

ASU - Instrumentation/Arranging
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Dr. Crist

GENERAL COMMENTS FOR PEDALING PIANO MUSIC

The correct way of using the pedal remains a study for life. -

Frédéric Chopin

2 main roles of the damper pedal:

- (1) to prolong and connect tones that cannot be held by the fingers alone.
- (2) to color

Pedaling the music of J.S. Bach

- The damper pedal did not exist on the instruments for which Bach wrote his keyboard music.
- may be used imperceptibly to achieve a "seamless" legato: play, then catch the chord with the pedal... lift when the next chord is played.

Pedaling the music of Haydn and Mozart

- Mozart did not indicate pedaling in his music.
- There are only a few indications of pedaling in Haydn's music.
- Pedal imperceptibly; do not obscure clarity of texture, phrasing and articulation.
- Slower passages using Alberti bass often need coloring by the pedal to avoid an overly dry sound.

Pedaling the music of Beethoven

- One of the first composers to indicate pedaling in piano music.
- May use the damper pedal to sustain the bass, improve legato, create a collective or composite sound, implement dynamic contrasts, interconnecting sections or movements, blurring the sound through harmonic clashes, and even contributing to the thematic structure.
- In performance, Beethoven used the pedal more often than he indicates in the score [from sources that heard Beethoven perform].

Pedaling the music of Chopin

- Very meticulous in indicating pedaling in his piano music.

from: Banowetz, Joseph. The Pianist's Guide To Pedaling. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985.