

Lesson 6: Hymn Playing in Polish Mode— Playing Single Lines in Legato Style

A podcast by Don Cook, Brigham Young University

See www.organ.byu.edu

Materials needed: The Six Organ Fingering Techniques; Common Stop Names Listed by Family; Hymns 174 and 5 (simplified); Hymn 259 (*Hymnbook*)

This is The New LDS Organist Lesson 6: Hymn playing in polish mode—Playing single lines in legato style. If possible, it will be best to be seated at the organ console with the organ turned on. You should have the written materials for this lesson at your fingertips. I am Dr. Don Cook from Brigham Young University.

[Learning to play in polish mode]

Lesson six is the first of four lessons on how to play hymns in polish mode. We begin in this lesson with single lines or parts, gradually increasing to two, three, and four parts in the following lessons. You will learn how to use chorus mixtures when registering hymns and organ pieces. We also introduce the six fingering techniques, which will become useful when playing three legato lines between the two hands.

Mastering these four lessons will take some dedicated practice over a period of time. Take all the time you need to polish at least one hymn or arrangement as described in each lesson before proceeding to the next. If the demands of your calling require you to play several hymns and other appropriate music within just a few weeks, you should study lessons ten through twelve at the same time that you work carefully through lessons six through nine. You may also need to play most hymns in shortcut mode, as described thoroughly in lesson five, for the first few weeks.

Working through lessons ten through twelve alongside lessons six through nine will get you through all the course topics quicker—at the same time that you begin laying the foundation of polished organ playing. If you have plenty of time before you will need to play for a service, just work through the lessons one at a time in their normal order.

Remember that “polish mode” is playing each line legato (that is, smoothly), with true independence of line (that is, breaks in one line do not cause breaks in other lines, and sustained tone in one line does not cause a tie between notes that should be repeated in other lines). Begin learning to play in polish mode with very simple forms—mainly soprano only or soprano in octaves. Because there is only one line (the soprano), there is no need for independence of line! Instead, you can focus on listening for two other very important qualities of your music:

1. a perfect legato between the tones, avoiding both detaching or blurring the tones, and
2. well-defined breaks between repeated notes and at phrase breaks.

At first, because they include fingering, play the right-hand part (only) of several three-part hymn arrangements that come with this course. You can play these arrangements exactly as written, without concern for whether or not to tie some of the repeated notes. These decisions have all ready been made, and written into the arrangements.

Listen to two examples played with these two qualities intact: perfect legato between the tones, and well-defined breaks between repeated notes and at phrase breaks.

**174 While of These Emblems, soprano line only, on principals 8' and 4'

Listen to the same example played again, now with occasional problems with legato and with the breaks between repeated notes and at phrase breaks.

**174 While of These Emblems, soprano line only, on principals 8' and 4', with problems as described above.

Now pull principals 8' and 4' on the Great, and find the arrangement of hymn 174, "While of These Emblems We Partake." Stop the recording if you need more time to pull these stops and locate the music.

***pause

Next, get ready to echo each four-measure passage of this hymn after it is played on the recording. Follow this procedure:

1. A four-measure passage will be played—listen carefully and prepare to echo what you hear.
2. At the end of the four measures, as the recording continues in silence, repeat that passage in time, trying to imitate the quality of the breaks between the repeated notes, the legato, and the phrase breaks exactly as you hear them on the recording. If you make a mistake, try to keep going through to the end of your four measures.
3. The next four-measure passage will be played—listen carefully again.
4. Imitate the new passage as you did the first.
5. Continue in this manner until you have played all four phrases, listening carefully and imitating precisely what you hear.

**174 While of These Emblems, soprano line only, on principals 8' and 4', in four-measure sections as described above.

What you have just heard (and hopefully, played) is a model of one soprano line played in polish mode. The line flows in a smooth legato, and the repeated notes are clearly distinguished one from another. Also, phrase breaks occur in a way that helps to clarify the meaning of the text in verse one. Playing this hymn in this way (soprano only) with this stop combination (principals 8 and 4) would provide adequate support to help lead a congregation.

While playing a single line in this manner does not offer the rich harmony that is certainly desirable, it could help a congregation to sing together either in unison or in parts, and the spirit could be present. Please do not hesitate to use a simple form such as this in the early stages of your service. If you want more volume, try playing the soprano part in octaves—right hand and left hand playing the same notes one octave apart. This will offer greater support to those who sing in the tenor and bass ranges. Here is an example:

**174 While of These Emblems, soprano line in octaves, on principals 8' and 4'.

Now listen to another example, hymn 5, "High on the Mountain Top", soprano line only. Follow along on the arrangement that is provided with this course, and see if you can detect some problems. Listen for breaks in the line where it should be legato, for ties or nearly ties between repeated notes where there

should be breaks, for legato at phrase endings where there should be breaks, and for blurring (or overlegato) between notes that should be played legato.

**5 High on the Mountain Top (q=72), soprano line only, on principals 8, 4, and 2, with problems as described above.

Here is the same hymn without the problems, now with the soprano line played in octaves by the right and left hands, and with an important stop added to the 8, 4, and 2-foot principals—the chorus mixture, which will be described in a moment.

**5 High on the Mountain Top, soprano line only, on principals 8, 4, 2, mixture, in octaves.

[Chorus mixture]

The chorus mixture is often called Fourniture, Plein Jeu, or just plain Mixture, followed by a Roman numeral III or above. The Roman numeral indicates the number of pipes that sound when a single key is played. These pipes sound very high-pitched fifths and octaves, designed to “cap off” a principal chorus. The resulting sound is described as brilliant, bright, and full. Chorus mixtures should only be used in combination with the strongest 8’, 4’, and usually 2’ stops in the division. They are most effective when playing jubilant, exultant, or majestic hymns and organ pieces.

Listen to a majestic four-part hymn beginning with principals 8, 4, and 2 on the Great, and in the Pedal with principal 16 and Great to Pedal. Based on my description of a chorus mixture, see if you can hear the point in the example where it is added to “cap off” the principal chorus.

** 259 Hope of Israel (q=114), one verse, mixture added at the chorus.

Any stop name that includes a Roman numeral is a *compound stop*. A compound stop is a single stop that activates more than one rank or set of pipes. The chorus mixture is one very common type of compound stop. You have all ready learned about another type: the celeste stop, of the type that also includes a Roman numeral II. Although both chorus mixtures and this type of celeste stop are compound stops, they should never be confused.

[Manual technique introduction]

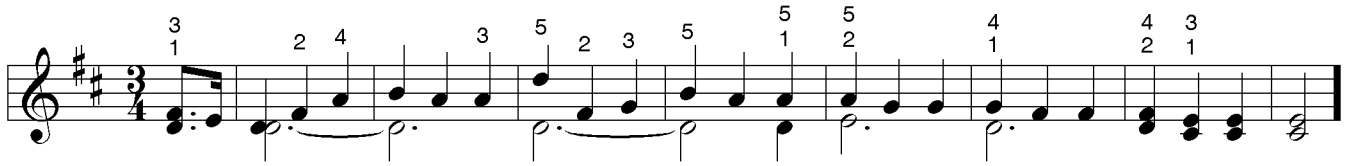
Now find the page titled, “The Six Organ Fingering Techniques” and place it on the music rack of the organ.

As you continue to grow as an organist, your desire to play and hear lines that are beautifully legato and completely independent will increase. Legato playing is made easier at the piano by using the sustaining pedal. Playing the soprano, alto, and tenor parts (three independent lines) at the organ with only two hands—as in the normal arrangement for hymn playing—legato and independence are more difficult to achieve. It is not uncommon to play even thicker textures in sustained style with the two hands.

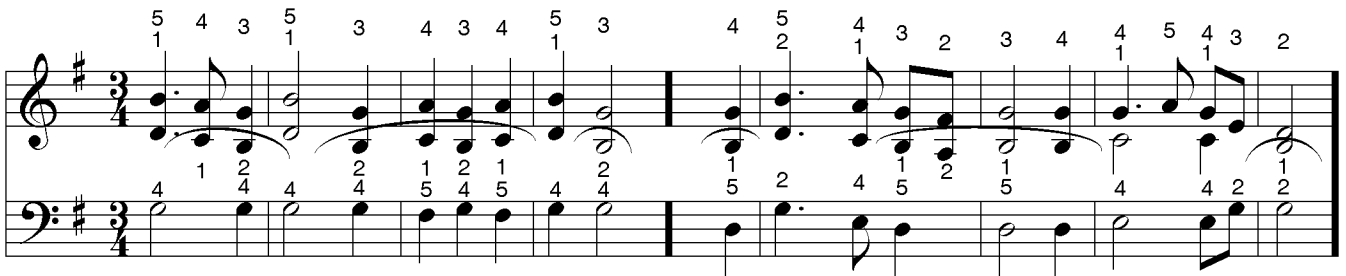
In the absence of the sustaining pedal, the organist uses specialized fingering techniques to connect the tones. There is not enough time in this course to learn all six of the legato organ fingering techniques, but you have all ready experienced some of them as you have played the few examples presented in these lessons. As you practice in polish mode, gradually become familiar—and eventually fluent—with each of the six legato organ fingering techniques.

Please pause the lesson after each technique is described to play the example and become familiar with the technique.

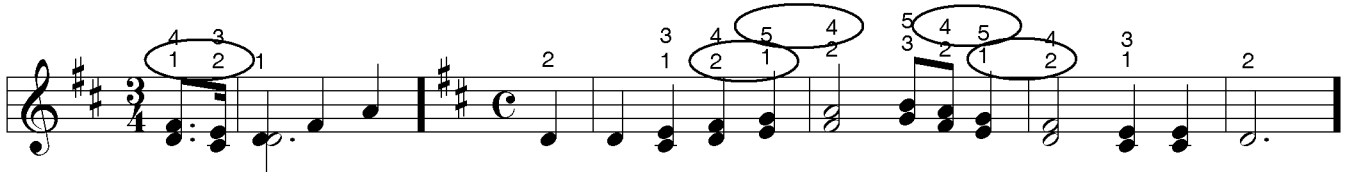
Direct fingering is familiar to pianists: playing fingers that are next to one another on keys that are next to one another. Direct fingering also includes extending the hand position slightly to reach additional keys, or compressing the hand without crossing. Direct fingering is very efficient, and most desirable of all whenever possible.



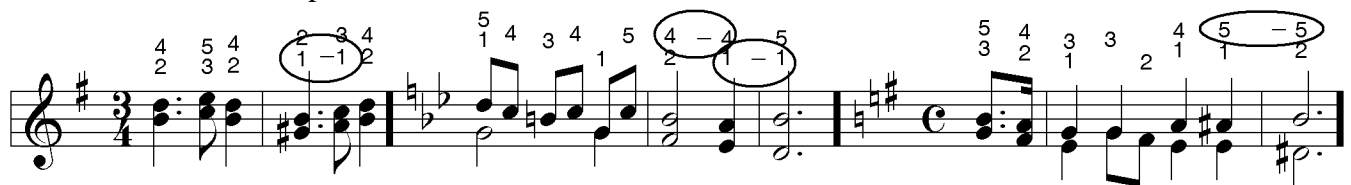
Redistribution of the inner part is actually more of a note-reading technique. It is most simple to describe in the context of hymn playing. The right hand usually plays both the soprano and the alto parts. Because the left hand usually plays only the tenor, it can occasionally help out the right hand by reaching up to play one or more alto notes. The alto part is “redistributed” into the left hand. Redistribution is as efficient as direct fingering, but is a little more challenging to get accustomed to since the left hand plays notes in the treble staff, and because there is a tendency to overlap notes when the alto line switches between left and right hands.



Finger crossing is familiar to pianists in scale playing, where the thumb crosses under fingers 3 and 4, and fingers 3 and 4 cross over the thumb. Organists use finger crossing much more extensively: fingers 2 and 3 will cross, as will fingers 3 and 4, and especially fingers 4 and 5. Even non-adjacent fingers will cross—1 and 5, for example. Crossing is most efficient when the fingers are flexible and well curved.

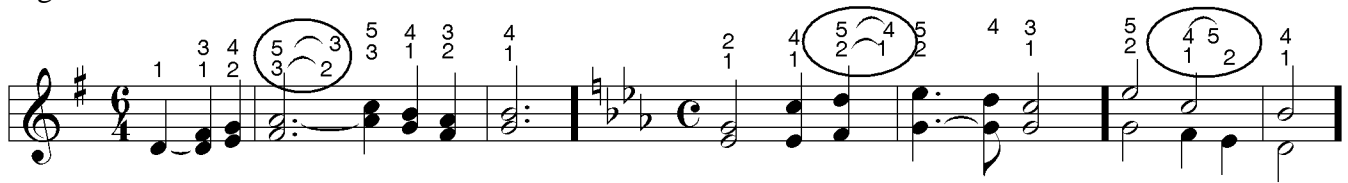


Finger glissando is simply the sliding from a sharp to a natural key by any one of the five fingers to achieve a legato connection. This simple, efficient technique is executed by snapping the finger quickly from the end of the sharp onto the natural.

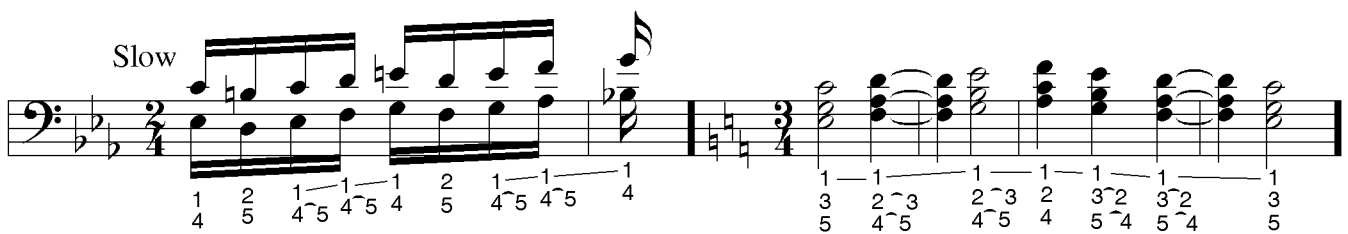


Finger substitution is the replacement of one finger by another while holding the key down in order to free the first finger. Pianists often use substitution instinctively when listening for a good legato.

However, it requires more motions and time to execute than most of the other techniques. Organists who use many substitutions should explore the possibility replacing some of them with direct fingering, crossing, or finger glissando. Substitutions are indicated by a short curved line between substituting finger numbers.



Thumb glissando is the most unique of the techniques, in which the tip and the base of the thumb are used as though they were two different fingers to achieve legato connections. It is reasonably efficient when executed well, and is particularly useful when playing the left-hand part of many organ pieces and hymn preludes with passages that move in parallel motion like the following examples. Thumb glissando is indicated by a straight line between thumb fingerings.



In summary, this has been The New LDS Organist Lesson 6: Hymn Playing in Polish Mode—Playing Single Lines in Legato Style. Make sure that you understand each of these topics, and review them if needed. You were reminded that this and the next three lessons are intended for those wanting to learn how to prepare hymns and pieces in polish mode. You learned how to play single lines in polish mode; that is, perfect legato between the tones, and well-defined breaks between repeated notes and at phrase breaks. The chorus mixture was described as a compound stop that adds brightness to the principal chorus. Finally, you were introduced to each of the six legato fingering techniques, and encouraged to explore each of them as a means of achieving legato when the two hands are required to play three or more parts.

Follow up with this lesson by learning to play several single-line parts in polish mode from hymn arrangements and directly from the hymnbook. Listen intently for perfect legato between the tones, and well-defined breaks between repeated notes and at phrase breaks. If possible, play some of them for a trained organist or other musician who can confirm that your single lines have the perfect legato and well-defined breaks as described. Also, become familiar with each of the six legato fingering techniques, playing through each example several times with the given fingering.

Lesson 7 is next, Hymn Playing in Polish Mode—Playing Two Independent Lines in Legato Style. You will learn how to play with true independence of line, and various ways to play hymns in two parts. The versatile chorus reeds will also be introduced. If possible, it will be best to be seated at the organ console again for Lesson 7, and you should have the written materials for that lesson at your fingertips.

Happy practicing!

The Six Legato Organ Fingering Techniques

Direct Fingering

Redistribution of the Inner Part

Finger Crossing (*circles added for emphasis only*)

Finger Glissando

Finger Substitution

Thumb Glissando

Common Stop Names Listed by Pipe Category and Family of Organ Tone

Most every speaking stop found on organs in LDS meetinghouses is listed under its pipe category (flue or reed) and family of organ tone.

<i>FLUE pipe category</i>			<i>REED pipe category</i>
<p>Flute family</p> <p>Blockflöte Bourdon (– doux, Contre –) Chimney flute Clarabella Copula Cor de nuit Doppelflöte Fife Flautino Flauto dolce Flûte (– à bec, – à fuseau, – bouchée, – celeste, – harmonique, – ouverte) Gedackt (Gedeckt) (– flûte) Harmonic flute Hohlflöte Holzgedackt Koppelflöte Larigot Lieblich gedeckt Melodia <u>Nachthorn</u> Nazard (Nasard, Nasat) <u>Octavin</u> Open flute Orchestral flute Piccolo Pommer Quintatön (Quintadena) Quintflöte Rohrflöte Siffelöte Spillpfeife Stopped diapason Subbass Tibia Tierce (Terz) Traverse flute <u>Waldflöte</u> Zauberflöte</p>	<p>Principal family</p> <p>Choral bass Diapason Double diapason Doublette <u>Dulciana</u> Fifteenth Montre Octave (Oktav) Open diapason Prestant Principal (Prinzipal) Quint(e) Spitz prinzipal Super octave Twelfth</p> <p>Chorus mixtures: (Plein jeu, Mixture, Furniture, Cymbal, Scharf, Acuta)</p>	<p>String family</p> <p>Aeoline Cello Echo gamba Fugara Gamba Salicet Salicional Unda maris Viola Viola da gamba Viola celeste Viola pomposa Violone (Contre violone) Voix celeste</p>	<p>Reed family</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Chorus reeds</i></p> <p>Basson (Contre –) Bombarde Clairon (Clarion) <u>Dulzian</u> Fagotto (Fagott) [bassoon] (pronounced “fuh-GOT”) French trumpet Hautbois [oboe] Oboe Posaune [trombone] Rankett Tromba Trompette (Trompete) Trumpet <u>Waldhorn</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Solo reeds</i></p> <p>Clarinet Cromorne English horn (Cor Anglais) Festival trumpet French horn Horn Krummhorn Regal Rohrkrummhorn Rohr schalmei Schalmei Tuba (– mirabilis)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Other reeds</i></p> <p>Vox humana (Voix humaine)</p>
<p>Solo mixtures--Cornet II or III, Sesquialtera II (These are usually flutes unless they are found on the Great, in which case they are usually Principals)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Hybrid stops (share characteristics of more than one family)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Erzähler Geigen (– diapason, – principal) Gemshorn, Gemshorn celeste <u>Spitzflöte</u></p>			<p><i>Some stop names that can easily be identified with the wrong family are <u>underlined</u>.</i></p>

While of These Emblems We Partake 174

Simplified for organ in three parts

Fervently ♩=72-88

Arranged by Don Cook

1. While of these em - blems we par - take In Je - sus'
 2. For us the blood of Christ was shed; For us on
 3. The law was bro - ken; Je - sus died That jus - tice
 4. But rise tri - um - phant from the tomb, And in e -

name and for his sake, Let us re - mem - ber and be
 Cal - vary's cross he bled, And thus dis - pelled the aw - ful
 might be sat - is - fied, That man might not re - main a
 ter - nal spen - dor bloom, Freed from the pow'r of death and

sure Our hearts and hands are clean and pure.
 gloom That else were this cre - a - tion's doom.
 slave Of death, of hell, or of the grave.
 pain, ' With Christ, the Lord, to rule and reign.

High on the Mountain Top

5

Simplified for organ in three parts

Resolutely $\text{♩} = 56-72$

Arranged by Don Cook

1. High on the moun-tain top A ban-ner is un-furled. Ye na-tions, now look
2. For God re-mem-bers still His prom-ise made of old That he on Zi-on's
3. His houseshall there be reared, His glo-ry to dis-play, And peo-ple shall be
4. For there we shall be taught The law that will go forth, With truth and wis-dom

up; It waves to all the world. In Des-er-et's sweet,
hill Truth's stan-dard would un-fold! Her light should there at-
heard In dis-tant lands to say: We'll now go up and
fraught, To go-vern all the earth. For-ev-er there his

peace-ful land, On Zi-on's mount be-hold it stand!
tract the gaze Of all the world in lat-ter days.
serve the Lord, O-bey his truth and learn his word.
ways we'll tread, And save our-selves with all our dead.

Hope of Israel

259

Energetically ♩ = 100–120



1. Hope of Is - rael, Zi - on's ar - my, Chil - dren of the prom - ised day,
 2. See the foe in count - less num - bers, Mar - shaled in the ranks of sin.
 3. Strike for Zi - on, down with er - ror; Flash the sword a - bove the foe!
 4. Soon the bat - tle will be o - ver; Ev - 'ry foe of truth be down.



See, the Chief - tain sig - nals on - ward, And the bat - tle's in ar - ray!
 Hope of Is - rael, on to bat - tle; Now the vic - t'ry we must win!
 Ev - 'ry stroke dis - arms a foe - man; Ev - 'ry step we con - q'ring go.
 On - ward, on - ward, youth of Zi - on; Thy re - ward the vic - tor's crown.



Hope of Is - rael, rise in might With the sword of truth and right;



Sound the war - cry, "Watch and pray!" Van - quish ev - 'ry foe to - day.

