

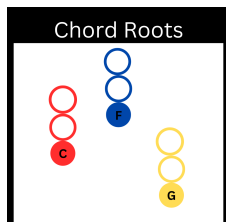
Practice Steps for Learning Hymns

1. Divide into phrases.
2. Write [fingering for legato phrases](#).
3. Sections, Right Hand Alone
4. Left Hand Alone
5. Left Hand Alone, Sing Melody
6. Hands Together Slow
7. Hands Together Regular Tempo
8. Pedaling and Expression

	Key of C
142	Sweet Hour of Prayer - Primary Chords, Legato 3rd
116	Come, Follow Me - Shifts Between Phrases
106	God Speed the Right - Alignment
152	God Be With you Till We Meet Again - Finger Subbing
302	I Know My Father Lives - Moving Middle Voicing
239	Choose the Right - Fast Primary Chords
	Key of F
100	Nearer, My God, To Thee - Left Hand Shifts, Flats
98	I Need Thee Every Hour - Legato 6ths
125	How Gentle God's Commands -2 note slurs
	Key of G
294	Love at Home - Legato 6ths
92	For the Beauty of the Earth - Left Hand Quick Shifts
	Key of D
144	Secret Prayer - Omitting 10ths
3	Now Let Us Rejoice - Fast 2#s
304	Teach Me to Walk in the Light - RH Finger Independence
19	We Thank Thee, O God, For a Prophet - Primary Chords
301	I Am a Child of God - Tenor to Alto 10ths
241	Count Your Blessings - Primary Chords, Rit, A Tempo
131	More Holiness Give Me - Triplets

How to Play Hymns with Chord Symbols

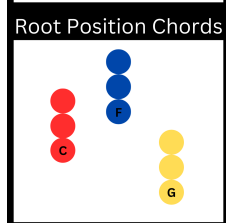
[Hymns Made Easy](#)



Step 1 - Roots Only

Color the Primary Chord Symbols (**I**, **IV** & **V**) and play the melody in the right hand with just the root of the chord in the left hand.

If no chord root is indicated above the measure, play the chord root from the previous measure.



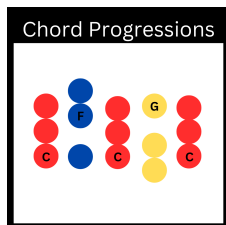
Step 2 - Root Position Chords

Play chords "snowman style" with a root, 3rd and 5th as you play the right-hand melody. This requires hand shifts to new spots.

C: CEG

F: FAC

G: GBD



Step 3 - Chord Progression Chords

Shifting to root chords is a lot more difficult than playing chords with inversions.. Instead play the IV and V chords in inversions like a I-IV-I-V-I chord progression.

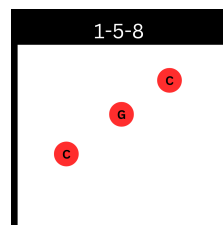
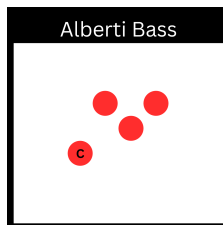
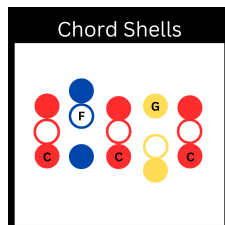
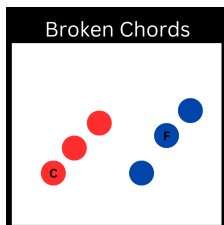
C: CEG

F: CFA

G: BDG or G7: BFG

Step 4 - Stylize with Left-Hand Patterns

Playing chords in block position can sound a bit like a march. To create your own variations of hymns, try changing the chord style to a [different left hand pattern](#). You can mix and match broken chords,, chord shells, alberti bass, 1-5-8, etc. to match the mood of the hymn.



Step 5 - Get Creative!

Once you are comfortable playing the melody with broken or block chords in the left hand, try playing some phrases or verses in higher or lower octaves, cross left over right to have a "chime" effect or mix up the styles above by including some blocked, broken and chord shell pieces all in one verse. You could even [add an intro](#), [outro](#) or interlude (music between the verses) to stylize the hymn into a piano solo.

As you analyze the left-hand parts that are written in the simplified hymns, you can see that most of the notes are just "chord pieces" that the arranger chose.

My favorite hymn arrangements in [Marshall McDonald's Simply Sacred books](#) have simple melody lines with beautiful examples of how chord patterns can be mixed around to create beautiful arrangements.

Hymns Made Easy with Mostly Primary Chords

Key of C

Jesus Once of Humble Birth
Count Your Blessings
We Thank Thee O God for a Prophet
Now Let Us Rejoice
Testimony
Joy the the World
How Great Thou Art
God Be With You 'Til We Meet Again
Let Us All Press On

Key of F

How Gentle God's Commands
How Great the Wisdom and the Love
Did You Think to Pray?
Let the Holy Spirit Guide
I Know That My Redeemer Lives
Silent Night

Key of G

I Need Thee Every Hour
Love at Home
O My Father