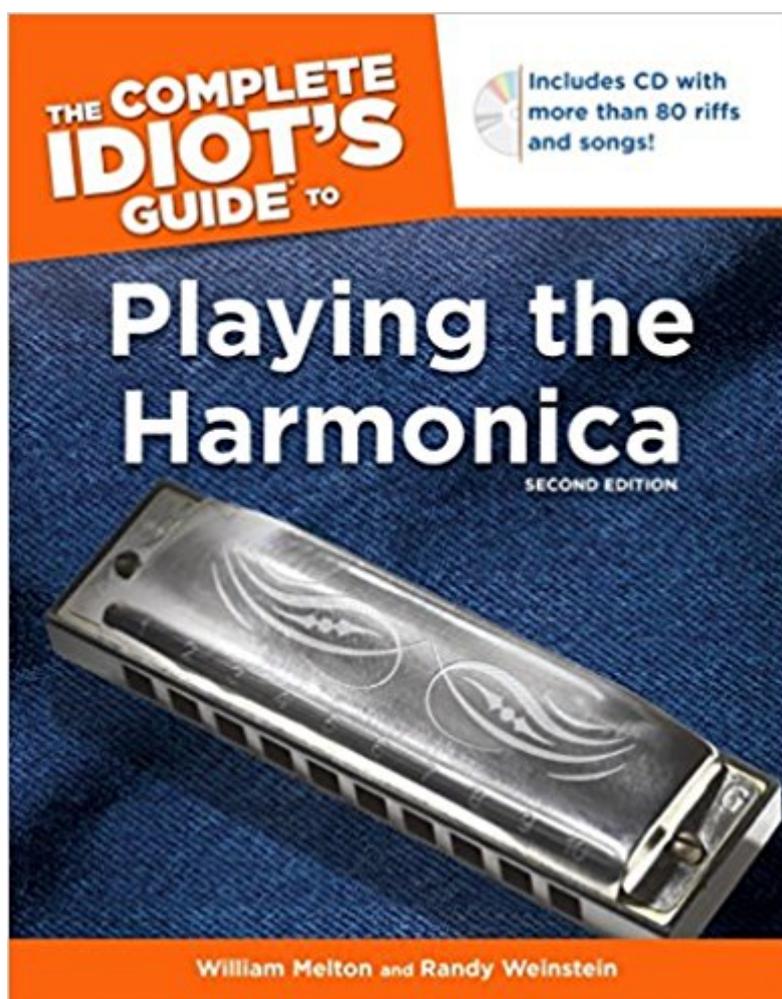


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# The Complete Idiot's Guide To Playing The Harmonica, 2nd Edition (Idiot's Guides)



## Synopsis

With photos, illustrations, and a new audio CD. The harmonica is one of the most traditional musical instruments in America. Millions are sold each year, but there are few high quality, comprehensive instructional manuals for new harmonica players. This bestselling book has been completely updated, with dozens of new songs and a professionally mastered audio CD. &#149; Over 100 songs, both traditional and original to this book &#149; Detailed instructions on playing, including photos to illustrate positions and techniques &#149; Buying tips and interesting historical facts about famous players &#149; Authors are professional musicians &#149; The most comprehensive music lists featuring nearly every style of playing and category of song &#149; Over 80 riffs and songs performed on the special audio CD &#149; Comprehensive resource guides

## Book Information

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Composition & Performance > Instruction & Study

## Customer Reviews

William Melton received his musical training at the Conservatory of Music at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. He is a multi-instrumentalist, having played clarinet, French horn, and classical accordion professionally. He toured Europe twice playing French horn with symphony orchestras. His current instruments are the harmonica, accordion, and keyboard. Randy Weinstein is a nationally known professional harmonica player and has performed in a number of international music festivals. He also teaches music theory and can be heard on several jazz CDs.

When I made a decision to learn how to play the harmonica I took on line lessons and purchased numerous books on the subject. *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Playing the Harmonica* second edition by William Melton and Randy Weinstein is no doubt the most comprehensive book of the many I purchased on playing the harmonica. Do not be discouraged by the title because these (Complete Idiot's Guide series) books are not for idiots. In fact, this book goes much deeper into the subject matter than most of my books on the harmonica. The other thing that makes this an excellent manual is that it also includes a CD with more than 80 riffs and songs to guide you in playing the harmonica. This 247 page comprehensive guide is organized into four detailed parts. Part one, *the harmonica: It's no toy* explains the many positive aspects of the harmonica and provides some other important basic information. The second part *Let's get blowin'* gets into the specifics of playing harp musical notes. The third part *steppin Up* explains how to read music, tongue blocking tricks, the art of bending notes on a harmonica and other details. The fourth part *It's Showtime* gets into how to play the blues. This section also provides vital tips to follow if you are interested in playing the harmonica with a music group. There is also a complete glossary of harp terms and a CD at the end of the book. Since I only intend to play the harmonica for my own personal enjoyment and have no desire to join a band, this book had more information than what I actually needed. Nevertheless, I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in learning the harmonica. Rating: 5 Stars. Joseph J. Truncale (Author: *The Samurai Soul: An old warrior's poetic tribute*).

Very good manual for neophytes or intermediate performer who wishes to learn some underlying techniques though he may already be handling the technique well. Very rudimentary. Good use of humor to get points across. Those playing and performing at this stage, should close the book and practice their own techniques for at least 45 minutes a day to keep their edge. Some points seem to be either regressive or in error and questionable, but this gives you a full understanding of how to make progress in basic learning, especially for persons who are not good at music sight-reading - this will give a good elementary education in that, however. Want to play from sheet music? This is your ticket! The manual is interesting and keeps one wanting to read more of the how-to-do-it. This is not a flimsy, ten-page pocket book. It is a thick text that covers a lot of detail.

This product with the book and the cd are a very welcome addition to my library. I have found the materials to be presented in a easy to read, and logical order that has really helped my playing. I

have been playing for over a year, but the wealth of info in the book, and actually being able to hear with the cd what the exercises should sound like has sped up my progress greatly. I would recommend this item to anyone who wants to learn to play the harmonica and has the discipline to follow the steps in the book. I recommend buying a good harmonica at the start so your progress will not be frustrated by a cheap harp's inability to perform for you. Hohner Special Twenty Harmonica, Key of C

A fairly methodical approach to learning about the instrument construction and care. It then moves on to learning some of the standard playing techniques. The CD has examples that you can attempt to copy. There are tracks on there that when you hear them your response is: "No way, it can't be done". Great inspiration for becoming an accomplished player.

The Kindle edition is not worth the price. There is no CD (obviously) and the promised web site where you can download parts of the CD and "learning tools" is more than lacking... I found no learning tools etc. The illustrations in the Kindle edition are too small to be of any use. Perhaps the print edition is OK, but not the Kindle edition.

I just begun to learn how play the harmonica. So far, this book is very comprehensive and fun to read. It's not only about how to play, but it also offers wonderful tidbits about the instrument. I know that, as I keep learning as I intended, I'll have to go beyond this book, but that will be a couple of years down the line. One thing though, and this is very minor. Even as a beginner I found some mistakes on a couple of easy songs, as they were written for the harmonica. That actually made me proud for catching these flaws, when I'm only a beginner. Maybe they were there on purpose! Other than that, I love the book.

The book is really verbose, starting out with page after page of detail that maybe should be in the appendix. Within those details, and not always highlighted, are the important bits you need to know, so skipping ahead isn't really possible either. Where they could and should motivate you by getting a little music going, they just drag on and on with background. Secondly, this book isn't for beginners at all. It continually makes references that aren't explained (until possibly later), or doesn't answer the question on your mind. As one example, of many: in the initial introduction to Tab, a distinction is made between "playing a single note" and "playing a chord," and some small tunes are displayed for us to play. Even if we assume for a second that you understand what a chord is - I do, but I'm

not a complete beginner to music - nowhere in the preceding pages does it say anything about how to play a note versus how to play a chord. It's "obvious" once you know it, but that kind of thing is extremely frustrating when you're trying to learn. In short, an evening with this book has me more frustrated than encouraged. If you actually want to -play- the harmonica, I'm sure there are better options out there to get you started. Update: 100x more useful and enjoyable is anything by Adam Gussow, much of it free.

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