

Key of C using SLASH chords

By John Axsom

The first exercise is in 3/4 time. The right hand plays a series of slash chords: C, G, F/A, C/G, and F. The left hand plays a descending C major scale: C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3.

Notice how the left hand simply plays a descending C major scale.

The second exercise is in 3/4 time. The right hand plays slash chords: C/E, D, G, G, and C. The left hand plays a walking bass pattern: C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2, F2, E2, D2, C2.

This is a 3/4 Time Piano Accompaniment Style that is using a walking left hand bass. Or, you could also describe this chord construction in terms of slash chords. The first letter of the chord would be the right hand full chord. After the slash, the second letter designates which bass note the left hand should play. If there is no slash, then your left hand should play the root of the chord. However, when there is a slash, for example in the 3rd measure, you would play the full F chord in the right hand, but play an A in the left hand bass instead of the root F.

This walking bass pattern adds a lot of color to the chords. Once you master this exercise, try to hum a little melody as you play it. Then try to make up some lyrics and sing a song as you play this walking bass piano accompaniment pattern.

Billy Joel, the famous recording artist, wrote a song called PIANO MAN. His piano accompaniment pattern for Piano Man is very similar to the SLASH chord exercise I wrote for you. Billy Joel's arrangement is more complicated than this exercise, but both follow the same musical theme of a descending left hand walking bass.