

What you need to begin...

Shop this List 

PIANO

Students **MUST** have a real piano at home for daily practice. This may seem obvious, but if you don't have a real (acoustic) piano at home, please let me know!

✓ Please go to the "[Your Instrument](#)" page to learn more.

ADJUSTABLE BENCH

I highly recommend all my students have an adjustable bench to ensure correct posture and technique.

If you don't have one, please don't settle for the "one-size-fits-all" of a fixed (hard) bench ... it really does NOT fit everyone! Regardless of age or level, all students need to sit properly at the piano and play with correct posture, position and technique.

✓ View affordable benches [HERE](#) or [HERE](#). Or [Shop on Amazon.com](#).

Small student needs an extra boost? Or need to make your bench more cushy?

✓ Add a [piano bench cushion](#).

FOOTSTOOL

This is necessary for small students! If a small student's feet don't reach the floor, they must have something for support.

Dangling, swinging feet or a body that's slipping off the bench will pull the entire body out of good alignment, foster bad habits, and can prevent a student from playing with correct technique.

⚡ Quick cheap fix: A simple wooden stool, or box, may work temporarily.

✓ **BEST:** Get an adjustable stool with pedal extenders.

Pedal attachments allow students to use both soft and damper pedals, without having to remove the footstool.

♥ **My favorite** is the one I have in my studio - the "PE-2" (expensive, but worth it).

✓ More good options [HERE](#) or search [on Amazon](#).

METRONOME

This is a tool that all musicians need to have! It helps students correct problems with counting and speed, and helps them develop a steady sense of beat. I design many practice assignments for students to use the metronome in their practice time at home.

♥ **My favorite:** a pendulum style [Wittner Taktell metronome](#) - they have a wide variety of full size, [mini](#) or even [animals!](#) No batteries required and it will last you forever. Plus, the pendulum swing is a great visual aid for students who need to see and hear the beat at the same time.

✔ Or use a metronome app. Try [this one](#), which I recommend on the [Music Apps page](#).

PENCIL & HIGHLIGHTERS & POST-IT NOTES

✔ **Always keep a pencil at the piano**, to use for assignments (never use pen!!) and for writing in fingering or other notes in your music as you practice.

♥ I love using [erasable highlighters](#) - color and mark your music without fear of mistakes ruining the page! Adding color is a strong aid for visual learners.

♥ [Post-It notes](#) are endlessly useful: page/measure markers, block out practice sections, or label piano keys.

PRACTICE PROPS

Practice can be fun, especially when learning happens through playfulness (for all ages! and especially young ones).

♥ **I like to use props (toys) to combine fun AND the mind-body connection of learning.**
[See my Practice Toys.](#)

✔ For beginners: get [ladybug squeezies](#) for hand position, and [lwako puzzle erasures](#) for keyboard games.

SPIRAL NOTEBOOK

✔ An 8.5x11 size, with lined paper. Bring it to every lesson for us to take notes of assignments & practice directions.

Students are required to use their notebook every day when practicing to follow instructions.

FOLDER

Keep all copied or printed pages of music & assignments secure in your folder, so they won't get lost or crumpled up.

MUSIC BAG

You need a bag that is devoted to holding all your materials, including music books, folder and assignment notebook. This protects everything from getting lost, dropped in the dirt, or rained on as you go back and forth to lessons. Each week, you can just grab your bag full of all the things you need, ready to go to the lesson!

✔ **PRO-TIP:** At home, keep your things stored in the bag, so you always know where your materials are when you need them (and family members won't accidentally move or misplace!).

MUSIC BOOKS

I email students a shopping list of which books to purchase, once I've decided on a plan of study.

I buy most of my music online at Amazon, Sheetmusicplus.com, or Primamusic.com.

MUSIC DICTIONARY

Learning music is like learning a foreign language: there are many vocabulary words, terms and symbols used in music that students need to learn and recognize. Once students enter their 2nd year of piano lessons, they should know how to look up terms they don't recognize.

♥ **The MusicTools Music Dictionary is my favorite dictionary app, on my Music Apps page.**

⊘ Printed music dictionaries? The majority are outdated, and not as easy to use as an app, or a quick Google search.

NAIL CLIPPERS

Keep your fingernails short and neat. Long nails get in the way of playing with good finger shapes and proper technique. Young students: please have parents do this!

✔ Get in the habit of trimming your nails 1-2x a week, and always check your nails before a lesson, so you don't come to a lesson with long nails!

✔ **PRO-TIP:** Set a scheduled reminder on your mobile device for every week, the day before your lesson - you'll never forget!