

Common Music Questions and Answers



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Q: Do I need a piano at home to take piano lessons?

A: Although a real (acoustic) piano, or a digital touch sensitive piano are always best, they are not necessary to start. Some students can start with keyboards and once they decide they like to play piano, than you can look at an acoustic or digital piano. The most important thing to know when purchasing a keyboard that it must have full sized keys. It is best to get a keyboard with at least 60+ keys so that you don't outgrow it too quickly (a regular piano has 88 keys). At Charlotte Music School we understand many parents do not have the time or know how to choose a keyboard. Therefore, we carry a small amount of ideal keyboards for sale for your convenience.

Q: Do I need a full drum set to take drum lessons?

A: No you do not need a full drum set to start drum lessons. Students can start lessons by using a practice pad. This is a small dinner plate sized pad that costs \$20-\$30 that is used for practicing basic drum rhythms. If you need to purchase a Drum Pad, please inquire at the Front Desk.

Q: How long does it take to learn an instrument?

A: There is no set answer of how long it takes to learn an instrument. With regular practice a basic level of playing can be accomplished in a few months. Every student is different. Age and how often a person practices also influences how fast one can learn an instrument. Most of our students learn how to play a song during their first 3 months of lessons. Moreover, our students take lessons on a long term basis because they want to be constantly improving and they find the lessons enjoyable. We also cater to our student's goals. So, if for instance you are preparing for a College Audition or a Band Competition our teachers help students set a plan to accomplish their goals.

Q: Aside from a musical instrument, what else do I need for my lessons?

A: Each lesson every student is required to bring a notebook for teacher notes and a 3 ring binder (1") to hold their handouts and books. On the first day of lessons the teacher will let you know what books/methods level you will need to purchase. The length of time a student will use a particular method book varies depending on instrument, level, practice, and the teacher's advice. We have all of our teacher's method books for sale at the front desk for your convenience. We can also order any particular music sheet or book you may need.

Q: Can I sit in on my child's private music lesson?

A: Ideally we find it is beneficial for the parent to sit in the first month of lessons as it allows them to meet the teacher and understand what will be expected of their child when they are home practicing. After this time, parents are welcome to remain in the reception area during the student's lessons. Experience has shown us that children tend to relax more when mom and dad are not in the room, thus reducing the pressure on the child which allows their talents to shine.

Q: Can I sit in on my child's group music class?

A: Ideally we find it is beneficial for the parent to sit in for the first couple of weeks. After that time, we ask that you wait in the reception area. If the parents sit in every week it is too distracting for the students. When there are too many authority figures present, the children either lose class time looking for Mom and Dad's approval, or they act out to see what reaction they will get. We encourage parents of young children (Pre-K and K) to wait in our reception area so that if they are needed they are close by.

Q: How can I contact the teacher if I have a question about my child's lessons?

A: Parents are welcome to contact the School Office to discuss progress, needs, goals, or any concerns of your child's classes. This helps keep your child's, or other student's, lessons from being interrupted or tardy. When necessary, the teacher will ask a parent to attend student's lesson.

Q: My 3 year old likes to sing and she seems talented. Can I enroll my 3 year old child in private voice lessons?

A: We recommend private voice lessons to 10 and older children. As the child matures physically, the changes that happen, such as development of lung capacity, vocal chord changes, etc. will effect how they progress and learn how to sing properly. Many concepts can be understood at the young age, but not all can be practiced because the body is not mature enough to handle and cooperate at such young age. At Charlotte Music School we have created our Choir Program, Pre-K and K Music Classes specifically with the young children in mind. This way they still develop their singing talents but in a less strenuous manner; more appropriate to their age and development. The Choir program is a great start and by the time the child is age appropriate for private lessons, she/he will have gained experience and knowledge, important, but not necessary, to get ahead start on their private lessons.

Q: How much practice should my child do each week?

A: We recommend to practice every day. For beginning students, the teacher usually gives them repetitions instead of a time amount. For example, do this scale 2 times a day, this song 5 times a day, etc. The younger children find repetitions easier than a set time amount. Typically though, a beginning student practices 20 – 30 minutes a day and the practicing goes much better if the parent supervises. The teacher will make the student and parent aware of specific practice expectations.

Q: What if my child starts lessons and does not like the instrument?

A: They can try another instrument. They are free at any time to switch over to another instrument. It is better to try something else than to wind up hating music.

Q: What if my child starts lessons and does not like the current teacher?

A: This is one of the biggest advantages of taking lessons at our school. We have several teachers for each instrument so if a student is not happy with a teacher's particular style – which is extremely rare – we have the flexibility to change you to a different teacher. Also, in our school we carefully hire our faculty members not only for their background and experience but how they relate to a child. We take the time to match a student with a specific teacher to enable common success.

Q: Your school year goes from September through June. Is it possible to start my child at a different month?

A: Yes. We welcome new students any time during the year (The tuition will be prorated).