

Lesson 9

Playing Staccato

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Abide with Me

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'Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika (Lord Bless Africa in the Xhosa language)

'Nkosi Sikelel'

Chat with David: Too much Staccato?



LESSON 9: PLAYING STACCATO

PRACTICAL BUILD YOUR SKILL

Now let's get used to playing staccato.

Exercise 1: Fingers 1 and 3

1. **Play the music below staccato with your right hand.** Since the notes are all marked staccato, make them short by playing with a jabbing motion.



2. **Repeat** until all the quarter notes are short and crisp and even (no variations in speed or loudness).
3. **Play the music below staccato with your left hand.**



4. **Repeat** until all the quarter notes are short and crisp and even (no variations in speed or loudness).

Exercise 2

All 5 fingers

1. **Play the music below staccato with your right hand:**



2. **Repeat** until all the quarter notes are short and crisp and even (no variations in speed or loudness).
3. **Play the music below staccato with your left hand:**



4. **Repeat** until all the quarter notes are short and crisp and even (no variations in speed or loudness).

Exercise 3:

Fingers 1, 3 and 5

1. **Play the music below staccato with your right hand:**



2. **Repeat** until all the quarter notes are short and crisp and even.
3. **Play the music below staccato with your left hand:**



4. **Repeat** until all the quarter notes are short and crisp and even.

Exercise 4:

Hand stretched out

1. **Play the music below staccato with your right hand:**



2. Repeat until all the quarter notes are short and crisp and even.
3. **Play the music below staccato with your left hand:**



4. **Repeat** until all the quarter notes are short and crisp and even.

Exercise 5:

Move your hand around

1. Play the music below staccato with your right hand:



2. Repeat until all the quarter notes are short and crisp and even.
3. Play the music below staccato with your left hand:



4. **Repeat** until all the quarter notes are short and crisp and even.

Tune 1:

A well-known hymn

Abide with Me by Henry Lyte (Abide means to live and this phrase was used religiously to ask God to always be present in one's life.)

This tune is not normally played staccato, but let's see how it sounds if it is.

1. **Play the music below staccato with your right hand.**



2. Repeat until all the quarter notes are short and crisp and even.

Play the music below staccato with your left hand:

Abide with Me

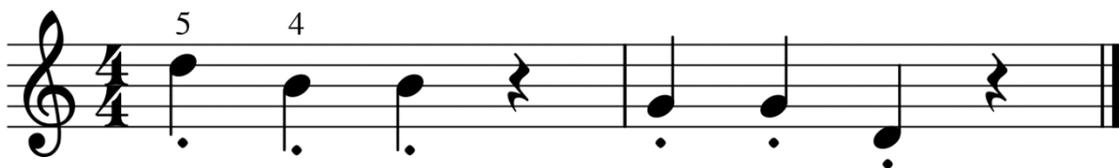


Repeat until all the quarter notes are short and crisp and even.

Exercise 6

Start on finger 5

1. Play the music below staccato with your right hand:



2. Repeat until all the quarter notes are short and crisp and even.
3. Play the music below staccato with your left hand:

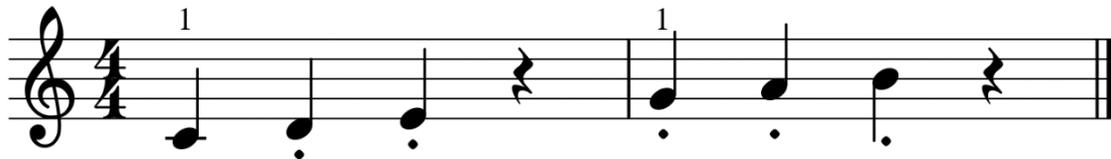


4. **Repeat** until all the quarter notes are short and crisp and even.

Exercise 7:

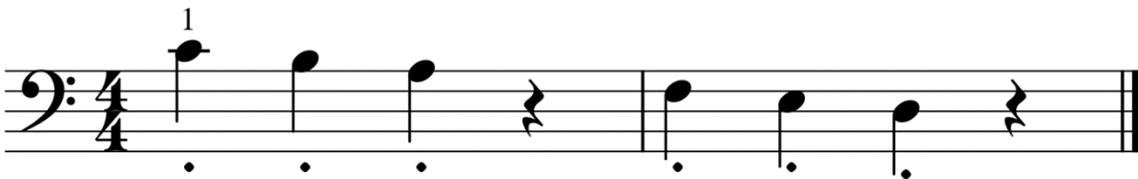
Thumb under

1. Play the music below staccato with your right hand:



Repeat until all the quarter notes are short and crisp and even.

2. Play the music below staccato with your left hand:



3. **Repeat** until all the quarter notes are short and crisp and even.

Exercise 8: Finger over

1. Play the music below staccato with your right hand:



2. Repeat until all the quarter notes are short and crisp and even.
3. Play the music below staccato with your left hand:



4. **Repeat** until all the quarter notes are short and crisp and even.

How are you doing in playing firmly and making a ringing, singing sound? You may want to play some of these exercises again, and focus on the firmness of your playing and the quality of your sound. Also, work at playing with curved fingers.

Tune 2:

National anthem of several African countries

This tune has a vivid history.

It was written in 1897 by Enoch Sontonga, a member of the Xhosa people. The song, written in the Xhosa language, was originally intended as a school anthem. From that humble beginning the song took flight and became an African liberation song, and was then adopted as the national anthem for five African nations.

In 1995, the song played a part in a historic event. South Africa had recently ended its racially-based political system known as 'apartheid'. As a result, it was no longer banned from participation in international sporting events. To underline this sea change, it was granted the honour of hosting the 1995 Rugby World Cup. In a fairytale ending, South Africa won!! Nelson Mandela, recently elevated from political prisoner to president of the country, joined with the South African rugby team to sing their new national anthem . . . Nkosi Sikelel.



**President Nelson Mandela presents the cup
to the captain of the victorious South African rugby team, Francois
Pienaar.**

Nkosi Sikelel'



- 4. **Repeat** until all the quarter notes are short and crisp and even.
- 5. Now **play the tune legato**. Play it with your left hand, making deep bass sounds to emulate a lusty team of rugby players.

Chat with David

Too much staccato?

After all that staccato playing, you may understand why it is reserved for special effects. It becomes wearisome to listen to if you play like that all the time. So don't use it too much.

In the next lesson, you'll get your first taste of mixing legato and staccato. ■