



# OPC PIANO PLAYBOOK

THE TOP 23 PIANO  
PRACTICE STRATEGIES OF 2019



# Strategy #1: Learn the various intervals in music

Familiarize yourself with 2nds, 3rds, 4ths, and 5ths to start. What fingers do you typically use with these intervals? How do you easily identify them on the staff? How do you play them on the piano?



Practice identifying these intervals, both reading and playing. Pick up any music and the intervals. It'll be slow when you're deliberately reading the intervals (this is a 2<sup>nd</sup>, this is a 3<sup>rd</sup>, etc.), but when you're good at it, interval recognition will be second nature – and will be so much faster than simply reading note names.

Eventually you'll start being able to see larger patterns in music – instead of just observing an interval between two notes, you might see scale patterns, or patterns of notes that run for multiple measures. This comes with observation and practice.

As sight readers, it's so much more important to be able to recognize shapes in sheet music via intervals than it is to label the notes with letter names.

Once you're well-acquainted with interval distances, start exploring more detailed intervals, such as major, minor and diminished intervals.

## Strategy #2: Learn chords by using lead sheets and P/V/C scores

Lead sheets are simply melody lines with chords written on top, and P/V/C (piano/vocal/chords) music has that same information with a bunch of extra stuff, like an entire (often unnecessary) piano part.

Take a piece of music you've wanted to learn for a while, look at the chord symbols, and figure them out. What's a Bb chord? A Gm7?

Once you've figured out the chords to a song (or a section of a song), decide if you want to play it as a piano solo, or a piano accompaniment. Piano accompaniment is truer to the "original", but it typically involves having yourself or someone else do the singing.

If you want to play it as a piano solo, you'll play the vocal line (the single treble clef line) on the piano. You'll play the chords you figured out in the left hand, using the chord symbols above the melody line.

If they're new chords to you, feel free to write them in. If you're decent at reading sheet music, you can also look at the piano part to see if there are any interesting inversions or fills being used that you might want to incorporate.

If you want to play it as piano accompaniment (with you or someone else singing the melody), play bass notes in the left hand and full chords in the right hand. For example, if the chord is Bb, you'd play a Bb note in your left hand, and the full chord in your right.

This is exactly what we do with lead sheets – P/V/C scores are essentially highly-developed lead sheets. But the basic information of a piece of music is all in the melody/chords.

Learning chords in this way is incredibly practical since it's hands-on. If we learn chords on paper but not on piano, they won't "stick". Learn chords by figuring out what chords your favorite music uses and start noodling around with that.

## Strategy #3: Learn how to invert chords

Any chord can be inverted, which just means rearranged and played in a different order. C chord in root position is CEG, but one inversion is EGC and another is GCE. Play around with these various inversions so you start becoming comfortable with them. You want to be able to instinctively “feel” the shape of root position chords and their inversions.

**C Major Chord**

The image shows three musical staves in 4/4 time, each representing a different inversion of the C Major chord. The first staff shows the root position with notes C, E, and G. The second staff shows the first inversion with notes E, G, and C. The third staff shows the second inversion with notes G, C, and E. Below each staff is a label and the corresponding note sequence.

Root Position	First Inversion	Second Inversion
C-E-G	E-G-C	G-C-E

Some great chords to start inverting are C, F and G. Start with a few at a time before branching out into new chords.

The reason we learn how to invert chords is because it opens more playing possibilities up. It would sound dull (and not overly musical) if we played everything in root position. Playing chords in different inversions allows for nicer voice leading, easier playing, and sequences/patterns.

Learn your chords AND learn your inversions. These skills go hand-in-hand.

# Strategy #4: Learn the I, IV and V chords for *every key*

This activity, outlined below, will not only improve your sight reading (you'll be able to recognize patterns in the notes), but it'll make it easier to improvise and pick out melodies and chords by ear.

Play through these patterns as a warm-up. Start with a few at a time – once they're easy and memorized, expand to other keys.

As you gain confidence, explore varying the left- and right-hand rhythm in new and interesting ways.

Identify the I, IV, and V in each of the following keys:

Key	I (root)	IV (2 <sup>nd</sup> inversion)	V (2 <sup>nd</sup> inversion)
C	CEG	CFA	DGB
Db	DbFAb	DbGbBb	EbAbC
D	DF#A	DGB	EAC#
Eb	EbGBb	EbAbC	FBbD
E	EG#B	EAC#	F#BD#
F	FAC	FBbD	GCE
Gb	GbBbDb	GbCbEb	AbDbF
G	GBD	GCE	ADF#
Ab	AbCEb	AbDbF	BbEbG
A	AC#E	ADF#	BEG#
Bb	BbDF	BbEbG	CFA
B	BD#F#	BEG#	C#F#A#

## Strategy #5: Learn 7<sup>th</sup> chords

Major and minor chords and their inversions are great to learn and know – they’re foundational for playing and reading music. But they can get boring! That’s where learning 7<sup>th</sup> chords comes in handy. Here are several different types of 7<sup>th</sup> chords you can learn:

<b>C7</b>	<b>CMaj7</b>	<b>Cmin7</b>	<b>C°</b>	<b>Cø</b>
dominant seventh	major seventh	minor seventh	diminished seventh	half-diminished seventh

You’ll notice that all these 7<sup>th</sup> chords are built on either a major or minor triad (in this example, C major or C minor). The diminished chords also involve lowering the fifth.

Start by learning one type of 7<sup>th</sup> chord at a time and get to know it by ear. You want to be able to recognize by sound the different types of 7<sup>th</sup> chord, since following your ear is easier than trying to memorize and work out the theory details all the time.

Expanding your chord vocabulary takes time, so don’t expect to do this all in a weekend. Explore these chords slowly, notice and apply them to your music, and you’ll find they “stick” far more easily than if you tried to learn all of them all at once.

## Strategy #6: Practice following along with chords to your favorite songs

Find a chord sheet to a song you like using a website like [UltimateGuitar.com](http://UltimateGuitar.com). Then practice identifying the key signature, followed by labelling the chords with Roman numerals.

**How to identify the key signature:** What chord does the music start and end with? This is the biggest clue. What chord is used over and over, or seems to come at key moments (like the end of a verse or chorus)?

Once you have your suspected key signature, write out every note of that scale. Identify the I, IV, V and vi chords of that scale. If you see these chords popping up in the music frequently, you've likely identified the correct key signature.

**Chorus:**

If heaven and hell decide that they both are satisfied  
 Illuminate the "no's", on their vacancy signs  
 If there's no one beside you, when your soul embarks  
 Then I'll follow you into the dark

**How to label the chords with Roman numerals:** Write out the notes of the scale (our example uses F scale below). Then find the 1<sup>st</sup> (I), 4<sup>th</sup> (IV), 5<sup>th</sup> (V) and 6<sup>th</sup> (vi) and label them. Finally, write out the three notes in each of those chords.

I IV V vi  
 F G A Bb C D E F

FAC BbDF CEG DFA

The reason I teach using Roman numerals is because that's how you'll start to see patterns in the music you learn. Even if you learn 10 pop songs in 10 different keys, you'll see how commonly the I, IV, V and vi are used. It'll also give you some insight into when songwriters change keys or make unusual choices. By understanding these choices, you'll be more able to make those choices yourself when songwriting.

**The final step** is to play along with the recording. Start with simple bass notes in the left hand and whole note chords in the right hand – really listen for when the chords change and try to develop a sense of pulse as you listen. The more you do this, the more you’ll start understanding the groove of different songs and how to expand beyond simple bass notes and whole note chords.



## Strategy #7: Compose an idea with a beginning, middle and end

Here are three ideas for a musical beginning. The first is “big”, the second is “small”, and the third is “warm”. Experiment with each of the “big”, “small” and “warm” sounds. Notice that the bass notes of the V chord isn’t in root position – this helps things from sounding too final.

Choose one of these beginning progressions and write a simple melody. Don’t feel like you need to do something wildly different than what’s already there.

Find a motif in your beginning – a key melodic or rhythmic idea – that you’ll repeat and play around with for the rest of the piece. Write your music down so you remember it.

Here are three ideas for a musical “middle” section. Now you must link this idea with the “beginning” progression so it flows naturally. This means taking the melody from your beginning and keeping that melody as *similar as possible* when playing the middle progression. Change notes/intervals as needed to fit the chords underneath.

Again, write it down on notation software or manuscript paper.

12

67

*p* *mf*

ii<sup>6</sup> V<sup>7</sup> I

Go through the same process, now with the ending ideas. Remember to keep your motif running through this section as well. Write your idea down and spend time smoothing it all together so it sounds cohesive. You don't want it to sound like three random ideas; you want it to sound like one idea.

This beginning, middle and end becomes the basis of your composition. Think of it as your musical idea. You can then take this material and expand on it in whatever way you like.

## Strategy #8: Learn the 12-Bar Blues Pattern and a Basic Right-Hand Improvisation

Here's what a standard 12-bar blues pattern looks like:

C <sub>7</sub>	F <sub>7</sub>	C <sub>7</sub>	∕
F <sub>7</sub>	F <sub>7</sub>	C <sub>7</sub>	∕
G <sub>7</sub>	F <sub>7</sub>	C <sub>7</sub>	G <sub>7</sub> <sub>b9</sub>

You can start by playing solid triads. Once you have the hang of that, try alternating “1-5” and “1-6” with each chord, like this:

The musical notation consists of three systems of four bars each, all in 4/4 time. The first system shows the first four bars with a bass clef and solid triads. The second system shows bars 5-8 with a treble clef line above the staff and bass clef triads. The third system shows bars 9-12 with a treble clef line above the staff and bass clef triads.

From there you can begin simple right-hand improvisation using the blues scale. For ease, instead of doing the full scale you can use the blues pentatonic scale:

C D Eb E G A

(For fingering, slide finger #3 between the Eb and E).

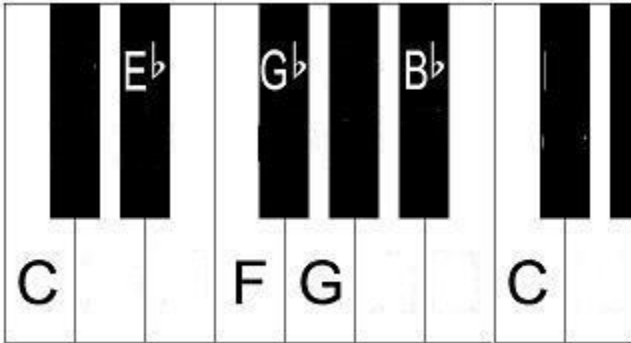
An easier position of the same scale for smaller hands would be:

G A C D Eb E

Work in the key of C major until you're very comfortable with these concepts, and then play around with transposing to different keys.

## Strategy #9: Take your improv a step further using the full blues scale

Start by learning the basic blues scale in the key of C:



Instead of thinking of this scale as linear like a scale, look at it in clumps of 3:

CEbF, FGAb, GBbC

For coming up with melodies, gate yourself in. Start with one clump of 3 notes and find new rhythms and patterns using only those notes. Do an entire 12-bar blues improv using just those three notes in the right hand.

Once you're good with that, add 2 more notes (the second "clump"). It's useful to give yourself limitations like this so you don't get lost in the ether of too many options. Being able to play any and all notes can be overwhelming, so start with just a few.

Play a basic 12-bar blues pattern in the left hand (as per the previous example), and practice improvising with the C-blues scale in clumps of 3 until you're comfortable enough to start incorporating the entire scale in your improv.

## Strategy #10: Understand the Circle of Fifths

There's a reason the circle of fifths comes up again and again in music theory discussions – it's foundational to so many things (scales, chords, etc.). This tip gets you started on memorizing and using the circle of fifths, but you'll find so many uses for it as you go on your piano journey.

First, memorize the mnemonic device:

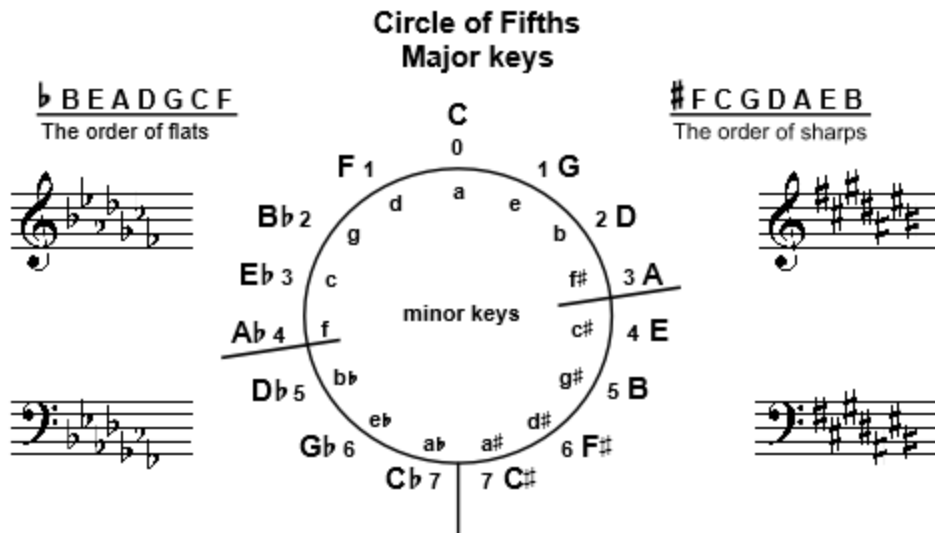
### Father Charles Goes Down And Ends Battle

Each of those letters (F, C, G, D, A, E, B) tells you two things. First is the order of sharps in any key signature. If you have 3 sharps in your key signature, they'll always be written F, C and G. If you have 5 sharps, they'll be written F, C, G, D, A. Secondly, each of these notes are the distance of a fifth apart.

If you reverse this mnemonic device, you have the order of flats (BEADGCF).

If mnemonic devices aren't your thing, you can simply pick a starting note – usually C – and write out the circle of fifths by simply adding the next note, which is a fifth apart. So C goes to G (a fifth), G goes to D (a fifth), D goes to A (a fifth), and so on.

To figure out the left hemisphere, we just move backwards down fifths. So C down a fifth takes us to F, F down a fifth takes us to Bb, and so on.

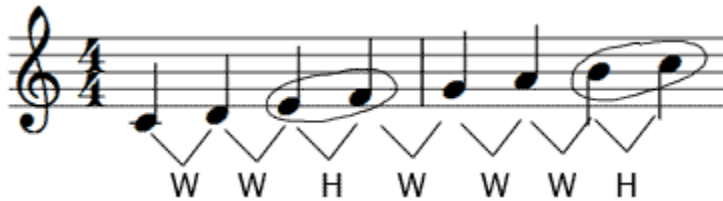


This circle gives you the information about every key signature in music. The numbers beside the letters indicate how many sharps or flats are in that key. Everything on the left hemisphere is flats, and everything on the right hemisphere is sharps.

This is your formula to remember all your key signatures – it's worth making note of.

## Strategy #11: Learn the major scale formula and perfect cadences

Every major scale follows the same pattern of whole steps and half steps. The half steps occur between notes 3+4 and notes 7+8. In a C scale, this would be E-F, and B-C.



Tonal music is all about the tension-resolution created by these half steps. F wants to resolve to E, and B wants to resolve to C. If you play F and B together, you have a tense tritone (which you'll find in the dominant 7<sup>th</sup> chord).



If you resolve each of those notes to E and C, you'll have created a perfect cadence (dominant to tonic).

Tonal music is constantly shifting from the V to the I (a perfect cadence). You'll find instances where the 4 constantly resolves to the 3, and the 7 constantly resolves to the 8. This is great to know both when you're learning, reading and studying music, and when you're writing it.

## Strategy #12: Try out a modal jazz improvisation

Try the following block chords in your left hand in the key of C (no black keys!):

Cmaj7, Dm7, Em7, Fmaj7, G7, Am7, Bm7b5.

It's the same shape moved up the keyboard by step. That's why it's easiest to try this in the key of C – it's nothing but white keys separated by a third, moved up the scale note by note.

**Improv exercise:** Play the same chord notes in the right and left hand. In the left hand, play the chords solid and held, and in the right hand play them broken. You can vary up the right-hand rhythm in whatever way you like.

Another thing to try is right hand pentascales (5-finger scales). When your left hand is playing a Cmaj7, your right hand can improvise using a C pentascale. When the left hand is playing a Dm7, the right hand can improvise playing a D minor pentascale. And so on.

Remember, this is easier than it sounds – there are no black keys used, so you're just moving your 5-finger position to whatever chord the left hand is playing.

Once you're able to improvise with these chords all in a row, try mixing up the order. Maybe go from Cmaj7 to Fmaj7 to Bm7b5 and so on.

## Strategy #13: The chaining exercise for speed

Start with a C major arpeggio for practicing the chaining exercise. If this is too difficult, you can use a 1-octave C scale.

Break this fast passage into very small parts – maybe even just a few notes. Play these notes at full speed and with full energy. Focus and plan, and then execute. Review what you just played and keep at it until you’re satisfied with the result.

C Major

Then move on to the next set of notes. Continue like this until you’ve covered the entire fast passage. Once you’ve worked your way through the entire arpeggio or scale, practicing in several sets of fast notes, try “chaining” them together. The idea is to keep everything in one arm gesture.

Note any hiccups or hitches you’re encountering, and work on that link of the chain until it’s comfortable. Then attempt to chain it all back together again.

Another passage to try is from Clementi’s Sonatina in C, op. 36 no. 1. It’s a little scale passage:

Start with the first five notes until crossing over to the 3 is natural. Then start from the fifth note (B) and play the next set of five notes. Once you’ve figured that out, play the final five notes of the passage. Make sure that you’re getting these parts up-to-speed without tension or hiccups. Then attempt to string all three segments together.

This exercise allows you to play fast and challenging passage with ease. Here’s more on the [chaining exercise](#) if you’d like to go more in-depth.



## Strategy #14: Play beautifully, fast, and without tension

If you want to play quickly and beautifully, you need to play with more than just your fingers – you need to play with your arms and body. Take the pressure out of your fingers and wrists. You need to find relaxation even in fast and difficult passages.

One mental exercise to try is to imagine you're dangling from the ceiling by a cord and someone cuts the cord. That surrendering of body weight into the keys is what we're looking for, instead of pressing your fingers like levers.

Here are three simple exercises to find this ease in playing.

The [up-down exercise](#): dramatically throw your hand from one chord to the next, which teaches your wrist to relax between chords.

The [free hands exercise](#): This is another exercise designed to get you into neutral position between notes, so you develop ease in difficult passages. Play each chord and immediately release into neutral position.

The loose wrists exercise: Loose but firm wrists is an important aspect of playing quickly without tension. Play a simple scale, and between each note, shake out your wrists. This will help you *feel* the neutral position between notes so that you're not playing the notes stiffly.

The idea with these exercises isn't to play slow forever, but it's to get a sense of the micro-movements that are happening between notes, even in extremely fast passages. We play slowly and deliberately like this in order to feel what we should be feeling when playing quickly.

## Strategy #15: Transpose!

Take the music you're learning and transpose it to a different key. Start with a simpler etude or easy piece to get the hang of this. Transposing is a good creative activity that breaks up the monotony of repetitive practice. It forces to apply your knowledge of intervals and patterns in real time and can allow you to think about your piece in a brand-new way.

To transpose: if you're moving from the key of C to the key of D, say, you'd need to move every note up a whole step. This means accidentals (or lack thereof) will inevitably change. Moving from the key of C to D means introducing two black keys (C# and F#) in order to keep the interval distance accurate. It helps to be familiar with scales when you transpose, so start by transposing to easy keys that you're very familiar with.

Instead of looking at your music note-by-note when you transpose, remember to look at the patterns and interval distances that you've identified. It's less about reading each note individually than it is about seeing the overall shape.

Try transposing to a few different keys and incorporate this activity into your regular practice sessions to get to know your pieces more intimately.

## Strategy #16: Measure your sight-reading level with SASR

The [SASR](#) (the Standard Assessment of Sight Reading) is a (free!) tool that can help us become a better sight reader. The highest possible score you can get is 1900 – Sean’s highest score is 1362. The creator of Piano Marvel’s score hovers around 900.

The main benefit of using the SASR is to actually be able to measure your sight-reading progress. We can clearly see if we’re improving over time because the program remembers us and charts our progress. There’s a wide library of music on the SASR, so you won’t always be reading through the same music.

Remember to sight read for short amounts of time on a daily basis in addition to using the SASR every couple weeks or so. This is how you’ll really start to see real progress and growth in your sight-reading skills.

## Strategy #17 - Learn a musical sequence

The most famous musical sequence of all time is the Pachelbel sequence (used in the famous Canon in D). A sequence is a chord/bass pattern. In the case of the Pachelbel sequence, there are two patterns you can find.

The first pattern, which is sometimes used in this sequence, is the bass note is descending in seconds up until the very end. Here's what it looks like:

**||: I – V<sup>6</sup> – vi – iii<sup>6</sup> – IV – I<sup>6</sup> – IV – V :||**

Imagining we're in the key of C, we start with a C chord (I). Then we have a G (V) chord but in first inversion, so our bass note is B.

(G chord in first inversion means the notes are rearranged like this: BDG. That's all the little "6" means beside the V).

This V chord is followed by an Am (vi) chord, followed by an Em (iii) chord (with G on the bottom, since it's in first inversion). Then there's an F chord, then a C chord (with E on the bottom). We finish with an F and G chord, two chords that build enough tension to allow us to repeat the pattern over and over again.

This means our bass line looks like this:

C-B-A-G-F-E-F-G

It descends by step until we get to the last two notes (the turnaround).

Another aspect of this sequence – the most important part - is the pairs of chords that are a fifth apart (I-V, vi-iii, IV-I). These chord pairs move down in thirds (I moves to vi, vi moves to IV). That's the aspect of the Pachelbel sequence that is most well-known.

To play this on the piano, play a single bass note in the left hand (C, B, A, etc.), and play a full 3-note chord in the right hand. You'll immediately hear the famous Pachelbel's Canon! This is a great sequence to improvise with as well.

Once you learn this sequence, you'll start noticing it in classical and contemporary music frequently. You'll also be better able to spot other musical sequences you come across.

## Strategy #18: Learn 40 pieces this year

This is a long-term activity that's well-worth exploring. Instead of just learning a small handful of pieces a year as many students do, learn a huge feast of music. There is so much excellent music on the piano – at all levels – it's a shame we ignore most of it in favor of just a few pieces.

Pick some level-appropriate music you're interested in and challenge yourself to learn a new piece to 80% proficiency each week. If you're unable to do this, the pieces are too hard or you're not practicing daily. Scale back, recalibrate and try again.

[The 40 Pieces a Year](#) challenge is a great resource for this activity.

You can still work on more challenging pieces and bring them to a mastery level – the idea is to *also* expose yourself to a wide array of music. You'll learn so much faster this way, while improving your sight reading and knowledge of repertoire. Plus, it's a whole lot of fun!

## Strategy #19: Record your practice session

It takes a little extra effort to record your practice session, but there are so many benefits to doing so. It'll help heighten your awareness of your posture and sound, things you might not notice as distinctly when you're deep in your practice. It gives you a broader scope, so you can step back and see clearly. When you're playing the piano, so much of your attention is focused on pressing the keys. With a recording, you're able to retarget that attention and start getting granular with your sound, tone, tempo, and so on.

Make a goal to **record a piece of music you're working on** today. Not tomorrow, not a month from now, but today!

What you'll probably find is that by doing so, you're putting more care and attention into your piece. After all, you probably want to get a "perfect" take! You're also likely to notice any postural quirks. Depending on where you set up your phone or camera, you might also be able to notice tension in your hands, weird elbow movements or anything else that might be impacting your performance.

Listening back to yourself play is a great way to tell if your rhythm is tight, if your dynamics are noticeable and doing what you want them to do, and so much more.

## Strategy #20: Record yourself “performing” at your weekly lesson

One natural performance opportunity that comes up often is our weekly piano lesson. Record yourself “performing” a piece for your teacher and listen to it multiple times throughout the week. Be curious, not judgmental. By incorporating our teacher’s practice suggestions, and using our ears to improve upon our performance, you’ll be heartened to hear real and actual improvement on a week-to-week basis.

The way we practice for performance is different than the way most of us regularly practice. By specifically using lessons as a weekly performance activity, you’ll be practicing performing on a regular basis as well.

This requires doing full run-throughs of your piece. Once you’ve done a full run-through, take time to reflect and decide how to improve for next time. Recording a run-through can add another element of pressure to the “performance” which can be helpful to experience.

As an additional bonus, record your teacher as they give you suggestions with the piece. You’ll be able to refer to their playing throughout the week so you have it as a reference for improvement.

## Strategy #21: Choose *one* of the following apps to immediately incorporate into your practice sessions

Pick one of the following apps which would seem best suited to you at this particular moment. Note that all these apps are paid, but most are inexpensive and are well-worth the investment.

**Piano Maestro** – excellent for sight reading – it’s like Guitar Hero. iOS only. You can use the app with or without a USB if your piano is tuned. It’s a nice-looking app that’s geared toward kids, but some adults love it too.

**Simply Piano** – this app teaches chords and has other types of lessons too. Absolute beginners can use it. It has courses or you can just play repertoire, which is mainly pop-based. The level ranges from beginner to intermediate.

**Tenuto** – this app is for building skills – it has drills, ear training, theory, and notation exercises. Start with the ear training section. For iOS only. Associated with the website [musictheory.net](http://musictheory.net).

**ForScore** – you can scan scores and make playlists/set lists. You can use Turboscan to scan with the iPad. You can annotate and record (such as recording your teacher at a lesson). You can highlight sections to work on.

**iReal Pro** – does backing tracks. You can make your own chord charts, but they have a good library. Great to jam along to and play “with a band”.

**Supermetronome Groovebox** – an app that’s better than just the standard tick of metronome. You can use all different kinds of rhythms to play along with.

**Anytune** – slows down any tune in your personal music library. This is good for ear training if you’re trying to figure out parts of music. You can also loop sections and set it up to get faster each repetition.



## Strategy #22: Immerse yourself in music theory by watching/listening to great content and joining a community

There are fantastic theory-focused YouTube channels and podcasts that will clue you in to the many ways music surrounds and affects us. By learning about theory in things like film and video games, we'll have a deeper appreciation for those activities.

A couple good YouTube channels to learn theory from are "8-Bit Music Theory" and "Sideways". Some good podcasts are "Song Appeal" and "The Underscore Show".

One of the biggest components to building fluency in any language (music *is* a language!) is surrounding yourself with a like-minded community. This gives you an immersive experience. For online communities, check out the Facebook groups "Music Theory" ("Music Theory II" for more advanced discussions), "Disney Music Theory" and "Top 40 Theory".

Twitter personalities who discuss music theory include Adam Neely, 12tone, Top40Theory, SongAppeal and DarkMusicTheory.

## Strategy #23: Start a piano meet-up group

Playing the piano tends to be a solitary activity. Aside from getting involved in a jam band (another great pursuit!), one thing you can do even when you're in the beginner stage of learning is start a piano meet-up group.

The idea is simple – get together with other piano enthusiasts on a monthly basis. Spend the first half of the meet-up performing, and the second half socializing.

Here are the general guidelines:

- Each performer has 6-7 minutes *maximum* (they can play multiple pieces)
- Don't do more than 10-15 performances in an evening
- Any skill levels and genres welcome (unless for some reason you'd like to be hyper-specific)
- No negativity allowed – the goal isn't to critique, but to support one another

Meetups can be casual and held in your home (or someone else's), or you could explore venues such as churches or other local areas. If you choose to meet somewhere that isn't free, simply charge a cover fee for performers and viewers (most people are understanding of this).

Really, though, it needn't be complicated. Find some other piano enthusiasts in your area (talk to your piano teacher, put up a flyer in the local music store, or start a Facebook or Meetup group), and start planning monthly meetings.

It's amazing how much this'll boost your piano game. You'll feel more pressure to "polish" pieces on a monthly basis, which means you'll actually build up a repertoire. If your group continues to meet for months or even years, you'll be able to watch each other grow. Camaraderie when learning a new skill is invaluable – it's helpful to be able to share the ups and downs of the journey as someone goes along them with you.

Want more great tips and strategies for the  
piano?



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Allysia Van Betuw, the host of Online PianoCon, has been teaching piano to people of all ages and levels, from three-year old beginners, to youth and teenagers, to retired adults, since 2005. Her website [PianoTV.net](#) and [YouTube channel](#) is the product of her desire to branch out and share music in new ways, and to provide a coherent framework for beginners. She works with an editor named Logan who is the real hidden powerhouse behind PianoTV.

Thanks for reading this e-book and I hope you enjoy the convention! 😊