



## Lesson Twenty Five

Gigajam Keyboard School Lesson 025 IKS IT

### Introducing Ties

#### Lesson Objectives

- Understand what ties are and how they affect a note.
- Develop ways of reading ties effectively.
- Practise playing ties in melody and chords using 1/2 and 1/4 notes

#### Understanding ties

To understand ties you need to consider the effect a tie has on the length of a note. Also, you need to look at the interpretation of ties often required by a musician to make them work on the keyboard. They are used both in melody and in harmony (chords etc).

#### Definition of a tie

Ties are used in music notation to tie two notes together. This is sometimes necessary to lengthen the sound of the first note.

A tie is a curved line between two notes indicating that the two notes should be played as one sound. This means that two separate notes become one sound - the first note combines its value with that of the second note. You play the first note but not the second. You play the first note and hold it - the value of the second note is added to the length of the first note.

Look at the example below. The first quarter note is tied to the second quarter note. Therefore, you play the first note and hold it for two beats combining the length of the two notes together.

$$1 + 1 = 2$$

#### Exercise 1 lesson025.iksit.01



A tie changes the rhythm. It does not affect pitch. Only notes of the same pitch can be tied together – you cannot tie together A and Bb for example.

Exercise 1 ties together two A's, both of which are quarter notes. It is also possible to tie together notes of different rhythmic value. In exercise 2 we have tied a half note with a quarter note.

$$2 + 1 = 3.$$

**Exercise 2**  
lesson025.iksit.02



The same result could be achieved with a dot of course – a dotted half-note lasts for 3 beats. Take a look at exercise 3, then read and play the same rhythm using different notation.

**Exercise 3**  
lesson025.iksit.03



Now let's take a look at the example of tied notes below. They are all written on the same one note – this is known as a **monotone**. A monotone is a rhythm written on one pitch, in this case A.

In conjunction with the media files, read through the exercise slowly understanding which notes to sound and which not. Identify which notes are tied.

Given that you will soon be playing this exercise, look at which notes to play and hold on to. The rule to follow is play the first note and not the second.

Once you have carefully watched and listened to the multimedia files, try and play along. Make sure that you count clearly and accurately so that you place the notes correctly.

**Exercise 4**  
lesson025.iksit.04



## Ties off

Reading and playing ties is a newly acquired skill which requires practise just like anything else. Much of this lesson so far has been dedicated to helping you achieve this. There is however another important trick to help you hear how a tie sounds.

If you experience any difficulty reading a tie, ignore it! Pretend it isn't there and play the notation without it. Keep playing it - loop and repeat it over and over – without the tie. Listen carefully to how it sounds and feels. Now imagine how it would sound if you put the tie back. Don't put the tie back yet, just imagine how it would sound and feel if you did. When you can hear how it would sound, put it back in and play the notation correctly.

Eventually, you will be able to do this without actually doing any playing – you'll be able to hear and imagine how it should sound before you play it.

Try this now by reading through the previous exercise. Remember, ignore the ties and try to hear it first. Don't play until you can do this.

## Tied Over

Ties are often used to connect notes in two adjacent bars. You may for instance, want a note that is played on beat 4 (of a common time bar) to last for 3 beats. A new note has always to be written at the beginning of the next bar. Both notes are then tied together - the note at the end of the first bar is tied to the new note in next bar. Look at the next exercise which demonstrates this.

### Exercise 5 lesson025.iksit.05



Here is an exercise which involves some of the different types of rhythms already studied in this course. Read through it first to make sure you understand each of the rhythms involved. The note values used are 1/2, 1/4 and dotted 1/2 notes.

**Exercise 6**  
lesson025.iksit.06



The next exercise contains exactly the same information combined with ties, mostly over the bar line. Read through it again to make sure you understand each of the rhythms involved. Try to imagine how it will sound and feel when you actually play it. Doing this carefully will help you to develop your understanding and ability to read and perform tied notes in a musical manner. Now play the exercise using the multimedia files to help you.

**Exercise 7**  
lesson025.iksit.07



## Tied chords and melody

The exercises in this lesson so far have all been on a monotone - containing rhythm only. Any of these new tied rhythms can of course be applied to melody or chords.

For example, use the rhythm from the first 4 bars of exercise 7 and add some notes, say from the A minor scale.

### Exercise 8 lesson025.iksit.08



Let's now add some chords to the same rhythm. The exercise uses inversions as it requires less movement around the keyboard. This exercise is still in A minor.

### Exercise 9 lesson025.iksit.09



The most important thing is to make absolutely certain that you can read what you are playing. Ties add an extra dimension to reading music notation. Until this lesson, reading meant recognising rhythm and pitch in both clefs. From now on you have to be able to read ties too.

The last exercise takes the same rhythm (including ties) and transfers it to F major.

### Exercise 10 lesson025.iksit.10

