The Keyboard Express E
Finding the way by feeling the black keys

Pre-staff reading for young pianists

The Middle Alphabet

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

by John Keller

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Smalls, Pairs, Bigs
Bottoms, Middles, Tops

Bot - tom notes, in their place. Bot - tom line, bot - tom space.

Mid -dle notes al - so go Space a - bove and line be - low.

Tops, tops, space and line. One note’s yours and one note’s mine.
Reach Across

Reach across to group of two. Something for your thumb to do. High hand's turn,

Low hand's turn, Watch the stems to see whose turn. Lots of fun to play and learn.
Three Note Chords

High hand

Low hand
Can You Find E F?

Can you find E F? Double keys E F. They are at the edges.

Of the treble clef. Bottom line, Top line, Top space, Bottom space.

Here is treble clef, from E F to E F.
Bottom Pair Then Double Keys

Bottom pair then double keys, line and space, line and space. In the treble where are these, lowest place, second place.

Space to space or line to line, skip one white key every time. G and A, E and F, learning notes in treble clef.
Doubles Race

high hand

low hand

My timings:

Bird

Frog
Which are Spaces?

Which are spaces, which are lines, When we’re in Express Stave?

Three Express Staves, all the same. Each an alphabet stave!
This side, that side, same or diff' - rent, Stay on side or skip a - cross.

This side, that side, same or diff' - rent, Get it right and dont get lost.
Invisible Lines

In - vi - si - ble lines,  In - vi - si - ble lines,

So turn on the lines,  for B and for F,

Al - though you can’t see them,  they’re there all the time.

And turn this low stave,  in - to this bass clef!
Next to this D-line there are middles and tops. Space notes touch D-line but line notes do not.

D-line is different when down in the bass. Right in the middle, the logical place.
On top of this Link Line there’s A and there’s B, And un-der this D-line it has to be C.

On top of this Bass-ment are Ants on the ground, And middle-C-cat kicks a Ball all a-round.
Left, Right, Hold Tight
Top big, middle big, bottom big, but top and bottom of small, that's all.

Over lines and under lines, Down these keys we fall, full stop.

\[
\frac{1}{4} = H
\]
Touching Link Line

Touching Link Line, Touching D line. There is one note in between.

Notes are either space or line with some on lines that can’t be seen.

high

low hand
Near These 3 Extras

Extras are big notes so what size are these?

Near these three extras are four natural keys.

Which are the naturals that no lines can touch?

Which are the naturals that links love so much?
Two Note Chord

Play up at first, then together.
In the frogs alphabet, down in the basement, Kindergarten frogs are practicing placement.

They get put outside if they do not know, Where in the alphabet all letters go.
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.
What is My Position?

What is my position in the alphabet? Sometimes I remember.

Sometimes I forget. Am I near the start or am I near the end?

Tell me my position, and I'll be your friend.
Bottom half of alphabet is letters A B C. Top half of this alphabet is letters G F E. Seven letters all in place.

Some on lines and some in space. Feel your way and play this basic alphabet for me.
Four Small Naturals

1. **High Hand**
   - Four small naturals here they go.
   - Two above line, two below.

2. **Bird**
   - Touching link or moved away, next to three black keys they play.

3. **Frog**
   - High low

4. **Piano Keys**
   - Four small naturals

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Notes:
- Four small naturals:
  - High: F,C,F,C
  - Low: D,A,D,A

- Piano Keys:
  - Red keys: C,F,C
  - Black keys: A,D,A
Below the Middle

Below the middle, above the middle, where ever we are, which letter is that?

Up at the top, or second from top, we know where we are in the alphabet.
Hey ho, Hey-dy ho, The great big elephant is so slow, He swings his trunk from side to side as he takes the little kids for a ride.
Eenie Meenie

Eenie meenie miney mo, Catch a tiger by the toe.
If he squeels then let him go, Eenie meenie miney mo.
The Halloween Monster has big scary eyes. Its best if you keep right away (away).

Coz if you get close you might get a surprise. Lets creep in close today! (surprise!)
Try to reach that centre line, closer to your goal each time.

When you reach it, that’s real great, everyone will celebrate.
Try to reach that centre line, Did—n’t quite succeed this time.

Now you’ve reached it, that’s real great, Ev—’ry—one will cel—e—brate.
Thumb Under

Extra below, natural above, extra below, natural above, extra below, natural above.

Extra above, natural below, extra above, natural below, extra above, downward we go.
When it rains we play inside, play inside, play inside.

When it rains we stay inside, till the sun comes out.
Bottoms, Doubles, Middles

Bottom pair in treble clef. Edge line E and First space F.

Double keys in second place. Second line and second space.

Middle pair so much in love. Middle line and space above.
When you play from line to line, skip one finger every time.

Treble clef is on the right. Treble lines all point to white.

When you play from line to line, skip one finger every time.
Jupiter

This is the planet in our solar system which has an immense gravitational pull. Jupiter, greatest of all.
Lucky Dip

Lucky dip, lucky dip

Put your hand in, take your pick.

Which prize will you win this time?

Space or line.

Black or white,
Mr Boogie Woogie

What do you play?

Mister Boogie Woogie

What do you say?

Play a boogie tune today!

... two three four.

Hoo-ray!

(swing feel)
Reach across and touch that line. Did not stretch enough that time. Notes are close or moved away. Play these notes by feel today.
Double Space Notes

Next to Link line, Double space notes, Space above and space below.
Next to Link line, only place two natural space notes in a row.
D-line, Top Pair

D line, top pair, D line, middle pair, Highest pair, middle pair, Line and space.

D line, top pair, D line, middle pair, Highest pair, middle pair, Line and space.

D line, top space, D line, middle space, Top line, middle line, all in place.
Stay On Line Notes

Play next door then stay on line notes. Start next door then just play lines.

The treble clef is for white keys on the high side.

The bass clef is for white keys on the low side.

Next door fingers then just skip one. Practice this one million times!
Bottom Pair and Double Keys

Bottom pair and double keys, Space and line, space and line. Bottom pair and underneath. D-line climb, down this time. How are you, I’m feeling fine.
Notes Not Touching

This is what some people say, They had lines that washed away.
Inside the Cave

Hold on to railing when inside this cave.

Only let go if you feel very brave
Small notes are fours plus twos. Large notes are threes plus threes. Playing the black and white blues, yeah.
Middle Pair, and the Tops

Bottom pair                    middle pair            top pair

Easy play,    easy play.

Mid-dle pair,    and the tops.
Mid-dle pair and top line.
Mid-dle pair,    and the tops.
Mid-dle pair and top space.

Easy play,    easy play.    Easy easy play play ...
Next Door, Skip One

Next door, skip one, Next door, skip one, Next door, skip one, Play next door.

The treble clef is for white keys on the high side.

Middle

Next door, skip one, Next door, skip one, Next door, skip one, Skip one more.

The bass clef is for white keys on the low side.
D-line in the Treble Clef

D-line in this treble clef, Where is D-line’s place?

Treble D-line, 4th line up, Diff’rent from the bass.

high hand

low hand
At the Top of Treble Clef

At the top of treble clef, On the lines we play.

Practise each hand separately at first.

Spaces next. They're the best. Having fun each day.

Spaces next. They're the best. Having fun each day.
Play a Chord

Play a chord, play a chord, Notes together make a chord.
Left hand chord, left hand chord, Play a chord staccato!
Here I sit at Poppa Joe's

Eating icecream nicely froze.

Choc'late flavoured, down it goes,

Oops, I got some on my nose
The sad tale of twins, I'll tell you a - bout.
One twin got in, but one got locked out.

He cried and he cried, but no - one would care,
Left out in the cold, Do you think that's fair?
Which Character is That?

Put the middle notes between the treble and the bass. Turn them into characters and help them find their place.

Whether it's a line or space, can you recognise the face? Say which character is that, girl or ant, duck or cat.
This pair are the middles, and this pair are the tops, and single likes to mingle, until the music stops.
The frogs had a party, Down in the bass. They got into trouble for trash - ing the place. They mixed up the notes between line notes and space.
Keep Out Of Trouble

Bottoms and seconds, top keys and middle, Bottoms and middles,

Down to double. Line notes and space notes, Keep out of trouble!
Only Two Notes Left

Now there are only two notes left. What kind of notes are B and F?

They’re on lines that we just can’t see. Vanishing line notes F and B.
Tops Of Groups

Tops of groups of extra keys.  
Top of twos and top of threes.  
Top of link line, top of D.  
Right side of each group of keys.
Turkey in the Straw
Somersaulting

Play over thumb, Duck your head, Here I come.

Fold finger 3 over thumb.

Somersaulting on these keys, Over twos, Over threes.

Playing leapfrog over thumb, Duck your head, Here I come.
On the Floor of the Middle House

On the floor of the middle house there's a red ball. On the floor of the middle house purple ants crawl.

And the duck likes to hide underneath the treble clef. And the middle notes are shared between the right and the left.
Bottom Pair Then Double Keys

Bottom pair then double keys,

Second line and space, (space).

Under middles double keys,

They're in second place, (place).
Down in the Basement

Down in the basement, searching, searching. Searching for the letters of the alphabet.

Look ing for their places, in the lines and spaces. Out of seven letters, which ones did you get?
In this house, there's a staircase leading down to a basement built deep underground.

There are shelves down there where you can get any letter you want in the alphabet.
Break Away Blues

Don’t be timid, don’t be timid,
Time to move away from home.

Time to let go, time to let go,
Time to break out on your own.

Not a baby any more,
Time to break away (yeah!)
Single In the Middle

Single in the middle down to doubles at the bottom. Inside group of threes, Then this pair of keys.

Doubles at the top go down to centre spot. When will we stop? Not till we drop!
Little children stay at home, always stay at home,

But when they get older, they begin to roam, they might begin to roam,

So then we bring them home, Yes then we bring them home, We always bring them home.
Rescue helicopter, for saving lives at sea. I'd like to thank the pilot who came to rescue me.
Hold keys down, while you wait. Don’t let those keys escape.

Touch them first, then you play. Slowly, slowly, that’s the way.
In my aeroplane I fly,
High up in the bright blue sky,
Over land and over sea,
All the people wave at me.
Link Lines

Link lines are the only lines, pointing to a black key.

Every other line you find, just points to a white key.
Days Of Old

Days of old, Days of old. I'm a composer in days of old.

Writing music, Writing music, Making up pieces to play.
Bottoms and Seconds and...

Bottoms seconds middles tops

Bottom and... seconds and... middles and... tops.

Singles and... doubles and... pairs... of socks.
Treble Melody

Double keys and middle pair.  
Keep-ing out of trou-bles.  
Pair on top and line for D.  
Play-ing tre-ble mel-o-dy.
Why Is the Middle?

Why is the middle not exactly right in the middle of the treble clef?

That is because double keys below, single key above, in the treble clef.
Walking Bassline

Heres a walking bassline tune, I play it every afternoon, I ...

... play it every morning too, I wrote this bassline (rest) for you!
These notes below this link line, They touch then they let go.

They start off near this link line, Then reach D-line below.
Some touch tightly, some touch lightly, Some notes do not touch at all.

Some are extras, some are naturals, Some are big and some are small.
Some notes play and some notes hold and some notes play together.

Some folk like a sunny day, and some like rainy weather.
Thumb Tricks

Thumb can stretch and thumb can reach. Thumb can tunnel underneath.

Thumb can stretch out to the side, And creep underneath to hide.
Chords

Chord of extras,

Can you hear which chord it is by listing carefully.

Chord of naturals,

Chords with melody.

Can you hear which chord it is by listing carefully.

Extras Chord

Naturals Chord
Yankee Doodle

Yankee Doodle went to town,
Riding on a pony.
Stuck a feather in his cap and called it macaroni.
Which Note Can I See?

I see this note E.

I also see D.
Silent night, Holy night. All is calm, all is bright.
Round yon virgin mother and child,
Holy infant so tender and mild.
Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.
Jingle Bells in J

Jingle bells jingle bells, jingle all the way.
Oh what fun it is to ride in a one horse open sleigh hey.
Top Pair and D Line

If you keep trying you'll find that it's true. Playing in treble is easy to do.

Top pair and D-line and middles for you. Bottoms and doubles and underneath too.
Pairs of Letters

3

Pairs of letters, E and F.
At the edge of treble clef.

Bottoms, middles, and these tops,
Pairs of keys, shaped like socks.
I can reach the ceiling down in the basement.

I can reach this top note G, down in the bass.
Three Alphabets