

# Piano Technique in a Nutshell

## Fingers

- 1) Keep fingers curved enough so the knuckles don't buckle under stress but flat enough for a good range of motion.
- 2) Play on the thumb near the nail, not the side near the knuckle.
- 3) Keep the fingers close to the keys.
- 4) Avoid raising fingers not being used. This introduces extraneous tension into the hands.
- 5) Don't overstretch the hand or keep the hand stretched for too long. Instead, incorporate more lateral wrist motion.

## Arms

- 1) Don't press or push the fingers down into the keys. Instead, let the weight of the arms drop into the keys to push them down.
- 2) Always let the wrists bounce out of the keys to absorb the shock.
- 3) Keep the wrist centered behind whichever finger or fingers are currently playing.
- 4) Keep elbows centered behind wrists. This delivers more arm weight into the keys.
- 5) When playing the thumb on a black key, move hand closer to fall-board. Don't turn the wrist.
- 6) Use a somewhat higher wrist position to help facilitate scales, arpeggios, and other passagework.
- 7) Use a somewhat lower wrist position to help reach wider stretches demanded by large chords.
- 8) Don't shrug shoulders. Keep them down at all times.
- 9) Keep elbows down when rotating fingers over the thumb or thumb under fingers.

## Body

- 1) Always sit or stand so that the weight of the body and instrument is well balanced.
- 2) Minimize all extraneous movement and tension throughout the body.
- 3) Don't hold your breath while playing.
- 4) Don't press too hard on the pedal. Instead, become aware of the minimum necessary foot-stroke to attain the desired results.
- 5) Keep the raised part of the pedal near the ball of the foot behind the big toe.
- 6) Don't move torso on the bench while transitioning into different registers. Instead, lean from side to side and use left foot for balance or support.