



PIANO STUDIO OF MISS FEI

Sep 2022 - June 2023

GUIDELINES FOR NEW STUDENTS

Your First Month of Studies

The beginning of piano studies should be a wonderful memory. After the first lesson, make sure to have a chat with Fei to ask any questions you might have about piano learning. It is normal to have doubts or lack of confidence but give yourself a month of time to experience it. Come to your lessons with open mind and heart, with no judgement and just listen and observe. That is step 1 in your learning: listen and observe, that shall calm your nerves and worries. As for parents, don't worry about your child's practice routine right away. The first month is the "honeymoon" month of exploration, most of the learning will happen in lessons for the first month. Parents are encouraged to observe some or most of the lessons for the first month.

Getting an Instrument

(For students who do not have an instrument yet)

After the 2-3 lessons, if you are sure about the interest, then it is time for another fun thing to do: select your instrument:

Buying a Piano

Of course having a piano would be the best to go for. There are many brands of piano you could select from and it is important to try out the piano before buying and of course it all depends on your budget. Brands with good historical reputation would be most reliable. Best ones are Steinway, Bechstein, Fazioli pianos, then there are mid-range brands that are good enough for beginners as well such as the Japanese pianos of Kawai, Piano, or European piano such as Petrof or Schimmel. There are many poor bands as well that are not worth the investment. If you plan to buy a piano, the best is to get professional advice from Miss Fei beforehand.

Renting a Piano

If a piano is out of your budget range, renting a piano could be an option and it is affordable. Talk to Miss Fei for recommendation. She could refer you to some options of piano renting. You could also rent a piano practice room at local instrument stores to practice by hourly rate.



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Buying a Digital Piano

Third option is getting a digital piano if it is a budget concern. Yes, a digital piano, NOT a keyboard. A keyboard is poor quality, usually light weighted which you cannot control its volume or exercise your touch and finger strength on it. It will discourage the learning more than it will inspire you. Fei would recommend you instead to get a digital piano with heavy weighted keys. You can get one on any local instrument store, or through website like Amazon. There is a good model by *Yamaha* that is affordable (around \$1000+) is : "Yamaha P125 88-Key Weighted Digital Piano" (get the bundle with the stand and piano chair) *Roland* and *Casio* are also two other famous brands for digital piano. *Kawai* also has digital pianos that are very decent. Again, it all depends on your budget. One could use a digital piano for 2-3 years (depends) and it really is not suitable once the student has passed the beginner's stage into intermediate level.

Setting Up Your Practice Routine

50% of your progress will be achieved in your weekly lessons but another 50% is actually self effort at home. Piano playing is hands skill, coordination skills that requires practice for muscle memory (just like any other sports) but it is more than that, it is also practicing your mind-body responses, therefore practice is essential! It is not a chore or a duty, it is a routine of you try things out because you are curious about it and you want to explore more about it. Remember to also accept your mistakes of today but try again tomorrow. Once you set your mind right, then you need a practice plan too. Start with small achievable goals such as :

- I will practice 10 minutes each day
- I will practice 1 song before dinner time each day

Then, slowly extend your routine to more frequent or longer practice. Make sure to read your lesson notes before practicing so you will not be repeating mindlessly. For younger beginners, parents' guidance is needed. The most important supports for beginners are:

1. Find a most suitable time during your child's daily routine to fit in 10-15 mins of piano practice
2. Make time during the day and the week to sit down and practice with your child. This does not mean requiring you to actually play the piano but you could be the audience, or you could offer words of encouragement, show curiosity in your child's learning. Make this a family fun thing to do and yes - your companionship really does matter!



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Communication with Teacher:

1. Make sure you give feedback to your teacher if you have any questions during your home practice. Each student is also expected to make his/her own notes during the lesson (very young kids are excluded). This is part of the learning.
2. For more advanced students who have clear goals (competitions, RCM exams, auditions, etc) make sure you discuss with Miss Fei as early as possible and before you sign up for these important goals.
3. Your progress will be evaluated every 3 months and a feedback and learning report will be given to adult students or to parents by end of each term. Any communication time related to learning is included as part of the lesson and lesson minutes. When the learning report is ready, please plan to have in-person chat with the teacher during the lesson.

What to Bring to Each Piano Lesson:

1. Your piano journal
2. Pens/pencil
3. Piano books / theory workbooks
4. Copied sheets in clear folder
5. A curious and cheerful heart

You will grow to love piano more ... and more!!