

Dear parent/student,

Welcome to the Suzuki piano online course! I'm so excited to guide you along this new musical journey! To get started, please read through the materials list and make sure you have the items listed.

### **Materials you will need:**

1. An instrument to practice on

- a. Acoustic piano—Best option! (can be found on Facebook Marketplace)  
Yamaha upright pianos are great quality and affordable for starting out.  
Pianos will need tuning once per year for maintenance.
- b. Or... a full-length (88 keys) electric keyboard with weighted keys

2. Suzuki Volume 1, New International Version

(Buy with CD or download the music files separately)

Book without CD:

[https://www.amazon.com/Suzuki-Piano-School-International-Vol/dp/0739054473/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=37V6KHI98JYHR&keywords=suzuki+piano+book+1&qid=1683838951&srefix=Suzuki+piano%2Caps%2C128&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Suzuki-Piano-School-International-Vol/dp/0739054473/ref=sr_1_1?crid=37V6KHI98JYHR&keywords=suzuki+piano+book+1&qid=1683838951&srefix=Suzuki+piano%2Caps%2C128&sr=8-1)

Book with CD:

[https://www.amazon.com/Suzuki-Piano-School-International-Book/dp/B001OTEER6/ref=sr\\_1\\_4?crid=37V6KHI98JYHR&keywords=suzuki+piano+book+1&qid=1683838951&srefix=Suzuki+piano%2Caps%2C128&sr=8-4](https://www.amazon.com/Suzuki-Piano-School-International-Book/dp/B001OTEER6/ref=sr_1_4?crid=37V6KHI98JYHR&keywords=suzuki+piano+book+1&qid=1683838951&srefix=Suzuki+piano%2Caps%2C128&sr=8-4)

Music Files: There are multiple recording artists. Choose the recordings by **Seizo Azuma**.

<https://www.alfred.com/suzuki-method/suzuki-audio-downloads/>

3. Boosters for your piano bench (or an adjustable bench)

Options: gardening kneeling pads, thick books, piano pads from YoungMusicians.com, large carpet sample pieces. **Avoid using pillows or soft cushions for boosters**

4. Piano Footstools

Options:

- a. Contact me for purchase (\$70 for a finished wooden set, cheapest on the market, available in the Grand Rapids, MI area)
  - b. Stacked books
  - c. Step stool
  - d. Purchase a set online
5. Succeeding At the Piano, Lesson and Technique Book – Preparatory (needed by Lesson 35)

<https://a.co/d/iPYQwWQ>

6. Sight Reading & Rhythm Every Day, Let's Get Started Books A and B (needed by Lesson 52)

<https://a.co/d/gdwFc8T>

<https://a.co/d/fB1zP8c>

7. Music Flashcards (needed partway through the course)

<https://a.co/d/fbFdR9E> Or <https://kjos.com/bastien-music-flashcards.html>

8. Toy car(s)
9. Bingo chips or bag of pennies

<https://a.co/d/4cQM3Hd>

10. Ball that fits under your child's hand
11. Fly swatter
12. Toys, toys, and more toys!

Children love to practice with toys, so the more sets of different toys you have the better! Legos, cars, puppets, stuffed animals, small plastic animals, fun erasers, balls, plastic bugs, toy people, etc.

#### **Other practice tools:**

- Sticker charts
- Bead counters
- Dice (to randomly choose a part or decide how many times to practice a section)

- Deck of playing cards, Uno cards, or SkipBo cards (any cards with numbers). You can use these to randomly choose a part of a piece to play, or to randomly decide how many times to practice a section.

## Getting Started

1. Turn on the Suzuki CD/recording **every single day**. This can be while your children are doing homework, when you're in the car, during mealtime, or while they're falling asleep at night. All the pieces that will be learned are on this CD, so being extremely familiar with the music will make learning the pieces much easier. Listening is the cornerstone of the Suzuki method. Your child must have the music in their ear so they can imitate it.
2. Print out the Practice Chart and Notes for each lesson. This file is provided on the Parent/Practice Resources page. The Practice Chart has spots to check off each assignment or piece that you practice each day. You should also log how many minutes you practiced and how long you listened to your music recording. There's also a spot to record your (or your child's) attitude while practicing. Involve your child in this process and ask them how they think their attitude was. Feel free to set goals and incentives to reward your child for having a good attitude all week. The "Main Point" section is purposefully left blank. I encourage you to write what you think your Main Point of focus during practice should be, based on what you learned in the lesson.
3. This program works best with daily, consistent practice of 30 minutes. If you don't have this amount of time, or if you regularly skip days, your child will still benefit, but you won't see the same kind of progress that you would if you practiced 30 minutes a day. (That being said, we all have days when we are extra busy. On days like these, if you're not able to fit in a full practice, just do what you can. Practicing for even 1 minute is better than skipping a day.)
4. Pick one day of the week to be your Lesson Day when you watch the lesson video and take notes. Most of the lessons are intended to take about a week to complete. If the student hasn't mastered all the assignments in one week, that's no problem. Just wait to move on to the next lesson until they have mastered everything from the previous lesson. The Suzuki method works by moving in small gradual steps. Each child learns at their own pace. The important thing is that you don't rush and move on to the next video before they have fully mastered the previous material. One practice chart is provided for each video lesson. If your child isn't ready to move on to the next lesson, print that same practice chart again for as many weeks as it takes them to master the concepts.

5. Children 4-7 will need your full involvement. Watch the lesson video with them each week. If they're too young and unable to focus on the video (4 and 5-year-olds especially), just watch the lesson yourself. You can take extra notes in the free space provided in the Practice Notes. Then you can guide your child through the concepts in the lesson. Children 6 and older will have an easier time focusing on the video. If they're watching the video with you, I will sometimes prompt the child to try something in the middle of the lesson. The screen will go dark, giving you time to pause the video so they can try whatever I prompted them to try. If your child did not watch the video with you, it will be your job to present these lesson ideas to them for the first time. Try to present them in the way I did in the video (e.g. if I used a toy or a certain illustration, try to do the same). Try to demonstrate a skill and let them copy you, rather than verbally explaining everything. They do not need to master all the skills right away on the Lesson Day. The Lesson Day is merely a day to introduce the concepts so you both know what the goals are for the week. It is ideal if the child achieves one successful "repetition" on Lesson Day of whatever is being taught so they know what a correct repetition looks like.
6. For the rest of the week, your goal is to work on the practice points from the lesson with your child, using the strategies given in the video. Use the provided practice sheets to check off (or let your child check off) each assignment when you practice it. Again, you will achieve best results if you practice every day and make it a point to complete most, if not all, practice assignments daily. (If you have a very busy day, practicing even for 1 minute is better than skipping altogether. Just do something.) The Practice Notes include the goal for the week, so it is easy to know what needs to be accomplished before moving on to the next lesson.
7. A child who is 8-11 will need your involvement at the beginning of their musical journey, probably for 6-12 months, and then they can gradually transition to practicing on their own if they seem ready, as long as you still watch the lesson with them once a week. This will allow you to check in on how they're doing. Don't rush this transition. The longer you practice with them the better. For this reason, try as hard as possible to make practice fun, positive, and enjoyable so that it's sustainable to continue working with them as long as possible. (Watch the Positive Practice videos for helpful ideas.) Every student is different. Some students are ready to practice independently sooner than others.
8. Children 12 and up can start off independently. They can still benefit from your involvement, but it's not absolutely crucial. You can be more of a "private consultant" for when they need an extra pair of eyes and ears. Students 12+

should use the Practice Charts and Notes and watch the parent videos themselves for extra tips.

9. In Lesson 35, we start Prepared Reading using the Succeeding At The Piano Lesson and Technique book.
  - i. What is prepared reading? Prepared Reading is reading music and practicing and "preparing" it until you can play it fluidly, confidently, with attention to all details written in the score. Prepared Reading is different from Sight Reading. Sight Reading is reading a piece of music for the first time. We will begin a Sight Reading Book a little later in the course.
  - ii. I do not teach you the reading pieces in the lesson videos. I have indicated which reading pieces you should be on in the Practice Charts.
  - iii. I created a separate "reading video" of myself playing each of the pieces to help you. Do **NOT** use this video to learn the notes. That would defeat the point of learning how to **read** music, since you would be learning from the video instead of reading the notes. Use the video to double-check your work and make sure you didn't miss anything.
  - iv. Make sure you can play the pieces well with attention to all details before you move on to the next video lesson.
  - v. If you have mastered all the assignments pertaining to the Suzuki pieces, but are behind on Prepared Reading, take an extra week or two to catch up. It is important not to fall behind on Music Reading.
10. In Lesson 52, we begin a Sight Reading book. Similarly, this material is not covered in the lesson videos. Instead, the Practice Charts indicate which unit you should be on. Aim to stay on track. The books are very easy and self-explanatory.