

# Piano Course Decision Tree

by Kevin M Coan

The following lists are intended to be used for selecting a piano method for a student. The courses are listed in order of preference, with the intent that the teacher would select the first course listed that serves as an appropriate fit for the student.

## Younger Children – Ages 5-7

### Highly Recommended

- Albergo – Celebrate Piano
- Noona – The Young Pianist
- Noona – Noona Basic Piano – Starter Book
- Bastien – Invitation to Piano (Piano Party)
- Bastien – The Very Young Pianist
- Faber – My First Piano Adventure

### Recommended

- Noona – Noona Comprehensive Piano Library – Music Magic
- Clark – The Music Tree
- Palmer/Lethco – Alfred Basic Prep Course
- Bastien – Piano for the Young Beginner – Primer A & B
- Bastien – Bastien Piano Library – Traditional Primer
- Arnold – Pianimals
- George & George – Artistry at the Piano

## Average Age Children – Ages 7-12

### Highly Recommended

- Noona – Noona Basic Piano – Book One
- Noona – Young Pianist (to age 9)
- Snell – Piano Town
- Olson – Music Pathways
- George & George – Artistry at the Piano
- Gillock – Piano All the Way
- Bastien – Bastien Piano Library
- Bastien – Bastien Piano Basics

- *Noona – Noona Comprehensive Piano Library – Starter Level*
- *Palmer/Lethco – Creating Music at the Piano*
- *Schelling – Oxford Piano Course – Preparatory A: Singing and Playing (ages 8-11)*<sup>1</sup>
- *Schelling – Oxford Piano Course – Preparatory B: Learning to Play the Piano (ages 8-11)*<sup>2</sup>
- *Bastien – Music through the Piano*

### ***Recommended***

- *Marlais – Succeeding at the Piano*
- *Pace – Music for Piano/Keyboard*
- *Bastien – Bastien Piano Library – Traditional Primer*
- *Palmer/Lethco – Alfred Basic Piano Course*
- *Faber – Piano Adventures*
- *Alexander – Alfred Premier Piano Course*

### ***Conditionally Recommended***

- *Kreader – Hal Leonard Student Piano Library (needs multikey supplement)*

### ***Older Students and Adults – Ages 10 and up***

### ***Highly Recommended***

- *Noona – Noona Digital Piano Method*
- *Noona – Mainstreams Piano Method*
- *George & George – Artistry at the Piano*
- *Olson – Music Pathways*
- *Gillock – Piano All the Way*
- *Glover – The Adult Pianist*
- *Palmer/Lethco – Creating Music at the Piano*
- *Bastien – Music through the Piano*
- *Noona – New Horizons*
- *C Pace – Piano Plain and Simple*
- *Bastien – Beginning Piano for Adults*
- *Pace – Music for Piano*
- *Schelling – Oxford Piano Course – Preparatory B: Learning to Play the Piano (ages 10-11)*<sup>3</sup>
- *Schelling – Oxford Piano Course – Older Beginner Piano Book (ages 12 and up)*

<sup>1</sup> *Preparatory A and Preparatory B are two versions of the preparatory level, not books that follow in succession. Choose one version or the other. They may be used together simultaneously to supply additional material. Both books are out of print.*

<sup>2</sup> *See note 1*

<sup>3</sup> *Preparatory B refers to one of two versions of the preparatory level. Version B is more appropriate for older children than version A.*

## ***Recommended***

- *Palmer/Lethco – Play Piano Now*
- *Palmer/Lethco – Alfred Basic Chord Approach*
- *Palmer/Lethco – Alfred Basic Piano – Complete Level 1 and Complete Level 2&3*
- *Palmer/Lethco – Alfred Basic Adult Piano Course*
- *Noona – The Adult Pianist*
- *Bastien – Older Beginner Piano Course*
- *Bastien – Piano for Adults*
- *Faber – Accelerated Piano Adventures*
- *Michael Aaron Piano Course*

## ***Serious Functional Piano Study***

### ***Highly Recommended***

- *Noona – Mainstreams Piano Method*
- *Noona – New Horizons*
- *Pace – Robert Pace Keyboard Approach*
- *Bastien – Music through the Piano*
- *Olson – Music Pathways*

## ***Serious Performance Piano Study***

### ***Highly Recommended***

- *George & George – Artistry at the Piano*
- *Noona – Noona Clavier Method*
- *Palmer/Lethco – Creating Music at the Piano*
- *Schelling – Oxford Piano Course*
- *Clark – The Music Tree*

## ***Casual Adult Group Study***

### ***Highly Recommended***

- *Noona – New Horizons*
- *C. Pace – Piano Plain and Simple*
- *Gillock – Piano All the Way*
- *Palmer – Play Piano Now*
- *Bastien – Older Beginner Piano Course*
- *Palmer/Lethco – Alfred Basic Chord Approach*

## ***Recommended***

- *Schelling – Oxford Piano Course – Older Beginner Piano Book*

- *Bastien – Piano for Adults*
- *George & George – Artistry at the Piano*
- *Faber – Adult Piano Adventures*
- *Faber – Accelerated Piano Adventures*
- *Kreader – Hal Leonard Adult Piano Method*
- *Aaron – Michael Aaron Piano Course*

## ***Special Needs Students***

### ***Highly Recommended***

- *Glover – David Carr Glover Method for Piano*
- *Glover – David Carr Glover Piano Library*
- *Noona – Noona Basic Piano*

### ***Recommended***

- *Vogt – Piano Discoveries*
- *Monell – It's Piano Lesson Time*

## ***Supplemental Piano Courses***

### ***Highly Recommended***

- *Schaum – Making Music Method*
- *Aaron – Michael Aaron Piano Course*
- *Weybright – Belwin Piano Method*
- *Nevin – Mark Nevin Piano Course<sup>4</sup>*
- *Gillock – Piano All the Way*
- *Waxman – Piano Pageants*
- *Frost – At the Piano<sup>5</sup>*
- *Schelling – Oxford Piano Course<sup>6</sup>*

### ***Recommended***

- *Schaum – John W Schaum Piano Course*
- *Fletcher – Leila Fletcher Piano Course*
- *Kasschau – Howard Kasschau Piano Course*
- *Brimhall – John Brimhall Piano Method*
- *Williams – Williams and Turner Piano Course*
- *Vogt – Piano Discoveries*

<sup>4</sup> Books 3-5 are out of print

<sup>5</sup> Course is out of print

<sup>6</sup> Course is out of print

### ***Conditionally Recommended – Must Remove Finger Numbers!***

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- Thompson – *Melody All the Way* (the “green” course)
- Thompson – *John Thompson’s Easiest Piano Course*
- Thompson – *John Thompson’s Modern Piano Course* (the “red” course) – Grades 2-5 only<sup>7</sup>
- Eckstein – *Eckstein Piano Course*

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<sup>7</sup> The *First Grade Book* is NOT recommended. The pieces in the first part of the book are in fixed positions with finger numbers, enabling the student to play without reading the music. There is a huge gap between the end of the *First Grade Book* and the beginning of the *Second Grade Book*.