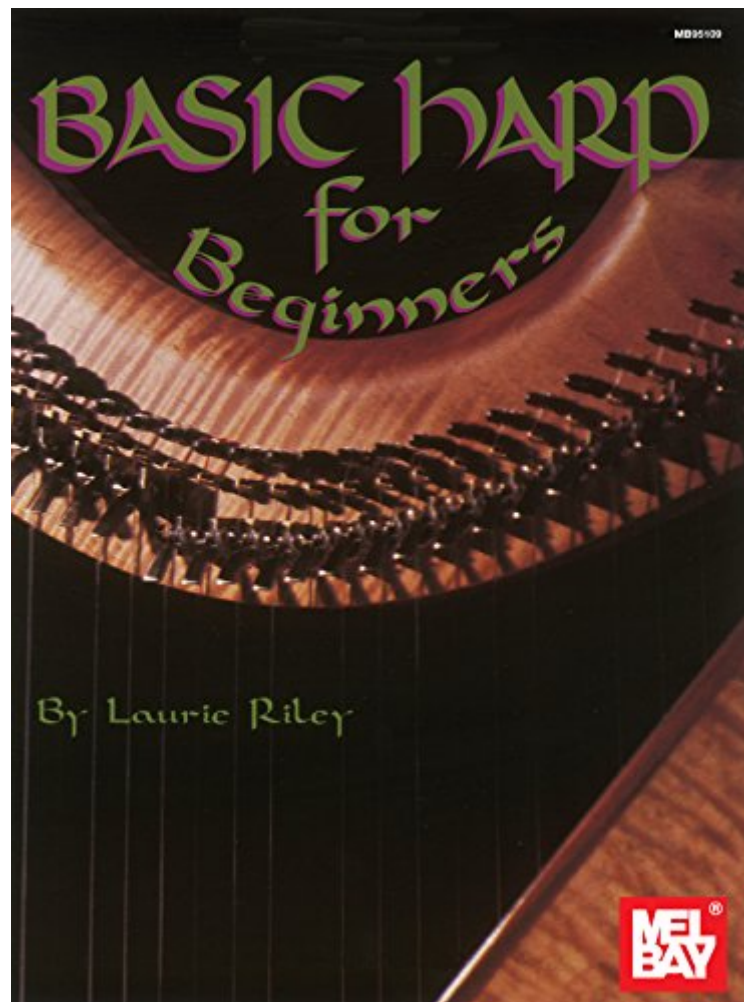


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# Basic Harp For Beginners



## Synopsis

A basic, easy-to-understand, step-by-step method about playing the harp. Extensively illustrated, this book is for musicians of all levels, requiring only an interest in learning to play the harp. The material in the book can be applied to any type of harp (with or without pedals) and any type of music. Specific topics covered include basic positioning, tuning, and techniques, etudes, and a colorful selection of folk harp solos. Each section of the book is arranged to show the most efficient way to learn quickly and as easily.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Laurie Riley is an accomplished folk harper. Her book is arranged logically, and you learn to play the tunes sequentially, starting with simple pieces and moving along to more difficult ones. The pieces themselves are nicely arranged, and you'll (very) soon be playing with both hands - important to me, because when I learned piano many years ago, I never progressed beyond the left hand exercises! So my belief was, it's difficult to play any instrument that requires both hands. Not true. The one and only thing I didn't like about the book was the pictures that depicted how to hold your hands. They look as if the harper's hands and arms are being held abnormally and are full of tension. Keeping

your muscles relaxed is of utmost importance, or you'll never progress to difficult pieces where your fingers need to move quickly and surely. I wish Ms Riley would update these pictures next time the book is updated to show a more relaxed stance. I'm well into my adulthood (late 40's) and have made excellent progress using this book (and the Sylvia Woods "Learn to Play the Harp" book, used in tandem). I highly recommend it!

This moves too quickly through the lessons. Accompanied by a teacher it may make more sense, but alone and with no prior experience it is, in my opinion, not a worth while investment. Many of the lessons include only a few lines of certain songs, which is frustrating if you want to play ALL of "Greensleeves". I would suggest "Teach Yourself to Play the Folk Harp by Sylvia Woods" book and DVD, especially if you do not have a teacher handy. This book is good for a quick review if you haven't played in a long time.

I started out with the Nancy Calthorpe book but later bought this one because I was left with too many unanswered questions. I would choose this as a first purchase if you are interested in teaching yourself to play the harp. There are some good tunes in this book as well.

And I am a beginner. A 65 year old beginner. I often find beginner's books on things tend to talk down to me, but this one treats the student with respect. I am very happy with this book, working my way through it, and happy with my progress as guided by the book. Five stars without a doubt.

This would get a beginner off to a very confusing start. Contains incorrect music theory (such as referring to D F A as a "D chord") and self-contradictory instructions. The 'harp tablature' (presented as an alternative to reading music) is used only in this book and nowhere else, so why bother learning it? Just learn to read music. (She mentions that some types of dyslexia make it hard to learn to read music, but if you're that dyslexic, how would you read the book?? The 'tablature' may make sense for some in-person lessons with students who won't read music, but makes no sense in a book.) Pamela Bruner's "Play the harp beautifully" is a much better introduction for beginners who don't read yet, with good photographs and with note-reading gradually introduced. "Levers Up Thumbs Up" by Kathy Bundock Moore is good for harp beginners who already read music. Either way, get yourself a good harp teacher! Get a Skype harp teacher if you don't have any locally - there's no excuse not to in this day & age!

With so much information overload nowadays, this book gets to the point and makes learning the harp really easy. There's nothing worse than complicated lessons when you want to learn to play the harp easily. I highly recommend this book for beginners that want to enjoy playing their harp without slaving over the lessons.

I find learning from this book to be somewhat frustrating. Part of the problem is that it seems to be written for a young person who needs firm guidance. For example emphatic directives like "DO NOT PLAY YET" and "OOPS! Did you look at your fingers play? Probably." As an older student who has written a number of tutorials, I find it much more motivating to work from guidance that simply tells me what I need to do. The book also falls short in the use of photographs. For example, page 26 includes a picture of hand placement that seems critically important. The image is so faint and washed out that I can barely tell where the harp strings are in relation to her fingers. Similar photos on pages 14, 15 and 17 are nearly as bad. If this book were improved, it would play a much more central role in my journey to learn the folk harp. As it stands, I am making better progress watching youtube videos that provide harp instruction. They allow me to study hand placement and technique much more easily. That doesn't mean I'm giving up on Riley's lessons though. I think that her music samples and notations will be more useful once I have gotten further along.

I should say firstly, that this book is best described as a beginner's reference guide only and not a first choice of how to learn to play the harp. While you will learn a great deal from this book, I can only cite it as good reference material, in addition to a good primary syllabus. If you wish to learn; I can highly recommend the Sylvia Woods tutorial "Teach yourself to play the folk harp". While I am certain there are other good tutorials out there, I am still learning from the Sylvia Woods program series and know firsthand it works.

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