

PEDAL TECHNIQUE

Position on the bench:

1. Sit in middle of the bench with the right foot hovering over tenor "e" and the left foot hovering over tenor "c" (pedal board includes bottom 32 notes of keyboard).
2. Sit tall (as if sternum is attached to the ceiling with a string) with half your thighs supported by the bench and legs hanging at a 90-degree angle from thighs to feet.
3. Move bench forward enough that toes fall 1½ to 2 inches in front of black (chromatic) pedal notes.
4. If bench is adjustable, pedal notes should stop sounding (with pedal stops on) if abdominal muscles tighten to lift legs just a quarter of an inch.

Make your legs and feet as efficient as your hands and fingers:

1. Thighs and knees together = palm of hand (pillar of stability)
2. Legs = fingers
3. Big toe (flat) on front third/half of black (chromatic) pedal notes, and surface of foot from ball to big toe (tipped inward) on white pedal notes = finger tips
4. Pedal is played using the ankle as the fulcrum (hinge), not the pelvis. Head and torso should not move when pedal is played; neither should the knee lift the foot.
5. When the toe depresses a white pedal key, the heel should slightly leave the surface of the key. When the pedal is released, toe and heel should be level again, lightly touching the surface of the pedal key.
6. When a pedal is released, the foot should not leave the surface of the key. Do not let the pedal snap back to its original position; let the toe control the pedal release.

Contact between feet:

1. Through the interval of a 4th (G - C for example), heels should stay touching when both toes are on black (chromatic) pedal notes.
2. Through the interval of a 4th, heel/arch should maintain contact when playing white pedal notes or one white/one black pedal note.
3. When the right toe needs to scissor outward to a new note, the left heel (or heel/arch) should move to the right to open the angle between the toes.
4. When the left toe scissors outward to a new note, the right heel (or heel/arch) should move to the left to open the angle between the toes.
5. The angles between the heels or heel/arch should be equal at the point of contact.

Reference tools for the feet:

1. Sensing notes with the bottoms of the feet
2. Visualizing angles between the feet
3. Using "corner chromatics"