

## Rachel's Music Lessons: Studio Policy and Information 2022-2023

### Lesson Payment

I accept payment by cash, cheque, or Interac eTransfer. Please pay eTransfers to RMcLellanMusic@gmail.com. Cheques must be made out to Rachel McLellan. Invoices will be sent out on the first of each month. Please pay in full at the beginning of the month. Lessons will be halted if two weeks pass without payment and will resume upon payment in full. I currently charge \$27 for half hour lessons and \$50 for full hours, plus 5% GST.

### Parents in the studio

For the first lesson, and often the first few, I recommend parents sit in on their children's lessons. Beyond this, I welcome parents whenever they would like to sit in, however, I find many of my students are distracted by family and don't always do their best work when they are 'being watched.' Parent attendance in lessons is always up to the parent and student, and their own comfort levels.

### Recording lessons

Students may record their lessons as a means of reviewing their work, but please let me know in advance. Watching lessons back can be beneficial, particularly for advanced students. These recordings are tools for practice only and are not to be shared to grandparents, cousins, your Facebook page, etc.

### Lesson times and cancellations

During the school year (September through June) I teach Monday-Friday through the afternoons and evenings. I do not answer my phone during lessons, but feel free to leave a message or text and I may be able to answer it in between students. I do my best to respond to emails and messages within 24 hours.

Lessons occur at the same time and day every week. I do not offer every other week lessons.

Summer hours through July and August vary depending on demand. I encourage taking lessons through the summer months to retain knowledge, but it is not required.

Please inform me of any lessons that will be missed as soon as possible. Make-up/rescheduled lessons will be available with a minimum of 24 hours' notice of cancellation, via phone, text message, or email. This is to respect both your time and mine.

If the student is feeling ill, please stay home. We can then complete lessons online or reschedule.

Lesson time will not be made up for students who arrive late. If you need to change the lesson time or day, I can reach out to other parents and students but cannot guarantee anyone will want to trade spots. If you need to discontinue lessons during the year, I ask for at least a month's notice.

### Piano and Metronome

**All piano students MUST have a piano at home for practicing.** A tuned acoustic piano is ideal, but a digital piano with 88 weighted "touch sensitive" keys plus proper foot pedals is acceptable. Lesser digital pianos are acceptable only for beginner students, and I encourage you to upgrade as soon as possible. Acoustic pianos should be tuned at least once a year. Although tempting, please do not label the piano keys with alphabet stickers. Students will learn to find notes using the black key patterns and other keyboard geography tools.

I recommend voice students have a piano to help with music theory/comprehension and starting notes.

If you are unsure about committing to purchasing a piano, electric pianos can be rented through Long & McQuade in Calgary. Electric pianos can be purchased from many locations, and good deals can be found on secondhand ones on Facebook Marketplace and Kijiji. I'm happy to help with your selection – just ask!

All students will need a metronome, or a metronome app. Many electric pianos come with a metronome installed. For an online option, Google Metronome is easy– simply google ‘metronome’.

### Practice Expectations

If there is a lack of progress, there is probably a lack of practice! Ideally, most students should practice 4-5 days a week. Specific amounts of practice time are not assigned to each student. Instead, students should practice long enough to complete their weekly assignments. If you feel your student needs a specific amount of time assigned, I am happy to talk with you to determine what will work best.

### **The quality of practice time is more important than the quantity of practice time.**

Support from parents is an important factor in a child’s musical development. Create a quiet space where the student can practice and schedule a time for practice each day – consistency is key. Parents are not required to have a musical background to help their children with music lessons. Simply sharing an interest in your child’s progress and providing attention and support are the best first steps.

### Collaborative Pianists

I am not a professional accompanist, and for this reason, I do not play piano for my singing students for public performances. This is to ensure the singer has the best experience with the right kind of support from an accompanist. This means that there will be external fees for pianists for performances (ex. festivals, exams). The fee will be determined by the pianist, and you will pay them directly. This will include rehearsal time and the actual performance. I can provide pianist recommendations.

### Lesson Procedures

Please arrive a few minutes prior to your lesson time. Students are welcome to come in when they get here to take off their shoes and wash their hands or use hand sanitizer.

Siblings who take lessons back-to-back are welcome to wait and silently read, draw, or work on homework during each other’s lessons. I have a digital piano with headphones for students to practice on or warmup during their sibling’s lesson. Please bring enough materials to stay occupied and quiet.

### **I do not provide childcare.**

Food, gum, and non-water drinks are not allowed in the studio. Water bottles are welcome but must stay on the table or the floor and have a top that closes.

### Lesson Supplies

Please ensure your child brings the following to every lesson:

- Piano lessons
  - Piano Adventures Lesson and Theory Books (unless using a different series)
  - Other assigned books (technique, performance, Royal Conservatory books etc.)
  - 3-Ring Binder for sheet music, handouts, and lesson notes
- Voice lessons
  - Full Voice workbook
  - Other assigned books (theory, repertoire, Royal Conservatory books etc.)
  - 3-Ring Binder for sheet music, handouts, and lesson notes

I recommend keeping all these items in a separate ‘music bag’ so they are not misplaced during the week. If a piece of sheet music is forgotten at home, we will likely not be able to work on it that day.

### Covid-19 Note

I will be doing extra cleaning of doorknobs and piano keys. Students must use hand sanitizer or wash their hands before lessons. I run a HEPA filter in my studio during lessons, and when the weather permits, I open the windows. This is not a guarantee of safety. If the student is feeling ill, please stay home. We can complete lessons online or reschedule. Masks are optional, and I am happy to wear one if the student or parent prefers. I am fully vaccinated and boosted, but I cannot guarantee other students' and families' vaccination status.

### Online Lessons

Online lessons can be held on several different platforms including Facetime, Zoom, and Skype. Please contact me if you would like online lessons to best determine the platform and device settings.

### Performance Opportunities and Exams

Airdrie Rotary Music Festival: <http://airdrierotaryfestival.org/>

I highly recommend students participate in the Airdrie Rotary Music Festival. This is an opportunity to perform and receive feedback from another professional. If you decide to perform in Festival, this will include some external fees. This will involve a pianist fee for singers.

Calgary Songfest: <https://www.natsofsouthernalberta.org/songfest>

This is a festival for singers which my students can participate in due to my membership with NATS. It is an opportunity to perform and receive feedback from other professionals. This will involve a pianist fee.

ARMTA Student recitals: <https://armta-calgary.com/north-south-recitals/>

There are several types of recitals my students have access to due to my membership in ARMTA. These recitals are great practice before performing in exams. This will involve a pianist fee for singers.

Studio Recitals:

I plan on two recitals a year, one in the winter and one in June, which will provide students with the opportunity to practise the performance skills we are developing in lessons. This may involve a recital fee, depending on the venue.

RCM examinations: <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/examinations>

For students who would like to pursue music further in their lives, RCM examinations are an important step. They test musicianship skills as well as repertoire performance. Parents and students interested in RCM exams must let me know at the beginning of September so that we have time to prepare for them properly. This will involve external fees. This will involve a pianist fee for singers.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Let's make music together!

Rachel McLellan  
MMus, BMus, Registered Music Teacher

Rachel's Music Lessons  
(403) 801-6865  
RachelMcLellan.ca  
RMcLellanMusic@gmail.com  
Facebook.com/RachelsMusicLessons