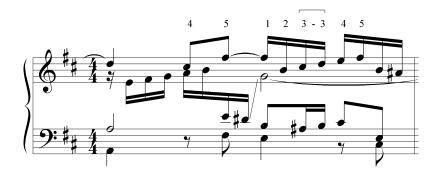
## When Appropriate, Slide a Finger from Black to White Keys

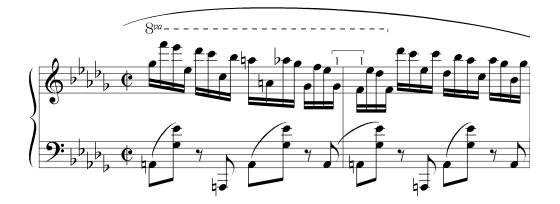
Throughout their training, pianists are taught to play different notes with different fingers. Even when the same key is repeated, it is almost always more efficient to change fingers rather than use the same finger for the repeated note. Nevertheless, after considering the musical nature of a passage, as well as various fingering possibilities, sliding a finger up or down from a black key to a white key can often be a practical alternative or useful solution.

The number of examples that can be cited to demonstrate the appropriate use of sliding from black to white keys is many, and well beyond the scope of this chapter. Nevertheless, the technique is regularly used, and is so important that every student of the piano should be familiar with it.

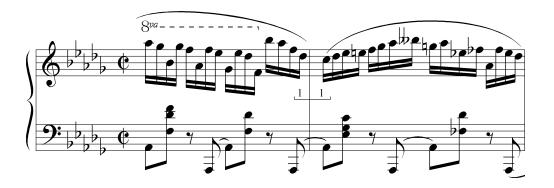
There are many instances in Bach's music where sliding a particular finger from a black key to a white key makes the passage easier to play. For example, in the Fugue in B minor, from Book I of the Well-Tempered Clavier, sliding the third finger makes the right hand passage in measure 51 more manageable:



Sliding the thumb from a black to white key is prevalent application of the technique. In Chopin's Prelude in Bb Minor Op. 28, no. 16, the technique is useful and appropriate in measures five and six:



and measures twenty-five and twenty-six:



Jazz musicians often slide off of a black key to create a certain articulation, which also makes many phrases easier to play:



There are a number of different fingerings all of which enable the passage to be played comfortably and rhythmically correct. However, the articulation that results from sliding the second finger from a black key to a white key cannot be produced when different fingers are used for D# to E, and F# to G. When the the second finger slides from the D# and F#, the phrase is also easier to play.

In a commonly used fingering for the ascending scale of chromatic minor thirds, the second finger slides from black to white keys:



The thumb can also slide from black to white in the descending form of the scale:



The exercise below can be practiced to get comfortable and familiar with sliding each finger from each black key to either the black key to the right or to the left of it:



Remember that sliding from a black key to a white key is best thought of as an alternative, and the use of the technique ultimately depends on the technical and musical considerations of the passage.