

Using a Keyboard 103 Frère Jacques: more of the tune

Learn three keyboard playing techniques: using fingers 4 and 5, shifting the hand and stretching the thumb in order to play the next two bits of Frère Jacques.

Also learn that the pitch numbers and the fingering numbers can be different.

You need a keyboard, and you must be confident with Musithinks 103 before you tackle this.

1. Adding fingers 4 and 5. In Using a Keyboard 101 you learned how to use your thumb and two fingers to play the first bit of Frère Jacques. Find the starting note and play up the three notes – 1 2 3. Now use your remaining two fingers to play the next two white notes – 4 and 5. If you've done a lot of practice with fingers 1 2 and 3, you may find that fingers 4 and 5 have got some catching up to do. Practise going up and down the 5 notes, until they are equal and even.

2. When you did Musithinks 103 you were relating the notes to the rungs of a ladder. For the first half of the tune, you can use the same numbers for your fingers. You know that the first half of Frère Jacques goes

1	2	3	1	1	2	3	1	3	4	5	3	4	5
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Keep your hand in the same place, one finger for each note, and play the tune.

Find the first note, then don't look at your fingers to listen better.

3. Shifting the hand. You know from Muisthinks 103 that for "*son-nez les ma-ti-nes*" you have to go up to note 6. With only 5 digits, you are going to have to do something new. You're going to shift your hand one note to the right. So far your fingering numbers have coincided with the pitch numbers. Now they are going to be one note to the right – one note higher. Practise finding the new position. You need to change to it once you have played the second "*dor-mez vous*".

You are going to play the same note on the keyboard for "*vous*" and "*son*", but you play it with finger 5 for "*vous*" and finger 4 for "*son*".

This is a really common thing to have to do on a keyboard. It's nice when you can play a whole phrase with your hand in one position, and do the shifts between the phrases.

3 4 5 4 5 4 3

Practise playing "*dor-mez vous*" (shift) "*son-nez les ma*" until you are comfy with it. Can you do it with your eyes closed?!

4. Stretching the thumb. Recall the pitch numbers for "*son-nez les ma-ti-nes*": 5 6 5 4 3 1. The last note is a jump down from the previous one, but luckily our thumbs are very good at being able to stretch – quite a lot. So you play "*son-nez les ma-ti*" on consecutive notes and then stretch your thumb a bit to the left to press the note for "*nes*".

Fingers	1	2	3	1	3	4	5	4	5	4	3	2	1
Pitch numbers	1	2	3	1	3	4	5	5	6	5	4	3	1
	Fre – re Jac - ques				dor – mez vous			Son-nez les ma-ti-nes					

5. Stick with this activity until you are comfortable with the concept of pitch numbers and finger numbers not necessarily being the same.