

FiddleStar Lesson Policy

This information is also posted on the FiddleStar website lesson page in case you need to refer back to it.

Mission Statement

I sincerely endeavor to create a supportive and caring atmosphere for each of my students so that learning the fiddle is both a fun and rewarding experience. At the same time, I have learned just how essential an environment of professionalism is to our success together, and I strive to balance these two equally important dimensions of teaching. In fact, I have discovered they're inseparable – that asking my students to meet a high level of responsibility, respect and accountability is one of the most supportive and caring things I can do as their teacher. With that in mind, this Studio Lesson Policy clarifies what I request of each student and parent. Remember, this is not a hobby for me; it is the profession to which I have dedicated my life. To be even more precise, I dedicate myself to my students. Therefore, I only accept – and keep – serious students who exhibit the same passion to learn as I have to teach, and who feel connected to me as a teacher. I desire students for whom the fiddle is a priority in comparison to their other interests. As such, I expect the level of practice, dedication and attendance to be reflective of someone personally committed to the learning process.

(I adopted the above paragraph from a fellow teacher whom I truly respect and who has great success with her own students. I kept trying to write something like this and realized she had already written it, more perfectly than I could have...)

Monthly Payment Policy for Weekly Lessons

If you wish to have a regular weekly lesson time and a discounted rate, payment will be due at the beginning of each month, before the first lesson of the month. You will receive three lessons each month. The three lesson weeks will be determined mutually at the end of each previous month. If you do not pay for your monthly lessons prior to the first lesson of that month, I will not be available online for your lesson. I consider the monthly lesson email I send out to be your reminder and that will be the only reminder you receive.

Single/Individual Lessons

If you are interested in a lesson here and there instead of on a regular basis, that's ok! I try to leave some openings throughout my weekly schedule for that purpose. Your rate per lesson will be slightly higher for individual lessons. To purchase an individual lesson, go to that section on the Online Lessons page on my website and choose your lesson length and purchase it using the PayPal drop down menu. Let me know your time preferences for the lesson and I'll get you in as soon as I am able. The cancellation policy below does still apply to individual lessons.

Cancellation Policy

If you have to cancel please let me know as soon as possible. There are no refunds or credits for cancelled lessons. If I happen to have an opening to reschedule I'll let you know at that time. However, rescheduling is not guaranteed and is only a possibility if I am given at least 12 hours notice. If you happen to not show up or forget or otherwise not notify me at all, I will not reschedule you and you will be charged for that lesson. If I have to cancel, you will have that lesson credit available to carry over. Remember, you are paying for a lesson time, not the lesson itself. My intention is to have a missed-lesson policy that is simple and easy to administer, and one that honors the value of my time in that if someone fails to show up for their lesson, that same portion of my day is still spent preparing and waiting for a scheduled arrival, and thus deserves the normal compensation. Also, that portion of my schedule is contracted out to that individual in lieu of other students on my waiting list who are eagerly awaiting and available for any possible openings.

Practice

I am only able to take (and keep) students who are willing to commit to at least 30 minutes a day of practice five days a week. Learning to play an instrument is a major undertaking and practice can be enjoyable and rewarding if you are working toward a goal and have a desire to learn. I will be able to tell at the beginning of each lesson if you have practiced and will be expecting as much. Everyone can have an off week but if there is a consistent pattern of less than adequate practice I will be happy to refer you to a teacher who is perhaps better suited for you.

Audio and Video Recordings

If you need a large amount of recordings to augment your lessons that would take a significant amount of time away from your lesson, I'm happy to do those outside of lesson time but you will be charged for an extra lesson, or more, depending on the amount of time I need to complete the recordings. I will let you know ahead of time so you can plan for that. However, most recordings are easily completed within the lesson itself, both in person and online. I will, from this point on, be making all recordings during your lesson time unless you advise me otherwise and choose to pay extra for the time involved.

Lesson Materials

Please purchase any necessary materials (books, rosin, new strings, shoulder rests, recordings, etc.) as soon as possible. I will try to find you the best deal for each item and will provide links and resources as available. I will not recommend anything that is not necessary. Change your strings no less often than every six months. Have your bow rehaired once a year. For in person lessons, please bring a recording device to every lesson. Video cameras are welcome. You may record the entire lesson or I will make sure to record important parts for you. You are welcome to record Skype lessons as well. All recordings are for your use educational use only. Do not post them or otherwise disseminate them without permission.

Parent/Child Relations

Parents are welcome in their child's lesson. However, I reserve the right to ask a parent to sit out of the lessons if I feel it is more beneficial for the student. In most cases, it is better for the student to take their lessons without a parent present.

Thank you for your time and commitment. Again, please let me know you have read and understood the above. I have spent the last 25 years teaching the fiddle and it is my greatest passion and joy. I only hope I can help you feel the same. I will do my best.

Cheers, Megan