

Prelude in C Major BWV 846 (Guitar arr.) with sheet music from The Well-Tempered Clavier: Book 1

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The **Prelude and Fugue in C major**, [BWV 846](#), is a keyboard

composition written by [Johann Sebastian Bach](#). It is the first [prelude and fugue](#) in the first book of [The Well-Tempered Clavier](#), a series of 48 preludes and fugues by the composer. An early version of the prelude, BWV 846A, is found in the [Klavierbüchlein für Wilhelm Friedemann Bach](#).

The Well-Tempered Clavier, [BWV](#) 846–893, is a collection of two sets of [preludes and fugues](#) in [all 24 major and minor keys](#), composed for solo keyboard by [Johann Sebastian Bach](#). In Bach's time *Clavier* ([keyboard](#)) was a generic name indicating a variety of [keyboard instruments](#), most typically a [harpsichord](#) or [clavichord](#) – but not excluding an [organ](#).

The modern German spelling for the collection is ***Das wohltemperierte Klavier***. Bach gave the title ***Das Wohltemperirte Clavier*** to a book of preludes and fugues in all 24 major and minor keys, dated 1722, composed “for the profit and use of musical youth desirous of learning, and especially for the pastime of those already skilled in this study”. Some 20 years later Bach compiled a second book of the same kind, which became known as *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, Part Two (in German: *Zweyter Theil*, modern spelling: *Zweiter Teil*).

Modern editions usually refer to both parts as *The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I* (WTC I) and *The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book II* (WTC II), respectively. The collection is generally regarded as being among the most important works in the history of [classical music](#).