

New Student Questionnaire

1. Contact Information:

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip _____
Telephone _____ E-mail _____
Name of Parent/Guardian _____
Parent's daytime phone# _____

Person to contact in case of emergency:

Name: _____ Relationship: _____
Phone: (1) _____ (2) _____

2. Student Information

Age _____ Grade in School _____

Do you have previous musical experience? _____

Can you read music? _____

Do you participate in school music programs? (Band, Orchestra, Chorus)

_____ Do you participate in any musical groups outside of school?

_____ Are you involved in other non-musical activities, hobbies or interests?

3. Musical Goals

What kind of skills do you expect to gain from music lessons?

_____ What do you feel is the most important thing you can learn by studying music?

_____ How hard are you willing to work to achieve your musical goals?

_____ Realistically, how much time do you anticipate being able to practice per day?
Per week? _____

Note to Students and Parents:

“What is the purpose of Music?” This is the first question I ask every student at the beginning of his or her first lesson. Why are we spending so much time and energy to learn to play these instruments and hone our skills? The answer to that question is perhaps the most important thing any musician should learn during the course of their studies, and it is central to the focus of what and how I teach when I work with students.

First, a bit about my academic background: I grew up in a musical family. I began playing clarinet and piano at age 8. At age 12, I studied clarinet privately with James Hopper who provided me with a valuable foundation during those early years. I attended college at the University of Denver’s Lamont School of Music, and graduated with a Bachelor of Music with emphasis in Performance and Jazz Studies. While attending Lamont, I studied clarinet with Dr. Ramon Kireilis, saxophone with Arthur Bouton, and Flute with Jeanni Muhonen. After graduation, I relocated to Portland, where I spent an additional year of graduate-level study in music at Portland State University. I am now involved in several working professional music ensembles in the Portland area, and am high on the list of in-demand woodwind players here in town. All told, I have been playing a musical instrument of some kind for 38 years, and I have been playing clarinet, saxophone, and flute professionally for the past 25 years.

As a teacher, it is my expectation that students learn to be self-motivated. As is often said, “In a way, every musician is self-taught.” Meaning that my job as a teacher is to provide guidance and direction, not necessarily to ‘crack the whip’ of discipline. I don’t consider myself a disciplinarian; students either want to learn or they don’t, and no amount of negative reinforcement on the part of the teacher is going to force a student to learn something they don’t want to learn. I can’t **MAKE** anyone practice on a daily basis; I can’t **MAKE** anyone learn to play a particular scale or passage of music. I can’t **MAKE** anyone do anything. That part is up to you, the student. Instead, I consider my role to be one of guidance. I can assign the exercises, the scales, the performance pieces, but I can’t make improvements in a student’s playing ability unless that student does the work to make it happen themselves. No one else can do it for you!

That having been said, learning music IS a lot of work. It does not happen overnight; in fact it takes a lifetime. That can be a hard concept to grasp in today’s instant-gratification society, but the fact is that it takes years to truly master an instrument. It is crucially important that students develop good practicing habits as early on as possible, even though results may not be immediate. **Parents:** you should spend some time encouraging your young one to get into the habit of making his/her practice session a part of the daily routine. This should not be made to feel like it’s a chore or a punishment, but instead a normal, necessary daily activity. Think of it as homework that’s equally as important as every other class in school.

The decision to study a musical instrument is a serious commitment of time, energy and effort. Many working professionals practice at least 4 and sometimes 8 hours a day. And while I don’t expect my students to put in that kind of time unless they plan to pursue a professional career in music, I do expect that every student spend time practicing every day. I’ll put it this way: I get to see each student for exactly 30 minutes

each week. The rest of the time you're on your own to make sure you put some time in every day.

I don't like to set time limits, because the important factor is what gets done, not how long it takes -- So rather than set a limit based on time, I prefer to set a limit based on the amount of work that gets done. Every day, students should practice 1) **warm-up**; 2) **scale and technique exercises**; 3) **solo or performance piece work**; and 4) **free playing or "noodling"**. See the accompanying practice guidelines sheet for further explanation of these. If a student practices all of these every day, that student will be able to see measurable improvement in their playing over time. If any of these are neglected, I can't guarantee any kind of results whatsoever.

Another crucial step in the learning process is training your ears. Every student should be **listening to music as much as possible**. What goes in through your ears will eventually come out through your playing. Students who listen to classical music at an early age will find that their own style of phrasing and articulation sounds classical. Students who listen to jazz music will find that their styling sounds jazzy. The best musicians will have a well-rounded taste and will have listened to ALL styles of music early on.

When you listen to music, listen with intent. Don't just have a song playing in the background, in other words. Really listen to it, pay attention to it. Listen to what each instrument is doing. Listen to what is going on in the melody (notes), harmony (chords), and rhythm (beat) as well as to how that music makes you feel when you hear it. An important bridge to cross is to be able to perform expressive music that makes a listener feel a certain way, and that process starts with being able to listen for that quality in music performed by others.

Finally, just as learning to be good at a musical instrument doesn't happen overnight, your musical ability doesn't go away overnight either. The skills you develop in music now will give you an entire lifetime of enjoyment, and will help you in everyday life in ways you can't even begin to imagine. Even if you don't decide to pursue music as a career, you'll find that developing an ear for music will increase your sense of self-worth, improve your ability to think and work in groups, and give you a lifelong source of entertainment and enjoyment. You are about to take your first steps into a greater world!

Sincerely,

Peter F. Petersen

Required Materials:

1. **Instrument:** This should be a good quality student model or professional model instrument. It should be kept in good, clean condition and maintained in proper working order. It should be stored in a good case, which will keep it from being damaged by normal bumping and jostling. You should also be prepared to eventually purchase a mouthpiece that is of higher quality than the standard student-model mouthpieces that are normally packaged with the instrument. Mouthpieces come in all shapes and sizes and should be chosen after playing several, to find the one that fits the student the best. **Reeds** are also important; **you should always have at least 4 playable reeds in your case at all times.**
2. **Reedguard:** Your reeds should be kept in a reedguard, instead of the plastic shell that comes with them from the box. A reedguard is a plastic (or metal) clip that protects the fragile tips of the reeds and also makes sure they dry flat and don't warp.
3. **Accessories:** Mandatory accessories are: a good swab, a supply of good reeds, cork grease, and a mouthpiece cap. Optional (but recommended accessories are: a clarinet stand, a portable music stand, a "pad-saver" or "mouse", a cloth to wipe down keys and outer surfaces.
4. **Notebook:** I'll use the notebook to keep track of your progress, and give you specific comments on the assignments you're working on.
5. **Metronome:** It is VERY IMPORTANT to practice with a metronome at home between lessons. (*Smartphone apps: Metronomics, Dr Betotte*)
6. **Digital tuner:** Also mandatory for practice sessions. (*Smartphone app: ClearTune*)
7. **Music Stand:** Keep this at home and set up in a corner of the room. A folding stand is acceptable, but the more durable Manhasset-style stand is more durable and will last longer if you have space for it at home.
8. **Books and materials:** A technique book (usually the Rubank method is what I recommend), a Solo/Performance piece book (Concert and Contest Collection is a good book for Intermediate/advanced students), a duet book. I like to tailor the text materials to each student, so this may vary from person to person.
9. **A recording device (smartphone, minidisc, or other recorder).** It's important to record yourself practicing once in a while and listen back to it. The recording doesn't lie; it will hear all of your mistakes and play them back so you can work on improving them.
10. **A CD player, mp3 player or other listening device.** Remember that listening is a crucial part of music. From time to time I will give you recordings of various sax or clarinet players and expect you to listen to them with a critical ear. This will help you improve your own playing by strengthening your conceptualization and musicality skills. iTunes should be your best friend.

How to get the most out of your practice session:

It is VITALLY IMPORTANT that you practice during the week, not just during your lesson. Think of each practice session as being equally important as your weekly lessons, because it is during your daily practice sessions that your real improvement will happen. To put it another way: The true value of weekly lessons is to learn new skills that build upon what was covered in previous weeks, but that can't happen if the entire lesson time is being spent going over what you should've been practicing on your own at home. Your daily practice sessions and your weekly lessons should have the same basic overall structure consisting of the following 4 points:

1. **Warmup:** Just like any physical activity, it's important to warm up at the beginning of your practice session. Athletes do a series of stretching exercises before they run or jump or swim or whatever it is that they do, why should playing an instrument be any different? Some things to do during warmup:

- Breathing and Sound Start by playing long tones. Play one note and hold it. Listen. Try for a full, rich, deep sound. Hold that one note as long as you can, then take a deep breath and play it again. Do this until your tone is as clean and clear at the beginning and end of the note as it is in the middle.
- Loosen your face muscles. Smile as broadly as you can, hold, then frown, pucker or scowl as narrowly as you can.
- Stretch your fingers. Play partial scales, patterns, whatever you feel will do the most good toward making your fingers, arms, and hands loosened up.

2. **Scale/Technique exercises:** This is where you're actually improving your skills and abilities on your instrument. Fundamentals are the most important aspect of anyone's playing; you should be spending most of your time on scales and technique exercises in lessons and in your at-home practice. Yes, they're that important. These exercises should all be practiced with the metronome on at a comfortable tempo.

- Get your tongue involved. Play "ta-ta-ta" exercises, concentrating on maintaining an even tone as you attack each note. Blow through the note as you tongue it so the note speaks as soon as you play it, not half a second behind.
- Practice exercises out of your Scale book. These exercises are meant to develop skills on your instrument that will make everything else easier to play. They are possibly the most important and direct path toward becoming a virtuoso on your instrument.

3. **Solo Piece/Etude/Performance Piece:** If your teacher has assigned a solo piece, now is the time to work on it. Follow all of the dynamic markings and other guidances your teacher has given. Work with a metronome to achieve constant tempo. This is also a time when practicing music for your school band or ensemble is encouraged.

4. **Free playing:** Play anything you feel. Play for fun. Improve your hand/ear coordination by playing whatever you are "hearing" inside your mind. Play along with a CD or the radio. Compose a song of your own. Play meaningless clusters of notes and rhythms. Feel what you play and play what you feel. Reward yourself for your hard work.

Policies and other stuff:

Lesson Duration: Lessons will be given on a half-hour or hourly basis. Hour-length lessons are recommended for advanced students of high-school age or older at the discretion of the instructor.

Lessons take place at least once a week in order to achieve the most noticeable improvement in the student's musical ability. Students are required to spend at least some time every day practicing the material gone over in lessons; think of it as homework that is just as important as if it were math or science class.

Grades: I don't do "grades" in the traditional sense but I do evaluation sheets on every student. Twice per term I'll send home a progress report where we'll go over the areas where each student has shown improvement and also the areas where I as a teacher feel more improvement is needed.

Cancellation policy: Lessons may be rescheduled up to 14 days before the date of lesson. Our goal is to get 12 lessons in per term; if a lesson is missed due to illness or other unavoidable conflict, we will TRY to make up the lesson during the same week. If that becomes impossible, we will try to find a time before the end of the term to make sure we get 12 lessons in. Due to the cost of studio space rental I am unable to refund tuition fees except under certain extreme circumstances.

Your **instrument must be kept in proper working order** to be able to get through lessons and practice sessions. If you show up to your lesson with an instrument that is not in acceptable condition, you will be sent home.

Tuition Pricing: Lesson tuition will be \$360 per 12-lesson term (roughly \$120 per month), for 30-minute lessons, or \$35 per individual lesson. 60-minute lessons are available for advanced students at the instructor's discretion; tuition for 60-minute lessons will be \$600 per term (roughly \$200 per month) or \$70 per individual lesson. Payment may be made by cash, credit/debit card, or check, at the beginning of each month. Payment in advance may be made for as many months/terms of lessons as you'd like to cover.

Missed payments: A 1 week grace period will be allowed; (meaning, if you forget to bring payment to your lesson, I'll still teach the lesson that week as long as payment is brought in within 1 week) – please try not to get more than a week behind as it really creates problems with bookkeeping. I reserve the right to cancel lessons if payment is behind by more than one week.

----- **(Please detach, sign, and turn in)** -----

_____ I have read the Policies sheet; I understand and agree to its terms.

_____ I have read the Note to Students and Parents; I will make every effort to follow its guidelines.

_____ I have read the Practicing Guidelines; I will keep a copy of it at my Practice Area and structure my practice sessions around it whenever possible.

(student's signature)

(parent's signature)

____/____/____
(date)

RESOURCES:

Here are some phone numbers for some repair shops in the area who do good work on woodwinds: (They also have instruments for sale if you're ready to upgrade)

Beaverton Music (503) 643-5431

Music Village (503) 644-7922

Aloha Wind and Brass Service (503) 591-8258

Tigard Music (503) 620-2844

Textbooks (available for purchase either directly from me or from one of the above stores)

1st Year Students: Rubank Elementary Method

2nd Year Students: Rubank Intermediate Method
Concert and Contest Collection
Rubank Selected Duets Vol 1

3rd Year Students: Rubank Advanced Method (Book 1)
Rubank Selected Duets Vol 2
A solo/ensemble contest piece as recommended
(Jazz Students) Jazz Conception etudes (Niehaus)

4th Year Students: Rubank Advanced Method (Book 2)
an etude book from the following list:
Selected Studies (Rubank)
32 Rose Etudes for Clarinet
48 Famous Studies for Saxophone (Ferling)
(Jazz Students may substitute the following instead of etude book)
Patterns for Jazz (Coker)
Bop Duets (Bugs Bower)
Charlie Parker Omnibook

5th Year Students: Scale Book (Pares or Klosé)
Additional course of study as recommended by instructor

Some helpful Apps for your iPhone (or iPad)

Dr Betotte (Metronome) (also available as a standalone app for Mac)

<http://homepage.mac.com/seishu/ssworks/drbototte/drbototte.html>

ClearTune (Tuner)

iRealBook (chord changes to many jazz tunes)