

Pedal Technique

An organist will get to know the pedal board and play with their feet! Playing with a legato pedal technique is the standard for legato hymn playing. Set yourself up for success by following the guidelines listed below. By establishing good habits you CAN play the pedals with confidence and accuracy.

Position on the Bench:

- Left/right: center on Pedal D
- Forward/back: you should be able to place your right foot flat on the Swell expression pedal and feel supported on the bench
- Up/down: adjust the bench so that your heels can either play or refrain from playing a key without holding up your leg
- Posture: Sit up straight and relaxed

Organ Shoes:

- Heel: wide, about 1 ¼" in height
- Sole: thin, flexible sole; slides easily and is not wider than the shoe
- Arch: space between the heel and sole
- Upper: flexible material that fits snugly on your foot
- organmastershoes.com

Pedal Technique Checkpoints:

- Sharps: cover no more than half of black key with pad of big toe; tip foot inward
- Naturals: play just clear of sharps; tip foot inward and play on the ball of foot; center heel over the key
- Knees and Ankles: knees should be kept comfortably together through an octave; only ankle motion should be used when playing with toes
- In General: keep your eyes up; pre-locate; quiet feet

Location Techniques:

- Gliding: individual foot gliding from key to key
- Contact: keep heels together through interval of a 4th, use contact to scissor out; offset the feet (heel to arch) when both feet are playing natural keys
- Gaps: use the gaps between the sharps at E-F and B-C

Pedal Techniques:

- Direct: toe and heel pedaling
- Heel Slide
- Toe Glissando
- Substitution
- Crossing

Pedal Notation:

- ^ = toe
- ° = heel