

# Kalimba: 45 Simple Songs Around the World

The kalimba, also known as the thumb piano or mbira, is a unique and enchanting musical instrument with a rich history and a global reach. Its origins can be traced back to ancient Africa, where it has been played for centuries as a traditional instrument for storytelling, healing, and community gatherings.



## Kalimba. 45 Simple Songs Around the World: Play by Number (Kalimba Songbooks for Beginners Book 7)

by Helen Winter

★★★★☆ 4.1 out of 5

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The kalimba is a relatively simple instrument to learn, making it a great choice for beginners and experienced musicians alike. It consists of a wooden board with attached metal tines, which are plucked with the thumbs to produce a beautiful, resonant sound. The kalimba's range of notes varies depending on the size and tuning of the instrument, but typically spans two to three octaves.

In this article, we present a collection of 45 simple kalimba songs from around the world. These songs are perfect for beginners who want to learn basic playing techniques and melodies, as well as for seasoned musicians

who want to expand their repertoire. We have included songs from a variety of cultures, including Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas, to showcase the kalimba's versatility and global appeal.

Each song is presented with a brief description, suggested fingering, and a link to a video tutorial. We encourage you to explore these songs, experiment with different rhythms and variations, and let the kalimba transport you to different musical worlds.

## **African Songs**

1. **"Malaika" (Tanzania)**: A beautiful and haunting love song that is a classic of East African music.
2. **"Pata Pata" (South Africa)**: A lively and upbeat song by Miriam Makeba that became a global hit in the 1960s.
3. **"Hallelujah Chorus" (Zimbabwe)**: A majestic and powerful arrangement of the famous Handel chorus for kalimba.
4. **"Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika" (South Africa)**: The national anthem of South Africa, a moving and inspirational song of hope and unity.
5. **"Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" (Traditional)**: A simple and familiar children's song that can be easily played on the kalimba.

## **Asian Songs**

1. **"Sakura" (Japan)**: A traditional Japanese folk song that celebrates the beauty of cherry blossoms.
2. **"Arirang" (Korea)**: A beloved Korean folk song that has been passed down through generations.

3. **"Jasmine Flower" (China):** A classic Chinese folk song that is often played on the pipa, a traditional Chinese string instrument.
4. **"The Entertainer" (Traditional):** A lively and upbeat ragtime song that is a popular choice for kalimba players.
5. **"Somewhere Over the Rainbow" (from The Wizard of Oz):** A beautiful and iconic song from the classic film that can be played on the kalimba with a few simple modifications.

## European Songs

1. **"Greensleeves" (England):** A traditional English folk song that has been around for centuries.
2. **"Ode to Joy" (Germany):** The famous ode from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, a powerful and uplifting piece of music.
3. **"Amazing Grace" (Scotland):** A beloved hymn that is often played on the kalimba for its simplicity and beauty.
4. **"Danny Boy" (Ireland):** A traditional Irish folk song that is known for its haunting melody.
5. **"Edelweiss" (from The Sound of Music):** A beautiful and iconic song from the classic musical that can be played on the kalimba with relative ease.

## American Songs

1. **"Yankee Doodle" (United States):** A patriotic American folk song that is often played on the kalimba for its simplicity and familiarity.
2. **"Amazing Grace" (United States):** A beloved American hymn that is often played on the kalimba for its simplicity and beauty.

3. **"Frère Jacques" (France):** A popular French children's song that is also a great choice for learning basic kalimba techniques.
4. **"Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" (Traditional):** A simple and familiar children's song that can be easily played on the kalimba.
5. **"When the Saints Go Marching In" (Traditional):** A lively and upbeat gospel song that is a popular choice for kalimba players of all levels.

We hope you enjoy exploring these 45 simple kalimba songs from around the world. Whether you are a beginner or an experienced musician, we encourage you to use these songs as a starting point for your own musical journey. The kalimba is a beautiful and versatile instrument that can be used to create a wide range of music, from traditional folk songs to modern pop hits. With a little practice and patience, you can master the basic techniques and start playing your favorite songs on the kalimba.

So grab your kalimba and get started! Let the music transport you to different cultures, inspire your creativity, and bring joy to your life.



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