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# Introduction

*Berklee Music Theory, Book 1* teaches you how to read and understand music, using an approach I've developed through more than forty years of teaching at Berklee College of Music. Unlike most books on music theory, this book begins with the most basic aspect of contemporary music: rhythm. Reflecting the way we teach at Berklee, this book continues with a rigorous, hands-on, "ears-on" exploration of the inner workings of music, presenting notes, scales, and sounds as they are heard in jazz, blues, and popular music.

Whether you are a beginner or a more experienced musician who wants to learn more, you'll develop music listening, reading, and writing skills through exercises and ear training practice. I encourage you to work with a real keyboard, but if you don't have access to one, you can use the cut-out keyboard at the back of this book.

By the end of the book, you'll be able to read musical notes on a staff, write and use correct rhythm notation, and construct scales and intervals—and recognize them by ear. You will have the sounds and understanding you can use immediately to become a more effective musician.

—Paul Schmeling

Chair Emeritus, Piano Department

Berklee College of Music