

Rob's Piano Room - Module 7 - PDF

More Left Hand Options

Main points

We have seen only very basic left hand accompaniment up to this point, so we could concentrate on making varied melodies over different sets of chords.

We will now look at ways of varying our left hand textures. The prime techniques we will use to vary our left hand are -

- changing inversions of the 'chord' part of our pattern

 - this can be done bar by bar or even within a bar

- adding and taking away in order to create different accompaniment rhythms

- changing individual notes within our chords to create movement

- changing our bass note to different notes of the chord

 - be careful to have enough roots for stability, especially of the I

- lowering the bass notes by an octave, as well as doubling octaves

- arpeggiation (many possible styles)

- low bass at beginning of bar followed by arpeggio

There are many other possibilities, which could be found by examining the music of your favourite composers

Let's look at the methods listed above individually.

Changing inversions of the 'chord' part of our pattern (bar by bar or within a bar)



Adding and taking away in order to create different accompaniment rhythms



Changing individual notes within our chords to create movement If we think of the notes of the chord as individual voices (three in this case), we can think of using approach notes for individual voices. It's normally best to end on the 'resolved' version of the chord



changing our bass note to different notes of the chord
be careful to have enough roots for stability, especially of the I chord



lowering the bass notes by an octave, as well as doubling octaves



arpeggiation (many possible styles)



low bass at beginning of bar followed by arpeggio



Exercises

Ex. 1 Practice the above examples with the left hand only, and make your own modifications of them using the basic ideas. Start with the I chord, then try moving to using progressions involving the IV and V once you feel comfortable. (Refer to progressions in module 2 and 3 pdfs if you like)

Ex. 2 Once you start feeling comfortable with each, start adding RH melodies. Again, you may want to keep your melodies slow and simple at first, so you are not trying to concentrate on too much at once.