

Contents

mp3 Track

Title	Composer	Page	Demo	Play-Along
Tuning Note (A Concert)				1
Spring	Antonio Vivaldi	5	2	3
(from <i>The Four Seasons</i>)				
Ode to Joy	Ludwig van Beethoven	7	4	5
("Choral Theme" from <i>Symphony No. 9</i>)				
Largo	Antonín Dvořák	9	6	7
(from <i>Symphony No. 9</i> , "New World")				
Canon in D	Johann Pachelbel	11	8	9
Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy	Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky	13	10	11
(from <i>The Nutcracker</i>)				
Trepak	Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky	15	12	13
(from <i>The Nutcracker</i>) (Russian Dance)				
Air on the G String	Johann Sebastian Bach	17	14	15
(from <i>Orchestral Suite No. 3 in D Major</i>)				

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Title	Composer	Page	Demo	Play-Along
Minuet in G (from <i>Notebook for Anna Magdalena Bach</i>)	Christian Petzold	19	16	17
Für Elise	Ludwig van Beethoven	21	18	19
Wiegenlied: Guten Abend, Gute Nacht (Good Evening, Good Night)..... (Brahms' Lullaby)	Johannes Brahms	23	20	21
Rondeau (from <i>Symphonies and Fanfares for the King's Supper</i>) (<i>Masterpiece Theatre</i> theme)	Jean-Joseph Mouret	25	22	23
Andante	Franz Joseph Haydn	27	24	25
(Second Movement from <i>Symphony No. 94, "Surprise Symphony"</i>)				
Morning Mood	Edvard Grieg	30	26	27
(from <i>Peer Gynt</i>)				
Habanera (from <i>Carmen</i>)	Georges Bizet	34	28	29
Can Can (from <i>Orpheus in the Underworld</i>)	Jacques Offenbach	38	30	31

Spring

(from *The Four Seasons*)



Antonio Vivaldi
(1678–1741)

“Spring” was written as part of a group of four violin concerti titled *The Four Seasons* by Italian composer Antonio Vivaldi. Each concerto musically depicts one of the four seasons: spring, summer, autumn, and winter.

The Four Seasons represents one of the earliest examples of *program music*—instrumental music that tells a story or evokes imagery. During performances of program music, audiences were often provided text in their program notes to describe the story or scene of that piece. In the Romantic era, this became a very popular idea, with composers like Hector Berlioz and Richard Strauss contributing famous examples.

In *The Four Seasons*, Vivaldi included sonnets that explained how to play the piece and what to listen for as an audience. After the grand entrance of spring in the first movement of the “Spring” concerto, the birds sing and the creeks peacefully flow. After, a storm comes and the thunder rolls.

Here is the sonnet that accompanies the first movement of the “Spring” concerto:

*Springtime is upon us.
The birds celebrate her return with festive song,
and murmuring streams are
softly caressed by the breezes.
Thunderstorms, those heralds of Spring, roar,
casting their dark mantle over heaven,
Then they die away to silence,
and the birds take up their charming songs once more.*



SPRING

(from *The Four Seasons*)

Composed by
ANTONIO VIVALDI
Arranged by BILL GALLIFORD

Vivace (♩ = 160)
(Tempo click)

f

p

f

p

f

mp

mf rit.