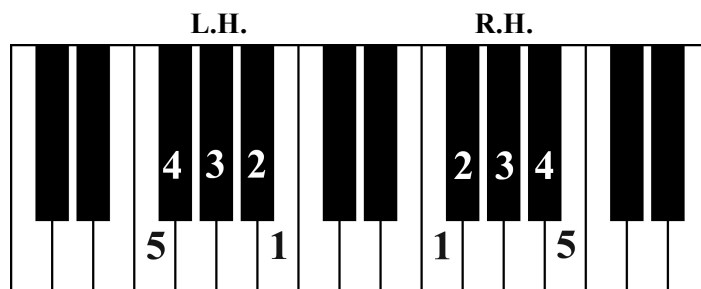


Hands Position

The pieces in the Suite use one particular, fixed hands position.¹ Each hand sits on a group of three black keys (Gb, Ab and Bb) and the two neighboring white keys (F and Cb), as illustrated below. Most children and adult beginners find this position both easy to remember and physically comfortable.



The hands may begin one octave apart, as in the above diagram, or any number of octaves apart, but they should always cover the range from F to Cb, with the left hand's thumb on Cb and the right hand's thumb on the higher F.

The mirror approach and this hands position dictate that each finger always corresponds to a certain single note or pair of notes: Gb and Bb are played by the 2nd and 4th fingers, Ab is played by the 3rd finger in both hands, and the white keys F and Cb are played by the 1st and 5th fingers.

The use of the same fingers in each hand does not imply the use of the same notes—"1," or the thumb, plays on F in the right hand and Cb in the left—and the harmonies that arise from these simple lines and intervals are pleasant, full, and tonal. More than one student has expressed surprise at how, at their first lesson, they are already playing something that "sounds like real music!"

The hands always move together, and the position is also *key-color symmetrical*: that is, whenever one hand lands on a black key (Gb-Bb-Ab) or white key (F-Cb), the other does the same. This perfect symmetry makes the pieces simpler to learn and perform. The "mirror" approach refers to the symmetry of both the intervals and the key-colors (white and black) of the group of notes mentioned above. This hands position is one of only two² arrangements of all ten fingers on the keyboard that contain this set of intervals while maintaining total symmetry. This symmetry is the key to making the position both visually intuitive and physically comfortable for the beginner.

¹ Once the student has spent some time with the above hands position, there is an alternative key-color symmetrical, diatonic hands position that is worth trying, which consists of five white notes: B, C, D, E and F. This is also a comfortable hands position for the small hand, but the wider space between the white keys makes it a slightly trickier one to play around with. Any of the finger-number scores can be translated into this new hands position.

² See above footnote (#1).