

## READING 4

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# BASS READING 4

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## Objective

This book continues with the intermediate process of reading music and the basic terminology used in written notation. Upon successfully completing this course, the student will have increased familiarity with navigating basic charts, odd meter time signatures, and reading bass clef notation that will include multiple position shifts and key changes. Additionally, sight reading, key modulation, and transposition skills will be improved as well. Reading in other clefs will also be addressed.

The units in this book will introduce longer-form examples of bass clef transcriptions and band charts. These examples will serve as effective preparation study for many different real-world working situations such as cover bands, private function bands, theater pits, cruise ships, and television and film scoring cues.

### **Recurring Subjects in Reading 4:**

- Improving Knowledge of the Fingerboard
- Odd Meters
- Reading Through Key Changes
- Sight Reading
- Transposing
- Treble Clef
- Charts/Real-World Reading
- Transcribing
- Reading Rhythms
- Reading Harmony/Polyphony

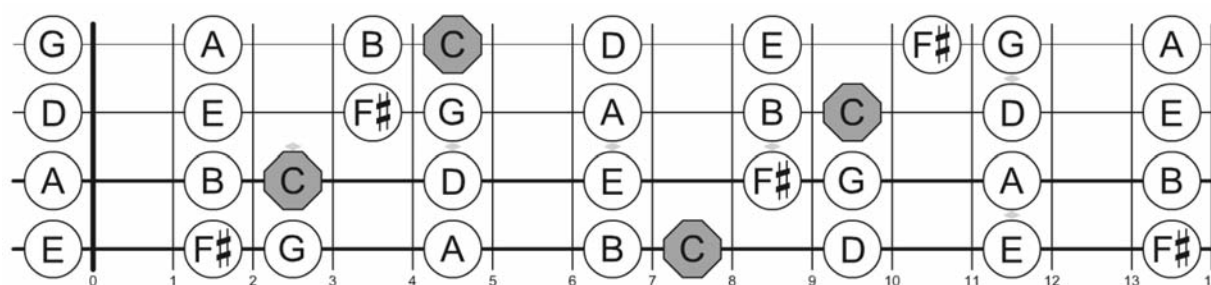
# Chapter 1:

## Improving Knowledge of the Fingerboard: C Lydian Etude

This chapter will present a 32-measure etude in the C Lydian mode. Position shifts will be required between the open through ninth positions. Examine the fingerboard diagram of all of the notes in the C Lydian mode on the neck of the bass on the open strings through the fourteenth fret.

Ex. 1.1

### Fingerboard Diagram, C Lydian Mode, Open Strings through Fourteenth Fret.



Recall that the C Lydian mode is derived from the fourth degree of the G Ionian mode (aka the G major scale). Therefore, the G major key signature is being used in this exercise indicating that all F notes are to be read as F# notes. Recall also that the Lydian mode fingering can be thought of as identical to the Ionian mode fingering, but with a raised fourth scale degree.

Since this exercise is being presented as an explicitly Lydian modal study, it is recommended to treat the note C as the root note for fingering purposes instead of the traditional tendency to treat G as the root in this key signature.

Anchor the middle finger on a C for playing in the octave above that C, for example at the third fret of the A string and the eighth fret of the E string. Anchor the pinkie on a C note for playing in the octave below that C, for example at the fifth fret of the G string and the tenth fret of the D string. The specific position shifts in this etude are left to the student to determine the most efficient fingering.

Play through the etude slowly at first. Take note of the range of notes in each passage. Plan where the most efficient position shifts should occur. Treat the entire etude as one contiguous piece. The maximum tempo for the entire piece should be determined by the limitations of the most challenging passages and position shifts. Play the entire piece at this maximum tempo, increasing speed only as these more difficult passages are executed accurately.

Ex. 1.2

**C Lydian Etude.**

The musical score for the C Lydian Etude is written in bass clef, 4/4 time, and the key of D major (one sharp). The piece consists of nine staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature, followed by a bass clef. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The etude is characterized by its melodic lines and includes several challenging passages, such as a triplet of eighth notes in the third staff and a sequence of sixteenth notes in the fifth staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the ninth staff.

# Chapter 2

## Reading in Time Signatures of Five

To review: a time signature is a set of two stacked numbers at the beginning of a piece of music. The top number describes how many beats are in each bar. The bottom number indicates which note value makes up one beat.

*Odd meter* is loosely defined as a time signature beyond the common simple meters of 3/4 or 4/4. It is not required to have an odd number of beats per bar to be called an odd meter.

This chapter introduces meters in time signatures of five. The most common of these are 5/4, which is five quarter notes per bar, and 5/8, which is five eighth notes per bar. Dave Brubeck's "Take Five" and the theme song to the television show "Mission Impossible" are famous examples of songs written in five. Very typically, measures of five get sub-divided into a group of three beats plus a group of two beats in either order, three plus two or two plus three.

When writing in any time signature, in five or otherwise, the decision whether to indicate the quarter note or the eighth note as the basic pulse, for example 5/4 versus 5/8, often depends on the tempo of the music. The eighth-note choice usually indicates that the music is moving faster. Similarly using a half note as the basic pulse in 2/2 time tends to indicate that the music is moving more slowly.

This chapter will use both 5/4 and 5/8 time signatures in various keys. If possible, use a metronome or a drum machine that emphasizes the start of each measure to help acclimate to the odd meter.

Occasional meter changes will be indicated in the following examples. It is much more important to keep count in odd meter reading, especially when meters change within a piece. 5/4 changing to 4/4 is a fairly logical transition. 5/8 changing to 4/4 is less obvious. Unless a tempo change is also indicated the basic tempo of the piece stays the same. A measure of 5/8 contains five eighth notes. A measure of 4/4 can be thought of as containing eight eighth notes.

Set the metronome to a slow tempo initially, increasing speed only as each example is played accurately.

Ex. 1.3

### Reading in Time Signatures of Five, Exercise 1.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in bass clef, 5/4 time signature. The first staff contains four measures of music, each with five quarter notes. The second staff contains four measures of music, each with five quarter notes, ending with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Ex. 1.4

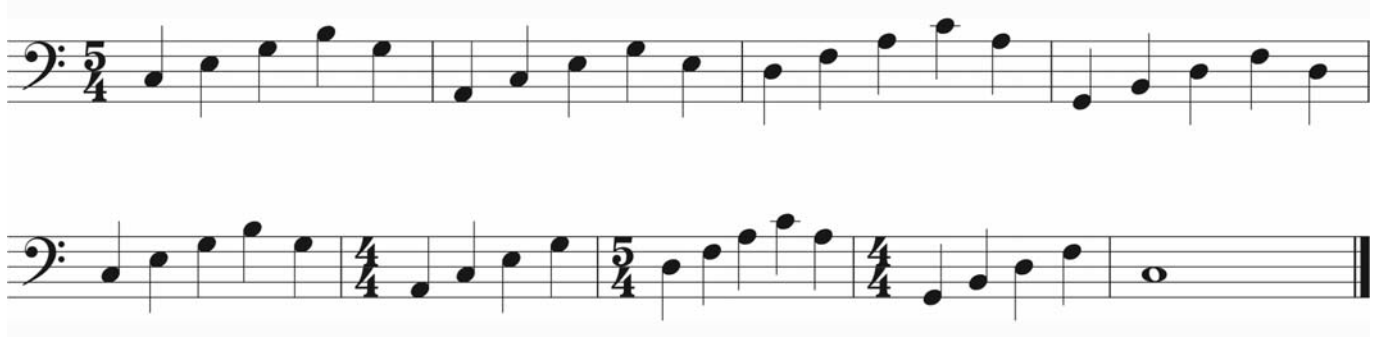
Reading in Time Signatures of Five, Exercise 2.



Two staves of music in bass clef, 5/4 time signature. The first staff contains four measures of music. The second staff contains four measures of music, ending with a double bar line.

Ex. 1.5

Reading in Time Signatures of Five, Exercise 3.



Two staves of music in bass clef. The first staff is in 5/4 time signature and contains four measures of music. The second staff contains four measures of music, with time signatures changing from 5/4 to 4/4, then back to 5/4, and finally to 4/4. It ends with a double bar line.

Ex. 1.6

Reading in Time Signatures of Five, Exercise 4.



Two staves of music in bass clef, 5/8 time signature. The first staff contains four measures of music. The second staff contains four measures of music, ending with a double bar line.

Ex. 1.7

Reading in Time Signatures of Five, Exercise 5.



Two staves of music in bass clef, 5/8 time signature. The first staff contains four measures of music. The second staff contains four measures of music, ending with a double bar line.



Ex. 1.8

## Reading in Time Signatures of Five, Exercise 6.

The image displays two staves of musical notation in bass clef. The first staff is in 5/8 time and contains eight measures of music. The notes are: G2 (quarter), A2 (quarter), B2 (quarter), C3 (quarter), D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), and G3 (quarter). The second staff is in 4/4 time and contains four measures of music. The notes are: G2 (quarter), A2 (quarter), B2 (quarter), C3 (quarter), D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), and G3 (quarter). The second staff ends with a double bar line.

# Chapter 3

## Reading Through Key Changes

Key changes, also called *modulations*, are a common compositional device to add variety to a piece of music. Modulations can change the color or mood of a piece. They can delineate song sections. They can add energy by moving to a higher key. They can put a singer or a soloist into a different range, thereby altering their timbre. Often there may be several modulations within the same piece. Generally they just add interest to the composition.

Before playing the examples below determine the keys involved. Determine whether they are major or minor by examining the melody. Determine the range of each piece to then select the proper hand position.

Use the root of each key in the proper position as an anchor point. With the fretting hand in proper position it is possible to keep the eyes on the sheet music rather than the neck of the instrument. Use the middle finger to anchor on the root of all major key passages. Use the first finger to anchor on the root of all minor key passages.

Set the metronome to a slow tempo initially, increasing speed only as each example is played accurately.

Ex. 1.9

### Modulation Exercise 1.

The exercise consists of four staves of music in bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The first staff is in C major (no sharps or flats). The second staff modulates to D major (two sharps). The third staff modulates to E major (three sharps). The fourth staff modulates to F major (one sharp). The exercise ends with a double bar line and repeat sign.