

DAVID ORMAI VIOLIN/VIOLA STUDIO POLICIES
For 2009-2010 Lesson Year

Contact Info

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Orientation Process for New Students

Whenever you begin something new, it is best to get the best start possible! In violin study for young children, this is truly the case; that is why I have set a series of steps for new families to take prior to beginning their lessons.

1. Parent and/or student introduction interview with teacher
2. Violin materials obtained as directed
3. Read and sign studio policy

It is essential that violin students have a good practice instrument in place when beginning lessons. I'd be happy to give you some guidance in your purchase of a violin and its accessories. Please ensure that you keep your violin clean (no rosin build-up!) and well maintained, that its strings are regularly changed and that your bow is rehaired periodically.

Obtaining Violin Music and Accessories

Local store: **Shar Music** (off of Industrial)
Online ordering: www.sharmusic.com

Essential Materials:

- 1.) Violin and bow
- 2.) Shoulder rest or pad** (Shar will not give you one automatically!)
- 3.) Rosin
- 4.) Metronome/Tuner/Pitch Generator
- 5.) Cleaning cloth
- 6.) Extra strings (recommended but optional)
- 7.) Sheet music (TBD)
- 8.) Notebook

Please bring to each lesson your violin, shoulder pad, all assigned music, and two notebooks (one for the student/teacher and one for the parent).

Lesson Schedule

Holidays to be observed (tentatively no lessons these dates):

November 25-27 Thanksgiving

December 21-Jan. 4 Winter Break

Private Lesson Fee Schedule

Lessons for beginners are \$25 per half hour. For intermediate and advanced students, 45 minute lessons are \$33, 1 hour lessons are \$40, and 90 minute lessons are \$60.

Payment should be made with check, money order or cash. Payment is due on the first lesson of every month and is based on the number of lessons in the month. Prompt payment of your fees is required for lessons to continue. There will be a \$10 late fee if tuition is not paid within the calendar month. You are responsible for any bank charges incurred because of returned checks.

It is assumed that lessons will occur on a weekly basis and continue year round, unless we have made special arrangements. There are scheduled weeks off for holidays and breaks between semesters. If a student decides to stop lessons for any reason, I ask for at least a month's advance notice. If sufficient notice is not given, one month's tuition will be expected at that time.

Missed Lesson Policy

Makeup lessons are not automatically given for lessons missed by the student. My schedule is very tight and make-ups for lessons you skip are not guaranteed. Lessons missed by the student will not be refunded. I will do my best to schedule make-up lessons by the end of the term. If you must miss a lesson, you may:

a) Switch lessons with another student using the schedule and phone list. Please call/email me about any changes. Please switch with those who have the same amount of time for lessons (half-hour lessons switch only with other half-hour lessons). If you see an urgent schedule conflict arising for a future lesson, please try to arrange this as soon in advance as possible (at least several days before). This "lesson-switching" is strictly voluntary, so please be aware that other parents or students cannot be forced to switch with you. If you must cancel on the SAME day as the lesson, please understand there is very little chance a "switch" could be arranged, so you will probably lose your lesson if that occurs.

b) If you have attempted unsuccessfully to switch lessons with another student, please call me as soon as possible. If there is enough notice given, I may be able to give you a makeup lesson in the future. Your name will be added to a list of students who have missed lessons. While I will do my best to make-up your lesson, there is no guarantee.

In cases of illness or emergency, I will do my best to try to reschedule a makeup lesson in the future, though I do not make any guarantees. Please do not come to a lesson when

you are sick; it puts others at possible risk for becoming ill and also makes learning difficult when a student is feeling unwell. Please notify me at least two hours before the start of your lesson if you will not be attending in case of illness or emergency.

Please keep in mind that tuition pays for my reserved time, my own continuing education to become a better teacher to my students, as well as any time spent on discussions outside the regular lesson time. In order for makeup lessons to be available, students must notify me of cancellations as far in advance as possible. If you do not call at least two hours before your scheduled lesson, you forfeit your chance for a makeup lesson.

If I as the teacher must cancel a lesson with the student, make-up lessons will be arranged by the end of the semester or a refund will be given for the missed lessons.

Inclement Weather Policy

In cases of severe weather, we will follow the Washtenaw County Schools on decisions of school closings. For the most part, **if the Ann Arbor public schools close, no lessons will be held here in the studio that day.** Make-ups will be offered for that lesson by the end of the semester. If the weather improves dramatically by afternoon and you are able to meet for a lesson in spite of a called snow day, give me a call and we can discuss options.

Withdrawal Policy

First and foremost, if for any reason you are considering discontinuing lessons, I ask that you speak to me about the situation so that we can work on it together.

If we have decided it is best to discontinue lessons, my studio policy for withdrawals from lessons is as follows: Written notice of withdrawal must be submitted to me from the student (or parent) at least two weeks in advance of your departure from lessons.

If the **student (or parent)** initiates the withdrawal, a refund will be made as follows: fees for the remainder of the current month will be charged. Any pre-paid tuition for remaining months in the term will be refunded to the parent. If the **teacher** initiates the withdrawal, a full refund of collected fees for the remainder of the term will be made to the student.

Practice Policy

Just like any other life skill (language, sports, art, dance), violin students **will not benefit** from lessons unless they establish consistent, diligent practice habits! Consistent daily practice habits allow the student to become increasingly comfortable on the violin and to more fully enjoy his/her playing. When a student does not practice regularly, it almost always results in frustration and loss of progress. Practicing every day takes commitment and results in greater enjoyment for the student as their ability progresses.

For younger students, the parent will have a key role in helping the student accomplish a daily practice routine. I require 7 days of practice per week from each and every single student. Dr. Suzuki said, "Practice only on days you eat!" Practice time requirements will vary from student to student; ask me for specifics about your child's daily practice needs.

Family vacation, illness, or other crisis are always an exception to the practice requirements, but please try to make me aware of these extenuating circumstances as soon as they arise so I can work with you.

For young students, several small practice sessions are usually more effective than one long one each day. A positive, nurturing parent/student interaction at the home practice session is key to successful study—ask me for some tips if you begin to experience some stressful practice times.

I have a limited number of spots open for lessons, so it is important for students and parents to take their commitment to violin seriously. All students will sign a contract at the beginning of each year to indicate their intention to put their best effort forward in their study!

Probation and Discipline

Students who habitually appear for lessons with inadequate practice preparation will be corrected in the following way:

First week: verbal warning

Second week: written warning to student and parent. If preparation is dramatically inadequate, formal instruction of assigned material will cease. I will find other ways of using the time.

Third week: student will be put on a six-week probation period, during which the student and parent must keep written record of consistent practice habits and attention to complete their assignments each week. If this is not accomplished, at the end of the six-week period, the student's lessons may be terminated. Excessive absences will also be reason for probation to be applied.

Studio Observation

Observation of lessons in my studio occurs regularly, so if you wish to bring family, friends, etc along to your lessons, please feel free to do so! On occasion, I may request that another student be allowed to observe your lesson. Please let me know if it would make you or your child uncomfortable, but please keep in mind that observation of others' lessons is beneficial when trying to learn violin concepts.

Parental Involvement

I strongly encourage active parental involvement for all of my students. I ask that parents of young children (ages 10 and under) do their best to follow along with the lessons (asking questions if need be) and be able to help their children practice what was covered in the lesson. I will also do my best to make sure parents understand how they can help their child practice at home. I only insist that parents keep a positive spirit in the room; discipline issues **MUST** be handled outside the lesson space.

Communication

You should always feel free to call me with any questions or concerns you may have. Please do also call if you have good things to report, such as practicing going well or success with a certain piece of music. Our lesson time is both limited and precious so I

strongly prefer we speak outside of lessons.

Recitals

There are no recitals scheduled at the moment. Future recital days TBD.

Group Classes, School Orchestra and Youth Orchestra

Participating in group classes, school orchestra and youth orchestra is greatly encouraged! Playing music with your friends is one of the best aspects of being a musician. You can find information about local youth orchestras etc. on my website. If you and some friends would like to work together on a piece of chamber music, I am more than happy to coach you.

Lesson Etiquette

Please do your very best to be a few minutes early to your lesson. If you are late, your lesson time will be shortened to allow the next lesson to begin on time.

When you come for lessons, please ring the “9A” button to the right of the front door. I’ll buzz you in. Please go downstairs, remove your shoes and come in (give the door a good push!)

If siblings come to the lesson, I ask that they be able to play quietly within sight of the parent, and that they do not disturb the sibling receiving the lesson. Parents or other relatives are welcome to bring toys for siblings to play with as long as the playing is quiet, and the toys are picked up before leaving.

I promise to treat everyone in my home with kindness and respect, and I ask that you do the same for me. I ask that students/parents actively listen to what I say and wait for me to finish before they say something or resume playing. I also ask students to refrain from playing, plucking, making noises etc. when I stop them to give an explanation.

Website

I will post upcoming performances that are worth going to or that I am personally performing in. I urge students and parents to attend as many of these as possible! I will also post any important studio information such as recitals, good news from students etc. I also have a feedback section where parents and students can submit any constructive criticism. As your violin teacher, I care about giving you the best learning experience possible. I’m constantly looking for ways to improve as your teacher, as well as ways I might be able to improve studio policies. Your comments are entirely anonymous (please do not leave your name or information about yourself). As an incentive to provide feedback, every 20th post that I receive will be rewarded in some way (concert tickets, discounts, recordings etc.)

Thank you for taking the time to read and understand my studio policies. I look forward to making the most out of our lessons!

Sincerely,
David Ormai