

Professional-Level Arpeggios
Making the Jump from “Intermediate” to “Advanced”

presented by

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Acquiring effortless arpeggios expands your technical foundation, enabling greater fluency and coordination in all movements.

Arpeggios

1. *One-Octave Arpeggios: Application of the Basic Three-Dimensional Form with interval expansion [begin with a RH major seventh on C-E-G-B, from c5]*
 - a. Quiet Hand
 - b. Continuous alignment; no swiveling
 - c. Isolating 2, 3, and 4 notes with instantaneously released fingers; counterclockwise supporting motion in RH (clockwise in LH)
 - d. Coordinating the turnaround; three planes of motion, simultaneously
 - e. Expand to full one-octave arpeggio, C-E-G-C, ascending and descending
2. *The Throw*
 - a. Sudden, unprepared, lateral movement
 - b. Fingers 3 to 1, and 4 to 1, ascending (RH), 1 to 3, and 1 to 4, descending, on intervals of fourths and thirds
 - c. Maintain alignment of fingers behind hand and forearm
3. *Isolating the Throw; Combining Three-Dimensional Movement with the Throw*
 - a. Identify challenge spot ascending: E-G-C w/fingers 231 (ex. still is C Major)
 - i. Reduce figure to E-G-A, using ‘checkmark’ motion
 - ii. Extend to successive thirds E-G-B
 - iii. Open to actual arpeggio notes E-G-C
 - b. Add the beginning note to gather more momentum: C-E-G-C w/fingers 1231
 - i. Begin with reduced figure C-E-G-A
 - ii. Extend to successive thirds C-E-G-B
 - iii. Play actual arpeggio notes C-E-G-C
 - c. Identify challenge spot descending: E-C-G w/fingers 213
 - i. Reduce figure to E-C-B

- ii. Open to E-C-A
- iii. Play actual arpeggio notes E-C-G
- d. Add a note above the challenge spot: G-E-C-G w/fingers 3213
 - i. Begin with reduced figure G-E-C-B
 - ii. Continue to G-E-C-A
 - iii. Play actual arpeggio notes G-E-C-G
- e. Continue descending from top (tonic) note, C-G-E-C-G w/fingers 53213, using the same processes as above

4. *Putting It All Together*

- a. Play a full one-octave arpeggio in the second 8ve, ascending and descending; link this gesture with the throw
- b. As before, begin with the smallest interval, throwing first to B, then to A, and then to G [CEGCGECB, etc., on 12353213]
- c. Continue to add a note descending to E: release fingers, allowing the hand to become 'small' and check to see that alignment has been maintained; continue on to middle C
- d. Return to the ascending arpeggio beginning at middle C; to add the E in the second 8ve, it is helpful to isolate the throw and the succeeding follow-through movement, e.g., play E-G-C-E w/fingers 2312. This movement can feel awkward, therefore, reduce the intervals first to smaller ones, E-G-A-C
- e. Unlike the initial 'checkmark' motion, adjust the follow-through so that instead of going in toward the fallboard, come out toward the edge of the keyboard to play the second finger at the end of the figure, and maintain alignment
- f. Play on the fleshy part of the fingers; keep fingers visible near the edge of the keys while supinating; 'hook into' another 'under' motion after the throw
- g. Expand the intervals to E-G-B-D, then to the actual arpeggio notes, E-G-C-E
- h. Return to middle C and play to the E in the second octave, releasing each finger in turn while maintaining continuous alignment
- i. Continue to add notes until performing a complete two-octave arpeggio ascending, descending, and ascending again so that you must coordinate the turnaround motion in each direction
- j. Apply all processes, inverted, in the left hand, as well as in each key and inversion. (Begin LH study with a second-inversion chord, so that the same fingering will be utilized first in the LH, before moving on to arpeggios requiring the 4th finger.)