

# Berg Piano Studio

## Studio Policies 2020-2021

### Payment

- The tuition for the year includes thirty 50 minute private lessons and is \$1000, or \$125 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 \$33 per lesson.

- There will be a \$125 studio fee payable in August.

This fee will cover the following:

\$65 **music fee** (This includes assignment book, printing costs, practice pouch items, 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 \$60 will be billed separately.)

\$10 **technology fee** (This includes the cost of computer software, educational ipad apps, etc.)

\$10 **Studio Fee** - to cover basic studio supplies, some printing costs

\$20 **Studio Festival Fee**

\$15 **Recital Fee**

### - Where do your tuition and registration fee dollars go?

- Time spent with student

- Time spent planning for student lessons

- Teaching and experience

- Property taxes, utility bills

- Instruments and maintenance

- Professional Journals

- Continuing Education

- Studio materials and technology

- Incentive prizes

- Music books

- Administrative upkeep, website

- Teacher certification

- Teacher salary, retirement

- Office Supplies

- Studio equipment

-Memberships in professional organizations

- Music and CD lending library

- Group lesson opportunities

**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 will 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 this year - no Friday lessons! If a swap does not work out, the lesson will be made up at another time. 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. For guidelines as to the amount of time needed to practice, please check the resource "Practice Tips" under the resources tab on my studio website - [bergpianostudio.mymusicstaff.com](http://bergpianostudio.mymusicstaff.com).

**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.

- 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 for those times when it is just too cold or too hot to stay in the car! This is also for siblings to use after they have finished their technology time. **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. My tuner is Mike Reese (305-9193). Mike has been tuning my pianos for more than 30 years and I recommend him and his apprentices highly. He is a very busy man, so it may take a couple of calls to get through to him!

- **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

Because this year will be quite different in many ways from previous years, our recitals will need to be different as well. Most likely our fall recital will be an online recital. The students will record their pieces here during a lesson and then once all are completed, the entire set of pieces will be available for you to watch and share with grandparents and friends if you so choose. We will probably do a Christmas recital this way as well this year. My plan is to have a live recital in February or March. The date and details will be announced later. Please note the following guidelines for live recitals.

\*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](http://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, please let me know in writing. Last names will not be posted.

## Festivals, Competitions for Spring 2021

Details about these will be forthcoming. This will include:

**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 6<sup>th</sup> grade and older. Each participant must learn one movement of a Sonata or Sonatina. Winners and Honorable Mention are awarded.

**Keyboard Artist Competition - Usually the end of April.** Participants must present a program of a certain length depending on their age. This is usually held in a public place such as the Galleria.

**Studio Festival** - Usually held in the first half of May. The cost is included in the yearly fees. 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

**The Amazing Piano Race!**

Two teams of students will be competing this year in The Amazing Piano Race. Everyone will be helping their team by completing challenges in practicing, learning keyboard theory, sightreading, note naming, playing chords, writing compositions, completing listening assignments, learning pieces, memorizing pieces, demonstrating understanding of theory concepts, ear training, and star lessons.

**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
- \* 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.

This year we will be focusing on counting, and especially on counting out loud. If, in the lesson, I can tell that a student has not been counting correctly, that will subtract a star from the lesson's total. On the other hand, counting correctly on everything might just add an extra star!

Also, leaving books or binder at home will also result in a star being subtracted from their total.

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.*

### **Practice Scholarships**

At the conclusion of this semester I will award 1 (or maybe 2 if warranted) 10% tuition scholarship awards scholarship to students who:

- Consistently demonstrate an excellent practice routine
- Are consistently well prepared for lessons
- Follow assignments as given in binder
- Show a positive attitude and a willingness to learn and improve

**The first semester winners will be announced before the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester begins, and the second semester winners will be announced before 2021 fall lessons begin.**