

Rearranging Parts:

A. Tenor Solo:

- Left hand plays the tenor part on one manual with a prominent solo combination while the right hand plays the soprano and alto parts on another manual with a less prominent registration. The feet play the bass part on a registration balanced with the right hand.
- Effective when the tenor line is melodically interesting; can be used for an entire verse or just a portion.
- Usually most effective on an internal verse, after the congregation has become accustomed to singing the hymn tune.
- May be played in the normal tenor range (tenor-range counter melody) or played up an octave (soprano-range descant).

B. Manual Only:

- All four parts of the hymn are played on a single manual (usually the Great) without pedal.
- Requires mastery over the basic hymn playing techniques (independence of voices and handling of repeated notes).
- When playing a verse manual only, the sudden absence of the pedal stops—especially the characteristic 16' foundation—can be enough contrast that no additional registration change may be needed.
- Use of this technique is most appropriate when verses contain texts that are questioning or reflective.

C. Soprano Solo:

- Right hand plays only the soprano part on one manual with a prominent solo registration, while the left hand plays the alto and tenor parts on another manual with a less prominent registration. The feet play the bass part on a registration balanced with the left hand.
- When the soprano part is played in the normal soprano range, it has the effect of reinforcing the melodic line of the hymn. If it is played down an octave, the solo becomes richer and less assertive while the alto becomes more prominent—like a counter melody.
- Follow good principles of solo and accompaniment registration that are and will be covered in *Registration Basics, Part III*, taught on Friday at 11:00 AM.
- Particularly useful in hymns that are relatively unfamiliar to the congregation (Hymn #80, *God of Our Fathers, Known of Old*) introduction, verse one, and possibly other verses might be played with a prominent solo part to “teach” the hymn to the congregation. However, it is effective whenever you wish for the melody line (usually soprano) of a hymn to stand out.
- Soprano solo can be applied for a portion of any verse or for an entire verse. The congregation can sing along in unison or in parts (Hymn #3, *Now Let Us Rejoice*).
- This technique is introduced most easily on hymns where the alto and tenor voices do not change frequently. Some good hymns to begin practicing this technique are: #s 3, 19, 125, 133, 142, 143, 152.

D. Alto up an Octave:

- The soprano is played in its normal written range, but, in contrast to the normal arrangement, is played by the LOWER fingers of the right hand (1, 2, 3). The alto is played up an octave on the same manual by the upper fingers of the right hand (3, 4, 5). The left hand can no longer assist the right hand in playing the alto part.



- b. Playing the alto up an octave has the effect of providing a descant above the soprano line. Because the alto line becomes even more prominent than the soprano, this technique is most effective when the alto line is of some interest; that is, when it is moving.
- c. It can be particularly effective to use it during the last part of the last verse of a hymn (Hymn #125, "How Gentle God's Commands").

E. Soprano and Tenor Switch:

- a. When the soprano or tenor parts are switched:
 - i. The soprano is played down an octave and the tenor part is played up an octave.
 - ii. Using the crossing-hands method, the left hand crosses over the right to play the tenor part an octave higher.
 - iii. One way to simplify the complexity of this technique is to think of it as tenor solo plus "alto up an octave" technique DOWN an octave. That is: the left hand reads the tenor up an octave—just as in tenor solo. The right hand reads the alto up an octave—just as in the "alto up an octave" technique. But the right hand plays its "alto up an octave" lines DOWN an octave. The feet play the bass part as usual.
 - iii. It is also possible to play the left hand (tenor part) on a second manual, which may help avoid confusion between the hands.



- b. Soprano and tenor switch approaches the effect of a free accompaniment, in that the most prominent (highest) part is not the customary melody, and the hymn melody is hidden in an inner part. This is the most complex application of rearranging parts that is in common use. In its complexity and its effect it approaches free accompaniment, where the harmony is actually changed. However, unlike using a free accompaniment, the congregation is free to sing parts, not melody only.
- c. Most organists need to practice carefully before switching the soprano and tenor parts of a hymn in a service. Even then, it is wise to practice "escape routes" in case of confusion—practice reverting to the normal arrangement in various points throughout the hymn.
- d. Use this technique only after the congregation is secure in singing the hymn—preferably during all or part of the last verse. Be prepared to revert to the normal arrangement if problems arise.

Hymn Introduction Ideas:

- A. Play the hymn as written.
- B. Play melody in octaves. This technique could also be augmented by alternating with material from the hymnal, especially if lines are repeated (#18) or fall into a call and response pattern (#25).
- C. Play the introduction beginning with the soprano only, adding alto, tenor, and bass voices by phrase (#174).
- D. Solo out the soprano voice, particularly for hymns that may be unfamiliar to the congregation.
- E. Use tonic or dominant pedal point to create a feeling of suspense (#30).
- F. Use a mixture of manual changes and voice additions to create a gradual crescendo:
 - a. Play the first line (or phrase) of the hymn in unison, manuals only, on the Swell, adding harmony for the last two or three notes.
 - b. Play the second line (or phrase) in harmony on the Swell, manuals only.
 - c. Play the melody from the third line (or phrase) on the Great, keeping the alto and tenor on the Swell and moving the bass to the Pedal.
 - d. Play the hymn as written for the final line (or phrase).