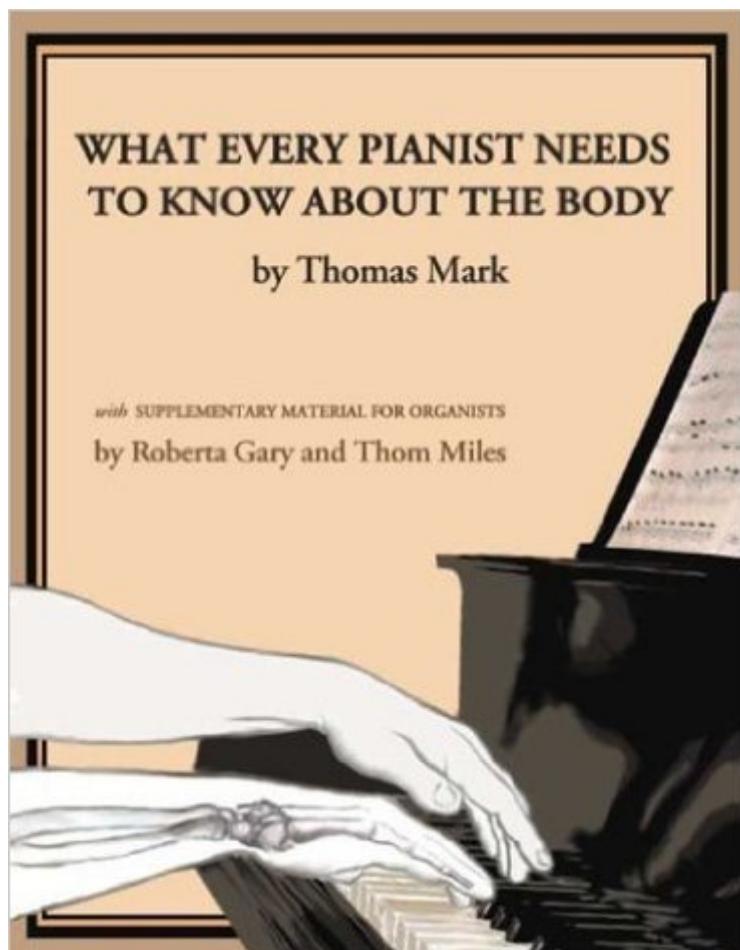


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# What Every Pianist Needs To Know About The Body



## **Synopsis**

Techniques on how to gain greater fluidity of movement while playing to improve the quality of the experience are offered in this manual for serious piano players.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This is simply the best book presently on the market for understanding and acquiring the principles of healthful, injury-preventive keyboard technique. Although nothing substitutes for hands-on training with a knowledgeable teacher, this book will be remarkably helpful to the injured or inquiring keyboardist. It is clear, succinct, and written in accessible, non-tedious language. Informative illustrations abound. The emphasis on technique as a coordination of the whole body with the instrument and the sound biomechanical information throughout are a welcomed relief from the hundreds of historically confusing and dense writings on technique. Technique is a highly complex, subtle physical activity which must be learned by understanding and sensing how the body mechanism works best. Thomas Mark and supplementary authors Gary and Miles, supported by the superb work of Barbara and Bill Conable in Body Mapping and Alexander Technique, have made a truly laudable contribution to the keyboard profession with this book.

Tom Mark's book is brilliant. It is easy to read and is entirely clear and concise. I am a pianist, piano teacher, and certified Andover Educator and I am thrilled to have such a tool at my disposal. I tell every pianist who comes to me with any kind of movement-based issue to read this book first. I find myself continually rereading it and quoting from it in my teaching. It is the kind of source from which

one can gain new insights with each reading. In fact, it is so user-friendly that many people need very little help from me once they have read the book and worked with the ideas on their own. I have found that after studying this material and making these concepts my own, I have been able to communicate and demonstrate these ideas to my students, regardless of their age or level. It has revolutionized my teaching and playing, and the playing of my students as well. This book is so well researched and written it should come with a satisfaction guarantee. It's just that good!

The information contained in this book is extremely valuable for ALL musicians (even flute players, like me!). My approach to playing my instrument has changed forever. I enjoy practicing and performing more than ever before, and I feel a lot more confident as a musician. Learning the practical human anatomy involved in playing my instrument has made movement easier and more enjoyable. I spent many years as a music major feeling extremely limited in my technique (especially my finger technique). Practicing Taffanel Gaubert finger exercises for an hour each day was doing nothing for me except causing a lot of emotional and physical pain. This book showed me how to use my fingers, and whole arm structure, in a more mechanically advantageous way. My scales, or any technical passage that I might encounter in a piece of literature, are faster, more even, and sooooo much easier to play. The information from this book also made my required group piano class at the University of Northern Iowa a lot easier to get through:) I can't imagine being a piano major or professor and not having this knowledge. The information in this book is what every piano professor needs to be teaching in piano pedagogy. This information needs to become standard knowledge for all musicians--especially those who intend to make music as a living. I cannot say enough about this book. If you're frustrated with your technical abilities, if you play in pain, if you want to be a responsible teacher....buy this book.

Although I am a cellist rather than a pianist, the author's delivery of practical information makes this manual a must-read, must-have book on every music teacher's shelf. As a cellist, the information Mark offers on the structure of the legs was especially valuable to me, as was his discussion of breathing. My goal as a teacher of adolescent string players is to prevent performance injuries in my students before they ever happen. Too often, students quit playing because "something hurts." By having a clear idea of how the body works as a structure, how bones and joints are designed to move and how they are NOT designed to move, teachers can offer their students an opportunity to learn to play pain-free forever. I wish for my students to develop a life-long love of their own performance, whether they choose to be professional musicians or amateurs in a local community

orchestra or string quartet. This book enables me to understand my own structure and, in turn, to offer that information to my students. While the original book on which this work is based, Barbara Conable's "What Every Musician Needs to Know About the Body," may be more user-friendly for kinesthetic learners, especially younger students, thanks to its clear graphics and limited text, older students and teachers may find the Mark book more appropriate with its indepth explanations of experiential anatomy. I refer to both books frequently in my day-to-day teaching.

Nice one! I got interested in this book because an acquaintance of mine has been traveling to Portland for lessons and workshops with Mr. Mark, and the resulting improvement in my friend's piano playing has been striking. I was able to make several improvements in my own approach to the piano almost immediately, based only on Mr. Mark's presentation in this book, which is both clear and detailed (the book is also attractively bound and well laid out.). I also learned a bit about the Alexander approach. This is not a book on piano technique, but there is valuable technical information here, and the anatomical information Mark provides is directly relevant to technique. I expect it will help one learn any technique that is soundly based on anatomy. I followed this book with Barbara Lister-Sink's video on piano technique, *Freeing the Caged Bird*, and I found that the two approaches go together beautifully (Lister-Sink apparently also has an background in Alexander work).

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