

Amplify

VOICE & PIANO STUDIO

Studio Policies for 2015-2016



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LESSON FEES

Lesson fees are charged on a monthly basis. Typically students receive four lessons per month. In months where there is a 5th week, there is no additional fee. Instead, this “extra” week is viewed as a built in makeup lesson. (See makeup lessons).

During the months where longer studio breaks are taken, lesson fees will be adjusted. (October, November, December, March). I accept payment in check, cash via online billing. (I will send you an invoice.) Please make checks payable to Ashley Ricks. Payment is expected by the first lesson of each month.

Lesson fees include the weekly instruction and preparation for your students lesson. Fees also include iPad lab use, participation in studio recitals, quarterly group lessons and occasional additional piano parties with other teachers. You are responsible for the purchase of music/method books for your student(s). I will contact you when it is time for new books, or if there is supplemental material that would benefit your student.

Fees for year 2015-2016 are as follows:

• Piano

30 minute lesson	\$60/ month
45 minute lesson	\$100/ month
60 minute lesson	\$120/month

• Voice

30 minute lesson	\$80/month
45 minute lesson	\$120/month
60 minute lesson	\$160/month

LESSON SCHEDULE

The Studio lesson schedule will run from August 2015-May 2016. I follow the school calendar for Sierra Vista Public Schools. There will be **NO LESSONS** during the following weeks:

- Fall Break
- Thanksgiving
- Winter Break (2 weeks)
- Spring Break

If you are a student with lessons on Mondays, there may be a few times when your lesson falls on a public holiday (ie, Labor Day, Presidents Day). We will work together to schedule an alternate lesson day due to the holiday.

I do not answer my home phone during lessons. (My family may.) If you need to get a message to me during a time when I am teaching, you may text me at 702-426-5774. Please note that I may not respond during a lesson. 😊

MATERIALS

Please bring all of your materials to every lesson. I highly encourage you to have a “music bag” to put all of your materials in and bring it to and from lessons. Keep your books in the bag while at home; that way if mom or dad has to pick up your music and bring it to you after school, you have what you need. If you are missing any part of your lesson material, we will still have plenty to work on; it just might not be material out of your books.

Piano Students: Notebook, pencil, water, method books & supplementary books as assigned.

Voice Students: Lesson Repertoire book (get a black 3 ring binder and page protectors), pencil, water. Spiral notebook is helpful for notes.

PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES AT LESSONS

I utilize technology in the studio. Technology can be a valuable teaching tool. If you have a phone, or a recording device, bringing it to your lessons can be helpful. It's especially helpful and encouraged for voice students. If you bring your own device, please turn it on vibrate or silent during your lesson. Your calls and texts can wait! If you decide to slip a text in to a friend during your lesson, I will ask you to put your phone in my cell phone basket on the piano. (Don't forget to take it home!) You may use your own device for apps, texting, etc., after you have completed your assignments for me.

GROUP LESSONS/MASTER CLASSES

Regular group lessons offer students the opportunity for collaborative interaction with their music peers. Through games, performing, guided listening and social interaction, students grow musically. Group lessons will be held quarterly, are TWO HOURS in length and of course, we will have a treat. 😊

Group lessons will be held the week prior to a major school break and will take the place of the regular lesson. Remember, with group being 2 hours long, you are getting an additional 1.5 hours of music instruction at no extra charge. There are no makeups for group lessons.

- October 5-8
- December 14-17
- Feb. 29-March 3
- May 16-19 (last week of school)

There are two options for Piano Group. You may keep your same time for piano group from last year. Please let me know if you need to switch times.

Group Lesson Times

- Piano 1 Wednesday 3-5pm
- Piano 2 Wednesday 5:30-7:30pm
- Voice Thursday 4-6pm

In the past I have offered sporadic “piano parties” to my students while collaborating with another teacher. I will continue to do this, as time allows.

MAKEUP LESSONS

When we schedule lessons that time is set aside during the week just for you! I commit to set it aside in my schedule, and you commit to do the same. Makeup lessons should be a rare occurrence. Makeup lessons are difficult to schedule for all of us. 😊

If you find that illness or emergency will prevent you from attending your regularly scheduled lesson, the following options are available:

1. Use your 5th week lesson. Over the course of the year, there are generally at least 2 times when there is a fifth week and you are getting an extra/bonus lesson. If you never miss a lesson, these are bonuses for you! In the event that you do need to miss a lesson and no makeup can be scheduled, view an upcoming 5th week lesson as a makeup.

2. Swap lesson times with another student. I will provide you with my weekly lesson schedule and a contact phone number. (Please let me know if you wish to NOT have your information shared in lesson swap.) If you find yourself in a situation of illness/emergency, try to swap times with another student. PLEASE NOTIFY ME OF ANY SWAP MADE. In the event that two students arrive for a lesson at the same time, I will teach the lesson of the regularly scheduled student.
3. A makeup lesson may be scheduled for a student who notifies me no later than 9am on the day of the lesson by phone or email. One or two alternative times may be given by the teacher for makeup. A later 'makeup day' may also be used. If numerous lesson conflicts occur, students should expect that lessons often cannot be rescheduled or made up.

In the case that I become sick or have an emergency, I will do my best to notify you as soon as possible and make alternate arrangements.

***Extended Absence.** If you will be gone for an extended period during the school year and are able to inform me at least 30 days in advance, lessons skipped need not be paid for. A "Continuity Fee" is charged per week to hold your spot because this is your time that is reserved and this time cannot be "resold". The fee is essentially half of your regular monthly rate.

LESSON TERMINATION

It is expected that once lessons begin, students commit to at least the full school year. Music study takes time, practice and patience. (see Secrets of Motivation and Success) I understand that even given time, music study is not for everyone or every family. There can also be additional factors (moves, unexpected financial changes, etc.) that play into a student discontinuing lessons. If, for some mutually agreeable reason, a student needs to discontinue lessons, a 2 week notice is expected, and lessons will conclude at the end of the month.

STUDIO GUIDELINES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Study Guidelines. Music is fun, but it also involves hard work and responsibility. You will enjoy your lessons more, and experience more success and progress by following a few simple guidelines.
2. The Lesson. Regularity of practice and lessons is the surest guarantee of success. Ideally, the students should practice daily. At a minimum, students should practice 5 times per week, for the length of their lesson. Voice students will have lesson recordings to practice with. However, even when this doesn't happen, it is still important to have your lesson at every scheduled lesson time. When you arrive for the lesson, please enter without knocking or ringing the bell so as not to disrupt the previous lesson. Please remain quiet until the previous lesson ends. Hands should be clean and if not, then washed before the lesson. Piano students, don't forget to have your nails trimmed! 😊

3. Everything that you play/sing. Be aware that everything you play or sing anytime at home or anywhere else affects everything else that you play or sing. I want students to be aware of everything you are playing and singing. You perform how you practice, even when you are not playing or singing something specifically assigned through lessons. If you want to do something “on your own”, bring it into the lesson and I’ll help you with it. This way we can be sure that the good habits you are learning are being applied consistently.
4. Attending Concerts. We have many musical opportunities in Sierra Vista and Tucson. I will let you know when I become aware of music events. We grow musically as we observe performances. Being a patron of the arts is part of developing as a musician. I hope that you will all take the time to participate as audience members as you are able.
5. Student Recitals. Students through high school age will perform in recitals twice a year, usually in December and May. I will notify you as the dates are secured.

SECRETS OF MOTIVATION AND SUCCESS IN MUSIC LESSONS

Students will enjoy any activity (such as practice) more if the practice ends on a “positive” note and is followed by a pleasurable activity. This means that when you plan your child’s practice time, try to schedule the practice in such a way that what comes after practice is something fun. The “fun feelings” that are produced by the activity after the practice will transfer into the practice experience and practice will become “fun.” The opposite is also true, so try not have unpleasant things follow practice.

Being a musician is full of ups and downs, peaks and valleys, just like anything in life. There will be times where it will seem like your student is on fire and progressing rapidly. During these times, you will usually see and hear your child enjoying, even loving, their music study. Students will also experience times of plateau. It may not seem like significant progress is being made week to week, but small steps will add up to quite a lot over time. It is also possible that students may experience slips and may even seem to be moving backward. Do not despair!! Remember that they are in a musical cycle. 😊

An added benefit of music study is teaching students patterns for success in all areas of their life. As partners (the parent and teacher), we are teaching students a valuable life lesson---life has ups and downs, but as you work consistently and diligently, you meet your established goals. I believe individual music study is a triangle. The student is the top. They are the most important person, and everything at their lesson (and practice) should focus on them and helping them to achieve success. They also have a responsibility to do their best, work hard and practice without complaint. The bases of the triangle are the teacher and the parents. We work together to bouy the student up, teach and encourage. If a piece of the triangle is missing, lessons will not be effective. 😊

- Always finish the practice session with fun pieces or favorite repertoire.
- Be sure practice time is always followed by a pleasurable or fun activity.

Just a note....

Lessons fees pay for much more than just the lesson time. It also includes preparation time, time spent at conferences surveying possibilities for students, teacher activities, etc. Did you know that through my continuing education, my teaching improves over the years? Improvement in the quality of my teaching gives you more value as time goes by. 😊

By Signing below, I ACKNOWLEDGE and ACCEPT the *Amplify Voice & Piano Studio* policies.

Parent Signature

Date