

# iPod – The Missing Manual

Book review by Mike Fordice



Did you ever think about it? What is this “missing manual” deal anyway? Why don’t they just do it right in the first place and we wouldn’t have to bother with a missing manual? Well, it is a good thing that they (whomever they are) didn’t do it right in the first place as the “missing manuals” tend to have much more than you would ever expect to be covered in a “real manual.”

And... the *iPod Missing Manual* is no exception. The author is J.D. Biersdorfer. Ms. Biersdorfer has been writing the weekly Q&A column for the Circuits section of *The New York Times* since 1998, and she occasionally writes feature stories and how-to articles for the same section.

The publication date of the book is July 2003, and covers the 2003 “slim” iPods and the iTunes Music Store. It does not cover the iPod mini family, as they didn’t exist last July. (They probably existed, we just didn’t know about them!) The book is divided into major segments that cover (1) The Hardware, (2) The Software, (3) Beyond the Music, and (4) Extreme iPodding along with an Introduction and an Appendix. Topics covered in these sections include iPod as PDA, iPod as hard drive, iPod as e-book and iPod as GameBoy. That should be enough to get any iPod owner very interested. Both Mac and Windows models are covered.

The **Hardware** section reviews the physical components of the iPod along with the menus. The connection of the iPod to either a Mac or PC is discussed. There is a lot more discussion on the PC side, as this appears to be more complex than with a Mac. This section concludes with “The Unspeakable Act: iPod-to-Computer Copying.”

The **Software** section begins with a discussion of digital audio formats and bit rates along with a listing of free (and legal) music web sites. iTunes for Mac and MusicMatch Jukebox for Windows are covered in detail. After reading the iTunes chapter, I definitely knew more about iTunes! The iTunes Music Store is then

discussed. This section wraps up with a hilarious song parody called “iPod Man” based on Billy Joel’s Piano Man.

In **Beyond the Music**, things get very interesting. Here we learn about the address book, calendar, games, and eBook features of the iPod. The use of iSync is also described along with the use of an iPod as a hard drive.

The book is very well produced and organized. It is easy to read and also easy to find a specific item of interest. I recommend the book for iPod users, especially those interested in exploring more than just playing a tune!

Here is something I learned from the book. Take a look at Fig. 1 and Fig. 2. These show my iTunes library in browser

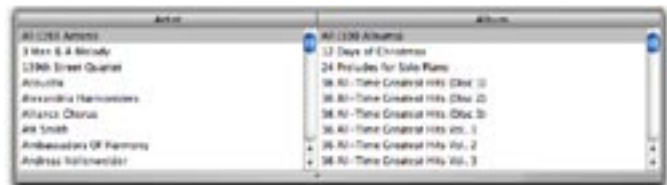


Fig. 1



Fig. 2

mode (select Library as the source and then click the Browse button in the upper right corner). Mine was always “stuck” in the 2-column configuration. I had seen the 3-column configuration, but couldn’t get mine to work that way. A quick look in this book directed me to the iTunes General Preferences where there is a check box for “Show genre when browsing.” It was that simple! Give it a try.



Use iTunes General Preferences to “Show genre when browsing” for enhanced searching.

Finally, here’s another bit of good information from the book – two web sites (more in the book) where you can obtain free, legal music. Visit [www.freesolopiano.com](http://www.freesolopiano.com) and [www.vitaminic.com](http://www.vitaminic.com). Enjoy!