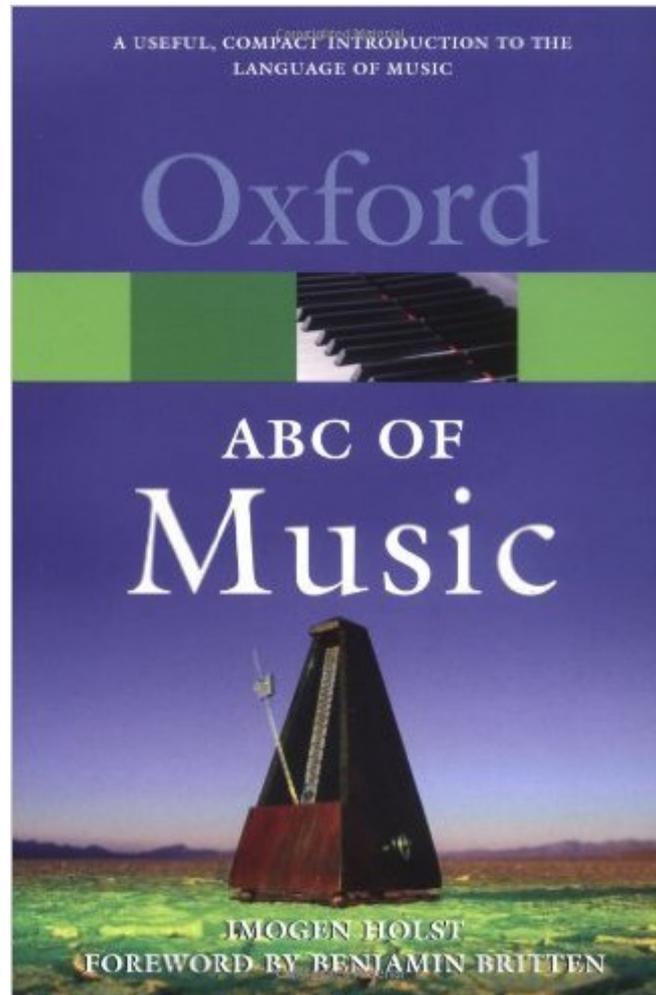


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# An ABC Of Music (Oxford Quick Reference)



## Synopsis

"Learning to read music, and learning its grammar, need not be dull or too much trouble," writes Benjamin Britten in his Foreword to this book. An introduction to the language of music, designed for the amateur musician, *An ABC of Music* surveys all the musical terms and ideas likely to be met in the beginning stages of learning to play an instrument. A short, practical guide to the essentials of rudiments, harmony, and form, it is capable of being read straight through with pleasure and understanding, but may also be used as a sort of cumulative dictionary, with each definition leading on to the next.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (7 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

This is a gloss that moves very quickly from elementary notation to dodecaphony. It is moderately pleasant to read and fairly clear for the novice. But beware: It is British, so it speaks of crotchets and quavers, rather than of quarter notes and eighth notes. It discusses dissonance in terms of Helmholtz's discredited beat theory. Also recommended (very much): *PENTATONIC SCALES FOR THE JAZZ-ROCK KEYBOARDIST* by Jeff Burns.

I came across Holst's *ABC's* 35 years ago as a teen and it gave me endless delight, fascination, inspiration and motivation. The explanations are clear and direct, classic in their simplicity. I rate this book as one of the keys to my becoming a professional musician.

It's very sad to find so many people systematically brainwashed into believing everything a few decades old is "outdated"--this belief is pure superstition. It's very sad to feel constrained to point out the bleedingly obvious (as comedian John Cleese would put it): 1) the fundamentals of music HAVE NOT CHANGED since this book was first published. 2) What is good is what ENDURES.

If your intent is to study a comprehensive introduction to the theory of music - this is not the book you're looking for. Although it is adequately thorough, the book's explanations are poorly organized and consistently cluttered with unnecessary & outdated commentary. For example, the book goes so far as to chide electronic instruments as "gloomy" and "hollow," insisting they have nothing to offer a serious musician. ABC of Music was published in 1963 and repeatedly shows its age. I've yet to see an adequate music theory companion, however, if you are strictly intent on being snooty about your compositions, Music Fundamentals: Through Pitch Structures and Rhythmic Design by Elvo S. D'Amante is worth the extra expense.

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