

Cleveland Piano Studio Policy for Fall/Spring 2009–2010

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Cleveland Piano Studio

Julie Cleveland, Instructor

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Credentials

New England Conservatory of Music, Boston MA
Master of Music, Composition, 1990

Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson NY
Bachelor of Arts, *cum laude*, Music Performance & Composition, 1983

Longy School of Music/Emerson College, Boston MA, 1979–80
Undergraduate Studies in Music and Drama

Active member of Palm Beach County Music Teachers Association (PBCMTA),
Broward County Music Teachers Association (BCMTA),
Florida Music Teachers Association (FMTA), Music Teachers National Association (MTNA)
Former member Massachusetts Music Teachers Association (MMTA)
and New England Piano Teachers Association (NEPTA)

Adjudicator for MMTA Non-Competitive Evaluations (piano)

My Studio

Yamaha G1 baby grand piano and Yamaha EP-120 digital piano (for recording/teacher use for duets).
Extensive music library, both sheet music and audio materials. Laptop computer used for reference, and, on occasion, GarageBand/music theory work.

Student's Piano

Keep your piano in good working condition, that is, all the keys and pedals working, and have it tuned at least once a year. Please ask me to recommend a piano technician in your area. An acoustic piano is, of course, the best, as nothing can take the place of its touch and sound. An 88-weighted-key digital piano is acceptable.*

No other type of keyboard is acceptable. If you decide to go with a digital piano for now, it should be on a stand, have 88 fully weighted keys, full-sized pedals (at least two, a soft and a sustain pedal), a music stand, light, and a bench of the correct height (adjustable). Eventually, it is best to acquire an acoustic piano as digital pianos can reproduce the sound of a piano, but cannot produce it. Many acoustic pianos can be purchased new or used, rented, or leased for less than the cost of a digital piano and, contrary to popular belief, take up the same amount of space (difference is in inches!) as a studio upright piano (please see my FAQ page on the website on acoustic versus digital pianos, as well as a testimonial by a student concerning this subject).

**If lessons are in your home, only an acoustic piano is acceptable.*

Your piano should be away from distractions—TV, siblings/friends, pets, video games—but situated where you can hear your child playing. The piano area should be well lit and the piano bench situated at the right height for the student, which I will go over in lessons. If your child's feet do not yet touch the floor, please place a footstool (or similar) under their feet.

Lessons in My Studio, Fort Lauderdale

When you arrive, another lesson may be in progress. Please sit quietly in the hall until it is your lesson time, so as not to disturb the lesson in progress, and have your books open to the pieces we are working on. Please try to be *no earlier than* 5 minutes before your lesson time, as it is distracting for the student whose

lesson is in progress. And, of course, please try not to be late. Your missed lesson time cannot be made up (e.g., if you are 15 minutes late and you have a 30-minute lesson, you will have only 15 minutes of lesson time). By being prompt, your child will know that you respect the work that they are doing.

Lessons in West Boynton Beach, Home of Laura Phillips

Same as above, except there is a waiting room, so please come in quietly and wait *in the waiting room* until it is your lesson time, so as not to disturb the lesson in progress.

Student Preparation

Students: Hands should be washed and all food, candy, drinks, and gum left behind in the car. Fingernails need to be cut short, even with the end of the fingertips. If students arrive with long fingernails, lesson time will be spent cutting them short.

Lessons in Your Home

In Advance of the Teacher's Arrival for the Weekly Lesson

The key to the most efficient lesson possible in your home, in addition to an in-tune piano, is to be as prepared for my arrival as possible—the lesson time goes by so quickly and I am on a strict schedule, most likely coming from a previous lesson and heading to the next home after yours. Some tips:

- Piano lid over keyboard is open, lights are on, all music for that lesson is out and ready to be played.
- Student is ready to start lesson, ideally, *warming up at the piano* when I arrive.
- Any equipment, such as metronome, CD boom box/stereo, is on and ready to use.
- All siblings, after-school friends, pets, other distractions, etc. are out of the piano room or area.
- If not already there, a chair has been set up for the teacher and a pencil with an eraser is on the piano.

Also, because I am going house to house, I may be slightly ahead or behind schedule; please be prepared for my arrival anywhere between 10 minutes before and 10 minutes after the scheduled arrival time.

Missed Lessons

There are no makeup lessons or rescheduling of lessons for any reason including student's vacations taken on the part of the student that are not part of the *Calendar* (see below), sports activities, drama productions, mandatory school events, playdates, school trips, etc.

Remember, a weekly lesson time for the year is a purchase of teacher and studio time, prepared in advance to be free from interruptions and distractions, and reserved exclusively for students each week—that timeslot remains committed to the student whether the student uses the time or not. The in-studio lesson time is only a portion of what is covered by the tuition fee; therefore, missed lessons are not made up, nor are fees adjusted.

Once your scheduled lesson time is in place, it is expected that music study will have priority. Be sure there are no conflicts with the lesson time you choose.

If you cannot make it to your lesson, please call the studio and let me know, rather than “not showing up.” All no-shows are forfeited lessons.

If the teacher misses a lesson it will be made up, with either a makeup lesson or a tuition credit. There are no refunds for any reason.

Discontinuing of Lessons by the Student

If the student wishes to not continue lessons in a *current* semester, there is no refund. One month's payment is required in lieu of one month's notice.

Dismissal of Student by the Teacher

I reserve the right to terminate lessons with a student for any or all of the following reasons:

- Uncooperative or repeatedly disrespectful, disruptive, or abusive behavior toward me during lessons.
- Repeated failure to prepare assigned material, bring materials to lessons, read the assignment sheet, and mark practice time on the sheet.
- Lack of progress due to insufficient effort to practice minimally on a regular basis.
- Excessive absences or missing lessons without letting me know ahead of time.
- Parents failing to meet payment obligations.

Evaluations

One progress report per semester will be hand-delivered/mailed to parents.

CALENDAR

The calendar teaching year comprises *three* semesters, Fall, Spring, and Summer, for a total of 40 lessons per year. Billing is for the school year (two semesters), and then separately for the summer semester.

School Year, 2009–2010

Tuesday, September 1, 2009–Saturday, June 5, 2010

35 lesson weeks plus Spring Recital

Summer Semester

6 lessons, Dates TBA

Fall/Winter Semester:

Tuesday, September 1, 2009–Saturday, January 23, 2010

18 lesson weeks (17 private, 1 group)

No lessons: Please see Calendar.

Special events: Please see Calendar.

Winter/Spring Semester:

Tuesday, January 26–Saturday, June 5, 2010

18 lesson weeks (16 private, 1 group, 1 Spring Recital)

No lessons: Please see Calendar.

Special events: Please see Calendar.

Summer Semester: Dates TBA

6 lesson weeks

The complete *Calendar* is on the website and available for download

Performance Opportunities

Performance opportunities are scheduled throughout the year: see my emails, notices on my website, and newsletters for specifics. Some of the events include a Musicthon at the Gardens Mall and Galleria Mall, as well as Honors recitals, composition contests, and Student Days. There is also my Winter Piano Party and the Annual Spring Recital; the Winter party is more casual and a wonderful chance for students to play for each other and their parents in a relaxed, festive atmosphere. The more formal Spring Recital is held in the spring. *All students are encouraged to participate in all or any of these performance events: however, participation in the Annual Spring Recital is **required**.*

TUITION

Tuition includes not only 36 private lessons, but also group lessons (which will be in place of a private lesson on the weeks indicated on the *Calendar*), and the holiday party/spring recital, as well as the many other events offered throughout the year.

In-Studio School-Year Tuition

Yearly Tuition (30-minute lessons):

Payment Schedule

Please make a note of when payments are due, according to your payment plan. (Email reminders will be sent out one week in advance of your payment due dates.)

1 yearly payment	\$1080	1) Due on or before Sept. 1.
2 semester payments	\$ 540	1) Due on or before Sept. 1. 2) Due week of Jan. 26, 2010 (first week of Spring Sem.).
4 half-semester payments	\$ 270	1) Due on or before Sept. 1. 2) Due first week of November (Nov. 3-7). 3) Due week of Jan. 26, 2010 (first week of Spring Sem.). 4) Due first week of April (April 6-10).

Yearly Tuition (45-minute lessons):

Payment schedule is the same as for 30-minute lessons above.

1 yearly payment	\$1620
2 semester payments	\$ 810
4 half-semester payments	\$ 405

Yearly Tuition (60-minute lessons):

Payment schedule is the same as for 30-minute lessons above.

Please double all amounts for 30-minute lesson fees above.

*Tuition remains constant regardless of the number of lessons received in any given month.
If you are starting lessons after a semester has begun, your first tuition payment will be prorated.*

Please make checks payable to “Julie Cleveland”—Thank you.

In-Home Yearly Tuition

Please request my in-home tuition rates and schedule (separate sheet) if you are an in-home student.

Late Fees

You are responsible to remember when payments are due depending on your payment plan; if you are more than 10 days late with your payment, please add a *\$15.00 late fee onto any payment not made within 10 days of the due date for that payment*. If payment is not made within 20 days of due date, lessons will be suspended until payment is made. This policy regarding payments and late fees *is strictly enforced*.

BOOKS AND MATERIALS

All students need to have the required books and materials for lessons, to be determined on a case-by-case basis. I will give you a list either at the interview or before the first lesson, or you can sign up for a book deposit plan (see below). Parents are responsible for the purchase of these materials or for keeping the book deposit account up to date.

OPTIONS: Most music materials can be purchased through my online store at:

www.clevelandpianostore.com

Other recommended sites are:

www.primamusic.com, www.sheetmusicplus.com, www.musicnotes.com

In addition to their piano lesson books, all school-age students will need:

- Metronome (can be purchased at my store above)
- Blank music staff paper notebook (small or full-size is fine; can be purchased at clevelandpianostore.com)
- CD player/boom box within easy reach of student, preferably with a remote (can be purchased at my store or at bestbuy, target, etc.), stereo system that plays CDs, computer within reach of piano.
- Hard-cover, **1/2-inch**, 3-ring binder with pockets

For other music sites that I recommend, please see under “Resources” on the website.

Book Deposits – NEW THIS YEAR!

You may leave with me a book deposit in the amount \$50, for which you will receive a receipt. When the \$50 is depleted, you will receive a list of books purchased and their prices, at which time you then replenish the book deposit.

PRACTICE

The key to successful piano playing is daily, careful practice: students are expected to practice 30 minutes minimum per day, for at least five days per week. Younger beginning students (ages 5–8) may start at a lower daily amount of practice (10–20 minutes), which should be supervised, and gradually work up to 30 minutes per day. Grades 1–6 must fill in practice times in their assignment books, and have them signed off by parents. Older students should make every effort to commit to a weekly practice routine, which includes 30–60 minutes of practicing per day.

Practicing piano takes concentration, and, unlike group activities, can sometimes be lonely, making it hard for the student to face practicing and even to actually *get* to the piano! The time spent should be *thoughtful, concentrated practice*—what counts is *quality time*, not quantity. Try breaking practice sessions into two for better quality practice. Parents, please encourage and support your child, give lots of praise for accomplishments, and most important, actively *listen* to his/her practice (i.e., not just while making dinner but sit down and listen to a song, without doing anything else). Encourage good practice habits by working out a set practice time each day in the best interest of your family and your child.

Please see the page on the website on practicing for more tips and links to resources for helping your child with music practice.

Learning to play a musical instrument is one of the most rewarding experiences in life. It is enjoyable but also involves work and self-discipline. Regular *daily* practice, no matter how short a session each day, is essential to any student's progress, no matter how talented s/he may be. All students, but especially younger students (aged 5–10), *need close supervision and support* especially in this endeavor. The payoff? An incredible feeling of self-worth and self-esteem, success and happiness playing music. I sincerely hope that the combination of my teaching and your encouragement at home will make studying music and learning to play the piano a wonderful, enriching, and joyful experience for your child and the beginning of a life-long love of music.

CONTACT ME

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns at all, including how your child is doing, practice strategies, etc. The best way to reach me is via email (I check several times a day) or by phone—if you don't reach me, always leave a message on my voicemail giving me the number and best time to reach you.