

Catherine Willey's Cello Studio Policy

Dear Student Families,

Welcome to the studio! The following are a few items of business and housekeeping you should know. I suggest keeping this policy letter for future reference (perhaps in your music notebook along with the lesson schedule), as I may refer to guidelines herein and expect them to be familiar to you.

Tuition and Expenses

	30-min. Lessons	45-min. Lessons	60-min. Lessons
Monthly regular	\$90	\$130	\$170
Early bird -\$5 (paid by the 1st)	\$85	\$125	\$165
Late +\$5 (paid after the 7th)	\$95	\$135	\$175
Trimesterly -\$30 (covers 4 months at a time)	\$330 (-\$30)	\$490	\$650

Tuition for one month is \$90/month for half hour lessons, \$130 for 45-min. lessons, and \$170/month for hour lessons. **If payment is made on or before the first of the month, a \$5 “early bird” discount is applied.** If you are going to miss the last lesson of the previous month, you may put the check in the mail to arrive by the 1st to keep the discount.

The monthly fee covers lessons and any of the additional opt-in activities scheduled for that month. If you know you will be unable to make it to a particular lesson, we can often plan a make-up lesson (no more than one per month). However, make-ups must be scheduled *before the day* of the cancelled lesson. Otherwise, there will be neither make-up nor refund.¹

Here are some non-tuition expenses. (I don’t control these prices, so they may change without my knowing.):

1) You will need a good-quality cello, of course. See “Instruments” below. By cello, I mean cello, bow, and case (preferably hard). You will also need a “rockstop” (a.k.a. endpin stop) and some good rosin. (The cheap rosin encased in wood and plastic that come with most student celli will get the bow to make sound in the first place, but they are really unsuitable for the type of playing we’ll be doing!)

¹ This is meant to encourage people to 1) plan in advance, 2) not make same-day cancellations, 3) not ask for retroactive refunds for lessons they have (often arbitrarily) cancelled. Obviously, in the case of an unforeseen emergency, allowances will be made (e.g. hospitalization, broken arm/hand, snow-in).

2) Over the course of your musical progress, you will also be asked to purchase other necessary materials, including books, flashcards, and recordings.

3) When your student plays on a recital (whether studio or solo), you will need to procure an accompanist. For books 1–4, I am willing to accompany for whatever price seems fair to you. Last I heard, Jayne Galloway, the studio accompanist, charges \$5 to play any book 1–3 piece at a studio recital.²

4) Each year, all students enter the Utah Valley String Teachers Festival, which is a \$15 fee. You will also need an accompanist for that.

5) Check the prices of any orchestras or summer music camps you plan to attend. I highly recommend **Mountains and Strings** (held in Harriman State Park, Idaho) and **Lyceum Music Festival–Youth** (in American Fork, Utah).

Holidays and Make-ups

Besides the odd makeup, there are generally no lessons given during the weeks of Christmas–New Years, on Monday school holidays (Martin Luther King, Presidents’ Memorial, and Labor Day), or during summer music camps I usually attend. If there are five Mondays in a month, which occurs three or four times a year, the fifth lesson is included in the regular lesson fee.

Although, historically, it has been a *very* rare occurrence, I reserve the right to call in another teacher to substitute for me. I guarantee that whoever I choose will be a competent, trained Suzuki teacher.

With summer camps, vacations, institutes, conferences, etc., everyone’s summer schedules vary. Since regular lessons are hard to guarantee, I try to open my schedule even wider to ensure that everyone can have as many lessons as can possible, via make-ups and trades. Some months may get six lessons and others may manage only one or two, but the price stays the same.

Please try to make music lessons a high priority, since regular, consistent lessons guarantee the best progress. I cannot always guarantee a make-up slot since they depend heavily on the cancellations of other students. In any case, as mentioned before, no more than one make-up is allowed per month. It is simply too hard for me to schedule around all of my lesson families’ other activities. If you are able to reschedule a lesson by swapping times with another student, that would take a lot of pressure off of me, and it will *not* count as a makeup for that month. *If you do not want me to release your contact information to other lesson families (to arrange lesson swaps), please let me know.*

Whether or not you schedule a make-up, let me know if you plan to miss a lesson so we can fill in the time. If it is a true emergency, call as soon as possible to schedule a make-up time. If I must miss a lesson, I will make it up to you at as convenient a time as possible for both of us!

² I believe her usual price is \$20/performance and \$24 per hour/rehearsal; so this is a great deal!

Group Lessons and Book Recitals

Group lessons are held once a month, usually (but not always) the last week of the month. (Summers are less certain.) These generally last as long or longer than a regular lesson, and no private lessons are held that week (unless you have a Monday lesson the week of a Friday group lesson, or vice versa). These are a *wonderful* performance opportunity each month. For the sake of efficiency, I also teach things to the group that I would otherwise have to teach to each student individually.

I hope everyone will attend other students' book recitals! There are not too many of them, and a well-prepared recital is incredible motivation for both performer and audience.

Orchestra and Music Camps

Group musical experiences are some of the best there are. For all students in late book one and up, I highly recommend participation in orchestra and a quality summer music camp. There is a wonderful, reasonably-priced orchestra program in American Fork on Wednesdays, in which I'd love you to participate: **American Heritage School Lyceum Orchestra Program**. They have five levels, from a beginning orchestra for young first-timers to a high-school-aged symphonic orchestra. During the summer, the **International Suzuki String Institute**, held in Draper, is a pricey but, well, invaluable experience. I also highly recommend you look into the chamber and orchestra camp **Mountains and Strings** (or **Mini Mountains and Strings** for younger students) in Harriman State Park, Idaho. Later in the summer is the **Lyceum Music Festival–Youth** in American Fork. This one also has the option of partial days (for a fraction of the cost), if you don't feel like committing a whole week to a music camp.

Expectations for Practicing, Listening, and Observing

For optimal results, make music lessons a high priority. Careful consistency is the most important ingredient in the recipe of progress. Parents of younger children should practice each day with the child and attend all of the lessons, usually taking notes. Parents of older students, please be willing to experiment with me to find the optimal arrangement to support your children. You may be asked to be the primary notetaker in lessons, or just to be physically present, or even to wait in the car (or run errands).

Every student should own his/her current Suzuki book and CD (or recording). I also recommend owning the piano accompaniment book. Students should listen to the recording for 40–50 hours a week, or 6-8 hours a day or night. (At night, just turn it down to barely audible.) Excessive listening boosts progress as much as any other one factor, including time spent practicing. Practice 5-6 days a week, but listen to the Suzuki CD every blessed day.

I recommend observing other students' lessons, even after you have begun your own. You may observe Mrs. Willey or me, or even experiment with watching other teachers. I'd love to hear about what you learn from them, too! [A learn-and-earn idea in the works here...]

Housekeeping and Privacy— “In our house,...”

Socks:

In my mother’s house, we are to wear *clean socks only* (goes for teacher, students, parents, and siblings). If tend to forget, please keep a pair of socks in your case, car, or lesson bag. Flip-flops and sandals are no excuse. If you don’t have socks, you can pay purchase a pair from the lesson cabinet for \$1.

Pre-lesson prep:

Each student should arrive a few minutes early to take care of all preparation needs so we can start the lesson on time. Have cello unpacked, end-pin out, bow tightened and rosined, hands washed, nails clipped (into a waste basket please), thirst quenched, music on stand, and restroom visited — before the lesson time starts. Late-comers cannot expect to be given extra time. Try to write checks and ask questions at the *first* of *your* lesson, not the during the next student’s time.

Communication outside of lesson time:

If you have questions, feel free to call or text me or send an email, but remember that most questions can (and ought to) be answered at lessons. Students who take the last lesson of the day, please be sensitive to my private time by not staying after very long.

Siblings/Home Privacy/Books:

Students and their siblings should stay with the parent in the lesson room at all times while in our home — no playing outside or wandering through the house. Please respect our privacy in this respect. Young children should not go to the restroom unattended. If children are waiting through other lessons, they should remain with the parent, preferably with something to do (e.g. novel, puzzle, toys, coloring book, homework). If they are observing other lessons alone, instruct them where to stay. If they or you take a book off our shelves, re-shelf it in its proper place before you leave.

Other household courtesies:

When you come to lessons, silence your cell phones. If you must take a call, please step outside before you talk. Please refrain from eating or drinking in the studio, with the exception of water. No gum is allowed during lessons. I *will* ask you to spit it out.

While siblings are welcome to attend lessons, I prefer that especially noisy or disruptive toddlers/children be left at home, *especially* during group lesson. Nursing babies are always welcome. Please do not change diapers on the carpet, or leave diapers in our indoor waste bins (which get emptied about once a week). We have a changing table that you may use in an emergency; ask to use.

Be sure to label cases, **music**, and other equipment with your name and phone number. Before leaving, double check to make sure you have gathered all of your belongings before you go. (I try to keep track, but I don’t have an official lost-and-found box.)

Instruments

Please don't bring me an instrument you have bought off the internet, sight unseen (sound unheard). The "cheap" building of this type of stringed instrument precludes decent tone or ease of tuning, and creates many other problems. Almost always, these "good deal" instruments turn out to be, well... rather expensive firewood. There are several fine instrument dealers in the area who compete with each other for the best prices, so we are fortunate indeed to be able to rent or purchase fine-working and -sounding instruments for the lowest possible price. I recommend Charles Liu 1-800-260-5818; tell him Catherine Willey sent you, and he will set up your instrument the way I require (and has even been known to give an even better deal).

How do you know if your child is ready for a bigger size of instrument? I, as his teacher, will tell you he is! Please have the instrument sized by me before you buy or rent. There is nothing I like less than feeling forced to work around a child's ill-sized instrument because his mother (or worse the child himself) decided he was "ready" for the next size bigger.

Recommended Bibliography [incomplete]

- ***Nurtured by Love*** by Shinichi Suzuki
- ***Make It Stick*** by Peter C. Brown
- ***Mindset*** by Carol S. Dweck
- ***The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up*** by Marie Kondo (not music, but I can't help recommending it)

Learn-and-Earn (i.e. I haven't read these yet, so I'd be extra interested in hearing about what you learned...perhaps willing to give a reward of some sort; I haven't figured it out yet.)

- ***Grit*** by Angela Duckworth
- ***Practice Revolution*** by Philip Johnston