

Root Position Triads

a study in chord shapes for harpists

Be sure to place this group of three notes before playing the first note.

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The first system of musical notation consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) in 3/4 time. It begins with two measures of whole triads. The third measure shows the notes G4, A4, and B4 in the treble clef and G3, A3, and B3 in the bass clef, with fingerings 3, 2, 1 for the treble and 3, 2, 1 for the bass. Brackets group these notes, and arrows point to them from the instruction above. The fourth measure repeats this triad. The fifth and sixth measures return to whole triads.

The second system consists of two staves in 3/4 time. It contains six measures of quarter notes. The treble clef notes are G4, A4, B4, G4, A4, B4. The bass clef notes are G3, A3, B3, G3, A3, B3. The notes are grouped in pairs across the measures.

The third system consists of two staves in 3/4 time. It contains six measures of quarter notes. The treble clef notes are G4, A4, B4, G4, A4, B4. The bass clef notes are G3, A3, B3, G3, A3, B3. The notes are grouped in pairs across the measures.

The fourth system consists of two staves in 3/4 time. It contains six measures of quarter notes. The treble clef notes are G4, A4, B4, G4, A4, B4. The bass clef notes are G3, A3, B3, G3, A3, B3. The notes are grouped in pairs across the measures.

The fifth system consists of two staves in 3/4 time. It contains six measures of quarter notes. The treble clef notes are G4, A4, B4, G4, A4, B4. The bass clef notes are G3, A3, B3, G3, A3, B3. The notes are grouped in pairs across the measures.

Work to memorize the shape of the root position triad. Place all three fingers simultaneously, with no buzzing. Remember to place all three notes at the beginning of each measure. Even in the measures where the notes will be played one at a time as quarter notes, you should place them as a group, just like when you play the three notes as a chord. You'll see this chord shape in a lot of your music and you'll use it a lot if you learn to read lead sheets. The time you spend as a beginner learning to do this well will save you time later. When you have mastered this, you can learn Westphalia, Savior Like a Shepherd Lead Us, Ode to Joy, We Three Kings or the Sweetheart Waltz. If you can play this, you can play the first harp part in Arabesque.