



How to Keep Your Repertoire Ready to Go With These 7 Easy Steps

Are you frustrated because you can no longer play the songs you worked so hard to learn?

Do you wish that you could just sit down at the piano and play one of your favorite tunes?

If you answered yes to these questions then you are not alone. Most piano students, including those who took lessons in the past, find that they practice a lot to learn a new song. Unfortunately, once they start putting all of their attention into learning a new piece, they no longer practice the previous one. Before long, the first tune falls by the wayside.

Multiply this process over a period of months and even years and what do you have? Someone who has learned a dozen or more tunes and can only play one. Does this sound like you?

Fortunately, there's a 7 step-solution for this problem that works wonders. If you put this system into place, you'll have your repertoire ready to go before you know it.

Step 1

Make a list of all the songs you enjoy playing on the piano. Next to each title, write the tempo, meter, key and style.

Step 2

Make a new list of these songs so that each song differs from the previous one as well as from the next piece in terms of tempo, meter, key and style.

Step 3

Put all of the music for these pieces into a loose-leaf notebook. Use the list you made in Step 2 to put your songs in order so that each one differs from the ones that surround it.

Tip: Put copies of the music in non-glare sheet protectors or use heavy duty paper.

Step 4

Begin practicing the songs in order. At first, you'll need more time to get re-acquainted with each piece, but this period will pass.

Tip: Always practice each song two times. Usually 90% of the mistakes you make the first time are automatically fixed by playing the song a second time.

Here's an example of how the process will work.

Note: the number of songs you play will depend on how much time you have on a given day.

Sample plan for repertoire review:

- Monday-songs 1, 2 & 3
- Tuesday-songs 4 & 5
- Wednesday-song 6
- Thursday-songs 7, 8 & 9
- Friday-songs-nothing
- Saturday-songs 10, 11, 12 & 1
- Sunday-songs 2, 3, & 4
- Monday-songs 5, 6 & 7
- Tuesday-song 8

Step 5

When you learn a new tune that you want to add to your repertoire, start by identifying the tempo, meter, key and style.

Put the music into a spot in your notebook where it will be different from the previous song as well as from the following one in terms of tempo, meter, key and style.

Step 6

When you get bored or tired of a repertoire song, simply take it out of your notebook.

But WAIT:

You still need to do one other very important thing:

Make sure that the two songs (which are now next to each other) surrounding the removed song still differ from each other in terms of tempo, meter, key and style.

If not, one of them will need to be moved to another spot in the notebook.

Step 7A

To prepare for a recital or similar performance, select your song(s).

Simply refine your playing with daily practice, recording, assessment, etc.

Tip: It will be a much easier and quicker process to prepare your pieces, because you've been playing your selected songs on a regular basis over a period of time.

Step 7B

To prepare for a gig (playing for a party or similar gathering), play through your entire repertoire every single day for a few days before the event.

Tip: This will help you build up the physical and mental endurance that you will need to maintain concentration at the actual event.

Many of my students have followed this format whether they have 5 songs or 50 tunes in their repertoire.

You can too!