

Helpful Parent Guide To Music Lessons

At The Lesson Center, we want our students get the most from their lessons. That's why we've put together these simple guidelines to help you choose what is best for you and your child.

1. Start At The Right Age Adults that are interested in getting lessons for the first time can easily start with any instrument with ease. Many instruments require a certain amount of lung power, finger strength, or body size that children may not possess at too young of an age. Take a look at our separate age guidelines (below) for more info.

2. Insist on Private Lessons When Learning a Specific Instrument

Group classes work well for theory lessons, however, when actually learning how to play an instrument, private lessons are far superior. In private lessons, it is hard to miss anything and the student can progress at their own pace. The teacher can focus on an individual's strengths and weaknesses. For the lesson period, the student is the the primary focus of the teacher.

3. Take Lessons In A Professional Teaching Environment

Learning music is not just a matter of having a qualified teacher but also an environment that is focused on music education. In a professional schooled environment, a student cannot be distracted by TV, pets, ringing phones, siblings or anything else. With busy family schedules that leave students with limited time for learning, a professional schooled environment can produce better results since the only focus at that time is learning music. Students are also motivated by hearing peers who are at different levels and by being exposed to a variety of musicians and instruments. In a music school, lessons are not a hobby for teachers; it is a responsibility that is taken very seriously.

4. Practice!

As with anything, improving in music takes practice. One of the main problems with music lessons is the drudgery of practicing and the fight between parents and students to practice every day. See below for some helpful practice tips.

5. Use Recognized Material

There are some excellent materials developed by professional music educators that are made for students in a variety of situations. For example, in piano, there are books for very young beginners and books for adult students that have never played before. Many different levels of books are available, making it easy to start comfortably. These materials have been researched and are continually upgraded and improved to make learning easier, and ensure that no important part of learning the instrument can inadvertently be left out. Using universally accepted material makes it easy to change teachers and continue smoothly.

6. Have Fun!!!

Music should be something that you enjoy for a lifetime! Try not to put unrealistic expectations on yourself or your children to learn quickly. Everyone learns at a different pace and the key is to be able to enjoy!

Ready to sign up for private instruction?

Call us now at 610-868-1617.

Age Guidelines

How Young Is Too Young? Starting At The Right Age

Adults can start any instrument at any time. Their success is based on how willing an adult is to commit to practicing. We teach many beginner students in their 60's and 70's.

For children, starting at the right age is a key element to the success of their lessons.

2-5 Years Old: If a pre-schooler has a keen desire and wants to start music, a preschool private music class will give them a good foundation in music basics, which will be helpful in later lessons. At this age, private lessons generally work as the child experiences the formal learning environment of kindergarten or school, and learn most effectively through the games oriented preschool environment.

Piano: At our school, 5 years old is the youngest age that we start children in private piano lessons. At this age, they have begun to develop longer attention spans and can retain material with ease.

Guitar (Acoustic, Electric, Bass): Seven years old is the earliest we recommend for guitar lessons. Guitar playing requires a fair amount of pressure on the fingertips from pressing on the strings. Children under seven generally have small hands and may find playing uncomfortable. Bass guitar students generally are 8 years and older.

Voice: Nine years old is recommended as the youngest age for private vocal lessons. Due to the physical nature of voice lessons (proper breathing techniques, development of the vocal chords and lung capacity), the younger body is generally not ready for the rigors of vocal technique.

Drums: The average age of our youngest drum student is seven. This varies greatly depending on the size of the child. They have to be able to reach both the pedals and the cymbals.

Flute, Clarinet, and Saxophone: Due to lung capacity (and in the case of saxophone, the size of the instrument), we recommend that most woodwind beginners are 8 and older.

Violin: We accept violin students from the age of five. Experience has shown us the most productive learning occurs when the beginner is 5 or older.

Trumpet and Trombone: The trumpet & trombone require physical exertion and lung power. 8 years and older is a good time to start these instruments.

Call us now at 610-868-1617 to Register

Practicing!

Some Helpful Hints in Making Practice Effective, Rewarding, and Fun

Same Time Each Day: Set the same time every day to practice so that it becomes part of a routine or habit. This works particularly well for children. Generally the earlier in the day practicing can occur, the less reminding required by parents to get their child to practice.

Repetition: We use this method quite often when setting practice schedules for beginners. For a young child, 20 or 30 minutes seems like an eternity. Instead of setting a time frame, we use repetition. For example, practice a section of a piece 4 times every day and this scale 5 times a day. Focusing on the number of times something must be practiced rather than a target length of time allows for more concentration on getting material right rather than just making it through the next half-hour.

Rewards: This works very well for both children and adults. Some adults reward themselves with a cappuccino after a successful week of practicing. Parents can encourage children to practice by granting them occasional rewards for successful practicing. In our school, we reward young children for a successful week of practicing with stars and stickers on their work. Practicing allows for better performance in lessons, school, and concerts, which is much more satisfying than not giving the effort to do well. Praise tends to be the most coveted award; there is just no substitute for a pat on the back for a job well done.

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