

Rob's Piano Room - Module 8 - PDF

Moving to Different Keys

Main points

We have been focussing on the key of C up to now, in order to easily understand the concepts without the confusion of having to try to transpose
We are now going to look at how you might begin taking what we have learned to other keys
Remember you do not have to do everything at once- you may just want to pick a new key or two at a time and build your comfort with these before adding more
We started off using numbers rather than absolute note names, both to describe the function as well as making it easier to move to new keys

\ Lets take the key of D as an example (which has F# and C#)
Find the I , IV and V chords in your left hand in this new key, first in basic form, and eventually with our accompaniment patterns. Practice this until relatively comfortable
Now start making simple melodies, first with chord tones, then adding passing and neighbour tones, etc, first out of time, using a time signature once comfortable.
Remember that for some lower non chord tones, you will use the semitone which will go outside of your scale.

Think of each scale as having a 'geography' on the keyboard. D major for example, has two 'hills', both of one black note. Trace this geography with your finger up and down the keyboard. As another example, A major has a hill of one black note, and a second hill of two black notes

An effective way to practice this geography is to take shapes from your scale and moving them up and down the keyboard , making sure you find the scale notes (moving up and down the proper 'hills') as you go. These may sound weird, but are just an exercise to get to know the scale geographies. Here are a few examples, but find your own shapes as well, making sure your starting shape is composed only of notes of your scale.



Exercise

Pick a new key, and familiarize yourself with its geography. Find your basic chords in the left hand in the new key. Once comfortable, start adding RH melodies, first with only chord tones, then slowly adding passing tones, etc. Be patient with yourself - only go to the next step once the previous step is comfortable, to avoid unnecessary frustration.

You can decide when to start a new key. There is no need to do all twelve at once!