

Berg Piano Studio

Studio Policies 2021-2022

Payment

- The tuition for the year includes thirty 50 minute private lessons and is \$1040, or \$130 per month for the 8 months September through April.
- **Payment is due at the first lesson of each month.** Please be prompt with your payments.
- Should lessons be terminated by the student in the middle of a month, there will be no refund for lessons not taken in that month. If payment has not yet been made, the student will be responsible for payment for lessons taken to that point at \$35 per lesson.
- There will be a \$130 studio fee payable in August.

This fee will cover the following:

- \$70 **music fee** (This includes assignment book, printing costs, practice pouch items, repertoire books, and any other materials purchased for the student. Any amount left over from this portion of the fee will be refunded when the student's lessons are terminated. Any amount spent over \$70 will be billed separately.)
- \$40 **Studio Fee** - to cover basic studio supplies, some printing costs, technology, recitals
- \$20 **Studio Festival Fee**

- Where do your tuition and registration fee dollars go?

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| - Time spent with student | - Music books |
| - Time spent planning for student lessons | - Administrative upkeep, website |
| - Teaching and experience | - Teacher certification |
| - Property taxes, utility bills | - Teacher salary |
| - Instruments and maintenance | - Office Supplies |
| - Professional Journals | - Dues - professional organizations |
| - Continuing Education | - Group lesson opportunities |
| | - Studio materials and technology |

**No price can be put on such a beautiful art as music,
but by investing in the music education
of your children, you can provide them with
a skill they will enjoy for a lifetime!**

Attendance

- Please be prompt with your lesson time.
- Lessons missed by me will be made up, as well as lessons missed due to impassable roads in the winter months. Zoom may be used for these makeup lessons and for lessons missed due to illness when possible.
- Lessons missed due to illness, an accident, or family emergency can be made up **only if I am notified by 8:00 p.m. the night before by email or phone call (978-9055)**. A family emergency does not include another activity scheduled for the child at the last minute.
- Understanding that students sometimes have unavoidable conflicts, and at the same time realizing the importance of attending lessons faithfully, parents may try to work out a lesson swap if a conflict arises. *If you will call me at least 1 week ahead of the known conflict, I can attempt to work out a swap for you.*

Please keep in mind that my teaching days are Monday through Thursday - no Friday lessons! If a swap does not work out, the lesson will be made up during one of the 2 makeup weeks listed on the studio calendar. If a lesson is missed without attempting to make a swap in the time frame mentioned above, it will be forfeited. **No more than 3 swaps per semester will be made. Your student's lesson time is their weekly "appointment", so please do your best to honor that scheduled time by not allowing other things to interrupt the schedule if at all avoidable.**

- If your family vacation takes you out of town for an entire week and a swap is not possible, the lesson will be made up later, provided that I know about it well in advance.

Practice

- Regular home practice is essential for student success. Students should aim for at least **5 days** of practice each week. Here are some basic guidelines for the length of time your student should be practicing each day:

Beginner: 15-20 minutes for the first ½ year, then up to 25 minutes a day

2 - 3 year students: 30-45 minutes

4th-5th year: Minimum of 45 minutes

Beyond that: Approximately 1 hour (or more)

- Regular daily practice sessions are more effective than one or two long sessions per week. It is also usually very effective to divide practice time up into smaller chunks, and within that, to space the practice by interleaving, or rotating through the pieces so that each piece gets practiced more than once for a few minutes.

- The most important time for students to practice is soon 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.** It's not a good idea to wait until the end of the week, then "cram" practice in right before a student's next lesson.

- Part of each assignment is for the students to record something that they are practicing and send it to me halfway through their practice week. This is tremendously helpful! So many times mistakes in note reading or counting are found out through these recordings and the students can correct those problems before their lesson. Suggestions about practice techniques to use during the remainder of the week can be made. Many times it's a great opportunity to commend the students on their progress so far.

- Parental involvement in home practice is crucial for student success. Please see these files on the website under resources : "How Can You Help as a Piano Parent" , "Practice Tips" and "Practice Steps" for information on how you can help as a parent.

- Weekly assignments of theory and technique are of utmost importance. Theory should be completed at the first of the week and technique should be practiced every day at the beginning of practice time to help enhance the development of facility and to enable the student to play more efficiently and fluidly.

- Regrettably, lessons will be discontinued if any of these circumstances occur:

*Persistent absences

*Uncooperative attitude

*Repeated failure to follow practice as instructed

*Lack of progress due to insufficient practice or unfulfilled requirements.

General Information

- There is a waiting area in the studio and parents are welcome to come in when it is just too cold or too hot to stay in the car! **Please note - this is still really a part of the studio, so please wait very quietly! The student's lesson time should be free from interruption.**

- Parents, please park in the driveway as far up as you can go (onto the bricks at the end) rather than in the middle of the driveway so as not to block the garage entrance.

- Please use caution when backing down the driveway. We have problems with our water meter because it is unfortunately located right next to the driveway and people tend to back over it and damage the meter (and their cars!).

- Please do not allow your student to bring a friend with him/her to the lesson. This is very distracting for teacher and student.

- Parents are welcome to come into lessons, particularly for the last 5 or 10 minutes of the lesson.

Supplies Needed for Piano Study

I will purchase any music that the students need for the year. The cost of this will be taken from the music portion of the registration fees. Beyond that, here are the other things that the student will need:

- A well-tuned acoustic piano (**not a digital piano or electronic keyboard!**). It is very discouraging to practice on a piano that is out of tune, or which has keys that stick or do not work. I usually recommend Mike Reese, who has been tuning my pianos for 40 years or so. Unfortunately, Mike's wife is ill and he is not tuning at the present time. He does however have a fine young apprentice who has tuned my piano a couple of times already. His name is James Powers, and his number is (205) 767-0996.

- **All books in which we are working during this year should come to each lesson.** When we have completed our work in a particular book I will give the student instructions to leave it permanently at home. **Please provide a bag or portfolio in which music can be kept at all times.** I prefer a canvas bag rather than a zip-up portfolio. Please also provide a pencil pouch for the student's binder.

- A metronome. If you do not have one, please let me know and I will purchase one for you. I can get them a little cheaper because I can get them at a discount. The cost is approximately \$30. If you have an iPad or iPhone, there are several metronome apps which can be downloaded free and are really preferable to the others because their sound is louder and can be heard above the piano. My personal favorite is Pro Metronome. There are also several metronome options for androids as well.

Recitals

We will have two major recitals this year. All students are expected to participate in each of these recitals. **However, if a student's pieces are not memorized at least 3 weeks before the recital date (with the exception of duets, which do not need to be memorized), I reserve the right not to allow the student to perform in the recital.**

- 1) The first will be a duet recital and will be held on Sunday, September 19th at 2:00 in the afternoon, hopefully at St. Mark Methodist on Columbiana Road. We will have recital practice **at my house** on Saturday, September 18th to give the duet partners a final chance to practice their duets together. **This recital practice is mandatory for those performing in the recital.**
- 2) The second recital will be on Sunday, March 13th, 2022. Typically each student performs two pieces. We will have recital practice **in groups at my house** on Saturday, March 12th. **This recital practice is mandatory for those performing in the recital. Group practice times will be made available later.**

*Cameras and video equipment are welcome at the recital, however, please avoid using flash photography during a child's performance.

*Each student is requested to remain for the entire length of the recital. For the sake of teaching good recital/concert etiquette, if a student cannot remain for the entire recital, he/she may not play on the recital.

*Girls with long hair should wear their hair off their face. If possible, it should be pulled back into a ponytail or pulled off the face using a headband. We want to be able to see their faces as they play!

*All students should dress appropriately for recitals. Please - no blue jeans, t-shirts or athletic shoes! Girls should wear either a dress, or a skirt or nice pants with blouse or sweater. Modest clothing is desired. Blouses or tops worn with skirts or pants should completely cover the midriff area, even when sitting down. **Please avoid short skirts** and low necklines. Boys should wear nice pants and shirt. (Coat and tie look very nice, but are optional.)

Website

- The studio web address is bergpianostudio.mymusicstaff.com. On it you will find a calendar of events for the year, information about practicing, links to articles, links to videos for students to watch, etc.

- If you prefer to not have pictures of your students posted on my website (first names only), please let me know in writing. Last names will not be posted.

Festivals, Competitions for Spring 2022

The first 2 of these are optional opportunities. All students are expected to participate in the Studio Festival.

Alabama Music Teachers' Association Auditions - usually in April. Students memorize 3 pieces plus their keyboard theory and play for a judge. Participants are given a score for their pieces and a separate score for their theory. Those who receive the highest score (Outstanding) in each category are eligible to enter the State auditions where state winners are chosen.

BMTA Sonata/Sonatina Competition - Usually early in March. For students 6th grade and older. Each participant must learn one movement of a Sonata or Sonatina. Winners and Honorable Mention are awarded.

Studio Festival - May 12, 2022. The cost is included in the yearly fees. This will begin at 9:30 or so in the morning and each student will be scheduled for a 15-25 minute slot depending on age and level. Homeschool students will need to be scheduled between 9:30 and 3:00, and it will also be necessary to have some public school students scheduled during that time frame as well.

Each student may choose the number of pieces he/she wishes to prepare for the festival (hopefully between 5 and 10 pieces). The more pieces learned, the greater the potential of earning a Superior. We will be working toward this all year long. Also, each student will be required to prepare a group of scales, chords, cadences and arpeggios in a group of keys appropriate to his/her age group.

Students will be judged on a variety of musical and technical aspects of their playing (correct notes, rhythms, pedaling, phrasing, dynamics, memorization, etc.). The score received (Superior, Very Good, Good, Fair) will be determined by the number of positive marks received. Below is a sampling of the points that students will receive towards a trophy to be awarded when 15 points have been earned: (Trophies are earned for each 15 points earned.)

5 pieces

Superior = 5

Very Good = 4

Good = 3

Fair = 2

8 Pieces

Superior = 8

Very Good = 6

Good = 4

Fair = 3

10 pieces

Superior = 10

Excellent = 8

Very Good = 6

Fair = 4

Individual Lesson Incentives

During the lesson, each part of the assignment will be graded by my giving the student a star (or not) in the space next to that assignment. Students who earn 8 stars in a lesson have had a “star lesson” and will have their picture displayed on the “Star Students” chart the next week. 10 stars makes a Wow lesson!

Examples of things for which students can earn stars include:

- * Completing Written Assignment
- * Sightreading done regularly during the week
- * A piece prepared according to goals: memory if assigned, counted correctly, notes secure
- * Keyboard Theory (scales, five-finger patterns, etc.,) prepared securely
- * Technique assignment/Warmups prepared for lesson
- * If, at the end of the lesson, I can tell that they have practiced carefully at least 5 days during the week, a star will be earned for that.

In general, here’s what the number of stars can tell you as a parent:

10 circled - WOW! You went above and beyond your goals and my expectations!

8-9 Stars Circled - Star Lesson - Your practice was right on target in most things!

6-7 Stars Circled - OK, but you could have practiced more and more carefully.

4-5 Stars Circled - Oops - A few assignments weren’t completed.

Less than 4 - Rats! We will have to redo last week’s lesson.

The students will also be earning piano dollars during their lessons. At the beginning of each lesson, each student will “earn” \$100. If they have prepared well, they can keep that \$100, but for each thing which wasn’t done well - such as counting, leaving a book at home, etc., \$5 or \$10 will be taken away. They will also earn “bonuses” for exceptionally well prepared lessons, for practicing 20 days in a month, for memorizing pieces, for completing 15 or 20 goals in a quarter, and for completing rhythm, note reading, technique, and sightreading challenges during the year. If a student earns \$4000 dollars during the year he/she will receive a \$10 gift card to the place of their choice. If a student earns \$3000 he/she will receive a \$5 gift card.

2021 - 2022
Parental Agreement to Terms

I have read the 2021-2022 Berg Piano Studio policies and I agree to abide by all the terms and conditions in that document.

Signature of financially responsible party

Date

Emergency Contact Information:

Mother's Cell: _____ Work: _____ Home: _____

Father's Cell: _____ Work: _____ Home: _____

Other cell in case of emergency (please indicate whose phone this is):

In providing Susan Berg with this emergency contact information, I understand that, in case of medical emergency, Susan will first attempt to contact the above people, and if no contact can be made, will use her best judgement in obtaining medical care for your child if necessary. I understand that any related expenses are my responsibility.

Parent's Signature

Date

I give Susan Berg permission to post pictures of my student on the studio website, understanding that only first names will be posted with the pictures.

Parent's Signature

Date