



Compose Yourself™

**Instructions &
Tips from the Maestro**

**Composer Code for
ONLINE
Tools & Resources**

**AGES
6 to adult**

Compose Yourself™

Start writing original music in minutes!

Dear budding musician,

I invented these cards to help me with a challenge I face every day. You see, I'm very lucky because I get to write music for my job, but I have to write hundreds of pieces a year and sometimes I need help to think of a new tune really quickly. So, late one night, I was working on some music for a film and I was stuck.

I thought to myself, what would Bach or Mozart do? Well, they would take a few notes and turn them upside down or backwards until their musical lines danced across the page, through an orchestra right into your heart & soul.

There was a piece of transparent paper on my desk and I had this crazy idea. Soon I had a stack of cards that I could flip and rotate and a world of tunes opened up right there. I wrote three pieces that night; the next day the director of the film was thrilled.

You now get the resulting cards, and I hope you have as much fun making music as I do. Remember, we all talk about playing music, but it's even more fun to play *with* music—so Compose Yourself!

Sincerely,



Philip Sheppard, Maestro

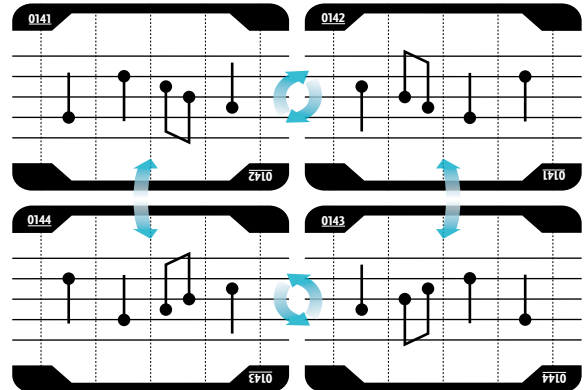


Now that you've opened your deck of cards, you're ready to start composing. Since a big part of creating your melody is hearing it and playing around with sounds, we've got a website that allows you to do just that. Philip had great fun working with his friend, World Famous Percussionist Evelyn Glennie, to play the tunes on the cards and we put together a ThinkFun Symphony Orchestra so you can hear your melody played professionally. Take your deck to a computer, come to our website, and start composing!

Each Deck Includes:

60 Transparent Music Cards

There are 30 different cards (2 of each). The transparency allows you to flip and rotate each card to produce four different variations. Take this card for example:



Simple Steps To Get You Started:

1. Visit www.ThinkFun.com/ComposeYourself
2. Enter using your composer code: **musicmaker**
3. Now that you're in, you can begin composing. The website will tell you what to do, but we'll get you set with the basics in this manual.
4. Build your melody by choosing cards in multiples of 4. For example, your melody might consist of 4, 8, 12 or 16 cards. Lay your cards in a row in front of you.
5. Enter your melody into the computer by plugging in the codes found in the top left corner of each card.
6. Listen to your melody played three ways:
 - a. Marimba (by musician Evelyn Glennie)
 - b. Orchestra (so you can play on your own instrument along with an orchestra!)
 - c. Marimba along with the orchestra (recorded at Abbey Road Studios)
7. If you don't like how your melody sounds, go ahead and change it. Flip cards, switch the order or enter a completely new card code until you like what you hear. This is where the creativity comes in, so have fun!

8. When you're happy with your composition, you can:
 - a. Create sheet music. Give your melody a title, take credit for it by adding your name and then print it to play on your own instrument or to give to a friend.
 - b. Create an MP3 that you can share with friends.
9. Finally, read the tips from the Maestro (see page 6) to get the most out of your Compose Yourself cards.



Tips from the Maestro, Philip Sheppard:

- 1. If your melody looks like an interesting shape, it will probably sound great too.**

Writing music is like drawing a picture with sound. You're taking a musical line on an interesting walk. If you finish on the same note you started on, you've arrived back home!

- 2. Flip one of the cards around and over & see how it changes your tune.**

It's amazing how different something sounds when it's been flipped.

- 3. Try fitting words to the rhythm of your tune.**

Wow! Now you've written a song.

- 4. Try repeating a card somewhere.**

Repetition is fine, in fact, in music it's great. There are 30 pairs in this pack, see how repeating a card somewhere in your tune makes it sound.

- 5. Think about what your tune could be used for.**

If it's gentle and warm-sounding could it be a lullaby? If it's scrunchy and weird could it be used for a scary scene in a film? Try to see the pictures in your head - this is what film composers do!

- 6. Did you realize..?**

By playing with these cards you're already composing music. That makes you a composer!

About the Inventor:



Philip Sheppard has been passionate about music since starting his performing career as a cellist at the age of 3. He went on to discover the joy of composing his own music after many years as a touring musician, and is now a distinguished film composer with more than thirty soundtracks to his name.

He has recorded with artists as diverse as David Bowie, Jarvis Cocker and Pretty Lights and has been a music director and producer on numerous live events including the Beijing 2008 and London 2012 Olympic Games and the 2014 Tour de France.

Philip was recently invited to speak as an expert in music and childhood development at the UK Parliament where he lobbied the government for greater music provision in education.

Having served as a Professor since graduating, Philip was awarded the prestigious lifetime achievement award of *Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music*.

Philip met Tanya Thompson of ThinkFun at the HATCH Experience (www.hatchexperience.org) where creative thought leaders gather to collaborate and HATCH a better world. Philip always wanted to inspire people to play WITH music. Compose Yourself was created #BecauseofHATCH

ThinkFun's Mission is to Ignite Your Mind!®

ThinkFun® is the world's leader in addictively fun games that stretch and sharpen your mind. From lighting up young minds to creating fun for the whole family, ThinkFun's innovative games and mobile apps make you think while they make you smile.



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