



# Elton John, Tori Amos To Curate Lessons for Yamaha

Musicians contracted to create lessons for connected pianos.

By Otis Chain

Piano manufacturing giant Yamaha [announced earlier today](#) that they will release a series of customized lessons from some of the music world's most famous piano players, including Elton John, Tori Amos, and Billy Joel. These [curated lessons](#) are a new feature of Yamaha's "connected pianos," [which use RFID technology and an interactive app to teach music](#).

The tags are connected to each key of the piano, which is then digitally represented as sheet music on Yamaha's connected app. The app also recognizes which note is being played on sheet music downloaded from Yamaha's sheet music store. The app's main selling point is through its use as a tool for teaching, and has become a popular item among aspiring musicians.



From left to right: Fiona Apple, Elton John, Billy Joel, and Alicia Keys among the many piano players signed to create lessons for Yamaha.

Yamaha, one of the largest manufacturer of pianos, is [not the first to offer connected pianos](#), but their entrance into the market earlier this year has gained popularity quickly. Now, they are broadening their product with curated lessons from some of the most recognized musicians of today.

These lesson packages will include a collection of digital sheet music, selected by the artists, as well as instructional videos from the musicians, including tips, examples, and exercises. Also included will be a selection of the artist's sheet music, all of which will be interactive with the connected instrument.

Critics are [concerned with the quality of lessons](#). Nina Grobinsky, president of Music Teachers National

Association, worries that music students will mistake these lessons as a replacement for real flesh-and-blood piano instructors. "While it may be interesting to see how some very talented musicians play, they won't necessarily offer quality lessons to their buyers."

Other are critical of the price ([the plans are \\$200](#)). "People think that digital sheet music and connected pianos are the future of music," says Henry Drannen, CEO of Hal Leonard, the world's leading sheet music publisher. "In reality, the prices of these digital files are overpriced, intangible, and cannot be downloaded. Once you stop using the app, that sheet music is gone forever."

Still, others say this is a turning point for pianos. "This gives the opportunity for students to engage and interact with professional musicians like never before," says Joe Trandin, CEO of Yamaha. "We are excited that connected pianos have become so successful, and are happy to introduce these new lesson features."

The lessons are expected to be released some time next fall. You can learn more at [Yamaha's website](#).