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alfred jazz easy play along easy standards vol 2 rhythm section piano bass drum set book mp3 cd alfred easy jazz play along series

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Alfred Easy Jazz Play Along Series: Elevating Your Jazz Journey with Volume /2

Jazz, with its syncopated rhythms, spontaneous improvisations, and rich harmonic language, has captivated musicians for generations. Yet, learning jazz can feel daunting for many players who lack a solid rhythmic foundation or a reliable accompaniment to practice with. The **Alfred Easy Jazz Play Along** series addresses this challenge head-on, offering a thoughtfully curated collection of standards that are easy to learn and play along with. In this article, we'll dive deep into *Volume /2 – Rhythm Section Piano, Bass, Drum Set*, explore its features, and show you how it can transform your practice routine.

Why a Rhythm Section Play Along Is Essential for Jazz Musicians

At the core of jazz is the rhythm section: piano, bass, and drums. They provide the harmonic and rhythmic backbone that supports soloists and creates the groove that defines each tune. For emerging jazz players, mastering the rhythm section's role is a prerequisite for confident improvisation. A dedicated play along book offers:

- Consistent Groove: Each track is recorded with professional musicians, ensuring a steady tempo and authentic feel.
- Instant Feedback: Listening to your playing alongside a full band helps you spot timing, phrasing, and dynamic issues early.
- Real World Context: You hear how your part interacts with the rest of the ensemble, which is invaluable for developing ensemble awareness.
- Motivation: The joy of playing with a full band keeps practice engaging and encourages regular sessions.

Introducing Alfred Easy Jazz Play Along Series

The Alfred Easy Jazz Play Along series is designed for musicians of all levels who want to learn jazz standards in a structured, enjoyable manner. Each volume focuses on a specific instrument or ensemble configuration, making it easy to find the right resource for your needs. The books come in both **CD** and **MP3** formats, allowing you to practice on the go or at home. The series is known for its:

1. Clear Arrangements: Simplified chord charts and rhythmic patterns that preserve the essence of the tune while remaining approachable.
2. High Quality Recordings: Professional audio production ensures that you hear every nuance of the rhythm section.
3. Educational Supplements: Each book includes a brief introduction to the tune's history, key changes, and suggested practice methods.

Spotlight on Volume /2: Rhythm Section Piano, Bass, Drum Set

Volume 2 is tailored for the rhythm section trio, providing a comprehensive collection of jazz standards that are both iconic and straightforward. Whether you're a pianist, bassist, or drummer, this volume gives you the tools to build a solid groove and support soloists effectively.

Key Features of Volume /2

- 30+ Classic Standards: From "Autumn Leaves" to "Blue Bossa," each track is a staple in the jazz repertoire.
- Chord Charts & Transcriptions: Simplified charts that highlight essential chord changes and rhythmic patterns.
- Tempo Variations: Tracks are available in multiple tempos, allowing you to practice at a comfortable pace and gradually increase speed.
- Dynamic Markings: Clear indications for piano comping, bass walking, and drum grooves help you develop a balanced sound.
- Downloadable MP3s: The CD's accompanying MP3 files can be streamed or downloaded to any device.

How to Use the Book Effectively

Getting the most out of Volume 2 requires a systematic approach. Below is a step by step guide that will help you integrate the play along into your daily routine.

1. Familiarize Yourself with the Tunes: Start by listening to each track multiple times. Pay attention to the groove, harmonic structure, and the interplay between instruments.
2. Study the Chord Charts: Work through the simplified chord charts to understand the progression. If you're a pianist, focus on comping patterns; for bassists, practice walking lines; drummers should concentrate on the groove and dynamics.
3. Practice in Isolation: Begin with the rhythm section alone. Play along with the recording, focusing on timing, feel, and consistency.
4. Gradual Integration: Once comfortable, add a soloist or a vocal track if available. This will help you transition from a support role to an interactive one.
5. Record Yourself: Use a simple recorder or smartphone to capture your playing. Compare it to the original track and note areas for improvement.
6. Set Specific Goals: Choose one tune each week and set measurable objectives—e.g., improve tempo accuracy by 5% or master a particular rhythmic motif.
7. Review & Reflect: After each practice session, jot down what worked well and what needs adjustment. This habit reinforces learning.

Sample Track Breakdown

Let's look at a representative track—**"Autumn Leaves"**—to illustrate how the book's features come together.

- Tempo: 120 /bpm (with options for 100 /bpm and 140 /bpm).
- Piano: Comping in 3 4 swing feel with simple block chords.
- Bass: Walking line that outlines the chord changes, emphasizing root notes.
- Drums: Light ride cymbal pattern with occasional snare accents, maintaining a steady swing.
- Dynamic Markings: Piano starts at mezzo forte, bass at mezzo piano, drums at piano. Gradual crescendo over the bridge.

Why Volume /2 Stands Out Among Play Along Books

While there are many jazz play along resources on the market, Volume /2 distinguishes itself through:

- Balanced Difficulty: The arrangements are not overly simplistic; they retain the harmonic richness of the originals.
- Professional Production: High fidelity audio ensures that players can hear subtle nuances.
- Comprehensive Educational Material: The accompanying book offers historical context, which deepens

musical understanding.

- Flexibility: The MP3 format allows for use on laptops, tablets, or smartphones, making practice portable.

Comparing Alfred Easy Jazz Play Along Volume /2 to Other Resources

When choosing a play along book, musicians often weigh factors such as quality, variety, and price. Here's a quick comparison with two popular alternatives.

1. Hal Leonard Jazz Play Along Series

- Strengths: Extensive repertoire, multiple instrument options.
- Weaknesses: Some tracks are more complex; audio quality can vary.
- Price Point: Generally higher per volume.

2. Musician's Friend Jazz Play Along Collection

- Strengths: Affordable bundles, good selection of standards.
- Weaknesses: Limited educational content; some recordings feel less polished.
- Price Point: Competitive, but often missing the depth of Alfred's arrangements.

Why Alfred Volume /2 Wins

- Higher audio fidelity and professional musicianship.
- Clear, educationally focused chord charts.
- Balanced repertoire that's neither too easy nor overly advanced.
- Convenient MP3/CD dual format.

Integrating Volume /2 into Your Long Term Jazz Development

While the play along book is a powerful tool for immediate improvement, its real value shines when incorporated into a broader learning plan. Here's how you can weave Volume /2 into a comprehensive jazz curriculum.

1. Mastering the Basics

Use the book to solidify your understanding of swing feel, chord voicings, and rhythmic patterns. The consistent groove helps you internalize the swing feel that is essential for all jazz styles.

2. Expanding Harmonic Knowledge

Each standard in Volume 2 features common jazz chord progressions—ii–V–I, minor ii–V–I, and modal interchange. By practicing these, you'll build a strong harmonic vocabulary that can be applied to any tune.

3. Developing Ensemble Skills

Playing along with a recorded rhythm section trains you to listen, adjust, and react in real time—skills that are critical when you eventually play with live musicians.

4. Transitioning to Live Performance

Once you feel comfortable, try performing these tunes with a local jam group or a small ensemble. The confidence gained from the play along will make the transition smoother.

Frequently Asked Questions About Alfred Easy Jazz Play Along Volume /2

Q1: Is this book suitable for beginners?

A1: Yes. The chord charts are simplified, and the tempos are adjustable, making it accessible for players who are still developing their jazz fundamentals.

Q2: Can I use the MP3 files on a mobile device?

A2: Absolutely. The MP3s are compatible with iOS, Android, and most desktop platforms. You can stream or download them for offline practice.

Q3: Do the recordings include any solo sections?

A3: While the focus is on the rhythm section, some tracks feature brief solo breaks. However, the primary goal is to support soloists, not to provide solo material.

Q4: How do I purchase the book?

A4: The book is available through major music retailers, including Alfred's website, Amazon, and local music stores. Look for the "Alfred Easy Jazz Play Along Series – Volume /2" listing.

Q5: Are there any additional resources to complement this book?

A5: Alfred offers companion workbooks, online video lessons, and community forums where players can discuss techniques and share recordings.

Conclusion: Elevate Your Jazz Practice with Alfred Volume /2

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