

Piano Note Detective

Black-Key City

Map missions for pre-staff beginners: use the groups of two and three black keys to find every white key, in every part of the piano.



IN THIS FREE SAMPLE

- Case 1: Two-Black Street (C, D, E)
- Count, find and name keys
- A paper keyboard to cut out
- Answers with a reason for each



By two black keys: C D E · by three: F G A B

- 1 Find the black group
- 2 Two or three?
- 3 Find the house beside it
- 4 Check on a piano

Digital download · Print at 100% on US Letter · Keyboard only, no staff reading · Three sittings of about 15 minutes ·
With a grown-up

How the case file works

Three cases, about 15 minutes each.

For a beginner who is learning the map of the piano before reading notes on a staff. Every white key is found from the black keys around it, so the detective never needs the letters printed on the keys. Read the story aloud and let the detective point and count.

EACH CASE

The story	Read it aloud together. It says what the detective is looking for.
Learn	The rule for this case, with a picture. Point at it while you read it.
Tasks	Short tasks that use the rule. Each one has a single right answer (except play tasks).
Clue	The last task gives a clue for the final question.

YOU NEED

- A pencil and a colored pencil
- A piano or keyboard if you have one, or the paper keyboard near the end
- Three short sittings, one case each

GOOD TO KNOW

- The strips on the task pages show the middle of the piano, with a pointer under Middle C.
- Higher means to the right on the piano, lower means to the left. The same letter comes back every seven white keys.
- There is no timer anywhere in this file. Accuracy counts, not speed.

NOT A METHOD BOOK

A short pre-staff practice file, not piano lessons. Note reading and keyboard practice only: no sharps, flats or key signatures.

Case 1: Two-Black Street

C, D and E: the houses around each group of two black keys

THE STORY

Key City is one long street. The white keys are its houses, and the black keys stand between them in groups of two and three, like lamp posts. Mo the mail mouse has a bag of parcels, but the rain smudged every house letter. Mo knows one rule: each house can be found from the black keys beside it.

LEARN

- C is the house just left of a group of two black keys.
- D is the house between the two black keys.
- E is the house just right of a group of two black keys.



1 Count the groups of two black keys on this part of Key City.



▲
Middle C

My answer:

Case 1: Two-Black Street (continued)

- 2 Deliver four parcels. Find each house, write the parcel number on it, and write its letter in the box.



- 1 The white key between the two black keys of a group of two: the nearest one to the right of Middle C.
- 2 The white key just right of a group of two black keys: the 2nd one to the right of Middle C.
- 3 The white key just left of a group of two black keys: the nearest one to the right of Middle C.
- 4 The white key just right of a group of two black keys: the nearest one to the right of Middle C.

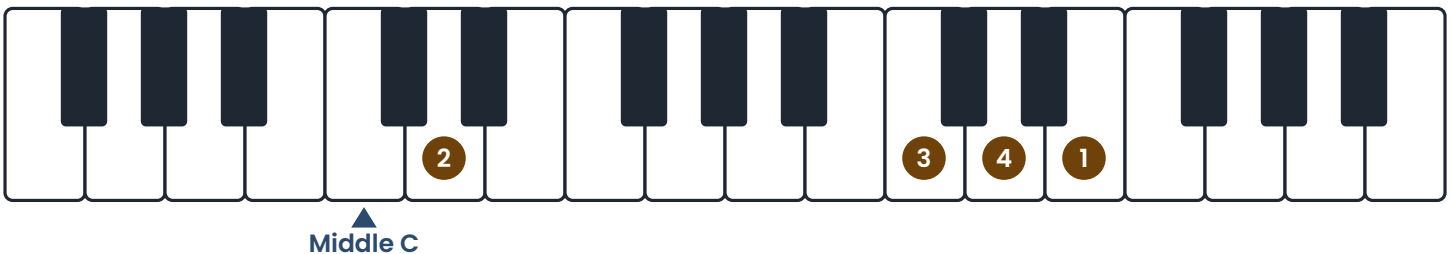
letter

letter

letter

letter

- 3 Mo put a number on four houses. Write the letter of each numbered house.



1

2

3

4

CLUE 1

The smudged address on Mo's last parcel starts with the letter of house 3 in task 3.



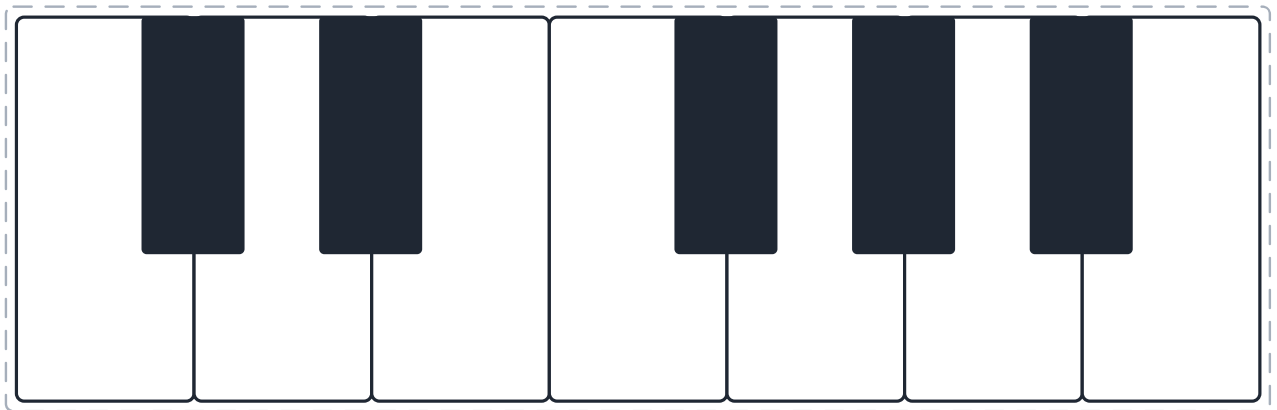
Clue:

Copy it onto the answer line of the final question.

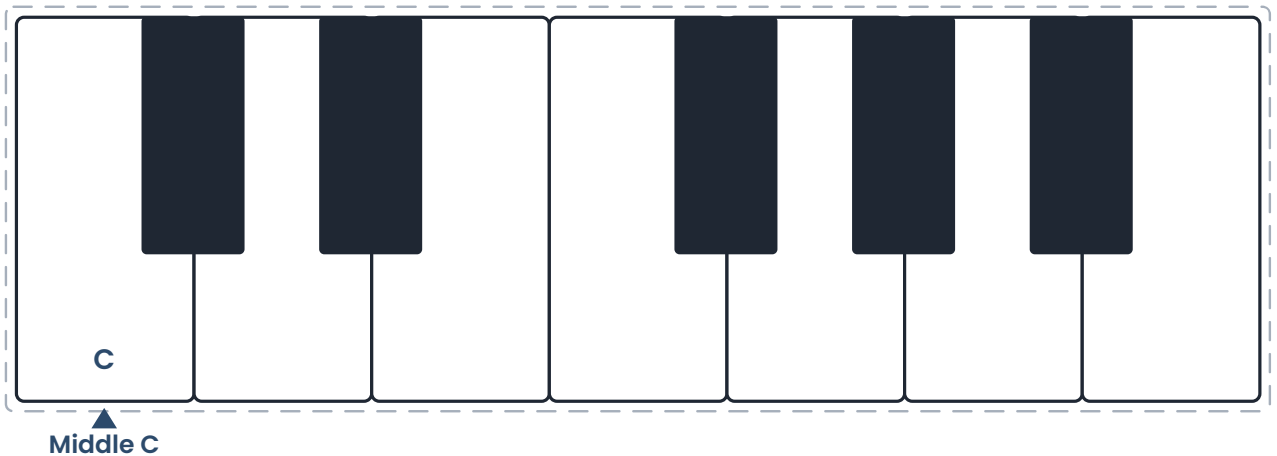
Paper keyboard

Cut out the rows and tape them in order, low to high. White keys are about as wide as a real piano's.

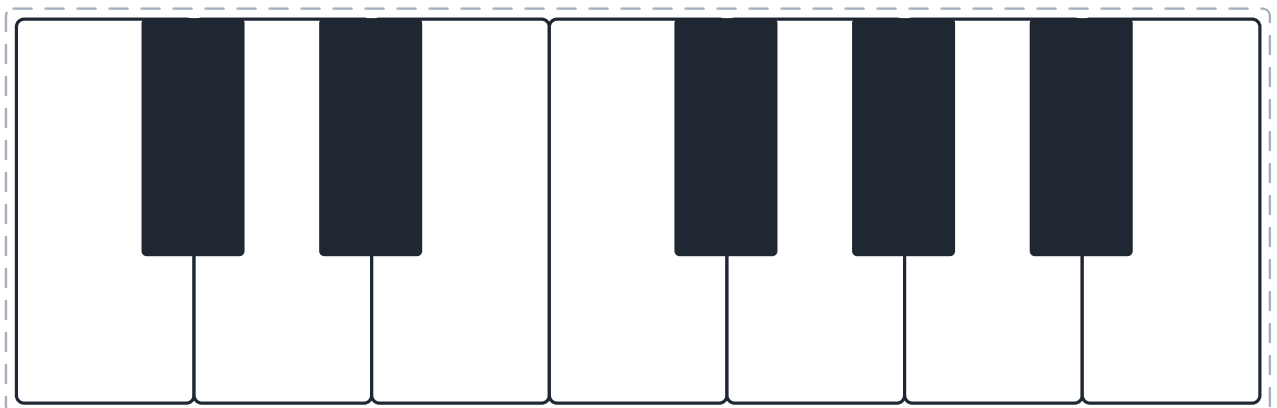
Low



Middle



High



Only Middle C is labeled: finding the other keys is the detective's job. Tape the rows edge to edge (low on the left) to make one long keyboard.

Case 1 answers

Every answer comes with its reason. Read the reasons aloud: they teach.

CASE 1 · TWO-BLACK STREET

Task 1

PND02-C1-T1

2 groups of two

The strip has 2 complete groups of two black keys.

Task 2

PND02-C1-T2

1 D (D4) · 2 E (E5) · 3 C (C5) · 4 E (E4)

D is between the two black keys of a group of two; the nearest one to the right of Middle C is D4. E is just right of a group of two black keys; the 2nd one to the right of Middle C is E5. C is just left of a group of two black keys; the nearest one to the right of Middle C is C5. E is just right of a group of two black keys; the nearest one to the right of Middle C is E4.



Task 3

PND02-C1-T3

1 E · 2 D · 3 C · 4 D

E is just right of a group of two black keys (E5). D is between the two black keys of a group of two (D4). C is just left of a group of two black keys (C5). D is between the two black keys of a group of two (D5).



Clue 1

C (the answer to item 3 of task 3)

THE FULL CASE FILE

The full Black-Key City file has two more cases (F G A B around the groups of three, and every octave with a no-timer challenge), a detective notebook, the final question, hints and a certificate.