

Lesson 14

Chords with Notes of Different Durations

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Version 1.0, 1 Mar 2018

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In today's world, where so much is changing and information is so freely available, I just want to outline your rights and mine with regard to this booklet, which is part of my home study course 'Read & Play Music'.

This is a legally binding agreement between you and myself (David Dempster). Please read it carefully.

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David Dempster

Course	Read & Play Music
Book 2	Read and Play Simple Tunes with Two Hands
Lesson 14	Chords with Notes of Different Durations

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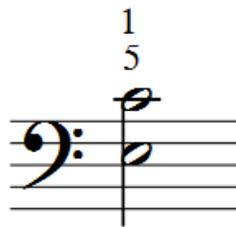
LESSON 14:
CHORDS WITH NOTES
OF DIFFERENT DURATIONS

Sometimes printed music requires us to play notes of different duration with one hand. Let's develop your skill in doing that now.

MUSIC THEORY

BUILD YOUR KNOWLEDGE

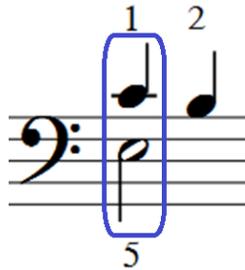
When you learned to play chords a few lessons back, you pressed down 2 or more notes together to play the chord and then you released all the notes together to end the chord. Here's an example. Play this now with your left hand:



Sometimes the notes are not all held for the same duration. Here's an example:

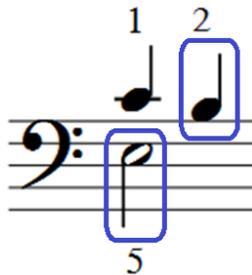


You play 2 notes together at the start (lower E and middle C), because they are vertically aligned:



Start by playing 2 notes at the same time:

When you get to beat 2, you let go of the middle C since it is a quarter note with 1 beat, and play the lower B. Meanwhile you keep holding down the lower E with your little finger because it is a half note which gets 2 beats.



On beat 2, release the C and play the B.

If this looks a bit tricky, don't worry, we're going to take it step by step in the exercises.

PRACTICAL

BUILD YOUR SKILL

You may find that these chords sound a bit like church music. If your keyboard is able to sound like an organ, you can try using that for these exercises.

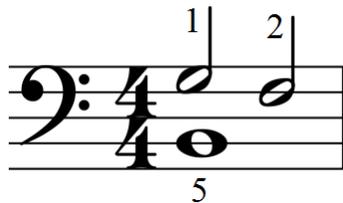
This may take a little work. But it's well worth it because you'll be acquiring a whole new skill in reading and playing the piano.

Exercise 1:

Left hand, 2-note chord with notes of different duration

1 Play the notes, disregarding timing

1. Apply Know-Before-You-Go. Keep holding down the bass B with your little finger as you move from lower G to F.



2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily while disregarding the timing.

2 Play with correct timing

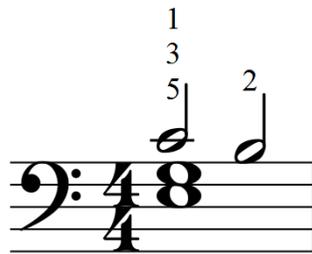
1. Start very slowly. Find a speed at which you can play with correct timing.
2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily.

Exercise 2:

Three-note chord with notes of different duration

1 Play the notes, disregarding timing

1. Apply Know-Before-You-Go.



2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily while disregarding the timing.

2 Play with correct timing

1. Start very slowly. Find a speed at which you can play with correct timing.
2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily.

Chat with David:

Get some personal coaching if you need it



This is a home study course. My students generally get along just fine doing the whole course on their own, even though they have no prior experience of reading or playing music.

But if you'd like some extra help, I'm available for personal coaching. Half an hour of coaching is probably enough to handle any questions you have and make sure you're playing the exercises correctly. We can communicate using an Internet video connection such as Skype, so it doesn't matter where in the world we are each located.

You can send me a request on my website. Go to www.dempstermusic.com and click on Contact in the main menu. ■

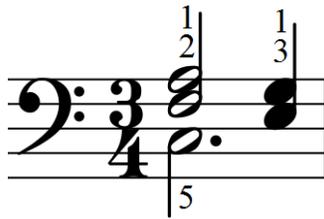
Exercise 3:

Three-note chord with 2 notes moving

When a chord has a number of notes with stems and they have different durations, it is usual to show some stems going up and some going down. In the music below, for example, that helps to make it clear that the C is a dotted half note (3 beats) while the F and A are half notes with no dot (2 beats).

1 Play the notes, disregarding timing

1. Apply Know-Before-You-Go. The C should continue to sound while you move to the E and G.



2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily while disregarding the timing.

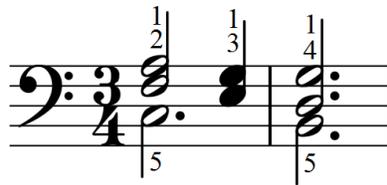
2 Play with correct timing

1. Start very slowly. Find a speed at which you can play with correct timing. Make sure you hold down the C for 3 beats, since it is a dotted half note.
2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily.

Exercise 4: 2 measures

1 Play the notes, disregarding timing

1. Apply Know-Before-You-Go. Start very slowly, and you'll do just fine.



2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily while disregarding the timing.

2 Play with correct timing

1. Start very slowly. Find a speed at which you can play with correct timing.
2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily.

Tune 1:

A left-hand tune with chords that have notes of different durations

This one is pretty tricky! If you find it too difficult, you can play just the tune (the notes at the top of the chords).

But if you like a challenge . . .

1 Play the notes, disregarding timing

1. Take it *very* slowly. Apply Know-Before-You-Go. Hold on to each chord while planning the next move. Don't move until you are certain you will do it correctly.

Red River Valley



2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily while disregarding the timing.

2 Play with correct timing

1. Start very slowly. Find a speed at which you can play with correct timing.
2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily.

Exercise 5:

Right hand, quarter notes moving

1 Play the notes, disregarding timing

1. Apply Know-Before-You-Go. Make sure you're playing this with your right hand, since the music has a treble clef.



2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily while disregarding the timing.

2 Play with correct timing

1. Start very slowly. Find a speed at which you can play with correct timing.
2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily.

Exercise 6: More complex

1 Play the notes, disregarding timing

1. Apply Know-Before-You-Go. Take it very slowly.



2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily while disregarding the timing.

2 Play with correct timing

1. Start very slowly. Find a speed at which you can play with correct timing.
2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily.

Tune 2:

A right-hand tune with chords that have notes of different durations

Another tricky one, but if you work at it a bit you might find it quite beautiful.

1 Play the notes, disregarding timing

1. Take it *very* slowly. Apply Know-Before-You-Go. Do you hear the discord in the last measure resolving to a harmony?

Hard Times

Hard times hard - times come a - gain no more.

2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily while disregarding the timing.

2 Play with correct timing

1. Start very slowly. Find a speed at which you can play with correct timing.
2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily.

Exercise 7:

Two hands, movement in right hand

Now let's play with two hands, reading from the grand staff.

1 Play the notes, disregarding timing

1. Take it very slowly. Apply Know-Before-You-Go for Two Hands. Here again are the steps to apply to each move:
 1. See which hand(s) move
 2. Prepare left hand (if it has to move)
 3. Prepare right hand (if it has to move)
 4. Play



2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily while disregarding the timing.

2 Play with correct timing

1. Start very slowly. Find a speed at which you can play with correct timing.
2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily.

Exercise 8:

Two hands, movement in left hand

1 Play the notes, disregarding timing

1. This is getting pretty advanced! Apply Know-Before-You-Go for Two Hands and you'll play it correctly on the first time through.



2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily while disregarding the timing.

2 Play with correct timing

1. Start very slowly. Find a speed at which you can play with correct timing.
2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily.

Reminder: If you ever feel muscle strain, take a break. You're making your hands do things they haven't done before, and they may need a rest from time to time. The same goes if you feel strain in your shoulders or back: take a break.

Exercise 9:

Two hands, movement in both hands

Just one more exercise, then we'll have a tune.

This one is pretty advanced. You have my permission to skip it if you want.

But if you like a challenge . . .

This is actually a snippet from 'Largo' by Handel. Handel was a German-English composer of 300 years ago. A largo is a piece of music played very slowly.

1 Play the notes, disregarding timing

1. Apply Know-Before-You-Go for Two Hands. Start slowly.



2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily while disregarding the timing.

2 Play with correct timing

1. Start very slowly. Find a speed at which you can play with correct timing.
2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily.

Isn't that pretty? Handel composed some neat stuff.

Tune 3:

Two hands, notes of different durations

1 Play the notes, disregarding timing

1. Apply Know-Before-You-Go for Two Hands. Here again are the steps:

1. See which hand(s) move
2. Prepare left hand (if it has to move)
3. Prepare right hand (if it has to move)
4. Play

If you really apply that, you will play this tune with no mistakes on the first time through. Hold on to each chord while planning the next move. Don't move until you are certain you will do it correctly.

My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean



2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily while disregarding the timing.

2 Play with correct timing

1. Start very slowly. Find a speed at which you can play with correct timing.
2. **Repeat** as needed until you can do it accurately and easily.

Chat with David:

Very well done!



I expect you found that quite tricky. Some of the tunes in the *Book 2 Tune Album* (which you'll find when you've completed **Book 2**) are easier than that, to help you work up to the point of playing more challenging music. ■

By the way ...

I mentioned earlier that the piano is 'usually' played with two hands.

However, there are some pianists who have only one hand. A famous example was Paul Wittgenstein, who lost his right arm in the First World War. He commissioned composers to write music for him to play with left hand alone. The best known is the Piano Concerto for Left Hand by French composer Maurice Ravel.

There are also times when the piano is played with more than two hands.

And how (you may ask) can a piano be played with more than two hands?

Well, there is quite a bit of music written for 'piano four hands'. It can be played by a pianist who has four hands. More commonly, it is played by two pianists

sitting next to each other playing the same piano. Mozart wrote a number of beautiful pieces for piano four hands.

What's next?

A riddle: When is a chord not exactly a chord?

Answer: When it is broken.

Read on . . .

To find Lesson 15, click the green box:

Go on to your next lesson



or go to your Book 2 Course Materials page at
www.dempstermusic.com