

The Ten Steps to Parnassus: Technical Skills

Dr. Richard Van Dyke, Dr. Erin Bennett, Dr. Siok Lian Tan

- I. Early Intermediate
 - A. Scales – 2 octaves HS, ♩ = 100, play
 - B. Chords with Inversions – Solid, ♩ = 60, play ♩; Broken, ♩ = 60, play in triplets
 - C. Chromatic Scales – 1 octave HS, ♩ = 100, play
 - D. Contrary Motion Scales in symmetrical keys – ♩ = 100
- II. Intermediate
 - A. Scales – 2 octaves HT, ♩ = 120, play
 - B. Arpeggios (Major and minor) – 2 octaves HS, ♩ = 100, play
 - C. Chords with Inversions – Solid, ♩ = 80, play ♩; Broken, ♩ = 80, play in triplets
 - D. Chromatic Scales – HT, ♩ = 120, play
- III. Late-Intermediate Preludes
 - A. Scales – 3 octaves HT, ♩ = 100, play in triplets
 - B. Arpeggios (Major and minor) – 2 octaves HT, ♩ = 120, play
 - C. Chords with Inversions (Major, minor, V7 and vii°7) – Solid, ♩ = 100, play ♩; Broken, play in triplets (major and minor) at ♩ = 100 and play (V7 and vii°7) at ♩ = 80
 - D. Chromatic Scales – ♩ = 80, play
- IV. Late Intermediate Inventions
 - A. Scales – 4 octaves HT, ♩ = 100, play
 - B. Contrary Motion Scales – ♩ = 88, play
 - C. Arpeggios (Major, minor, V7 and vii°7) – 4 octaves HT, ♩ = 72, play
 - D. 4-Note Chords with Inversions (Major, minor, V7 and vii°7) – Solid play ♩ at ♩ = 120, and Broken play at ♩ = 80
 - E. Chromatic Scales – ♩ = 100, play
- V. Early Advanced
 - A. Scales – 4 octaves HT, ♩ = 112, play
 - B. Contrary Motion Scales – ♩ = 100, play
 - C. Octave Scales – ♩ = 60, play
 - D. Arpeggios (Major, minor, V7 and vii°7) – 4 octaves HT, ♩ = 84, play
 - E. 4-Note Chords with Inversions (Major, minor, V7 and vii°7) – Solid, play ♩ at ♩ = 120; Broken, play at ♩ = 92
 - F. Chromatic Scales – ♩ = 112, play
- VI. Pre-College Advanced (Equivalent to MDP Grade 10)
 - A. Scales – 4 octaves HT, ♩ = 120, play
 - B. Contrary Motion Scales – ♩ = 112, play
 - C. Parallel Scales at the 3rd, 6th and 10th – All major keys, ♩ = 100, play
 - D. Octave Scales – ♩ = 80, play
 - E. Arpeggios (Major, minor, V7 and vii°7) – 4 octaves HT, ♩ = 96, play
 - F. 4-Note Chords with Inversions (Major, minor, V7 and vii°7) – Solid, play ♩ at ♩ = 100; Broken, play at ♩ = 100
 - G. Chromatic Scales – ♩ = 120, play

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- VII. Collegiate Level
- A. Scales – 4 octaves HT, ♩ = 144, play ♪
 - B. Parallel Scales at the 3rd, 6th and 10th – All major keys, ♩ = 120, play ♪
 - C. Double Third Scales – All major and natural minor keys, ♩ = 100, play ♪
 - D. Contrary Motion Scales – ♩ = 120, play ♪
 - E. Octave Scales, ♩ = 92, play ♪
 - F. Arpeggios (Major, minor, V7 and vii^o7) – 4 octaves HT, ♩ = 104, play ♪
 - G. 4-Note Chords with Inversions (Major, minor, V7 and vii^o7) – Solid, play ♩ at ♩ = 100; Broken, play ♪ at ♩ = 120
 - H. Chromatic Scales – ♩ = 144, play ♪
- VIII. Artist
- A. Scales – 4 octaves HT, ♩ = 160, play ♪
 - B. Contrary Motion Scales – ♩ = 132, play ♪
 - C. Parallel Scales at the 3rd, 6th and 10th – All major keys, ♩ = 132, play ♪
 - D. Double Third Scales – All major and natural minor keys, ♩ = 56, play ♪
 - E. Octave Scales – ♩ = 104, play ♪
 - F. Arpeggios (Major, minor, V7 and vii^o7) – 4 octaves HT, ♩ = 112 play ♪
 - G. 4-Note Chords with Inversions (Major, minor, V7 and vii^o7) – Solid, play ♩ at ♩ = 120; Broken, play ♪ at ♩ = 120
 - H. Chromatic Scales – ♩ = 160, play ♪
- IX. Virtuoso
- A. Scales – 4 octaves HT, ♩ = 160, play ♪
 - B. Contrary Motion Scales – ♩ = 144 play ♪
 - C. Parallel Scales at the 3rd, 6th and 10th – All major keys, ♩ = 132, play ♪
 - D. Double Third Scales – All major and natural minor keys, ♩ = 66, play ♪
 - E. Octave Scales – ♩ = 104, play ♪
 - F. Arpeggios (Major, minor, V7 and vii^o7) – 4 octaves HT, ♩ = 120 play ♪
 - G. 4-Note Chords with Inversions (Major, minor, V7 and vii^o7) – Solid, play ♩ at ♩ = 120; Broken, play ♪ at ♩ = 120
 - H. Chromatic Scales – ♩ = 160, play ♪
- X. Parnassus

Selected Resources

Bach, J. S. *Inventions and Sinfonias*. Willard A. Palmer, ed. Van Nuys, CA: Alfred Publishing, 1991.

Gordon, Stewart. *A History of Keyboard Literature: Music for the Piano and its Forerunners*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1996.

Hinson, Maurice. *Guide to the Pianist's Repertoire*. 3rd ed. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2000.

Magrath, Jane. *Pianist's Guide to Standard Teaching and Performance Literature*. Van Nuys, CA: Alfred Publishing, 1995.

Royal Conservatory Music Development Program. *Piano Syllabus*. Toronto: Frederick Harris, 2008.