

Jessica Olson Piano Studio

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Studio Policy

Weekly Lessons:

During our one-on-one weekly lessons, students will learn the building blocks for playing beautiful music. We will devote significant time to music theory, composing, improvising, note reading, piano technique, rhythm, expressive performance, ear training, and effective home practice. Students can expect to study classical composers on a regular basis, along with a wide variety of other styles of music. I do my best to work with students on pieces that interest and challenge them, so feedback and communication about your student's musical tastes is encouraged and appreciated! Parents are welcome to attend or walk in on lessons any time.

Thirty-minute lessons are available for beginning students, and 45-minute lessons are required for nearly all students in their second year of study and beyond. I may recommend additional increases in time as students advance based on their personal goals.

Group Classes:

Group classes are an important part of the learning experience in my studio and are included in tuition fees. During a typical group class, students reinforce general music and theory concepts, perform for each other in a low-stress environment, and form supportive friendships. Dress code for these events is casual. Classes are divided by age and are announced on the studio calendar at the beginning of each school year to allow for advance planning. **In order for students to reap the benefits of group classes, attendance is important and will be considered mandatory.**

Calendar and Tuition Policy:

Weekly lessons are held from the second full week of September until the first week of June, excluding Thanksgiving week, winter break, and spring break. (*My position as President of the Montana State Music Teacher's Association includes two additional travel breaks for the 2016-2017 school year. The cost of these lessons and all other holiday breaks have been removed from tuition fees in advance.*) A complete calendar of weekly lessons and group classes will be distributed at the beginning of each school year.

Tuition for the 2016-2017 school year includes 33 weekly lessons, three group classes, one performance class and awards presentation, and one free make up week. Students may choose to finance the total cost of their annual tuition fee into two semester payments or nine monthly payments. **Because tuition payments are considered a financing option, monthly payments are equal regardless of the number of lessons received during the**

month. Monthly payments are due at the first lesson of each month, semester payments at the first lesson in September and January, and annual payments at the first lesson in September. **Unused tuition fees are non-refundable.** A 10% tuition discount is available for families enrolling more than one student. Please see the fee table for current tuition pricing.

Summer lessons are available during June, July, and August, payable per session. (See current fee table for pricing.) Students are strongly encouraged to continue study during the summer months, and I am happy to schedule sessions around camps and vacations.

Missed Lesson Policy:

In the rare case of teacher cancellation due to illness or unforeseen events, students will receive their choice of a credit on their next tuition payment of \$21.00 for 30-minute lessons, \$31.50 for 45-minute lessons, or \$42.00 for 60-minute lessons or a make up lesson to be scheduled within 30 days of the canceled lesson.

Absolutely no discounts are given for student absences. Within 30 days of the absence, students may request to schedule a make up lesson by appointment or may utilize the free make up week scheduled at the end of the school year. Although I am happy to offer make up lessons as my schedule allows, **it is the student's responsibility to request and schedule make up lessons. I do not track absences or schedule make ups without a request.** Lessons missed without prior notice will be automatically considered forfeited without a credit or make up lesson. Students who arrive late for lessons will be given the remainder of their scheduled time. I do my best when possible to accommodate unforeseen conflicts with sporting events and school functions, but I ask that families plan ahead as much as possible when setting up their lesson time for the year since time changes are not always possible.

Home Practice:

Piano is different from sports and other extra-curricular activities in that a significant part of a student's musical growth occurs outside of lesson time. For this reason, **regular home practice is essential for progress and will be expected.**

The length of daily practice required is variable and will be discussed with each student and their parents based on their individual needs. A significant part of our weekly lesson will be devoted to showing students how and what to work on at home, and detailed practice instructions are sent home weekly.

Parents are asked to:

- establish a regular practice schedule and follow through consistently;
- monitor the quality of their student's practice ("noodling" doesn't count!);
- check in occasionally on the progress of special assignments;
- maintain the home instrument and position it in a frequently used area; and
- listen and applaud!

Most students in elementary school are not able to initiate and effectively monitor their

own practice, regardless of their enjoyment of piano. Parents do NOT need to play or even understand the piano to effectively support and supervise.

The first lesson of every school year will include a parent orientation session covering studio policies, effective practice, motivation, and tips for supporting your student's growth.

Attendance is strongly encouraged for parents with and without piano experience. One additional parent week will be held during the last lesson of the school year, where we will discuss your student's unique strengths and areas for growth. Similar to parent-teacher conferences, these sessions will address specific goals and achievements.

Materials and Fees:

Each student will need:

- a spiral bound notebook;
- a small 3-ring binder;
- a set of highlighters for use at home;
- pencils, crayons and colored pencils for use at home;
- a bag for transporting books and materials; and
- a home instrument in good repair.

Please bring all music books and worksheets, your notebook, and your binder to each lesson. The binder will be used to organize practice instructions, worksheets, and other lesson materials.

All students will need a piano for home practice. **Home instruments need to be well tuned with weighted keys, full keyboard size, and working pedals.** The better your home instrument sounds and the more centrally located it is, the more your student will want to play it! A good quality digital piano can be a serviceable instrument for beginners, as long as it mimics the touch of a quality acoustic piano. Synthesizers and toy keyboards are not effective home instruments. I am happy to advise families looking for an appropriate instrument for their home.

Each family is asked to pay a non-refundable \$45.00 deposit at enrollment which will be used to cover the cost of materials and event fees. At the end of each school year the deposit account must be brought up to the \$45.00 level to serve as confirmation of re-enrollment for the following year. Students who exceed their deposit on account will be asked to pay the overage as it occurs.

Performances:

Performances are wonderful opportunities to share your student's hard work and musical gifts with the studio and wider community. Students in my studio have many opportunities to perform at school functions, group classes, area-wide recitals, fundraisers, festivals, and on our studio YouTube channel.

Performances are the equivalent of each student's final exam and can be very motivating, although performances are usually much more fun than exams! Most students will be asked

to participate in at least one piano festival and one performance class each year. Modest, dressy attire is required for these events. With parental consent, I also regularly video record polished pieces for the studio's YouTube channel, web site, and Facebook page. (Please review the consent and media release at the end of the studio policy.) Exceptionally hard working students may receive the honor of being selected to participate in Southwest Montana Music Teacher's Association area-wide recitals, the Montana State Music Teacher's Association Fall Festival, or MTNA competitions.

I am aware that performing is overwhelming for some students. Discretion will be used in requiring participation in formal recitals and festivals.

Student Do's and Don'ts:

Learning the piano is a wonderful adventure that takes place over many months and years. In order for piano lessons to be fun and rewarding, please DO:

- come to piano lessons with a respectful, willing attitude;
- work hard and try your best at all times;
- listen attentively, follow directions, and ask questions;
- treat the studio, my home, and my personal property with respect;
- bring your materials to each lesson;
- openly share your goals and opinions about your music;
- wait quietly for your lesson time to begin.

Please DON'T:

- distract others who are learning with noisy devices or loud voices;
- play the piano while I am giving instructions;
- enter areas of my home not designated for piano lessons.

Parents are asked to refrain from leaving students unsupervised outside of their lesson times unless specifically approved. I am unable to supervise students before or after their lesson time, and the safety of each student is important to me.

I immediately address any concerns about student behavior as they arise. Parents are asked to reinforce any needed behavior modification strategies at home.

Thank you so much for allowing me to be a part of your child's music education! Please feel free to call or email me with questions or concerns at any time.

Parent Agreement

I have read and understand the studio policies and payment terms outlined in Jessica Olson's Studio Policy. I agree to abide by these policies and payment terms and to supervise and support my student in his/her piano study.

I affirm that any loss or injury suffered by me, my child, or my property because of participation in any activity or use of equipment or facilities during lessons or studio-related events is my sole responsibility, and I will not hold Jessica Olson Piano Studio/Jessica Olson liable for any such loss or injury.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Optional Media Release

I give permission to Jessica Olson Piano Studio/Jessica Olson to create and post photographs, audio, and video recordings of my child using his/her first name and last initial on the studio's Facebook page, web site, blog, YouTube channel, or printed promotional materials.

Signed: _____

Date: _____