

DAVID ORMAI'S STUDIO POLICIES

My Contact Info

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Orientation Process for New Students

Here are some steps for new students to take prior to beginning their lessons:

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

Obtaining Violin Music and Accessories

Local stores: Shar Music, Psarianos Violins

Online ordering: www.sharmusic.com

Essential Materials:

- 1.) Violin and bow
- 2.) Shoulder rest or pad**
- 3.) Rosin
- 4.) Metronome + Tuner all in one
- 5.) Cleaning cloth
- 6.) Extra strings (recommended but optional)
- 7.) Sheet music (TBD)
- 8.) 2 Notebooks (one for child, one for parent)

Please bring to each lesson your violin, shoulder pad, all assigned music, and a notebook for assignments (plus a notebook for parents)

Payment Protocol

Private Lesson Fees:

30 minutes: \$100/month

45 minutes: \$132/month

60 minutes: \$160/month

90 minutes: \$240/month

Payment Protocol – Checks

In order to simplify payments, the studio requires post-dated checks at the beginning of each term dated for the 1st of every month for a total of 4 lessons a month (some months offer more or less lessons, but it averages out to 4 in the long run). Payment is due on the first lesson of each. The fall term will be 4 months (Sep. – Dec.), and the spring term will be 5 months (Jan. – mid June). I will cash the post-dated check during the first week of each month. Before I cash the checks, I will send out a reminder that I will be doing this. If I do not receive payment by your second lesson of the month, you will be assessed a **\$10 late fee**. If I do not receive the full amount owed by the end of the first month (including any late fees), lessons will cease until I have received payment. You are responsible for any bank charges incurred due to returned checks.

Payment Protocol – Cash

Payment is due on the first lesson of the month and is always the same amount (regardless of how many lessons there will be in the month). If I do not receive payment by your second lesson of the month, you will be assessed a **\$10 late fee**. If I do not receive the full amount owed by the end of the month (including any late fees), lessons will cease until I have received payment.

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 vacations. 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.**

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 a withdrawal from lessons is as follows:

Written notice of withdrawal (email acceptable) must be submitted to me from the student (or parent) at least 1 month in advance of your departure from lessons. Once the student (or parent) submits a request to withdraw, a refund will be made as follows: fees for the remainder of the current month will be charged. Any pre-paid tuition for future months 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.

Missed Lessons

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 make-up lessons to be available, students must notify me of cancellations **as far in advance as possible**. My schedule is very tight and **make-ups for missed lessons not guaranteed**. Lessons missed by the student will not be refunded.

If you have a foreseeable conflict (i.e. soccer games, vacation, doctor's appointments etc.):

- You may **switch lessons** with another student using the schedule and phone list on my website. (Ask me for the password). Please switch with those who have the same amount of time for lessons (half-hour lessons switch only with other half-hour lessons). 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. If you successfully make a switch, please call/email me to let me know.
- If you have attempted unsuccessfully to switch lessons with another student, please call me as soon as possible. I require notice of a missed lesson at least **2 weeks** in advance. If you do not notify me at least 2 weeks before your foreseeable conflict, I cannot offer you either a make-up lesson or a refund.
- Special summertime lesson policy: If you miss 3 or more consecutive lessons during the summer months (June-August) due to foreseeable conflicts (especially vacations) I require a deposit of \$100. This deposit will be credited towards lesson tuition once lessons resume. If you do not pay the deposit, I cannot guarantee you/your child a spot in my studio upon your return.
- If your lesson happens to land on Thanksgiving, Christmas or Christmas Eve, New Years Day or New Years Eve, there will be no lesson. You are not required to pay for it, and there will be no make-ups for it! If your lesson happens to land on a day of your religious observance (i.e.: Yom Kippur, Easter, etc.), I will be happy to accommodate a make-up lesson.

Unforeseeable Conflicts:

- **Illness**, I ask that you/your child do not come to the lesson. If you or your child becomes ill, please notify me as soon as possible. Each student will be offered only **ONE** make-up lesson per calendar year for missed lessons due to illness.
- **Emergencies** (broken arm, traffic collision, family emergency etc.) I will do my best to try to schedule a make-up lesson in the future, though I do not make any guarantees.
- **Severe weather** (i.e. when public schools close), I will not require you to drive to your lesson; however, if you are willing and/or able to drive despite the weather, I will be happy to teach you! I will do my best to schedule make-ups for lessons missed due to weather.

If I Cancel

If I as the teacher must cancel a lesson with the student, a make-up lesson will be arranged. If I cannot find time for a make-up lesson, you will be refunded. If I do not give you at least 2 weeks notice of my own cancellation, you will not be charged for that make-up lesson!

Expectations of Students and Parents

Students

I assume that all students are taking lessons because they **choose to do so** and that they ultimately enjoy it. If this is not the case, making progress will be extremely difficult. I expect the following from each and every student:

- Have a strong commitment towards learning violin and music in general
- Show up for all scheduled lessons
- Be respectful of me and my home
- Be disciplined about practicing everyday
- Practice what you are assigned by me
- Ask questions if something is unclear
- Listen carefully when I am speaking (**no playing, plucking, making noises etc.**)
- Abide by my policies
- Silence your cell phone

Parents/Guardians

Students younger than 12

I require active parental participation for any student who is under the age of 12, and is in Suzuki books 1 – 3. When parents are involved and take lessons seriously (taking notes, asking questions), kids are also more likely to take lessons seriously. As a result, kids will progress much quicker! I ask that parents follow along with the lessons and be able to help their children practice material covered in the lesson at home. I will also do my best to make sure parents understand how they can help their child practice at home. I insist that parents keep a positive spirit in the room to facilitate learning.

Cell Phone Policy

I require ALL cell phones, pagers etc. to be turned off or at least put on silent mode. I ask that all persons in the room refrain from taking calls. If you absolutely must take a call, please be courteous and take your call outside. Also, if your child is under 12 and in one of the first three books, please refrain from using your cell phone for anything other than taking notes. **If you are playing games, reading books or otherwise not paying attention to your child's lesson, I will take that as a sign of a weak commitment. Parents and students who consistently show signs of a weak commitment will be permanently dismissed from my studio.**

Students 12 and older

While I strongly encourage active parental involvement for **all** of my students, I do not require it if the student is 12 or older, or if the student is in Suzuki book 4 and up.

Lesson Etiquette

Please do your 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 and I am teaching another student before your time, please let yourself in and remove your shoes.

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.

Practicing

Expectations

- Practice everyday
- Practice what I assign
- Find a specific time for your practice that is always the same (i.e. 5:30pm everyday)
- Don't just play pieces over and over, fix problems!
- Practice the amount of time I assign to you

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 stagnation 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 each 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. Positive, nurturing parent/student interactions 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. **I will take lack of preparation as a sign of a weak commitment. Students who are not completely committed to their lessons may be permanently dismissed from my studio.**

Often students are so excited about new orchestra music that they ignore the lesson materials that I have assigned them. This is NOT acceptable! **If you join a group/orchestra, you are also taking on extra practice time!**

Probation and Discipline

Students who habitually appear for lessons with inadequate practice preparation will receive the following consequences:

First week: verbal warning.

Second week: If preparation is inadequate, formal instruction of assigned material will cease and I will find other ways of using the lesson time. If preparation is severely inadequate, **I reserve the right to end the lesson early and send the student home (no refund or makeup).**

Third week: Depending on the severity and reasons for their lack of preparedness, the student may be permanently dismissed from my studio. Excessive absences will also be reason for permanent dismissal.

Other Policies

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.

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

Students are strongly encouraged to play in recitals throughout the year. There will be a small fee that covers the rental of the venue. Students will be responsible for fees associated with piano accompanists. There will be a few recitals every year, as well as opportunities to perform at other venues. The more a student performs, the easier it gets and the more fun it becomes, so be sure to take advantage of these opportunities!

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.

That said, if you participate in an orchestra/group, I ask that that you still **prioritize the assignments that I give**. Often students are so excited about new orchestra music that they ignore the lesson materials that I have assigned them. This is NOT acceptable! **If you join a group, you are also taking on extra practice time!**

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.)