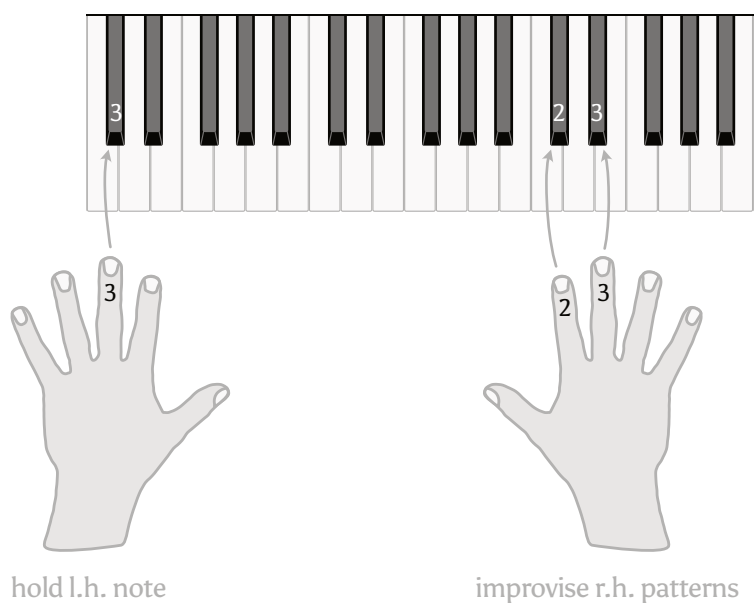


IMPROVISATION

Improvise with 2 black keys →



Creating music spontaneously is called **improvising**. Explore high and low notes, quiet and loud sounds, fast and slow rhythms, and everything in between. There is no right or wrong here. Start by following these improvisation ideas, but don't feel limited by them; branch out as you like.

1) Toward the left side of the keyboard, pick a group of two black keys. Play and hold the lower of the two keys (on the left) with finger 3 of your left hand (*l.h.*). Listen as it fades away, then play it again.

2) Toward the right side of the keyboard, pick a group of two black keys. Use fingers 2 and 3 of your right hand (*r.h.*) to play a little pattern on these notes. It could go back and forth, it could repeat one note several times. Try different rhythms, different patterns, and listen to how it mixes with the sustained left hand note. Repeat the *l.h.* note as it fades away.

3) Try moving the *r.h.* to different groups of two black keys, higher and lower for a different effect. Spend time on this, listen, explore, and let the sound lead you to what you play next. Take your time.

4) With the *l.h.*, switch to the upper key of the two key group (on the right). Use finger 2. Play similar patterns in the *r.h.* and listen to how it mixes with the new *l.h.* note. Once you've done this for a while, switch back to the original *l.h.* note, improvising a bit more. Find a nice place to finish.

Improvise with 3 black keys →



1) Use *l.h.* finger 4 on the lower/left key of a three black key group. Use *r.h.* fingers 2, 3, and 4 on groups of 3 black keys. As before, the *l.h.* holds its low note while the *r.h.* improvises above.

2) Try *l.h.* finger 3 on the middle black key while the *r.h.* continues to improvise above. Later try *l.h.* finger 2 on the higher black key. Eventually return to the lower key with finger 4 to end the improvisation. Notice how each *l.h.* note changes the 'color' of the improvisation above.

Teachers: If the student is younger or reluctant to experiment, you can play the sustained *l.h.*, perhaps adding a simple repeated rhythm for inspiration. Demonstrating improvised *r.h.* examples can help.

If the student struggles, the teacher can improvise very short patterns which the student can imitate back (even two or three notes). Eventually the student can reply with slightly altered patterns (call and response). Then the roles can reverse; the student playing patterns, the teacher imitating them back.

