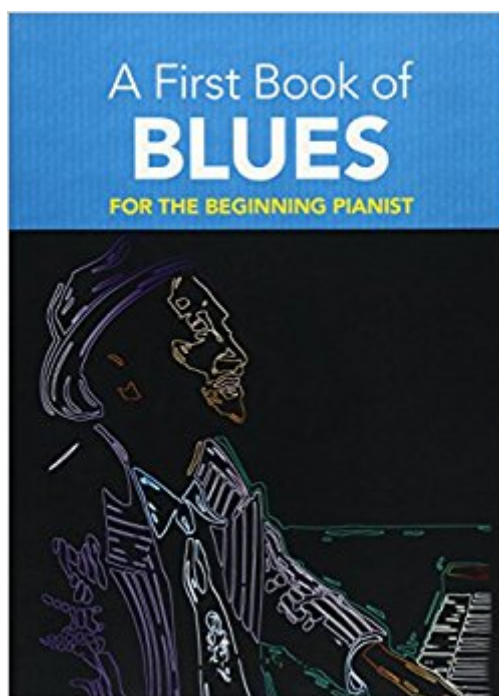


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# A First Book Of Blues: 16 Arrangements For The Beginning Pianist (Dover Music For Piano)



## Synopsis

With these easy-to-play renditions, beginning pianists of all ages can enjoy one of America's most celebrated art forms. Sixteen popular blues melodies include traditional songs such as "St. James Infirmary" and "Careless Love" as well as several numbers by blues giants Jelly Roll Morton and W. C. Handy, including "St. Louis Blues," "Joe Turner Blues," and "The Hesitating Blues." Students, teachers, and other pianists will find these arrangements much simpler and more melodic than other versions. The selections include suggestions for fingering and are arranged in order of increasing difficulty. Introductory material by editor David Dutkanicz offers helpful explanations of the melodic and rhythmic theory behind the blues.

## Book Information

Series: Dover Music for Piano

Paperback: 48 pages

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Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 8 x 0.5 x 10.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.6 out of 5 stars 17 customer reviews

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Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Blues #28 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music >

Musical Genres > Soul #480 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Instruments > Piano

Age Range: 4 and up

Grade Level: Preschool and up

## Customer Reviews

I'm a beginning to intermediate piano student and I thought this book was a good introduction to the blues. The individual songs, traditional basic blues material, were kept intentionally simple and are only 1-2 pgs in length. Good material to practice the syncopation and phrasing of blues, at a beginner level.

"A First Book of Blues" would not be a good choice if you are looking for your first book to start playing blues piano. In fact, I can't figure out who would find this book useful. You would never want

to play these arrangements for anyone else to hear. You probably wouldn't get much pleasure or value out of playing them as exercises. If you are just starting with blues piano, you aren't going to learn how to get the blues sound from this book. At best, someone who knows quite a lot about playing blues piano could use this as a kind of fake book to provide a starting point for building a interesting arrangement, but there probably are a lot of better choices for that. I've posted images so you can see what the music in this book looks like. These are from the Kindle edition but I wouldn't expect the paper edition to look appreciably different. My complaint is that the "arrangements" are so simplified that almost all the flavor of these songs has been boiled out of them. To illustrate I have posted an image that shows the first four bars of "Down Home Blues" as presented in this book compared to a transcription from a piano roll by James P. Johnson. Admittedly Johnson's performance is probably the gold standard for a solo piano performance of this song and about as far from an easy arrangement for beginners as you can get. I posted the comparison so you can get a sense of how much the arrangements in this book have been simplified. The biggest shortcomings in my view are the static left hand parts. I have been playing blues piano for a year. What I have been learning is that a rhythmic left hand is the foundation on which blues piano is built and what propels the music forward. The left hand does almost nothing of interest in any of the arrangements in this book. If you want some idea of what I think this book should have been, you can find audio from the arrangement of "Down Home Blues" included in Alfred's "Premier Piano Course" Lesson Book 3 on their website or a student performance on YouTube. The left hand is still rather leaden but at least it provides a steady beat against which the right hand syncopation can work. I understand that writing an arrangement suitable for beginners that still sounds good and has the flavor of a more advanced arrangement is a real challenge. Unfortunately, this book fails to rise to the challenge. Since the guidelines require disclosure of whether you received a free copy to review, I'll disclose that I am going to return this book so I guess you could consider this a review of a copy I didn't pay for.

SO BEAUTIFUL. IT IS A GIFT can't wait for him to see

I wanted an easy set of blues arrangements, but this is basic at a level made for kindergarteners. It's too hard for kids, but too juvenile for adults who want to learn beginner's blues.

Predicatable, no real usable information.

No words/lyrics included. Drat! I like knowing the sad croons!

Explicit and easy to follow.

Thank you

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