



Easy piano tutorial jingle bells

Quick Tip Instructor Jonny May Skill Level 2 Level 3 Learning Focus Music Style Get free weekly lessons, practice tips, and downloadable resources to your inbox! Do you want play holiday songs with your friends and family this year, but aren't sure where to start? Are you looking for something easy you can learn quickly before December? In today's Quick Tip, you will learn Jonny's easy Jingle Bells piano accompaniment in 3 steps: Learn the stride/ragtime accompaniment style Use through the Quick Tip. Let's get started with the stride/ragtime style! Step 1: Jingle Bells Piano Accompaniment Stride/Ragtime Style Before we dig in to the details of stride style. let's take a look at the whole arrangement so we know what we'll be learning today: Jingle Bells easy piano accompaniment This may look like a lot, but it's actually very simple! The key to this arrangement is getting the style right. When played correctly, stride and ragtime have a joyous energy that's sure to get everyone's foot tapping! This energy is generated from the contrast of long and short notes. Notes or chords played on beats two and four should always be short, while other notes (such as the through-line we'll get into later) or bass notes can be long. For now, start by ignoring the bottom notes with the right hand (this is the through-line) and just alternate between playing your left hand on 1 and 3 with your right hand feel it "bounce" as you play along. This is what we're looking for! This style is present throughout the entire arrangement, so once you have the feel of it down, let's move on to looking at the through-line. Step 2: Using Through-Lines A through-line is a moving line underneath chords that creates a melody. In our arrangement, the through-line exists using the bottom note of each chord. The harmony for Jingle Bells is very simple, which is great because it gives us a lot of flexibility in creating through-lines! There are only five chords in the whole song and it's easy to find fun melodic ways to navigate the harmony. Let's look at how we use a through-line over the first four measures? First four measures? that the bottom note starts on C (the tonic of C Major) and moves down by half step each measure, ending on A when we get to F Major. By utilizing this through-line is making sure the through-line itself can be heard clearly while your stride/ragtime groove is going on. This can be a little tricky to execute because it all happens in the right hand! Hold down the lowest note of each chord while you "pop" the top two notes to achieve this clarity. If this is difficult for you, just practice holding down C with your thumb while you pop E and G with your 3 and 5 fingers. Once you get this down, try changing the bottom note while still popping the top two notes. If you can do this, you can play the whole arrangement easily! HOW TO CREATE THROUGH-LINES You may be wondering how to choose which notes to create your through-lines with (if not, feel free to skip ahead!). In general, through-lines sound best with descending step-wise motion, starting from one chord tone and moving down to a chord tone in the next chord. Look at how the through-line got us from C Major. We started on C (the tonic) and moved down by half step until we got to A, which lined up with F Major. We started on C (the tonic) and moved down by half step until we got to A, which lined up with F Major. We started on C (the tonic) and moved down by half step until we got to A, which lined up with F Major. own through-lines, you'll need to have a working knowledge of all your inversions. If you look at how we built that F Major chord, you can see it's in first inversion since the 3rd is the lowest note of the chord. As you move through this arrangement, identify which inversions we're using and how we moved from one to the other. It's tricky at first if you're not comfortable with inversions, but once you get the hang of it you'll see all kinds of possibilities for through-lines. Try to keep the motion descending as long as the phrase lasts. Once you get to the end of a phrase, move that through-line back up otherwise you'll keep going down on the piano forever! Now, let's look at some alternate techniques you can use with this arrangement. Step 3: Alternate Techniques We are going to look at two ways to change your left hand in octaves! This will give you a big, full sound. Don't use this technique the whole time though - save it for the most exciting part of the song! If you'd like to add some more harmonic interest to what we already have, there are spots we could spice up. Look for places where the chords change (i.e. from C to F in the fourth measure). This is a great place to approach the next chord using chord tones from the previous chord. In the third measure, you could play C and E instead of C and G because that E is the leading tone of F! This creates some very nice harmonic movement as you go between chords. The leading tone is the 7th of the chord because it leads the ear to hear the next chord! Another place we could use this is in the first ending of the chorus. D7 leads to G7, so here you could play D and F#. G7 then leads back to C (on the repeat), so we can use G and B to create a really nice cycle with our left hand: First ending with leading tones Apply these concepts to other songs you know! It's so much fun to find little ways to make your accompaniments more musical and melodic. WRAPPING UP I encourage you to check out our Jingle Bells. You can also check out our Play Piano Lead Sheets with Shells & Guide Tones, Rag Time Crash Course 1, and Rag Time Crash Course 2 courses for more about the ragtime style. Thanks for learning, and see you in the next Quick Tip! Blog written by Austin Byrd // Quick Tip Instructor Jonny May Skill Level 2 Level 3 Learning Focus Music Style Get free weekly lessons, practice tips, and downloadable resources to your inbox! Do you want play holiday songs with your friends and family this year, but aren't sure where to start? Are you looking for something easy you can learn quickly before December? In today's Quick Tip, you will learn Jonny's easy Jingle Bells piano accompaniment in 3 steps: Learn the stride/ragtime accompaniment style Use through-lines to make the accompaniment more interesting Explore some alternate techniques to personalize your accompaniment Feel free to follow along with the stride/ragtime style! Step 1: Jingle Bells Piano Accompaniment Stride/Ragtime Style Before we dig in to the details of stride style, let's take a look at the whole arrangement so we know what we'll be learning today: Jingle Bells easy piano accompaniment This may look like a lot, but it's actually very simple! The key to this arrangement is getting the style right. When played correctly, stride and ragtime have a joyous energy that's sure to get everyone's foot tapping! This energy is generated from the contrast of long and short notes. Notes or chords played on beats two and four should always be short, while other notes (such as the through-line we'll get into later) or bass notes can be long. For now, start by ignoring the bottom notes with the right hand (this is the through-line) and just alternate between playing your left hand on 1 and 3 with your right hand playing short on 2 and 4. Play your left hand short, even though the sheet music is written as half notes. If done correctly, you should feel it "bounce" as you play along. This is what we're looking for! This style is present throughout the entire arrangement, so once you have the feel of it down, let's move on to looking at the through-line. Step 2: Using Through-line is a moving line underneath chords that creates a melody. In our arrangement, the through-line is a moving line underneath chords that creates a melody. In our arrangement, the through-line exists using the bottom note of each chord. The harmony for Jingle Bells is very simple, which is great because it gives us a lot of flexibility in creating through-lines! There are only five chords in the whole song and it's easy to find fun melodic ways to navigate the harmony. Let's look at how we use a through-line over the first four measures: First four measures You can see that the bottom note starts on C (the tonic of C Major) and moves down by half step each measure, ending on A when we get to F Major. By utilizing this motion, we've created a great melodic line within the harmony. Cool! The key for using this through-line itself can be heard clearly while your stride/ragtime groove is going on. This can be a little tricky to execute because it all happens in the right hand! Hold down the lowest note of each chord while you "pop" the top two notes to achieve this clarity. If this is difficult for you, just practice holding down C with your 3 and 5 fingers. Once you get this down, try changing the bottom note while still popping the top two notes. If you can do this, you can play the whole arrangement easily! HOW TO CREATE THROUGH-LINES You may be wondering how to choose which notes to create your through-lines with (if not, feel free to skip ahead!). In general, through-lines sound best with descending step-wise motion, starting from one chord tone and moving down to a chord tone in the next chord. Look at how the through-line got us from C Major to F Major. We started on C (the tonic) and moved down by half step until we got to A, which lined up with F Major. The through-line got us from tonic to the 3rd of the next chord (C on C Major down to A on F Major). To create your own through-lines, you'll need to have a working knowledge of all your inversions. If you look at how we built that F Major chord, you can see it's in first inversion since the 3rd is the lowest note of the chord. As you move through this arrangement, identify which inversions, but once you get the hang of it you'll see all kinds of possibilities for through-lines! There's one other thing you should know about through-lines. Try to keep the motion descending as long as the phrase lasts. Once you get to the end of a phrase, move that through-line back up otherwise you'll keep going down on the piano forever! Now, let's look at some alternate techniques you can use with this arrangement. Step 3: Alternate Techniques We are going to look at two ways to change your left hand to make this more interesting. The first one is super easy; just play every note with your left hand in octaves! This will give you a big, full sound. Don't use this technique the whole time though - save it for the most exciting part of the song! If you'd like to add some more harmonic interest to what we already have, there's an easy way to do that with our left hand. Instead of just playing tonic and the 5th of each chord, there are spots we could spice up. Look for places where the chords change (i.e. from C to F in the fourth measure). This is a great place to approach the next chord using chord tones from the previous chord. In the third measure, you could play C and E instead of C and G because that E is the leading tone of F! This creates some very nice harmonic movement as you go between chords. The leading tone is the 7th of the chorus. D7 leads to G7, so here you could play D and F#. G7 then leads back to C (on the repeat), so we can use G and B to create a really nice cycle with our left hand: First ending with leading tones Apply these concepts to other songs you know! It's so much fun to find little ways to make your accompaniments more musical and melodic. WRAPPING UP I encourage you to check out our Jingle Bells Challenge and Jingle Bells Rag courses. In each of these you'll dive into much more detail on Jingle Bells. You can also check out our Play Piano Lead Sheets with Shells & Guide Tones, Rag Time Crash Course 1, and Rag Time Crash Courses for more about the ragtime style. by Austin Byrd // Quick Tip by Jonny May

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