

# PLANS FOR CONTINUING ORGAN TRAINING

LDS organists are strongly encouraged to consider a plan for developing their organ playing skills. Here is some detailed information on how to explore some of the options that are available.

- ❑ **BYU Independent Study organ course** (free, or \$ for certificate or college credit).  
A variety of organ courses designed to provide motivation and instruction for organists to improve their skills by working toward specific goals. Each course or level covers hymn playing, organ technique, organ pieces, music theory, transposition, sight-reading, and choir accompaniment as appropriate to the level. Traditional instruction is offered through books and computer lessons, while performance instruction is coordinated with [qualified organ instructors](#) in the vicinity of the student. Visit [organ.byu.edu/orcert.html](http://organ.byu.edu/orcert.html).
- ❑ **Go through OrganTutor** (\$, OrganTutor is also used in the BYU Independent Study organ courses, and can be used in private and group lessons)  
62 computer lessons for the pianist on the basics of classical or traditional sacred organ playing. The OrganTutor computer tutorial and workbook contain technical and musical studies for aspiring classical or church organists of any denomination. They are designed to be used together, but are available in several versions and combinations. Visit [organtutor.byu.edu](http://organtutor.byu.edu) or [organ.byu.edu/usingorgantutor.pdf](http://organ.byu.edu/usingorgantutor.pdf)
- ❑ **Private lessons in your local area** (\$)  
There is no better form of organ training than meeting periodically with a trusted personal mentor. Finding an organ teacher who is effective in helping you reach your goals and whose fees are within your budget is worth the effort. Here are some ways to find one:
  - *Word of mouth.* Ask your ward organist, stake organist, stake music chairperson, or another organist who is already studying with someone.
  - *The American Guild of Organists (AGO).* Many larger cities have a [local chapter of the AGO](#) (scroll to the bottom of that page), and the dean of the chapter can recommend the best teacher for your needs.
  - *Local college or university.* Contact the music department of nearby academic institutions. Visit [agohq.org/education/academic-organ-programs/](http://agohq.org/education/academic-organ-programs/) for a partial listing.
  - *Local churches.* Many churches (especially the larger ones) employ a part- or full-time organist. Some of these can be good teachers. Ask around for references, and then contact him or her if you feel comfortable.
  - *The BYU "Finding an Organ Teacher" web page.* Visit [ardpublications.com/instructorvisible.html](http://ardpublications.com/instructorvisible.html)
- ❑ **Online (Skype) lessons with a BYU Graduate instructor** (\$, high-speed Internet and webcam at the organ)  
Some graduate instructors at BYU are willing to conduct online lessons via Skype. Email [doncook@byu.edu](mailto:doncook@byu.edu) for contact information.
- ❑ **BYU Organ Workshop** (\$, August 5-8 in Provo)  
An intensive four-day workshop for organists of all levels. Primarily for those ages 18+. Visit [organ.byu.edu/orcert.html](http://organ.byu.edu/orcert.html) and [organworkshop.byu.edu](http://organworkshop.byu.edu)
- ❑ **BYU Young Musicians Summerfestival** (\$, June 15-21 in Provo)  
A seven-day event where young people ages 14-18 can receive daily organ lessons, attend concerts, study music theory, enjoy social events, and more. Visit [organ.byu.edu/orcert.html](http://organ.byu.edu/orcert.html) and [summerfestival.byu.edu](http://summerfestival.byu.edu)
- ❑ **The New LDS Organist** (free online, 12 lessons/podcasts)  
A free course designed to help LDS pianists adapt their skills to the organ as soon as possible. Consists of 12 audio podcasts and a free 59-page packet (instruction and simplified hymns). Visit [organ.byu.edu/newldsorganist](http://organ.byu.edu/newldsorganist).
- ❑ **LDS ward or stake-sponsored organist training** (free)  
Many stakes and wards conduct some form of organ training. Contact your ward or stake music chairpersons or priesthood leaders. Multi-stake organ workshops can be arranged by contacting [doncook@byu.edu](mailto:doncook@byu.edu) at the BYU School of Music.
- ❑ **Membership and activity with the American Guild of Organists** (\$ annual membership)  
Local chapters of the American Guild of Organists meet monthly to share interests and skills, and there is a monthly magazine. The regional and national organization also conducts annual conventions. Visit [agohq.org/membership/membership-overview/](http://agohq.org/membership/membership-overview/)