

# Allen Hamrick Studio Policies

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This document is intended to be a detailed outline of how I manage my studio. All of the information herein is of utmost importance, and the entire list of policies should be read through carefully and thoroughly. Studio policies will be enforced as outlined here without exception. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

## Content

I teach a wide variety of subjects related to music in addition to specific instruments. I believe that all of these have great value in being studied in tandem with learning an instrument or by themselves. In the case of grade school students especially, I am very interested in relating what students learn under my tutelage to what they learn in school. I treat the information and skills that I espouse with the same respect as I would the information and skills taught in the classroom. I expect my students and their parents to do the same. I also expect students and their parents to treat studying music and our time together with the same respect that they would with any other extra-curricular activity they may also be pursuing.

The pursuit of music is as universal and individual as there are people. I am of the firm belief that the study and enjoyment of music is meant to be experienced by everybody and that music has a part in everybody's life. This will not take the same form for everyone, as those who study under me will find: not everyone wants to study the same thing; not everyone needs to study the same thing; and not everybody learns at the same rate. The curriculum that is given to a student is tailor-fit to them to help them realize their goals, and their fullest potential.

Here is a full list of the subjects that I teach, which can be taken as lessons by themselves, or incorporated into a broader curriculum:

- Modern bassoon
- Historical bassoon (classical, baroque, and dulcian, with more varieties to follow)
- Historical performance
- Recorder
- Piano (beginning students only)
- Music performance
- Music theory and literature
- Music history
- Ear training and musical skills
- Music appreciation

## Billing and Fees

I operate my studio using an annual schedule similar to local public schools. The year is broken into two semesters and summer recess. The first semester runs roughly from the first week of September through the second week of January; the second semester runs roughly from the third week of January through the first week of June. For the 2019–2020 year, the first semester is **September 2, 2019 through January 18, 2020**. The second semester is **January 19, 2020 through June 6, 2020**. There is the potential for single lessons during the summer break for active students who enroll during the regular school year. The availability will depend on my schedule, and they will need to be arranged on an individual basis.

## Tuition

The tuition for lessons during the school is calculated by semester, depending on the length of the lesson and the location of where lessons are conducted. Tuition pays for 15 lessons and reserves the weekly time slot for the entire semester. There are a variety of methods by which you can pay (details below), but please note: **tuition is due up front, and lessons will not begin until I have payment, no exceptions**. Here is the full tuition schedule:

### “Local” Lessons

(locations accessible by T or whose commute is less than 45 minutes)

	Per Lesson	Per Semester
30 minutes	\$30.00	\$450.00
45 minutes	\$45.00	\$675.00
60 minutes	\$60.00	\$900.00

### Non-local Lessons

(locations not accessible by T or whose commute is greater than 45 minutes)

	Per Lesson	Per Semester
30 minutes	\$37.00	\$555.00
45 minutes	\$56.00	\$840.00
60 minutes	\$75.00	\$1,125.00

These fees guarantee your appointed day and time for the duration of the semester. At my discretion, it may be possible to begin lessons after the semester has begun. Even in this case, I must receive payment before lessons begin. Except in the case of a family emergency or an illness **there is no refund for missed or cancelled lessons**. More details regarding my attendance policy, including any exceptions to this rule, are listed below. I reserve the right to change tuition rates at any time, in which case advance notice of at least 30 days will be given.

## Additional and Summer Lessons

If 15 lessons have been given during the semester and there is additional time in the semester before its conclusion, additional lessons may be requested subject to my availability. These additional lessons are charged at the single lesson price listed above.

Summer lessons are available to students who enroll in the regular school year (subject to my schedule and availability) and are also charged at the individual lesson rate. The one exception to this rule that I offer is to first-time students who are curious about the instrument, but who are not sure that they are ready to commit to a full semester of lessons. I encourage prospective students to take advantage of this. The summer recess lasts from roughly the second week of June through the end of August. For the 2019–2020 season, the summer schedule runs from **June 7, 2020 through August 29, 2020**.

## Music and other Texts

For all music and materials required for lessons, it will be up to the student or their parents to bear the financial responsibility of acquiring them. I can serve as a resource in locating music, and arranging orders of the music, if necessary. If I make this arrangement, the student/parents will reimburse me for any materials I acquire out of pocket (which may also include shipping).

## Reeds

Reeds are an important aspect of playing the bassoon, but they are made of organic material and do not last for an infinite amount of time. Thus it is necessary to continue to replace old reeds with new ones as the need arises. This cost is not included in tuition, but the price of tuition does include frequent adjustments to reeds for free as well as a discounted rate for the reeds I make. For students, I charge \$18 per reed. Non-students are charged \$22.

I also make reeds for historical instruments. For students, I charge \$25 per reed. Non-students are charged \$30.

## Payment Methods

Depending on the situation of each student, there are a number of options available for the remittance of payment:

- PayPal
- Venmo app @Allen\_Hamrick
- Check (made payable to *Allen Hamrick*)
- Cash (not available for lessons)

Please mail checks to the following address:

Allen Hamrick  
196 Willow Avenue  
Somerville, MA 02144

If you decide to mail a check, you will need to include the invoice I issue to you when your lessons are booked and confirmed.

In the case of cash, *I will only accept cash in person*, and only for supplies needed for lessons, not for lesson tuition (including additional/summer lessons). You will receive a receipt for your payment once it has been received. In the case of other receipts, I would prefer to email a copy but am willing to mail a hard copy.

## Attendance Policy

As part of the registration process, weekly lesson days and times will be decided upon between the families and me. **It is strongly encouraged that the family be prepared with a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of their schedule when these arrangements are made.** I have to juggle a number of different schedules and obligations, so it is imperative that we change the weekly lesson time as little as possible. When arranging additional lessons or lessons during the summer, requests for the following week must be made by Thursday. Weekly schedules for the following week are set on Thursday, and any requests made after midnight Friday morning will be applied to the week after next.

## Initial Contact

Before any lesson is given, an initial meeting between myself and the prospective student(s) and their parents (if they are under 18) will take place. This need not be in person. It can also be conducted over the phone, via email, or via skype. This meeting is intended for both parties to get to know each other and for me to understand what the goals are for the student and the parents. This meeting is also intended for me to gain some background information about the student and the parents to better relate the information I teach. It will be greatly beneficial to learn about the student's interests and hobbies, specific classroom content that is being taught as well as any previous musical experience on the part of the student or the parent. Please specify in our correspondence how you would like this initial meeting to take place.

## Attendance

Attendance to all lessons is mandatory. Any lesson that is missed without proper communication will be treated as a NO SHOW cancellation and will be counted toward the 15 lesson allotment without a refund. If a student is late, the length of the lesson will not be adjusted, and the lesson fee will not be prorated to reflect this. If being late is unavoidable due to unforeseen circumstances, please call in advance at the earliest convenience to let me know.

As stated above, there are 15 lessons conducted within the duration of a semester. It is my responsibility to keep accurate records and ensure that the student is given the allotted number of lessons.

## Refunds and Rebates

No refunds are issued because of a student's tardiness to lessons, and in general, no refunds are issued due to absences. Details for what constitute an absence and associated rules are described below. The one exception to this policy is the case where I, as the teacher, am unable to fulfill my obligation to teach the allotted 15 lessons within a semester **by the semester deadline**. In other words, if I cannot teach all 15 lessons for the fall semester before January 18, 2020, I can either issue a refund for the missing lessons or I can apply a reduced rebate to the following semester/term, even into the summer. The amount of the refund/rebate is calculated based on the number of lessons that are outstanding. For example: if I can only teach 11 hour-long lessons by the deadline, and the student is non-local, I would either issue a refund of \$300 or I would reduce the tuition for the spring semester by \$300.

## Rescheduling

Sometimes, things outside of our control can happen that prevent us from meeting our appointments. This is normal and understandable. However, these must be communicated effectively in order to maintain a healthy working relationship between the families and me. If a reschedule is requested outside of 24 hours before the lesson, it will be considered "excused," and the student may request an alternate time slot for the week, depending on my availability. Each student has a maximum of 5 reschedules they are allowed to request per semester. As the 3<sup>rd</sup> reschedule is granted, the family and I will discuss the feasibility of maintaining the current time slot and explore the option of adjusting the weekly time slot for the lesson. At this point, it is optional to adjust the weekly time slot to one that better fits the schedules of the student and me. The student may only adjust their time slot exactly once per semester after lessons have begun. If the time slot is adjusted after the 3<sup>rd</sup> reschedule, but the student continues to reschedule the lesson time, **they may not adjust it again**. If the time slot is not adjusted after the 3<sup>rd</sup> reschedule and the student continues to reschedule lesson times, after the 5<sup>th</sup> reschedule, the student **MUST** adjust their weekly time slot to one that better fits the schedules of the student and me.

Requests to reschedule a lesson within 24 hours prior to the lesson will not be honored, and the lesson appointment must be kept. If the student is not able to attend the lesson in this case, they must communicate the absence with me and it will be counted toward the lesson allotment-per-semester. Failure to do so will result in the lesson being counted as a NO SHOW cancellation and carry with it the associated consequences outlined below.

There will likely be times where I, as the teacher, need to reschedule a lesson. These will be arranged outside of the 24 hour window (unless it happens to be an emergency), and will not count toward a student's rescheduling limit. The same thing applies if I need to cancel a lesson for the week.

## Cancellations

If a student must cancel a lesson entirely, they must do so outside of 24 hours prior to the lesson start time in order to count it as “excused.” Each student is allowed a maximum of 2 excused cancellations per semester. After that, they will be counted as excused reschedules, following the rules outlined above.

If an absence (i.e. cancellation) is requested within 24 hours, it will be considered “unexcused” and will be treated as a missed lesson. Missed lessons are not eligible for rescheduling and are counted toward the 15 lesson-per-semester allotment (unless a doctor’s note is presented in the case of an illness or emergency). If a student does not attend their lesson at the appointed time and does not request an absence or does not communicate any adjustment to the schedule with me, it will be treated as a NO SHOW cancellation, and a follow up email or phone call to the parent will be issued to discuss the absence. As stated above, NO SHOW cancellations are counted toward the 15 lesson-per-semester allotment. With three NO SHOW cancellations, the student will be suspended from the studio for the duration of the semester with no refund issued. At the end of a suspended semester, a meeting with the student/parent will take place, and the tenure in the studio will be evaluated. Readmission will be possible upon a positive evaluation. Two suspensions will result in expulsion from the studio, and the student will not be able to reenter to resume lessons.

The only exceptions to the rescheduling and cancellation policies are illnesses, which must be accompanied by a doctor’s note, and family emergencies. In each of these cases, any rescheduling or cancellation that is requested will not count toward the semester maximums (5 reschedules and 2 cancellations) outlined above.

## Trades

If it is not possible to make it to a lesson for one week, it may be possible to switch times with another student. This will not count toward any rescheduling or cancellation limits that I have set above. **This option is only available subject to my approval.** Both parties **must** agree on the trade, and the student who is initiating the swap must be the one to contact me. I have the final say on whether a trade is possible or not. Upon approval, I will communicate with both parties that the trade has been approved, as well as confirmation of the new times for both parties.

## Lesson Termination

In the event that a student or parent decides in the middle of a semester that they do not wish to continue lessons, a notice of at least two weeks in advance must be given. At the time the notice is given, a discussion will take place to go over the reasons for termination, as well as whether termination is the appropriate course of action. If it is decided that the family must move forward with termination, details of the termination will be determined at that time, including the final lesson date. A refund will be issued at the final lesson and will be calculated as follows: take the dollar total of the remaining lessons that have not been given and subtract the termination fee from this total. A summary of the termination fee is given below:

Termination fee subtracted from total remaining lessons

1-5 lessons remaining	10% of remaining lesson total
6-10 lessons remaining	20% of remaining lesson total
11-15 lessons remaining	30% of remaining lesson total

Some exceptions may be made at my discretion. Any exceptions that are to be made will be determined during the discussion at the time the notice is given.

## Holidays

The studio observes all national holidays and will additionally be closed for the weeks surrounding the Christmas holiday and New Year's Day (2 weeks). It will also be closed for "Spring Break" which is the last full week in March. If you have a special religious circumstance, please inform me so that I may adjust your schedule accordingly.

## Practice and Preparation

It is the responsibility of the student to come prepared for lessons, and it is the responsibility of the parents to prompt their students as the need arises. Students must have all the tools and materials they need for lessons on hand; they must adhere to an appropriate practicing schedule to ensure that they are prepared to actively engage during our lesson times; and they must be focused during our lessons to maximize our time together. An appropriate practice regimen will be discussed during the initial point of contact and in subsequent lessons, and it is the responsibility of the parents and the students to follow this regimen outside of lesson times.

**Lessons are not the time to practice your music.**

## Recitals and Performances

The ultimate goal of studying a musical instrument is to share with your family and friends the progress that you have made in your studies. I encourage students to seek out any opportunities they can find, and in addition, instrumental and performance students will have opportunities to perform in recitals. These recitals will typically be pastiches representing the knowledge and skills gained across the entire studio, which limits the musical selection to one or two per student per recital. For particularly ambitious students, solo recitals may be discussed and arranged. Participation in any of these events will be discussed in lessons.

## Code of Conduct

All of these rules **MUST** be obeyed. Failure to do so will result in immediate removal from the studio and will greatly diminish the student's chances of readmittance:

- No violence

- No rude or foul language
- No suggestive behavior
- No vandalism
- Respect the teacher and every other student and parent in the studio

In addition, please be kind and courteous to other students in the studio, be careful around the instruments, especially those that aren't yours, and no food or drink (except water) in the studio.

If you have any questions about the policies, please contact me via phone at (812) 361-1367 or via email at [allen.hamrick.bassoon@gmail.com](mailto:allen.hamrick.bassoon@gmail.com). I look forward to working with you to help you reach your goals!