Study Guide

for

Piano 2

Cheryl Ziedrich, Instructor

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Reading Music

Notation, the written language representing musical sounds, is one of the great accomplishments of music history. Notation enables players and singers to recreate music they have never heard before, and makes it possible to pass on elements of culture through succeeding generations. The interpretation of visual symbols into meaningful sounds requires efficient physical responses to these clues and some knowledge of historical performance practices.

Obstacles to fluent music reading include feelings of insecurity, and a mistaken desire for perfection that results in backtracking to correct errors. Musicians can overcome these obstacles with *visual, tactile, auditory* and *mental* strategies.

Begin music reading by studying the score *visually.* Collect as much information as possible before playing or singing a note. Look for patterns in rhythm, melody and harmony. Look for challenges and determine how to address them.

Keyboard players can do a short silent exercise to increase the ability to read multiple staves. Use a finger to trace a series of W's from the top of the treble staff to the bottom of the bass staff, moving steadily from left to right across the page. Concentrate on expanding your vision to recognize more symbols.

Singers should study the text before attempting to sing words and melody together. The head must be up and the face forward to project the voice, so hold the page chest-high.

To build confidence in the *tactile* realm, musicians work for fluency in scales, chords, arpeggios and progressions, the basic elements from which music is constructed. Establish a steady pulse and practice rhythms by tapping and clapping. Keyboard players must navigate by *feeling* the keys while eyes are focused on the page; looking down at the hands interrupts the flow of information when reading music, so practice exercises with eyes closed.

Audiation is the skill to hear and comprehend music in the mind, imagining what music on the page sounds like. A well-trained ear can confirm that the sound heard matches the symbols on the page, and can anticipate the musical logic of a piece, sensing what comes next. Exercise your auditory skills by closely following the written score while listening to others perform.

Positive *mental* attitudes will follow as reading skills are strengthened, as technique becomes more secure, and as listening skills are developed. But the greatest joy is making music with other people. Look for a friendly duet partner or ensemble, let go of the pursuit of perfection, and enjoy trying new music *just for fun!* This will help build the confidence that leads to fluid performance.

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Reminders for Daily Practice

Warm-up with exercises:

Scales, arpeggios, chord progressions in various keys

Review the subjects being studied:

Key signatures, notational symbols, glossary terms, counting rhythms

For each solo or ensemble piece assigned:

Think about the style or character.

Title
Composer, nationality, style period
Tempo, range of dynamics
Rhythm, articulation

Notice the key and form.

Major or minor
Key changes
Repeats, double bars, codas
Dynamics

Work systematically.

Practice rhythms before playing a note
Work hands separately for accuracy in rhythm, pitch, articulation and fingering, at a slow steady tempo
Put hands together by working slowly only a few measures at a time, with many repetitions
Isolate trouble spots, working them until secure
Increase the tempo as necessary to capture the mood

Prepare to perform.

Memorize the starting position
Prepare the pedal if used
Imagine the perfect sound
Silently count in tempo to begin
Shift your practice strategy to keep going whatever happens

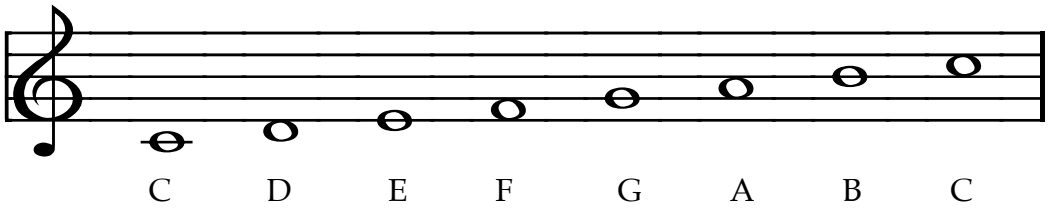
Always listen as you play, and monitor your body for relaxation.

About Major Scales

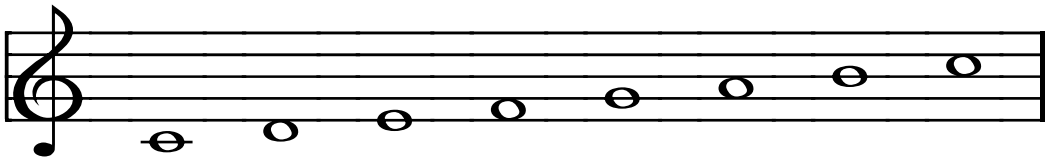
Many kinds of scales are used in the world's music, each with a distinct pattern of intervals. The first scale piano students study is the major scale.

The major scale is a series of eight pitches, using each letter of the music alphabet in order, beginning and ending on the same letter name.

C Major Scale



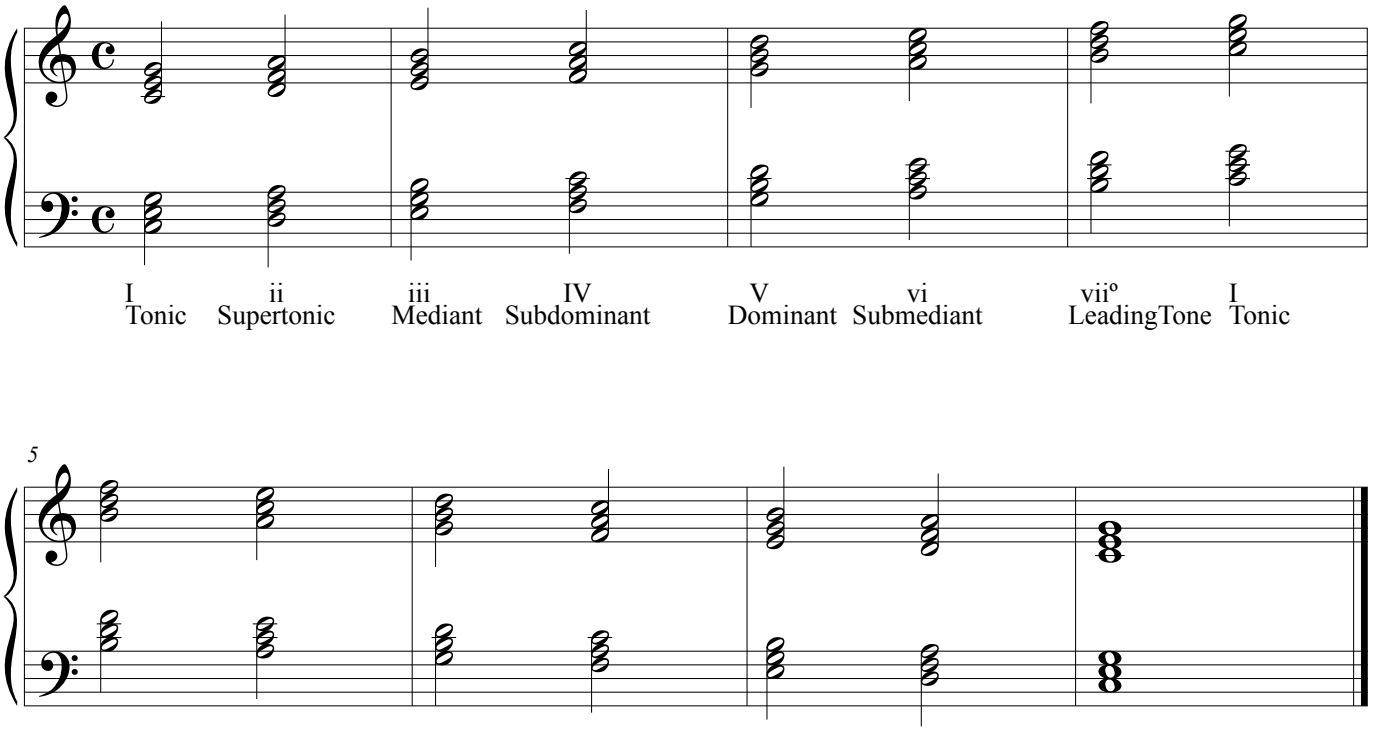
Most of the steps from pitch to pitch are whole steps, but a major scale always contains two half steps. The half steps always occur between the third and fourth degrees, and the seventh and eighth degrees.



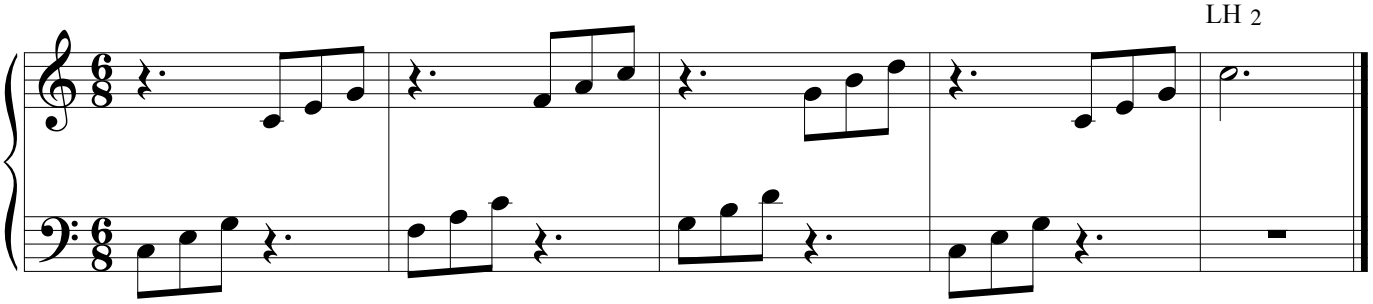
The C Major Scale displays half steps between E and F, and between B and C.

The pattern of whole steps and half steps of the major scale can be reproduced on any pitch. As all seven letters of the music alphabet are always used in order, major scales use no more than seven sharps or seven flats.

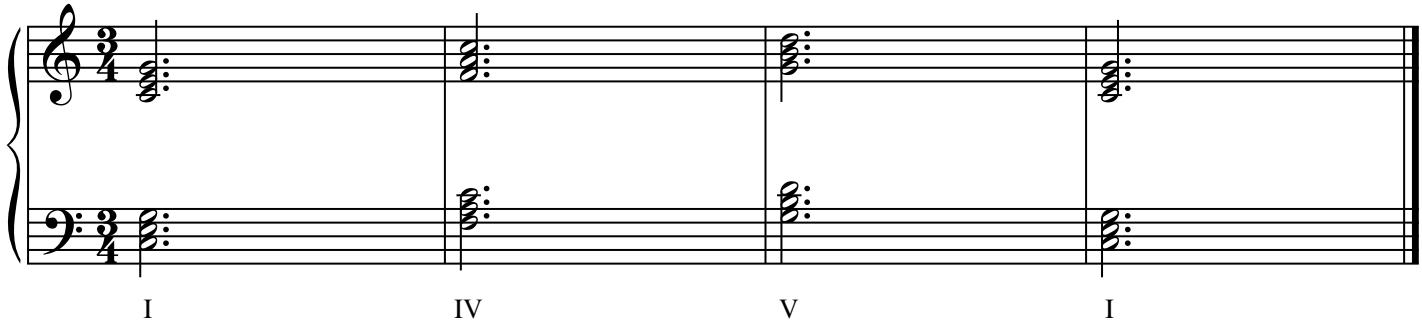
Diatonic Triads

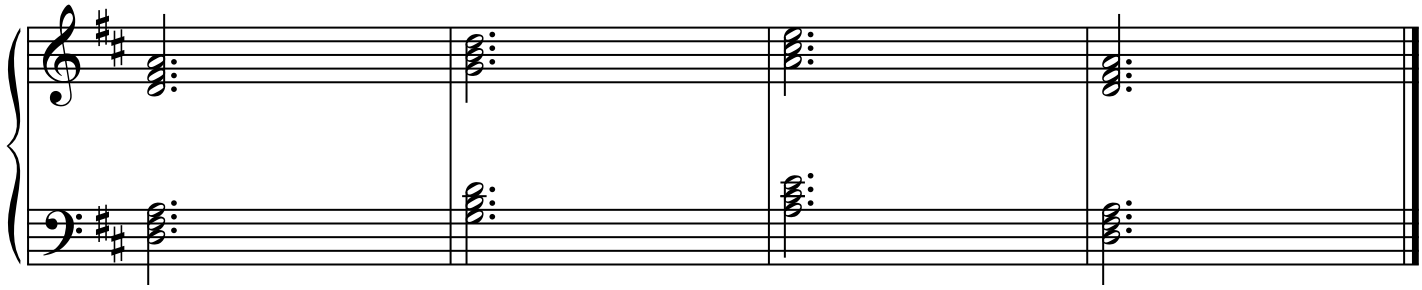


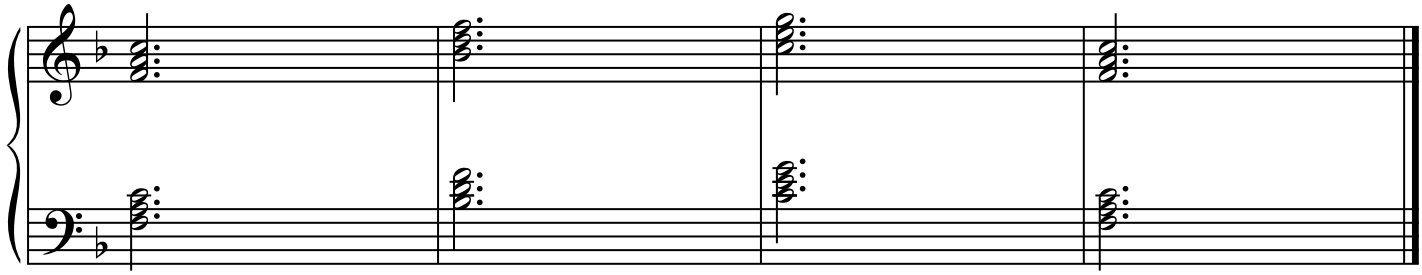
Primary Triads

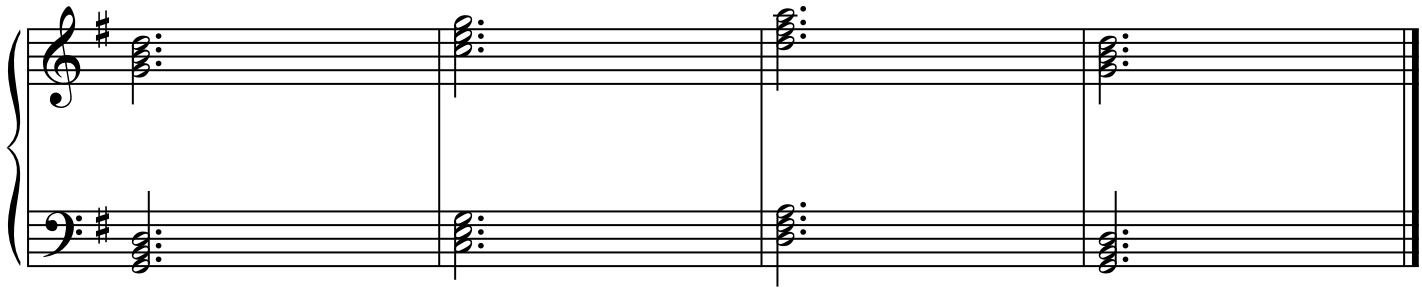


Primary Triads



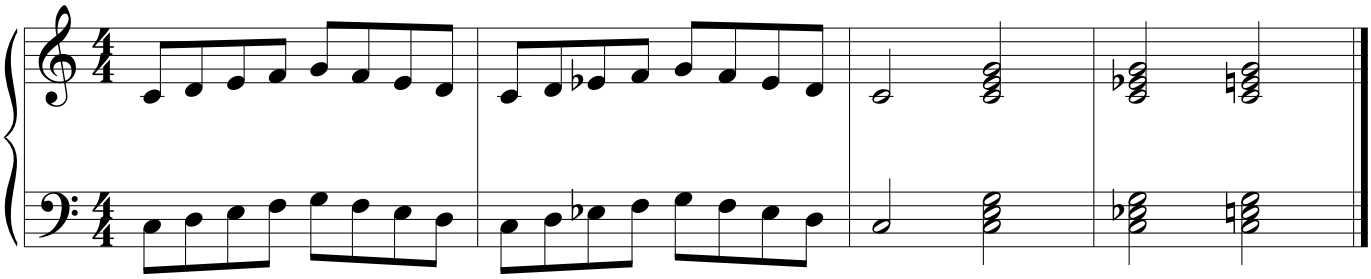




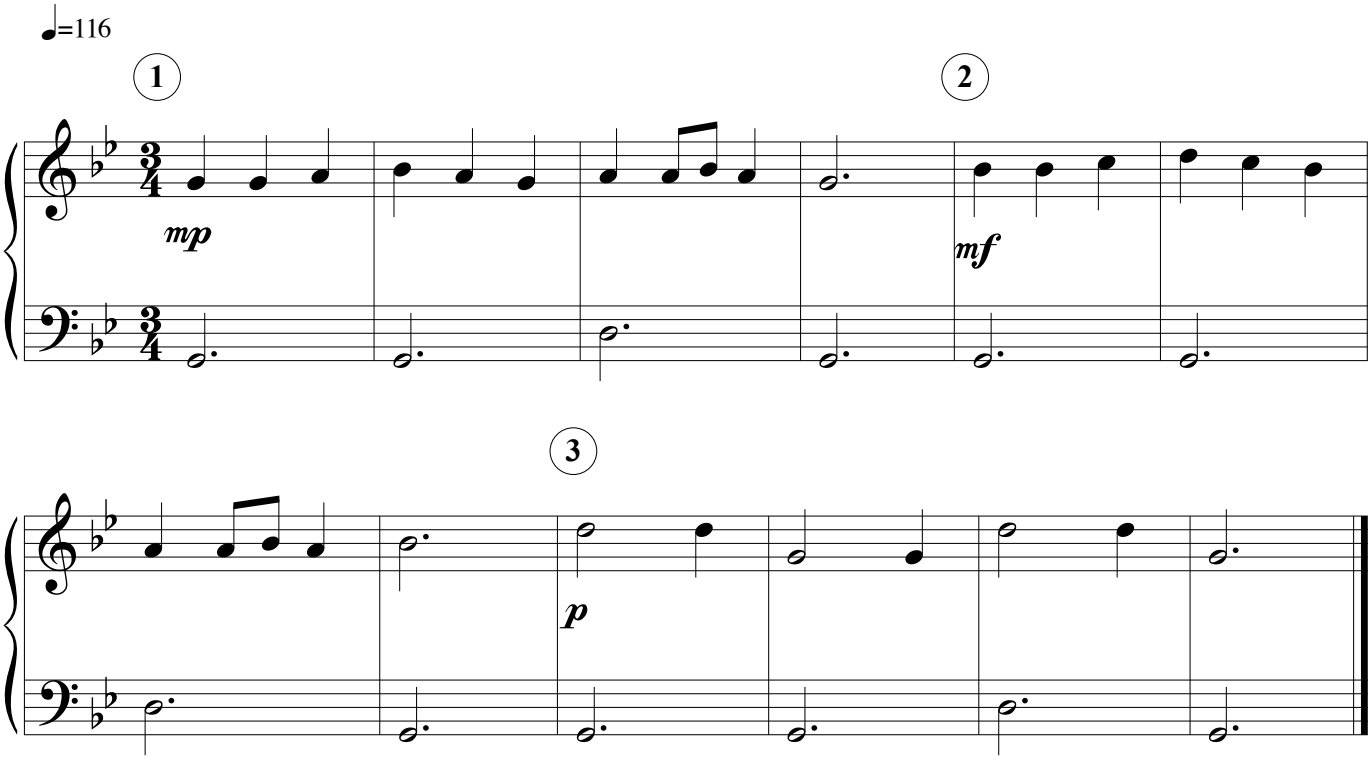


Major and Minor Pentascales and Triads

Play this exercise in all keys.



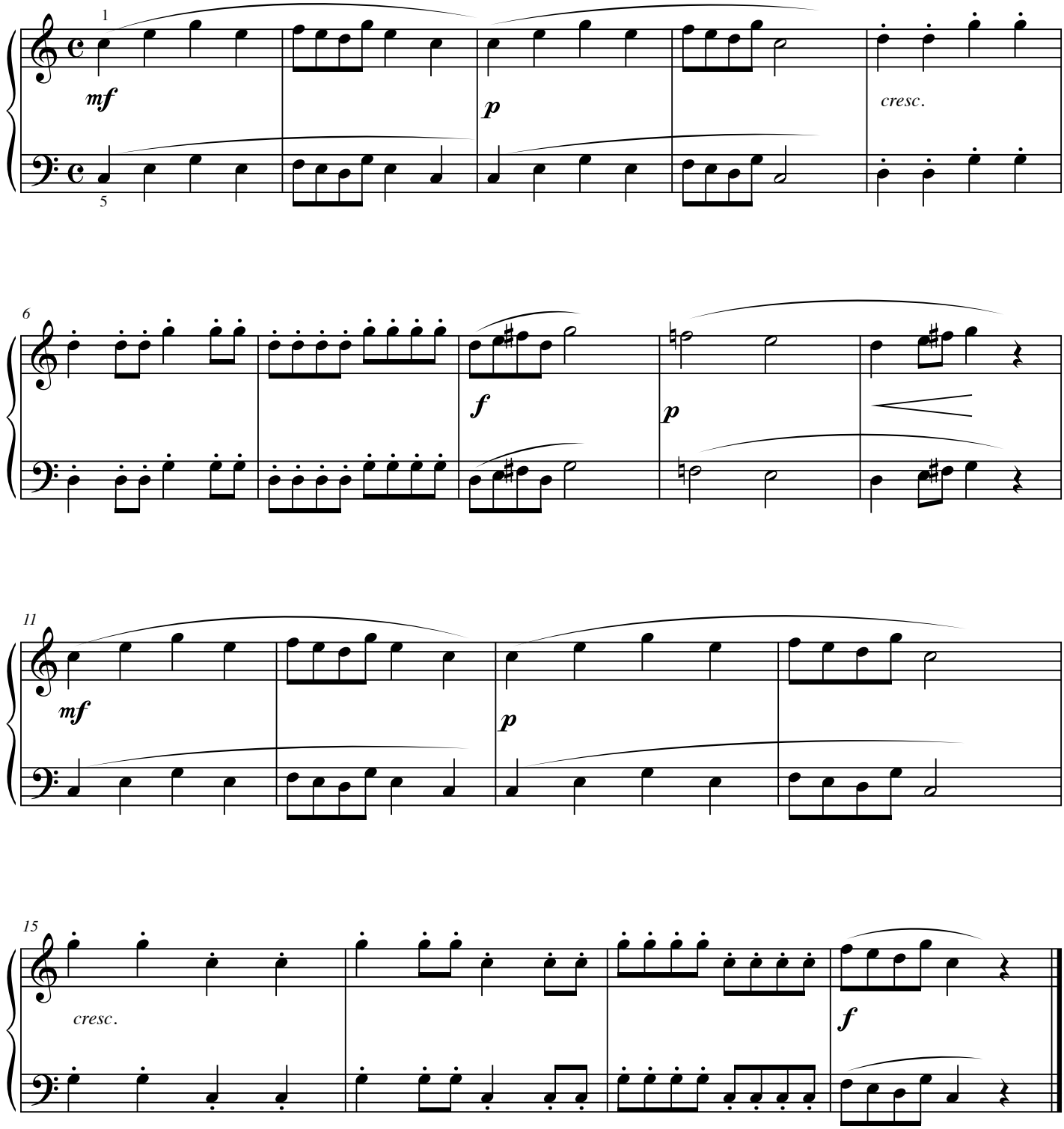
Ensemble Piece



Sonatina in C

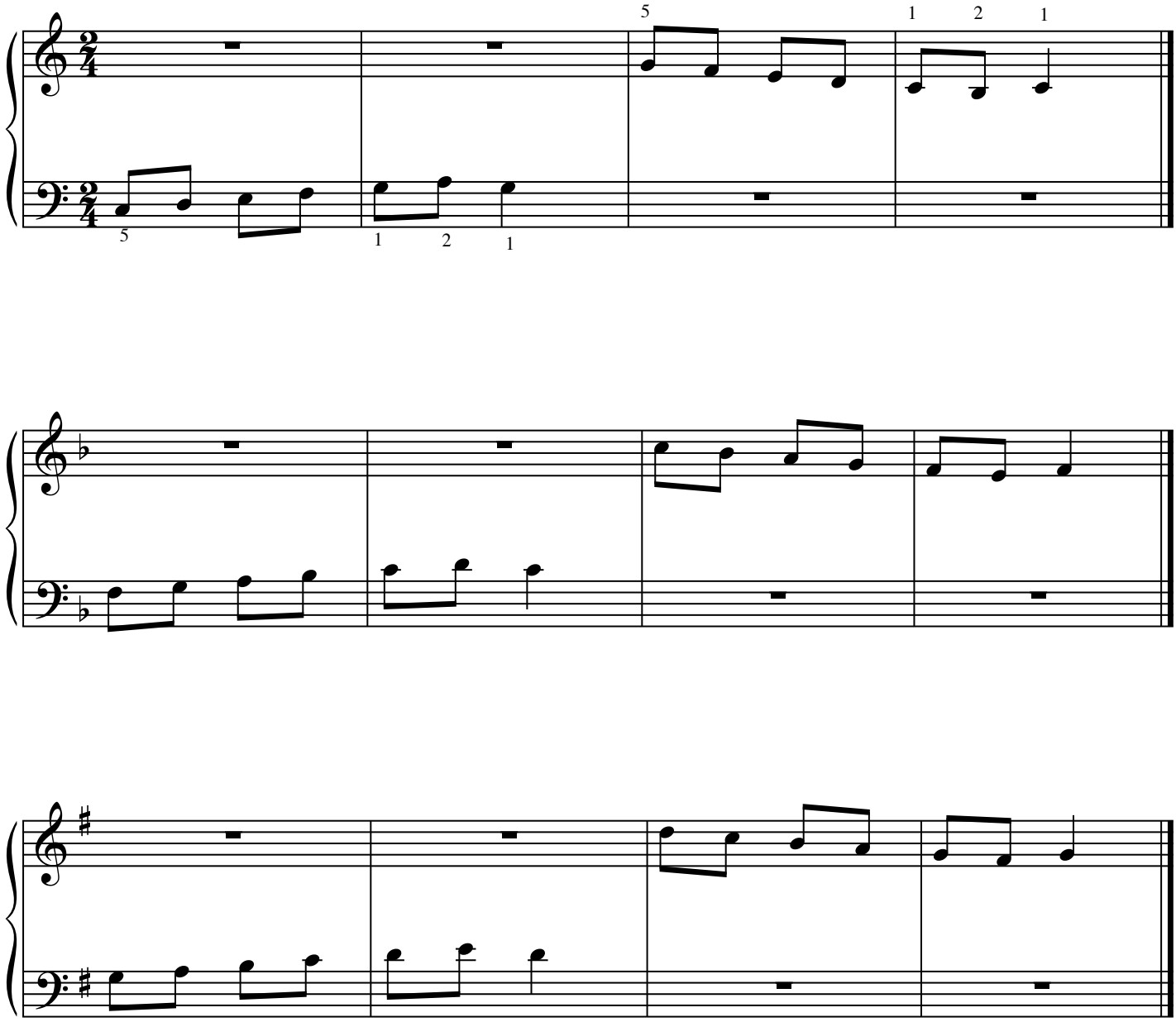
Oskar Bolck
(1839-1888)

Allegretto

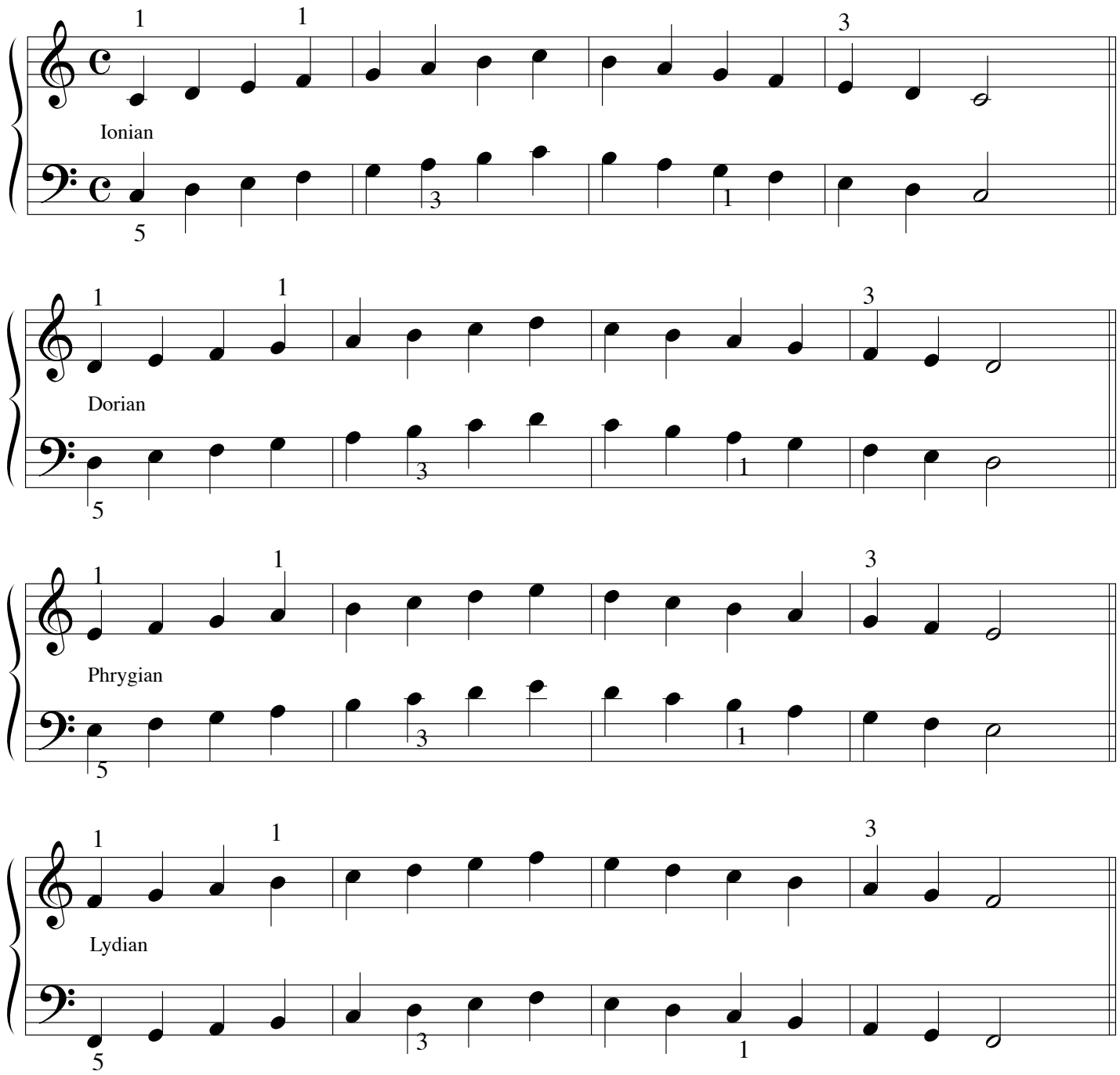


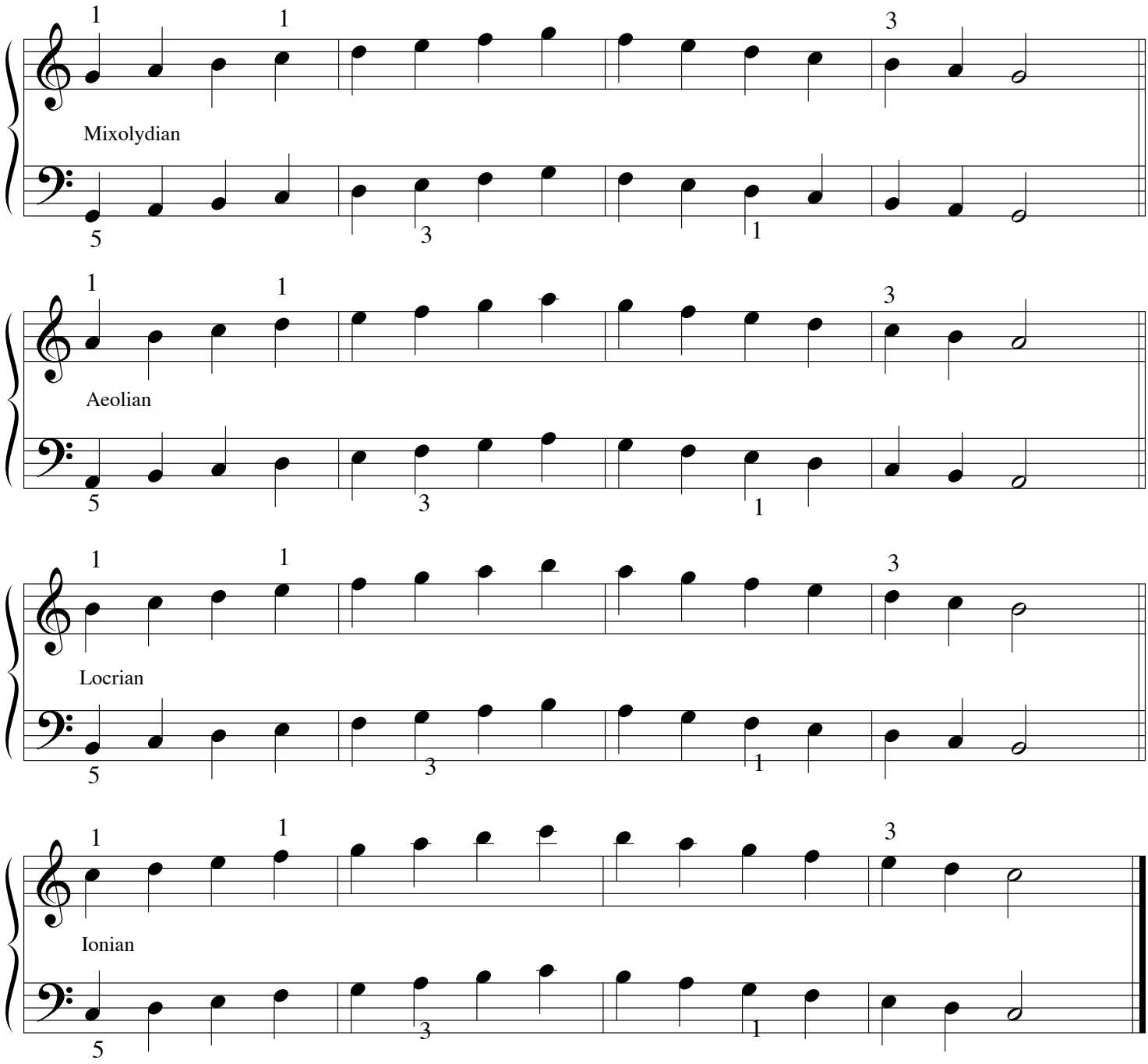
Degrees 6 and 7

Left Hand reaches above the pentascale to Degree 6, and Right Hand reaches below to Degree 7.
Bring the hand over the thumb and back again by rolling on the thumb nail.



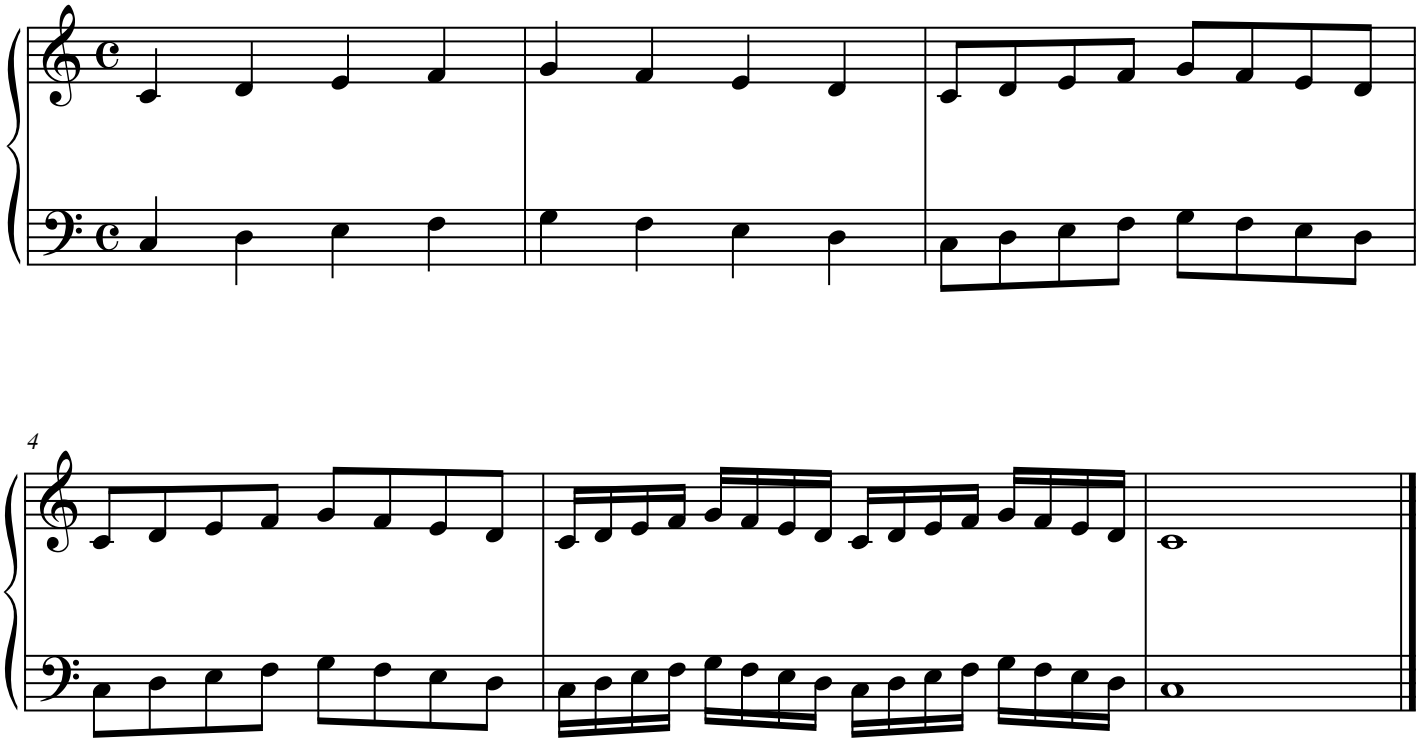
Modes


1
1
3
Ionian
5
3
1
1
1
3
Dorian
5
3
1
1
1
3
Phrygian
5
3
1
1
1
3
Lydian
5
3
1


1
1
3
Mixolydian
5
3
1
1
1
3
Aeolian
5
3
1
1
1
3
Locrian
5
3
1
1
1
3
Ionian
5
3
1

Accelerando

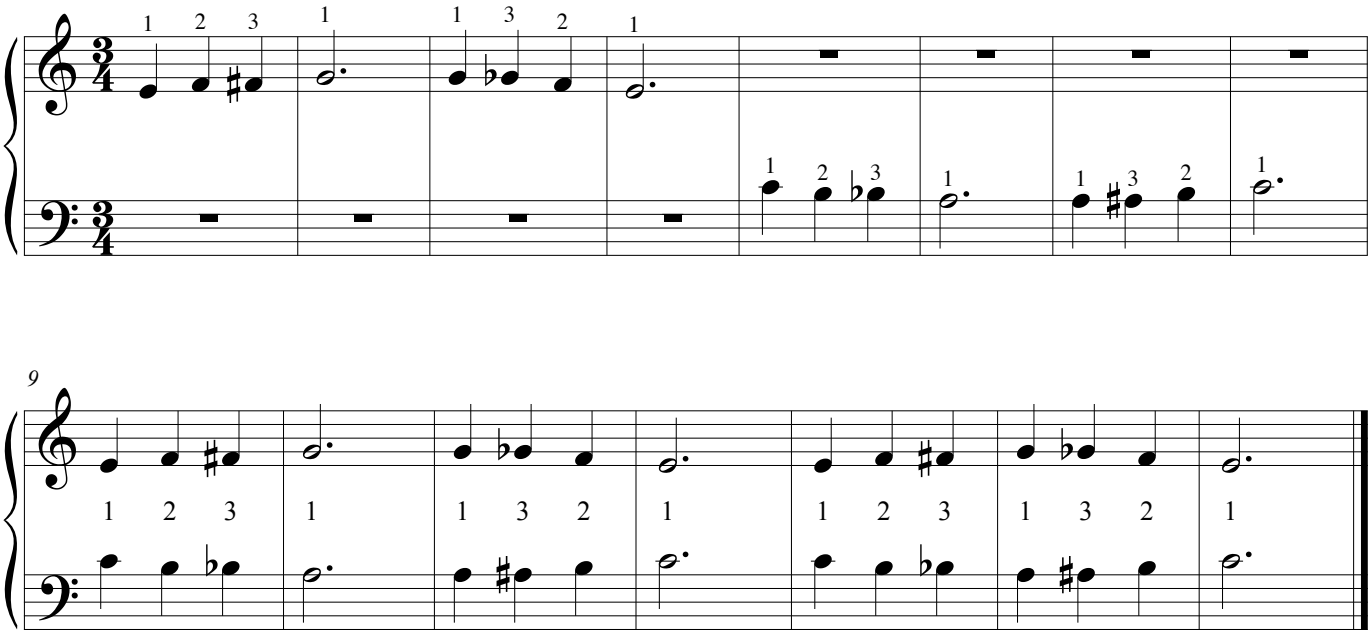
To keep the tempo steady, think the 16th notes before playing: "One-ee-and-a, two-ee-and-a..."



Chromatic Exercises

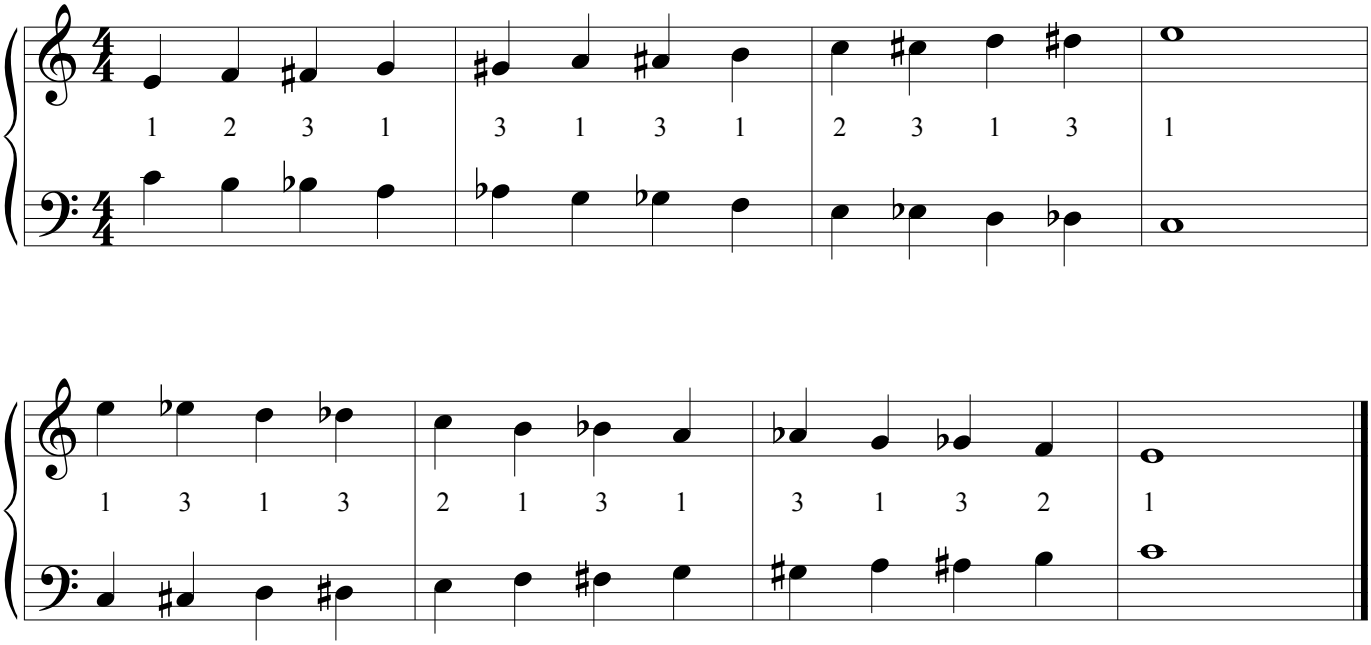
No. 1

In this contrary motion exercise, the same fingering pattern is used in each hand.



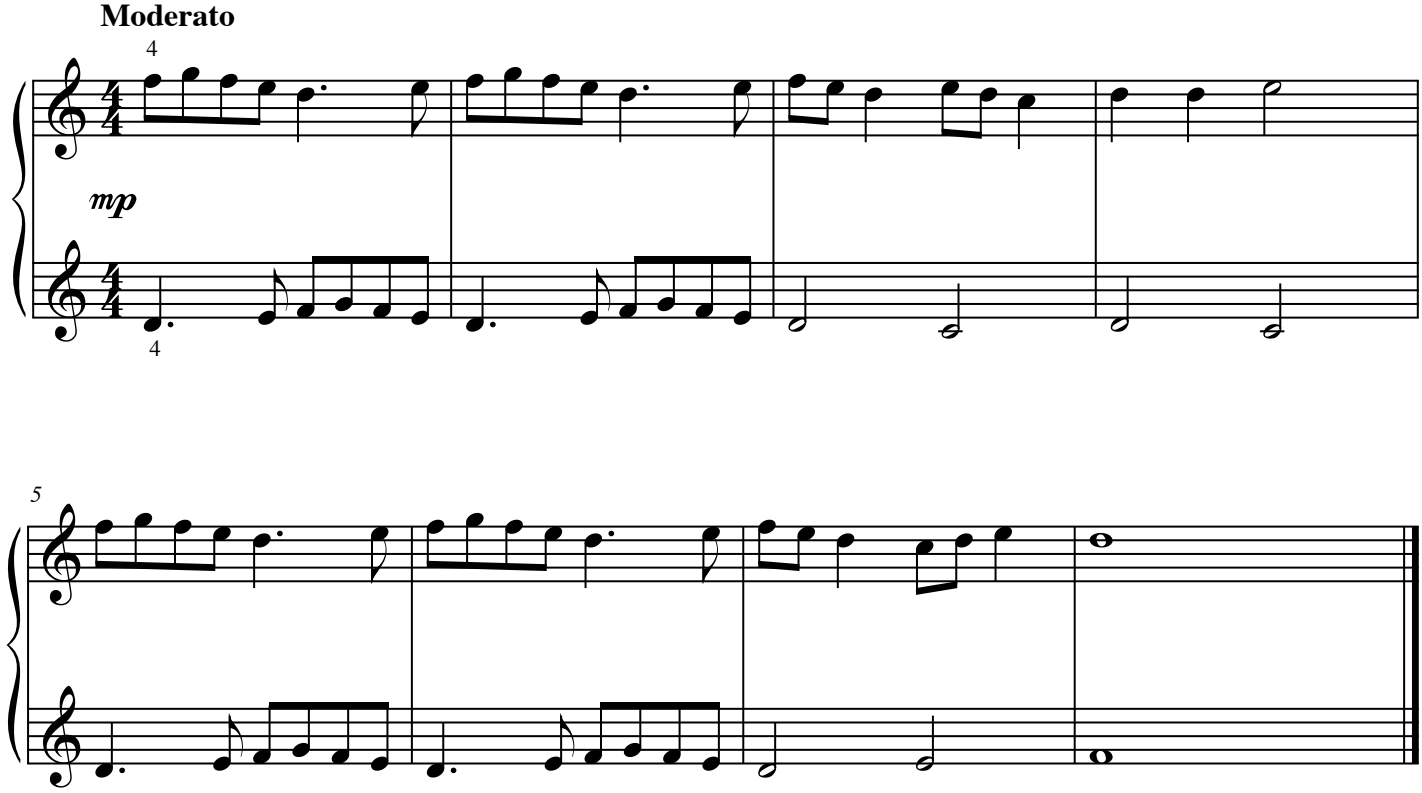
No. 2

Say the finger numbers aloud as you play hands separately, then together.



D minor Etude

C. Ziedrich



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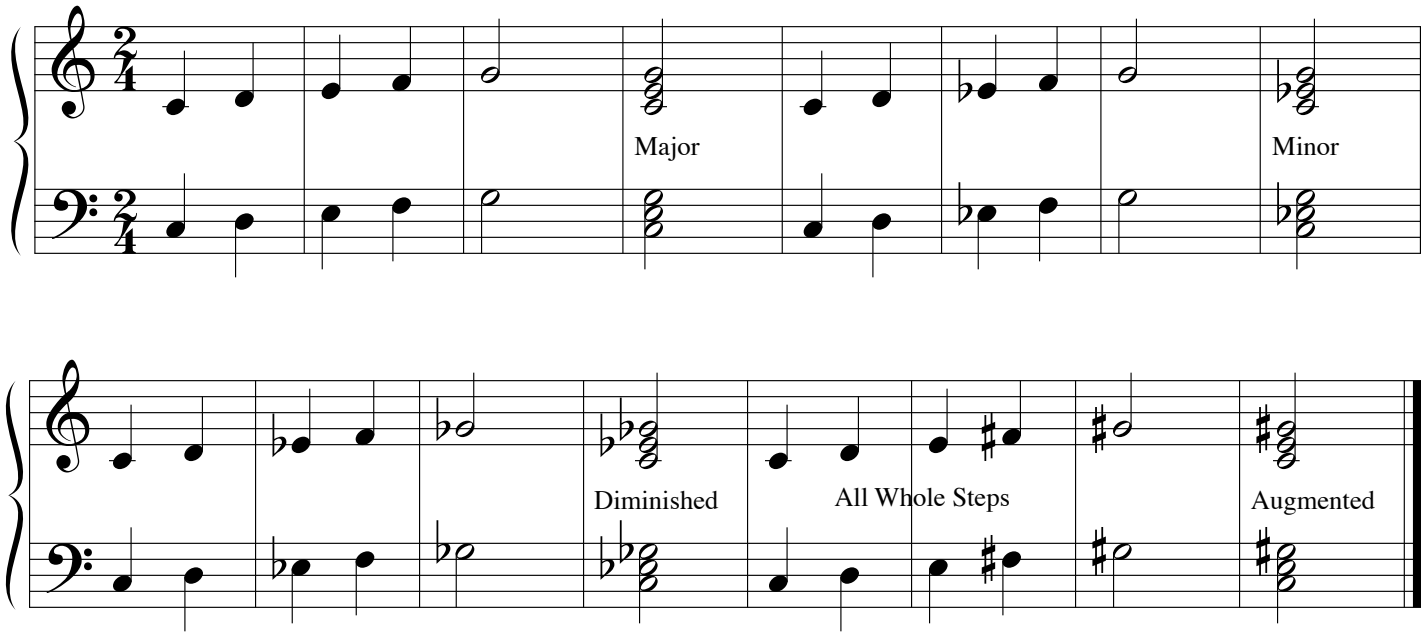
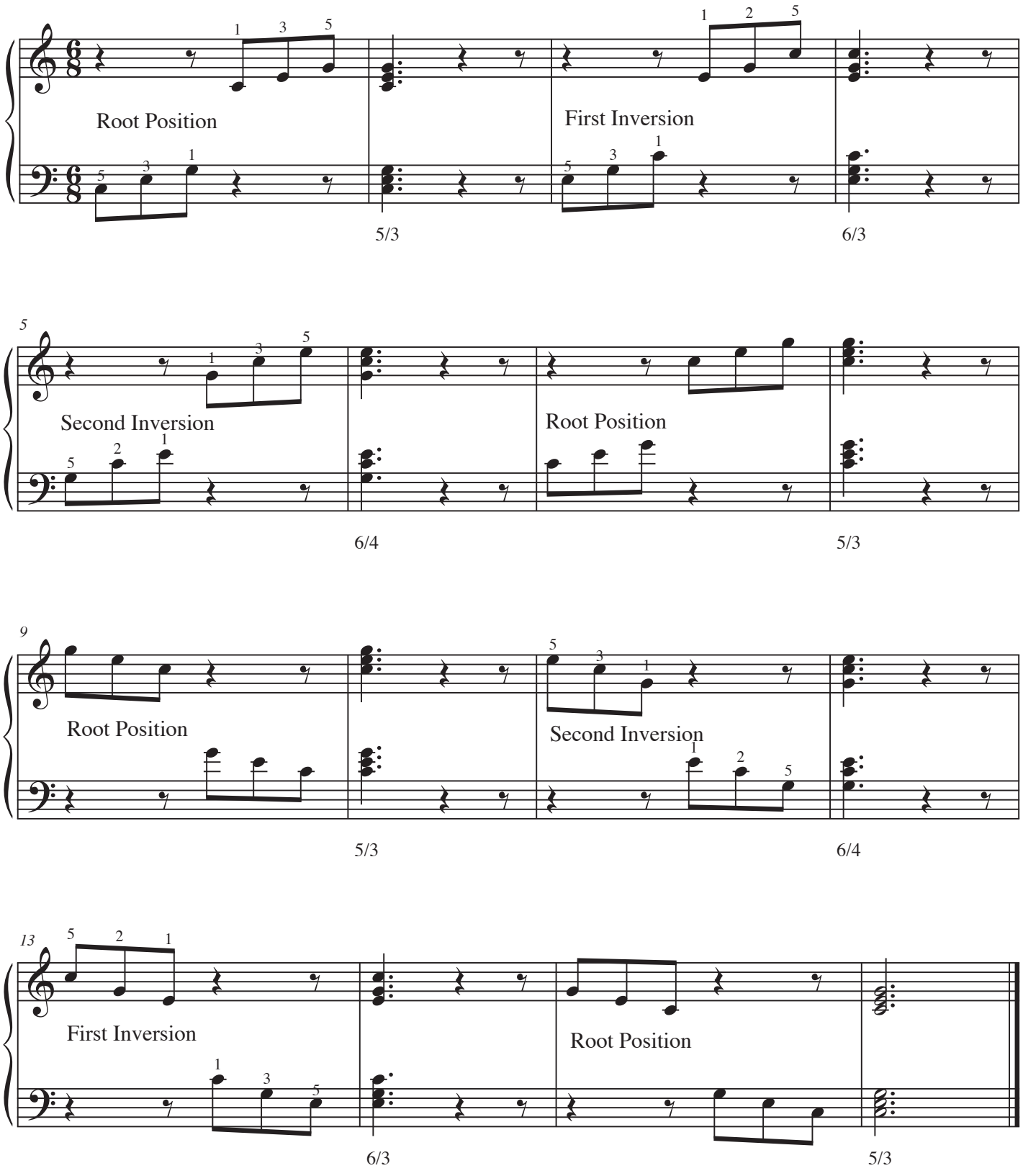
Major, minor, diminished, and Augmented Triads

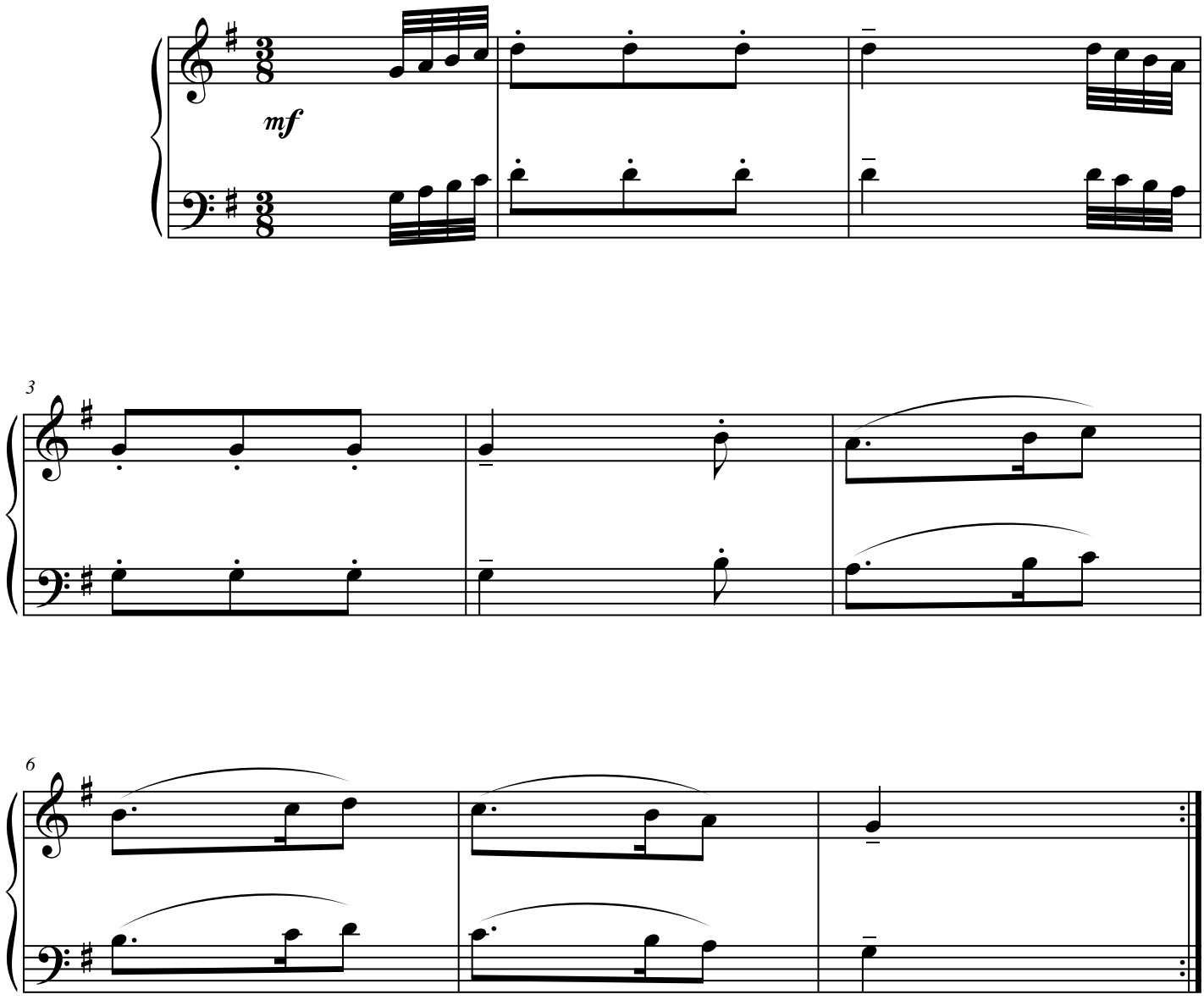


Inversions Up and Down

Inversions are determined by which chord tone is lowest.
Arabic numbers describe the intervals above the lowest note.



Parallel Motion



The time signature indicates 3 eighth notes per measure.
As always, a quarter note lasts as long as 2 eighth notes.
Four 32nd notes fill the time of an eighth note and can be counted here "three-ee-and-a."

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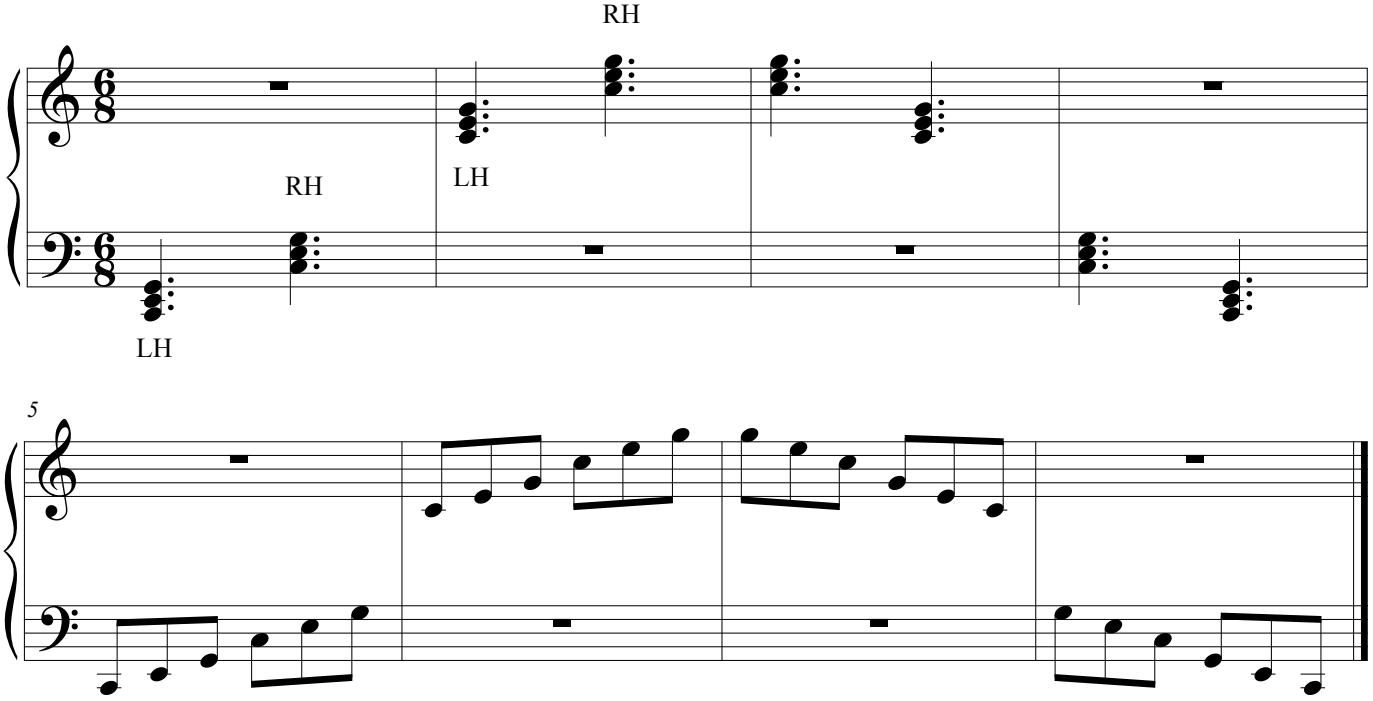
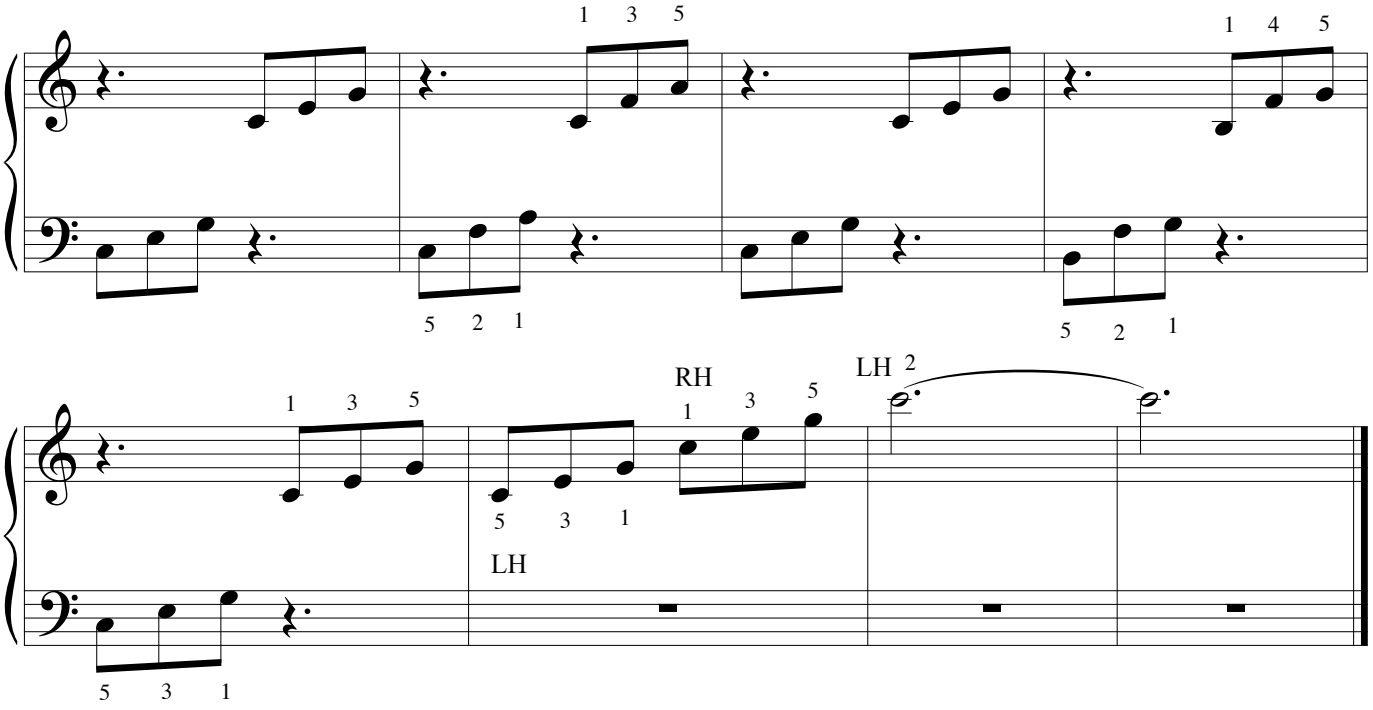
Chord Studies

No. 7

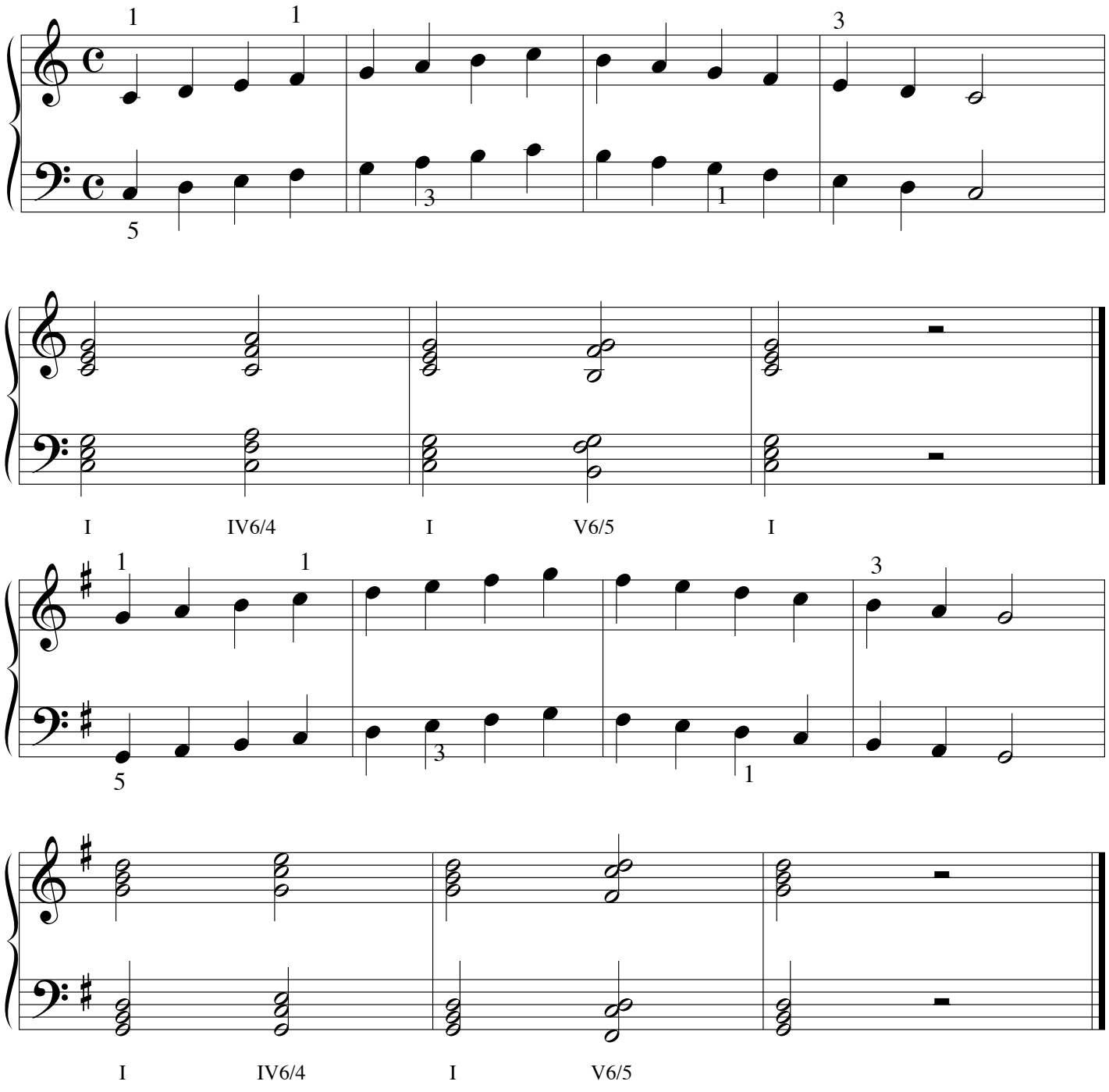


No. 8



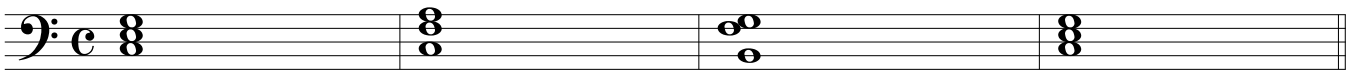
C and G Major Scales

and Primary Chords

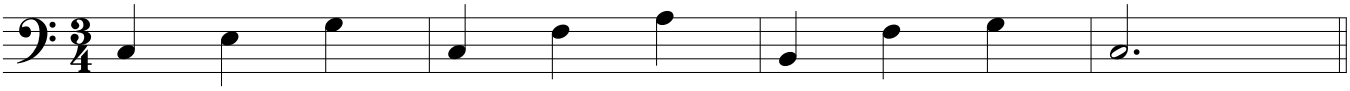


Elementary Accompaniment Patterns

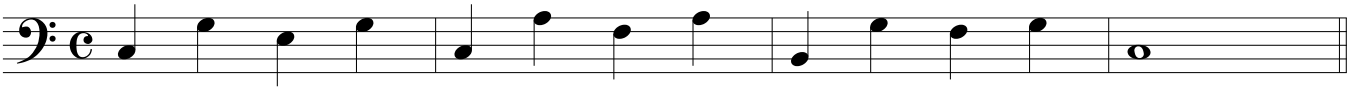
Block Chords



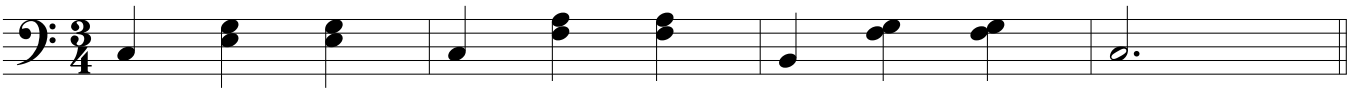
Broken Chords



Alberti Bass

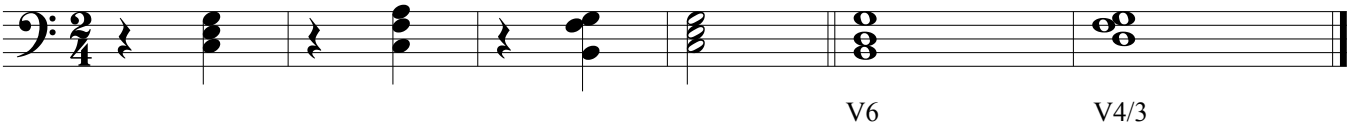


Waltz Bass



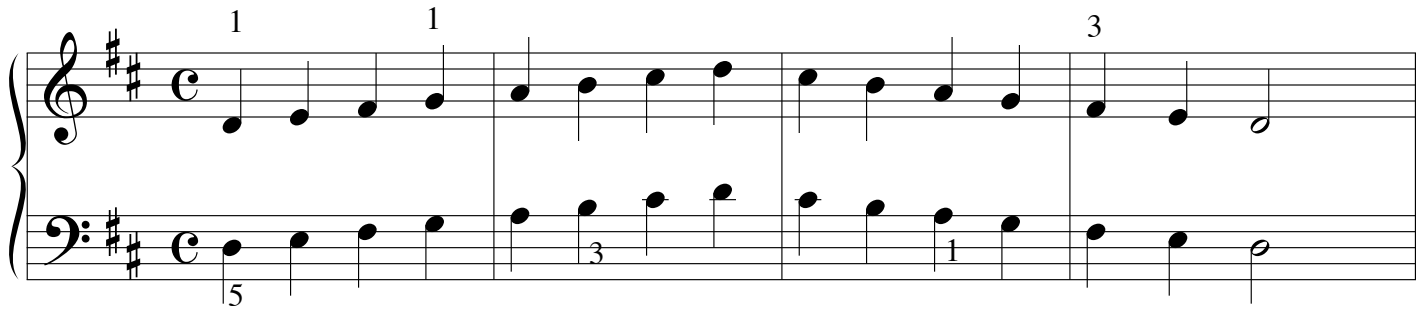
Off-beat Chords

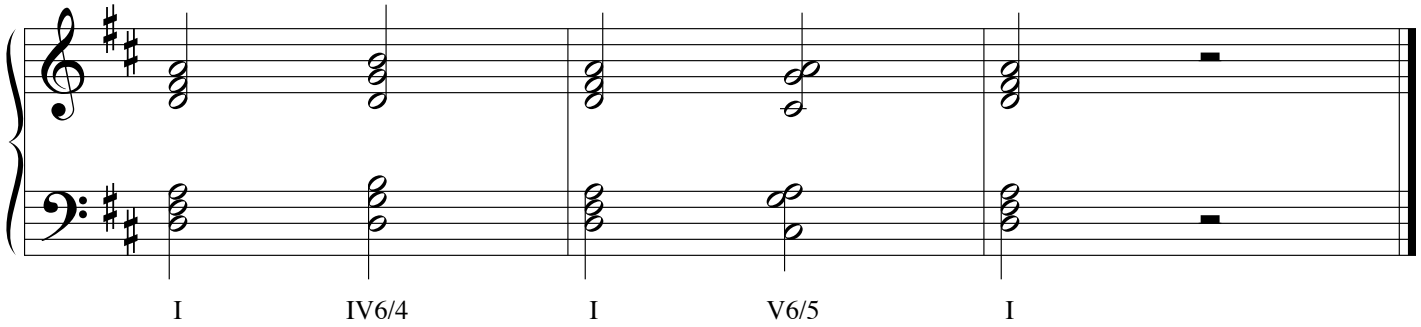
Alternate Forms of the Dominant Chord

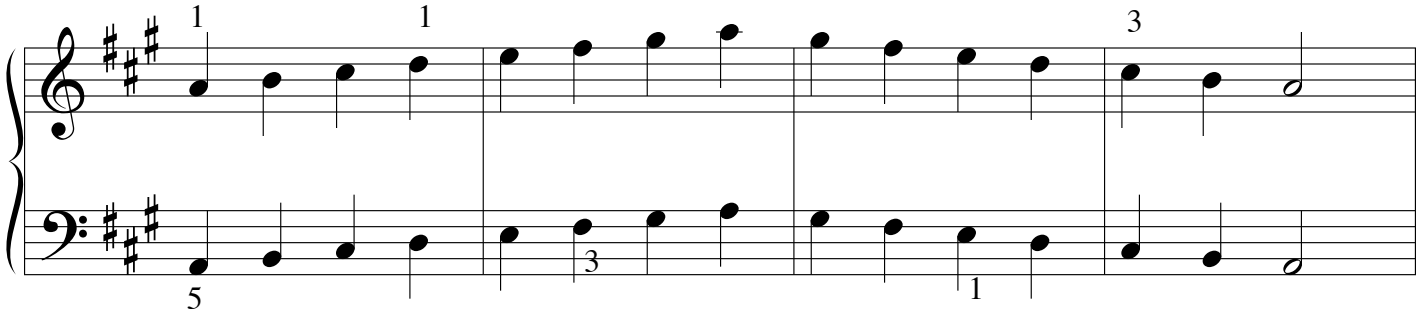


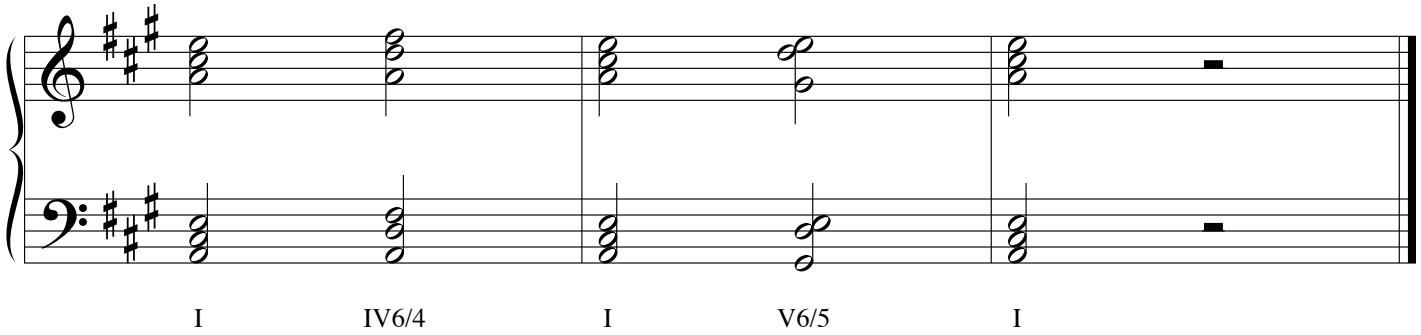
D and A Major Scales

and Primary Chords



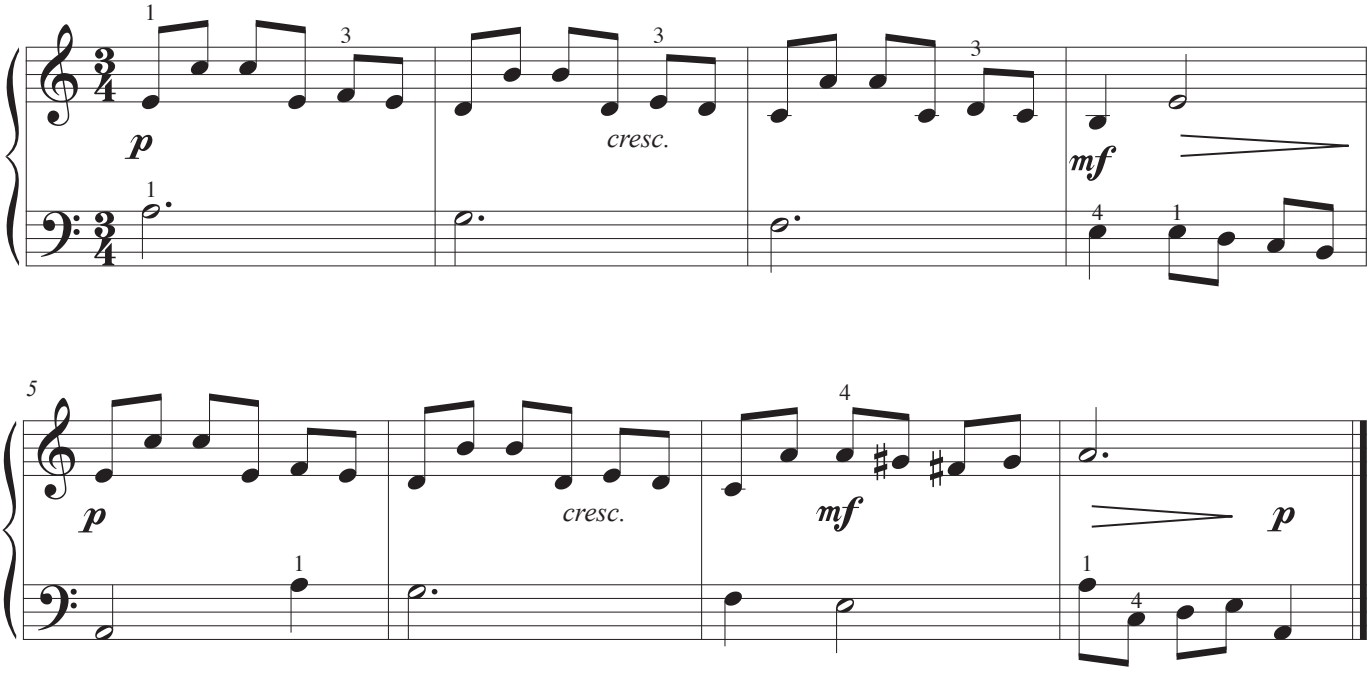




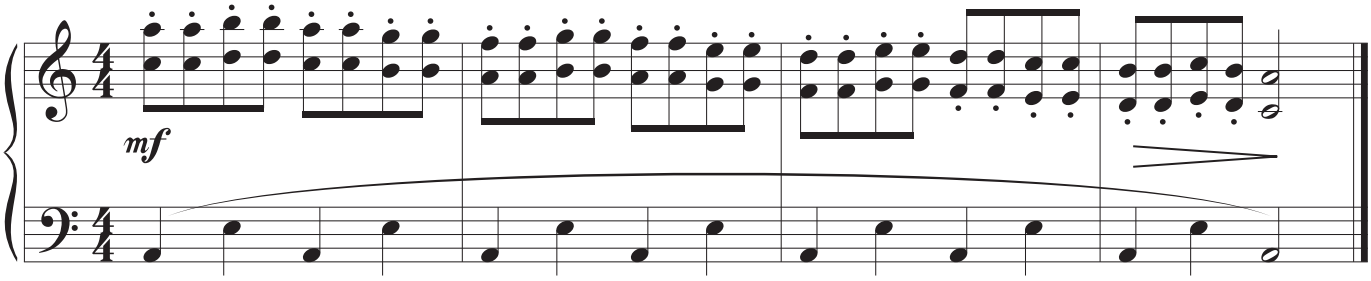


Two Etudes in A Minor

1. Teneramente



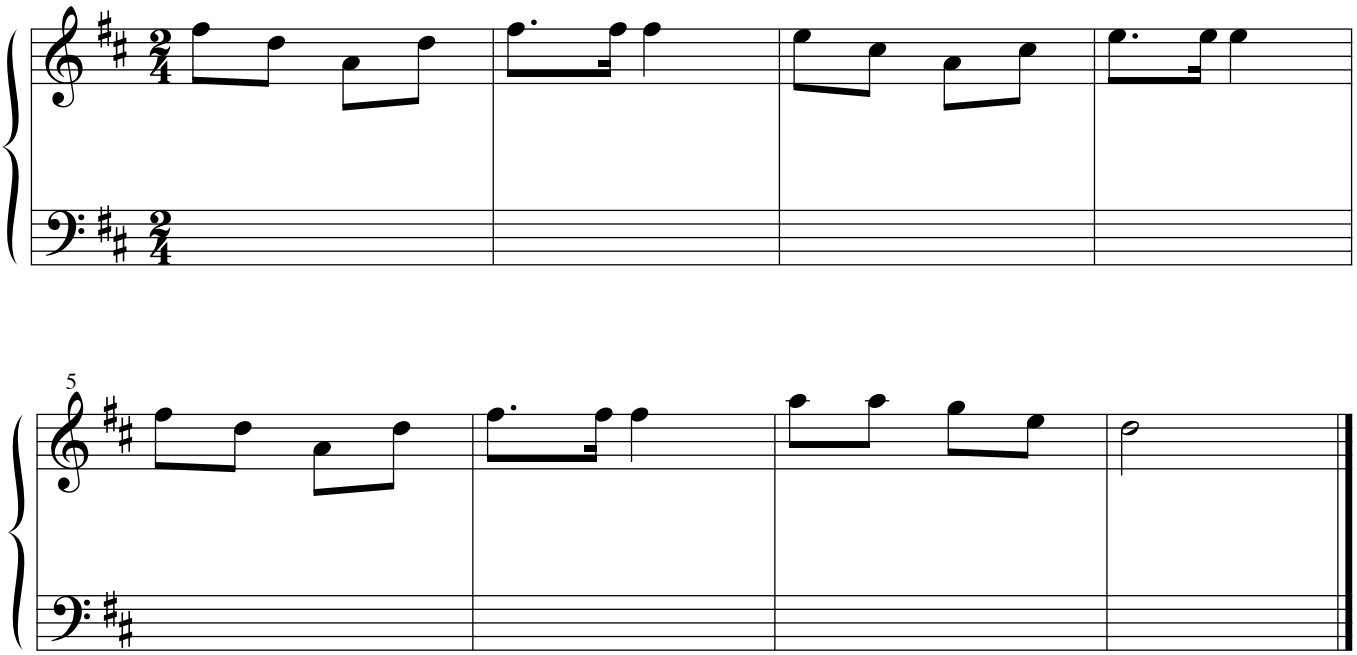
2. Spiritoso



Sandy Land

Determine the key of this melody.
Review the primary chords of that key.
For each measure, choose one primary chord that matches the pitches of the melody.
Use Roman numerals below the bass staff to mark your choices.
Play the melody with the chords you have chosen.

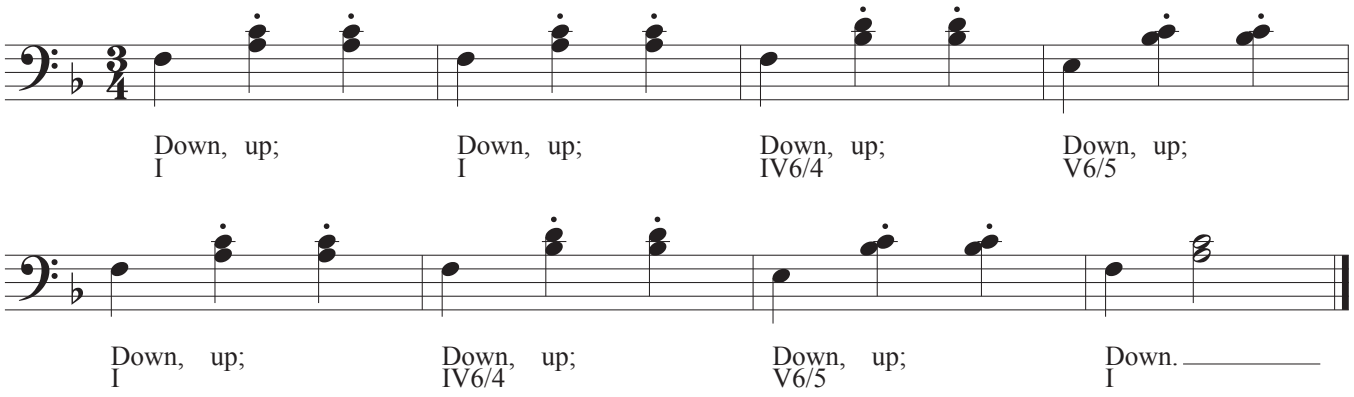
With Spirit



Damper Pedal

Waltz Pedal

Use your right foot to depress the damper pedal on the downbeat and release on the second beat.
Listen for resonant tone on Beat 1 and for light, crisp staccatos on Beats 2 and 3.



Triste

with damper pedal

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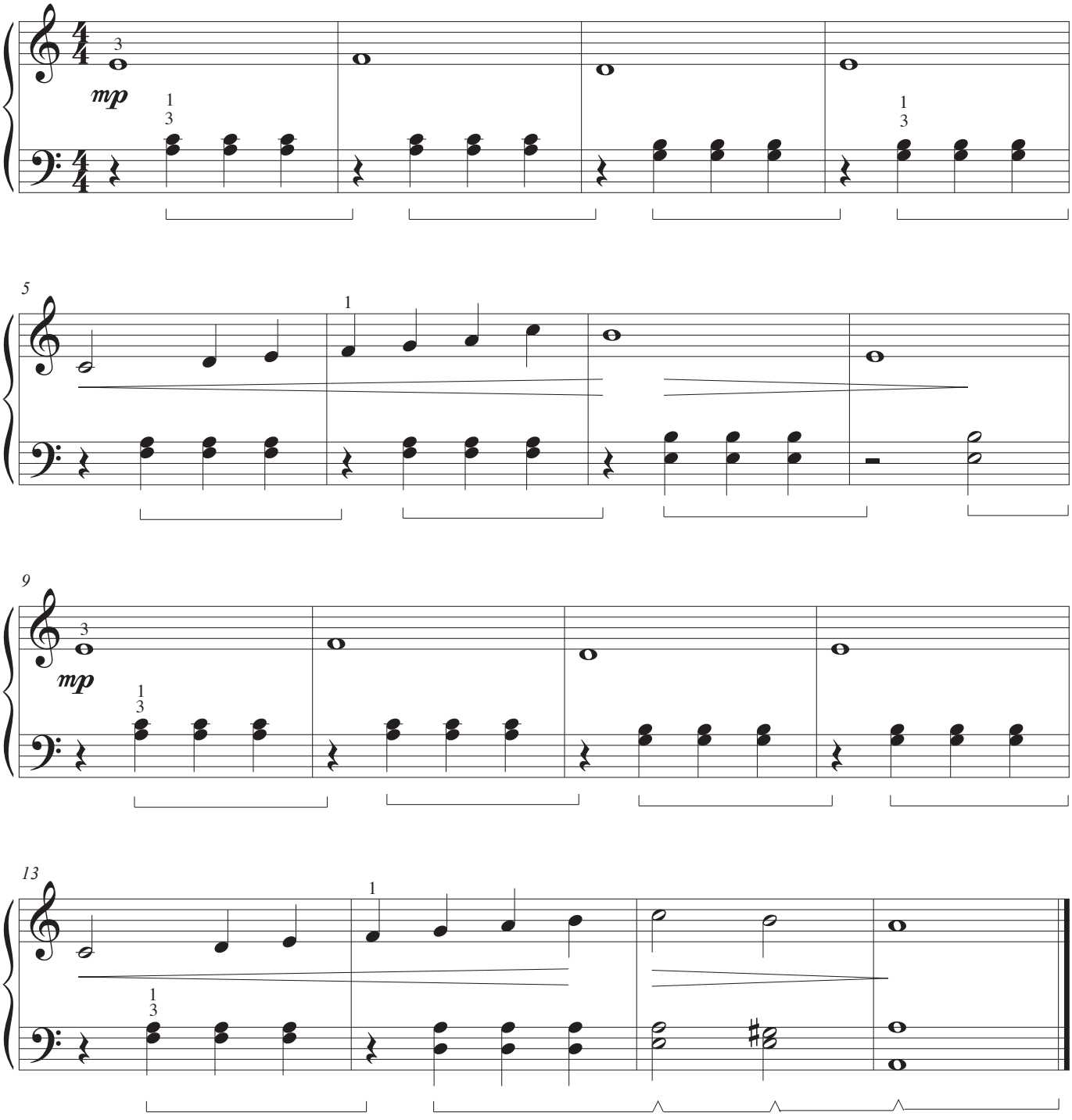
Andante



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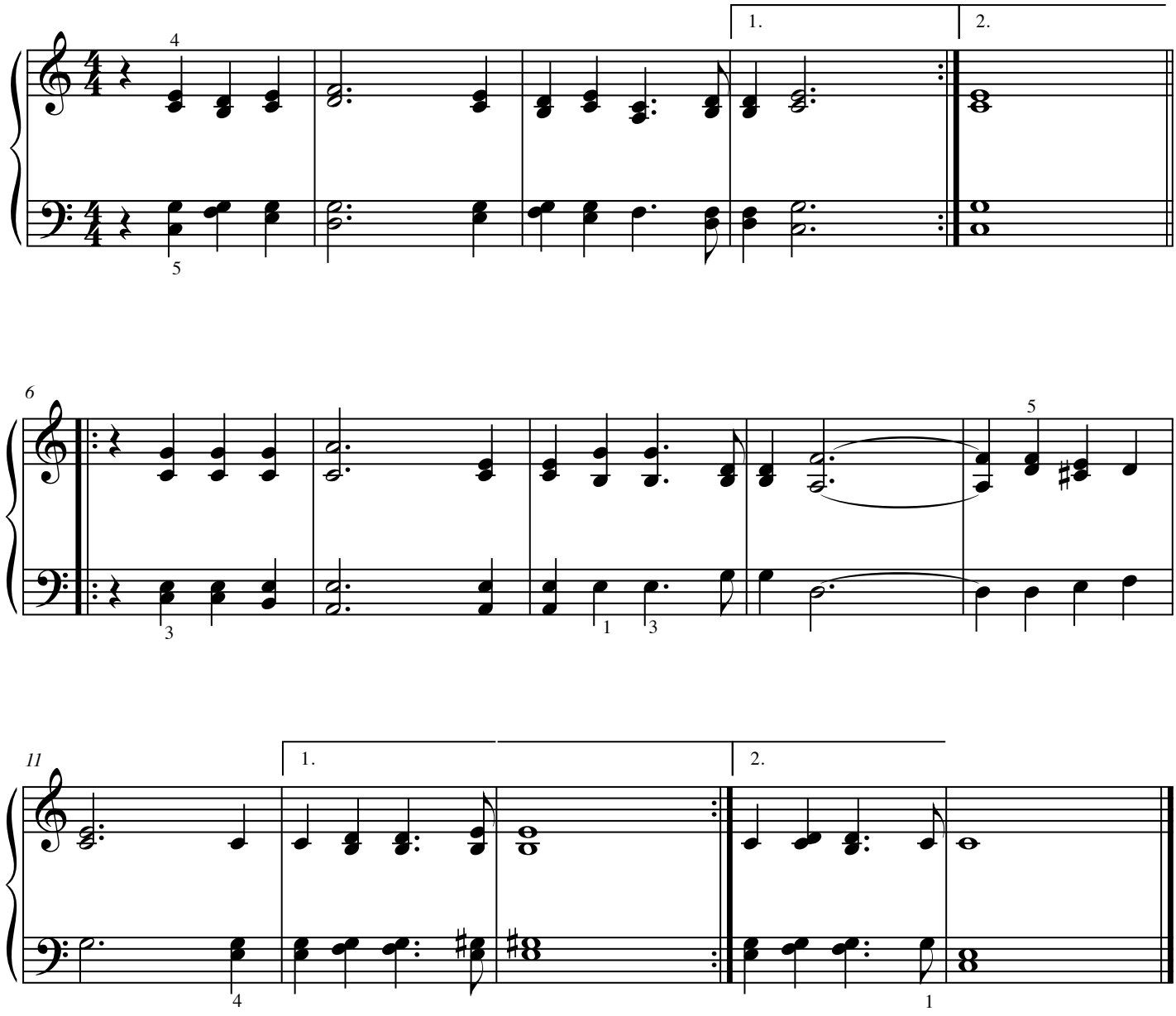
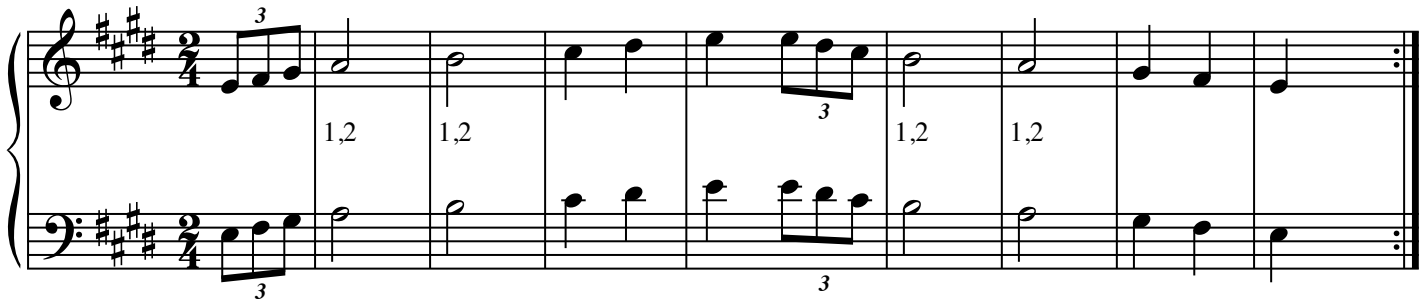
Finlandia

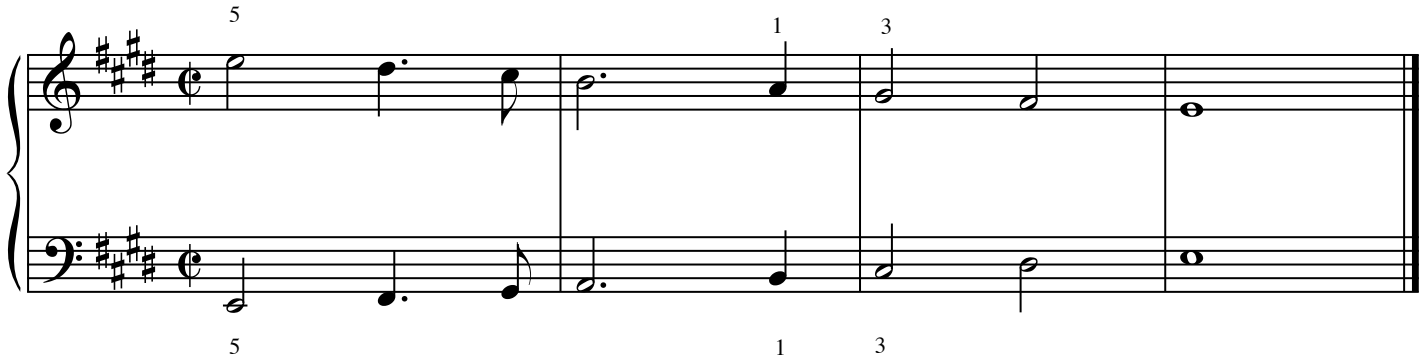
Jan Sibelius
(1865-1957)

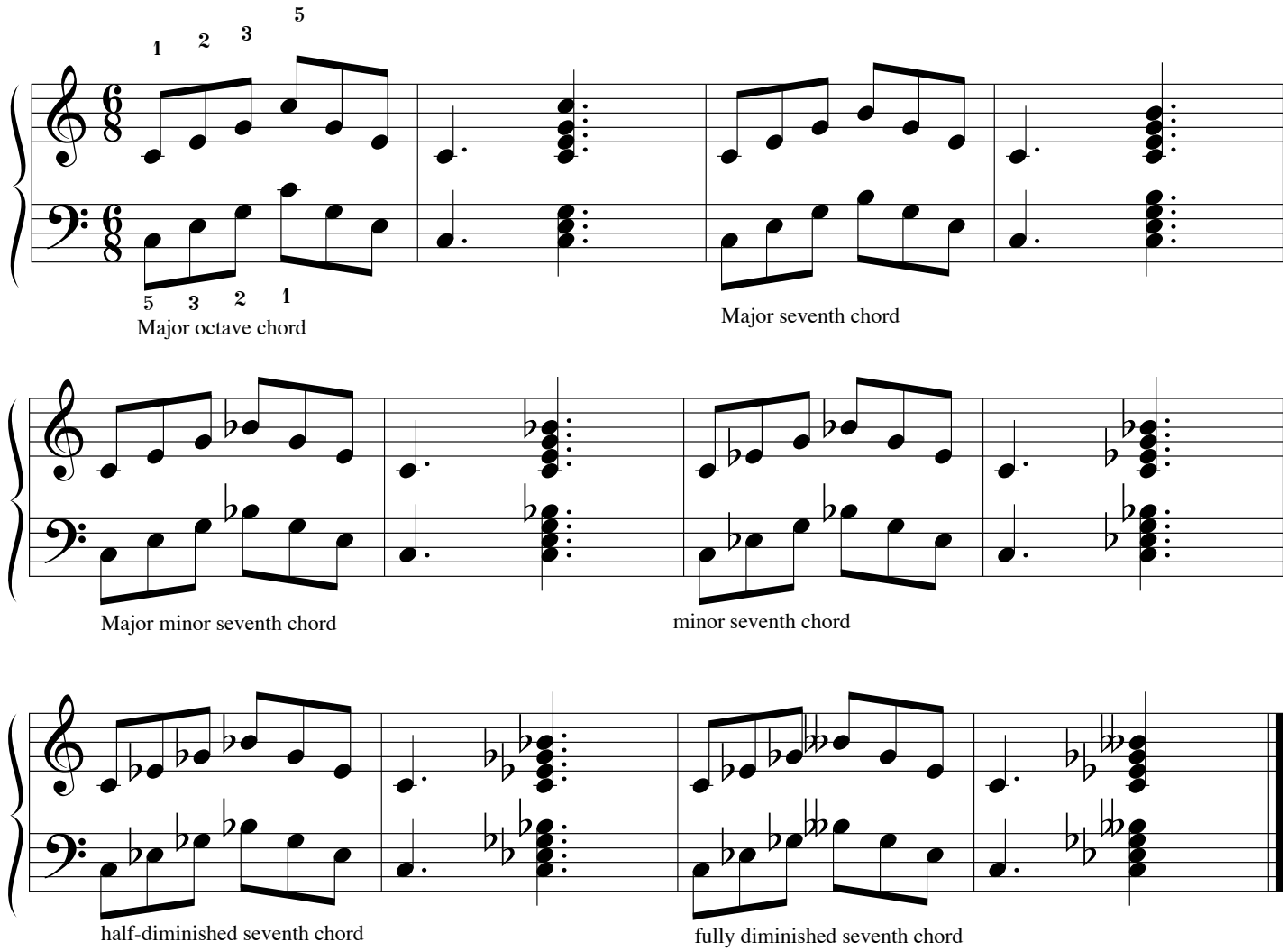


Jan Sibelius wrote *Finlandia* as an orchestral tone-poem honoring his homeland in 1898. This principal theme is now widely used as a hymn tune in American churches.

Scales in Rhythm





Seventh Chords

on C