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K-ON!, Vol. 1



Synopsis

When their high school's pop-music club is about to be disbanded due to lack of interest, four girls step up to fill the membership quota. Unfortunately, lead guitarist Yui Hirasawa has never played an instrument in her life. Ever. And although she likes the idea of being in a band, standing in front of the mirror posing with her guitar is a lot easier than actually playing it. It's gonna be a while before this motley crew is rocking out, but with their spunk and determination cranked to 11, anything is possible!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Kakifly is the music-enthusiast/manga creator behind K-ON!, a series that has spawned an anime, concert tours, music CDs, and more!

K-On is a funny and endearing manga by Kakifly (the mangaka's pen name). It's part of the cutesy genre of slice-of-life school girl stories. Such stories are not necessarily geared towards girls. In fact, they often are not. Instead, they are usually geared towards adult men. This is partially due to wish fulfillment. Japan has one of the lowest birth rates in the Western world, so this type of story is popular among people who want kids but don't have them. Also, they can read them on breaks when they are away from families and the lightness and slice-of-life can be a comfort in notoriously long working hours in Japan. Anyways, our story begins when two best friends, Mio and Ritsu, are looking at clubs to join. Among finding that the light music club is empty and in danger of being

disbanded due to the members all graduating the year before, Ritsu gets an idea. You see, in Japan, school clubs are very important for socialization and for the student's resume towards college, so they're a big deal there. Anyways, Ritsu sees a chance to become president of a club by joining and taking command of the light music club. Of course, she drags poor Mio into the mix with her. Mio is, of course, very reluctant to take part in this club, due to her crippling shyness. This only gets worse as time goes on because of some funny future occurrences. Soon two other students, Yui and Tsumugi, decide to join the club as well. Tsumugi is a talented musician who wants to play with a group, while Yui... is Yui. She is a funny and slightly air-headed girl who has zero musical knowledge (though a lot of inborn talent, it is shown), yet somehow learns to play the guitar like a pro very quickly. The above is just the set-up, though, for the main story. K-On is not about music, really. The musical goings-on happen, yes. But they are not the main plot. The main plot was the budding friendship of these girls as we follow them through high school. The four girls (with a fifth to come in, I think, the second volume) forge a solid and loving friendship that really gets the audience to care and want to root for them and read about their humorous lives. The characters each have their own unique traits. We have the air-headed yet talented Yui, the beautiful and talented, yet shy Mio, the slightly lazy but full-of-life Ritsu, and the kind-hearted, strong (seriously, an ongoing gag in the manga is her strength at near super-power levels almost, especially for her size), and shipper of hilariously and wildly inaccurate mental Yuri pairings among her friends, Tsumugi. Even if you don't agree with Yuri, it's not the main thrust, just a funny gag. Of course, this is also a problem in that it might be unfortunate implications that the only mentions of Yuri are a gag. In fairness, it's to be funny, and not either endorsing anything or being homophobic. It's just a funny joke. Sort of like what American Dad (in it's less severe moments) can be to conservatives. All of these characters, and their friends and family that we meet, grab the audience by the heart-strings so you care about their mundane, but funny, school lives. This was the first volume of this really humorous, endearing, and sweet manga series. I've read them all, and enjoyed them greatly. I can't recommend these Highly enough.

I've been a big fan of the anime for a few years and own both all of the blu ray and most of the dvd releases state side of the series. I finally broke down and bought the manga I had been eyeing for a while. The manga is released by Yen press who, in my opinion, has done an OUTSTANDING job of the release. They have less pages then I'm used to BUT the size of the book and the quality of the paper/color is definitely worth it. It's rare to find manga releases with such white, crisp paper, even rarer to find them with all the color pages intact from the original Japanese release. The only time

I've ever seen a release on par with this is the Dark Horse Card Captor Sakura onimbuses. As many of reviews have said that this a four panel comic, very slice of life and no real overarching storylines. The anime follows it fairly close and still is a wonderful story to read. This is one of those series and books I'd give to a child or someone fairly inexperienced with reading manga. It's much like Azu Manga Daioh in both silliness and sorta plot. It's about a bunch of high school girls going through high school (sounds like azu manga daioh right?) but with the added fact that they all join a club called K-on which is translated as the pop-music club (in the anime bandai/sentai translated it as the LIGHT music club, not much of a change). One of the girls has no real experience with playing instruments or music in general and she's an airhead for the most part but it's a wonderful read to watch said girl go from an airhead that really doesn't know what to do with her life to realizing she enjoys this and actually ends up pretty good. If you like Azu Manga Daioh or slice of life manga I couldn't recommend this release enough. ALSO Yen has picked up the rights to the two spin off mangas of K-on so we'll get to see them go to college and what the other members do in high school.

Very well. K-On... well, there's this club. In Japan, they call it the "light music club"... here, it's the "pop music club". There's only four members... and one of them doesn't really get how to play music. So that's the basics of it. To be more in-depth, K-On is a manga about a group of girls who join a club to prevent its closure. But with only three members, they're unable to maintain their status. To make up for this, they rope in Yui Hirasawa. She's not the brightest bulb and a bit on the clumsy side, but they get her a guitar and off they go. The manga documents their activities together. Before I read the manga, I had already watched the anime. The whole thing is very light-hearted and not that plot-focused. If you're going to understand K-On!, you have to be aware that this is not the sort of thing you read to see the story go anywhere. Each chapter is self-contained and there is no overarching storyline. K-On!'s main strength is it's strong characterization. Those who enjoy K-On! to its fullest are the ones who get attached to the characters. Once you get in the proper mindset, K-On! is a funny and cute series that really pulls the reader into its world. It exemplifies the concept of "feel good". Unless you're trying to be a grump, by the end you will feel cheery. K-On! is probably my favorite Japanese franchise in years. The author (kakifly) has a strong talent for characterization. This is not a story about conflict and resolution, it's a slice-of-life. That said, I don't think I've read anything that does the genre better.

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