Maple Leaf Rag

Easy Piano Sheet Music

Scott Joplin (1899)

Level 5 | Full score, fingering, practice tips

From the Benchoom free piano sheet library

benchoom.com/free-piano-sheets/

Maple Leaf Rag

Key	Time Signature	Tempo	Difficulty	Measures
G major	4/4	Tempo di marcia, 96 BPM	Beginner - Level 5	16

About This Piece

Scott Joplin (about 1868-1917) published the Maple Leaf Rag with John Stark & Son in Sedalia, Missouri, in 1899 (copyright registered 18 September 1899), marked Tempo di marcia. This score is the first strain of that first edition, played once, a semitone lower in G major (one sharp instead of four flats), with sixteenths written as eighths in 4/4. The right hand plays Joplin's top line without his octaves, an octave higher from the middle of bar 8 to bar 12 as he wrote it; bars 13-16 are his echo an octave lower. The 1903 lyrics by Sydney Brown are not used.

Notes and Hand Positions

Fingering Guide

Right Hand: G3, Bb3, F#4, G4, A4, Bb4, B4, D5, Eb5, E5, G5, A5, Bb5, B5, D6, E6, G6
Measures 1-4: thumb on G4 or F#4, 2 on A4, 3 on B4, 5 on D5. Measures 5-6: 1-2-5 on G4, Bb4, Eb5, 4 on D5. Measures 7-8: 1-2-5 on each G-Bb-G group, G3 up to G6. Measures 9-16: 5 on the repeated G, 2-3-1-3-5 on D, E, B, D, E, thumb on G.

Left Hand: G2, G#2, A2, Bb2, B2, C3, D3, Eb3, G3, Bb3, B3, C4 (single notes)
Oom-pah bass in measures 1-4: 5 on G2, 3 on B2, 4 on G#2 and A2, 2 on C3, thumb on D3. Measures 5-6: thumb on Eb3, 2 on D3. Measure 7: G2, Bb2, G3 with 5-3-1. Measures 9-16: 3 on Bb, 2 on B, thumb on C, in two octaves.

Notes Used in This Piece

Right Hand

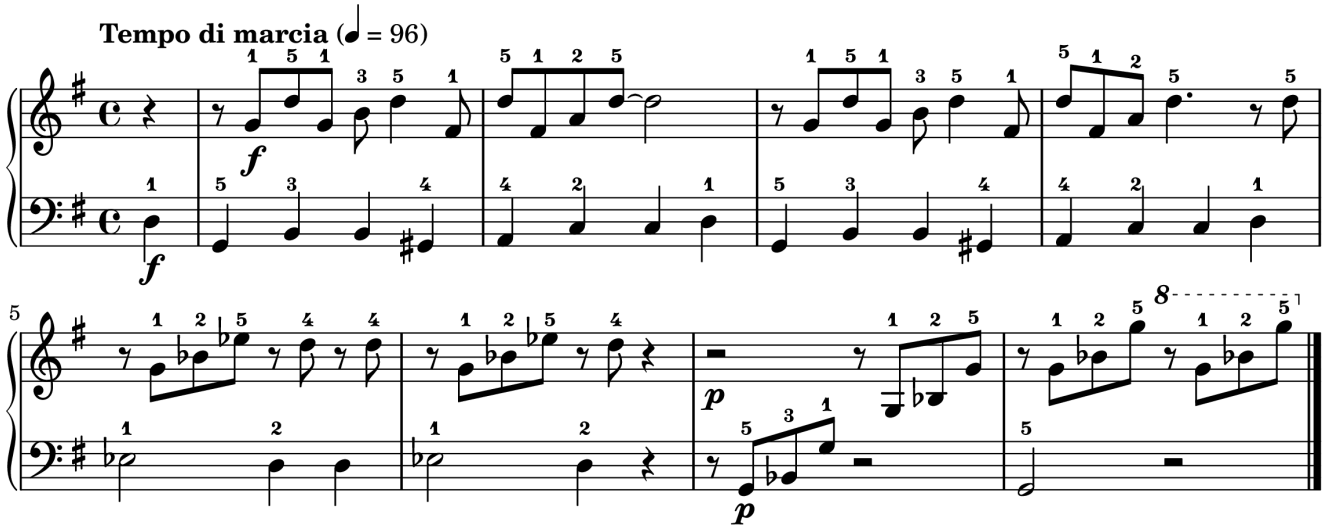
Note	On the Staff	On the Keyboard	Finger
G3	Below two ledger lines under staff	A fourth below middle C	Thumb (1)
Bb3	Below first ledger line, flat sign	Black key between A3 and B3	Index (2)
F#4	First space, sharp in key signature	Black key between F4 and G4	Thumb (1)
G4	Second line of treble staff	Between the first two of three black keys	Thumb (1)
A4	Second space of treble staff	Between the last two of three black keys	Index (2)
Bb4	Middle line, flat sign	Black key between A4 and B4	Index (2)
B4	Middle line of treble staff	Right of the three black keys	Middle (3)
D5	Fourth line of treble staff	Between the two black keys above C5	Pinky (5)
Eb5	Fourth space, flat sign	Black key between D5 and E5	Pinky (5)
E5	Fourth space of treble staff	Right of the two black keys above C5	Middle (3)
G5	Space above staff (2nd line under	Between the first two black keys above C	Pinky (5)
A5	Second space, under 8va	Between the last two black keys above C	Index (2)
Bb5	Middle line with flat, under 8va	Black key between A5 and B5	Index (2)
B5	Middle line, under 8va	Right of the three black keys above C5	Middle (3)
D6	Fourth line, under 8va	Between the two black keys above C6	Index (2)
E6	Fourth space, under 8va	Right of the two black keys above C6	Middle (3)
G6	Space above staff, under 8va	Two octaves above G4	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)
G#2	Bottom line, sharp sign	Black key between G2 and A2	Ring (4)
A2	First space of bass staff	Octave and a third below middle C	Ring (4)
Bb2	Second line, flat sign	Black key between A2 and B2	Middle (3)
B2	Second line of bass staff	Octave and a step below middle C	Index (2)
C3	Second space of bass staff	One octave below middle C	Index (2)
D3	Middle line of bass staff	Between two black keys below C4	Thumb (1)
Eb3	Third space, flat sign	Black key between D3 and E3	Thumb (1)
G3	Fourth space of bass staff	A fourth below middle C	Thumb (1)
Bb3	Space above staff, flat sign	Black key between A3 and B3	Middle (3)
B3	Space above bass staff	Just left of middle C	Index (2)
C4	Ledger line above bass staff	Middle C	Thumb (1)

Section A - The Opening Figure (Pickup and Measures 1-8)

Forte. The right hand plays the syncopated figure G4, D5, G4, B4 and a quarter D5 on the off-beat, then D5, F#4, A4 to a long tied D5, twice. Measures 5-6 add Bb4 and Eb5 over a left-hand Eb3. Measure 7 drops to piano and starts a G arpeggio in the left hand, which the right hand carries up to G6 in measure 8, under an 8va sign.

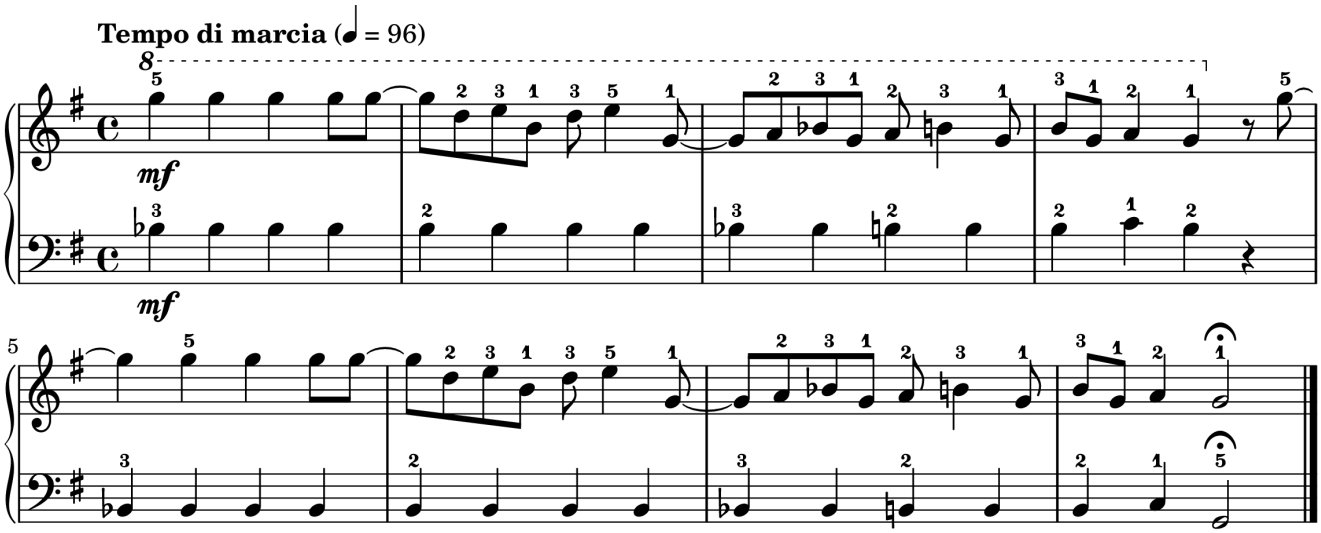


Maple Leaf Rag - Section A - The Opening Figure

> **How to Practice This Section**
>
> Count eighths out loud (1-and-2-and-3-and-4-and) and clap the right hand of measures 1-2 before playing it: the quarter D5 starts on the and of 3. Practice measures 7-8 hands separately; each group of three is 1-2-5.

Section B - High Answer and Echo (Measures 9-16)

Mezzo-forte, under the 8va sign: G6 five times, the last tied over the bar line, then D6, E6, B5, D6, E6 and a line that steps down to G5. The left hand plays Bb3 and B3 in quarters. Measures 13-16 repeat the answer an octave lower, Joplin's echo, over Bb2 and B2, and end on a held G4 over G2.

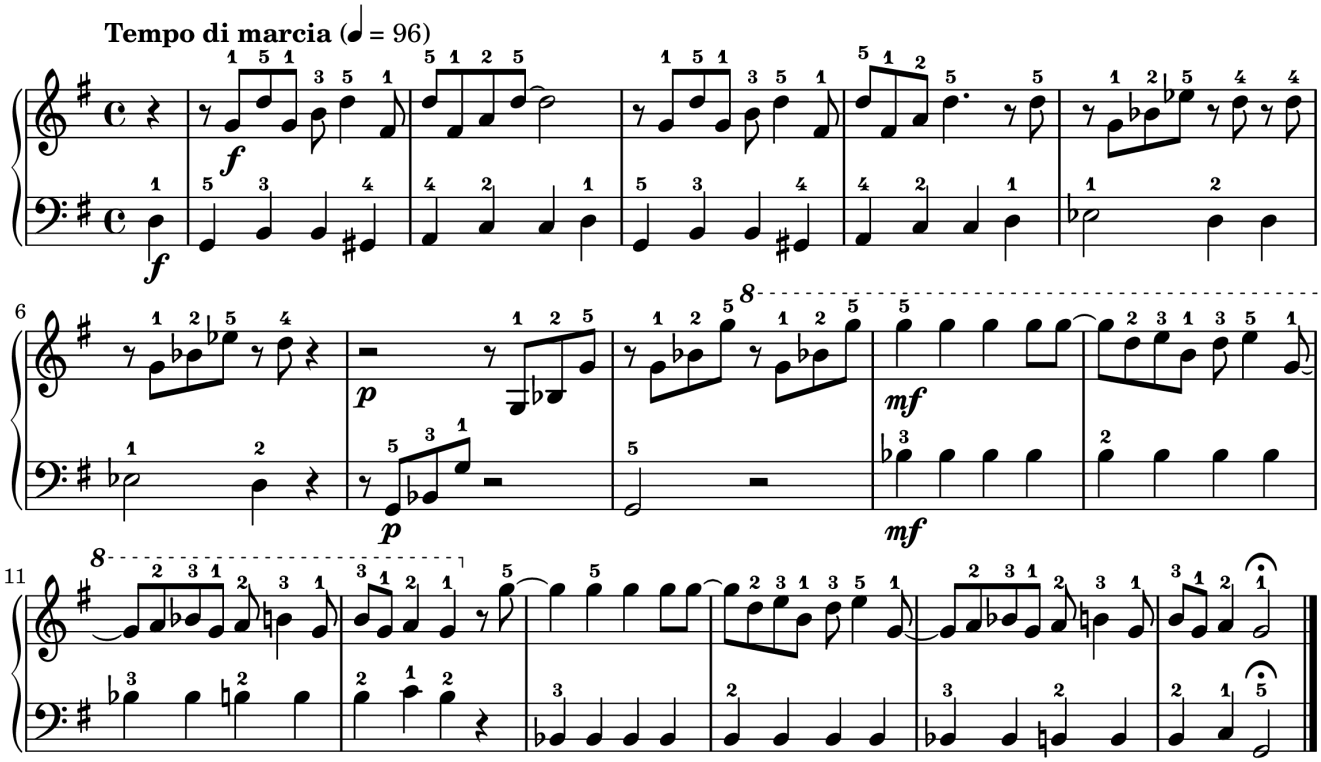


Maple Leaf Rag - Section B - High Answer and Echo

> **How to Practice This Section**
>
> The tied eighths carry the rhythm here: hold each one into the next beat instead of playing it again. Learn measures 9-12 first; measures 13-16 look the same on the page, only without the 8va sign.

Full Score

Here is the complete piece with all sections combined.



Maple Leaf Rag - Scott Joplin (1899)

Step-by-Step Practice Guide

Step 1: Right Hand Alone

1. Measures 1-4: 1-5-1-3-5-1, then 5-1-2-5 to the tied D5
2. Measures 5-6: 1-2-5 on G4, Bb4, Eb5, then 4 on D5
3. Measures 7-8: three groups of 1-2-5, G3 up to G6
4. Measures 9-12: pinky on G6, 2-3-1-3-5, thumb on G5, 2-3-1-2-3-1
5. Measures 13-16: the same fingers an octave lower

Step 2: Left Hand Alone

1. Measures 1-4: G2 (5), B2 (3), G#2 and A2 (4), C3 (2), D3 (1)
2. Measures 5-6: Eb3 half note with the thumb, D3 with 2
3. Measure 7: G2, Bb2, G3 with 5-3-1, then G2 held in measure 8
4. Measures 9-16: Bb with 3, B with 2, C with the thumb, then G2 with 5

Step 3: Hands Together

1. Start at 60 to the quarter, counting eighths

2. Measures 1-4 together until the off-beat D5 sits between two bass notes
3. Measures 7-8 slowly: the arpeggio passes from the left hand to the right
4. Target 96 to the quarter: f to measure 6, p in measures 7-8, mf from measure 9



Because true virtuosos deserve nothing less.

More free pieces, each with a player, a video and full fingering.

benchoom.com/free-piano-sheets/