

Free Piano Playing for Beginners

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How to use this book

The compositions in this book are invitations to play the piano in a free, personal way. My own experiences with a classical piano training as a child (during the 1970s), made me quit all musical education for a long time. I hardly touched a piano again until at a later age I picked up the forgotten violin of my grandmother, and discovered different kinds of making music.

Still, I found very little sheet music allowing me, with the very limited technique I had, to play the piano from my heart. I therefore began to make my own compositions, which are influenced by a broad variety of musical styles.

I hope the twenty-five pieces in this book can be an inspiration to beginners of all ages, who like to experiment themselves and put their feelings into what they are playing.

Some pieces take more than just a minimum of technique, but my opinion is that technique is easiest learnt – alone or with the help of a teacher – on the basis of what a person likes to play.

I have deliberately given hardly any indications as to dynamics, tempo and the like, so that players can experiment and play in the way they sense the music themselves.

The compositions have not been written in a certain key signature. The accidentals only serve to facilitate the reading. I used flats or sharps according to how the notes felt to me.

Practically, here are some examples of how players may bring variation into the pieces:

- tempo: playing slowly, at a moderate speed, fast, at a consistent speed or irregularly, lively, with power, speeding up, growing larger, gradually slowing down ...
- rhythm and phrasing: notes may be held a bit longer than notated, some notes may give the impression of forming a set, a slight hesitation may precede a note, certain notes or passages may be accentuated ...
- dynamics: quiet/soft, loud/strong, crescendo, diminuendo ...
- expression: evoking feelings or atmospheres. A piece may feel light, dark, neutral, flat, joyful, sensitive, melancholic, romantic, serene, mysterious ...
- improvisation: playing ornaments, keeping the accompaniment and inventing a different melody, changing the accompaniment, choosing a series of chords and making up both the accompaniment and melody ...

The following examples are included:

- n° 3 (Omar): the second version has a different accompaniment
- n° 9 (Siena): the second version has a different melody
- n° 14 (Try Again): contains indications referring to the feelings I experienced when writing the piece. An invitation to empathise (or to play a completely different version)
- n° 25 (Improvisation for 7 notes): is an example of improvising on the basis of a scale, here already with the accompaniment.