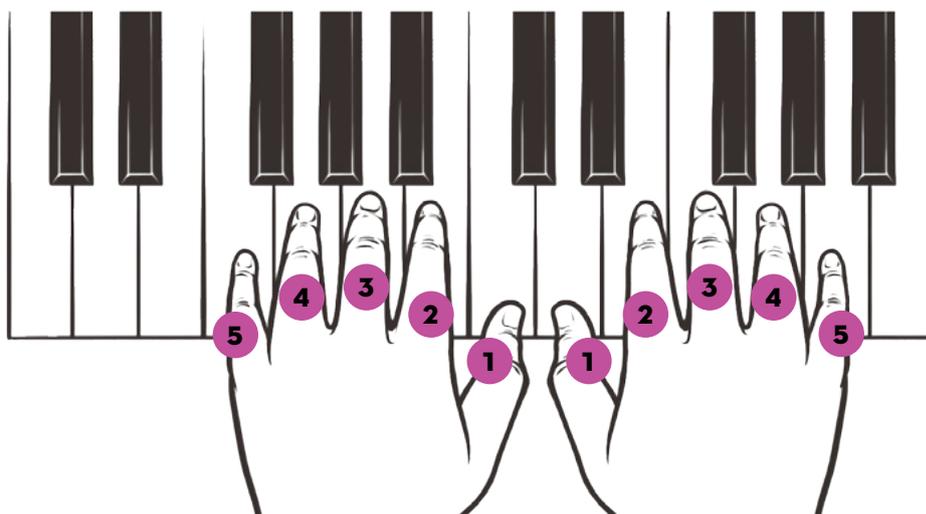
Now you’ve been introduced to playing the piano and have learned a simple hymn melody. To play other hymns, you need to learn some basic principles about beats, rhythm, and notes.

Here’s the best part: the lesson you just learned is the first lesson in the Church Keyboard Course, available in six languages from Church distribution.<sup>1</sup> The easy-to-follow instruction plan helps you learn by yourself or in groups.

You might even get your whole family involved in learning the piano together as a family home evening activity. The course can be completed in just six weeks.

Numerous studies show that private music lessons help improve students’ focus, academic excellence, and reasoning skills.<sup>2</sup>

By learning music skills, we develop the talents the Lord has given us, increase our knowledge, and learn many different ways we can use our knowledge and talents to build His kingdom. ■



#### NOTES

1. To order the Keyboard Course Kit, go to [store.lds.org](http://store.lds.org).
2. See Laura Lewis Brown, “The Benefits of Music Education,” [pbs.org](http://pbs.org); Jessica Velasco, “How the Arts Can Help Students Excel,” the Science of Learning Blog, Dec. 11, 2012, [scilearn.com/blog/how-arts-help-students-excel](http://scilearn.com/blog/how-arts-help-students-excel); “Music Helps Children Learn Maths,” *The Telegraph*, Mar. 22, 2012, [telegraph.co.uk](http://telegraph.co.uk).