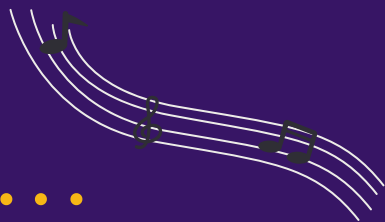


What Parents Need to Know About Piano Practice

A Practical Guide for
parents of piano students

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Dear Parent,

Piano practice can be a mystery if you've never played an instrument yourself.

Soccer practice? Pretty straightforward... Drop your child off at the field, cheer from the sidelines and when a great pass is made or a goal is scored, it's obvious that they're doing well.

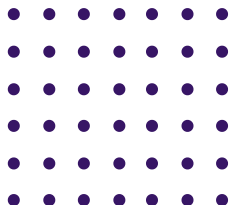
Dance practice? Again... drop your child off at the studio, peek through the viewing window and if they're in sync with the rest of the class, it's obvious that they're probably doing well.

But piano practice? Well, that's a different beast altogether! Piano practice drop-off just doesn't exist.

Piano lessons are a big commitment for anyone, especially a child. I only have your child for 30 to 45 minutes each week. While we go over all assignments during the lesson, sometimes there are questions and frustrations during the week that will require your guidance or even intervention.

I put this handy checklist together as a practical guide to help make piano practice at home as pain-free as possible with a little planning and oversight.

Let's get started.



1

Your child will need help. Up until about age 11, children need hands-on help with home practice. And even though you yourself may not read music or play the piano, your assistance is still very much needed!

Parental help can take the form of reading lesson notes, organizing practice time wisely, providing encouragement through difficult sections or situations, and seeking out answers for “I’m stuck on this” problems.

Asking a young child to be in charge of something as important as piano practice is often asking too much. Your help at home will make a substantial difference in your children’s progress.

2

Your child needs you to establish a routine. Piano practice that happens every single day is by far the most effective practice structure.

Short, focused and regular visits to the piano help your child retain and understand what they are learning while making the most of generally short attention spans.

If practice is enjoyable, rather than arduous, your child will naturally (and unknowingly!) increase the time they spend on the bench... eventually reaching that 30-minute mark.

Setting a regular time of day when piano practice happens “no matter what” will ensure a daily practice routine is easy for your child to maintain.



3

Your child needs lots of encouragement. Learning to read music and play the piano can be difficult, discouraging, and even overwhelming. Your child (no matter what their age) need loads of encouragement.

And not just verbal encouragement. You can show your child that you value their efforts by attending their recitals with enthusiasm, inviting friends and family to listen to them play, and taking the time to listen to them practice.

Most of the time, they don't need your undivided attention when they practice. A listening ear and occasional "Atta boy/girl" from the next room while you're folding laundry or doing dishes is usually all that's needed.

About once a week have them play their current assignments for you while you listen attentively. Your support will go a long way to making your child feel that their efforts are valued and their progress is steady.

4

Your child needs a home instrument that is enjoyable to play. Much of the pleasure from playing the piano comes from one's ability to emote feeling, nuance, and expression through music.

Even young beginners will experience great satisfaction from making beautiful sounds. So choose an instrument that gives them the best opportunity to make beautiful sounds.

There are many great and affordable options that will give your child the tools they need to truly experience piano lessons. A keyboard is generally less expensive than a piano and requires no regular maintenance.

A piano requires regular tunings (at least once a year) to maintain a beautiful sound, but is preferred once a student has reached a more advanced level of playing.

An investment in a good instrument, as well as regular maintenance for a piano, protects the investment you are making in your child's musical education.



5

Your child needs a positive practice environment. Aside from providing encouragement, your child needs you to create a positive practice atmosphere.

Help your child avoid “cramming” the day before lessons. Stick to your daily routine to avoid weeks of forgotten practice (which lead to feelings of inadequacy on the part of your child).

Music is joyful, and practicing music should be as well. This is, fortunately, something that you are able to create easily with a commitment to regular practice.

6

Working as a parent/child/teacher triangle is the optimal way to ensure progress and success in piano lessons.

Be sure to communicate often with me as your child’s piano teacher. A quick heads-up text when a practice week has gone extremely well (or not so well) helps me be better prepared for the lesson.

Ask how lessons are progressing, or for help if something is difficult for your child at home. Working as a team means your child is supported equally on all sides at all times.



7

The profound pleasure of being a “piano parent” far outweighs the required extra efforts.

Learning to play music is a life-changing experience. And, as a parent, the process is a thrill to watch. Being a major part of this accomplishment is incredibly rewarding!

When you put in the extra time and effort to be a proactive piano parent, your child will likely be encouraged to persevere as a piano student.

Your personal investment in your child's lessons will support your financial investment, and will give your child a far greater chance of success at the piano, which is the ultimate goal of piano lessons in the first place.

