SARGAM LESSONS

Brought to you by

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SARGAM LESSONS

Sargam Lessons assumes you have no prior knowledge of music or playing the keyboard or harmonium or you play without correct approach. This book will show you:

How to play harmonium in desi style?
How to practice sargam in stages?
What are paltas in sargam?
Akaar and its definition.
How to play notations of raga based songs?

The book also features about thaat, ragas and raga based songs. All music players should know all of the information contained in this book. The best and fastest way to learn is to use this book in conjunction with: Buying midi music of your favorite songs. Practicing and playing with other musicians. Learning by listening your favorite Indian Pakistani midi music provided in the Internet. Be practical in the early stages, it is helpful to have the guidance of an experienced teacher. This will also help you keep a schedule and obtain weekly goals.

CORRECT APPROACH TO PRACTICE

From the beginning you should set yourself a goal. Many people learn keyboard or harmonium because of a desire to play old songs of sub-continent. It is important to have a correct approach to practice from beginning. You will benefit more from short practices (15-30 minutes per day) than one or two long sessions per week. Correct approach is learning with the thaat and raga concept in which melodious film songs are being composed. First learn octaves/saptak, names of notes that is achal, komal and tiver notes, and then learn thata/scale and practice few days with thaat sargam. After learning thaat sargam its fingering practice in all three octaves is also necessary. In the beginning try to play songs in a particular thaat and after that listen and learn Ragas and play songs with ragas. Listen and play raga based film songs with notations provided with the book. Do, not try to play raga-based songs in the early stage of your learning. While practice, try to take help from the book repeatedly. I am sure within few weeks you will be able to play your favorite tunes yourself without any help but ragas require additional practice. In the end do not forget to learn taal or rhythm theory along with melody. Gradually you will become master. If you want to become a singalong singer then practice sargam.

USING THE DOWNLOADS

It is recommended that you have a copy of the download that includes all the ragas and their khyals. Midi music will sound identical to Yamaha keyboard instruments in your computers if you play it using Yamaha sound cards. Midi music can also be played with a floppy or with USB equipped keyboards. In the Yamaha keyboard you will listen real voice of Yamaha XG. Midi music is a digital music with 16 individual recorded tracks that can be edited in computers using cubase or cakewalk. You may singalong with midi music and record your own audio song using Yamaha PSR S-900 keyboard which also support audio recording using a mike.
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The singing voice practice

In this series of sargam exercises, we will go through vocal and rhythmic exercises, in order to learn and develop the basic tools that the singing voice needs in order to start practicing the Indian chant music system, i.e.

* Paltas exercises with the ‘Swards’: Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni;

* Thaat’s or melodic scales on which the 'Ragas' are based, example: Bilawal, Kalyan, Bhairav and Bhairavi.

* Sargam and swar-song forms will be practiced based on the above-mentioned 'Thaats' or scales.

* Introduction to Raga chanting: Vocalization, ascending and descending scales, more exercises and collective singing practice with harmonium or keyboard.

Harmonium - Keyboard

The harmonium came to India through missionaries. The original form was that of a pedal organ. The harmonium is a reed organ, with bellows that are operated by hand. Over the years many vocalists preferred to be accompanied by the harmonium. The role of the harmonium is to provide a backup for the main melodic line, thus endowing it with a sort of strength and an added dimension.

Before playing the harmonium instrument it should be placed on a stool alongside of which the vocalist may sit or on a chair of equal height. Or if the gathering of listeners is organized on a carpeted floor, the instrument may be put in front of the vocalist.

1. Harmonium and keyboard are similar for Indian music so these lessons are equally suitable for both instruments. For harmonium we have to blow air all the time when we play. For Keyboard it is not required.

2. For keyboard we have to select the best sound out of 100 or more available. The sound should be pleasing and continuous. Suggested sounds are Flute, organ, Clarinet, Reed etc. Every keyboard is different; therefore every keyboard has different set of voices for selection.

3. For harmonium first open at least 3 big knobs and then blower. In some there is a straight blower, which is to be opened from both sides, and in other it should be opened only from left.

4. In harmonium never blow air until any note black or white is pressed, otherwise air will not be able to go out from anywhere and the harmonium will start leaking air from sides or anywhere.

5. Use left hand to blow air and right hand to play keys. Use right hand thumb to play white keys only and adjoining three fingers on black and white keys both. In harmonium or keyboard thumb is very rarely used on black keys.

6. For harmonium you need to use right hand only. In these lessons fingering position is same for harmonium as well as keyboard. After a little basic knowledge of how to play on the harmonium, it should not be difficult for a vocalist to find the tonic (Sa) key, suitable for his singing gamut (entire rage seven notes) of notes on the harmonium/keyboard. In keyboards as a general rule, an area of about two
octaves can do the job of self-accompaniment. What you need is really four notes in the lower octave from your chosen tonic note, and another four notes from upper octave from same tonic note.

7. With the key of the tonic note (Sa) pressed, pull the bellow gently toward yourself, with the left to get the sound of this note.

8. Along with the sound of this tonic (Sa) note try to sing your song at this moment, by aligning the tune with the tonic note. Make a judgment of the pitch of the song in high as well as low places on the keyboard.

9. Feel your way while singing; by touching the suitable keys on the harmonium with those notes, which are related to the song, you want to sing. At this point, the touching of fingers will produce two kinds of sounds. One kind, which resemble the elements of your song and the second kind, which do not resemble. In fact second kind tones will sound boring, so you should avoid and pass over them.

10. As with solo (alone) playing of the keyboard, the fingers are made to skip over the notes besides other techniques, with self-accompaniment. The same fingering is done by a method called legato in modern musical terminology which implies constantly keeping pressed, one of the appropriate keys along with singing, like a continuous flow of sound tones, exactly as a church organ. In this way you will produce sound effect of a harmonium in your keyboard while practicing sargam.

With a little practice, the fingers will get accustomed, to synchronize with the vocal sounds controlled by the mind. You get better knowledge of the technique of playing harmonium, before the actual accompaniment. Also a teacher, if available in the neighborhood, can help a lot to give a fairly good start or watch video lessons.

**Division of a saptak**

In Indian Classical music three saptaks (Octaves) are usually utilized.

1. **Saptak**: When the set of seven notes is played in the order it is called a Saptak (i.e. Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni). In the keyboard or harmonium the Sa gets repeated after Ni. The frequency of 2nd Sa is twice the frequency of first Sa. Notes of this saptak are indicated by a sign of apostrophe on right side e.g. S’.

2. **Mandr Saptak**: The one below the madh saptak is called mandr saptak (low). Notes of this octave are sung or played in a low deep tone. This comprises of the saptak that is below the lower Sa of the madh saptak. Notes of this saptak are indicated by a sign of apostrophe on left side e.g. ‘S.

1. **Madh Saptak**: The normal tone of human voice, which is neither high nor low. It is called madh saptak (middle octave). This has got no symbol in the notation system.
Taar Saptak: The one higher than madh saptak is taar saptak (high). The notes are high and sharp. The frequency of the second Sa is twice the frequency of the first Sa. The second Sa belongs to taar saptak and in this way the same saptak gets repeated.

The Indian musical scale is said to have evolved from 3 notes to a scale of 7 primary notes, on the basis of 22 intervals. A scale is divided into 22 shrutis or intervals, and these are the basis of the musical notes. Musicians as Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha and Ni know the 7 notes of the scale. These 7 notes of the scale do not have equal intervals between them. A Saptak is a group of 7 notes, divided by the intervals is as follows:

3a Re Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22

The first and fifth notes (Sa and Pa) do not alter their positions on this interval. The other 5 notes can change their positions in the interval, leading to different ragas

Notes of a saptak (Sa, Re, Ga, Ma)

The notes of the Indian gamut (seven notes of music) are known as sargam. Just as the English word "alphabet" is derived from the Greek letters "alpha, beta", in the same way the word "Sargam" is derived from "Sa-Re-Ga-Ma". Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, is simply the initial notes (swar) of the Indian musical gamut. These swars are Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, and Ni. The intervals of the Indian scale are essentially the same as those of the western scale. The notes in the Western scale are evenly spaced; the ones in the Eastern scale follow the natural divisions of vibrational frequencies.

Musical notes are chosen by certain names. However, the names do not refer to notes of fixed absolute pitch. Having decided on the schedule and key in which the performance is to take place, the singer or musician determines the pitch, which will be the fundamental pitch, and designates it as the first note of the octave, calling it by the label "Sa". The succeeding notes of the octave are then given the following names: Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni, Sa

The full names of the notes are given as under:

1. Sa Khraj/Shadj (the tonic note)
2. Re Rekhab
3. Ga Gandhar
4. Ma Madhyam
5. Pa Pancham  
6. Dha Dhaivat  
7. Ni Nikhad

The intervals between these notes can be regarded as the same as those of the standard C major scale of just temperament, and we will denote these notes by S, R, G, M, P, D, N, S.

\[
\begin{align*}
S, R, G, M, P, D, N, S & \quad \text{(Indian)} \\
C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C & \quad \text{(western)}
\end{align*}
\]

Traditionally, the seven swars are said to derive, as do many elements of Indian music, from sounds in nature: Shadj/Sa is said to imitate the cry of the peacock; Rekhab /Re, the chataka bird crying for its mate; Gandhar /Ga, the bleating of a goat or sheep; Madhyam /Ma, the middle sound, the crane or heron's call; Pancham /Pa, the fifth sound, the kokila (cuckoo) in spring; Dhaivat /Dha, the horse's neigh, or the frog in the rainy season; Nikhad /Ni, the trumpeting of the elephant.

- Shuddh or natural notes are notated as S, R, G, m, P, D, N,
- All upper case letters except Sa and Pa refer to "Tiver Swars" Example, RGDN.
- All lower case letters refer to the "Komal Swars". Example, r g d n.
- For 'Ma', m refers Shuddh Ma or the natural one and M refers to the 'Tiver or Kori Ma'.

Sa and Pa are never sharp or flat. **Shuddh ma, however, is written with a lower case m.** It is the only note ever referred to as sharp. As tiver or "bright" Ma it is written with an upper case M. In addition there are of course, certain notes that are komal (flat) or tiver (sharp) versions of some of these.

### Twelve Notes Of A Saptak

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<th>No</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Notes Detail</th>
<th>Notes Properties</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Sa, which will be represented by S</td>
<td>Khraj Sa (Or fixed/constant Sa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>Komal Re, which will be represented by r</td>
<td>Komal Re</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Tiver Re, which will be represented by R</td>
<td>Tiver Re</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>Komal Ga, which will be represented by g</td>
<td>Komal Ga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Tiver Ga, which will be represented by G</td>
<td>Tiver Ga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>Komal Ma, which will be represented by m</td>
<td>Komal or Shuddh Ma (natural note)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Tiver Ma, which will be represented by M</td>
<td>Tiver Ma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Pa, will be represented by P; (immovable note)</td>
<td>Fixed/constant Pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>Komal Dha, which will be represented by d</td>
<td>Komal Dha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Tiver Dha, which will be represented by D</td>
<td>Tiver Dha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>Komal Ni, which will be represented by n</td>
<td>Komal Ni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Tiver Ni, which will be represented by N</td>
<td>Tiver Ni</td>
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Komal means notes with lower voice and Tiver means notes with higher voice. Shuddh Notes are also called natural notes

- We can fix any note as khraj note that is “Sa” and corresponding attached notes of scale will be according to the given arrangement. E.g. S, r, R, g, G, m, M, P, d, D, n, N
- Sa and Pa are immovable or constant. Thus the full twelve-tone scale arrangement of notes is labeled as: S, r, R, g, G, m, M, P, d, D, n, N, S'. Here in the below given picture we have selected first black key as our khraj note.
Each time we change our Khraj note (Sa) the position of notes in scale will also be changed according to below given arrangement where our Khraj note is first white key in the below given diagram.

So, how do you distinguish between octaves? Mandr saptak is situated in extreme left of harmonium or keyboard and notes of mandr saptak have a sign of apostrophe on left side e.g. 'S. Middle saptak is without any sign and taar saptak is in extreme right. Notes written in taar saptak are shown by a sign of apostrophe on right e.g. S'.

We will use as the fundamental note the C# which lies in middle octave in western system. This will correspond to Sa in madh saptak of Indian system. So by combining both systems the other notes will correspond as follows:

Most of the singers sing in the particular scale according to their sound pitch. Many male vocalists will use C# or D# as their fundamental starting note. Female vocalists tend to place their fundamental somewhere in the range from F# to A#. Female sound pitch is higher than male. Lowercase (small) letters are shown as "komal" or flat notes, and the uppercase (capital) letters are shown as "tiver" or sharp. All notes except for Sa and Pa have an alter ego, whose nature is either komal or tiver.

**Identifying notes and their position:**

- **Shuddh (natural) notes** are notated as S, R, G, m, P, D, N,
- **Komal (flat) notes** are notated as r, g, d, n
- **All Tiver (sharp) notes** are notated as R, G, D, N and Tiver Ma is also notated as M
1) \((S\ R\ G\ M\ P\ D\ N) = \text{notes in middle octave (madh)}\)
2) Apostrophe + Note \((S'\ R'\ G'\ M'\ P'\ D'\ N') = \text{notes in lower octave (mandr)}\)
3) Note + apostrophe \((S'\ R'\ G'\ M'\ P'\ D'\ N') = \text{notes in upper octave (taar)}\)

The lower case letters indicate komal or flat notes, the upper case, Shuddh or pure, natural notes. Sa and Pa are never sharp or flat. **Shuddh Ma, however, is written with a lower case m.** It is the only note ever referred to as sharp. As tiver or "bright" Ma is written with an upper case M.

Sa of Indian is equivalent to C# of the western system. This need not be the case, since in Indian music ‘Sa’ is not only the most important note (also called the "tonic" note), it is modal, e.g. it can be anything you wish and the other corresponding notes will offset from there as shown in above picture 1a and 2a. However, C, C# are commonly used as Sa. Most persons prefer to play music from the western C# as their starting point. In other words,

they select Sa from C# which is a common expression which is easy to remember. It is suggested to use C# if you are beginning to play harmonium or keyboard as a student of music for simplicity and ease. After learning you may start playing from any note and corresponding notes will change according to our chosen khraj note.

Indian classical music is principally based on melody and rhythm, not on harmony, counterpoint, chords, and modulation. Before you begin your first lesson, you must go through the initial lessons above. When you have a basic understanding of the notes of a sargam, it will help you sing and play better.

**You will need the following:**

A good teacher is essential because this person will correct your mistakes and set a good example to follow. Your teacher should be someone capable of performing and have a good reputation for teaching. Treat your teacher with respect and consideration at all times, even when you are no longer learning from him. Instrumentalists must be sure to learn from both a vocal and instrumental teacher. From the instrumental teacher you will learn techniques and from the vocal teacher to implement these techniques as though your instrument is singing the words.

It is not enough to just attend a class once a week. Practice everyday, even for as little as half an hour. For those who wish to be performers, weekday practice should be 2-3 hours. You must be ready to listen carefully to your teacher and to other performers. Listening to great recordings of old semi-classical will help you learn faster. Attend concerts as well.

**Sargam**

Natural notes (pure or major) are called Shudh notes which are shown as S, R, G, m, P, D, N. The notes, or swars, are Khraj/Shadj, Rekhab, Gandhar, Madhyam, Pancham, Dhaivat and Nikhad. When singing these become Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni, and sargam stands for "Sa-Re-Ga-Ma". Only these syllables are sung, and further designations are never vocalized. When writing these become, S, R, G, m, P, D, N. A sign of apostrophe on the right side of a letter (S') indicates the octave higher, a sign of apostrophe on the left side of a letter ('S') indicates the octave lower. Re, Ga, Dha, and Ni may be either shudh or komal; Ma may be either shudh or tivar and is then called tiver Ma. Sa and Pa are immovable (once Sa is selected),
Don't think there is anything that you can practice that will have as much an impact on your playing as sargam. Take the sargam challenge. Play the sargam every night for one month and then re-assess your playing skills afterward.

In other words Sargam is the collection of music notes or the swar of the scale. It has been mentioned earlier how notes of the sargam relate to the western scale. Practicing to play sargam in music is bit like weight training. Basic rules of weight training are to start with simple exercises with lightweights. As you get comfortable with lightweights, you increase repetitions or increase the weight you are lifting. You also focus on muscle group you work on. You go to heavier and more complex exercises after you feel comfortable with the basic exercises. When we say sargam, we don't just mean a scale of notes but it means the act of playing the sargam. Playing the sargam is the single most important thing you can do when you are learning harmonium or keyboard. When beginning to learn harmonium, the teachers should not stress the playing of the sargam too much or enforce it. After all, there is nothing joyous about playing one note after the other in succession, over and over again. Students tend to hate sargam for this very reason. Getting students into sargam is a challenge.

Sargam fixes everything. If your right hand is not strong enough, sargam fixes that. If you are not confident in class, sargam fixes that. If you don't know where the notes are at the beginning, or how to sit properly for long periods of time or need discipline or you are trying to increase your speed or clarity or timing or rhythm or etc; sargam fixes all. Sargam needs great practice, but it doesn't have to be boring. Nothing is more boring than playing the same notes over and over again, so spice up your sargam with some of the variations. This will sound like you are actually playing something.

There are various books written on harmonium or keyboard but no suitable book is available on basics. These books were for advance learning and lessons were difficult to follow. This lesson of sargam is the first effort to produce sargam lessons in easy and with simplified exercises. With these lessons you will be able to play and sing-along with your harmonium or keyboard. All the exercises are produced with simple diagrams and notations. Thanks to great music composer Nisar Bazmi Sahib and all those colleagues who cooperated with me in producing these fundamental lessons.

**Thaat**

The set of seven notes is called a thaat and thaat produce ragas. The system of classification for the raga in different groups is called a thaat. Thaat system is an "artificial" way to classifying ragas. Classification in Thaat system is purely for academic purpose. It is not necessary that Ragas from the same thaat might have same or similar personality. The idea behind thaat is pretty simple. There are 12 notes in an octave - 7 pure notes and 5 flat/augmented notes. If one makes various permutations of these notes, one can think of 72 different combinations. Hindustani system, however, adds further restrictions on the way these notes are used. It is usually not allowed to use both pure and corresponding flat note one after the other (and since this is an evolved art form and not science, there are always exceptions to such rules). When such restrictions are factored in, the numbers of thaat reduce to ten. It is important for beginners to practice Kalyan thaat well to begin with. As they get comfortable with it, they may switch to Behravi thaat. I also find from my own experience that Bhairav thaat too presents some interesting fingering challenges. If one gets command on these three, the other thaat usually follow pretty easily.

If you learn thaat then you can easily learn ragas and can play many songs in keyboard or harmonium. You can play few songs with thaat but unlimited songs can be produced with ragas and ragas produce beauty. It is easy to play songs in a thaat that contain fixed number of ascending and descending notes. In a raga there may not be fix number of notes in ascending and descending order so, it is not easy to
play songs in the first instance. There are certain rules for representation of thaat. These rules of classification of thaat are defined as under.

1. A thaat must have seven notes out of the twelve notes placed in an ascending or descending order. Both the forms of the notes can be used.
2. Thaat has only one arohi and one amrohi.
3. Thaat is not to be sung and is for only playing music songs but the ragas produced from the thaat are sung.
4. Thaat is named after the popular raga of that thaat. For example behravi is a popular raga and the thaat of the raga behravi is named after the raga.
5. Out of ten thaat about 80 ragas are developed and performed these days. But for a beginner 30 ragas are sufficient to bring perfection in learning.

The set of seven notes or scale that can produce a raga is called a thaat. The system of classification for the ragas in different groups is called a thaat. There are again several systems of classification of the raga. Presently in Indian classical music the 10-thaat classifications of ragas is commonly known.
## Widely Accepted Ten Thaat

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Thaat</th>
<th>Ascending Notes</th>
<th>Descending Notes</th>
<th>Notes Properties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilawal</td>
<td>S, R, G, m, P, D, N, S'</td>
<td>S', N, D, P, m, G, R, S</td>
<td>All Shuddh or Natural Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kafi</td>
<td>S, R, g, m, P, D, n, S'</td>
<td>S', n, D, P, m, g, R, S</td>
<td>Ga, Ni, Komal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asavari</td>
<td>S, R, g, m, P, d, n, S'</td>
<td>S', n, d, P, m, g, R, S</td>
<td>Ga, Dha, Ni Komal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khamaj</td>
<td>S, R, G, m, P, D, n, S'</td>
<td>S', n, D, P, m, G, R, S</td>
<td>Ni Komal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhairav/Behro</td>
<td>S, r, G, m, P, d, N, S'</td>
<td>S', N, d, P, m, G, r, S</td>
<td>Re, Dha Komal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhairavi</td>
<td>S, r, g, m, P, d, n, S'</td>
<td>S', n, d, P, m, g, r, S</td>
<td>Re, Ga, Dha, Ni Komal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marwa</td>
<td>S, r, G, M, P, D, N, S'</td>
<td>S', N, D, P, M, G, r, S</td>
<td>Re Komal, Ma Tiver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poorvi</td>
<td>S, r, G, M, P, d, N, S'</td>
<td>S', N, d, P, M, G, r, S</td>
<td>Re, Dha Komal, Ma Tiver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Todi</td>
<td>S, r, g, M, P, d, N, S'</td>
<td>S', N, d, P, M, g, r, S</td>
<td>Re, Ga, Dha Komal, Ma Tiver</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. A thaat must have seven notes out of the twelve notes placed in an ascending or descending order. Both the forms of the notes can be used.

2. Thaat has only one arohi and one amrohi.

3. Thaat is not to be sung and is for only playing music songs but the ragas produced from the thaat are sung.

4. Thaat is named after the popular raga of that thaat. For example bhairavi is a popular raga and the thaat of the raga bhairavi is named after the raga.

5. Out of ten thaat about 80 ragas are developed and performed these days. But for beginner 30 popular ragas or less are sufficient to bring perfection in learning.
Ten Thaat Diagram With Komal And Tiver Notes

[Diagram of Thaat Bilawal Notes]

[Diagram of Thaat Bhairavi Notes]

[Diagram of Thaat Bhairav Notes]

[Diagram of Thaat Kalyan Notes]

[Diagram of Thaat Kafi Notes]

[Diagram of Thaat Marwa Notes]

[Diagram of Thaat Pooni Notes]

[Diagram of Thaat Khamaj Notes]

[Diagram of Thaat Todi Notes]

[Diagram of Thaat Asavari Notes]
Ragas

Ragas are derived from ten thaats or parent modes. These thaats are sampooran i.e. containing seven notes in the octave, whereas a raga may contain five, six or all the seven notes or any combination thereof. A thaat is only a group of abstract tonal forms, but a raga is a combination of notes having the power of generating and creating emotional values. Ragas are the melodic modes used in Indian classical music. A raga describes a generalized form of melodic practice; it prescribes a set of rules for how to build a melody. It specifies rules for movements up (arohi) and down (amrohi) the scale, which notes should figure more and which notes should be used more carefully, and so on. The result is a structure that can be used to compose or improvise melodies, allowing for everlasting variation within the set of notes.

All the Ragas have a name and a character, which can be devotional, bold and gallant, or tragic. Raga usually comes with a time of the day when it is best performed. Some ragas are related to seasons, for example the raga malhar is usually performed mainly in the monsoon season, or it can be sung at any time.

Ten Thaat & Their Main Ragas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thaat</th>
<th>Some Well Known Ragas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kalyan</td>
<td>Kalyan, Shuddh Kalyan, Aiman Kalyan, Aiman/Yaman, Bhupali, Kamod, Chhayanat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilawal</td>
<td>Bilawal, Bihag, Durga, Hansdhwani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khamaj</td>
<td>Khamaj, Jhinjhoti, Desh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kafi</td>
<td>Kafi, Pilu, Bageshri, Miyan Ki Malhar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asavari</td>
<td>Asavari, Jaunpuri, Darbari Kanada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behravi</td>
<td>Behravi, Bilaskhani Todi, Malkaus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhairav</td>
<td>Bhairav, Gauri, Lalit, Jogiya, Ramkali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Todi</td>
<td>Todi, Multani, Gurjari Todi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purvi</td>
<td>Purvi, Puriya Dhanashree, Shree, Basant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marwa</td>
<td>Marwa, Jaït, Vibhas, Bhatiyar, Puriya, Sohni</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sargam Chapter 1

We can learn how to play music with keyboard or harmonium but without practice of sargam we cannot sing-along while playing harmonium or keyboard. Practice of sargam is very important for a harmonium or keyboard singer.

Raga Kalyan

Every thaat is also a Raga and Raga Kalyan is derived from that Kalyan. In raga Kalyan Madhyam is Tiver and all other notes are Shuddh (full). Raga Yaman Kalyan is an evening raga. It is also denominated variously by Yaman, Iman, Eman and Aiman. Although the Raga is as old as the hills, its historical antecedents are not easy to pin down. Traditionally rendered in the first quarter of night, Kalyan achieves its potent effect with tiver madhyam and shuddh nikhad forming a graceful symmetry amidst the other five-shuddh swar of the saptak, and shuddh gandhar serving as the vaadi and nikhad as samvaadi. The derivative ragas out of this structure are grouped under the broad head of Kalyan Thaat. Here its jaati is kept sapooran-sampooran for sargam practice only.

Exercise (Raga Kalyan)

In this exercise we will practice Raga Kalyan notes in madh saptak. The Raga Kalyan, among the ten recognized by the great musician, composer, theorist and scholar, Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande, takes for its basis the following set: S R G M P D N. In our notation system tiver notes are shown in capital letters and with red dot. Achal (fixed) notes are also shown with capital letters but with blue dot.

Sit beside harmonium/keyboard properly as explained earlier. First you have to practice Arohi of raga kalyan sargam, which is ascending order as (S, R, G, M, P, D, N, S’). The arohi of sargam will be taught in ten stages. After completing ten stages of Arohi you will practice Amrohi, which is descending order of a Sargam as (‘S, N, D, P, M, G, R, S). You have to spend five to ten minutes on each stage for practice. Our practice of arohi and amrohi will be in madh or middle saptak.

Below given diagram is showing Raga Kalyan notes in all three saptak. Raga Kalyan is the best thaat to start with. Raga Kalyan notes are shown in all three saptak with finger numbers.
FINGERS & THEIR NUMBERS

Thumb 1, Index finger 2, middle finger 3, ring finger 4, little finger 5

Sargam Exercise 1. (Raga Kalyan Arohi)

First Stage – Sa (index finger 2)

We will begin our practice in middle saptak that is best for beginners. Press note of Khraj, which is ‘Sa’ with right hand index finger number 2. With the voice of harmonium note try to synchronize your voice with it by saying ‘Sa’ for at least five seconds. Keep pressure on the note while pressing bellow of harmonium with your left hand. You have to practice at least 5-10 minutes on this first note of Sargam. In the beginning you may feel difficulty in synchronizing your voice with harmonium but gradually you will overcome this difficulty. Khraj note that is ‘Sa’ is shown in the diagram with a blue dot. All our basic lessons in Raga Kalyan will begin from middle or madh saptak.
Second Stage - Re (middle finger 3)

Press note of Rekhab, which is ‘Re’ with right hand middle finger and do not displace your finger from Khraj note and only decrease its pressure from the note. By pressing note of Rekhab say ‘Re’ and try to synchronize your voice with the voice of harmonium as explained in the first stage. Say ‘Re’ again and again until your voice is fully synchronizes with harmonium. Your index finger and middle fingers must remain over the notes. In the picture below Rekhab note is mentioned with red circle. You should keep in mind that all above stages are linked and only one note is added in each stage.

Third Stage - Ga (thumb 1)

Raising your finger from Rekhab note press note of Gandhar (G), with your thumb by twisting your thumb beneath your hand. Do not raise your second finger much higher over Rekhab note and only decrease its pressure while approaching Gandhar. Now again try to synchronize your voice with Gandhar note and repeat this practice again and again at least 10 minutes. In the picture below Gandhar note is mentioned with red circle.

Fourth Stage – (Kalyan Arohi) Sa, Re, Ga (fingers 2,3,1)

In this stage we will practice all three notes together, which we have already practiced. Press Khraj note ‘Sa’ with index finger and say this note for about five seconds. Then by pressing note of Rekhab say ‘Re’ for about five seconds and try to synchronize your voice with the voice of harmonium. Raising your finger from Rekhab note press note of Gandhar, with your thumb and say ‘Ga’ for five seconds.
Fifth Stage - Sa, Re, Ga, Ma (fingers 2,3,1,2)

2 3 1 2
Sa, Re, Ga Ma ⇒

Now we have to learn four swars together and fourth swar is ‘Ma’. Saying note ‘Ga’ from previous stage bring your index finger on Madhyam note and say ‘Ma’ for about five seconds. Now again bring your index finger back on Khraj note ‘Sa’ and after five seconds of vocal synchronizing press note ‘Re’ and keep practicing these four notes again and again with your particular fingers. This repeated exercise from Sa to Ma should not be less than ten minutes of duration. It should be remembered that we would stay on each note for about five seconds.

Sixth Stage – Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa (fingers 2,3,1,2,3)

2 3 1 2 3
Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa ⇒

Keeping in view fifth stage add Pancham note ‘Pa’ in your exercise. By raising your finger from Madhyam note press Pancham note ‘Pa’ with your middle finger and say ‘Pa’ for about five seconds. Keep on practicing Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa again and again for about 10 minutes. Do not forget to stay for five seconds on each note in each exercise while synchronizing your voice with swars.

Seventh Stage – Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha (fingers 2,3,1,2,3,4)

2 3 1 2 3 4
Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, D ⇒
Connecting your link from sixth stage add note ‘Dha’ in your exercise. By pressing ‘Dha’ say this note by synchronizing your voice with it. Now you have to practice Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha for about ten minutes.

**Eighth Stage** – Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni (fingers 2,3,1,2,3,4,1)

2 3 1 2 3 4 1
Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, D, Ni ⇒

Press Note ‘Ni’ with your thumb by turning your thumb under your hand and say this note for about five seconds. Soon after that position place your index finger No.2 again on the Khraj note ‘Sa’ and practice Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni for about ten minutes like previous exercises of Sargam.

**Ninth Stage** - Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni, Sa' (fingers 2,3,1,2,3,4,1,2)

2 3 1 2 3 4 1 2
Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, D, Ni, Sa ⇒

Continuing your lessons from previous stage bring your index finger on Khraj note ‘Sa’ in the third octave and try to synchronize your voice with the Khraj note while note is pressed. Duration of pressing each note in all above stages is not less five seconds. You should keep in mind that all above stages are linked and only one note is added in each stage.

**Tenth Stage** - Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni, Sa' (fingers 2,3,1,2,3,4,1,2) ⇒

Now you have to practice all these eight swars, which are given below:

**Arohi:** S, R, G, M, P, D, N, S' ⇒ Play left to right
Arohi of Sargam is ascending order of Sargam notes. The above sargam initiates from ‘Sa’ note of middle saptak and ends to ‘Sa’ note of third saptak. You should practice arohi of sargam until your fingers are not used to play notes without hesitation and confidence. One should try to practice Arohi without time limitation until perfection arises. Proper synchronizing of voice with swar is very important.

Sargam Exercise 2 (Raga Kalyan Amrohi)

S’, N, D, P, M, G, R, S (fingers 2,1,4,3,2,1,3,2) ⇐

After getting proficiency in Arohi you have to practice Amrohi, which is descending notes of a Sargam. You also have to practice Amrohi in stages as you already did in Arohi of Sargam but now in descending order from Taar (upper) Saptak towards Madh (middle) Saptak.

Amrohi: S’, N, D, P, M, G, R, S 2, 1, 4, 3, 2, 1, 3, 2 Play right to left

Do not forget to stay for five seconds on each note in each exercise while synchronizing your voice with swars. There is also no time limitation for Amrohi practice but it should be continued until you get acquainted with the voice of notes. Fingering will be same as selected in Arohi practice but in reverse order. There must be a gap of one and half second between swars to breath.

First Stage – S’, N, D, ⇐ (fingers 2,1,4)

2 1 4
Sa, Ni, Dha ⇐ Play right to left

In all these six stages you will have to practice as explained in earlier exercises of Sargam. You have to remain for five seconds on each note while saying relevant swars and by synchronizing your voice. The gap between each note must be one and half second in this initial stage. Total time of practice must be between 5-10 minutes.
**Second Stage** – S’, N, D, P ⇐ (fingers 2,1,4,3)

2 1 4 3
Sa, Ni, Dha, Pa ⇐ Play right to left

By adding note ‘Pa’ practice all four notes all over again and again for ten minutes and synchronize your voice with swars.

**Third Stage** - S’, N, D, P, M ⇐ (fingers 2,1,4,3,2)

2 1 4 3 2
Sa, Ni, Dha, Pa, Ma ⇐ Play right to left

By adding note ‘Ma’ practice all four notes all over again and again for five to ten minutes and synchronize your voice with swars.

**Fourth Stage** – S’, N, D, P, M, G ⇐ (fingers 2,1,4,3,2,1)

2 1 4 3 2 1
Sa, Ni, Dha, Pa, Ma, Ga ⇐

**Fifth Stage:** S’, N, D, P, M, G, R ⇐ (fingers 2,1,4,3,2,1,3)

2 1 4 3 2 1 3
Sa, Ni, Dha, Pa, Ma, Ga, Re ⇐
Sixth Stage – S’, N, D, P, M, G, R, S ⇐ (fingers 2,1,4,3,2,1,3,2)

Sa, Ni, Dha, Pa, Ma, Ga, Re, Sa ⇐

Now it is the stage of Amrohi, add Khraj note ‘Sa’ in your practice. In the sixth stage there is no fixed time period for practice of swars. You may increase your time if you feel you are not perfect in fingering or vocal.

Sargam Exercise 3 – Kalyan Arohi Amrohi

It is the time when we will practice complete sargam in ascending and descending order. This exercise is very important for harmonium students for basic music learning. Proper synchronizing of voice with swar is very important in this lesson. It is better to stay on each swar for five seconds and gradually decrease your time to four seconds and in the end half second. At least half an hour continuous practice is important but you can increase your practice time according to your capability. Now you got familiar with Sargam notes in ascending and descending order so, we are going to write arohi and amrohi of sargam in normal style. Now notations of Raga Kalyan sargam will be written from left to right but will be played according to direction of arrow as given below:


Try to remain on each note for half a second, which is the perfect speed for practice of Sargam. If you get bored then take rest and divide your practice time in parts or play in front of friends or family members.
Alankars & Their Types

Alankars are different sets of the swars that will enable you to practice and familiarize yourself with the different sounds. You should practice these till you can play them correctly without looking at the keyboard. While you practice how to play, please sing along too so that you can improve your voice and can learn how to sing more in tune.

The term Alankar literally means an ornament or decoration; it is the repetition of musical notes from a Raga in a particular pattern.

Alankars are of four types:

1. **Asthai Alankars**, which returns to the initial note
2. **Arohi Alankars**, which is an ascending sequence of notes
3. **Amrohi Alankars**, which is a descending sequence of notes
4. **Sanchari Alankars**, which combines elements of the above types.

Alankars are extremely useful for practice and are a great way of getting familiar with your keyboard or harmonium.

Here are some more Alankars for practice; try to play them continuously for an extended period of time; its extremely important that your fingers move smoothly on the keyboard because when you are playing a metered melody, an extra second's hesitation is enough to send you out of synchronization with the taal or rhythm.

### Kalyan Sargam

**Practice according to above diagram of Kalyan. Play in madh saptak:**

1. S R G M P D N S'  
   S' N D P M G R S
2. SS, RR, GG, MM, PP, DD, NN, S'S'  
   S'S' NN, DD, PP, MM, GG, RR, SS
3. SRG, RGM, GMP, MPD, PDN, DNS'  
   S'ND, NDP, DPM, GMP, MGR, GRS
4. SRGM, RGMP, GMPD, MPDN, PDNS'  
   S'NDP, NDPM, DPMG, PMGR, MGRS
5. SG, RM, GP, MD, PN, DS'
This might look extremely difficult, but its not, its actually a sequence of Asthayee alankars. If you break it up you will see the following pattern:


7. S G R M G P M D P N D S'


11. S D P M R N D P G D P M M N D S'

Practise according to above diagram of achal, komal and tiver notes:

12. S r g M P d P g M d n S' r' S' g' r' S' n d N S' M P d n d P M S r g M g r S

Based on these lines you can create any number of alankars. These will help in improving your ability to play the instrument and also improve your voice. When you sing the alankars saying S R G... it is called singing in sargam. You can practice singing the same alankars in Aakar, ie., singing Aaa, Aaa, Aaa... instead of S R G... We have explained Aakar in sargam lesson earlier.
Shuddh Kalyan

Raga Shuddh Kalyan is very close to Raga Bhoopali. In fact, the Arohi notes of Raga Shuddh Kalyan are the same as those of Raga Bhoopali. Raga Shuddh Kalyan is played in the evening. Arohi and Amrohi notes and other attributes of Raga Shuddh Kalyan are as follows:

**Arohi:** S – R – G – P – D – S’

**Amrohi:** S’ – N – D – P – M – G – R – S

Its Jaati is Odav-Sampooran (meaning 5 notes in Arohi and 7 notes in Amrohi, excluding one of the SA’s). Its Vaadi notes are Ga or Re and Samvaadi notes are Dha or Pa. Varjya swar are only in arohi which is ma and ni. Varjya Swar in a raga are the notes, those are strictly excluded in rendition. Varjya Swar is the enemy of the raga. If a Varjya Swar is accidentally used during rendition of a particular raga, it will spoil the atmosphere that a particular raga is supposed to create. Its Thaat (parent scale) is Kalyan. Pakkad or Bandish is G, R S, N D P S, G, R, P R, S (Note that Raga Shuddh Kalyan has all Shuddh swars both in arohi and amrohi. Hence all notes in arohi and amrohi have been shown in upper case.

This raga is more suited for men's voice. This raga should be sung in vilambit laya (slow speed). If Ga is used as vaadi then this raga should be sung after Raga Yaman. Raga Shuddh Kalyan is a balance of ragas Bhoopali and Yaman. This raga follows the pattern of Raga Bhoopali of Kalyan Thaat in arohi, while amrohi uses tiver (sharp) Madhym and Shuddh Nikhad as in Raga Yaman. Raga Shuddh Kalyan is an immensely popular raga in the world of classical music. Pakkad or bandish are the most dominating notes of a given raga. Each raga has its own bandish. In a way, bandish is a common factor within all the tunes composed on a given raga.

Song Rasik Balma is from the old Hindi film Chori Chori which was based on Raga Shuddh Kalyan. Song. Chand Phir Nikla is from another old Hindi film Paying Guest that was also based on Raga Shuddh Kalyan. For both songs use the same electronic rhythm Latin Bolero in Keyboards. The reason for using the same electronic rhythm is an attempt to show the similarity between both songs, which are both based on Raga Shudh Kalyan. These two songs were composed by two of the greatest music directors: Shankar-Jaikisan and S.D. Burman respectively around the year 1956. Since both songs were composed in Raga Shuddh Kalyan, both have the same bandish or pakkad. And this is the reason why both songs sound so similar. There was no question of one being a copy of the other. Lata Mangeshkar has stated that these two songs are two of the best songs of her career among her other favorite songs such as Aaja re pardesi (Film: Madhumati), Ayega anewala (Film: Mahal) and Ye zindagi usiki hai (Film: Anarkali).
Song Based On Raga Shuddh Kalyan

Song 1: Rasik Balma
Song 2: Chand Phir Nikla
Song 3: Ye shamki tanhaayiyan
Song 4: Meri muhabbat javan rahegi

Notations Of Raga Shuddh Kalyan Songs

Song 1: Rasik Balma

Movie: Chori Chori (1956)
Singer: Lata Mangeshkar
Music Director: Shankar-Jaikishan
Lyrics: Hasrat Jaipuri
Raga: Shuddh Kalyan
Thaat: Kalyan
Scale: B major
Khraj Note: First black shown in blue

Raga Shuddh Kalyan notes are shown in yellow

Asthayee:

D...Bm...D  \[ \equiv \text{CHORDS} \]
Rasik Balmaa hi... dil kyun lagaayaa
SRG PDS’ DPDS’ NS’ N DPPD

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Bm} & \quad \text{D} \\
\text{Those} & \quad \text{dil} \quad \text{kyun} \quad \text{lagaayaa} \\
\text{GR} & \quad \text{‘N} \quad \text{R} \quad \text{RGRS} \\
\end{align*}
\]

D...Bm...D
Jaise rog lagaayaa (Rasik)
‘N ‘D ‘D R RGRS
Antra:

D . . . . . . Bm . . . D
Jab yaad aayi thihaarii
SR GDP GRR GGGRS

D . . . . . . Bm . . . D
Surath who pyaari pyaarii
SRGD P GRRG GG

A . . . . . . . . . . . D
Nehaa lagaa ke haarii
GR’ R’ R’ S’ R’ G’ R’ S’ S’

Bm . . . . D . . . .
Thadpun mein gham kii maarii (Rasik)
NS’ N D P PD PNN

Dhoonde hai paagal naina
Paayee na ik pal chainaa
Dasthii hai ujlii rainaa
Kaa se kahun mein behna (Rasik)

Song 2: Chaand Phir Nikla

Movie: Paying Guest
Singer: Lata Mangeshkar
Raga: Shuddh Kalyan
Thaat: Kalyan
Khraj Note: First black shown in blue

Asthayee:

Chaand phir nikla . . magar tum na aaye
SR GP DP DS’ D DS’ D P PDG
Jala phir mera dil karo kya main haay . . . . . –2
DS’ D S’ R’ G’ R’ S’ R’ S’ D PD GRS

Chaand phir nikla . . .
SR GP DP DS’D

Antra 1:

Yeh raat kehti hai woh din gaye tere
S’ S’S’ S’R’S’ N S’ ND GM MP

Yeh jaanta hai dil ke tum nahin mere –2
D DDD ND P D P GM MP

Khadi hoon main phir bhi nigahein bichaye
G’G’ G’ G’ M G’R’ G’R’S’D NNS’

Main kya karoon haay ke tum yaad aaye
N D GM MP M G SRRG RS

Chaand phir nikla magar tum na aaye
Jala phir mera dil karo kya main haay

Chaand phir nikla

Antra 2:

Sulagte seene se dhuaan sa uthtaa hain
Lo ab chale aao ke dam ghuthta hain 2
Jala gayi tan ko baharon ke saaye
Main kya karoon haay ke tum yaad aaye
Chaand phir nikla magar tum na aaye
Jala phir mera dil karo kya main haay
Chaand phir nikla
Notations Of Raga Kalyan Songs:

Here we are using first white key to play the song ranjish hi sahi only for getting idea but we can also play this song from first black key. In the initial stage we will use first black key for playing song notations and after mastering we may use any key to begin our song according to scale of our voice or according to scale of original song. No matter what is our khraj note or initial note but the achal, komal and tiver scheme will remain as defined in detail in our earlier lessons.

Song 1 : Ranjish hi sahi
Music Director: Nisar Bazmi
Singer: Mehdi Hassan
Taal: Dadra
Raga: Kalyan
Thaat: Kalyan
Khraj Note: First white shown as blue

Asthayee
ranjish hi sahi dil hi dukhaane ke liye aa
S 'N S P RG P M DP GR G MP GRS

aa phir se muJhe choD ke jaane ke liye aaa
DN S' S' S' S' NR' S' N P G R GP GRS

Antra 1
pehle se maraasim na sahee phir bhi kabhi to
'D 'NS S SS 'NR R RR 'N R P GR P

rasmo rahe duniya hi nibhaane ke liye aa
NS' S'S' S' ND' S' NDPG MP RS

ranjish hi sahi dil hi dukhaane ke liye aa
S 'N S P RG P M DP GR G MP GRS

aa phir se muJhe choD ke jaane ke liye aaa
DN S' S' S' S' NR' S' N P G R GP GRS

Antra 2
kis kis ko bataayenge judaai ka sabab hum
tu muJh se khafa hai to zamaane ke liye aa
Antra 3
ab tak dil-e-kushman ko tujh se hain ummeed
ye aakhir shamme bhi buJhaane ke liye aa

End Of Demo Sargam Lessons
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