

Guide for piece no. 1:

«Hello!»

Quickstart:

1. To become familiar with the features of the app, it is advisable to watch the app guide video that can be accessed via the corresponding button on the homescreen.
2. This guide can be opened and closed again with the «?»-button in the upper right-hand corner of the menu. The guide can also be closed by tapping the «X».
3. Watch the demo video of the piece first. By tapping the -button the demo video can be played back. On some iPhones, the button will not show, unless this text window is closed.
4. The demo video shows the four main versions of how to play the piece "Hello!" in ascending order of difficulty. Here are the four versions of the piece shown in the demo video notated with ordinary note symbols:

Version I (Twin keys, play mirror-inverted)



Version II (Twin keys, play parallel)



Version III (Triplet keys, play mirror-inverted)



Version IV (Triplet keys, play parallel)



5. The piece "Hello!" shown with the PianoSeesaw tone symbols:

					
Hel -	lo!	This	will	be	
					
fun -	ny	so	let's	just	play!
					
Now	we	will	im -	i -	tate:

- The tone symbols shown here represent only the rhythm of the piece.
- Square-shaped tone symbols represent exclusively the black keys. Round tone symbols, which do not occur in this piece, refer to white keys.
- Black squares represent quarter notes, while white rectangles represent half notes.
- This piece is to be played exclusively on the black keys since all tone symbols are square-shaped.

6. The pupil plays the piece and the teacher sings the lyrics. If possible, the pupil (or group of pupils) may also sing the lyrics while playing. At the end of the piece the teacher calls out "a bear", "a cat" or "a mouse," and then the pupil(s) should find and play the corresponding keys as quickly as possible (allocation of the animals see demo video). Then the piece is played again and another animal is announced.
7. At the end of the piece, a nice little competition could be organized: Who finds the correct keys first?. This can be done both in individual private lessons (teacher against pupil, taking turns in announcing animals) as well as in group lessons (pupils competing with each other).
8. Along with this piece the finger numbering should also be introduced, i.e. by announcing a number from 1 to 5 instead of an animal at the end of the piece. Then the pupils(s) perform an activity with the corresponding fingers, such as touching two fingertips having the same number together.

Good luck and have fun!

Detailed guide:

(with explanations, teaching ideas and background information)

Foreword to the PianoSeesaw method:

The PianoSeesaw-app is a teaching tool for piano teachers. The app addresses the teaching of beginners. Regardless of which age one starts learning to play the piano, it is a good idea to initially play only on the black keys. The benefits that arise for the development of a healthy and natural technique as well as for the haptic (means: sensation of touch) orientation on the keyboard cannot be denied.

The PianoSeesaw method offers an entirely new way to learn to read music. Because the notation system is highly simplified in the beginning, the pupil succeeds in reading the music already at the very first attempt, without need for extensive theoretical explanations given in advance.

For every piece there is a guide included which provides explanations, teaching ideas and background information. In addition, many suggestions for **improvisation, composing and ear training are given**.

The PianoSeesaw can be used both as standalone course or as supplemental material to train orientation on the keys, to learn reading (never seen before approach) and to start composing and improvising. Because the app is starting off on the black keys it is predestined to be used before any other piano method or in conjunction with methods starting off with rote pieces on the black keys (age group 6-10). It also works very well as a teaching supplement for pupils who have learned to play the piano only by ear and now are supposed to learn to read music. For these pupils, it would be advisable to begin directly with piece number 2 or 3 ("Waltz of the Bear" or "Triplet- and Twin-keys Song"). The notation system of this piano method is also suitable for teenagers and adults. But the vocabulary which is applied in this version of the method is quite unsuitable for this age group (mouse, bear, childish lyrics, etc.). A version for youth and adults will soon be released.

The PianoSeesaw can be used both in private lessons and in group lessons. The suitability for group lessons is ensured primarily through the notation system which is presented here. The tone symbols are immediately understandable after a brief introduction. Individual explanations for each pupil, which would deflect the teacher's focus from the group, can therefore be avoided for the most part. This method is probably only suitable for self-instruction on a limited scale, however no studies on this have been carried out yet. Although the written instructions for the individual pieces are certainly understandable also for autodidacts, they are meant mainly for trained piano teachers and pedagogues.

Children between the ages of 6 and 10 have a very limited capacity to visually understand a regular notation system. This fact was the main reason for developing a new system, i.e. the PianoSeesaw method. Children readily understand the simple symbols, and it is easy to implement them. The PianoSeesaw notation system which is at the beginning significantly different from the regular notation system, passes through a smooth process of change during the method. At the end of the method this process ends up using the regular staff with

treble and bass clef (see trailer on PianoSeesaw.com). The pupils learn to read music effortlessly, so to speak, without noticing it.

The PianoSeesaw comes completely without embellishing images or illustrations. The reason for this is that the musical notation often fills the sheet pages almost completely and additional images would therefore interfere with reading. During a long testing period, no pupil has missed images or illustrations.

With the PianoSeesaw method a notation system has been developed which is immediately understandable and easy to use. Pupils who learn to play the piano using this method like to avoid looking down at the keys while playing and instead are highly motivated to read the music. Now that the pupils don't have to spend time understanding the notation of a piece, valuable lesson time becomes available for developing conscious listening, improvisation and composing.

Teachers and pupils can both look forward to exciting, varied and creative piano lessons.
Have fun and good luck!

Markus Kreisler, Tromsø

The main learning objectives of this piano method:

1. Haptic orientation (i.e. sensation of touch): "I only need to look down at the keys occasionally."
2. Positive attitude towards looking at the music: "I want to look at the music because I immediately understand what it says."
3. Playing by ear/improvisation and playing from sheet music are equally important.
4. Composing is easy and fun.

Functions

- This guide can be opened and closed again with the «?»-button in the upper right-hand corner of the menu. The guide can also be closed by tapping the «X».
- To become familiar with the features of the app, it is advisable to watch the app guide video that can be accessed via the corresponding button on the homescreen.
- By tapping the -button the demo video can be played back. On some iPhones, the button will not show, unless this text window is closed.
- The content displayed on the screen can be printed by tapping the -button (printer). If the pupil's part is to be printed, this text window has to be closed so that the pupil's part will be brought to the front.

Practical information

!!! If the pupil has an iPad with a screen of 12.9 inches or more, it is not necessary to print out his part. If the screen is smaller, it's better to print out his part in a larger format, for example A4 !!! Six- to ten-year-olds need at least this size in order to be able to read the tone symbols selectively. This applies particularly when later on in the method, the graphics are scaled down in order to show more tone symbols per page.

Introduction of the PianoSeesaw tone symbols for black keys:

The PianoSeesaw tone symbols are especially adapted to the abilities of pupils who are new at beginning to read music. The tone symbols in this piece are not yet assigned to specific pitches and therefore give no hint as to

which keys have to be played. They show only the rhythm.. For example, the first line consists of three half- and two quarter-notes (see illustration below).



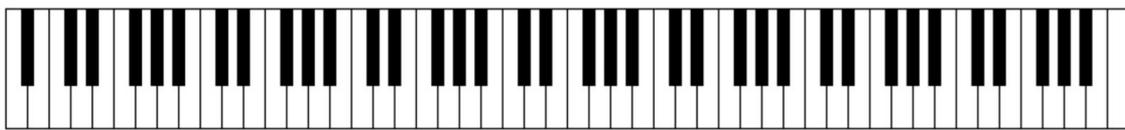
The rectangles and squares represent the black keys, regardless of whether they are black or white:

- White rectangles represent long tones, played on black keys (white half notes)
- Black squares represent short tones, played on black keys (black quarter notes)

The lyrics help the pupils to play the rhythm properly.

The demo video demonstrates which black keys are to be used in performing the piece. More information on this can be found under ["Variants on how to play the piece "Hello!"](#) at the bottom of this document.

Bear, cat and mouse



bear

cat

mouse

Background: With pupils up to 10 years old, it is very useful to imitate animals on the piano. In this way they get to know the instrument and its possibilities in a playful manner. In the sheet music of the piece "Hello!" there are three animals named: bear, cat and mouse. The three animals should be associated with the keys as follows: The bass keys resemble a grumbling bear, the highest keys sound like a squeaking mouse and the cat represents the keys in the middle of the keyboard. (See illustration above.)

The goal of this activity is to introduce the pupil to the keyboard, in particular to let him experience where on the piano the dark (low) sounding keys and the bright (high) sounding keys are to be found. This is the first step towards working on the topic "orientation on the keyboard." Being able to find your way around on the keyboard without looking down at the keys (haptic orientation) is a major goal of the PianoSeesaw method.

How to proceed in the lesson

1. At first the above described animal-imitation activity has to be conducted.
2. The music sheet of this piece has to be set up in **landscape** orientation so that the title is shown at the top edge of the page.
3. The following has to be imparted:
 - Square-shaped tone symbols refer to black keys.
 - The piece is played exclusively with black keys, since all tone symbols are square-shaped. Already now it may be mentioned that white keys are represented by round tone symbols, but that these notes will come in a later piece.
 - Black squares represent short tones (quarter notes) and white rectangles represent long tones (half notes).
4. The teacher now recites the lyrics of the first two lines of the piece following the notated rhythm and pointing with a pencil at the corresponding tone symbols.
5. Next, the teacher sings and plays the first two lines of the piece. Since the pupil is going to repeat what the teacher is playing, a variant of the piece should be chosen which the pupil can manage instantly with his motor skills. An overview over the pupil's motor skills can be obtained by the animal imitation game which was conducted before. Most pupils ages 6 to 10 years are immediately able to play variant 1 of the presented

variants in the demo video (both hands on the black twin keys, mirrored melodic lines). However, some pupils must begin with the easier variants, alternating hands or one hand alone (see descriptions below under: Variants of how to play the piece "Hello!").

6. Now the pupil tries. It would be best if both the teacher and the pupil sing the lyrics while the pupil is playing.

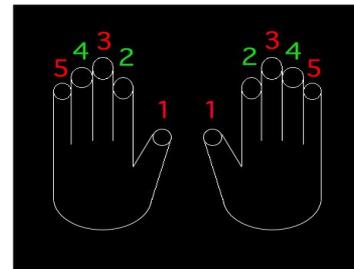
7. The pupil plays the whole piece. After the pupil has played the last note of the piece, the teacher says either "mouse", "cat" or "bear".

→ The pupil will then play as quickly as possible some of the corresponding keys.

8. Now the terms "bear keys" for the lowest keys and "mouse keys" for the highest keys can be introduced. Also the terms "bear hand" and "mouse hand" could be used, but strictly speaking, these will first be needed in the next piece (See instructions for the piece "Waltz of the Bear.").

Introducing the finger numbers

The pupil draws her hand and writes in the finger numbers:



Games with finger numbers

1. Dice game:

- Preparation: The teacher draws 6 to 8 groups with circled numbers from 1 to 5 on an A4/letter sheet. The result might look like this:



(Download on www.PianoSeesaw.com)

- One of the dice will be rolled:

→ The player who first taps with the correct finger on one of the corresponding numbers of the game board wins the round. Example: The die rolls a 2. Now one has to tap with the index finger on one of the ciphers on the game board that show a 2. The first player who taps with the correct finger on the right number has won this round.

→ If a 6 is rolled, the first one to clap his hands wins the round.

2. Finger-touch game:

Example: The teacher and the pupil alternate with appointing finger combinations, i.e. as follows: "The 2nd finger of the bear hand welcomes the 3rd finger of the mouse hand." Both teacher and pupil bring the corresponding fingertips of the respective hands together. Then a new combination will be called out.

3. Game with hands in *twin-key- or **triplet-key-position

- This game should be played first while looking at the keys. However, the goal is that the pupil masters the game without looking at the keys.

- The pupil brings both hands in *twin-key- or **triplet-key-position. The positions can also be mixed later on.

- The teacher calls out one of the numbers of the fingers being used in the corresponding hand position (2 or 3 for the twins; 2, 3 or 4 for the triplets):
 - The pupil plays the corresponding black key with the named finger.
 - It is possible to call out two different finger numbers, but then it must also be determined which hand has to play which finger-number.
- Since this game is only played on the black keys, the first and fifth fingers cannot be part of the game. Further on in this piano method the white keys will also be used, and then all the fingers can participate.
- **The game should also be played in an alternative manner where the name of the key-group is called out instead of a finger number**, for example ****bear-triplet** (for F-sharp), ***mouse-twin** (for E-flat), etc. (later on: C, D, E, etc.)
- The game can of course also be played with only one hand at a time.

***)twin-key-position:** 2. and 3. finger on the black twin keys

The two twin keys are renamed as follows:

- **bear-twin(-key)** instead of C-sharp / D-flat
- **mouse-twin(-key)** instead of D-sharp / E-flat

****)triplet-key-position:** 2. and 3. and 4. finger on the black triplet keys

The three triplet keys are renamed as follows:

- **bear-triplet(-key)** instead of F-sharp / G-flat
- **cat-triplet(-key)** instead of G-sharp / A-flat
- **mouse-triplet(-key)** instead of A-sharp / B-flat

Variants of how to play the piece "Hello!":

(those shown in the demo video and some additional)

- **Alternating hands** (Each hand is placed on a separate twin keys group.):
 - First one hand plays both twin keys simultaneously and then the other, etc. The twins are to be played with the index finger and the middle finger. Hands switch with each tone symbol.
- **Individual hands:**
 - On the twins: Index finger and **middle finger** alternate.
 - On the triplets: Index finger and **ring finger** alternate.
- **Both hands** play simultaneously and **mirrored** to each other (i.e. in contrary motion):
 - On the twins: See variant I in the demo.
 - On the triplets: See variant III in the demo video.
- **Both hands** play simultaneously and **parallel** to each other:
 - On the twins: See variant II in the demo.
 - On the triplets: See variant IV in the demo video.

The variants that are played with individual fingers should be started sometimes with the index finger and sometimes with the middle finger (twin-key-position*) respectively the ring finger (triplet-key-position**).

It is also possible to play with one hand in the twin-key-position* and simultaneously with the other hand in the triplet-key-position**.