

How to succeed at Music Lessons

To get the most out of music lessons, Somerset Academy of Music recommends the following:



COME to lessons every week



BRING all materials to your lessons (books, folders, worksheets, etc)



PRACTICE a minimum of 15 minutes a day, at least 5 days a week. Some students may require more time. If you are unsure what to practice, try playing your pieces four times through



PRACTICE everything your teacher assigns you (scales, technique book, lesson book, solos, etc.)



PRACTICE with proper hand position & techniques as explained by your teacher



CONCENTRATE on the details in the music (fingering, dynamics, counting, etc.)



PREPARE to play your assignments for your teacher at lessons



PROGRESS, not perfection, is the expectation



FOLLOW instructions without complaint



COOPERATION is key



ENJOY! Playing music is a privilege and you should have fun doing it



PATIENCE - Development takes time



PERSISTENCE and **PRACTICE** over time will get you results

What to expect: (these are only estimates - age, ability, & effort will impact results)

Before beginning lessons, students should have the ability to recognize the alphabet and numbers 1-10, ability to sit for at least 15 minutes, listen and follow simple directions, show respect, and have a piano or at minimum a working keyboard with full-size keys that are touch-sensitive

6 months – should complete first lesson book, ability to name all white keys, understand difference between left & right, understand basic rhythm, proper hand position, middle-C position, ability to count basic notes & time signatures, cooperative attitude

1 year – progressing in second lesson book, beginning scales, understanding dynamics, C & G positions, beginning articulation, playing hands together, accidentals & key signatures, rhythm sub-divisions, beginning pedaling techniques, self-motivation to practice

2 years + – continuing to progress through at least one lesson book a year, all major & minor scales, chord progressions, exploring different genres, grasping basic theory concepts, extended hand positions, complex time signatures, desire to perform music for others

5 years and beyond – ability to present a solo performance, completed lesson book series, multiple octave scales & arpeggi, working on more intermediate to early advanced repertoire, original arrangements, expanded genres including classical, jazz, improv, sacred etc. Learning advanced techniques for pedaling, sightreading, ornamentation, articulations, dynamic shading, phrasing, showing enthusiasm, self-discipline, initiating song selection and developing personal taste in music

The future is unlimited and up to the student