T H E O R G A N I S E D P I A N I S T

An "8 - Page" Pocket Guide to Pipe and Electronic Church Organs and Hymn Playing

If you can play hymn tunes on a piano / keyboard, then you can quickly and easily, learn to play hymns and indeed complete services on church organs.

An organ has two or more keyboard-manuals to allow the player to play the tune on just one keyboard **or** to "**solo**" the melody on one and play the accompaniment-harmony on another and play the bass line on the foot-pedals.

Keyboard / 'Manuals' : An organ may have two, three, four, five or even more keyboards and they are always 'stacked down', from top to bottom, in the same order so that you can always begin to find your way round the rest of any organ layout easily.

❷ - Manuals	❸ - Manuals	❹ - Manuals	❺ - Manuals
N / A	N / A	N / A	
Echo Organ			
N / A	N / A		Solo Organ
Solo Organ			
***SWELL Organ**	***SWELL Organ**	***SWELL Organ**	***SWELL Organ**
***GREAT Organ**	***GREAT Organ**	***GREAT Organ**	***GREAT Organ**
N / A	Choir Organ	Choir Organ	Choir Organ

**** Some 'electronic' organs name 'Swell' as "Solo" and 'Great' as "Accompaniment"***

The Foot Keyboard's Pedals are arranged just like keys on an ordinary piano keyboard and we shall come back to them

in a moment after looking at getting the keyboard / 'manuals' working !

The Volume of the Keyboard/Manuals is controlled by the **BIG pedal(s)**.
The **BIG 'Swell'/Volume Pedal(s)** do(es) ***not*** increase or decrease the volume of the 'Great Organ' on a 'pipe-organ' ***but***, where there is only one 'Swell' / Volume Pedal on an 'electronic' organ, it will control the volume of the whole organ.

To avoid damaging the organ, these '**Swell Pedals'** are **always left in the "open/full volume" position when a pipe organ is switched off**. Consequently, these pedal(s) must be "closed down" ***before*** starting to play.
Each keyboard has its own set of "stops" and there are usually "couplers" which enable the "stops" on one keyboard-manual to be played on the (an)other keyboard and also on the foot-pedal keyboard !

The Organ "Stops" are all numbered in "feet" and are labelled as to their 'family' types.

First "FEET" : The number of **"feet"** corresponds to the lengths of the organ pipes and the 'basic' length of **8'** corresponds to the pitch of a piano.

The shorter or longer the organ pipe, the higher or lower its pitch

- the **4'**, **2'** and **1'** 'stops' add brightness and sound as **one**, **two** and **three** octaves ***higher than the note pressed***

- the **16'**, **32'** and, where there is such a pipe, the **64'** add resonance and gravity and sound as **one**, **two** and **three** octaves ***lower than the note pressed***.

Some of the **"stops"** have ***' feet and fractions'*** and these are called **'Mixtures'** and, by adding *' natural harmonics'*,

these “stops” add brightness. **‘Mixtures’ *shouldn’t be used unless combined with other “stops”.***.

Families of “Stops” : Many of the “stops” sound, or try to sound, much like their labels - ***“Viols”*** and ***“Gambas”*** are essentially ***“Strings”; “Flutes”*** and ***“Oboes”*** sound like themselves and, though they are actually pipes with reeds in them, the ***“brass”*** are good ‘imitations’ of their namesakes.

The ‘Characteristic’ Church Organ Sound comes from the **DIAPASON “stops**” which are found on every organ.

The ‘Electronic/Cinema’ Organ Sound comes from the ***TIBIA***. ***“stops”*** and the ***“Tremulant(s)”*** - Some ‘electronic’church organs have “Tibia” stops too ! **The ‘TREMULANT’ gives a *‘vibrato-wobble’* effect and SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR HYMN TUNES ! O.K. !**

You will have to learn to play most hymn tunes in a very smooth ***‘ l e g a t o’*** fashion for, as soon as you take your fingers off the organ keys, the organ’s sound stops ! ***Tip* : *Where the ‘melody’ notes repeat, you should learn to ‘hold’ the melody notes and only “repeat” the ‘inner’ contralto and tenor notes* !**
Setting Up The “Stops” : Most, even small church organs, have ***‘combination pistons’*** - **pre-set buttons** found below the keyboards and perhaps too above the foot-key pedals - These ‘piston’ buttons are pressed **‘on/off’** to select the most frequently used ‘sounds’.

If there are no **‘pistons’**, experiment with combinations of **8’**, **4’** and **16’** “stops” on the keyboards and play through the same hymn tune several times until you find a combination that sounds like ‘a church sound’ !

You need 8’, 4’ and 16’ stops on ALL KEYBOARDS - and PEDALS ! Also, try ADDING a 2’ stop on the Swell and the Great for ‘brightness’.

Try playing a hymn through on each keyboard with both hands **and then** with ***different hands on different keyboards*** **!**

Next, **try *"coupling"*** the keyboards together, look for the**"Swell to Great" coupler** - and play the **right hand** 'melody' on the (lower) **GREAT**
and the **left hand** accompaniment on the (upper) **SWELL** keyboards.
Note : On some 2-manual 'electronic' organs the upper keyboard is called the "SOLO" and the lower keyboard called the "ACCOMPANIMENT". The upper "SOLO" keyboard may be slightly shorter than the lower "ACCOMPANIMENT" keyboard and the "SOLO" too may also be 'slightly off-set', toward the right of the lower keyboard - These keyboards are generally used for the purposes that their names suggest.

Now to 'The Pedals' - The only way to learn is to practise playing **"tunes"**, **try e.g.** playing the first four bars of a hymn tune with your **right hand**
then trying to play it with your **left foot alone** on the pedals
and then your **right hand *and*** **left foot together** - **'in unison'**.

Next, try playing the bass line "A-MEN" notes on the foot-pedals !

Recommended Music Copies which will cover nearly every Order of Service

❶ Church of Scotland (1929 edition) "C.H. 2" ❷ (1973) "C.H. 3" Hymnaries
❸ "Songs of God's People" (OUP, 1988) ❹ "Carols for Choirs 1" (OUP, 1961)
❻ Wedding Marches by 1) Wagner and 2) Mendelssohn

Now to *"A PROVEN FORMAT" for HYMN - PLAYING* - ***Kid's Play*** **!**

Hymns can be anything between one and seven verses long and the

5 - Verse Format here adapted to suit.

The Introduction : Both Hands on the same, usually (upper) SWELL keyboard

: Play the first 4 bars and the last 4-bars through, slightly quicker than you will actually want the congregation to sing

: Hold the last chord of the tune and count an extra bar to yourself before the verse

T H E N (changing the format as the number of verses demands)

V E R S E ❶ : BOTH HANDS on SWELL (Upper) Keyboard

: Hold the last chord of the verse and

count an extra bar to yourself between verses

V E R S E ❷ : LEFT HAND on SWELL (Upper) Keyboard

and RIGHT HAND on GREAT (Lower) Keyboard

: Hold the last chord of the verse and

count an extra bar to yourself between verses

V E R S E ❸ : BOTH HANDS on GREAT (Lower) Keyboard

: Hold the last chord of the verse <u>and</u>

<u>count an extra bar to yourself between verses</u>

<u>V E R S E ❹</u> : BOTH HANDS on SWELL (Upper) Keyboard

***<u>or, 2nd last verse</u>*: Hold the last chord of the tune <u>and</u> <u>an extra bar to yourself between verses</u>**

<u>V E R S E ❺</u> : BOTH HANDS on GREAT (Lower) Keyboard

***<u>Last Verse</u>*: Hold the last chord of the tune <u>and</u>**

<u>an extra bar to yourself at the end of the verse</u>

"<u>A - M E N</u>" : Hold each chord of the '<u>A - MEN</u>' for 'about one bar'.

Play the proper number of verses for each hymn !
Adapt 'the format' according to their being five, four or three or whatever verses !
Use "Faux-Bourdon/Descant" tunes for 'middle' and/or 'last' verses.

<u>Church Services and Choir Practices</u>

You will need 'voluntaries' for BEFORE THE SERVICE - THE OFFERING - AND AFTER THE SERVICE TOO !
<u>Choose simple voluntaries</u> *and* <u>Check Through the "Order of Service"</u>

= Does the choir sing an '**INTROIT**' before the service **?**

= **Agree** choice of **tunes** <u>and</u> **Tell the choir too !**

= **Number of verses** in each Psalm and Hymn as there are often "omissions"

= **Sung "A-mens"** at the end of Psalms and Hymns **?**

= **"** **"** " " " " Prayers ?

= **Spoken <u>or</u> Sung "A-men" after The Benediction ?**

= If there is a ***Baptismal Christening*** - Does the Choir / Congregation **sing** *"**The Lord Bless You and***

Keep You" afterwards **? If so**, then <u>Always **use "CH 2" No 727 (i)** arr. by Lowell Mason</u>.

= If it is a ***Communion Service*** and **Psalm 24, verses 7 - 10**

is chosen, use the **Tune : "*St. George's, Edinburgh"*** by

Andrew Mitchell Thomson "CH 2/ Psalms" No 190

<u>or at</u> "CH3" No 566 (ii).

= If it is **a *Communion Service***, then the *"Nunc Dimittis"* found

in "CH 2" at No 716 (iii), (iv) <u>or</u> (v) *may be appropriate* as a

'voluntary' at the end of the service as the communion elements are removed from the Communion table.

Sung "A-men" settings are found in "CH 2" No 728 <u>and</u> in "CH 3" No 662 *The 'more familiar' settings are in **"CH 2" 728 (iv)** John Stainer's **"Dresden A-men" and** also the very familar 'Danish' "**Three-fold A-men"***.

***<u>YOU SHOULD HAVE A VERY QUICK CHOIR PRACTICE TOO</u>* !**

❶ **Play the each hymn** through **<u>TWICE</u> <u>then</u>, TWICE THROUGH ❷ Soprano ❸ Contralto ❹ <u>Soprano and Contralto TOGETHER</u>**

❺ Tenor ❻ <u>Soprano, Contralto and Tenor TOGETHER</u> ❼ Bass AND FINALLY ❽ <u>TWICE THROUGH ALL PARTS TOGETHER</u> !

<u>Learn to play</u> - <u>and teach the choirs</u> **and <u>use</u> the "<u>Faux-Bourdon</u>" and "<u>Descant</u>"** tunes in the **<u>1929</u> Church of Scotland Hymnaries** !

***<u>Tips</u>* :** A most useful combination of stops for playing a **melody** on the **Great** would be a **16'** + **4'** + **2'** + **'Mixture' stop,** with the accompaniment on **Swell**

<u>An A - Z of The Organ</u>

(M) = Mixture (type) <u>or</u> Mutation Stops which should not be used on their own

Acoustic Bass **(M) 32'** sounds a 5th higher than key pressed, the tone is produced from the 16' pedal stops - **see 'Quint', Mixture and Mutation**

Acute Mixture **(M)** overtones sounded by additional pipes, tuned slightly sharp

Bass Flute **8'** a pedal stop of 8' length and pitch

Bassoon **8' <u>or</u> 16'** reed pedal stop continuing clarinet or oboe range in the bass

Bell Gamba **8'** a 'string' stop with a 'bell' or cone on top of pipes, **see Gamba**

Bombarde **16' <u>or</u> 32'** pedal reed stop, more powerful than the **Bombardon**

Bombardon **16'** pedal reed stop, less powerful than the **Bombarde** (above)

Bourdon **16'** dull -toned pedal stop found on every organ

Carillon(s) **(M)** **Mixture stop**, adds 12th - 17th and 22nd harmonics

Clarabel/Clarabella/Claribel/Claribel Flute (various spellings and names) **8'** wooden flue stop sounding much as the **Hohlf lˆte**

Clarinet **8'** slightly reedy quality sound

Clarion **4'** reed stop sounding like a **Trumpet**

Clarion Mixture **(M)** see **Mixture Stops**

Clarinet Flute **8'** essentially a **Diapason**-type sound

Closed Horn **8'** reed stop

Cor Anglais **8' <u>or</u> 16'** reed stop sounding a bit like its orchestral namesake

Cor - de - Nuit **4' <u>or</u> 8'** (night-watchman's horn) metal pipe stop with distinctive sound

Cor Oboe **8'** somewhat reedy sounding flue stop

Cornet **(M)** **Mixture stop** adding 4 or 5 harmonics

Corno di Bassetto **8'** much like the bass register of a **Clarinet**

Corno dolce 8' or 16' soft **Flute - *not* Horn** - sound
Cornopean 8' reed stop sounding like a soft **Trumpet**
Couplers link manual-to-manual and manual-to-pedal so that the stops belonging to and selected for one particular manual can be added to and played on another manual or the pedals **Cremona 8'** (corruption of *Cromorne*), sounds like a **Clarinet**
Cymbal (M) **Mixture stop** of bril liant effect, may be 'open' or 'stopped'
Diapason 8' produces the church organ's most distinctive and characteristic tones - may be '**Open**' or '**Stopped**' - see **Octave**, **Principal**
Diaphone 8' or 16' or 32' powerful 'Open Diapason' reed stop with a vibratory apparatus to increase loudness'
Dolcan/Dolce 8' soft-toned 'open' metal diapason stop with inverted conical - shaped pipes
Dulciana 4' or 8' or 16' a delicate-toned soft 'open diapason' stop in British-built organs but a 'string-sounding' stop in instruments built in the U.S.A.
Dulciana Mixture (M) of soft tone on **Swell and/or Echo** organ(s)
Echo (stops/manual/organ) soft stops giving an 'echo' effect or a 'contrivance' enabling phrases to be repeated more softly on a different set of stops
a name given to a keyboard manual or even to a separate organ
built in a different part of the building but operated from the main console
Fagote/Fagott/Fagotto 16' a reed stop sounding somewhat like a **Bassoon**
Fifteenth 2' on Manuals or 4' on Pedals high-pitched 'Diapason' stop producing notes 2 octaves above the key pressed
Flagelot 2' soft-toned flue stop
Flat Twenty-first (M) **Mutation Stop** adds 2 octaves-and-a-*m i n o r* - third
Flautino 2' softer tone than the **Fifteenth** and continues the **Gemshorn** in a higher register
Flauto traverso 4' flute tone
Flute Stops include **Doppelflˆte 8' : Fernflˆte 8' : Flûte d'amour 4' or 8'**
Flûte amabile 4' or 8' : Grosseflˆte 8' (metal pedal stop**)** **Harmonic Flute 4' (silvery-toned) : Hohlflˆte 8'**
Rohrblatt (reed pipe like a **Clarinet** or **Oboe)**
Rohrflˆte 4' (but 8' pitch metal pipe**)**

Spitzflˆte 8’ or 4’ or 2’ (slightly conical-shaped metal pipe**)**

Waldflˆte 4’ (woodland flute) (like **Clarabella) and Zauberflˆte 8’ (**sounds the 3rd harmonic and not the 2nd octave**)**

Flûte ‡ cheminée **8’** metal pipe with a ‘tube’ or ‘chimney’ in the stopper

Flûte ‡ pavillon **4’ or 8’** pipe ending in a bell-tent structure

Flute Bass/Bass Flute **8’** pedal stop

Flute Harmonic **4’ or 8’** ‘open’ metal pipe

Furniture **(M)** powerful **Mixture Stop**

Gamba **4’ or 8’ or 16’** ‘open’ metal ‘string-sounding’ stop

Gedackt **8’** metal ‘stopped’ **Diapason** sounding like a soft **Flute**

Geigen Principal **4’ or 8’** ‘open’ **Diapason** with a slightly ‘string-like’ tone

Gemshorn **4’** (from ‘*chamois horn’*)‘open’ soft and light-toned, slightly nasal stop

Grave Mixture **(M)** **Mixture Stop** adding the lower (12th and 15th) range harmonics

see, conversely, the **Sharp Mixture**

Hautboy **8’** reed stop, sounding a bit like an **Oboe**

Hohl Flute/ Hohlflˆte **8’** like a **Claribel** (above)

Horn **8’** powerfull reed but fuller and smoother in tone than **Trumpet**

Horn Diapason **8’** ‘open’ **Diapason** - ‘Horn’ is a *mis-nomer* - sounds like a ‘string’

Keraulophon **8’** a kind of ‘basset-horn’, ‘French Horn-like’ but **Gamba** sound

Krumhorn **8’** a double-reed ‘curved horn’ stop often found on cinema organs

Lieblich Flute **4’** “lovely” flute, continuing upper range of the **Lieblich Gedackt**

Lieblich Gedackt **8’** “lovely” **Gedackt**, a ‘stopped’ **Diapason**

Major Bass **16’ or 32’** usually an ‘open’ **Diapason** pedal stop

Melotone **8’ or 4’ or 2’** stop found only on Compton cinema organs

Mixture Stop(s) **(M)** add richness and brightness but cannot be used on their own.

They sound the note played and add its other ‘natural’ harmonics

and the number of ‘harmonic ranks’ played is marked in Roman

Numerals e.g. III, IV, V etc.

Mutation Stops **(M)** do not sound at ‘normal’ pitch but at the pitch of one of the ‘non-octave’ harmonics see **Quint : Twelfth : Seventeenth**

Nineteenth : Flat Twenty-first

Ninet eenth (M) **Mutation Stop** adds 2 octaves-and-a-fifth
Oboe / Hautboy **8'** reed stop imitating its orchestral namesake
Octava/Principal **4'** sounds an octave higher than the 4'
Diapason
Octave aiguës (Coupler**) = Octave Coupler** plays notes an octave higher than the keys
pressed - Conversely, see **Octave graves (Sub-Octave Coupler)**
Octave graves (Coupler) = **Sub-Octave Coupler** plays notes an octave lower than the keys
pressed - Conversely, see **Octave aiguës (Octave Coupler)**
Octave Quint (M) as a **Twelfth** sounding an octave-and-a-fifth hugher than the note pressed
'Open' Pipes are, as one would expect, exactly that, like simple 'f lutes'
Ophicleide 16' powerful reed stop sounding like a **Tuba**
Piccolo 2' metal or wood pipe sounding like its orchestral namesake
Posaune **8' or 16'** powerful **Trombone** tone
Principal **4' on manuals and 8' on pedals**
an 'open' **Diapason** stop sounding an octave higher than the
key/pedal-note pressed
Quint (M) sounds a 5th higher than the note pressed and when on the
pedals makes a 16' stop give the effect of a 32' stop
Quintadena/Quint‰ton
16' (M) sounds the 'fundamental' note pressed and that a 12th higher
Rohr Flute/Rohrflˆte 8' 'stopped' **Diapason** with flute-like tone - also see **Flute Stops**
Salicet/Salicional 4'/ 8' soft-toned stops of respective lengths
Sesquialtera (M) **Mixture Stop** usually of 2 ranks adding the 12th and 17th
Seventeenth (M) **Mutation Stop** adds 2 octaves-and-a-third higher
Sharp Mixture (M) **Mixture Stop** adding the higher harmonics, conversely,
see **Graves Mixture**
Stops are the devices which alter the organ's sound and 'registration' and there are the
Flue Stops which control the 'whistles and flutes' **and** the ***Reed Stops*** for metal-tongued pipes **'Stopped' Pipes** have 'closed' ends and produce the pitch of 'open' pipes twice their length
Suabe Flute 4' like a **Claribel etc.** but the pipe has inverted lips
Sub Bass 16' a 'stopped' **Diapason** pedal stop

Super Octave/Octave (Coupler) plays notes an octave higher than the keys pressed Conversely, see **Octave graves (Sub-Octave Coupler)**

Tibia Stops on 'electronic' and cinema organs, are like the **Diapason Stops** on church organs

thus **T. Major 8' or 16' : T. Minor 4' or 8' : T. Plena 8'** (a loud 'solo' stop)

T. Profunda 16' : T. Clausa 4' and **T. Dura 4'** (quite hard in tone)

Tremulant (s) *should not be used* when playing hymn tunes ! They give a 'vibrato' effect

which is the familiar characteristic of 'electronic'/cinema organs !

Tromba 8' essentially a **Trumpet**

Trombone 16' a powerful **Tuba** or **Trumpet** sound

Trumpet 8' a reed stop giving a **Trumpet** sound

Tuba 8' or 16' or 4' reed stop of great power but with higher range than **Trumpet** sometimes marked as **'Tuba Major' and/or 'Tuba Mirabi l is'**

Twelfth/Octave Quint (M) see **Mutation Stops -** sounds an 0ctave-and-a-fifth higher

than the note pressed

Unda Maris 8' (wave of the sea) sounds like the **Voix celeste**

Viol (d'orchestre) 8' stringy-sounding light-voiced stop as sound too the

Viol d'amour 8' (an 'open' **Diapason**) **: Viol da Gamba 8'**

Viola 8' : Violin Diapason 8' : Violincello 8'

and **Violone 16'** (sounding an octave lower than the **Violincello**

Voix celeste 8' producing a 'string-like' sound with one of the pipes tuned sharp

Vox angelica or Vox coelestis 8' like the **Voix celeste** but hasone of the pipes tuned slightly f lat, instead of sharp

Vox humana 8' (human voice) a reed pipe stop beloved by cinema organists !

Wald Flute 4' or 8' (woodland flute) similar to the **Claribel etc.** with pipes inverted.