



The Complete Peanuts 1950-1952 (Vol. 1) (The Complete Peanuts)

By Charles M. Schulz

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The first volume in the bestselling archival series collecting the most beloved comic strip ever. Many of these formative strips have never been collected or reprinted anywhere else. Introduction by Garrison Keillor.

This first volume, covering the first two and a quarter years of the strip, will be of particular fascination to *Peanuts* aficionados worldwide: Although there have been literally hundreds of *Peanuts* books published, many of the strips from the series' first two or three years have never been collected before—in large part because they showed a young Schulz working out the kinks in his new strip and include some characterizations and designs that are quite different from the cast we're all familiar with. (Among other things, three major cast members—Schroeder, Lucy, and Linus—initially show up as infants and only "grow" into their final "mature" selves as the months go by. Even Snoopy debuts as a puppy!) Thus *The Complete Peanuts* offers a unique chance to see a master of the art form refine his skills and solidify his universe, day by day, week by week, month by month.

This volume is rounded out with Garrison Keillor's introduction, a biographical essay by David Michaelis (*Schulz and Peanuts*) and an in-depth interview with Schulz conducted in 1987 by Gary Groth and Rick Marschall, all wrapped in a gorgeous design by award-winning cartoonist Seth. Black-and-white comic strips throughout

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Good grief! *The Complete Peanuts 1950-1952* launches the most ambitious and most important project in the comics and cartooning genre: over a period of 12 years, Fantagraphics Books will release every daily and Sunday strip of Charles M. Schulz's "Peanuts," the best-known and best-loved series in the world. Most everyone with an interest in its history has seen the very first strip ("Good ol' Charlie Brown... How I hate him!"), but this first volume follows it up with 287 pages (three daily strips or one Sunday per page) of vintage material in chronological order. "Peanuts" was unique at the time for portraying kids who seemed like real kids, but they also had a wisdom beyond their years, embodied especially by the lovable loser, Charlie Brown, who even in these early years has lost 4000 checker games in a row. We see him don his familiar jagged-stripe shirt for the first time (December 1950) and, at the age of 4, at his peak as a babe magnet. Shermy is the other significant boy, and the girls in their lives are Patty (not to be confused with Peppermint Patty) and Violet. Schroeder is an infant who has learned to sit up in order to play Beethoven on his toy piano. Snoopy is an anthropomorphic dog who plays baseball (April 1952) and has his own thoughts (October 1952). In March 1952 we meet a bug-eyed Lucy, who by November has been designated "Miss Fuss-Budget of 1952" and is pulling the football away from Charlie Brown (Violet had done it a year earlier). Her baby brother Linus arrives in July 1952. The book itself is beautifully packaged, the strips printed large and clear on high-quality paper and accompanied by an in-depth essay by David Michaelis, a 1987 interview with Schulz, an introduction by Garrison Keillor, and even an index of characters and subjects. It's so well-done that any reader will be impatient for the rest of the series, but in the meantime this is a book to savor. --*David Horiuchi*

From Publishers Weekly

With its ambitious plan to reprint all of "Peanuts" in chronological order over the next 12 years, Fantagraphics is making this comics masterpiece available for everyone. The real surprise of this first volume is watching the beloved comic strip develop from its embryonic stage. From the start, Schulz had some of the ground rules in place: the ensemble cast whose faces appeared only in profile or three-quarter views, the sophisticated language from the mouths of babes and the absence of visible adults from their world. But, although "good ol' Charlie Brown" appears in the very first strip, the early protagonist is the rather colorless Shermy. Lucy is a googly-eyed baby in a playpen; Linus and Schroeder are pre-verbal infants; and Snoopy is just a small, affectionate dog without a fantasy life. Even more odd, the strip's unique hilarity hasn't quite developed yet; most of the humor here is very mild and generally stems from the characters being little kids playing with each other and fooling around with grown-up roles. They're archetypes of children, not yet archetypes of humanity. Still, flashes of Schulz's later greatness are evident. All the characters show hints of the personalities they'll grow into, and Schulz's clean, magisterially expressive line falls into position by the end of the strip's second year. Regardless, the chance to see the early "Peanuts"—much of it never before reprinted—is a treat.

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From [Booklist](#)

Peanuts fans who wanted larger doses of the beloved comic strip than their daily newspaper fix afforded have hitherto had to make do with haphazard paperback collections. Now, however, *Peanuts*' entire 50-year run is to be reprinted in chronology in uniform hardcover volumes, with two years' worth of daily and Sunday episodes in black-and-white per book. As the inaugural strips in this volume show, Schulz plied his successful formula of having children convey adult thoughts and emotions from the beginning, and the

underlying melancholy that set *Peanuts* apart on the comics page was there from the outset. Still, though Charlie Brown was immediately the everyman heart of the strip, other aspects weren't fully developed; for instance, Schroeder and Linus were at first infants. Of special interest to librarians is the volume's index, featuring such entries as "baseball," "Beethoven," and "blockhead, first use of"; perhaps this is a first in a comic-strip collection. Now that Schulz's classic is finally getting its bibliographic just deserts, consider replacing those tattered old *Peanuts* paperbacks with this definitive series. *Gordon Flagg*

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