



Paper Moon Music

Guitar Lessons in San Diego

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO MUSIC LESSONS

If you're new to music lessons, it can be a daunting task to choose the right program. Here are a few tips to get you started.

CHOOSING A PROGRAM

"What should I look for in a music program?"

First of all, lessons should be one-on-one. Success in music lessons depends on the personal attention of the instructor who tailors the classes specifically for the individual student. Group classes can be fun and social, but must be "taught to the middle," which means the pace of the class is dictated by the average student. More advanced and slower students are not allowed to progress at their own pace.

Secondly, the teacher should be using nationally recognized materials that are standard and common. Even if your child is learning rock guitar, there are book courses that are time-tested and methodical that will move his or her study in a logical and progressive manner. Any songs the student wants to learn should of course supplement these courses, but learning from a book guarantees the student will not have gaps in his or her knowledge of the instrument. Ask what methods are used when inquiring about music lessons.

Where are classes/lessons given? Learning music is not just a matter of having a qualified teacher, but also having an environment that is focused on music education. Many teachers give lessons in their homes, but a professional studio is by far the best place to take lessons. The distractions and atmosphere of someone else's home or apartment does not lend itself to serious study, and avoiding this is all but essential when finding a teacher for young children. Look for a studio with a professional environment and ask if you can visit the studio before you sign up for any program.

"At what age should my child begin guitar lessons?"

Although every child is different, the age of 7 is the earliest a child should begin lessons on guitar. Guitar playing requires a fair amount of pressure on the fingertips from pressing on the strings. Children under 7 generally have small hands and may find playing uncomfortable. Using a small child-size guitar is essential for young children, as it makes holding and playing the guitar much easier.

"How long should each lesson be and how frequently should they be given?"

Hour long lessons are perfect for teenagers and adults, as it allows sufficient time to focus on specific issues, concepts, and techniques. For small children, however, 30-minute lessons are

recommended due to reduced attention spans. Taking lessons once a week provides the optimum time for practice without allowing too much time between sessions. Even in those cases when the student has not had time to practice, attending weekly lessons allows the teacher to check the student's technique and form and gives the student a sense of momentum. Those students who attend lessons more seldom (for example twice or once a month) obviously progress much more slowly than those who take weekly lessons. For those students who are more enthusiastic, attending "double" lessons or scheduling sessions more than once a week can be helpful. However, this kind of accelerated schedule proves impractical for most students.

THE ROLE OF THE PARENT

"What can I do to help?"

A parent who enrolls their child in music lessons has taken one of the most powerful steps possible towards positively shaping their child's future. Sounds a little dramatic, but the benefits a young person reaps from the study of music when it comes to discipline, mental dexterity, confidence and appreciation for culture are unmatched by any other activity they can do.

Music lessons should be very hands-on for the parent. Some of the most successful students are those whose parents help with practice at home and generally take an active interest in the process.

We hope this has given you a little insight into what you should look for and expect when getting music lessons for your child. Feel free to contact us at 619-341-0552 for more information.

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