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About the DVD

The DVD contains valuable demonstrations of all the instructional material in the book. You will get the best results by following along with your book as you watch these video segments. Musical examples that are not performed with video are included as audio tracks on the DVD for listening and playing along.

THE SUSTAIN PEDAL (DAMPER PEDAL)

Most pianos have two or three pedals. The pedal on the far right is the *damper pedal*, which, when depressed, lifts all the felt dampers off of the piano strings to allow the notes to ring. Electronic keyboards are typically equipped with a *sustain pedal* that creates the same effect as the piano's damper pedal. (The term "sustain pedal" will be used in this book to mean either pedal.)

Using the sustain pedal can add color and life to keyboard music. When pressed down, the pedal is "on." Because the notes continue to ring after you've lifted your fingers off the keys, it becomes possible to create a rich wash of harmony. To turn the pedal "off" and silence the notes, simply lift it up. Turning the pedal off and then immediately back on again is called *changing* the pedal. When playing music with sustain pedal, it is important to change the pedal appropriately in order to avoid creating a muddy mess of notes that aren't supposed to be heard at the same time. Always use your ears to be sure you aren't overdoing it.

In classical keyboard music, pedal markings are usually very specific and indicate exactly when to depress and release, as shown in the example below.

1

Pedal down Pedal change Pedal change Pedal change Pedal up

Sometimes, the abbreviation *Ped.* is used to show where the pedal should be pressed or changed. In this case, the symbol * is used whenever the pedal should be taken off completely.

1

Ped. *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *

Important: In a lot of keyboard music, especially popular music, specific pedal on and off markings are not shown. Instead, the words "with pedal" might be seen under the first measure. In many cases, no indication whatsoever will be given; this does not necessarily mean pedal should not be used—it is simply being left to the discretion of the performer. Use your ears to decide what is best. (Hint: In most cases, you will want to change the pedal at least at the start of each measure.)