

Preface by Lydie Auvray



Y en a qui disent que c'est pas bon
Qu'ils préfèrent la flûte ou l' violon
Ils prétendent même que c'est couillon
J'm'en fous, je joue d'l'accordéon

Et même si ce n'est pas d'bon ton
Je n'vais quand même pas me mettre au basson
Moi je vous dis „vive l'accordéon“
Bien sûr je ne parle qu'en mon nom

Some say, it's not beautiful
They prefer the flute or the violin
They even say it's silly -
Doesn't matter to me: **I PLAY ACCORDEON**

And even if it's "just not done"
I won't switch to the bassoon
I tell you – long live the accordion ...
But I'm only speaking for myself

from Jan en – on by Lydie Auvray 1995

For the past 18 years – in fact, as long my band “die Auvrettes” has been playing – I have tried to improve the image of the accordion: to show that it is not the old-fashioned, fuddy-duddy, folksy instrument which many think it is. I am happy when young people come to me, buy my music and say that they can't wait to unpack their accordion and play my pieces. Sometimes they ask me to recommend a good accordion method book, one which has more repertoire than just polkas and waltzes.

Now I can finally recommend such a method book. Accordionists young and old – and folks who might just want to become accordionists – have reason to be happy now.

This method book is interesting for accordionists because it has music pieces in a wide variety of styles. And it is a well thought-out accordion method book which is fun to play, as well. Beginning students can play short pieces from the very start and don't have to work through frustrating finger exercises in the beginning stages. Plus, ear training and creativity are encouraged from the very start. I wish Peter Haas much success and all accordionists who learn from this book great fun.

Lydie Auvray

Thanks

When a book like this is written, it is largely due to the help of a lot of friends.

For photos I thank Yolanda Cvitak, Dr. Ute Hoffmann, Angelika Scheidhauer and Hans-Peter Zimmer as well as Rita Steffen-Frisch from the Spritztier Agency. Lisa Liebetrau helped as “model” for the photos of how to hold the instrument. Angelika Scheidhauer loaned her 4 reed Italian accordion for the recordings.

Dieter Plinke offered much important help in the early stages; he also let us photograph instruments from his accordion museum.

The Berlin trombonist Marliese Sondermann tested the manuscript for its suitability for self-study.

The wonderful and cooperative accordionist Lydie Auvray gave me courage and purpose for the final spurt and the Berlin accordion teacher – and tango and jazz specialist – Melanie Ziesche gave me important tips which have made their way into the final version.

Karin Stuhmann of the AMA Publishers offered much welcome and detailed feedback in regards to the form and contents of the manuscript. Her vision and ideas were absolutely essential in the conception and development of this book.

To all of you: many, many thanks!

Peter M. Haas

Foreword

When writing this book, I had two goals:

first, to devise an interesting *world music book*

and second, to construct a systematic *accordion method book* suitable to be used with or without a teacher, a method which would enable a step-by-step development towards a wholistic sense of musicianship.

Many enthusiastic letters – and many sold books later – have let me know that this concept is successful.

For the new edition I have changed one thing in particular: the fingerings for the left hand have been altered to conform with current pedagogical standards. Two practice pieces have also been added. Other than that, everything has been left as it was.

The AMA publishers and I are always interested in feedback from readers. In fact, the number of letters posted to my website is quite astonishing ... go have a look!

But first and foremost: welcome to the club of accordionists – I wish you much fun and success!

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Working with this book

Small accordion button symbols help to organize the information:



This button points to interesting tips and background information.



Beware! Here you find important advice about what “not” to do.



This star points to helpful little tips.



Almost all the music pieces are also on the CD. Sometimes you have the chance to play along with the CD ... use the opportunity!

The mole you can depend upon your hearing, the more humble you are. Occasionally you will find a small hearing quiz, which is meant to motivate you.

The jumping kangaroo shows you ideas about testing things out for yourself, such as playing improvised melodies. Don't worry; the exercises are prepared in such a way that you will not be stretched too far!

In case you are learning without an accordion teacher, you will occasionally encounter situations in which it is difficult to play with both hands together. “Beware – slippery!” means: don't be bashful in asking for help ideally another accordionist.

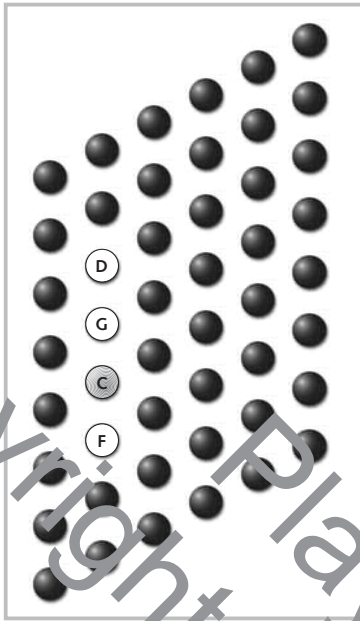
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The bass tone C and its neighbors




Other bass tones are in the vertical row next to C. The neighbors on the upper side are G and D, the first neighbor on the lower side is F.


 All bass tones are named with a capital letter.


Position your hand so that the ring finger (4) is on the C button, the little finger (5) on the F button and the fingers (3) and (2) on the G and D buttons (see the diagram to the right).


Play the following melody with short, detached tones (only the final tone is long):









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







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







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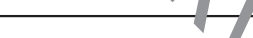












2.3 Play the melody a few times until you have the feeling that you've got it right. Restart the CD track (Track 2; 01:22) and listen to the exercise!

Does it sound similar?

If not: press Pause and practice until you are satisfied.

If yes: press Pause and go to the next exercise.

Finding orientation on the keys

The Registers

Behind the keys you will see the manual register switches. These control the accordion's sound range. If there are two or three switches, then the accordion has two reed ranks. An accordion with three reed ranks has at least five register switches (See page 48 and listen to CD Track 15).

For the first pieces you should pick the "Tremolo" register. Usually it looks like the picture to the right.

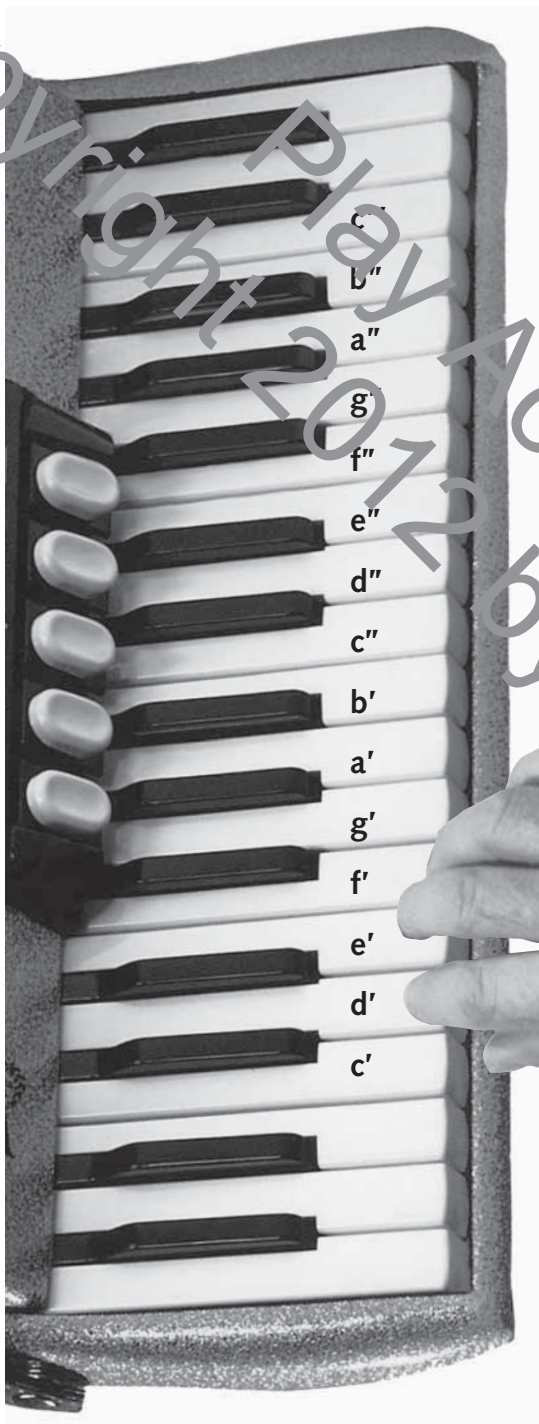


Keys and pitch names – "white keys"

The sequence of the tones played with the white keys is designated, starting with the letter "c", by letters of the alphabet: c – d – e – f – g – a – b. The ascending sequence designated by these letters consists of seven tones. The eighth tone is again "c": the start of a new sequence, or scale. When the ascending sequence is extended with a new set of seven tones, these have the same name as the first set, but sound an octave higher.

The distance from one note or sequence to the next one with the same name is called "octave".

Every accordion has a range of at least two octaves.



The keyboard of an accordion is held vertically and the lowest, deepest tones are close to your chin. Whenever you are playing a melody or sequence of notes and your hand moves down towards the floor, the listener will note that the melody is going up! Don't let this confuse you!

The staff

In order to write notes, a system of five horizontal lines is used; this is called the staff. The individual tones are notated on or between these lines. The higher the tone is placed optically, the higher it sounds. A clef stands at the beginning of each staff. In this diagram you see a treble clef, also called a G-clef, so-called because it curves around the second line from the bottom, where the tone "G" is notated.



An afternoon on the Quai d'Orsay

- ⚠ Sometimes the first note of a melody begins before the downbeat of the first full measure, which is often accompanied by the bass. Musicians often call this an upbeat or a pickup. It frequently lends the melody firm sense of energy.
- ▶ “An afternoon on the Quai d'Orsay” is your first piece in which the melody is structured with main part, a contrasting middle part and a return to the melody of the main part. A double bar line shows where these parts begin and end.

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Main part (First melody)

Chords for Main part (First melody):

Measure 1: D (upbeat), dm, dm

Measure 2: D, dm, dm

Measure 3: D, dm, dm

Measure 4: D, dm, dm

Measure 5: D, dm, dm

Chords for Middle part (second melody):

Measure 6: A, am, am

Measure 7: A, am, dm

Measure 8: D, dm, dm

Measure 9: D, dm, dm

Measure 10: D, dm, dm

Measure 11: A, am, am

Measure 12: A, am, am

Chords for Middle part (second melody) continuation:

Measure 13: D, dm, dm

Measure 14: D, dm, dm

Measure 15: G, gm, gm

Measure 16: G, gm, gm

Measure 17: G, gm, gm

Measure 18: D, dm, dm

Measure 19: D, dm, dm

Measure 20: E, e7, e7

Measure 21: E, e7, e7

Measure 22: E, e7, e7

Measure 23: A, a7, a7

Measure 24: A, a7, a7

Chords for Upbeat to the Main part (First melody):

Measure 25: A, a7, a7

Measure 26: D, dm, dm

Measure 27: D, dm, dm

Measure 28: D, dm, dm

Measure 29: D, dm, dm

Chords for Main part (First melody) return:

Measure 30: D, dm, dm

Measure 31: A, am, am

Measure 32: A, am, am

Measure 33: D, dm, dm

Measure 34: D

The alternate bass – more variety with a new bass technique

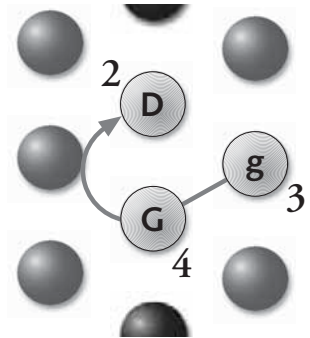
With the alternate bass, you change back and forth between the primary bass tone (here G) and the neighboring bass tone (here D), while continuing to play the same chord.

The chord stays the same.

The bass tone alternates back and forth.

Alternate bass fingerings for major chords

- Primary bass 4
- Major chord 3
- Alternate bass 2



▲ The next two pieces are in 4/4 meter. Alternate bass is also used in 3/4 meter; you will learn more about this on page 106.

Circus march – with alternate bass

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