

# 🎵 Lesson Policies 🎵

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## Philosophy

I believe that every person has the ability to sing and make music. Everyone, from early childhood to late adulthood, has the power inside of them to become a singer. I do not promise miracles, but with consistent practice, hard work, and good instruction, I believe that all my students are capable of producing beautiful sounds. In my studio, I find that many genres of music and styles of singing can be beneficial for both student and teacher, and I will work with your voice and your goals to create a more resonant, cleaner, and healthier sound regardless of aesthetic. I do not subscribe to a cookie-cutter method, nor do I focus exclusively on one aspect of singing or playing. In my studio, we will explore vocal technique, vocal health and hygiene, lyric diction, good posture, dramatic intention, musical interpretation, some music theory and ear training, and any other challenges that may arise through the study of singing. For piano students, we will practice proper posture and hand positions, technical exercises, music theory, ear training, musical interpretation and musicianship, and appropriate repertoire -- either selected by myself or through the gradual progression through the piano method book I have selected for you.

Here's how a typical lesson in my studio might go: We will begin with a brief chat about the previous week's lesson. Did you maintain regular practice sessions? Did you enjoy the exercises I gave you? Was there a written or listening assignment to help further understand a piece of repertoire or a new musical concept? We will then warm up for 10-15 minutes, addressing the specific vocal concerns of the individual student. Then we will explore repertoire, which will be specifically chosen both to highlight the strengths of the individual singer and to improve on the under-developed aspects of their voice. For younger students (particularly those under 13), this lesson may be broken up into even smaller segments, with breaks for music theory lessons, ear training practice, or music history lessons. Each of these segments help to create well-rounded musicians capable of creating beautiful, age-appropriate sounds while also preserving the vocal health of the young singer's instrument.

## Expectations

I expect my students to have a positive attitude towards practice and to be prepared to sing each lesson. You are expected to bring all needed materials to each lesson. These will include:

- ▶ A water bottle
- ▶ Any music we are currently working on (preferably a physical copy, or digital copy on an ipad, your phone is not an acceptable score reading device!)
- ▶ A pencil
- ▶ A recording device to record (a phone is fine for this one!)

You may also need to purchase sheet music for specific songs to avoid copyright infringement. Piano students will need to purchase assigned method and technique books as needed. These may be purchased directly from me at cost or through any retailer that sells them. Piano students should also have a piano or keyboard (at least 61 keys!) in their home. Additionally, there may be a need to listen to .mp3 files of backing tracks, listening assignments, or vocal exercises at home, so some sort of listening device (a phone, an ipod, etc.) will be necessary.

## The First Lesson

For your first lesson, please bring along a song you want to work on, a recording device, and a water bottle. You will be asked to fill out a short questionnaire including contact information and previous musical history, as well as any genres or topics of interest that you wish to explore through our lessons. I will assess your vocal and musical development through a series of warm-ups and exercises. We will then take a look at the song you brought. This will help me begin to make a customized plan and to set goals for your future lessons.

## Fees

The 2024-2025 fee for one half-hour of instruction is \$40, and \$75 for a full hour, and paid for on a monthly basis. This payment is due at the first lesson of the month. Late fees (\$10) will be incurred if a student does not pay by the 3rd lesson of the month. Discounts for multi-student families and mid-day lessons for homeschoolers may be made available on an as-needed basis. If your lessons are held in your own home, there will be an additional \$10 monthly fee to cover travel costs. A la carte lessons are available for the standard lesson fee and must be scheduled at least one week in advance.

Payments can be made by cash, check (made out to me directly), Venmo (number above), Paypal (email above), or by credit/debit card through Paypal Here.

## Scheduling

Initial lesson appointments should be made through text or email. Once we have found a permanent time for your weekly lesson, it can be quite difficult to change times due to the crowded schedule. However, if there is a serious need to permanently alter this lesson time (seasonal activities, childcare restraints, etc.), please let me know as soon as you are made aware of the change and I will try my best to make new arrangements.

## Cancellations and Lateness

The student must notify of any cancellation by phone, text, or email at least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled lesson. If such notice is not given, there will be no makeup, the student will still be responsible for the lesson fee, and the student will simply miss the benefit of the lesson. Of course, there are always emergencies that will arise within the 24-hour cancellation window. These emergencies can be excused at my discretion. As “cold and flu season” is fast upon us, day-of cancellations due to illness are due by 12 pm that day, and failure to inform of the cancellation within this timeframe will result in the student paying the full fee for that lesson. If for some emergency, I must cancel our lesson, I will schedule a makeup lesson that works with our schedules as soon as possible at no additional cost to you.

Please let me know via text if you are going to be late to a lesson.

## Online Lessons

Online lessons may also be available. While it is still preferable to meet in-person for more specific instruction, there is a lot that can be accomplished via online lessons. During the COVID-19 crisis, all lessons will be completed via Skype or Zoom. The student will be required to have the technological capability to experience these lessons, with either a webcam/microphone/computer set-up or with a mobile device or tablet.

## About Practice and Vocal Health

The way we develop our vocal and musical ability is highly reliant on consistent practice. Schedules are busy, but try to find a consistent time to practice every day. I recommend practicing about 10-15 minutes a day for students under 12, and about 20-30 minutes for students 13 and older. Please also keep in mind that choir, musical theatre, or in-school music requirements may have you singing for long periods of time. Take care of your instrument, and limit singing on these intense days to about 1-2 hours of total singing time. Your vocal folds are quite resilient, but remember that other activities that use the voice (such as cheerleading or other sports which require loud communication) can cause your voice to become tired or sore. If that is the case, please let me know and we can work on some healthy ways to keep your voice strong even through the most intense practice!