# The Lost Art of Improvisation

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## **Improvisation**



 It's taking what you know and reworking it in a new way to fit a specific context, while also leaving room for exploration of new ideas.

### Why Improvise?



- Keyboard greats
- Personal expression
- Useful skill:
  - Performances
  - Lead sheets
  - Juries
  - Composing
  - Arranging
  - Relaxing
  - O Church music
  - Weddings

- Basic accompaniment (music ed, music therapy)
- Theory reinforcement and application
- Better listening
- Decreases memory slips
- Unique audience experience
- O TikTok
- O Etc.

### How to Improvise: Remember first



- Everyone can improvise
- O Complex, yet simple
- Practice
- O Be ok with "Wrong" notes
- No comparing

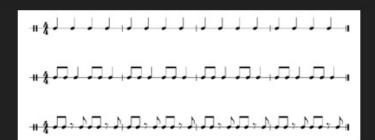


- Teach yourself, then teach your piano class
- Many ways to learn and teach improvisation

### How to Improvise: An approach



- 1. Build confidence
- 2. Start simple: rhythm
- 3. Start simple: notes
- 4. Simple embellishments
- 5. Major to minor



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#### To try

- Try improvising newly learned theory concepts
- 2. Allow "wrong" notes.
  Pursue them.

Wrong notes are opportunities for exploration.

#### In class

- 1. Call & response
- 2. Private improv to teacher's chords
- 3. Only a few minutes each week
- 4. Homework and practice
- 5. Quiz them (video submission)



Too busy for improv?

#### Warm-up routine:

- 5 minutes scales
- 5 minutes sight-reading
- 5 minutes improvisation

## Improvisation is fun.

(Let yourself enjoy it)

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#### Further sources

- O Gabriella Montero
- O Richard Grayson
- Chung, Brian, and Dennis Thurmond. Improvisation at the Piano: A Systematic Approach for the Classically Trained Pianist. Los Angeles: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 2007.
- Czerny, Carl. A Systematic Introduction to Improvisation on the Pianoforte: op. 200. Edited and translated by Alice L. Mitchell. New York: Longman, Inc., 1983.