

## The Top 10 Ways To Improve On The Piano

Looking for piano improvisation tips? Here are the top 10 ways to improvise on the piano:

1. Use fake books. Fake books, as one of the top 10 ways to improvise on the piano, are gentle introductions to what could be interpreted as the Wild West of improvisation. Improvisation is largely based on freedom of expression. Without having a good foundation of the basics, beginners may feel intimidated by the possibilities. Fake books however contain music that provides opportunities of expression. Since it's music lacks full notation, fake books allow the musician to fill in the missing parts with what \*could\* be there or what \*should\* be there without leaving \*everything\* up to the pianist.
2. Make up your own songs. Making up your own songs really isn't as easy as you might think. If you've been trained in the classics for example, you might find it difficult to break from instilled patterns. See if it helps to hum a random melody right off the top of your head at first. Then fill it in with interesting chords. You could probably fill up an entire album of improv this way!
3. Imagine how a master would play a song. Here, you can put your imagination to use and let your fingers tell the story. Ask yourself what Alicia Keys would play for a crowd -- impromptu of course. Since her music is already a bit unconventional, your mind shouldn't have too much trouble inventing new tunes for "her" (er... we mean, for you).
4. Improve a song with elements from your culture, the current holiday, etc. Every culture has it's own unique set of chords and rhythms so why not incorporate them into the contemporary music that you play? This way, you can spice things up. You could for example, give the National Anthem an Brazilian spin or Italian twist.
5. Try to forget whatever you've learned about notes, intervals, scales, chords, and all the rest. Approach the piano as if you've never seen the thing before and you wonder what it does. Touch it's keys and see if your random play generates any interesting tunes. If you should 'accidentally' discover a cool tune, melody, chord, or rhythm, build on it. Think of another section that would go well with the element that you just discovered. Keep following this pattern and you'll have an entire song in no time.
6. Remember that when improvising, there are no mistakes. Okay, that's not entirely true -- but the idea is to break you from fearing improvisation. The thing that prevents a lot of us from even trying improvisation is our own fear.
7. Try different elements within a single song. Mix and mash different rhythms, octaves, dynamics, and more just to see what results. While you might not find anything appropriate for an entire song, you just might discover a unique passage that would fit well in an existing song.
8. While you're experimenting, record your efforts. You can easily create a database of unique passages if you record your efforts into a sound database. Your database needn't be anything fancy, as a simple file of wav files will suffice. Just remember to give your recordings descriptive names.
9. Chord it. Play a steady beat and a single chord with your right hand in other words, and use then use your left hand to decorate the chord with an interesting melody.
10. Try playing a song that you've committed to memory -- only play it backwards. You're sure to find some unique and creative passages using this method!

### About the Author

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