

Circle warm-ups



Here's a warm-up sequence you can do every day before you sit down to play. These exercises will help you relax your shoulders and arms and get your blood flowing. You'll also be able to play more quickly and easily when your arms are warm and relaxed.

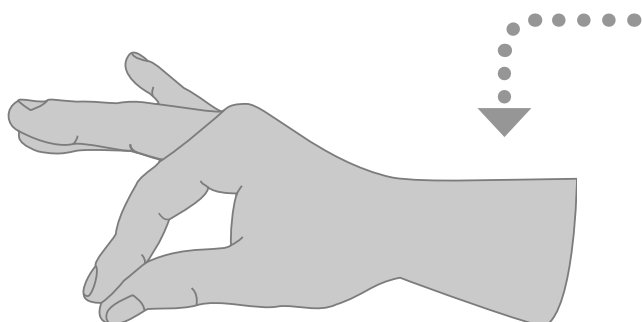
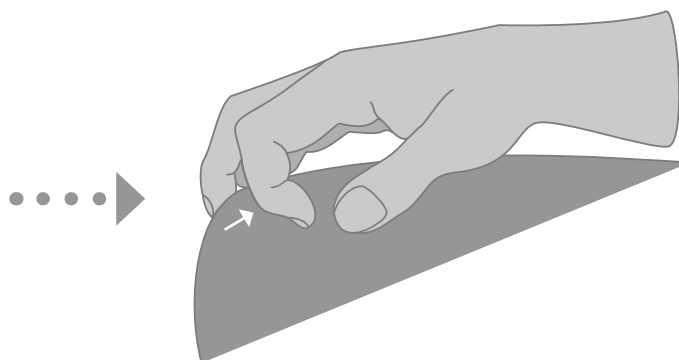


Hand gym



Itchy leg

Cup your hand over your knee. Scratch your leg with each fingernail in turn. Feel your finger bending at the end joint.

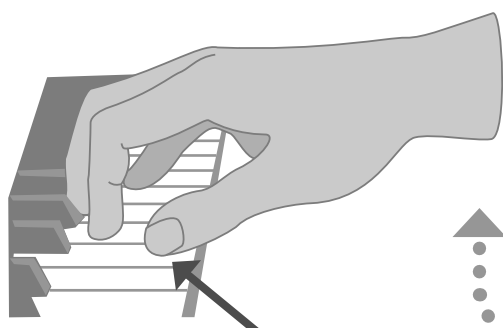
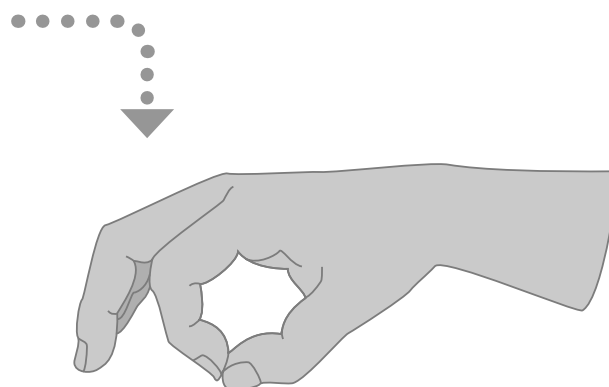


Snapping crocodile

Touch your thumb and second finger together like a crocodile opening and closing its mouth. Then snap your thumb against your third finger, then fourth finger.

Squeezing the circle

Form a circle between the tip of your thumb and second finger. Keep the circle round and count to 5 as you squeeze them gently together. Repeat with your third, then fourth finger.



corner

Tapping thumb

Rest your hand on a table in playing position and tap lightly up and down with the corner of your thumb, being careful not to dip your wrist. Repeat at the piano.

Legato-staccato



In the next two chapters you will practise playing *legato* in one hand and *non-legato* in the other.



Drawing rainbows

Rub your tummy with one hand while you pat your head with the other. Then swap hands. Next, draw big rainbows with one hand while you pat your head with the other. Swap hands.

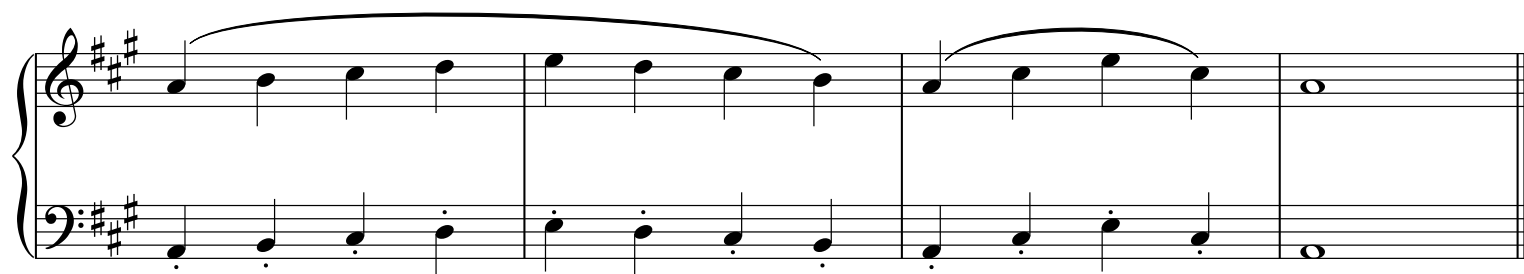
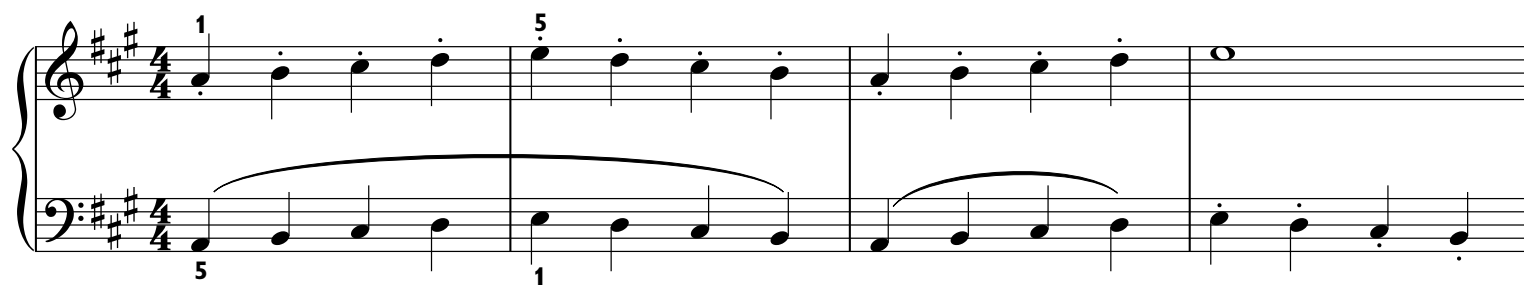


Stroking the cat

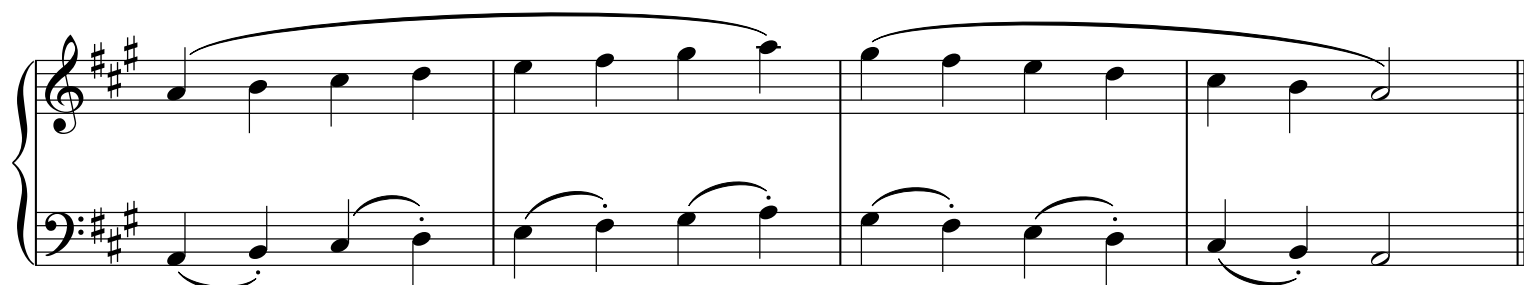
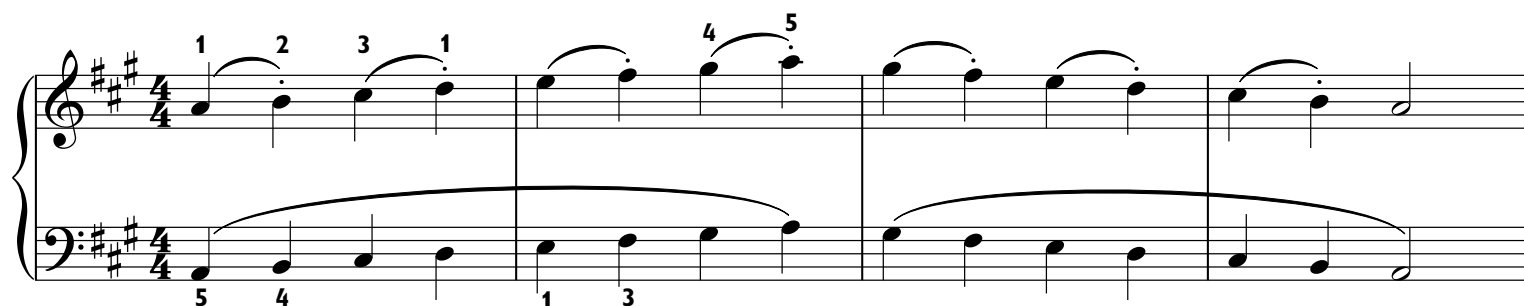
Gently stroke an imaginary cat with one hand then knock on a door loudly with your other hand. Swap hands then try doing both these actions at the same time!



Legato and staccato



Now try slurring the right hand in pairs:



» Make up your own exercises playing *legato* in one hand and *staccato* in the other.