The Keyboard Express D
3-octave reading for young pianists

The Middle Alphabet

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

by John Keller

The Keyboard Express™
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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.
A B C D, C B A. Notes in space and notes on line.

Space line space line all the way, Skips can happen any time.
Two Note Chords

(Left, Right, Both)
Double Keys and Single Keys

Double keys and single keys. Inside groups of twos and threes.

Middle bottom middle top, All frogs like to hop.
Secret Line Note B

Touch this Link line, move a-way,  Touch this D-line, move a-way.

That's the sec-ret line note B,  A lit - tle bird told that to me.
F clef, Playing in the left clef. Playing down low on space and line.
Change to bass now, Notes all stay in place now. Playing down low in bass this time.
Mary - the full story

Now Mary had a little lamb, Its fleece was white as snow.

And everywhere that Mary went that lamb was sure to go.

It followed her to school one day which was against the rule. It made the children laugh and play to see a lamb at school.
Edgeline, Duck and Cat snuck beneath the fence one day, and...

... found a secret track, to a secret hideaway.
Middle Guide for Bass and Treble Clefs

Middle A, C, E and G are lines. Middle B, D and F are spaces.
If we change the middle keys

All these notes will change their place,

And each line becomes a space.
Rest in Left

Edgeline

3
Rest in left,
rest in left.
In the right we cling on tight.

Girl in the curl

5
Rest in left,
rest in left.
In the right we clinging on tight.
Natural notes, touching lines. Double keys are inside threes. Threes are big, doubles small. Read these notes and find them all.
Left right, low high,  Hop up to sky.  Right left, sky ground,  Threes groups hop down.
Moving Up, Moving Down

Moving up and moving down. To the sky and to the ground.

Play the same note, or next door. From the ceiling to the floor.

Find the keys by feel.
At the Start of the Alphabet

At the start of the alphabet is A, And these are the words some people say: It's a thing that you will not forget, That A is the start of the alphabet.
At the End of the Alphabet

At the end of the natural alphabet, it's G, yes G, that's what I said. At the end of the day, when you go to bed, remember the end is G, not Z.
The Treble Stave

treble clef

treble D-line

top pair

middle pair

centre of keyboard

bottom pair
The Bass Stave

bass clef

bass D-line

middle
Notes can go on lines or notes can go in spaces.

In these five-line staves there’s just two kinds of places.

D line for Treble clef

D line for Bass clef
Drawing Notes

centre of keyboard

bottoms                        middles                  tops

bottom space

middle

top space

top line

bottom line

Where do I go?
Miss One Finger Out

Miss one finger out, Miss one finger out,

Miss one finger out, That’s what skips are all about.
On Each Side Of D-line

On each side of D-line, there's pairs of keys in place. These middles line and space.

tops are space and line, These middles line and space.
D-line Goes Up

D line goes up, to pair at the top.

D line goes down to the middle.

Top space and middle space, top line and middle line,

That’s how we play in the treble.
New Rule

There’s a new rule, that we have been told. In five line staves, all hollow notes hold!

Hold on for two, or hold on for three. Hollow notes mean they’re long notes you see.
Stepping Up and Stepping Down

Edgeline

Step - ping up and step - ping down. Line to space we go (two - three - four).

Duck Under

Step - ping up and step - ping down. White keys in a row (two - three - four).
First play sep, then play tog.

Notes are extras, notes are naturals, That's one way we say which kind.

Notes are lines or notes are spaces. One more way we say which kind.
Do the same, (Do the same.)
Same as me, (Same as me.)
Both hands play together.
Lady caterpillar creeps into her cocoon and sleeps. When she wakes, what a pretty butterfly! My oh my, higher!

Lady Caterpillar
Thumb is the Best

Thumb is the best for reaching out and letting your fingers cross on top.

Thumb can also tunnel underneath. See what talent your thumb has got.
Playing Inside and Outside

Playing inside and outside, far away or in close.

Playing black keys and white keys, in the big or small house.
1 2 3 go:

Link line, link line, D line, eyes.

Play these keys and win your prize.

Outside three groups, inside twos,

Stems will tell which hand to use.

low hand

high hand
Snake Charmer

What is this I’m seeing now? Swaying to and fro.

Rising from the basket, To hypnotic music

What is this I’m seeing now? Swaying to and fro.
Inside the stave, and outside the stave. Inside we're safe, but outside we're brave.
Touch this D-line, which notes do? Extras touch and naturals too.

Yes but which get closer in? That’s the quest these extras win.
Hold this link line, then let go,

Up above and down below.

Notes are safe that touch a line.

Once they let go, they'll be mine!
Coordination

Lifting off and clinging on, That's cooperation.

Everybody sing along. That's cooperation.
Pair of Keys

Pair of keys, Pair of keys, Bot - tom, top and mid -dle keys.
Did you know this tre - ble clef

Goes from E F to E F?
In the treble find your place, Bottom line and bottom space. From the middle to the top, Keep on finding every spot until its time to stop, stop.
Three Five One

Three five, thirty five, three one, thirty one. They play line notes, Three five one.

Two four, twenty four, they like spaces more. Odd numbers back again, Three five one.
Which Keys Go In Between

Which keys go in between bottom and middle? Double keys inside threes there can be seen.

Which keys go in between top pair and middle? One single D line note goes in between.
Middle House

When to use it, let's be clear, when it's bass and treble clef.

Middle house, place it here, in between the right and left.
Cubby House

In - side my cub-by house I like to stay,

high hand

Even when they take my D line away.

low hand
The Happy Hippopotamus

The happy hippopotamus is showing off to me.

He’s rolling in the mud and he’s as happy as can be.
Who will own this centre line? Will this prize be yours or mine?

Tug of war will now begin. Will the birds or frogs side win?
Double Space Notes

Double space notes next to link line, Inside group of three they hide.
Next to link line, only place two space notes can go side by side.
Each Express Stave starts with A. Easy easy easy play.

Touching line or moved away, Easy easy play play.
Back and Forth We Go
What's inside this group of three?

Group of two,
group of three.

Double keys and single key,

Every note must have a key.
A Secret

Repetition makes you better. That’s the secret that we hear.

Here’s a secret. Lean in closer. And I’ll whisper in your ear.
Alphabet staves go A B C. D centre line then E F G.

Alphabet staves have symmetry, Symmetry like the keyboard.
Play play, easy play,
Move across the easy way.

Stay loose, just relax,
Reach across, whites and blacks.
Clap on the strong beats, Find where they are.

Strong beats are always First in the bar.
Three Houses

If I was a millionaire

I'd buy houses everywhere.

I'd invite my friends to play

In a different house each day.
An Alphabet Stave

An alphabet stave is any music stave with notes from A to G in order inside.
Space notes can be black or white.

Space notes go beside a line.

Space notes have to touch a line.

Space notes can be black or white.

Touching light or touching tight.
Bass clef pairs are **not** bottom, middle and top!

They go above and below the stave, and above and below the centre line.

**Bass Clef Pairs**

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

**Play Staccato:**
Hop then land lightly, ready for the next note or notes.
Next-door Naturals

Next door naturals, line and space. In the treble and the bass. In each place and every time, Next door notes are space and line.

Number the lines upwards.

Number the lines upwards.
Skip One White Key

Edgeline
Skip one white key, skip one finger. Skip on line notes, change that now!

Duck Under
Skip one white key, stretch one finger. Skip on space notes, change that now!
Inside and Outside

Play inside and outside, At the top of treble clef,

Play next door or skip one, Careful as we go.
At the Top of Treble Clef

At the top of treble clef, touch this line then move away.

Moved away notes need a line and lighter lines will be okay.
Hiding the Keyboard

Hiding the keyboard and feeling my way. I don't have to look at the keys when I play.
My mother had a baby,

She called him Tiny Tim.

She put him in the bath tub,

To see if he could swim.
Low, High, Both

Easy easy play play, Low High both.

Play play play easy play both low.
Extras Above, Naturals Below

Ex - tras a - bove, and nat’-rals be - low. Ex - tras a - bove, then down-wards we go.

Ex - tras be - low, and nat’-rals on top. Ex - tras be - low, then keep go - ing up.
Riding my bicycle not very slow. Holding the handlebar, then letting go.
Single keys, double keys,
Inside twos, inside threes.

Natural keys and extra keys,
Bottom top and middle keys.
Notes Are Wide, Notes Are Close

Left, right, both.
Someone In Need

When you see someone in need,
You will be a friend indeed,                                    Reach across today.

Reach across and help them.

When you see someone in need,
You will be a friend indeed,                                    Reach across today.
Bottoms and Doubles

Edge line and First space, bottoms of the treble. Second line, second space, They are doubles.

Play on the space notes, Play on lines. You will play in treble clef a million times.
Swapping the Middle Alphabet Guide

White keys go like this in bass, Space line space line space line space. Now continue past the top,

Then the middle notes must swap. And that middle cat looks fine, With her whiskers legerline.
Up at the Top

Up at the top, Or right in the middle, Down at the bottom we play in the treble.

Down in the bass, The edges are double. Notes in the middle should stay out of trouble.

double single double
That Feline!

Bot - tom pair in treb - le clef,
Edge-line E and First-space F,
Who are these we won - der.
Duck and Cat go un - der.

Doub - le keys, in their place,

Mid - dle pair and D line.
Se - cond line and se - cond space,
End - ing with that fe - line!
The first black key invented, they played instead of B.

They added one more letter, but just in Germany.
Tell me where we’ll play today. Bottom top or middle.

Extra keys or natural keys, Double keys or single.
Top Big, Bottom Big

- Top big, bottom big, Top small, bottom small.
- Top or bottom or middle of threes.
- Under, over line, Free or holding on.
- Left or right hand side. Black and white keys.

(One two three and four, ... )
One line for each group of keys, Playing in Express Stave.

played with ease,
Naturals always As to Gs,

That ‘s one alphabet stave.

Extra keys are
Wave Wiggle Touch

Wave wiggle touch, we get ready to play.

Which hand, wave it. Which finger, wiggle it. Which note touch it. Then count in. (Then begin.)

Wave wiggle touch, we get ready that way.
Old MacDonald had a farm. E I E I O.

And on that farm he had a duck. E I E I O. With a quack quack here

and a quack quack there. Here a quack, there a quack, Ev - 'ry - where a quack quack,
Feel These Keys

Easy play, every day, Feel these keys. Touching these twos, Touching these threes.
In between the bass and treble middle house.

There's a very friendly place.

There the children all assemble, in that famous middle house.
Middle middle wiggle wiggle finger number 3.

Space space, miss one space,

Line line, miss one line,
Melody In Treble Clef

Double keys and middle pair.

Bottom pair and seconds.

Highest pair and D line.

Melody in treble clef.