

# THE NEW WARD ORGANIST

*Eight video lessons to assist the pianist in getting started as an organist  
for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*

The free YouTube videos are hosted by Dr. Don Cook of the Brigham Young University Organ Department, with graduate students Samantha Adair, Amber Dahlberg, and Taryn Harding. Click the link in any video description to download and print the free packet (in pdf format).

Visit [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and search “new ward organist”  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCx4LzmaxMI1CpEk-i25yqvQ>

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## **Lesson 1 – Introduction (2:34)**

- How to use this video series to get started on the organ bench

## **Lesson 2 – How to Start Playing the Organ (8:13)**

- How to turn it on
- Names of keyboards
- Stops
- Thumb pistons: “Generals” & “Divisionals”
- Expression pedals
- Crescendo pedal
- Toe studs
- Organ shoes
- Adjusting the bench
- General cancel

## **Lesson 3 – Choosing Organ Stops (9:43)**

- Families of organ tone
- Pitches of organ stops
- Mutations
- Couplers
- How to register a jubilant hymn
- How to register a meditative hymn
- How to register prelude and postlude
- Saving registrations
- General and divisional pistons

## **Lesson 4 – How to Play a Hymn (10:37)**

- What if I can’t play with my feet yet?
- Choosing stops for a hymn
- Common stop names by category
- How do I begin to play a hymn?
- Exercises to practice fingering techniques
- Orienting yourself at the pedalboard
- How do I know what part of my foot to use?
- Putting it together: Learning the hymn, “Nearer, My God, to Thee”

## **Lesson 5 – How to Play the Pedals (10:22)**

- Organ shoes
- Adjusting the bench

- Notation and markings for pedaling
- Technique: knees and feet together
- Don’t look down: prelocate
- What part of the pedal key do I play on?
- Some advanced techniques
- Two hymn pedaling examples

## **Lesson 6 – Advancing Your Hymn Playing (11:15)**

- Chorus registration
- Exercises to practice repeated notes
- Collection of hymns with repeated notes edited: Carol Dean marked hymnbook
- Exercises to practice more advanced legato fingering techniques

## **Lesson 7 – Prelude and Postlude Tips (6:04)**

- A great list of prelude and postlude music
- Tip #1: Time your music
- Tip #2: Length of prelude and postlude
- Tip #3: Concluding prelude
- Tip #4: What music should I play?
- Tip #5: How to choose registration (with three examples)
- Tip #6: Postlude

## **Lesson 8 – Continuing your Organ Training (10:44)**

- Find an organ teacher
  - BYU Independent Study organ courses
  - BYU Organ Workshop
  - BYU Traveling Organ Workshops
  - BYU Organ Workshops Facebook Group
  - OrganTutor Online
  - BYU Musicians Summerfestival
  - Find the nearest American Guild of Organists (AGO) chapter
  - The AGO website
  - BYU Organ Study website
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