

Using a Keyboard 104 Five Note Tunes

Learn to play familiar tunes where the finger and pitch numbers are the same, work out which notes to use and be more confident and fluent playing with all 5 fingers

You need a keyboard and a pen(cil)

1. In Using a Keyboard 103, you used all 5 fingers of your right hand. There are some well known tunes which only use 5 notes. In order to enjoy playing them you need all 5 fingers to be comfortable on their notes. If some are a bit stiff or weak, or you just aren't very well co-ordinated, exercise them on the keyboard. Make up patterns and try bits of the tunes – stick with it. If you are not comfy, check the bullet points in step 3 of Using a Keyboard 101. Keep practice sessions short to avoid straining tendons that are getting used to something new.

If you have an underlying problem with your right hand, like arthritis or tendon issues and you think practice will exacerbate it rather than help, you could use your left hand if that is more comfortable. Finger 1 (thumb) becomes finger 5.

2. Here are the finger numbers for “Oh when the saints go marching in”. They are the same as the pitch numbers. Start on the same note as for “Frère Jacques”.

1 3 4 <i>Oh when the</i>	5 <i>saints</i>	1 3 4 <i>go march - ing</i>	5 <i>in</i>
1 3 4 <i>Oh when the</i>	5 3 <i>saints go</i>	1 3 <i>march - ing</i>	2 <i>in</i>
3 3 2 <i>I'm going to</i>	1 <i>be</i>	3 5 <i>in their</i>	5 4 <i>num-ber</i>
3 4 <i>when the</i>	5 3 <i>saints go</i>	1 2 <i>march - ing</i>	1 <i>in</i>

The position of the syllables in the boxes gives you an idea of the rhythm. Each line of the song ends with a long note – on a different pitch each time.

3. Here's a tune that gives you lots of opportunities to practise repeating the same note, with some fingers: “Jingle Bells”. (Just the chorus – you need more notes for the verse). This time you're going to work out the notes for yourself. You'll do better if you give yourself the starting note on the keyboard and then sing the first line. Think about it (Musithinks style) and then have a go at playing it. If you launch straight into playing you can lose your way.

3 3 3 Jin - gle bells	Jin - gle bells	Jin - gle all the	way.
Oh what fun it	is to ride in a	one horse o - pen	sleigh (eigh)
Jin - gle bells	Jin - gle bells	Jin - gle all the	way.
Oh what fun it	is to ride in a	one horse o - pen	sleigh.

4. More tunes to play by ear. They all start on note number 3, finish on 1 and use your 5 notes.
“My Old Man's a Dustman” “One Man went to Mow”
“Now the Day is Over” “Merrily we Roll Along”