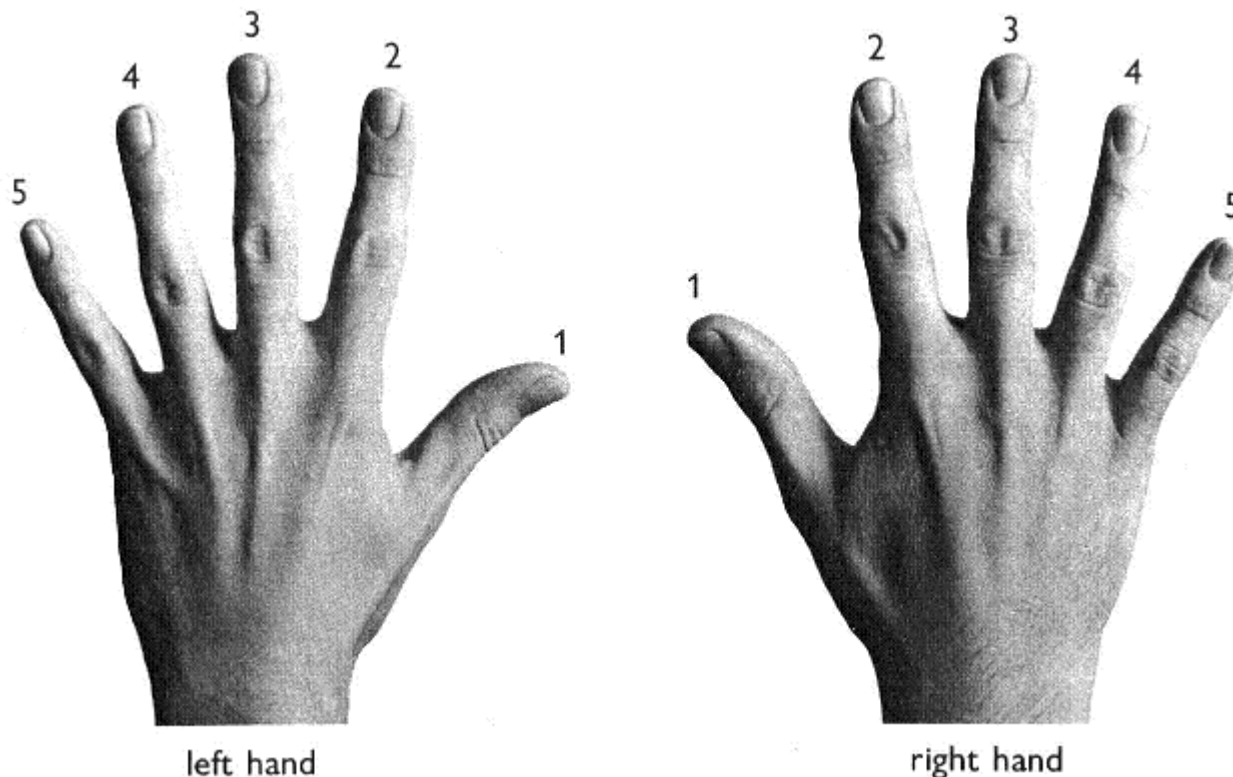


## Lesson 6: Finger Numbers

The fingers of both hands are assigned numbers:

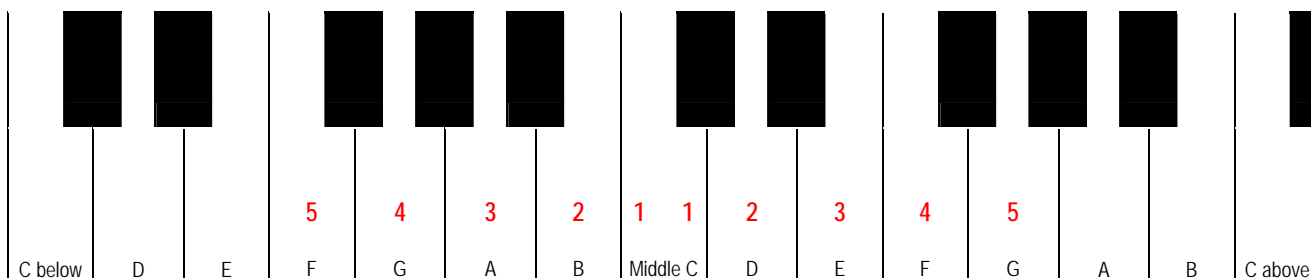


In the very early stages of learning to read music, lesson books will usually assign each finger to a specific key on the keyboard – you will always play that particular key with the assigned finger. This makes it a bit easier to learn how to read music.

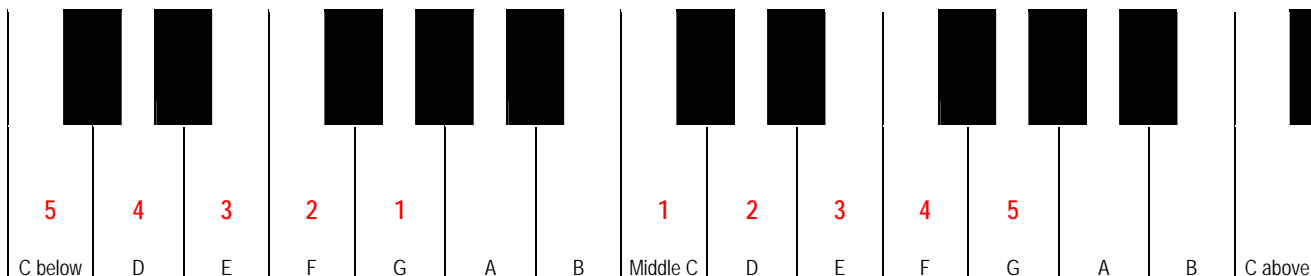
Over time, the finger assignments will change to other positions on the keyboard. Then, eventually, you will be free to move your fingers all over the keyboard during while playing a piece of music, using your own judgment to determine the appropriate hand positions.

There are two hand positions that are commonly used in the very early stages of learning: The "**Middle C position**" and the "**C position**". Usually, a curriculum will focus on only one or the other in the beginning, but not both. Also, different curriculum may identify these positions by other names.

The "Middle C position" guides you to place both thumbs on Middle C and then place the sequential fingers on the sequential keys. The thumbs share Middle C.



The "C position" guides you to place your [left finger #5] on the "C" below Middle C and your [right finger #1] on Middle C – then place the sequential fingers on sequential keys. There will be two white keys without assigned fingers in between your hands – when you need to play those two keys, you temporarily slide your thumbs over to cover them.



Correct fingering positions are important because they allow you to move to upcoming notes without having to twist your fingers or disrupt the rhythm of the piece. They also allow you to find the correct keys on the keyboard without having to look at your hands – you can find the keys by feel.

Make sure that you keep both hands in position with each finger on its assigned key even when you are playing notes with only one hand.

### For the Younger Student

New vocabulary: **right hand, left hand, [Middle C position / home position / C position]**

"Each finger has a number"

- 1) On a blank piece of paper, trace the outline of your child's hands. Have him/her label each hand "right" or "left" and each thumb/finger with the appropriate number.
- 2) Obtain a collection of plastic toy jewelry rings – have him/her place rings on all his/her fingers then ask him/her to take them off, one-by-one, according to your request – for example, "please remove the ring on finger number three of your left hand".

"Each hand has a starting position"

- 1) Have your child practice walking around the bench, sitting down and then placing his/her hands on whichever position is initially utilized by your specific curriculum. (There is no need to learn the alternate position at this time.)