

# The 7 Keys to Piano Lesson Success

## 1. Encouraging, Motivating, and Inspirational Teacher

Inspiring teachers produce inspired students. A talented teacher has the ability to inspire, motivate, and encourage. An enthusiastic, empathic teacher will inspire a student to achieve musical excellence and nurture the motivation within. Motivation is greater than discipline. When there is sufficient motivation, the discipline will take care of itself. A music teacher imparts the love of music, the inherent beauty of music, and the spirituality of great music. A talented teacher will build a student's esteem and confidence. An inspirational teacher is able to bring out the best in a student by expressing and demonstrating the musical interpretation of the music and its composer. The high expectations of the teacher always raise the performance level of the student. Look for a teacher who possesses musical passion, one who makes playing the piano fun, and watch your child's love for music grow!

*It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge.*  
~ Albert Einstein

## 2. Encouraging and Supportive Parents or Spouse

The success or failure of our children in music lessons or any other endeavor will be in direct proportion to the amount of interest, support, reward, and encouragement we give them. The study of music is a journey that will reap a lifetime of rewards and benefits. Encouragement and praise are the helium of life. As parents, we are musical encouragers for our children. Parents are an integral part of the musical team. It takes teamwork to make the musical dream work. Don't give up! Decisions we make now as parents, will affect our children's entire lives. No education is complete without the study of music. The opportunity to study and make music is one of the most valuable gifts we can give our children...a gift that will last a lifetime.

## 3. Willing Student

A beginning student of music does not necessarily have to be talented or gifted. It's not the aptitude of the student, but the attitude. Where there is a will, there is a way. There is music inside of every child and adult. Children are naturally attracted to music making. Everyone should have the opportunity to enrich their lives with joyful music making. Not all children will be musical geniuses like Mozart, or become professional musicians when they grow up. But they all should be allowed the joy of learning how to love and appreciate great music. Piano lessons develop character building qualities like perseverance, self-confidence, discipline, and diligence. Your talent determines what you can do. Your motivation determines how much you're willing to do. Your attitude determines how well you do it.

## 4. Quality Instrument for Practice

Frequently, parents make the mistake of letting their children begin lessons on an inadequate instrument or portable keyboard; they wait to determine if their child will continue with lessons and see if they will "stick with it". But before long your child will be able to notice the difference between full, clear tone and dull inconsistent tone. Students recognize the limitations of keys that do not respond properly and make it difficult to accomplish the teacher's requests. If an instrument does not feel or sound right, unnecessary frustration may spread to disenchantment with music in general. Children take great pride in their pianos and become attached to them. A good piano reinforces the value of piano lessons and encourages a child to succeed. The very appearance of a poorly maintained piano can be discouraging to a child. When you buy a good piano, your child will be able to enjoy it throughout his or her lifetime. In order for a beginning piano student to develop a beautiful tone, even touch, balanced dynamics, clear pedaling, and a solid technique, a quality piano or a digital piano with a weighted hammer action is recommended. Keyboards are discouraging and not recommended because of limitations in key size, key dip, pedal options, and a non weighted touch. Imagine taking tennis lessons with a ping pong paddle! There are few things more discouraging than practicing on an inadequate instrument. The point is clear: If your child is to learn to play an instrument and be successful, he must begin on a good instrument. The end depends upon the beginning.

## **5. Participation from Other Family Members in Piano Lessons**

Piano lessons are not just for kids! Many adults are discovering the benefits of music study. Piano lessons are the perfect prescription for wellness of mind, body, and soul. Besides being fun and relaxing, learning to play the piano is the perfect stress reliever. There is a hidden talent hiding inside each and every one of us. As someone said, don't die with your music still in you. Make your dream of playing the piano a reality....it's never too late to start! Anyway you play it, music is good for you. Families that share and participate in music making will encourage and help one another. Having a piano in your life says a lot about what is important to you and what you value. Bring your family together around a piano and make musical memories that you'll treasure for a lifetime.

## **6. Playing the Piano with the Assistance of a Music Tutor or Digital Piano**

A Music Tutor is a GS/General MIDI instrument like a Roland KR Intelligent Piano or CVP Yamaha Clavinova digital piano with a disk drive and a virtual live orchestra of built in realistic instrument sounds. Yamaha Disklaviers also have music tutors for practice and performance. Using interactive disks, the Music Tutor guides students by helping them to play correct notes and rhythms with proper musical style and expressiveness. Music Tutors like the Roland MT90S & MT300S enable students to listen more actively. Practicing the piano with a music tutor is fun! Students who practice on digital pianos with a disk drive or a music tutor can dramatically improve their rhythmic counting, sight reading, ear training, improvisation, composition & arranging skills, memorization, and over all musicianship. Technology is a powerful tool for teachers and learners that will motivate and encourage purposeful practicing. Interactive learning with digital pianos, Disklaviers and music software disks are a proven way to guarantee piano lesson success and musical joy!

## **7. Playing Music that Inspires and Motivates**

Great music equals successful students. The music does make the difference. Great and beautiful music will motivate a student to want to learn and to practice. The style and level of music being studied will also instill the desire for mastery and performance confidence. Students like to play music which they perform well. Since the birth of the piano over 300 years ago, there has been more music written for the piano than any other instrument. We can choose music from the world's greatest composers in any of the following periods and styles: baroque, classical, romantic, impressionistic, twentieth century, jazz, improvisational and blues standards, Broadway & movie show tunes, traditional sacred and inspirational gospel hymns, world folk songs, and contemporary tunes. There is a level and style for everyone. By discovering the music styles and composers that you like, you'll be on your way to making the learning process fun and exciting! And the more you play and practice, the better you'll become! There's so much beautiful music to explore and learn. Studies tell us that making your own music can energize the brain, improve your state of mind and even boost your immune system.

*We're just beginning to comprehend the power of great music to heal the body, strengthen the mind and unlock the creative spirit.*

*~ Don Campbell, author of *The Mozart Effect**