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# BEGINNER'S GUIDE

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## Start here!

If you're a complete or near-complete beginner, this guide will give you enough information to get started with the **30 days of piano series**.

Even if you've been playing a while, you might want to give the lessons here a quick look-over to make sure you know the basics.

For the series, we're going to start with the assumption that you know how to:

- Find the notes on the keyboard (using the alphabet)
- Do basic and simple note reading (treble and bass clef)
- Read simple rhythms (4/4 and 3/4 time signatures, eighth notes and rests, dotted quarter notes)

If you're unsure about some of these, follow along the guide and watch through the suggested videos.

## Lesson 1: Introduction to Rhythm



In this lesson, you'll learn:

- Quarter notes, half notes, dotted half notes and whole notes
- Time signatures: 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4

Complete the **two PDF worksheets** in this lesson – I get my students to manually write in the counts with paper and pencil, and recommend you do the same if you're a beginner.

## Lesson 2: Introduction to Note Reading



In this lesson, you'll learn:

- What the different notes on a keyboard are (using 7 letters of the alphabet)
- C 5-finger position
- Where to find middle C
- How to read notes in the treble and bass clef

Be sure to complete the **two PDF worksheets** in this lesson on reading notes in the treble and bass clef. This helps reinforce the concepts – it's much easier to remember things when you manually write them down.

If you'd like to put your skills to the test, try reading through this short and simple piece called "[Little Waterfall](#)". If you'd like further guidance on reading this piece, you can follow along the [video lesson](#).

## Lesson 3: Simple Tricks for Note Reading



Once you understand the basics of note reading (see lesson 2), you can use some of these shortcuts. I teach these to kids and adults alike in my studio, and they make a great “scaffolding” to jog your memory.

Eventually you’ll have all the notes memorized, but it could be a while before that happens. In the meantime, it’s nice to have some tools in your toolset to remember the notes quickly.

In this lesson, you’ll learn:

- The G clef/F clef trick
- The ACEG/FACE trick



## Lesson 4: Reading Intervals



I find understanding intervals as valuable as understanding note letters. Being able to judge *how far* two notes are from each other is crucial to smooth sight reading.

In this lesson, you'll learn:

- The difference between **harmonic** and **melodic** intervals
- Different types of intervals (2nds, 3rds, etc.)
- The difference between **slurs** and **ties** (this has nothing to do with intervals, but it's good to know)

You can give the [sheet music for Chopsticks a try](#) – it uses a variety of intervals, and will help familiarize you with C and G7 chords (two beginner chords).

## Lesson 5: Playing Eighth Notes



In this lesson, you'll learn:

- How to read 8<sup>th</sup> notes
- How to count 8<sup>th</sup> notes

Eighth notes are a little tricky for some people, so make sure you have a really good grasp on basic rhythm (lesson 1) first.

If you'd like to give 8<sup>th</sup> notes a try by reading a piece, take a look at [Minuetto by James Hook](#) – it's a very simple Classical piece (but surprisingly difficult to coordinate both hands with).

If you'd like even more detail on learning the Minuetto, you can also check out the [full video tutorial](#) for that piece.

## Lesson 6: How to Read Dotted Notes



In this lesson, you'll learn:

- How to read the dotted whole note, dotted half note and dotted quarter note
- How the dot works, and how to count notes with a dot

If you'd like to apply the lessons in this video to a piece, you can check out the [PDF for Greensleeves](#) (and the [full video tutorial](#)). This is a little more advanced (suitable for a late beginner), so if you're a complete beginner you can always just do the right hand.

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# NEXT STEPS

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Once you've completed these 6 lessons...

You're ready to participate in the **30 days of piano** live video series!

Even if you don't get through all of this before the videos start, don't worry. I'll be explaining things as we go, and simplifying wherever possible.

If you run into a concept during the 30 days of piano that you don't understand, you can always come back to this page and make sure you've covered the basics.

If we talk about something during the 30 days you'd like to go deeper into, there's a good chance we've already done a full video on it on [PianoTV.net](https://PianoTV.net). You can search the tabs on the website, or you can also do a Google search (eg: "pianotv" + how to use the damper pedal).

Thanks for flipping through this beginner's guide, and I'm looking forward to doing **30 days of piano** with you! 😊

Allysia