

FOREWORD



I've always loved playing the piano and want to encourage as many people to have a go as possible. It's a great way to explore music, to get a feel for different styles and songs – and you can also gain a deeper understanding of how the music 'works'.

The songs in this book are all favourites of mine, and really reflect my interest in diverse musical styles. I've given you lots of ideas and suggestions on how to learn them, and also how to re-create my musical style. But I'd also love you to develop your own style – there are plenty of opportunities to do this through the improvisation suggestions I've given. The accompanying CD will help you hear what I have in mind, and also give some great backings for you to play along with.

Just remember, have fun and enjoy making some great music!

Jamie Cullum

IMPROVISING

Improvising is a big part of my playing – if you really want to play like me, then give it a go!

Here are my two golden rules for you:

- 1 You don't have to use all the notes in every bar – keep it simple!
- 2 Always remember which bar and chord you are improvising over.

LET'S GET STARTED

Let's take the left hand and play the chords in the chorus around a few times. It's important to keep this left hand steady because the right hand will improvise over it.

Two staves of bass clef music in 4/4 time. The first staff shows four measures of chords: C, Gm¹³, E^b, and F. The second staff repeats the same four measures.

The next step is to try out some right-hand rhythms in each bar above this. Start by using any note from the left hand chords in the right hand.

Next I'm going to give you a selection of notes to use in each bar:

12

Two staves of piano music in 4/4 time. The top staff shows right-hand melodic lines for each chord. The bottom staff shows the left-hand chords: C, Gm¹³, E^b, and F.

You can try all of this (or just the right hand alone) with backing track 12.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DAY MADE

THE STYLE

The bass line is incredibly important in jazz. Listen to my instrumental solo in **I get a kick out of you** – the double bass is totally responsible for outlining the tonality and rhythmic feel of each bar. This four-beat movement in each bar is called a ‘walking bass’. Listen to the beginning of **What a difference a day made** – can you hear the double bass playing this slow, steady rhythm?

WALKING ON THE PIANO

To play this song on the piano, we need to keep the walking bass going in the left hand whilst playing the melody in the right hand. Let’s start by practising the left hand. Here are the first couple of bars, forming a pattern which repeats several times:



And here’s the beginning of the first verse:



TAKE IT FURTHER There are many different ways of ‘walking’ from one chord to another each bar. See if you can make up your own walking bass, filling in these gaps (there are some examples on track 24):

24

What a diff - 'rence a day made