



Coventry Carol

Easy Piano Sheet Music

Anonymous (Coventry, 1591)

Level 3 | Full score, fingering, practice tips

Door 22 of the Free Piano Advent Calendar

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Coventry Carol

Key	Time Signature	Tempo	Difficulty	Measures
A minor	4/4, 3/4, 2/4	Andante, 76 BPM	Beginner - Level 3	26

About This Piece

The tune is anonymous. The three-part song was copied by Thomas Mawdyke on 13 May 1591 into Robert Croo's pageant manuscript of 1534, which burned in 1879. It was first printed by Thomas Sharp (died 1841) in A Dissertation on the Pageants or Dramatic Mysteries Anciently Performed at Coventry (Coventry, 1825), as Song II. The 16th-century text is also anonymous and is not printed here. Sharp's print has no barlines, so our bars keep every printed note length, which is why the meter changes. We moved the tune up a whole tone, from G with one flat to A minor, and kept the major-third endings and the G natural in the verse.

Notes and Hand Positions

Fingering Guide

Right Hand: G4, G#4, A4, B4, C5, C#5, D5, E5

Thumb on G#4, 2 on A4, 3 on B4, 4 on C5, 5 on D5. For the leap to E5 (measures 7 and 19) the thumb moves up to A4. The final C#5 takes finger 4, the G natural in measure 23 the thumb.

Left Hand: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3 (single notes, mostly one per measure)

Pinky on A2 as home note, thumb on E3, index on D3. B2 comes in the 2/4 bars; the verse adds C3 with finger 3 and a low G2 with the pinky in measure 23.

Notes Used in This Piece

Right Hand

Note	On the Staff	On the Keyboard	Finger
G4	Second line, natural sign	Between F# and G# black keys	Thumb (1)
G#4	Second line, sharp sign	Black key between G4 and A4	Thumb (1)
A4	Second space of treble staff	Between G# and A# black keys	Index (2)
B4	Middle line of treble staff	Right of the three black keys	Middle (3)
C5	Third space of treble staff	One octave above middle C	Ring (4)
C#5	Third space, sharp sign	Black key between C5 and D5	Ring (4)
D5	Fourth line of treble staff	Between two black keys above C5	Pinky (5)
E5	Fourth space of treble staff	Right of two black keys above C5	Pinky (5)

Left Hand

Note	On the Staff	On the Keyboard	Finger
G2	Bottom line of bass staff	Octave and a fourth below middle C	Pinky (5)
A2	First space of bass staff	Octave and a third below middle C	Pinky (5)
B2	Second line of bass staff	Octave and a step below middle C	Ring (4)
C3	Second space of bass staff	One octave below middle C	Middle (3)
D3	Third line of bass staff	Between two black keys below C4	Index (2)
E3	Third space of bass staff	Right of two black keys below C4	Thumb (1)

Section A - The Refrain (Measures 1-12)

A quiet minor-key refrain. A4, A4, G#4 open it, and the first phrase rests on a dotted-half G#4 in measure 4. The second phrase climbs to D5, then the thumb shifts to A4 for the leap to E5 in measure 7. Bars change between 4/4, 3/4 and 2/4, and the section ends on a held C#5 over A2.

Andante (♩ = 76)



Coventry Carol - Section A - The Refrain

How to Practice This Section

Before playing, tap the beats of each bar with the player at x0.5: four, three, three, three, three, two, and so on. Then play the right hand alone, with a 2 to 3 finger change on the long B4 in measure 9.

Section B - The Verse (Measures 13-26)

The verse begins like the refrain at mezzo-forte and reaches the same E5 in measure 19. After it the line comes down D5, C5, B4, C5, then B4, B4, A4 to a G natural in measure 23, played piano with the thumb. The last three bars repeat the end of the refrain and close on C#5 under a fermata.



Coventry Carol - Section B - The Verse

How to Practice This Section

Loop measures 20-24 slowly. The G natural in measure 23 sits one key left of the G#4 you have used all along, so look at it before you play it, and let the decrescendo in measure 22 lead into it.

Full Score

Here is the complete piece with all sections combined.

Andante (♩ = 76)



The image shows a full score for the Coventry Carol. It is written for piano in G major and consists of 24 measures. The tempo is Andante (♩ = 76). The score is divided into three systems of eight measures each. The first system starts with a piano (p) dynamic. The second system starts with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The third system starts with a mezzo-forte (mp) dynamic and ends with a piano (p) dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as treble and bass clefs, time signatures (C, 3/4, 2/4, 4/4), notes, rests, and fingerings. The piece concludes with a final cadence in the 24th measure.

Coventry Carol - Anonymous (Coventry, 1591)

Step-by-Step Practice Guide

Step 1: Right Hand Alone

1. Set the hand with the thumb on G#4 and the pinky on D5, then play measures 1-4: A4, A4, G#4, A4, C5, B4, B4, A4, G#4
2. Measures 5-7: A4, B4, C5, D5, B4, then move the thumb to A4 and reach E5 with the pinky
3. Measure 9: hold B4 for three beats and change from finger 2 to finger 3 on it
4. Measure 23: the thumb plays G natural, one key left of G#4

Step 2: Left Hand Alone

1. Pinky on A2 and thumb on E3 for measure 1, then a dotted-half A2
2. Measures 3-6: D3 with finger 2, E3 with the thumb, A2, then B2 in the 2/4 bar
3. Verse, measures 20-23: D3 to A2, E3 to A2, E3 to C3, then a low G2 with the pinky
4. Last bar: A2 held under the fermata with finger 4

Step 3: Hands Together

1. Hands together at about 60 to the quarter, counting the beats of each bar aloud
2. Section A first, checking each meter change before you play the bar
3. Section B, with extra loops on measures 20-24 and the G natural

4. Target 76 to the quarter: p in the refrain, mf in the verse, and both fermatas held



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One carol and one short task a day, December 1 to 24.

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