

# Why Children Need to Take Piano Lessons



Learning to make music is a valuable skill and a way of expressing one's self. Learning to play the piano develops fine motor skills, visual skills, and listening skills. Piano playing combines all of these skills at one time.

Developing performance skills goes without saying. Yet this goes way beyond the traditional spring recital. The ability to get up in front of others translates to speaking in public, presenting papers, and interviewing for jobs.

Got a competitive student who isn't into bouncing or throwing balls? Competition is not just for athletes! You can find local, statewide, and nationwide piano competitions and festivals. Friendly competition is a great learning tool. Students work harder for competitions, and just participating in the event is a huge win in itself.

For students who are looking at playing in band or orchestra, piano lessons are a huge benefit. Piano lessons teach the child the basics of music, reading notes, learning scales and music terminology, without having to learn how to play a violin or trombone at the same time. Later, the student can concentrate on the specifics of the new instrument.

A good teacher should offer a well-rounded curriculum and be well-educated in piano pedagogy and music theory. Private lessons are the traditional way to go. This one-on-one provides maximum time with the teacher for developing repertoire.

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The dreaded practice struggles need not be a traumatic event. Parents must realize that they make the rules of the home, not the children. If a parent has determined that a child should learn the piano and practice a reasonable amount of time each day, then that is the rule of the home. Children do not decide whether or not they should brush their teeth, do their homework, or eat their meals, so neither should the child tell their parent that they do not want to play the piano.

By the same token, piano practice does not have to be drudgery! It should be fun. Ask your piano teacher for a book that includes a fun play-along CD. Kids love these! And sit down and play along with your child. If your child sees you having fun at the piano, they will, too.

Split up the practice time into short sessions, such as 15 minutes after school, then another 15 minutes after supper.

Playing the piano is a valuable lifelong skill. People can play at church, in amateur productions, maybe earn some income from accompanying or teaching, and best of all, they can just sit down and play. Why watch others make music--make your own!