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Focused Firm Fingertips

The fingertip should remain **firm** at the **nail joint** to support the hand and arm on the keyboard.

This



Firm nail joints

Not This



Broken, collapsed nail joints

To make nail joints firm:

1. **Knock** fingertips on the keys until nail joints feel heavy.
2. **Hang** onto the edge of the piano with the nail joint of finger 2. (Pretend you are hanging from the edge of a cliff with only this joint.)
3. The muscles of the upper arm must be relaxed. Have someone (or with your other hand) **shake your upper arm**, keeping the nail joint in place.
4. Next, hang on with the nail joint of finger 3, then finger 4, and then finger 5.



Relaxed upper arm muscles with firm nail joint

Use firm nail joints in *Five Finger Exercise*. Place fingers over the new position **before** playing it.

Five Finger Exercise

new position

1

1

continue upward until...

5

5

2

5

5

continue downward until...

Supported Hand Position

The arch of the hand:

The muscles in the **palm of the hand** support the fingertips on the keys.

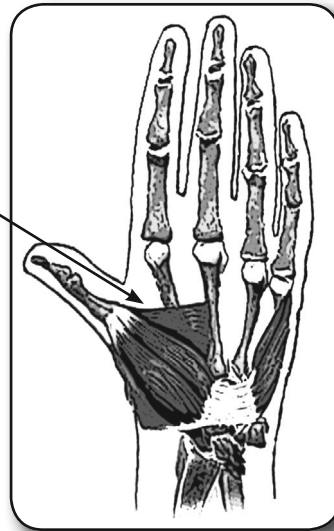
- Place the five firm nail joints on the keyboard (or fallboard).
- Using muscles of fingers 1 and 5, lift the hand from the palm to make an **arch from the knuckle of finger 1 to the knuckle of finger 5**.



The muscles in the palm of the hand:

A muscle that connects fingers 1 and 3 makes those fingers **a strong support** for the arch.

- Finger 5 has a muscle that connects to the muscle of finger 1.
- The elbow helps support finger 5 on the keyboard.
- Playing with the muscles in the palm allows knuckle and wrist muscles to be relaxed when playing.



Using the **palm muscles**, balance on finger 3 when playing these exercises:

RH

LH

First, play fingers 5, 3, and 4. Next, add finger 1 when playing finger 5, feeling the connection between fingers 1 and 3 to make a strong arch between fingers 1 and 5. (Knuckles and wrist are relaxed.)

RH

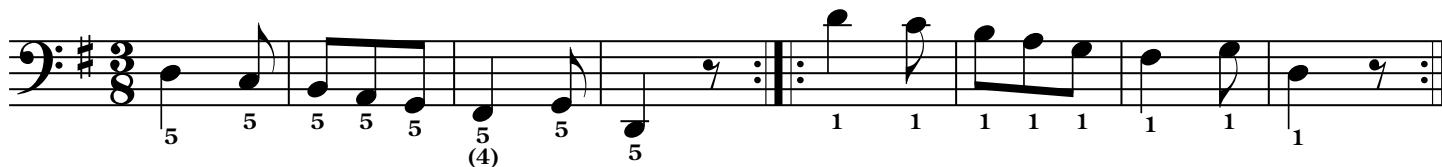
LH

Octave Preparation

Octave playing has **two** skills that must work together: the **fingertips** and the **wrist action**.

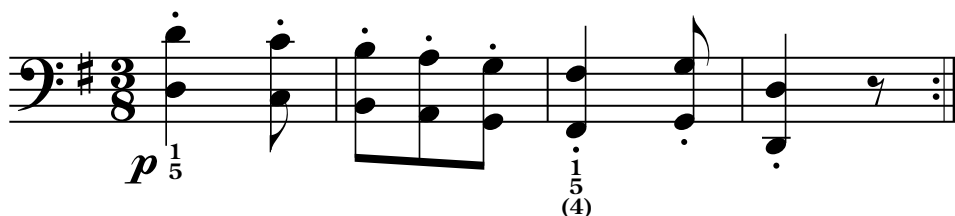
1. Practicing the fingertips:

- First, practice finger 5 alone with **no arm weight**. Use finger 4 on black key octaves if the hand can reach it. (Make the octave hand shape while playing finger 5.)
- Then, play finger 1 alone with a **quiet wrist** and octave-shaped hand.



Playing the octaves with finger staccato (plucking motion):

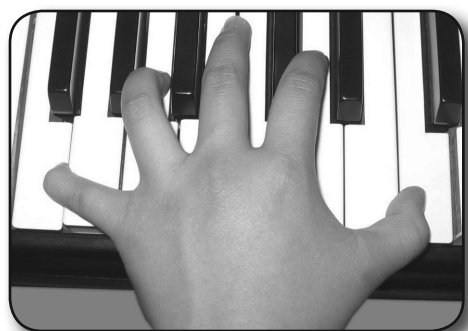
- Fingertips bounce to the next key with no forearm weight.



2. Practicing the wrist action:

- Make **knocking** motions on the keys (or fallboard) with a fist, using the above rhythm.
- Rest the fingers on the keys, keeping a **firm arch** between fingers 5 and 1 with a **relaxed wrist**.

This

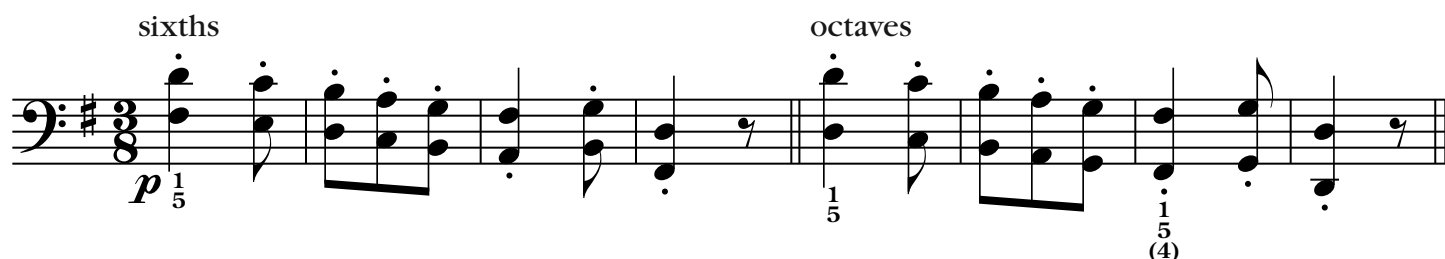


Keep **arched hand**
when playing octaves

Not This






- Keeping the fingers close to the keys, use a knocking motion (from the wrist) to play sixths and octaves:



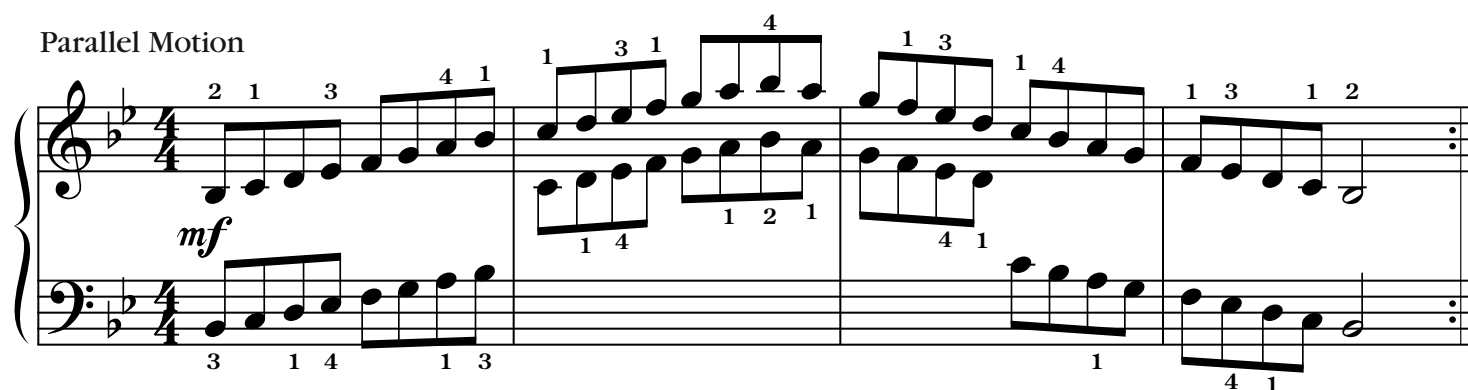
Warm-Up Patterns in B \flat Major

Using a metronome, play the Parallel Motion and Contrary Motion B \flat Major Scales in Progressive Rhythms with the same rich, full tone at all speeds.

- Play the Parallel Motion scale first  one octave, then  two octaves, then  three octaves.

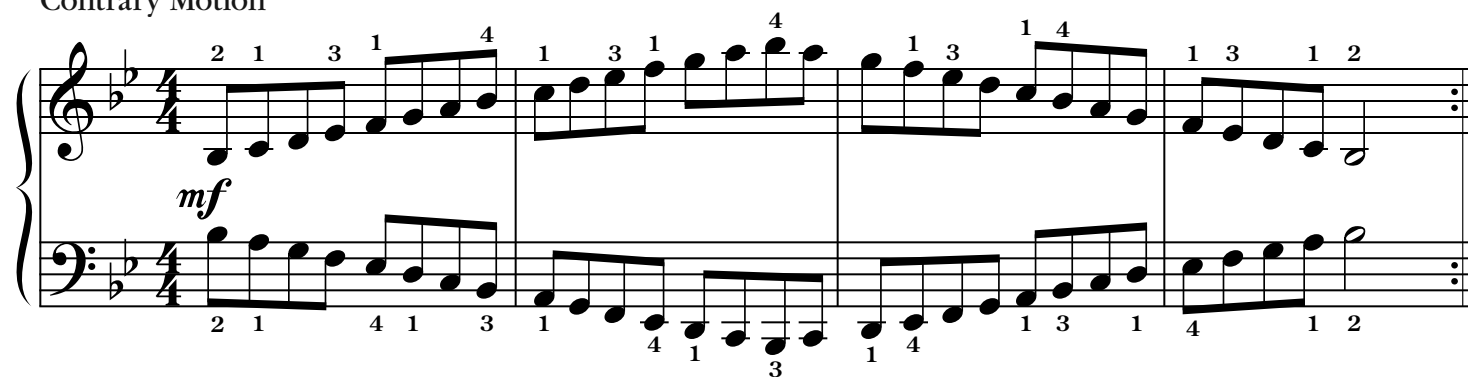
B \flat Major Scales in Progressive Rhythms

Parallel Motion



- Play the Contrary Motion scale first  one octave, then  two octaves.

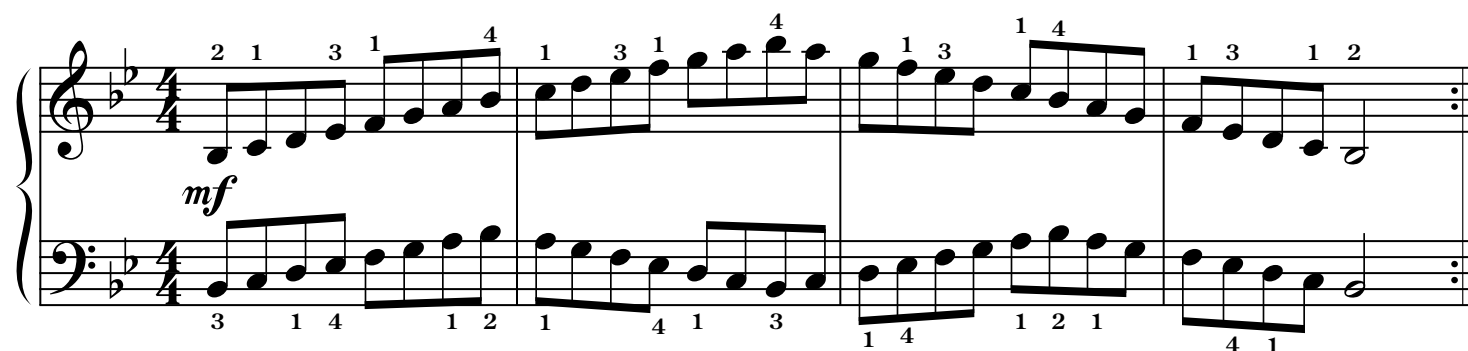
Contrary Motion



- Play the Combined Parallel and Contrary Motion scale as written.

- Double the tempo on the repeat.

Combined Parallel and Contrary Motion



The Siciliano

Originally a dance from Sicily, the **siciliano** became a song-like instrumental piece. In a slow $\frac{6}{8}$ or $\frac{12}{8}$ meter, it was associated with **pastoral** (rural) scenes with a somewhat sad melody, suggesting a shepherd's flute.

There is frequent use of the $\text{♩} \cdot \text{♪}$ rhythm pattern.

Play the ornaments ahead of the beat.



Pastoral Scene with Cart and Horses
by James Meadows (1828–1888)

Track 2



Siciliano

Anton Diabelli
(1781–1858)

Andantino

5

6

9

mp *sf* *mf* *p* *sf* *mf* *mp* *sf* *cresc.* *sf*

simile

1 3 2 1 2 1 3 4 1

1 3 5 1 2 5 1 3 5 1 2 4 1 2

4 3 2 1 2 3 3 5

1 2 4 1 3 2 4 1 3

1 2 5 1 3 5 2 4 1 3

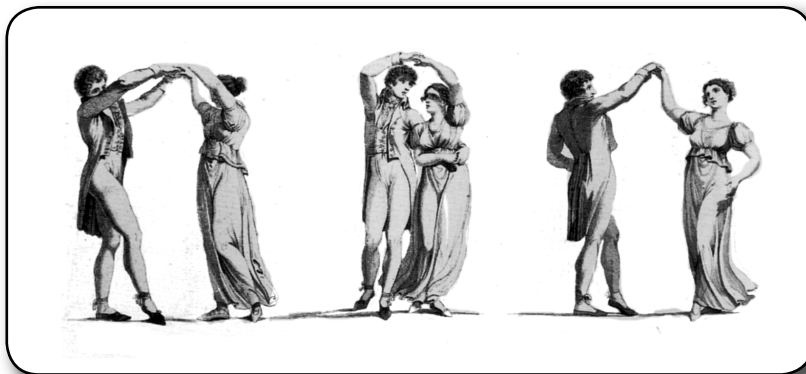
1 2 4 1 3 2 4 1 3

ROMANTIC

Social Dancing in the 19th Century

Ballrooms that had been limited to aristocracy were opened to the public near the end of the 18th century in Vienna. Dancing by the upper middle classes became part of social life throughout Europe at this time with over 700 dance halls in Paris alone.

- The **German dance** was a popular ballroom dance for couples with turns and intertwined arms. It had a “step” on beat 1 and a “hop” on beat 3.
- Franz Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Beethoven, and Franz Schubert wrote many **sets** of German dances (groups of three, six, or twelve) that were used for dancing and amateurs to play.



German Dance (1808)

Play the ornaments ahead of the beat.

German Dance in B \flat Major

Track 9



Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

WoO 13, No. 6

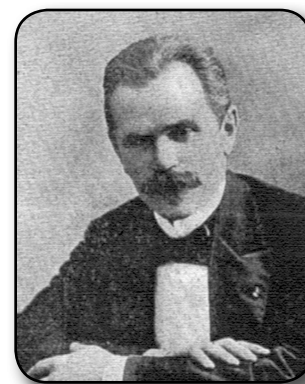
Allegretto

The musical score is written for piano in B \flat major and 3/4 time. It consists of 12 measures. The tempo is marked 'Allegretto'. The score includes dynamics such as *f* (forte) and *sf* (sforzando). Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5. Ornaments are placed above certain notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Valse Mignonne (Little Waltz)

The **waltz** became the most popular Romantic era ballroom dance. In triple meter, faster than the minuet or ländler, it is felt “in one” beat per measure.

From Poland, **Henryk Pachulski** became a piano professor at the Moscow Conservatory. He wrote many short pieces for piano, including this “little waltz.”



Henryk Pachulski

Valse Mignonne

Henryk Pachulski
(1859–1921)

Track 14



Allegretto

14

p rubato

1 1 2 1 2 3

4 1/2 5 5 5

5

mp

1 1 2 1 2 3

4 1/2

to Coda ⊕

9

mf

2 3 1

1/2 1/2

13

pp

2 1 3 1

1/2

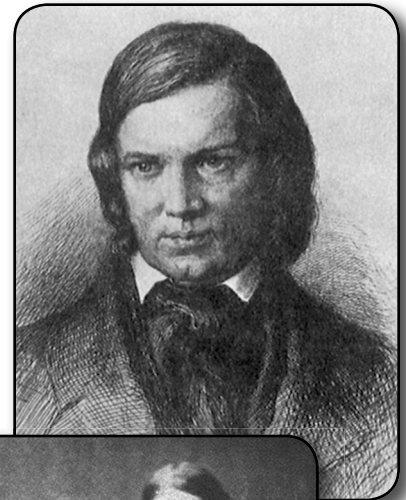
MODERN

ROBERT SCHUMANN

Robert Schumann's (1810–1856) life and career represents the “tragic Romantic artist.” His hope of being a concert pianist was destroyed when his right hand was permanently injured. His music was not widely accepted during his lifetime, and his final years were spent in a mental asylum. Yet today his music is widely performed and loved.

- His greatest happiness was his marriage to **Clara Wieck** (1819–1896), the most famous woman pianist of the 19th century.
- Schumann created the Romantic **piano suite** or **cycle**—short piano works connected through an idea or theme.
- Schumann's *Album for the Young* is considered to be among the greatest piano teaching music of all time. *Album for the Young* was written for his oldest daughter Marie's (1841–1929) seventh birthday.
- Robert wrote that the pieces came “*from family life, and had wrapped themselves around [his] heart.*”
- When teaching their daughter Eugenie (1851–1938), Clara said, “*When he saw you children at play, little pieces of music grew out of your games.*”

Robert Schumann



Children of Robert and Clara Schumann (1855).
Back left to right: Ludwig, Marie, Elise,
Felix in Marie's arms, Ferdinand, and Eugenie.

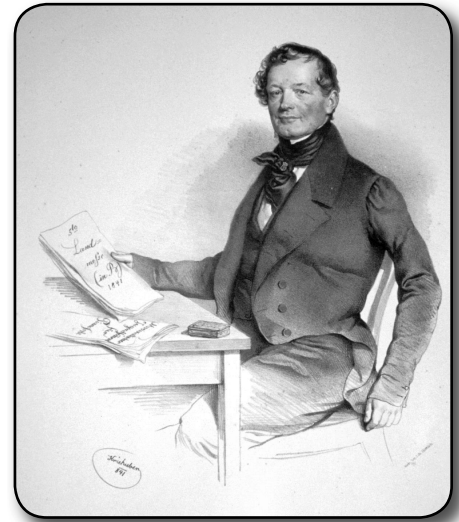
About *The Wild Rider*

Eugenie Schumann studied each piece of her father's *Album for the Young* with her mother. She stated that Clara complained that her sforzandos were meaningless and anemic in *The Wild Rider*. Explaining, Clara said, “*When a breakneck rider gallops about the room, he knocks his hobby-horse against chairs and tables.*”

Sonata-Allegro Form

Anton Diabelli was an Austrian composer, music publisher, and teacher of piano and guitar. His publishing company in Vienna, Diabelli & Company, gained international fame through the first publication of the music of Franz Schubert.

- Diabelli's childhood education was as a choirboy and he later studied composition with Michael Haydn (1737-1806), the brother of Franz Joseph.
- Although Diabelli lived into the Romantic era, his sonatinas are in the Classical style. This one is in **sonata-allegro form**.



Anton Diabelli

Sonata-Allegro Form

Section	: Exposition	: Development	Recapitulation	
Theme	: a	b	: a	b
Key relationship	: I	V	: V	I
	(F major)	(C major)	(C major)	(F major)

CLASSICAL

Sonatina in F Major

Track 20



Anton Diabelli (1781-1858)

Op. 168, No. 1

Moderato cantabile

EXPOSITION
theme a

Key: F Major (I)