



LESSONS

Individual lessons

Individual lessons are given to students of all ages and levels. Students receive a 30-, 45-, or 60-minute individual lesson weekly, except during the weeks of group lessons, recitals, and holidays (see studio calendar.) An individualized, comprehensive curriculum is developed for each student introducing age-appropriate literature from all style periods. Theory, music history, tone production, and healthy technique are integrated into each lesson. Students are encouraged to participate in studio activities and incentive programs, and are expected to perform in the Spring Recital.

Group lessons

Approximately every 6 to 8 weeks, a 60- to 90-minute group lesson will replace the weekly individual lessons. These small, informal classes provide an opportunity for students to perform for each other, analytical listening skill development, theory/ music history instruction, and camaraderie. Multiple sessions will be scheduled for each group lesson week, and signups will be available well in advance.

Preschool Classes

Preschool children (typically 4- and 5-year-olds) are taught in pairs or small groups, with parents in attendance during the lesson. Lessons for preschoolers move quickly and cover a number of different topics in short, fun segments which cycle and repeat several times over the 45-minute lesson. These segments are designed to stimulate the recognition and comprehension skills of young children as they work interactively to learn about things such as a sense of pulse and beat, white- and black-key groupings, high sounds vs low sounds, moving up and down the keyboard, steps and skips, finger numbers, music symbols, and much more, all in a way that they can clearly understand. These classes help young students develop improved hand/eye coordination as well as fine and gross motor skills, while building their confidence and learning responsibility.

COMMUNICATION

I can be reached by email, phone call, or text and will respond promptly. Feel free to write me at any time to discuss your child, provide feedback, or ask questions. I love hearing from you!

If something is happening at home or school that is affecting your child, please let me know. Please err on the side of letting me know more so I can be sensitive to the needs of your child.

I am happy to provide a written progress report upon request. Similarly, I am available via phone or in person for parent conferences, or to discuss any problems/ frustrations that might be happening at home (for example, how to help your elementary-aged student practice, or putting a stop to "Practice Wars!") I welcome any feedback about your student. If I know what motivates your student, what they especially enjoy, or what they dread, I can help nurture them by modifying their individualized plan of study.

SCHEDULE

Studio Year

The Studio Year runs from September through mid-August, divided into three semesters: The Fall Semester begins in September and ends late December. The Spring Semester begins early January and ends mid-May. The Summer Semester begins the first week of June and continues through mid-August with a more flexible schedule offered. Individual lessons and preschool classes are held weekly, with the following exceptions:

Fall

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| August 29 (Monday) | Lessons begin for <i>Monday students only</i> (to account for Labor Day) |
| September 5 (Monday) | Labor Day holiday break; no lessons |
| September 6 (Tuesday) | Lessons begin for all other students |
| Week of October 24 | Group lessons take the place of individual lessons |
| Week of November 21 | Thanksgiving holiday break; no lessons |
| Week of December 19 | Group lessons take the place of individual lessons |
| Week of December 26 | Winter holiday break, no lessons |

Spring*

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| Week of January 2 | Group lessons take the place of individual lessons |
| Week of March 6 | Group lessons take the place of individual lessons |
| Week of March 13 | Spring Break; no lessons |
| Week of May 22 | Group lessons take the place of individual lessons |
| Week of May 29 | Memorial Day holiday break; no lessons |

Summer

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| Week of July 3 | Independence Day holiday break; no lessons |
| Week of July 17 | Summer break; no lessons. |
| July 28 (Friday) | Last day of Summer Semester |

**The annual recital will take the place of lessons one week during the spring semester.*

Commitment

Enrolling in the studio is a firm commitment for the entire studio year, including the Summer Semester. Students lose momentum and skills developed when they discontinue their study during the summer. During the summer, the studio has a more flexible schedule to make it convenient for students to attend their weekly lesson (or an equivalent amount of time.) Students who do not enroll for summer lessons are not guaranteed a spot in the studio for the next year.

TUITION AND FEES**Tuition**

Tuition is factored for the Studio Year and divided into monthly installments. The tuition covers 40 to 42 billable individual and group lessons plus individualized plans for each student's course of study, development of teaching materials and supplemental curricula, continuing education/ professional development, event planning, and written progress reports for each student (upon request or conference). The monthly tuition does not relate to a certain number of lessons per month -- it is merely the yearly tuition broken up for your convenience. Most months have four lessons, some more or less. For the 2016-2017 Studio Year tuition schedule, please call the studio.

Fees

An annual non-refundable registration fee of \$70 per student is required to help cover the cost of student assignment notebooks, group materials, the studio lending library and technology, scheduling and bookkeeping, incentive programs, studio upkeep and maintenance, substantial costs for the recital location, and much more.

Registration fees are due with the September tuition for returning students, or at the time of registration for new students. For families with more than one student, the fee for the second and each additional student is \$40. For students registering after February 1 but before August 1, the registration fee is \$35.

Billing and Payments

Tuition is due and payable on or before the first lesson of each month (whether your student is in attendance or not), with a three day grace period. If a payment is received after the grace period, a \$15 late fee per student will be added to your account. If a payment is received more than seven days after the due date, an additional \$1 per student per day will be added to the late fee.

Account statements will be provided the last week of each month. I accept cash, checks, and most major credit cards. Credit card transactions on my website are subject to a 2.9% convenience fee to help defray the cost of bank charges. There is a \$35.00 fee for any checks returned due to non-sufficient funds (NSF.)

Attendance/ Missed Lessons

Tuition pays for much more than just lesson time with your child; therefore, no refunds or credit will be given for missed lessons. If a student misses a lesson, they will simply miss the benefit of that lesson. However, with advance notice and a valid excuse, individual lessons may be rescheduled if a mutually convenient time is available on the studio calendar, up to a maximum of two times per semester. To receive a make-up lesson, you must contact me with a valid excuse at least 24 hours in advance (or before 10:00 AM, in case of unexpected illness). Missed group lessons will not be made up. Please contact me prior to the week of the lesson to inquire about possible openings in another group.

Please do not send a student to a lesson with a fever, or if the student missed school that day due to illness. Similarly, parents, siblings, and other visitors who have a fever should refrain from visiting the studio.

The studio does not close for inclement weather. Please exercise good judgement and attend lessons only if the roads can be safely navigated.

Any lessons missed by the teacher due to illness or emergency will be rescheduled as soon as possible.

Try to choose a lesson time in which you feel confident. Please understand that the tuition you pay reserves an exclusive weekly time in my schedule for your child and, unlike many service professionals, I cannot resell that time nor can I create extra teaching time in which to give lessons.

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

Student Music Account

Students will need to purchase method books and sheet music throughout the year, which the studio buys in advance. Upon registration, parents are asked to make an initial deposit of \$75 per student to cover these anticipated expenses. An individual account is established for each student (or one account per family, for families with more than one student,) from which music purchases and event fees will be deducted. Parents will be notified when the account balance is low. At the end of the studio year, any remaining balance will carry over to the following year or, if lessons are terminated, will be refunded.

Lending Library

The studio maintains a large collection of supplemental books and sheet music, and students are invited to borrow from this "Lending Library." Please treat these materials with respect so that everyone can enjoy and benefit from them. Use only a pencil for markings, and write lightly. Any markings must be completely erased before returning the music to the Lending Library.

If a student is working on more two or more pieces from a particular book from the lending library, I will order it for them and invoice accordingly. Any borrowed music not returned within 3 weeks (unless being used for a performance) or returned with damages will be billed at its replacement cost.

Equipment

All students must have an acoustic or digital piano for home practice. Just as you can't learn to drive without a car, a student can't learn to play the piano without a piano. The quality of a student's home instrument plays a significant role in their potential for success. Keyboards are not instruments; they are computers. Except for the first 60 days of lessons, they are not interchangeable with a piano. Pianos are readily available at a relatively low cost. If you aren't sure where to start in the process of buying one, I would be happy to help you discover some great options.

Acoustic pianos should be tuned at least once a year, and kept in good working order. If you prefer a digital piano, please invest in a full-sized keyboard with weighted, touch-sensitive keys and pedals.

Students will need a metronome for home practice. There are many places to purchase mechanical or digital metronomes, and I would be happy to help you procure one. Alternatively, there are a number of free metronome apps for smart phones and tablets that can be used if you prefer that option.

PRACTICE

The study of music is rewarding and enjoyable, but it is also work! A daily practice schedule is essential for good musical growth. Shorter, daily practice sessions are more effective than one or two long practice sessions per week. I strongly encourage practicing six out of seven days (this does include the lesson day) with one "day off." An important time for students to practice is right after their weekly lesson, to solidify what they have just learned. Research has shown that retention of new knowledge drops to 60% after just 24 hours.

When practicing, piano students are encouraged to follow assignment sheets and work toward musical goals rather than simply counting minutes. That being said, a general guideline is 20 minutes per day for preschoolers, 30 minutes a day for beginners (or two 15-minute sessions per day for younger students), 40-45 minutes per day for third- or fourth-year students, and one hour or more for students beyond that level.

Parental involvement in home practice is crucial for student success. Please help your student to establish and stick to a practice routine, and see that practice time is free of distractions. Younger students (and sometimes even teens) need parental guidance to ensure their assignments are completed before their next lesson. If you are the parent of an elementary age student, please plan to sit with your child for at least a portion of their daily practice time.

I frequently give ideas that will help with quality practicing, and students are encouraged to participate in studio incentive programs. Please encourage your child to use these practice tips and work toward their goals.

STUDIO GUIDELINES

Arrival and Departure

Please be on time for your lesson and when picking up your student. Lessons will not begin early for students who arrive before the start time of their lesson, nor can lesson time cannot be extended for students who arrive late.

Please do not ring the doorbell or knock, as it may disturb other lessons in progress. If a lesson is scheduled, I will be expecting you – please come directly in and make as little noise or disruption as possible so as not to disturb another student. The front door should be closed promptly – do not stand in the open door or run in and out leaving the door open. A coat rack is available near the door for coats, hats, scarves, etc. Should the weather outside be frightful, or if your shoes are muddy, please kindly leave them by the door.

To ensure each student's safety, students are to remain inside until the parent has arrived and can be seen in front of the studio. Parents should notify me if someone other than the parent will be transporting the student or if the student will be walking home.

Waiting Area

Students and parents are welcome to wait quietly in my living room. The kitchen table is available for homework. With the exception of the music studio room and bathroom, all other areas are off limits (including the basement, garage, and back yard.) Children should not wander through the house exploring closets, cupboards, or shelves. If younger siblings wish to color or do activity sheets while they wait, they may only do so at the kitchen table.

Please respect the premises by not bringing food or drinks, other than plain water in a container with a lid. No food, drinks, or chewing gum are allowed at or near the piano. (It is really hard to count aloud or sing and chew gum at the same time!)

Before Lessons

All students are expected to wash their hands thoroughly before their lesson. Please have your books and all other additional instructional materials out and ready, so that the lesson can begin promptly.

Fingernails should be trimmed short (no longer than the end of the finger,) as long nails hinder the development of good piano technique. If fingernails are too long to play with an optimal hand position, we may use the lesson time to study theory.

Students' cell phones and other electronic devices should be OFF in the studio (not even on vibrate or silent.) Except in case of emergency, there should not be any texting or phone calls during lessons.

DISCONTINUING LESSONS

It is anticipated that a student will study for the full studio year. However, I understand that sometimes lessons just don't work out or life gets in the way. Please make this decision thoughtfully with plenty of discussion between the teacher, parent, and student so that lessons can cease with a positive sense of closure. I require a one-month notice before the current semester ends, to be given in person. The student is required to finish the remainder of the semester.

Regrettably, I reserve the right to dismiss a student in any of these circumstances, without refund of that month's tuition:

- Failure to make payments promptly
- Persistent absences or tardiness
- Failure to honor studio policies
- Uncooperative attitude
- Frequent lack of lesson readiness (bringing materials, following assignments and practice standards)
- Lack of progress due to insufficient practice or other unfulfilled requirements
- Inappropriate or disrespectful behavior, theft, and/or misbehavior in my home