Studio Policy

Thank you for your interest in piano lessons at Carltabie Studio. This document provides a simple overview of our teaching philosophy, lesson structure, and expectations to help you determine whether our approach is the right fit for your family. Carltabie Studio is a faith-based piano studio focused on musical understanding, discipline, and character formation. Lessons are designed to help students play thoughtfully, calmly, and confidently, particularly in worship and service settings.

Our Approach

- Listening before playing
- Playing melodies and accompaniments by ear
- Hymns and sacred music
- Patience, focus, and steady progress

Our goal is not simply for students to play songs quickly, but to develop musical maturity, confidence, attentiveness, and long-term understanding. Students are guided toward becoming musically independent, able to accompany hymns, support others, and play with understanding rather than imitation alone.

Who This Studio Serves Best

This studio works especially well for families who value:

1. Discipline over entertainment
2. Formation over competition
3. Faith-centered music education
4. Steady, meaningful progress over fast-tracked results

While we respect other musical paths, this studio may not be the best fit for families primarily seeking competitions, examination-focused training, or rapid performance-based advancement.

Studio Policy

Lesson Format & Tuition

Tuition is $100 per month and includes:

- 4 live Zoom or Google Meet lessons
- 8 guided supervised practice sessions
- Ongoing lesson preparation and structured feedback

Lessons are held at a fixed weekly time slot reserved specifically for the student. Tuition is paid monthly in advance. If a scheduling conflict arises, lesson swaps within the same week may occasionally be arranged depending on availability.

Practice Expectations

Consistent practice is essential for healthy progress. We encourage short, focused daily practice sessions rather than long, distracted ones. A suitable instrument at home, along with parental support for routine and consistency, is important for the student's continued growth.

Commitment

1. We work best with students and families who are committed to steady development and consistent preparation.
2. Should a student repeatedly come unprepared over an extended period, we may recommend pausing or discontinuing lessons until the student is ready to continue productively.
3. One month's notice is requested before discontinuing lessons.
4. Tuition is non-refundable, as lesson spaces and preparation time are reserved in advance.

Recommended Instruments

If you do not currently own a keyboard, we recommend:

- Yamaha PSR-S670
- Yamaha E473
- Yamaha E383

Final Note

If this philosophy aligns with your goals for your child, we would be glad to continue the conversation and support your child's musical growth.

Curriculum Overview

Structure

Progress is organised by formation rather than speed. Advancement depends on consistency, understanding, and readiness.

Beginner Level

Keys: C, F, G

- Listening before playing
- Singing melodies before keyboard work
- Simple hymn melodies
- Basic harmonic awareness
- Steady rhythm and calm tone

Outcome: Students internalise sound and develop confidence without dependence on notation.

Intermediate Level

Keys: D, A, Bb, Eb

- Left-hand coordination
- Chord patterns and accompaniment
- Transposition
- Awareness of harmonic movement

Outcome: Students begin to understand musical structure and support melody thoughtfully.

Curriculum Overview

Advanced Level

Keys: E, B, Ab, Db, F#/Gb

- Fluency across keys
- Voicing and balance
- Discernment in texture and style
- Playing for congregational contexts

Outcome: Students develop musical restraint, clarity, and responsibility in service settings.

Lesson Structure

Each lesson follows a consistent structure:

1. Listening and singing
2. Slow, controlled playing
3. Pattern recognition (melody, harmony)
4. Technical coordination
5. Reflection on musical meaning

Beginner Repertoire

Key of C major

1. Jesus Loves Me This I Know
2. Sweet Hour Of Prayer
3. When He Cometh
4. The Great Physician
5. When Peace Like A River

Key of F major

1. Tis So Sweet To Trust In Jesus
2. What A Friend We Have In Jesus
3. Jesus Keep Me Near The Cross
4. Oh How I Love Jesus

Key of G major

1. Master The Tempest Is Raging
2. How Great Thou Art
3. Worthy Worthy Is The Lamb
4. Sowing In The Morning
5. Rock Of Ages Cleft For Me

Intermediate Repertoire

Key of D major

1. In That Of Fadeless Day
2. Called To The Feast
3. Great Is Thy Faithfulness
4. I Surrender All
5. This Is My Father's World

Key of A major

1. When We Walk With The Lord
2. Joy By and By
3. Lift Up The Trumpet
4. Blest Be The Tie
5. Sing Them Over Again

Key of Bb major

1. Master The Tempest Is Raging
2. How Great Thou Art
3. Worthy Worthy Is The Lamb
4. Sowing In The Morning
5. Rock Of Ages Cleft For Me

Key of Eb major

1. The Lord's Our Rock
2. My Hope Is Built On Nothing Less
3. Abide With Me
4. My Jesus I Love Thee
5. Lord In The Morning

Advanced Repertoire

Key of E major

1. More About Jesus
2. Give Me The Bible
3. Nothing But The Blood Of Jesus
4. We Have Heard A Joyful Sound
5. Work For The Night Is Coming

Key of B major

1. Far And Near The Fields
2. There's a Land That Is Fairer Than Day
3. How Far From Home
4. When We All Get To Heaven

Key of Ab major

1. Are You Washed
2. Tis Love That Makes Us Happy
3. Showers Of Blessings
4. We Know Not The Hour
5. At The Cross

Advanced Repertoire (continued)

Key of Db major

1. Sweeping Through The Gates
2. Nearer Still Nearer
3. There Is A Place Of Quiet Rest
4. He Brought Me Out
5. A Wonderful Savior

Key of Gb major (F#)

1. Whosoever Heareth Shout Shout The Sound
2. Marching To Zion
3. Burdens Are Lifted At Calvary

Studio Philosophy

Carltabie Studio is a faith-based music studio that uses piano study as a means of character formation, discipline, and musical understanding.

We teach students to:

- Listen attentively before playing
- Develop patience, focus, and responsibility
- Understand music by ear before relying on written notation
- Accompany hymns and spiritual songs thoughtfully
- Play in congregational, band, or solo settings with confidence

Our goal is not speed or display, but musical maturity. Progress is measured by consistency, understanding, and steadiness rather than by how many pieces a student can rush through. As a Seventh-day Adventist-based studio, we believe music shapes the inner life. We therefore prioritize hymns and sacred songs that support reverence, discernment, and service.

This studio is not a preparation center for:

- Piano examinations
- School competitions
- Music trophies or performance rankings

We are not training sight-reading specialists whose primary skill is decoding notes on a page. While reading is introduced gradually and carefully, it is not the foundation of our teaching.

We are not a pop or secular music studio. This does not mean we hate or fear secular music. It means we believe that what students practice daily forms their taste, attention, and values. For this reason, we intentionally focus on music that aligns with Christian character and spiritual growth.

We do not promise fast results with minimal effort. Daily practice is expected. Short, focused sessions are preferred, but consistency is required.

Studio Philosophy

Our Approach

Students learn music in the following order:

- Hearing and singing
- Playing melodies by ear
- Understanding harmony and accompaniment
- Developing independence between hands
- Gradually introducing notation as support

This approach produces students who can:

- Play without panic
- Adapt to new musical situations
- Support others musically rather than seek attention

A Note to Parents

This studio works best for families who value:

- Discipline over entertainment
- Formation over performance
- Faithfulness over flash

1. If your goal is to raise a child who is calm, attentive, and musically useful in church and life, this studio will serve you well.
2. If your goal is rapid advancement, public recognition, or competition-based success, this studio may not be the right fit, and that is perfectly okay.

Assessment

Musical Listening & Awareness

- The ability to hear attentively before and while playing.
- Recognizing melody and harmony by ear.
- Anticipating where the music goes next.
- Balancing the sound between both hands.

We are building a mind that is observant, patient, and learns to listen before it acts.

Technical Coordination

- The ability to execute ideas calmly and reliably.
- Developing hand independence.
- Building finger strength and control.
- Maintaining a steady, rhythmic pulse.

We are building self-control and the ability to stay composed under pressure.

Musical Expression

- The ability to shape music meaningfully, not mechanically.
- Controlling the volume and ”touch” of every note.
- Understanding when to lead and when to show restraint.
- Developing a high-quality, consistent tone.

We build sensitivity and the ability to make thoughtful, intentional decisions.

Assessment (continued)

Learning Habits

- The responsibility shown toward the craft.
- Maintaining a regular, honest practice schedule.
- Coming to the lesson prepared and focused.
- The willingness to take a mistake and refine it.

We build Grit: the habit of doing difficult things well.

Musical Understanding

- The grasp of logic, structure, and patterns.
- Recognizing how chords and keys work together.
- Identifying patterns rather than just memorizing.
- Making informed choices about how to play a piece.

We build independent and critical thinking.