Create Your Own Technique Exercises - Turns

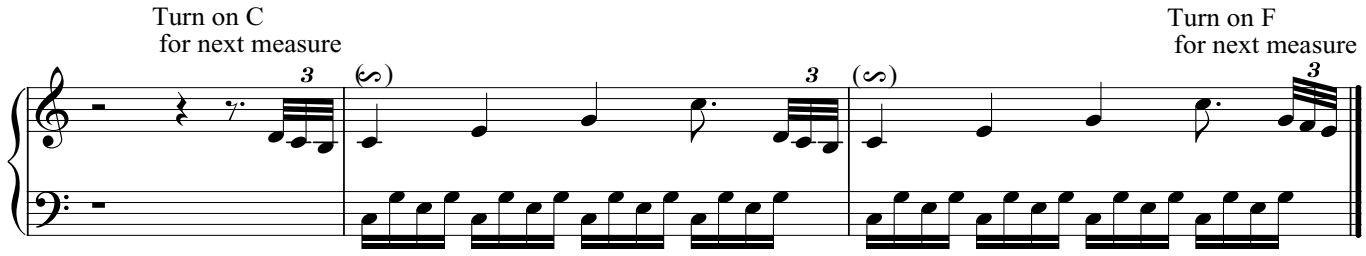
There are plenty of technique books for the aspiring pianist. The most famous is probably Hanon. Instead, we recommend taking your technique practice from real music, not technique exercises. So, when you find a "tricky" piece of technique in music, take that measure or section out of the piece and practice it around the circle. That way you get the practice in all the keys so that the next time you see that little bit of technique, your fingers will already know how to do it in whatever key you are in.

For example:

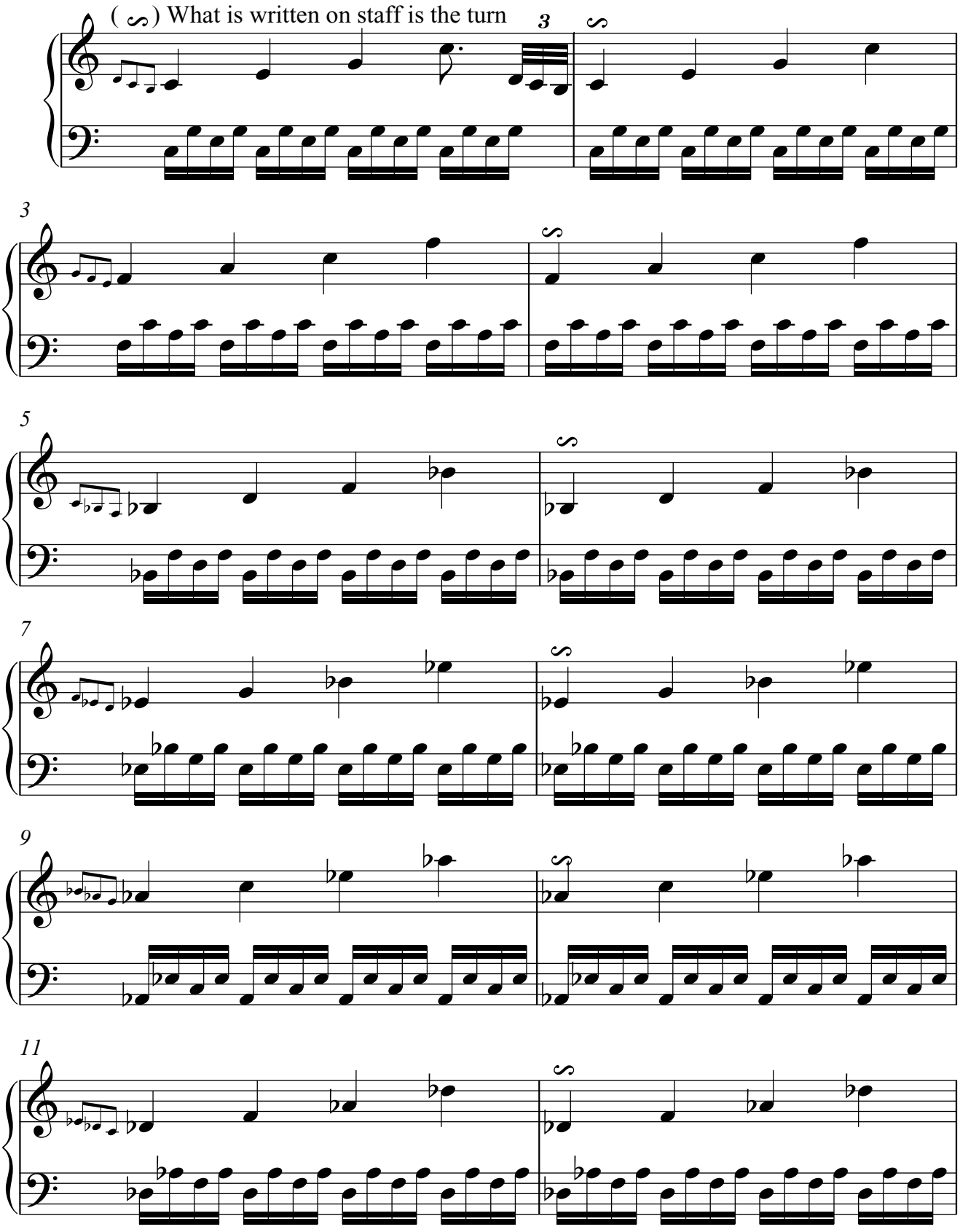
Take the first measure of Hayden Sonata No. 1, Hoboken Number XVI:1
In the very first measure you find an ornament. Depending on which edition, the ornament is either a mordant or a turn. Since turns are a little trickier, we'll do the example using turns.

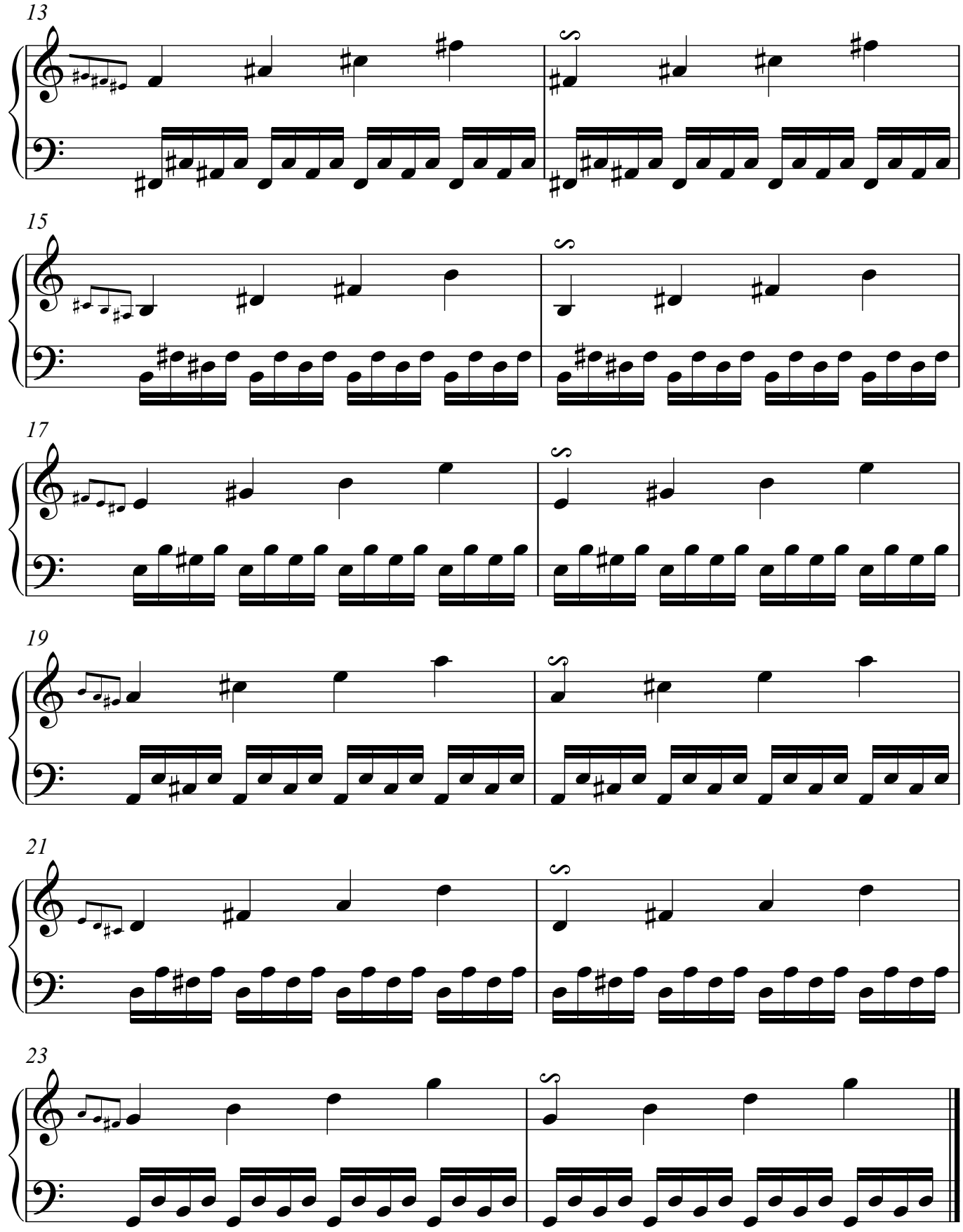
On the following two pages, the first measure of the sonata will be written twice (and in all subsequent keys twice as well). The first time, the turn is written out and the second time it has the more common turn symbol you will see above the first note of the measure.

These turns are usually played "ahead of the beat". The example below shows how the timing of the turns works with the 16th note Alberti accompaniment the Haydn sonata uses. Even though the turn appears in the 2nd measure of the example below, it is actually played as triplet 32nd notes on the last sixteenth note of the preceding measure. You can listen to how it sounds in the accompanying sound file.



Turn Practice

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