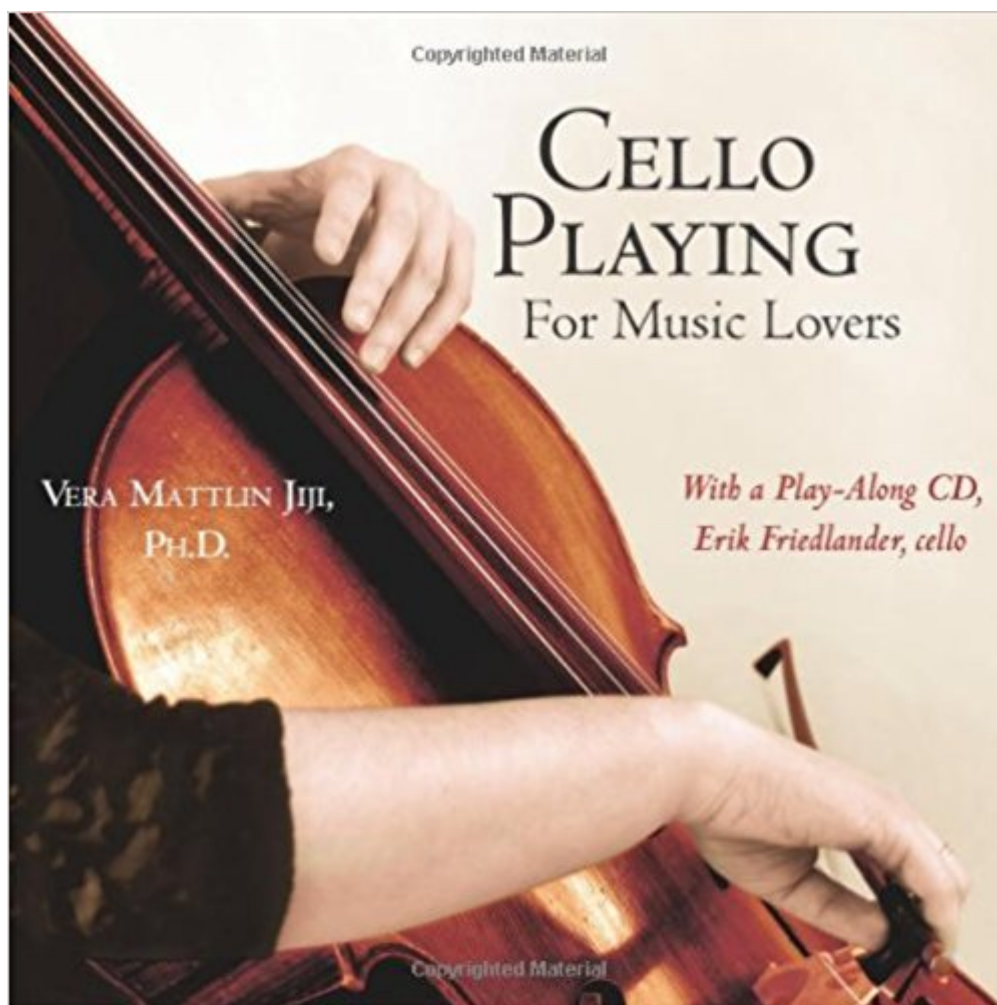




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# Cello Playing For Music Lovers: A Self-Teaching Method



## Synopsis

Cello Playing for Music Lovers provides beginners and intermediate cellists with an authoritative, step-by-step guide to learning how to read music and play it on your cello. On the accompanying CD, master cellist Erik Friedlander plays the book's 116 varied selections chosen from folk tunes to a Bach Sarabande. The CD gives the reader aural feedback on how well he is doing. The book's many photos show correct playing positions from first through fourth. Working with a good teacher certainly makes the complex process easier. However, this book puts the process in writing, making reviewing easier. It also covers more terrain than most books, which provide only exercises. Here you will find information on learning positions one through four, on music theory and playing with others, for example. Getting all your questions answered becomes more likely. A typical buyer said, "5 out of 5 stars A Fantastic Journey for me and my Cello . . . I live in a part of East Texas with no instructor available so I bought a level 1 book at the local music store. After about a week, I had more questions and no answers. I spent a few hours on the Internet and learned of Vera Jiji's wonderful book. . . . I immediately found the book answering my questions. The book is easy to understand and follow! Have no doubts, if you are learning the Cello, you will love this book!" • Michael L., Jefferson, TX.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Cello Playing for Music Lovers attempts to bring the complex and daunting task of learning to play the cello down to earth and approachable for adult beginners. Unlike the typical beginning cello

book, CPML contain easy-to-read explanatory text matched with simple, short, playable examples that illustrate the point. . . . The target audience for the book is a typical adult non-musician who might feel intimidated by technical-looking cello methods and etude books, but who is already familiar with many of the melodies and fragments of classics that make up the book. The learner can relate the point in the text to the already-familiar example, and then perform the example. I don't know of another book for cellists with this mix of adult-beginner orientation, conversational style, widely-known examples from popular culture, a demonstration CD, and introductory discussions of concepts such as relaxation, dynamics, factors in choice of bowings and fingerings, modulations, and modes. The book addresses the primary issues for cello beginners: parts of the cello, posture, bow hold, hand position, rudiments of scales, notation, positions, etc, assuming no prior knowledge on the part of the student. It contains several fingering charts from 1st position to 4th position, including 3rd position. The songs include Some Enchanted Evening, A Mighty Fortress Is Our God, My Funny Valentine, Hava Nagila and Shenandoah. The classical excerpts are short extracts of a major theme, not necessarily in the same key as commonly performed. Examples include themes from Pomp and Circumstance, J.S. Bach's Arioso, and Tchaikovsky's Song Without Words. The audio CD contains 97 tracks demonstrating the simple exercises, scales, and melodies notated in the book. All the songs and classical excerpts are melodies that adapt easily to cello. Just the things to have ready when Uncle Glenn and Aunt Helen visit and ask, So, play us something! . . . . The melodies as presented often (but not always) use open strings, lower positions, and (early in the book) no vibrato, as befitting the level of the student. Erik Friedlander plays them well, fingered as notated, and at tempos suitable for the student. However, on the last track of the CD, labeled Encore, Friedlander reprises nine of the melodies, letting loose with a large dynamic range and full vibrato on more professional-style fingerings. Yep, those simple tunes sound so absolutely gorgeous on cello. Dr. Jiji does not pretend to be an expert, only a veteran, so she also relates personal stories of setbacks to which the reader might relate. One thing that I've never seen in a cello book: At several places, the author suggests names of tunes at an appropriate level that the student should try to figure out on his/her own. She provides the key and the starting note. I have to think an early beginner that has figured out tunes by ear on the cello will have increased confidence in his or her ability to hear and learn (Didn't Pablo Casals start out that way on his gourd cello?). Dr. Diliانا Momtchilova, who reviewed the book, received her doctorate from the Juilliard School, and serves on the faculty at Mannes Music College so presumably she knows her stuff. I certainly did not find anything in the content controversial or likely to lead a beginning student astray. . . The way I see it, the more a student knows outside of lessons, the more the teacher can cover other things

during the lesson. For less than the price of one lesson, CPML covers the basic cello-facts through 4th position, and can be a source of inspiration for individual enjoyment and exploration. But perhaps the best use of the book would be by teachers. My teacher, who has quite a few adult students, has looked through it, was favorably impressed, and expects to borrow it at my next lesson. I wonder if I'll get it back. --Chiddler, Cellists by Night, Internet Cello Society Forum

Vera Jiji gives detailed explanations of how to approach the musical examples in the book, virtually compiling the ministrations of a teacher. She thus enables the beginning cellist to get started on the instrument without a teacher, if necessary. Cello Playing for Music Lovers is not just a great manual for students but also for teachers of adult beginners who seek a more wide-ranging source. --Diliana Momtchilova, DMA, Juilliard School

It's terrific and long overdue advice for this target group and I think what you've done is marvelous with many truly inspiring sections. Your general emphasis on physical relaxation and enjoyment of the process seems right on the mark for me. My experience with amateurs has always been that they want so much to show you that they're a good intelligent student that they are as tight as a drum, fearful of making a mistake or misinterpreting. . . It would be good to encourage people at any age to investigate simply to improve their quality of life! --Rolf Gjelsten, cellist, the New Zealand String Quartet

Many years ago, during my four years at the incomparable High School of Music and Art in New York City, I treasured my opportunity to study the cello. I was fortunate enough to receive a cello scholarship from Janos Scholz, a co-founder of the Cello Society. However, once I entered college, other demands on my time forced me to give up the scholarship and my music. During the next forty-two years, I embarked on a career as a teacher of literature, raised my four children and seldom thought about my cello. Still, I refused to relinquish the silent instrument. I kept it safe, untouched, encased and hidden in the back of my closet. When I retired from teaching in the 1990s, I took up the cello again, although with great trepidation. Like many people who took music lessons during childhood, I feared that my musical knowledge had been completely lost. I can tell you from personal experience that your musical training is tucked away in the back of your brain, as my cello was hidden in the back of my closet. Many people who never studied music in childhood won't even try in adulthood; they feel so overwhelmed by the prospect. They have been told that unless you studied music as a child, it is impossible to learn later on. But that is simply not true. Playing music is one of life's most glorious experiences. Nobody should be deprived of it, especially through an unwarranted fear of music's difficulties. It's shocking to read message boards on the internet with people asking, I am over forty: am I too old to learn to play the cello? I wrote this book because I

believe that if I could return happily to music after so many years, so can almost anybody. I play with other amateurs who have done it. It requires patience and determination, but older adults have patience and determination. It requires only that the student be in reasonable physical health, discern higher and lower pitches, be able to follow instructions closely, and have the patience and persistence to study every day. Cello Playing for Music Lovers has been carefully scrutinized for accuracy and comprehensiveness by my cello teacher, Diliانا Momtchilova, who holds a DMA, a Doctorate degree from The Juilliard School. If the book's technical expertise is the teacher's province, the approach and contents are mine. During my many years of teaching at Brooklyn College, I learned how to organize material clearly, logically, and in an appealing way. I particularly enjoyed making complex subjects simpler for my students. Accordingly, once I had advanced beyond the basics of music making, I wanted to pass on to others the gift I had received from Janos Scholz and my years of experience by setting the basics down in this book. Usually in this field, instruction is conveyed one to one, teacher to pupil, through spoken communication. However, it is easy to misinterpret or forget important instructions. Here, written out, are the fundamentals from a learner's perspective. You can study, review and absorb the information at your own pace. Studying the cello will keep you mentally alert and happy while it keeps your body active and moving. The rewards of music making, even for beginners, are great enough to keep me and many other seniors studying for years with astonishing tenacity. There's a saying that dancers do not age while they are dancing. I think musicians don't age while they are playing, either. Of course, young adults can also learn from Cello Playing for Music Lovers. My point is merely that learning to play the cello is neither forbidden nor impossible after you reach a certain age, defined as whatever your age is now when you are tempted to try it. Come join the party.

This book is amazing, not only is it a really good technical manual for playing the cello, but it coaches the physical and emotional mind set to enable the reader to get out of their own way and really play. I've checked out many books of this sort and I have never found one that gets into the posture and the mental and physical relaxation need to play really well. It is well worth the money and mine did not come with a play along CD and I still say it is well worth it. This should be a part of any serious cellist's library

I'm a 40+ adult who has recently started learning the Cello. I used reviews to purchase several books and thought I would share what seems to be working for me. I meet with an instructor for 30 minutes a week, which is much too short for anything but corrections to my form.

I'm renting an Eastman SV100 and am much more reliant on the books and Youtube (for sound rather than form) as I practice at home. Books purchased: Picture Yourself Playing Cello by Jim Aikin- This is very good introduction for those of us who know nothing about the cello but are determined to learn it for whatever crazy reason driving you. I found it to be good for learning how to position your hands on the bow and general playing set up. I appreciated the DVD demonstrations and this book was very helpful for about two weeks. There is very little music included in the book but it's great if you don't have access to an instructor yet. Cello Playing for Music Lovers by Vera Mattlin Jiji- The layout of this book is not very intuitive to me but I really appreciate the position maps along with the scales as well as the CD with sound clips for 95% of the music. It's another introduction book but it has more depth and pacing for multiple years of instruction. Based on references from this book, I also purchased The Art of Cello Playing by Louis Potter, Jr. The Art of Cello Playing by Louis Potter, Jr.- This is my primary instruction book at the moment and my go to source for relearning how to read music (flute player in a previous life, many, many moons ago and never learned to properly read music) as well as being a great source for practice. I do wish I had a CD/DVD with this since I tend to learn better when I can hear the music (remember that lack of learning to read music?!) The combination of this book with Cello Playing for Music Lovers has been very helpful and my instructor likes this book a lot. Suzuki Cello School Volume 1- Only purchased this because my instructor uses this method in our classes. In my opinion, it's terrible for anyone who is trying to learn on their own unless you are much better at watching youtube for potential set up instruction than I am. Having said that, I am using this book for my practice in combination with The Art of Cello Playing, Cello Playing for Music Lovers and working with my instructor. I have found some great video clips on Youtube for each exercise in this book which I really appreciate since again, I need to hear how each piece is supposed to sound as I'm practicing. If I were only working on my own, I would probably get the String Builder by Samuel Applebaum (and recommended by Jim Aikin in Picture Yourself Playing Cello). I hope this helps other adults exploring the cello. I love it and have yet to master anything other than the scale in first position in sharps. Ok master is being generous. It takes time and practice. Lots of time and practice. Enjoy.

This is an excellent book for learning to play cello. I have been using this book for about 18 months now, and I am nearing completion. Vera Jiji has done a marvelous job creating one of the best teaching/learning aids I have ever used. I was a band student in childhood and learned to read music only for treble clef and have since forgotten much about it. The part of the book on music

theory was a refresher for me, so it may take someone with less experience more time to get that concept. I was able to get to the cello playing specifics quickly, and all aspects of cello playing were covered precisely and in such a way as to be easily understood. I also took her suggestions of other books to use in tandem with hers to get the most out of my endeavor. The public schools in my area have not had a string program since the 1940's and there is no one within about 100 miles of me that teaches cello, so learning in person isn't really an option. If you want to learn cello on your own, this is the book for you. If you already know how to read music, it's still an excellent guide to cello playing and will get you on the fast track to playing music you like on the cello.

I have been playing cello for a couple of years without the advantage of regular instruction. I have purchased a lot of music books. However, finding a book with truly progressive, in terms of difficulty, pieces is very difficult. Some books just mix pieces at random. Others jump too fast from easy to difficult with little transition or reason. This book does three important things. First, the music presented is progressive in a nice step like manner. Just a few new elements are added with each turn of the page. What one has already learned is reinforced and one can concentrate on the new material. Second, in between the music scores the book provides bits of instruction related to the increasing complexity of the work. Third, it includes a CD of all the pieces so one can hear the music while looking at the score and can, at some point, play along with an accomplished cellist. The book starts at the absolute beginning of cello playing and reading music. Since I can read music and had been playing I started at Chapter 9, which was a little below my skill level but a good review. That still leaves me over half of the book to go and Chapter 10 on extended positions is certainly new. As I look toward the end of the book I see I will have pieces that I could never play now. Hopefully, the progressive nature of the approach will work for me and by the time I get to the end I will have the ability to play them. At that point, I should be able to go back to my other music books with confidence. This book is the best music instruction purchase I have made.

A thorough and comprehensive approach to learning the art of cello playing.

Very clear and informative. Since I already knew how to read music I was able to skip ahead, however individuals new to the "art" of music will be well served by this book.

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