

The Piano Spot

Student Handbook

Lesson Procedures and Etiquette

01. Enter the studio when it is your lesson time or 2 minutes prior but not earlier. Silence all electronic devices.
02. Siblings and/or friends of students may be present for lessons if a parent is present and the children remain seated and quiet. Toddlers and babies cannot be present for lessons.
03. No food or drinks will be allowed except for a drink that an adult caretaker may have. Students may not chew gum.
04. Have nails clipped short prior to lesson and keep nails short for practicing. Remove all bracelets, rings, and watches prior to lesson and when practicing.
05. For students 2nd grade and under, at least one parent or adult must remain in the studio during the lesson, although all parents (regardless of student age) are welcome to be present for the lessons.
06. Parents present for the lesson should be silent observers unless there are questions about the assignments. Ask questions prior to the end of the lesson.
07. If there are questions outside of the lesson regarding assignments, ask the teacher at the next lesson.
08. Be organized - Bring all necessary materials to every lesson and ensure that practice logs have been filled out.
09. Students are expected to behave appropriately and be respectful. In the event that a student is behaving inappropriately, the lesson may be concluded early by the teacher. The student will not be reimbursed for this lesson.
10. Discussions regarding student progress should occur during the scheduled lesson time.

Practicing Environment

01. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that students practice. Practicing cannot be optional.
02. Do not let young students practice without assistance. Ask the teacher whether or not your child is ready for independent practice sessions.
03. Keep your acoustic piano in a clean, quiet, organized place in the home. Have your piano tuned by a professional piano technician 1-2 times per year or as recommended by a technician.
04. Ensure that students sit with proper posture when they practice, at a proper height on a piano bench. Have an adjustable bench or "pads" available to students.

Practicing Requirements and Strategies

01. For minimal progress, practice daily 5-6 times per week, 30 minutes each session, mastering assignments on EverNote. A minimum of 45 minutes to an hour daily is ideal, especially for advancing students, and highly recommended.
02. Students with poor practicing habits may not be scheduled for upcoming recitals and/or other performances.
03. Practice everything on the lesson sheet every day. The lesson sheets are available online via EverNote. Students should especially focus on "practice zones."
04. Students should work toward fluency (playing without mistakes, pauses, stumbling, etc.), accuracy, and performing at a "Level 4" for lessons. See the "Practice Levels" hand-out for specific practicing steps and performance diagnosis solutions.
05. If a student has mastered everything on the assignment sheet, the student should play their assigned songs repeatedly, play review songs, start learning a new piece, sight-read through pieces or play more technical exercises.

Note: Rates of progress are directly related to 2 things: (1) The amount of time spent practicing every day and (2) The quality of practice time. Students will progress at slower rates if their practice time is lacking in one of these aspects.

Performance Expectations

01. During performances, students of all ages are expected to exhibit appropriate audience behavior. This includes sitting independently without having to sit next to a parent and being still and quiet throughout a performance.
02. Other audience members should refrain from using electronic devices during a performance, other than for the purpose of taking pictures (without flash) or videos. Please remain seated as you photograph and ensure that devices are silenced.
03. Please be aware that the teacher, in addition to the families of students and/or audience members, may post photographs or videos of your child on the Internet. If you do not want photographs or videos taken of your child, do not allow your child to participate in these events.
04. For KMTA recitals and events, parents are only allowed to photograph or record their own child and in some cases may not be allowed photography rights of any kind. Parents are asked to not photograph or record other children in these events.
05. Students and parents will be expected to remain for an entire performance, regardless of when the student performs.
06. Do not bring babies and toddlers to a performance.
07. Do not let children wander around during a performance; they need to be on a parent's lap or sitting in a seat.
08. Students (and all children present for a recital) should not be running around, shouting, touching instruments, etc. This is also the expected behavior for the conclusion of a concert or recital. Please discuss these expectations with students and others attending these performances.
09. If recitals are held in churches, remain in the performance area, foyer, or bathroom areas only – do not use other areas or rooms in the church.
10. Those attending performances as audience members should dress up.

Performance Attire for Student Performers

01. For performances, students are expected to wear the following semi-formal or formal clothing, unless otherwise specified:

No student may wear jeans, jean material, jean jackets, casual clothing or casual shoes, clothing with logos or words, or athletic clothing. All students must wear dress shoes: No boots, flip-flops, business casual shoes, UGGs, or anything that looks remotely like a sneaker. Err on the side of being modest and appropriate, not stylish. No nail polish.

Ask the teacher in advance of the performance if you have a question about attire.

Girls: Skirts or dresses must go **well below the knees when standing – nearly ankle length is best**. Please do not wear clothing that exposes cleavage, is see-through, or allows bra-straps or midriffs to show. Skin-tight clothing, such as spandex or leggings, would also be inappropriate for a performance. When wearing an outfit with shoulder straps, make sure the straps will not fall off the shoulders when performing. Strapless dresses are not recommended.

Girls may also wear dressy pants and dressy tops. No girls should wear heels as this can be a safety issue when walking up and down steps and can interfere with proper pedaling technique. Refrain from wearing jewelry other than earrings.

Make-up should only be worn by girls of an appropriate age; "stage make-up" is unnecessary. Hair should be pinned back and pulled away from the face.

Boys: Wear slacks with a dressy, button-up shirt with a collar, long sleeves and dress shoes; ties and jackets are optional although ties are recommended. Shirts must be tucked in.

02. Performers must be dressed accordingly. This is also an expectation of the Katy Music Teachers Association. Parents are expected to ensure that students are dressed appropriately. Students not dressed appropriately may not be allowed to perform.

[Tip: Have students put their recital outfits on at least a week in advance to ensure that the clothing fits and is appropriate. Have students try out recital shoes with the piano pedals. Lay out the outfit the night before.]

03. The teacher reserves the right to amend this Handbook at any time.