

# SUCCESSING AT THE PIANO®

- ★ How can students play with amazing articulations, phrasing, and sound?
- ★ How can you take your students from good performances to stellar ones?

## Through Five Physical Gestures

It's important *how* the student approaches the key, plays the key, and releases the key. This is why these five physical gestures are called “Touch Releases.”

Friendly icons throughout *Succeeding at the Piano*® remind students which touch release to use for a desired sound.



### Touch Release No. 1: Drip-Drop-Roll

This most basic gesture at the keyboard teaches students arm weight, and complete coordination of the shoulder, upper arm, elbow, forearm, wrist, and fingers. Arm weight is used to drop the wrist and forearm to the bottom of the key. Have the student feel it sink! Then slowly roll forward and off the key, *wrist first*.



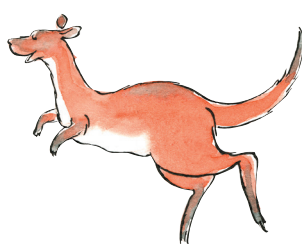
### Touch Release No. 2: Tissue Box

Do you wish for a sound that is very quiet and *pp*? This is the touch release! It's the same motion as the “Drip-Drop-Roll” except the wrist and forearm slowly lifts up and off the key.



### Touch Release No. 3: The Woodpecker

For basic staccato, the wrist stays level with the forearm but is not locked or overly loose. The wrist is indeed flexible. Make little woodpeckers, medium-sized woodpeckers, and big woodpeckers for big differences in sound!



### Touch Release No. 4: Push Off

Use arm weight to drop the wrist and forearm to the bottom of the key. Have the student feel it sink! Then the wrist and forearm pushes forward for a crisp, snappy sound. The upper arm is the energy source when pushing forward and off the key. Great for *legato* phrase lines with a *staccato* note at the end!



### Touch Release No. 5: Kick Off

For a very short *staccato* sound, start *on* the key. Then move the wrist and forearm at the same time from the key forward and off the key. The wrist stays level with the forearm. The fingers and hand stay close to the keys on the release. Experiment with different dynamics! Great for quick two-note slur gestures!

*Teach healthy, natural technique.*

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