

ZOE SCHLUSSEL MUSIC

VIOLIN. FIDDLE. MUSICIAN HEALTH.

www.zoeschlüssel.com

Studio Information & Lesson Agreement



Thank you for your interest in lessons and your commitment to furthering this child's music education. It is my goal as a teacher to discover the individualized learning style of each student and use that to help them grow and develop as both musicians and human beings.

I believe in developing strong, healthy technical basics while nurturing the student's love of music. I work with each student to create a custom curriculum that best suits their goals, whether their interest lies in classical, fiddle, or elsewhere.

Learning an instrument is about much more than just playing. Music lessons offer discipline, structure, self motivation, and artistic expression. The value of being immersed in music, working day by day to grow as a musician, impacts every area of life, be it sports, academics, current work, or future careers.

Before we get started, please read through the following carefully. Then review, sign, and return the last page to me prior to our first lesson. Please save a copy of this document for future reference.

COMMUNICATION

I am always a message away. Please contact me if you ever have any questions between lessons. I commit to communicating whatever I feel will best help this student. Please do the same for me. Keep me updated with your progress at home and come to me with any questions or concerns.

Lessons are for the student, but the student's success is a team effort the whole family participates in. Learning an instrument is not only about music but about habits, patterns, responsibility, organization, commitment, and a love of what we are doing.

CONSISTENCY

Learning an instrument requires consistency above all else. Being consistent with lessons is just as important as being consistent with practice. Missing or skipping lessons creates a gap of at least two weeks between instruction which will slow or stall progress.

HOLIDAYS

I teach weekly, regardless of school holidays and breaks. If lessons fall on a major holiday, I will contact you to find another suitable time that week. If you need to move a lesson for any reason, let me know with as much notice as possible so we can find another day that would work instead or so that I can offer your time to another student.

SCHEDULING

Lesson schedules are created individually for each student to fit both our schedules in the most consistent way possible. I will always do my best to tell you of any schedule changes that may affect our lessons as far in advance as possible. Please do the same for me. Let me know with as much advance notice as possible of any changes to our planned schedule. If I need to cancel a lesson, I will find a time to make it up or not charge you for that day by crediting your account for the next month.

CANCELLATION POLICY

I have a 24-hour cancellation policy. **If a lesson is canceled with less than 24 hours notice, you will still be charged for that lesson.** If you would like a make-up lesson, you will have to pay for that as an additional lesson.

PAYMENT

I accept lesson payments by cash or check (preferred), Venmo, Zelle, or PayPal (listed as a personal expense). **Payments are due monthly on the 1st of the month.**

PRACTICE

The Three Bubbles of Practice:

1. Technique, warm ups, body awareness, connecting our body and ears to the instrument
2. Practicing the songs we're learning together (including listening)
3. Creativity: playing songs you already know to enjoy the feeling of playing, performing for family/friends, listening to recordings/watching musicians perform, making up songs, improvisation, exploring new songs you might want to play, etc.

Frequency: I ask for *daily practice* from students as this is the most important part of lessons. Practice is not always easy, so habits, discipline, and a good sense of fun are important to maintain progress and momentum. Find a consistent time in your daily schedule for practice to happen so it becomes a routine.

Planning, Follow-through, and Accountability: I believe it's important to set goals and follow through with intention. My least favorite thing to hear is, "I don't know why I didn't practice." It's ok to take a little time off sometimes but I believe it is important to look ahead and set the intention: "I will only practice 4 times this week because I am at grandma's over the weekend." Then we can feel clear about our choices instead of confused or guilty about not practicing.

Post Lesson: Notes are taken at every lesson that go home with the student in their *lesson notebook*.

Please look these over right after each lesson to be sure everything is understood. Make sure you have all the resources you need for that week (find your song recordings, make sure you have the necessary sheet music in your folder, etc.) Reach out if there are any questions. *Tip: Always get a practice session in as soon as possible after each lesson which will help with retention and motivation.*

Practice Routine: Every practice session, go down the list of tasks in the lesson notebook. The notebook should be right next to your music stand when practicing. After each practice, mark your practice for the day in the practice chart at the bottom of your notes to help us both keep track of progress. Keep an eye on proper posture (guide below) when practicing.

Listening: Listening to *practice recordings* is a vital part of practice and should be done daily. Practice both active listening (listening to the song during your practice session while giving it your full attention, maybe even following along with the sheet music or your fingers) and passive listening (having music on in the background, great for while doing homework or driving in the car). *If you don't have the recording of your song, message me so I can send you a link!*

Parental Support: Students need your support. Please help them schedule their practice, reach the goals we have set, and remember good posture and technique.

“I couldn’t practice because...” Things happen and sometimes you think you can’t practice because you don’t have your instrument, it needs repairs, you’re injured, etc., but practice can always be done! You can: Listen to practice recordings / Sing fingers and clap rhythm for your song / Use a pencil to practice your bow hold and fingerings / Practice good playing posture / Watch videos of great players and listen to music / Ask me for more ideas if needed!

LESSON MATERIALS

Notebook: I recommend having a designated notebook for lesson notes to reference during practice.

Recordings: I will give you links to your music in lessons. Let me know if you do not have a recording that you need.

Folder: I will provide loose sheets of paper periodically. Please have a designated folder/binder for lessons to keep papers organized and accessible.

Pencil: Always have a pencil in your case and/or music bag. You will need this during practice and lessons to make notes in your music and to fill out your practice chart.

Accessories: You will need a music stand and shoulder rest. Let me know if you need purchase suggestions.

INSTRUMENT CARE

Environment: Your instrument is made of wood which means it moves and changes with the environment and weather. If your instrument gets too hot, cold, dry, moist, or changes conditions quickly, it may cause cracks or other damage so never leave it in direct sunlight, outside, in your car, or in wet areas.

Tuning: I will tune your instrument at the beginning of every lesson. If we meet online, we will do it together. Please do NOT try to tune your instrument on your own. It is very easy to break strings or otherwise harm the instrument. Over time I will teach you to tune with the fine tuners (the little metal ones on the tailpiece) but please avoid adjusting the big tuning pegs at the top of the instrument. If your instrument falls dramatically out of tune between lessons, contact me.

Cleaning: Clean your strings at the end of each practice using a soft, fuzz-free cloth to gently wipe off rosin residue where your bow comes in contact with the strings and on the wood of the instrument right below. Gently wipe down toward the bridge. (Do NOT use the velvet violin cover as a cleaning cloth.)

Handling: Treat your instrument with care! It is a fragile collection of pieces that can easily break if handled roughly. Handle it gently, don't bang it around, even in the case (cases are protective only to a point, a good jostle can still cause damage). Avoid using your bow in non-violin ways (including poking the floor or your toes while thinking). When picking up the instrument, hold it by the neck or body, never by the fingerboard or strings, and never set the instrument face down or put pressure on the bridge, even in the case.

Touching: Avoid touching the hair of your bow or the strings of the violin where your bow plays them. The oil from your fingers will end up on the bow hair and will render that part of the bow useless.

Rosin: I recommend giving your bow a light rosinning each day. If you're getting lots of white residue on your strings after playing, your bow has too much rosin. Ask me if you have questions.

Storage: Store instrument safely in the case after each practice. If you prefer to have it out so it is easier to start practicing, be sure that it is in a safe, protected, shady place. Always loosen your bow when putting it away (just until the hair lightly touches the stick or gets slightly slack, the stick will warp if held at tension for extended periods of time).

Safety: Have a conversation with the other members of your household about care and handling of the instrument. Be extra careful of small children and pets.

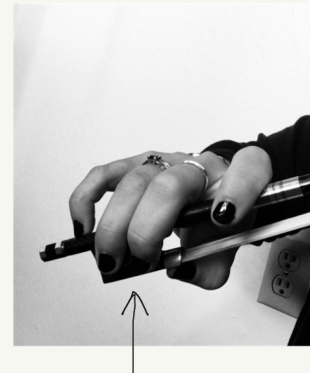
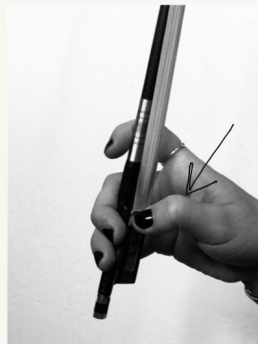
A GUIDE TO THE INSTRUMENT AND BOW HOLD

Please save this as a reference for proper positioning. The way that we hold the instrument and bow is imperative to how we sound and feel. We should be aware of the shape of these parts of our body every moment we play.

The Bow Hold:

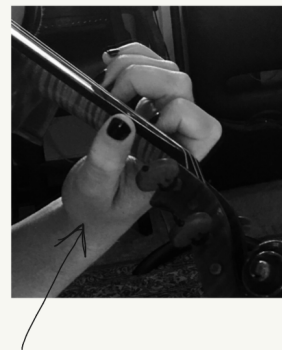


All fingers curved. Watch especially for curved pinky and thumb.



Middle fingers should be down around and in contact with the frog.

The Violin Hold:



The violin is held on the left shoulder with the shoulder relaxed down and the chin turned and rested on the chin rest. The wrist should be straight and the fingers curved up over the fingerboard. The thumb should be straight and rested right across from the first finger along the neck. Be careful that the pad of the thumb is resting on the instrument not the base of the thumb. Thumb should not be sticking up past the neck.

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(530) 401-8991

Lesson Agreement

By signing below you agree to the following:

Please initial:

_____ I have received a copy of this document.

_____ I have read this document in full.

_____ I agree with all stated information and policies.

_____ I have shared this information with this student and household.

_____ I understand and will adhere to the Cancellation Policy whereby I am responsible for full payment of lessons canceled or rescheduled with less than 24-hours notice.

_____ I have shared this document with other parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student and they too understand and agree to the information and Cancellation Policy.

_____ I understand that lesson payments are due in full on the 1st of each month.

Student Name (*print*): _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (*print*): _____

(*if applicable*)

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

(*if applicable*)

Date: _____

Version 8/22/25