

## Learning to Improvise - Part 1

Being able to improvise is absolutely essential as a worshipper. When you begin to worship, you may find yourself moving away from a set song and into "free" worship. Begin to flow with the Spirit, and now how to create the sound and expression that you want.

To understand improvisation, we need to have some understanding of musical keys. A musical key is a collection of single notes or chords which sound good together. There are 12 musical keys, one for each note in music (C, C#, D, D#, etc...)

We are going to look at the key of C (it is the easiest for pianists, because it has no sharps or flats in it.)

the key of C goes like this in single notes: C, D, E, F, G, A, B

or in chord form: C, Dm, Em, F, G, Am, Bdim

(nb - the use of major, minor and diminished chords is merely a (strong) suggestion, but not essential.)

So to improvise in the key of C, begin on the C note or chord, and then pick any other note or chord in any order and in any rhythm, and the song will sound right! Easy!

We call the C in the key of C the major (or Ionian, to give it its posh name!) It is also called the "first," because it is the first note of the scale. When we play in a major key, it creates a happy, light sound, and is usually used for happy sounding songs, such as children's songs, light-hearted praise songs, and dancing-type songs.

Now we need to learn how to create different sounds.

The sixth note of any scale is called the minor (or Aeolian.) In the key of C the sixth note is the A (or A minor in chord form.) To play in a minor key, begin on

the sixth note of the scale (the A or Am) and then pick and other notes of the scale. You will create a much more powerful sound (especially if you are using chords rather than individual notes,) that is often better suited to more powerful worship. For example, using chords, try going from Am to G, to F. It has a serious sound to it, that in the right situation will sound good.

In "Learning to Improvise - Part 2" I will give guitar diagrams to how to use the major and minor scales, give MP3 examples and continue the idea of improvising from keys.