

LESSON POLICY

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Music and Arts

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Thank you, parents and students, for being so accommodating and easy to work with! I have been truly blessed by working with each one of you, either student or parent, and hope to continue this rewarding arrangement for many years. I have not taken for granted your flexibility and willingness to work with me on scheduling. Thank you.

Learning an instrument is difficult and challenging, especially for younger children. Please know that I have an invested interest in all my students of any age and you are welcome to contact me with any concerns and arrangements as required.

And although I have formally amassed all my materials into one place (a book that contains everything I have been teaching for years now), and simplifying that process, I have not taken the time yet to develop an official policy, and for that I apologize. This, of course, has led to some confusion, and repeat questions, that I should address.

A lot of these concerns you probably have already discussed with me at some point. Some are items that I have needed to address.

One thing that has no category: I have a **no-gum-chewing** policy. It interferes with the counting that is required for students, and generally young kids don't have the facility to coordinate chewing with drumming.

Tardiness:

If the student is ten or more minutes late *without notification* generally they may not find me in the store as I must assume, without notification, that student will not be arriving.

If the student is not right on time, within that ten minutes, generally I'm in the lesson room.

Please just come on back if you were a few minutes late and don't see me there.

Absence:

If the student or parent does not notify me before I arrive for the lesson, then the lesson will not be refunded nor a makeup rescheduled. I have a very flexible lesson-makeup policy and want to ensure every student receives as many lessons as possible. Most instructors require a 24-hour notification, some more. Just ensure that you catch me before I am enroute that day, usually before 2:30.

Parental accompaniment:

Some students are young children and require parental attention or accompaniment during the lesson time. Having five kids of my own I'm aware that every child has different needs and I am more than willing to accommodate if it assists in the learning, or just makes you feel better as a parent. However, also know that at times it can be difficult if there is too much interference by the parent. If you choose to observe, I am happy to oblige. However, **please refrain from participating** in the teaching, which can only be disruptive to my process.

Please trust me in this regard. I have lots of teaching experience and have raised five of my own children.

Dropping students off:

Understand that the store is extremely busy at times. If you have a young child entering the building for lessons *unaccompanied*, s/he may get tossed around in all the commotion. Sometimes the child will head to the back of the store to explore the various instruments, which is fine. But they tend to lose track of time and, frankly, I just don't see them and assume they are not in the building. I have even missed entire lessons with a child because they were not in the waiting area.

I must insist that parents accompany young children in and out of the facility. As a parent myself, I understand how difficult the parking is. However, this is a safety precaution as much as it is a policy preference. There have been times when I could not locate the student due to high traffic in the store, or could not release the student because the parent was not present, taking up the lesson time of the next student. Please try to make eye contact with me if you have a young child before releasing them.

Practice time:

I always advise no less than two hours a week of practice per *week*. There is no rigid formula for length of practice time, or for how to get your child to practice. **Usually 30 minutes a day** is sufficient, regardless of age.

As a teenager, I was extreme and practiced about six to eight hours in a single day, usually five times a week on average. It takes a great commitment and lots of dedication and tenacity to advance on any instrument, and **the student may become discouraged** without sufficient practice time. Please refer to page 19 of my book for tips for getting your child to practice.

NOTE: If there has been little to no progress since the prior lesson, then *lesson time becomes practice time*, which can help sometimes in illustrating *how* to practice but is not truly making any progress.

Materials for lesson:

With an average of about 27 students per week, it is difficult to recall what each student was assigned on the previous lesson. If the student doesn't **return the assignment sheet**, then I don't have any notes for the prior session. If the student doesn't recall what was worked on then we are sometimes simply flying in the dark. I cannot emphasize enough to please return the assignment sheet. It has notes that I take for myself, as well as for the student.

Resources:

<http://udklm.com/> is the website that contains *everything*, including PDF downloads for song transcriptions, and videos, that the student will need, and it accompanies the book. *Please use it.* Sometimes I put on the weekly assignment sheet for the student to watch a certain video. Most of the time, this gets ignored. The videos are like having an in-house lesson – an instructor to show what the student should be doing. This benefits the parent as much as the student. I've worked hard to make this available to all students. Please utilize it.

Holidays:

Regarding holidays, if the store is open, then I am teaching.

As a full-time, self-employed musician and instructor, I do not get paid time off. Please schedule with me ahead of time to arrange for makeups for any lost days during the holiday season.

Makeups and rescheduling:

I keep all records of attendance on an Excel spreadsheet that I access from my iPhone and from home. **Please communicate with me directly** regarding scheduling changes, as the store gets very busy, and I may not get the information in time. I will convey any changes to the store for their records.

Makeup Expiration:

I do have an **expiration on makeups**, however. Please plan to reschedule a makeup *within the current month*. I will make some exceptions for makeups in the following month after the missed lesson. But I cannot makeup lessons beyond a month prior (about 45 days). So, if you missed in February, there can't be a makeup in April. That just throws off my scheduling and accounting too much.

Communications:

I generally use text but phone calls are fine as well. I will always be available for questions and concerns and try to update each parent on their child's progress following each lesson. If I am not present to do this, please know that it is due to something beyond my control. You may contact me any time regarding his/her progress. **It is important to maintain communications** with me. Otherwise, students may arrive at the store when I'm not present, despite multiple attempts to notify them or their parents.

Consent to physical contact:

From time to time, because this is a physical instrument that requires interaction to facilitate improvement, I am often required to physically adjust a hand position, shoulder or elbow, or adjust their foot positions. Because sometimes verbal communications simply don't work as well in most of these cases. This is how I instruct, and it is necessary. There is a window to the door, fully visible to everyone at all times, and I ensure the student is positioned in full sight. Also, you may at any time join the lesson. You would not be interrupting, and it is sometimes even beneficial.

To avoid any future misunderstandings, it is important that you acknowledge and agree to this aspect of my drum instruction.