



Lesson Seventeen

Gigajam Keyboard School Lesson 017 IKS IDN

Introducing Dotted Notes

Lesson Objectives

- Introduce the appearance and musical purpose of Dots.
- Understand the affect of Dots on the Note Value of Half Notes and Half Note Rests.
- Apply understanding of Dots to performance by playing a series of studies that include melody and chords.
- Dots and Dotted Notes.

Introducing The Dot

Dots are used to change the length of notes and rests. This allows us to create an even more varied array of notes and rests, and represents the wide range of different rhythmic combinations available, all of which help to make music so diverse and interesting.

A Dot after a note or rest increases the value or length of that note or rests by half of its value.

This is the definition we will use when looking at exercises and examples in lessons.

Dotted Half Note

You learned about Half Notes in Lesson 1.

- A Half Note lasts for two beats.
- A Dot after a note increases its value by half.
- A Half of two is one.

Therefore,

- A Dotted Half Note lasts for three beats – that’s two beats (the Half Note) plus one beat (the Dot).

Fig 1 Table of Dotted Half Notes and Dotted Half Note Rests.

<i>Dotted Half Note</i>	<i>Dotted Half Note Rest</i>	<i>Value</i>



Three beats

Dotted Half Notes in Melody

This adds a new dimension to melodic rhythm – it is now possible to play a melody note which is three beats long – a Dotted Half Note.

Exercise 1 will help you to practise playing a melody containing dotted half notes. Look at it first and make sure you understand exactly what the rhythm is. Count it out loud to yourself. When you are ready, play along with the media files. Only the first five notes of the A Major scale are used – remember to use the correct right hand fingering.

Exercise 1 lesson017.iksidn.01



Adding the Left Hand

Now play that exercise again, this time with a triad played in the left hand. The triad lasts for four beats. Remember to use the correct fingering for both hands.

Exercise 2 lesson017.iksidn.02



Dotted Half Note Rests in Melody

It is also possible of course to use a Dotted Half Note Rest in a melody. Using a rest creates space and allows the music to breathe.

Exercise 3 will help you to practise playing a melody containing dotted half note rests. You will recall the half note rest and how it looks from the table in lesson 11. A dotted half note rest simply has a dot after it and lasts for 3 beats. Look at it first and make sure you understand exactly what the rhythm is. Count it out loud to yourself and remember to leave a space or silence for the dotted rest.

When you are ready, play along with the media files. Only the first five notes of the A Major scale are used – remember to use the correct right hand fingering.

Exercise 3 lesson017.iksidn.03



Adding the Left Hand

Now play that exercise again, this time with a triad played in the left hand. There is no triad in the first bar. Thereafter, the triad lasts for four beats. Notice that no triad is played in bar 4. Remember to use the correct fingering for both hands.

Exercise 4 lesson017.iksidn.04



Mixing It Up

Many of the exercises in these lessons are specially written to focus on one particular aspect of your playing. For example, a whole exercise based only on dotted half notes. In reality however, the most interesting music is often a combination of different musical information.

Exercise 5 is a good example of this mixed musical activity. It includes dotted half notes, half notes, quarter notes and one whole note. It also includes quarter note rests. Additionally, your left and right hands will sometimes be working independently of each other. You can practise each hand separately first.

Look at it first and make sure you understand exactly what the rhythm is. Count it out loud to yourself. When you are ready, play along with the media files.

Only the first six notes of the A Major scale are used – remember to use the correct fingering for both hands.

A Musical Pick-Up

Before you play this exercise I would like to introduce the musical pick-up. In this next exercise the keyboard plays two notes in the first bar. You will see that at the end of the first bar there is a double bar line which represents the beginning of a new section. These two notes are therefore picking up into the second bar. In the music that accompanies the exercise, you will notice that there are no other instruments playing during the pick up bar and that is typical of how pick-ups work. A pick up is usually an instrumental part introducing the next bar.

Exercise 5 lesson017.iksidn.05



Developing Rhythm and reading skills

In your grade 2 studies we have provided a number of new concepts so that you can develop your rhythmic understanding and also your ability to perform increasingly more sophisticated rhythms.

Take time, as always, to go back through your studies ensuring that you are familiar with each of the symbols for rests and that you are comfortable counting and playing notes and rests of all lengths.

Consolidate this knowledge with your understanding of Dotted Notes and how they increase the length of notes and how they add to your ability to read and play rhythm.