

# Introduction

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## To the student

Have you ever realised that it is much easier to learn something if you want to? Do you ever forget your telephone number? How many characters can you name from your favourite 'soap' or football team? Scales are not difficult to learn if you really want to learn them. Not only will they improve many aspects of your technique, but you will also get high marks in the scale section of grade exams, you will be able to learn pieces more quickly (difficult passages are often nothing more than scale patterns) and your sight-reading will improve too! Treat scales as friends – they will pay you great dividends!

## To the teacher

Scales and arpeggios are often a real stumbling block for exam candidates and budding musicians. *Improve your scales!* is designed to make scale preparation and learning fun!

Working through the book will encourage your pupils to approach scales and arpeggios methodically and thoughtfully. It will help with memory problems and turn scale-learning into an enjoyable experience.

## Simultaneous learning

Scales, sight-reading and aural are often the aspects of teaching relegated to the final few minutes of a lesson. The link between scales (particularly in the development of 'key-sense' and the recognition of melodic/harmonic patterns) and sight-reading is obvious, and there are many ways to integrate aural into the process too. Thus the use of the material in this book as a more central feature of a lesson is strongly recommended, especially when used in conjunction with *Improve your sight-reading!* Pupils will learn to become more musically aware, make fewer mistakes and allow the teacher to concentrate on teaching the music!

## Using the book

The purpose of this workbook is to incorporate regular scale playing into lessons and daily practice and to help pupils prepare for grade examinations. You need not work at all sections, nor in the order as set out, but the best results may well be achieved by adhering fairly closely to the material.

**Know the Notes!** is to prove that the actual notes are known! Students should be encouraged to say the notes up and down until this can be done really fluently.

The **Finger Fitness** exercises are to strengthen the fingers and to cover technically tricky areas. They should be played legato, detached, staccato and any other form of mixed articulation that you can devise! When they are fluent you may like to add dynamic levels and vary the rhythmic patterns. Always encourage an active awareness of intonation. It is recommended that these exercises are played slowly until real control is achieved.

The **Scale Study** and **Arpeggio Study** are really extended exercises, but place the material in a more musical and 'fun' context. Some have *ad lib.* accompaniments or you might like to improvise a simple piano accompaniment; this would add interest and help the student with intonation and time.

**Have a go** is to encourage thought 'in the key', through the improvisation or composition of a short tune.

As a further exercise to develop the ability to think in a key, encourage pupils to play (by ear) a well known melody – for example, Happy Birthday or the National Anthem (major), 'Greensleeves' or 'God rest ye merry, gentlemen' (minor). You might like to ask pupils to improvise a simple variation on their chosen melody. This could be rhythmic or dynamic to begin. As they grow in confidence they might try 'decorating' the melody.

# F major 2 octaves

## Finger Fitness

## Fiendish Feet

Scale study in F major

Allegretto

## Frogs Frolic

Arpeggio study in F major

Moderato

## Revision Practice

F major 2 octaves	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Legato/Detached/Staccato										
Articulation pattern										
Rhythmic pattern										
Dynamic level										

## Marking

F major 2 octaves	Grade
Finger fitness	
Scale study	
Arpeggio study	
Say→think→play!	

Revise **Finger Fitness** exercises on page 4 for the lower octave.

Don't forget to **Have a go** at improvising or composing a piece using the full two-octave range.

# Aviary

Arpeggio study in A minor

Allegretto grazioso

## Say

**Say** the notes out loud, up and down, then say the notes out loud and finger the scale/arpeggio.

## Think

**Think** the notes and finger the scale/arpeggio.

## Play!

**Play!** the scale and arpeggio.

## Revision Practice

A minor 12th	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Harmonic/Melodic										
Legato/Detached/Staccato										
Articulation pattern										
Rhythmic pattern										
Dynamic level										

## Marking

A minor 12th	Grade
Finger fitness	
Scale study (harmonic)	
Scale study (melodic)	
Arpeggio study	
Say→think→play!	

Revise **Finger Fitness** exercises on page 16 for the lower octave.

Don't forget to **Have a go** at improvising or composing a piece using the range of a twelfth.