

Fingerings

There are two schools of thought regarding fingering for the bass side of the accordion.

Fourth Finger on Root Method

This fingering convention uses the fourth (ring) finger to play the fundamental and counter bass columns, with the second and third fingers playing the chords and notes of that row.

- 1a) When playing a pattern with the fundamental and major chord (see Illustration 1.8):
4th finger on fundamental or counter bass columns
3rd finger on major chord

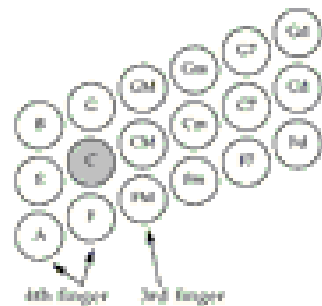


Illustration 1.8 – fingering.

For example, place your fourth finger on the C button in the fundamental column and place your third finger on the CM chord button. Your fingers are now in the C major position. In this case, the note C is also called the ROOT of the chord.

- 1b) For playing fundamental and minor, seventh or diminished chord (see Illustration 1.9):
4th finger on bass or counter bass (use with seventh chords only)
2nd finger on minor, seventh or diminished chord

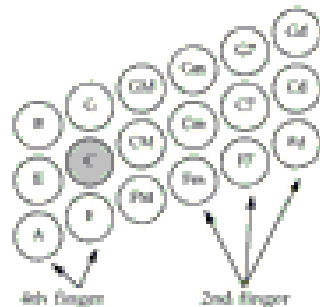


Illustration 1.9 – fingering.

Getting Started

Introducing C

Let's start by playing two buttons on the accordion's bass side, the C bass note and the C major chord. *Illustration 2.1* shows where the buttons are found (also refer to *Illustration 2.2* on page 12). Notice that the C bass button is physically indented to assist in its identification.

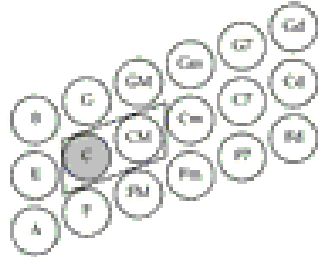
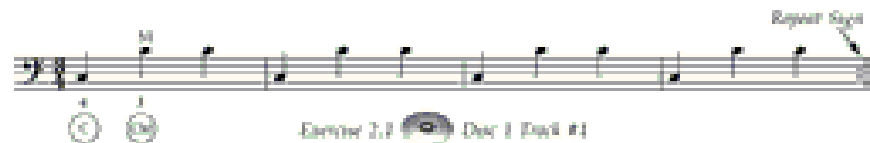


Illustration 2.1 – C bass and C major buttons

C bass is played with the fourth finger, while C major is played with the third. When playing, keep your fingers curled and relaxed (see *Illustration 1.10*), pressing each note with the fingertip. Press with a firm but relaxed attack. It is imperative to train your fingers to stay close to the buttons, even when not pressing them. Do not allow your fingers to rise away uncontrolled from the buttons when not in use.

In *Exercise 2.1*, the time signature indicates there are three counts per measure and the quarter note gets one count. Say 1-2-3 evenly and slowly for each measure, and play one note on each count. The double bar with two dots at the end of the line is a REPEAT SIGN, indicating the line is repeated from the beginning. The numbers below the first two notes indicate which fingers are to be used. The M indicates use of the major chord button and appears each time a new chord is to be played.



Exercise 2.1  Disc 1 Track #1

In *Exercise 2.2* play C and C major again, but notice there are four beats per measure. Count 1-2-3-4 evenly for each measure and play one note per count.



Exercise 2.2  Disc 1 Track #2

Repeat *Exercises 2.1* and *2.2*, playing slowly and accurately. It may take many repetitions to develop the control necessary to play the lines properly.

Minor Chords

Introducing the Minor Chord

The minor chord column is located next to the major chords as shown in illustration 4.1 (also refer to illustration 1.2 on page 12).

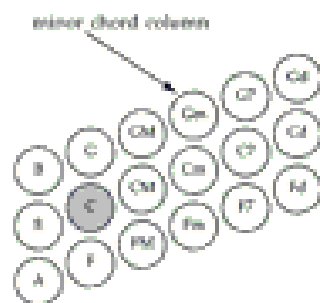


Illustration 4.1 – The minor chord column

To indicate the use of the minor chord, a lower case “m” is placed above the note written on the staff. When playing a minor chord, use the fourth (ring) finger to play the fundamental bass and the second finger to play the minor chord. Illustration 4.2 shows this convention.

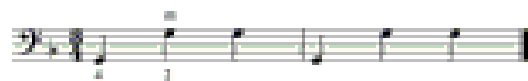
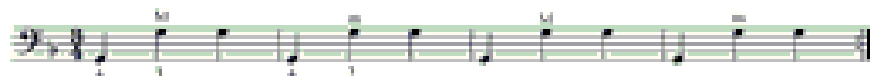


Illustration 4.2

In Exercise 4.1, play both G major and G minor. Be careful to use the correct fingerings.




Exercise 4.1 Disc 1 Track 437

In Exercises 4.2 through 4.4, various combinations of major and minor chords are played. Practice slowly at first to develop accuracy of playing. Learn each exercise thoroughly before moving on to the next exercise.

Exercise 4.2  Disc 1 Track #33

Exercise 4.3  Disc 1 Track #34

Exercise 4.4  Disc 1 Track #40