

# What you need to know before starting Grade 1 piano

## Physical

- Proper piano posture
- Hand position/finger numbers

## The piano

- Keyboard geography
- Hand positions

## Note and rhythm reading

- Note values (from whole notes to 16<sup>th</sup> notes and including dotted quarters and dotted 8ths)
- Time signatures (4/4, 3/4, 2/4, 6/8, 3/8)
- Metronome
- Notation (all)
- Intervals up to an 8th
- Key signatures
- Basic syncopation
- Formatting (repeats, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> endings)

## Expression

- Dynamics and terms (from *pianissimo* to *fortissimo*)
- *Ritardando*
- Phrasing
- Damper pedal/syncopated pedal
- Straight 8ths vs. swing 8ths
- Accents, staccato, tenuto, staccatissimo

## Chords

- Major and minor chords (all 7 major and all 7 minor triads)
- How to build a 7 chord
- Diminished chords
- Inverting chords
- Using Roman numerals to represent chords
- Playing I, IV and V7 chords in the standard keys (C, F, G major, D, E minor)

- Various chord patterns (solid, broken, 1358, different time signatures)

### Technique

- 5-finger scales (pentascales) in all major keys
- Various touches
- 1-octave scales (C, D, F, G major and A, D and E natural minor, A harmonic minor)
- Difference between harmonic and natural minor scales
- Chromatic scales
- Cross-hand arpeggios

### Key signatures

- Main major keys (C, D, F, G)
- Main minor keys (Am, Bm, Dm, Em)

### Other theory

- How to build a major scale
- Relative major/minor keys
- Binary form
- Canons/inventions/2-pt writing
- Terms: tonic and dominant
- 12-bar blues