

Jessica Olson Piano Studio

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Studio Policy

Thank you for studying with me! I feel honored by the opportunity to share my love of the piano with you and your family. Below you will find important information about studio operations and policies.

Weekly Lessons:

Weekly lessons are held from the second full week in September until the last full week in May. A calendar of lessons and special events is provided at the beginning of each school year. Thirty-minute lessons are available for young beginners, and 45-minute lessons are strongly recommended for students in their second year of study and beyond as my schedule allows. Sixty-minute lessons may be recommended as students advance based on their personal goals.

Field Trips and Piano Parties:

Because broader engagement with the arts is vital for developing musicians, I hold several group classes, masterclasses, field trips, or family excursions each year. Although the dates and times of these events can't always be firmly set at the beginning of the year, I strive to provide as much notice as possible. With the exception of large ensemble excursions, these fun events are included in tuition fees. *Many of these events require strong attendance to remain available, so families are asked to prioritize them whenever possible.*

Tuition Policy:

Tuition for the 2022-2023 school year includes all scheduled individual weekly lessons, piano parties, field trips, and studio recitals. (Voluntary large ensemble excursions are not included.) Students may choose to finance the total cost of the annual tuition fee into two semester payments due in September and January, or nine monthly payments due at the first lesson of every month. *Because semester and monthly tuition payments are considered a financing option, payments are equal regardless of the number of lessons scheduled during the month.*

Payment may be made by check (payable to Jessica Olson), online via the parent portal on the studio web site, or through the payment link embedded in emailed studio invoices. Invoices are typically emailed out after the second lesson of the month if no payment has been received. *Unused semester and annual tuition fees are non-refundable, so please only pay ahead for lessons you know you will use.*

Unless other arrangements are made in advance, students who wish to take a break or delay the start of lessons during the school year will be required to pay their usual tuition fee during the break if they wish to hold their place. If you choose to make your slot available to another student from my waiting list during your break in study, you will be placed back on the list for the next available studio opening.

Summer lessons are available in pre-paid blocks of 4, 6, or 8 lessons in June, July, and August, and a special project or exploratory unit is often offered. Scheduling is done week by week to allow for flexible vacation and camp schedules.

Absence Policy:

Because occasional illness is inevitable for both students and myself, five free lessons have been built into the tuition schedule. As a result, no credits or make up lessons will be offered. If students attend every scheduled weekly lesson for the school year, they will receive several lessons at no charge!

If an unavoidable absence occurs right before an important performance, I may ask the student to attend a make-up lesson to prepare at my discretion. While I do my best to be as flexible as possible in scheduling, I ask that families plan ahead when setting up their lesson time for the school year since time changes may not always be possible.

Video Lessons:

If students are actively ill (including a persistent cough), may be contagious with any illness, or have had a fever within the last 24 hours, please refrain from attending lessons in person. If your student is too ill to attend in person but feels well enough to study at home, I am happy to offer virtual lessons via Skype, Zoom, or Google Duo provided I have enough notice for equipment setup. A quality internet connection, a large iPad or laptop computer, and quality speakers are required at home for virtual lessons. (Phone screens are too small to be effective for virtual instruction.) Video lessons are not offered for absences within a family's control, such as vacations, sporting event travel, etc.

Music at Home:

Piano lessons are different from sports and other extracurricular activities in that a significant part of a student's musical growth occurs during exploration outside of lesson time. For this reason, *piano playing at home is essential for progress and will be expected.*

The length of daily music making required varies between students and will be discussed with each student and their parents based on their age, goals, and individual needs. Most students will be asked to regularly complete theory work, complete monthly listening challenges, and compose their own pieces in addition to

the repertoire we're learning. Part of our weekly lesson will be devoted to showing students how and what to rehearse at home, and detailed instructions are emailed to parents (or directly to students based on age) each week.

Parents are encouraged to expose students to as many musical experiences as possible, and parental supervision and encouragement are essential for success!

Materials and Fees:

Prior to starting lessons, each family will need the following items: 1) Reliable access to email for receiving lesson notes; 2) A spiral notebook; 3) A 3-ring binder; 4) A pencil pouch containing a highlighter, pencil, and pen (the kind that clip into your binder is best); 5) A tote bag for transporting books and materials; 6) A home instrument in good repair; and 7) Reliable online access for completing listening and other assignments in Google classroom.

Please bring all music and theory books, your notebook, and your binder to each lesson.

All students will need a piano for home practice. *Home instruments should be well tuned with weighted keys, full keyboard size, and working built-in pedals.* A good quality digital piano can be a serviceable instrument for beginners, as long as it mimics the touch of a quality acoustic piano. Students who have advanced to the early intermediate level and beyond should plan to acquire a quality acoustic instrument.

Each family is required to pay a non-refundable deposit of \$60.00 per individual student or \$80.00 per family at enrollment which will be used to cover the cost of materials and any applicable festivals or competition entry fees. At the end of each school year the deposit account must be brought up to the \$60.00 or \$80.00 level to serve as confirmation of re-enrollment for the following year.

Performances:

Sharing music is one of the most fun and important parts of learning to play an instrument! Students in my studio have many opportunities to perform at school functions, group classes, recitals, fundraisers, festivals, and on our studio YouTube channel.

Most students will be asked to participate in at least one piano festival or master class, all scheduled piano parties and field trips, and at least one formal recital each year. Some of these events require performing from memory, and modest, dressy attire is required. With parental consent, I regularly record polished pieces for our studio YouTube channel, which serves as a fun video scrapbook to celebrate growth and success! Exceptionally prepared students may receive the honor of being selected to participate in Southwest Montana Music Teachers Association recitals

and festivals, the Montana State Music Teachers Association Fall Festival or masterclasses, or MTNA Competitions.

I am aware that performing is overwhelming for some students. Although performances can be great challenges for overcoming personal limitations and developing courage, discretion will always be used in requiring student participation in public performances.

Thanks so much for choosing to be part of my studio family! Open communication is important to me, so please feel free to reach out at any time with questions or concerns.

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