

Benjamin's Music Studio

PIANO / GUITAR / VOICE benmusic.org

2021 MUSIC STUDIO POLICY

• OVERVIEW

Private Music Lessons in *Piano, Guitar, or Voice* are offered weekly in 30, 45, or 60 minute *one-on-one* sessions. Students are expected to practice daily at home six days a week to ensure progress and to solidify concepts studied in the lesson.

*Students' DAILY PRACTICE ROUTINE should be at least as long as their weekly lesson length i.e. a student who has a 30-minute lesson should be practicing 30mins a day.

*Parents are expected to help each week at home to ensure that music assignments and practice sessions are being completed.

*A written-out practice schedule of the week that coincides with that student's school + extracurricular activities is incredibly essential for musical success and is expected from each parent to sit down and give this / write out with their child.

PRO TIP →

Practice sessions can be broken into TWO parts during each day i.e. 30mins can be done as 20min + 10min OR 15min + 15min

• PRICES

- ✓ September 2021 → August 2022
- ✓ MONDAYS + TUESDAYS + WEDNESDAYS
- ✓ #34 Music Lessons

@ **30mins** (\$20) = \$680 per year
+ \$21 (3% transaction fee coverage)
+ \$30 (ANNUAL Fall Registration Fee / per student)
→ \$731 TOTAL / per year

→ PAID: October – June, 9 month payment installments **\$81.30**


@ **45mins** (\$30) = \$1,020 per year
+ \$31 (3% transaction fee coverage)
+ \$30 (ANNUAL Fall Registration Fee / per student)
→ \$1,081 TOTAL / per year

→ PAID: October – June, 9 month payment installments **\$120.20**

@ **60mins** (\$40) = \$1,360 per year
+ \$41 (3% transaction fee coverage)
+ \$30 (ANNUAL Fall Registration Fee / per student)
→ \$1,431 TOTAL / per year

→ PAID: October – June, 9 month payment installments **\$159.00**

• PAYMENTS

- ✓  **wave** Your monthly “Wave” invoice can be accessed via EMAIL which will show you the invoice with a link to view/pay your invoice
- ✓ Invoices sent out 1st of the month Oct – June, DUE within 7 days
- ✓ LATE FEE: late payments (past 7 days) will incur \$10 charge – it is encouraged everyone enroll in AUTO-PAY to help avoid this. Thank you.
- ✓ Auto-Pay? It is encouraged to enroll in “auto-pay” for the #9 Monthly Payments which make payments convenient for parents & consistent for the teacher. It's a win-win!

*** Don't prefer auto-pay? No worries!

Parents can always make individual payments on each invoice within 7 days if they choose not to do auto-pay.

- ✓ “Am I paying for music lesson weeks AND off/vacation weeks?” No, you are only paying for the #34 Music Lessons September 2021 → August 2022... you are never being charged for the vacation days that are marked “off” on the studio calendar. But the payments are spread out over nine months Oct – June paid equally to help bring in a consistent & reliable income for the teacher. The studio calendar will be strictly followed though so make sure to double check what days are actually marked ON or OFF.

*** You can see the financial details above on the first page in the “Prices” section

- ✓ July + August Music Lessons are PRE-PAID and built into the monthly payments
- ✓ 3% fee increase covers online transaction fees for “Wave” app/website

This pricing system & payment setup helps me create a more stable and consistent business in many ways. An easy example is during the month of December I could normally only have two weeks of lessons due to holiday concerts or school vacation whereas in the month of March I could easily have five full weeks. Or one particular week I could have three cancellations or as many as twelve cancellations. This creates a terrible imbalance for my income month to month which makes financial planning close to impossible (house mortgage, bills, retirement, etc). Whereas with this system parents are paying close to the same amounts but just spread over nine months so that I get equal amounts each time instead of a little here, more there, etc.

Additionally, having ONE form of payment using WAVEAPPS.COM will help streamline how parents pay which will massively simplify financial planning especially when it comes to paying taxes each year. Bookkeeping between so many forms of payment i.e. checks, cash, venmo, zelle, popmoney, etc was a complete headache and again nearly impossible to try to do taxes accurately or financially plan for the month or for long-term financial planning.

All of this in turn will allow me to more successfully continue to teach your children and share my joy, enthusiasm, and love for music with them.

“Music can change the world because it can change people.” -Bono, U2

“Music is the universal language of mankind.” -Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

- **ANNUAL FALL REGISTRATION FEE**

Registration fee will go to cover costs of:

- 1) Venue Rental Costs – #2 Recitals per school year
- 2) 10-minute One-On-One “Coachings” – #2 per school year in preparation for recitals in lieu of a “dress rehearsal”

- ✓ \$30 per student

- ✓ Built into the monthly payments

- ✓ PRICE BREAKDOWN:

 - \$10 → Venue Rental Costs – #2 Recitals per school year

 - \$10 → Winter Recital 10-mins Coaching

 - \$10 → Spring Recital 10-mins Coaching

- **LESSON TIME SLOT**

After agreement upon a weekly lesson time, each music student will keep their TIME SLOT for the entire year September – August.

- **CANCELLATION POLICY**

Parents will be required to pay for every weekly lesson (*through the online monthly invoice WAVE billing system*) REGARDLESS of whether the student shows up or not on a particular week. Can be due to sickness, schedule-mix up, sports practice/game, car traffic delays, going away on family vacation, family emergency, etc. → the lesson time will still be charged to your account via the monthly payments that are all pre-setup and scheduled out based on the #34 lessons for the year.

*** If a student does need to miss a lesson for any reason, just let Mr. O'Brien know ASAP please. Preferably no later than the day before.

With this CANCELLATION POLICY parents can have peace of mind about cancelling lessons if they need to without feeling guilty (knowing that the teacher is being compensated for the cancelled time) + at the same time there will also be a greater incentive for families to try not to miss lessons (since they're being paid for) which will help the student/s achieve their musical goals faster by consistent practice, study, and learning.

“I use the analogy of renting an apartment. If you go on vacation and stay at a hotel you still have to pay your rent on the apartment back home. Basically, students/(parents) are renting a space (of time) in your studio. If they choose to do something else during that time, they still have to pay for the space.”

- **SICKNESS & WEATHER**

If a student is sick at home (if they're not completely bedridden) OR if the weather is particularly bad (snow storm or icy roads) it is encouraged they do a Facetime / Skype Lesson that particular day. Please let Mr. O'Brien know ahead of time via text message so he can have his laptop prepared. This will ensure our music progress by minimizing any “missed weeks”

- **NO MAKEUP LESSON POLICY**

Relating to the CANCELLATION POLICY (listed above) there will be no makeup lesson times if a student misses a lesson for any reason. *Because specific times are set aside for specific students, a student who does not attend a lesson will simply miss the benefit of that lesson. The reasoning behind this policy is that the teacher is scheduled to be present for the student's lesson at a specific time. If the student cannot make it and it was expected that a makeup lesson be given, the teacher would be giving double their time for the same price of one lesson, which is not a good business model nor fair to the teacher's time.*

There are however "Swap Lessons" available (read more below)

- **SWAP LESSONS**

In lieu of "makeup lessons" families of private students may trade their lesson time with another student to help avoid absences. Use these rules carefully to make sure swaps go smoothly:

- ✓ Swaps must be arranged via EMAIL
 - Out of respect for everyone's privacy we ask that all communication stays on email and not cell phones/texting
 - I will provide my full weekly teaching schedule so you could see where other possible slots you could switch with occur.
- ✓ Mr. O'Brien must be informed via EMAIL (CC me onto the message and replies please) when arranging a swap.
- ✓ Swaps must be setup + confirmed at least 1 day in advance
 - i.e. a Wednesday swap would need to be finalized and confirmed via EMAIL to Mr. O'Brien by the end of the day Tuesday*
- ✓ If a swap has not been confirmed by both parents by the day prior then it is assumed the normal schedule is on and there is no swap
- ✓ Different Lesson Length? Swaps CAN BE made between students of different lesson time-length this year (30, 45, or 60 mins) but please be aware you might be forfeiting extra time from your normal lesson if you have a longer lesson and are switching with someone who has a shorter lesson.
 - *** Ideally, you would switch with someone who has the same lesson time-length, but it's not a rule this year. Losing some lesson time and having a shorter lesson due to a swap is oftentimes better than missing a lesson altogether for a particular week. Just food for thought.*
 - i.e. Billie 30min lesson can swap with Sallie 45min lesson but Sallie will then be stuck with only a 30min lesson that one week and Billie will get 45min.*
- ✓ No make-up lessons will be given if any confusion from this arises.

- ✓ *Should 2 people arrive at once, I will teach the one whose lesson is normally at that time.*
- ✓ *The earlier you set this up (i.e. a week or more in advance), the more success you will likely have. Please ask coaches/etc for sports schedules asap so you can prepare ahead of time and coordinate with other parents where conflicts will occur.*
- ✓ *A friendly reminder that no parent is ever under obligation to switch with someone else requesting a switch and they should never feel pressured to do so. Every parent reserves the right to keep their normal scheduled slot time, no questions asked.*
- ✓ *It never hurts to "ask" when a schedule conflict arises but if a parent declines please respect that and do not press the issue further.*

- **TEACHER CANCELLATION**

If the teacher decides to cancel any music lesson during the year (*not previously scheduled OFF on our yearly calendar*) you will be contacted immediately via text/call/voicemail and the lesson time will be REIMBURSED that day individually as \$20 (30mins lesson) OR \$30 (45mins lesson) OR \$40 (60mins lesson).

- **STOPPING LESSONS?**

It is 100% certain that your child will eventually realize that practicing music requires hard work. Rest assured, there will come a time when they say something like "I want to quit", "this isn't fun anymore", or "I don't want to practice". Please know that this is normal and their interest will probably not be consistent. To be successful though, you will need to be consistent in your encouragement and commitment to music instruction. In most cases, simply acknowledge your child's comments, but then go on with your normal routine just as you would if they said they didn't want to brush their teeth, do their math homework, or eat their vegetables. Music lessons are a privilege and should not be considered a "chore." Your "attitude of gratitude" will affect your child's perspective 😊

It is important to remember you're giving your child the foundational music skills to enjoy playing and performing an instrument the rest of their life into old age. That's something no one can ever take away from them and something to be treasured.

REMINDER: NEW students are allowed to commit to just the first #3 months while ALL previous/current students have to commit to the full #12 months at the start of the year in September.

- **SUMMER LESSONS**

It is understood that families often go away during summertime, take trips, and visit friends so there is no pressure if a family needs to "cancel" some time to be away from some scheduled summer lessons. Please let Mr. O'Brien know ahead of time which days/weeks you'll be away if that's the case. There are no refunds for this (as stated above in the "cancellation policy" and "no makeup lesson policy") but families can have peace of mind knowing that their time-slot is being reserved for them, the teacher is being compensated for the time they missed, and things can resume as normal when they get back. Each individual family will have to weigh out financially what is "worth it" to them skipping scheduled summer lessons... whether that's taking one lesson off, two weeks worth, or even the whole summer (July + August).

It is worth double-checking the YEARLY MUSIC STUDIO CALENDAR to see if you can match up any weeks away with your family with the already pre-scheduled OFF DAYS as seen in RED on the summer months, to minimize missed lessons. This is just a suggestion of course and again it's understood if a family needs to be away during some of the scheduled summer lessons.

From a MUSIC perspective: for what it's worth, obviously the more consistent lessons are and minimizing missed weeks will greatly help your student progress and mature in learning their instrument. Studies have shown those who continue music lessons through the summer definitely make significant progress over those that don't. It's just mathematics.

REMINDER: music lessons in July + August are PRE-PAID via the 9 monthly payments during the year October through June. Just as for the school year, the entire summer has been scheduled out with which days are marked OFF (in red) so please plan accordingly.

- **NEW STUDENTS**

New students will be allowed to pay their first #3 MONTHS of lessons before entering obligation to pay for the rest of the year.

***Registration Fee?

ALL new students are required to pay the non-refundable "Fall Registration Fee" (see further above) whether they continue past three months or not. This helps support the studio and again keeps our TWO recitals per year entirely FREE for friends and guests. This fee is already built into the monthly payments so no separate payment is needed.

***Any new students who join the studio in the middle of the school year must also still pay the "Annual Fall Registration Fee" (again, built into the payments already) regardless of when they join between September – May. Any new student joining during June – August however will only be billed for the Registration Fee for that coming September school year if they continue lessons.

*** New students are required to pay registration fee regardless of whether they are ready or not to participate in studio recitals i.e. even if a new student joins in March but might not be ready to perform until the following year's Spring Recital. This again helps defray the cost of renting the venues & keeps our wonderful recitals FREE to all guests.

MONDAY MUSIC LESSONS

September 2021 – August 2022

#34 LESSONS

October 4, 18, 25
November 8, 15, 29
December 6, 13
January 3, 10, 24, 31
February 7, 14, 21, 28
March 7, 14, 21, 28
April 4, 11
May 2, 9, 16, 23
June 6, 13, 20
July 11, 18, 25
August 1, 8

NO LESSONS

September 6, 13, 20, 27
October 11
November 1, 22
December 20, 27
January 17
April 18, 25
May 30
June 27
July 4
August 15, 22, 29

TUESDAY MUSIC LESSONS

September 2021 – August 2022

#34 LESSONS

October 5, 19, 26
November 9, 16, 30
December 7, 14
January 4, 11, 25
February 1, 8, 15, 22
March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
April 5, 19
May 3, 10, 17, 24
June 7, 14, 21
July 12, 19, 26
August 2, 9, 16

NO LESSONS

September 7, 14, 21, 28
October 12
November 2, 23
December 21, 28
January 18
April 12, 26
May 31
June 28
July 5
August 23, 30

WEDNESDAY MUSIC LESSONS

September 2021 – August 2022

#34 LESSONS

October 6, 13, 20, 27
November 3, 10, 17
December 1
January 5, 12, 19, 26
February 2, 9, 16, 23
March 9, 16, 23, 30
April 6, 20
May 4, 11, 18, 25
June 1, 8, 15, 22
July 13, 20, 27
August 3, 10, 17

NO LESSONS

September 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
November 24
December 8, 15, 22, 29
March 2
April 13, 27
June 29
July 6
August 24, 31

WINTER RECITAL

Jan 22nd, 2022:

February 12th, 2022: Winter RECITAL @10am

DRESS REHEARSAL "Coachings" @7am – 1pm

SPRING RECITAL

May 21st, 2022:

June 11th, 2022: Spring RECITAL @10am

DRESS REHEARSAL "Coachings" @7am – 1pm

p 1 – 11: Labor Day / Beginning of School
 p 12 – 30: Father-in-law VISIT (cancer)
 t 11 – 12: Columbus Day Weekend BREAK
 v 1: All Saints Day (church)
 v 2: All Souls Day (church)
 v 21 – 27: Thanksgiving Vacation
 c 8: Immaculate Conception (church)
 c 15: HTS School Christmas Pageant
 c 19 – Dec 31: CHRISTMAS BREAK
 n 17 – 18: MLK Day Weekend BREAK
 n 22: COACHINGS @7am – 1pm
 o 12: Winter RECITAL @10am
 rch 2: Ash Wednesday (church)
 ril 12 – 13: Holy Week (church)
 ril 18: Easter Monday (church)
 ril 24 – 30: SPRING BREAK
 y 21: COACHINGS @7am – 1pm
 y 30 – 31: Memorial Day Weekend BREAK
 e 11: Spring RECITAL @10am
 e 26 – July 9: SUMMER BREAK #1
 gust 15: Assumption of Mary (church)
 gust 21 – August 31: SUMMER BREAK #2

2021-2022

September 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

October 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
						31

November 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

December 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

January 2022

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
						30
						31

February 2022

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

March 2022

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

April 2022

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

May 2022

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

June 2022

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

July 2022

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

August 2022

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	