



# FOREWORD

With this book you can learn how to improvise in jazz and rock styles like a pro! Improvisation is important because it allows the performer to use music to express individual feelings and ideas. Improvisation is a natural part of jazz/rock playing. It allows you to take written charts or lead sheets and create new melodies, rhythm and chords. Whether you wish to play as a soloist or in a jazz or rock band, you will be instantly equipped to know exactly how to improvise. The secret is out—everyone can improvise!

You will need an acoustic or electronic piano, or a keyboard that

has a piano register. If you use an acoustic piano, you will have the advantage of touch sensitivity and the natural feel of a true piano keyboard. If you use an electronic keyboard or synthesizer, for best results it should have a full-sized keyboard and be touch-sensitive.

**IMPORTANT!** Although this is a Teach Yourself book, any student will find it easier with the help of a competent teacher. If you run into difficulties, a teacher is a must. If you find that you are making rapid progress on your own, you will certainly learn even more rapidly with professional assistance. Learning music *with* a

teacher is always easier than *without* a teacher.

## Optional CD

The companion CD features examples of the pieces (indicated by track numbers). If your audio equipment offers the capability of track separation, turn the balance all the way to the left to hear just the piano part; turn the balance all the way to the right to hear just the arrangement, minus the piano part. Keep it in the center for a perfect combination of both! Note: Due to the time limits of the CD, not all the repeats have been taken.

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# Improv Idea #1: Playing 8va (one octave higher than written)

**IMPROVISATION** (“Improv” for short) is an exciting musical skill that will give you the ability to use a variety of musical techniques to play written music in slightly different and appealing ways. Follow these carefully worked out steps to improv, beginning by playing *8va* or as written. The improv score and markings in the music will help you to get started.

## Following Directions (See page 2.)

*Play as written.*

**Walking tempo**

Musical score for 'Following Directions' in 4/4 time, marked *mf*. The score consists of two systems of piano accompaniment. The first system has four measures with chords: Cmaj7\*, F7, Cmaj7, F7, and G. The second system has four measures with chords: C, F, F#°7, C, F7, G, and C. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 in the right hand and 1-5 in the left hand. A repeat sign is at the end of the second system.

*The IMPROV SCORE is a step-by-step guide that will make improvising very easy.*

## Changing Directions

**IMPROV SCORE**  
**1st time**, play *right hand (RH) 8va* at the Improv measures marked (┌─┐).  
**2nd time**, play *both hands (BH) 8va* at the Improv measures.

 **Walking tempo**

Musical score for 'Changing Directions' in 4/4 time, marked *mf*. The score consists of two systems of piano accompaniment. The first system has four measures with chords: Cmaj7, F7, Cmaj7, F7, and G. The second system has four measures with chords: C, F, F#°7, C, F7, G, and C. An 'Improv' bracket spans the first three measures of the second system. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 in the right hand and 1-5 in the left hand. A repeat sign is at the end of the second system.

\* Chord symbols let you know what chords you are playing. They also can be useful to any guitarist or bass player you might be jamming with. See page 79 for a chord dictionary of some basic chords.