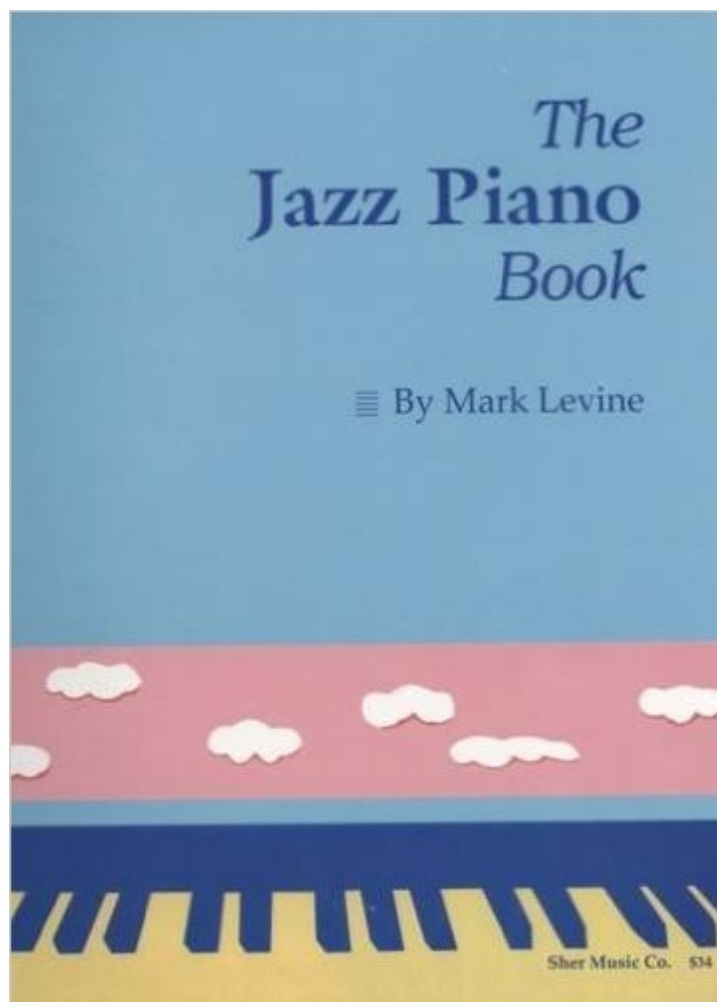


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# The Jazz Piano Book



## Synopsis

Endorsed by Kenny Barron, Jamey Aebersold, Richie Beirach, and more, this book presents all the information a student of jazz piano needs in an easy-to-understand, yet thorough, manner. For intermediate to advanced pianists, written by one of the acknowledged masters of jazz piano playing.

## Book Information

Spiral-bound: 306 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (124 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

Before Mark Levine's Jazz Piano book came out, choosing a book on how to play piano was a lot like selecting a presidential candidate - - you may not have been crazy about the choices but... (blah blah blah) What makes this book different is that it walks a fine and brilliant line between theory, application and stylistics and it is never dry, and further it is contemporary. By chapter 10 and beyond he's getting into fourth chords, upper structures and "so what" chords. Most books sort of finish up just when Bud Powell is hitting the scene. This book however will take you up to McCoy Tyner and Kenny Barron. - - Unlike other books, his book also sites practical song examples and specific listening examples. If you're entirely on your own, I think this book, along with a few Aebersold play-a-longs and Amadea's Harmonic Foundations for Jazz and Pop Music would really take you a long way. Your ultimate goal should be able to sit in at Jam sessions and with real players... that's where the real learning begins. Do what you have to do to get to the point that you can hang with a blues or Real Book standards. (Regarding suitability for beginners vs. advanced players : This book is pretty good for players of all levels, though if you're starting from scratch

another book to consider is Brain Waite's "Modern Jazz Piano : A Study in Harmony" or Amadea's book, then this.)

This is the best book on jazz theory I've encountered; would be one of my five desert-island music books. He's formatted the book like this: each chapter begins with a short transcribed passage that demonstrates, say, a particular type of voicing or scale in context. The musical concept behind the example is then explained and expanded on. Mark's brevity makes for a book that's dense with information, and the style is not so much prescriptive -- "play this and this and you're playing JAZZ!" as it is descriptive -- "Here's what you're hearing when you hear, e.g., this characteristic Bill Evans sound". The result is a book that covers everything, but still relies on the reader to listen to lots of jazz music, experiment, and practice. Which is exactly how it should be. For the serious student, this is by leaps and bounds the best study guide to mastering the vocabulary of jazz piano as played by the musicians who've helped shape it over the last half-century-plus, and a great stepping stone toward developing one's own style.

As a guitarist/percussionist who had piano lessons as a kid (and hated them) I have always been a little intimidated by the piano. Toward my goal of being able to comp and improvise over changes, I have purchased several jazz piano method books, including titles by Jerry Coker and Dan Haerle, and they have all been helpful. Mark Levine's book, however, is exceptional. He introduces his concepts in perfect-sized chapters, with musical examples bracketed by coherent and engaging explanations. There are dozens of very musical exercises, and lists of suggested jazz standards for applying them. He conveys the essential elements of jazz theory in an easy-to-digest but highly intelligent anecdotal writing style. The pacing of how material is presented in a method book is very important to the advancing musician. For example, I always knew that the melodic minor scale was important, but it only fully came together in my head when I worked through Mark's chapters on scale theory. Instead of being bombarded with chord voicing options, there are two or three. The emphasis is on getting you prepared enough to play music! Helpful hints seem to appear just as you need them, and Mark's enthusiasm for the piano provides subtle encouragement for the exhausting but rewarding process of learning jazz. This is a book which stays on my music stand. It's large but spiral-bound. The font size is just right, and notes are professionally typeset (I hate books where you spend half your time deciphering notes from the author's scrawl). Bonus points for the great photos and the recommended discographies from all periods of jazz. I would recommend this book to any intermediate to advanced player looking to expand and strengthen his or her abilities to comp

and solo on piano. No one book can teach you everything, but this one is a hell of a start.

Please read the other reviews. In my forty years of practicing, playing, and studying music in general and the piano in particular I have never seen such a well thought out, comprehensive, completely understandable, easy to read, value packed, exquisitely formatted, thoroughly useful book on this subject. There is not any '....' to be found. It cannot possibly tell you everything you need to know, but it does tell you everything you need to know to find out the rest. Any one who does not derive tons of benefit from this book is simply too lazy to really study and assimilate what it has to say. Period. Mark is to be commended, and Sher Publishing, too, for the lavish attention they paid to presenting a book whose production quality is on a par with its content. Also highly recommended is a new work by Randy Halberstadt, also published by Sher (check their website), called 'Metaphors for the Musician'. Master the information in these two books, Put it to use it by learning lots of tunes, and the only thing standing in the way of your success will be the amount of talent you actually have. What they don't cover, you probably don't need!!!

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