A beginner piano method with coloured alphabet and pre-staff reading.

The Keyboard Express

by John Keller

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Express Stave by John Keller

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Twos and Threes
(Keyboard Geography)

Next line, next group, Extra keys. Frogs side, Birds side, Twos and threes.

Frogs
3  2  3

Birds
3  2  3

middle of keyboard
In these three.extras, which notes are called 'link'?

In every measure we count up to three.

Right in the middle, these line notes, I think.

Play on these line notes and space notes with me.
Name These Naturals

Name these naturals here inside.

Here inside this three line guide.

Centre alphabet clef

First key inside must be A.

G's the furthest key away.
Inside, Outside

Inside link lines, Outside link lines, Inside, outside, we have been.

Also count the naturals between the two links.
I’s below and J’s above. Which side were you thinking of.

J’s above and I’s below. Follow everywhere I go.

i and j are the only two dotted letters in the alphabet.
Easy Play

1: First play on the middle twos as written.

2: Then play both hands together, with the high hand on the top twos and the low hand on the bottom twos.

(Mark the rhythms.)

(Find the keys by feel without looking down at the keyboard.)
Missing Links

Special new black keys, Help you learn white keys. Middle of black threes, Missing Links!

Let's you see symmetry From an A, to a G. No more mystery. Missing Links!

Link middle of keyboard
I'd like to go to Frogtown. I'd like to know the way.

Just head in this direction, You'll make it there today.
With low voice and with low hand, These first two naturals play.

They live above this bottom link, Middle B and A.

(Name the notes as you play.)
Ant and Ball

In five-line stave notation, this Ball and Ant we draw. On top of bass, in middle house, sitting on the floor.
Learn G and F Today

With high voice and with high hand,
These last two naturals play.

They live below this top link
Learn G and F today

(Name the notes as you play.)
In five-line stave notation, Here's middle G and F.

Girl in curl and First-space, With in this treble clef.
Baby Twins

Inside threes, double keys, One on each side of this line.

In their beds, fast asleep, Baby twins are doing fine.

Babies say “Ga ga ga”. (Get it?)
Three Line Guide

In the middle, and each side, There’s a line on three line guide.

Line for two and lines for three, Outside Link lines, inside D.

Repeat

low hand
double keys
double keys
single key

high hand
Put these white notes on to black keys, and vice versa, so they can be seen! White notes go onto the black keys, and vice versa, so they can be seen!

Black keys are the “extras”. White keys are “naturals”.

Put these white notes on to black keys, Put these black notes on to white. Show me where to put my fingers, So I can play all notes right.
Single in the Middle

Single in the middle up to doubles at the top.
Single in the middle down to bottoms where we stop.
Some are big and some are small.

I don’t care, I like them all.

Some are low.

Some are high,

Some go fast but some go slow.
Easter Eggs

Easter eggs are big and small.

I don't care, I'll eat them all!

Hide them low.

Hide them high,

Yum yum, to my tum they go!
Middle Riddle

When notes are in the middle, instead of high or low.
Then which hand has to play them? That’s what I’d like to know.*

* Answer to the riddle:
Stem up means high hand plays,
stem down means low hand plays.
1: Old MacDonald had a farm.

2: On that farm he had a frog.

Tie: just hold the note on.

Staccato: - a dot over or under the note(s). - hop off the keys straight after playing.

FINE: finish here.

REPEAT

Frogs go hop.

Bottom, top, middle, top.

Birds go hop.
What's That Hiding?

What's that hiding, in the very centre spot? Let's get thinking!

Some-thing swimming in the pond a lot.

Some-thing blinking, (rest) Quack quack!

(rest) What's that?
Near these twos are three big naturals. We should learn the names for these. They are letters C D E. Three important natural keys.
Double Bubblegum

First play each hand separately, then play both hands together.

Twice as much in flavour, and twice as much in fun,
You'll get twice the value with double bubblegum.
Next to lines, they call them space notes. What are notes that moved away?

They are really secret lines. That is what some people say.

Where does each middle character go?
Here is the D-line

Play copy cats:
Choose the bar, teacher plays, student copies.

Here is the D-line. Up in the treble clef.

Down in the bass clef.

Treble and bass staves are only for the naturals.
D-line, D-line

D line, D line, Two black key line, Where in treble is its place?

Treble Clef
treble D-line

Bass Clef
low hand
bass D-line

Treble Stave
Number the lines upward from the bottom Edge-line.

Bass Stave

D line, D line, Two black key line, In the middle of the bass.
Can you make a smiley face,  

With the letter :D?

To the treble and the bass,  

Sending love from me.
Knuckle Muscles Test

A fun game to help develop strong, curved fingers 2,3,4 and 5.
Teacher calls out “freeze” at random times while student plays.
Test the “knuckle muscles” by gently pushing against the knuckle
while student holds the note.

Knuckle muscles, test your muscles, How strong have your fingers got?

Knuckle muscles, test your muscles, Do they buckle when you stop?
Traditional Staves

The naturals alone, own each space and line. One "staff" or one "stave", both words are just fine.

Traditional staves of treble and bass. They each have five lines, and four notes in space.

Number the lines upwards.

Number the spaces upwards.

Bass staff or stave

Treble staff or stave
Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

Twinkle twinkle little star, How I wonder what you are. Up above the world so high

Like a diamond in the sky. Twinkle twinkle little star, How I wonder what you are.
That's one music alphabet.

Inside link lines, don't forget,

Naturals start from A and go

Up to G, that's what I know.
A, B, C - hold, ... (Name the letters as you play.)
Five Reps

No one can play, this song straight away.

1. Play high hand
2. Play low hand
3. Play both hands together.

('Reps' is short for 'repetitions'.)
1: Natural chords, Extra chords, Sing this tune and play these chords.

2: Notes together make a chord, White keys chord, Black keys chord.

3: Play hands together.

Black Keys Chord

Extras Chord

White Keys Chord

Naturals Chord
Blackbirds

In the sky. Tweet tweet tweet, they sing up high.

Blackbirds fly low hand high hand

- plays the TUNE.

- plays the CHORDS.

chords
Pairs of Socks

I just don’t know what you mean.

Next to D there’s pairs of socks.

Where there’s no black key between.

Pairs of naturals shaped like socks,

Teacher’s Accompaniment:

centre of keyboard

pair

pair

pair

pair
How many pairs are on the high side?
Treble and Bass Pairs

Bottom of Treble is this pair of keys. First space and Edge line, Right hand side please.

Below the Centre belongs to Bass Clef. All notes on this side, Play with the left.

(Tog:) Characters in between treble and bass. Learn their positions. Each line and space.

Bass clef region  centre  Treble clef region

Ball  Cat  Edgeline  Firstspace
This pair of keys goes below centre. Ball rolling round and Cat with whiskers.
Edgeline and Firstspace

Edge-line and First-space, of the treble stave. Two little characters, strong and brave.
At the bottom of the treble, Lives the first space in the staff.

Stay in the treble.

If you draw his note too small or large it makes the teacher laugh.
From the bottoms, you might wonder
Where are these notes on the left.
From the bottoms, they duck under,
Underneath this treble clef.
Treble Clef and Bass Clef

Treble clef starts from this pair, Bass clef goes down under there.

In the treble, up we go. In this bass clef down below.

high hand

low hand
Cat and Duck and Edgeline

C D E

Cat and Duck and Edgeline
hid beneath my bed. I could hear them laughing, then someone bumped their head.
On the Top of Bass

On the top of bass, There are middle notes in place. When we sing them they sound low, So on bass clef they must go.
Four Naturals Near 3s

In Express Stave, the three extras are drawn as ‘big’ white notes.

The four naturals near them are drawn as ‘small’ black notes.

Not touching the line, is not called a space.

Not touching the line, is not called a space.

Touching the line, is called a space.

Touching the line, is called a space.

Crossing the line, is called a line.

High side of the line

Low side of the line

Link

The ‘doubles’ are both space notes, but are played with next door fingers.

Next-door white keys have next-door fingers.
Near These Threes

1: Near these threes are four small naturals, Two hug link but two let go.

2: Extras large notes, Naturals small notes. Two above link, two below.

Write in the middle alphabet letters.
1: Sharp means play the next key up. Flat means play the next key down.

2: Sharp - en up to - wards the top. Flat - ten down to - wards the ground.

3: This chromatic scale I play ... Hands together every day.
Holding On

While we play the other.

While we look for next notes,

Cling on all the time.
Imaginary Friend

My imaginary friend, Is he real or just pretend?

Up above or down below, Where’s he hiding? I don’t know.
Near this three group, are four naturals.

Near this two group, there are three.

On these extras, and these naturals,
Play a scale along with me.
Over Link, Under Link
(Feeling Sad)

Feeling sad, feeling sad,
I am feeling sad today.
Its okay, its okay,
Its okay to feel that way.

Over link, under link, From the middle to the bass. Under link, over link, Two small naturals in each place.

Feeling sad, feeling sad,
I am feeling sad today.
Its okay, its okay,
Its okay to feel that way.
Naturals (♮) Rule

Space, line, space, line, space, line, space. That's the rule how naturals go.

Rule gets broken at one place, With two space notes in a row.

line space
Start in Frogs Clef

Start in frogs clef, A B C. Cross this line to E F G.

Top of birds clef, G F E. Treble guide is number three.
On Each Side of D

On each side of D they go,
Pair above and pair below.

In these pairs of notes we see
Which notes do and don’t touch D.
Next to D in treble, we see these pairs of socks.

This pair is called middles,
And this pair is called tops.

Stay in the treble.
D-line Middles, D-line Tops

Number the **lines** upwards from the *Edge Line*.

Number the **spaces** upwards from the *First Space*.

D-line middles, D-line tops,  Pairs of keys each side of D.

At the bottom, one more pair.  Learn these treble pairs all three.
In This Treble Clef

In this treble clef, find these pairs of keys.

Bottom pair, middle pair, top pair,

Find them please.
Single Keys, Double Keys

In this bass clef we see, Bot-toms, tops and mid-dle key.

Sing-le keys, doub-le keys, In-side twos and in-side threes.
Bass D-line and Doubles

D line down here, in the bass. D line is this middle place.

Double keys, at the edge, Notes on lines and notes in space.
Lines Are On the Outside

Lines are on the outside,

Line and space,

Double keys,

In the bass.
Bottoms and middles and top notes in place,

Each pair of keys has one line and space.
Both or One

Match them up!

bottom pair middle pair top pair

Both or one, Both or one. Bottom line, bottom space. Both or one.

Both or one, Both or one. Top line, top space. Both or one.

Both or one, Both or one. Bottom line, bottom space. Both or one.
On the Edge

Which is really on the edge? Space or line, space or line.

Lines are really on the edge. Edge is line, every time.
Bullfrogs

Bullfrogs live down on the ground. Croak croak croak, Deep low sound.

- plays the CHORDS.
- plays the TUNE.
Inside bass clef, don't forget. That's this lower alphabet.

Seven letters A to G. All notes just where they should be.
Change this frog clef into bass. Just put in those secret lines.
All these notes just stay in place. Basic-’lly the same designs.
See This Middle Pair

Which side’s closer? Which side’s near? Top pair, or bottom pair?

See this middle pair, in this treble clef.
Which Space Should Be Middle Space?

Which space should be middle space?  
Mid - dle space is third space up.

How do we know that’s its place?  
Mid - dles clo - ser to the top.
Hey Middle G, are you that famous girl who stands at the treble clef, looking thru the curl.

Hey Middle G, are you that famous girl who stands at the treble clef, looking thru the curl.
Ants in a Line

Ants in a line all ready for a race to dig their ant holes down into the bass.
In the Centre

In the centre, children sing. Oh what joy their voices bring.

In the centre, every day, happy children laugh and play.
Train on Platform

Please stand clear.

Off we go, out of here. Then we soon disappear.

Train on Platform number two

Stops all stations to the zoo. Doors are closing.

G A
The Keyboard Train Song

Riding on the keyboard train.

Play the keyboard train song.

slur: play smoothly

tenuto: - not staccato
The Keyboard Train Song

Riding on the keyboard train.

Play the keyboard train song.

Tenuto: not staccato

Slur: play smoothly

Low hand

Staccato

Treble Alphabet

Centre Alphabet

Bass Alphabet

A G D
In the centre what do I see?
Riding on the keyboard train.

Friendly passengers watching me
Play the keyboard train song.
Duck Underneath

Duck, underneath that treble clef, To shelter from the storm. Then

Duck back out again when the weather is fine and the sun is warm.
Find These Pairs of Keys

Find these pairs of keys. Where do they all hide?

Do you know, where they go? On your side or my side.
Bottom of the Treble

Bottom of the treble,
These notes are for this pair.

Middle of the treble,
and tops go over there.
Leger Lines

Touch this edge line, move away. People say that's not okay.

Moved away notes need a line, so draw in leger lines today.
Where Do Middle Naturals Go

Where do middle naturals go? Duck just simply ducks below.

Middle C that cat looks fine, With her whiskers legerline.
Doo-Dah

Campdown ladies sing this song, Doo dah, doo dah.

Campdown race track five miles long. Oh, doo dah, day.
Middle House

In this middle house we see Space notes F and D and B.

Space notes B and D and F, between this bass and treble clef.
First Space Man

First space in this treble clef, First-space-man at middle F.

Up in space his rocket goes. Where he lands nobody knows.
Middle Characters

High notes all say “Hi!” Low notes say “Hel-lo”.

Middle A’s an ant and middle B’s a ball. Middle F’s in first space, G’s the Girl in Curl.

Edge-line lives at middle E, middle C’s a cat. Middle D’s the duck, cause it looks like that.
Hear those famous Odd Bods. (whistle)

Cheer " " " " "

Johnny What's'isname

Here comes Johnny What's'-is-name, You know, what's-'is-name. Here comes Johnny What's'-is-name.

Walk-in' down the street. (repeat)

to coda

da capo

Coda

Walk-in' down the street, Walk-in' down the street, What's-'is-name!
White Keys Next Door

White keys next door,  Fingers next door,  Line, space, line, space,  In a row.

Now go line - line,  Then go space - space.  What is that called?  Do you know?
This Basement

Down below that middle house, this basement is a scary place.

Spiders, rats and frogs live there. Kids are not allowed in bass!
A, B, C, What is that? Lower than a duck, Middle C the cat.

Doesn’t she look great? Whiskers neat and straight. Give her a pat, Middle C the cat.
Treble and Bass 5-line Staves