

ORGAN ESSENTIALS PART I

Manual Organ Technique

Felipe Dominguez

Manual technique is one of the distinct features of organ playing. Because of the nature of the mechanism of the instrument, manual technique is crucial to the musical outcome. The main feature of the way organ tone is produced is that when the key is depressed, the sound begins, and as soon as you let go of the key, the sound stops. This is the feature that presents the greatest challenge in organ playing.

- **Hand posture and wrist** – Curved fingers and relaxed wrists. Fingers do the work, not the wrists. There is no need to apply excessive pressure on the keys.
- **Attack and Release** – Precise rhythmic attacks and releases. Release is as important as the attack.
- **Independence of lines** – Each voice or part is independent and should be treated as an important part, not just accompaniment to the melody.

Fingering Techniques.

The nature of most organ repertoire and hymns is independent lines interacting with each other like a choir would. The most widely accepted style for hymn playing is legato style. The following fingering techniques allow us to perform in legato style and connect lines.

- Direct Fingering
- Redistribution of the inner parts
- Finger Crossing
- Finger Glissando
- Finger Substitution
- Thumb Glissando