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Alfred's Essentials Of Music Theory: A Complete Self-Study Course For All Musicians (Book & 2 CDs)



Synopsis

This practical, easy-to-use, self-study course is perfect for pianists, guitarists, instrumentalists, vocalists, songwriters, arrangers and composers, and includes ear training CDs to help develop your musical ear. In this all-in-one theory course, you will learn the essentials of music through 75 concise lessons, practice your music reading and writing skills in the exercises, improve your listening skills with the enclosed ear training CDs, and test your knowledge with a review that completes each of the 18 units. Answers are included in the back of the book for all exercises, ear training and review.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have been playing guitar almost completely by ear for over 30 years and have long wanted to learn a little theory to inform me as to what I've been doing all this time. I am almost finished with the three books within this book, and they have been enormously helpful in expanding on the two years of piano lessons I took as a child as well as on the bits and pieces of technical knowledge I have picked up while playing guitar. The book is very compact and I could imagine it might be too brief in its explanations to be useful to someone with absolutely no prior musical training. Going back through the beginning of it, I cannot find anyplace where it mentions the difference between major and minor intervals in terms of half-steps, for instance. Had I not known that much already, it would have been much more confusing learning about the difference between a major and minor third, sixth, or seventh. As is, I have found the book only slightly confusing. A little internet research (not

too much!) and a lot of self-directed practice with both guitar and keyboard seem necessary to make the material at all concrete or to explore any of the concepts in any kind of depth. The written exercises are useful to a point--I am not entirely certain that I need to be able to draw rests, sharps or flats perfectly to understand what they are, but placing notes on the staff by hand provides a way to learn visually and spatially, making the theory practical before one applies the lessons directly to an instrument. I would recommend this book to anyone who knows a little about music and wants to know more and is willing and able to be creative in supplementing concise textbook material with self-directed practice.

This is a very good book for those who have little knowledge of musical theory, and those who have none. It contains three books which can also be bought separately. This book was used as a textbook for me for my voice lessons. It proved to help me a great deal since I am going to be studying music in college this fall. It's best to buy the CDs so you can do the ear training as well. You have no way of checking your answers unless you also purchase the teacher's answer key. I gave it a three just because you have to buy the CDs and teacher's answer key to get the most out of the book.

This is a good series if you are trying to learn music theory. The material is well organized, and clearly explained. Anyone can learn the essentials of music theory from these books. Unfortunately, the material is available in so many formats, you can get lost trying to figure out which version to buy. 1st up, you can buy 3 separate books. Since each book is only about 40 pages long, this really doesn't make that much sense. Also, you are going to want the ear training CDs. There are only 2 CDs for the 3 books. and you have to buy them as a complete set. So, you want to buy all the material at once. That brings us to this collection, which contains the text from all three books, but lacks the CDs. As I mentioned, the CDs are available separately, but if you could buy the book plus the CDs as a single package, you could save a little bit over purchasing both items separately. But, where is this all-in-one package? You might expect this to be called "Alfred's Essential of Music Theory Complete (Books 1 - 3 plus Ear Training CDs)." Alas, it is not. It's called "Alfred's Essentials of Music Theory: A Complete Self-Study Course for All Musicians (Book & 2 CDs)", and you can find it on

here: http://www..com/Alfreds-Essentials-Music-Theory-Self-Study/dp/0739036351/ref=sip_rech_dp_10 This version also appears to have the Answer Key (which you would have to purchase separately, for even more money, if you wanted to check the answers to the quizzes). I say

"appears" because I foolishly purchased this version of the product, along with the separate CDs. But glancing at the Table of Contents of the other edition has convinced me that it includes the Answer Key as well. To summarize: this material is well worth buying, but there are too many ways to purchase it. Do yourself a favor, and buy the Complete Self-Study Course, not this edition.

I just used this book to teach an introductory music theory class for adults (primarily community members with a recreational interest in playing/knowing more about music). I must say I was very pleased with this book in general. It offers straightforward theory lessons with appropriate drills for getting a grip on the content. This is not an in-depth tome by any means, but it worked out well for my purposes. I have the following minor gripes:—This is really three books spiral bound together as one. A combined table of contents would have been most welcome.—The CDs with the listening examples are not included and it seems the only way to acquire them is to buy the answer key book at almost \$40. Phooey. How about offering the CDs with the student book for an extra \$10?—I don't care for the way this book teaches the compound meters $3/8$ & $6/8$. The method used is very practical and straightforward, however, so it works out okay. It just never mentions 'compound' or 'simple' in presenting meters.— $9/8$ & $12/8$ are not presented. Ever.—No asymmetric meters are presented. Ever. With all of that out of the way, I'm happy to recommend this book for your middle school level band kids or even high school students looking to pick up some written theory, and of course as I used it for your bare-bones beginning adults with an interest in the subject. A motivated student with the listening CDs could run through the course on his or her own, but I think you really still need a teacher for best results. Particularly as this book lacks the depth of background and explanations that an engaged student will inevitably be curious about.

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