The Right Hand Chord Piano Difference

by David Longo
A few questions that, once asked, will lead you to "break the chains" and open yourself to more possibilities.

Firstly, let's consider each question...

What is a chord? It is basically a group of three or more notes played at the same time that create harmony. When you consider the 3 basic elements of music, a chord certainly provides one of them. The three basic elements of music are Melody, Harmony, and Rhythm. Playing a chord instantly assures that harmony exists.

Why do the majority of people resort to playing chords on the piano with the left hand? Well, for a couple of reasons, and they make sense - to a point. Firstly, when chords are played in the tenor area of the piano keyboard, they tend to provide a good sense of support for the melody, which usually gets played from the midsection of the tenor area of the keyboard and above. For clarity of explanation, the tenor area is the area that pretty much ranges from the C below middle C to the A above middle C:

When you consider that the melody is usually played in the "upper area" as just mentioned, it certainly seems almost like common sense that playing chords in the "lower area" would seem to be the best choice,
considering our physical position as we sit at the piano keyboard.

Secondly, if what we've considered up to this point is true, the tendency to "follow suit" is pretty strong. Along with that, since most people gravitate toward playing chords and melody in this fashion, it seems understandable that the majority of people in the capacity of "teacher" train their students to play in this manner.

Is it wrong?

No. At times, this approach is even preferred...

However, depending on the experience of the teacher, it may not go further than this. In turn, that student matures and possibly becomes a teacher... and what does he or she teach?

You guessed it: *chords left hand... melody right hand.*

Much can be achieved, musically, with this method of playing. However, limiting yourself to playing in this fashion cheats you of a level of musicality that is just knocking on your door and awaiting your permission to be explored. If you feel that your performances lack that "certain something," you'll be open to learning another way. By the way, this does not mean boycotting the strategy described earlier... it simply means learning a new way that will compliment it. You see, having the ability to resort to one or the other whenever you want to means confidence in a very real sense of the word.

Let's take a look again at the piano keyboard...

![Piano Keyboard](image)

Let's ask ourselves a question here...

If playing both chords and melody during performance involved using either one or the other of the following
ranges of the piano, which of the two could result in those songs having more substance? A or B?

I'm almost willing to bet that you might be in agreement with me that "Range B" lends itself to more possibilities. As a matter of fact, it absolutely does!

Okay, now let's get back to acknowledging what a chord is. Since it is a group of three or more notes played at the same time that create harmony, let's use one as an example. Let's use a C Major triad for the purpose of illustration. Most beginning students, upon learning how to play this chord will play it here:

While playing a melody along with this chord, the estimated range of the piano being utilized might be:
Once again, let’s recall what a chord really is. If a chord is a group of three or more notes played at the same time that create harmony, let’s take a look at those notes that make up a C Major chord:

\[ \text{C E G} \]

A fact that may be quite easy for some to overlook is that a C, E, and G make up a C Major chord wherever they happen to be played on the piano keyboard...

Just seeing this makes you want to open up to using more of that piano keyboard, doesn’t it?

It amazes me (and you might find this interesting) that many people play for years (and years!) without ever treating themselves to the experience of actually hearing what a simple chord like the C Major triad sounds like in different ranges of the keyboard! If you haven’t, by the way, please go to that piano or keyboard of yours right now and indulge!

There is no question about it... once you make up your mind to using more of the keyboard, the more possibilities you have. As a matter of fact, just thinking this way will cause more and more musical ideas to unfold!

Look at it like this... a full sized piano keyboard consists of 88 keys. That’s an entire orchestra that you have at
your fingertips... really see it that way!

An entire orchestra just for you... and YOU are the conductor!

Now imagine getting one of the musicians to play solo... perhaps a clarinet player? A trumpet player? Or perhaps a vocalist? Hmmm, can we get a guitar player to strum some rhythm for us? Absolutely! Wow, this is really starting to come together. Do you suppose we could get that bass player to add some "rich bottom" to our arrangement? You bet we can!

This is starting to get pretty exciting!

It is exciting. The possibilities are truly unlimited. Now, don't you owe it to yourself to having this type of an open mind (and creative one) each and every time you sit at that piano or keyboard of yours? You most definitely do!!!

It's about time you start to see it this way. You see, if you are truly to realize your musical potential... as well as your "pianistic" potential... and if you are to maximize your enjoyment of the instrument, familiarizing yourself with the entire instrument - not just a part of it - is an absolute must!

The art of "right hand chord piano" comes into play here. What exactly are we referring to? Well, as we already agree on, a chord is a chord is a chord... no matter where we play it on the piano keyboard. So it certainly stands to reason that our right hand as well as our left can play a significant role when it comes to playing them.

But what about the melody? If I'm playing melody with my right hand and I only have two hands, how's that chord going to get played?

Well, if this is a new concept for you, I would encourage you to experience Right Hand Chord Piano Made Easy... but just to illustrate the concept briefly here, let's consider this scenario:

The melody note you are playing is the G above middle C... and the chord you need to play is a C Major. Let's look at the first illustration that was presented earlier...
Go ahead and play that chord one octave higher, as shown here, with your right hand:

Play it once again and *really listen*...

Which of the three notes in that chord do you hear most prominently?

Chances are great that you answered "G."

Therefore, it stands to reason that playing the C Major in this position is a good choice if our melody note is a G:

At this point, you are playing both the melody and the harmony (two of the three basic elements of music) with
just your right hand... now that's efficiency!

It's not only efficient but it makes good musical sense... you are, in effect, simulating three voices (or other instrumentalists in that orchestra) harmonizing with each other, keeping their "voices" close together which results in harmony most pleasing to the ear!

What's more, you've freed up that left hand of yours, so now it can play another significant role which will add more dimension to what these three "musicians" under your right hand fingertips are achieving...

It gets even better, too, as you begin to discover the possibilities, which you are about to do by getting involved with Right Hand Chord Piano Made Easy, which will certainly help you to get the ball rolling when it comes to enjoying this very intriguing and rewarding approach to playing those favorite songs of yours!

Enjoy the journey!

And remember...

Always...

ALWAYS...

PLAY WITH PASSION!

Musically,