

Balanced Arpeggios

The skill of balanced arpeggios combines the balanced torso and forearm with arpeggio pivots. This skill ensures that the torso follows the playing fingers so that the weight of the arm is aligned behind the hand and playing fingers. This results in good dynamic and tonal control. The fluid motion also helps produce a musical arpeggio.

Three Steps for Developing Balanced Arpeggios:

- Align the hand and arm weight** with the initial note played.
- Lean the torso slightly** in the direction of the arpeggio.
- Follow** the direction of the arpeggio with the torso, arm and hand.

1

Align hand and arm weight with the thumb.

Lean torso slightly to the right.

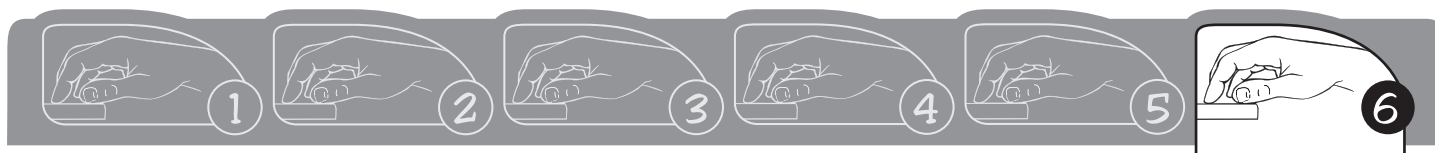
Follow the direction of the arpeggio. Lean torso slightly to the left.

2

Align hand and arm weight with the five.

Lean torso slightly to the right.

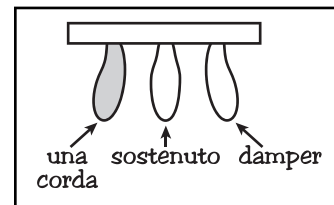
Follow the direction of the arpeggio. Lean torso slightly to the left.



Una Corda Pedal Technique

Una corda pedal technique gives pianists an added dimension of dynamics and color to work with. When used properly, the una corda pedal can contribute greatly to an artistic performance.

Most pianos have three pedals. The left pedal is called the “una corda” pedal, often referred to as the “soft pedal.” This pedal makes the piano softer in one of two ways: 1. On an upright piano, the pedal moves the hammers closer to the strings, resulting in less hammer force and a softer sound. 2. On a grand piano, the una corda pedal shifts the entire keyboard to the right. With the keyboard shifted, the majority of the hammers will strike one less string for each key that is played, resulting in a softer sound. The una corda pedal should be used as the musical situation warrants.



Three Steps for Developing Una Corda Technique:

- A. **Using the left foot, follow the three steps for damper pedal technique:** 1. Ball of the foot on the una corda (left) pedal, heel firmly on the floor. 2. Depress the pedal using the foot and pedal as one unit. 3. Release the pedal high enough to disengage, but not all the way to the top (to avoid pedal clunks).
- B. **Prepare to use the una corda pedal** by resting the left foot lightly on the pedal surface. **Engage the pedal** only as the artistic moment calls for it.
- C. **Use your ear** to find special moments to use the una corda pedal. Unlike the damper pedal, the una corda pedal is **depressed before playing** the notes that you wish to be softer. **Rehearse** by first using just the pedals, then add the left hand, then finally play hands together with both pedals.

Before playing this exercise, rehearse just the damper and una corda pedals as indicated. (The una corda is depressed *between* beat 4 of measure 3 and beat 1 of measure 4). Then play the left hand alone with the pedal as indicated. Finally, play the whole example hands together with pedals as indicated.

Developing One-Octave Scales Hands Together

Playing scales hands together allows the pianist to develop important scale skills with both hands simultaneously. There are many examples in the piano repertoire that use hands together scales.

Three Steps for Developing Hands-Together Scale Skills:

- A. First, **master the fingering and scale skills** used in the scale hands separately.
- B. **Analyze** the fingering. **Look** for places where finger units or thumbs match.
- C. **Drill in small units, hands separately and hands together.**

In the Group 1 one-octave major scales, there are no matching finger units. This makes it even more important to emphasize steps A and C of the above three steps. Practice the following exercises hands separately, then hands together slowly. Transpose to the keys of G, D, A and E major.

The image displays five musical exercises (labeled 1 through 5) for hands-together scale skills in 4/4 time, marked *mf*. Each exercise consists of a two-staff system (treble and bass clefs). The exercises are designed to develop scale skills with both hands simultaneously, focusing on fingering and thumb placement.

- Exercise 1:** Treble clef starts on C4, bass clef on G3. Annotations: "pivot" (treble, C4), "thumb under" (bass, G3).
- Exercise 2:** Treble clef starts on C4, bass clef on F3. Annotations: "pivot" (treble, C4), "thumb under" (bass, F3), "thumb roll" (treble, G4).
- Exercise 3:** Treble clef starts on C4, bass clef on E3. Annotations: "pivot" (treble, C4), "thumb under" (bass, E3), "thumb roll" (bass, F3).
- Exercise 4:** Treble clef starts on C4, bass clef on D3. Annotations: "pivot" (treble, C4), "thumb roll" (bass, E3).
- Exercise 5:** Treble clef starts on C4, bass clef on C3. Annotations: "pivot" (treble, C4), "thumb under" (bass, C3), "thumb roll" (bass, D3), "pivot" (bass, F3), "thumb under" (bass, G3).

The exercises are marked *mf* (mezzo-forte). Exercise 5 includes a dynamic change to *f* (forte) and then *mp* (mezzo-piano) in the final measure.