

Mason Voice Studio Policies and Procedures

Welcome to Mason Voice Studio! I look forward to working with you to develop your skills as a singer and musician. Together, we will seek out your unique voice using healthy, classical singing techniques and refine your performance style in an engaging, professional, and inviting atmosphere. Included in this document are my studio's policies and expectations. Feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you might have about these policies.

Calendar:

Lessons will occur weekly in two 14-week terms, Fall and Spring. The Fall semester will begin on September 14, 2020 and conclude on December 18, 2020. The Spring semester will begin January 11, 2020 and conclude on May 16, 2019. An optional 8-week Summer term is available by request. This studio observes the holiday calendar of Hamilton Southeastern School District, and lessons will not be offered on those holidays or on federal holidays. Holidays include:

- Fall Semester:
 - Fall Break (Oct. 19-23)
 - Thanksgiving (November 25-27)
- Spring Semester:
 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day
 - President's Day
 - Spring Break (April 2-9)
- Summer Term:
 - July 4th

Tuition:

Tuition can be paid once per semester or monthly, as illustrated in the following chart. Before making a payment, please communicate your chosen payment plan to me via the agreement form included at the end of this packet. Accepted forms of payment include cash, check, Paypal, and Venmo. Checks may be mailed to the studio address.

Length of Lesson	Lesson Payment Schedule	
30 min.	Semesterly payment of 280\$ (14 lessons at 20\$ each) Due at First Lesson of Semester	Monthly payments (20\$/lesson) Due First Lesson of the Month Approximately 120\$/month Based on number of weeks of lessons per month
60 min.	Semesterly payment of 420\$ (14 lessons at 30\$ each) Due at First Lesson of Semester	Monthly payments (30\$/lesson) Due First Lesson of the Month Approximately \$120 per month Based on number of weeks per month

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The payment for each semester or quarter is due at the first lesson of the payment period, whether it is monthly or by or semester. *No lesson will be given unless the payment has been received.* A late fee of 15\$ will apply to any payment that is later than the student's first scheduled lesson of the period. This is because I value my time as well as yours; if I must turn a student away from their lesson time due to a tardy payment, both the student's time and my own have been wasted.

If there are concerns of affordability, please speak to me directly and I will do my best to make arrangements accordingly. I can offer a family discount of ten percent off the semesterly sum if more than one family member takes lessons at my studio. Scholarship information is available upon request.

Lesson Location and COVID-19 Policies:

Due to recent and current events, we are all being cautioned to be careful of our health and safety. This is especially important for singers, and I take your health and my own seriously. For this reason, I offer remote teaching options in addition to my in-person studio. In-person voice lessons will be held in my home studio, located at 10636 Blackthorn Court, Fishers, IN 46250, just off of I-69 and 106th Street. Remote lessons will be held over Zoom, Skype, or Facetime, to your preference. If safety requirements change due to COVID-19, I may have to move in-person lessons to remote means, and we will handle that cooperatively and individually.

For your health and mine, please do not attend a lesson if you have been feeling unwell or have been experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. Please handle such events as described in the absences and make-up lesson policies below. I do not ask that you wear a mask as you sing; I find this severely hampers communication, singing, and instruction in the lesson setting. We will observe social distancing as we can, and as you are comfortable with. However, please otherwise observe health and safety guidelines, such as washing your hands and sanitizing what may come into contact with others. I will be sanitizing the area you come into contact with as a student regularly to prevent the spread of germs.

Absences and Make-Up Lessons:

As mentioned previously, make-up lessons may be arranged via communication between the student and the teacher. A student is eligible for a make-up lesson if I, the teacher, cannot attend your lesson time, or if there is at least 48 hours notice of your (the student's) absence. Family emergencies and illness, including COVID-19 related absences, will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

A student more than ten minutes late to their lesson who has not contacted me will be considered absent. Failure to notify me at least 48 hours in advance of an absence will mean that I cannot offer a make-up lesson. I do my best to follow up on make-up lessons, especially when the lesson cancellation is due to my own schedule, but your absences are your responsibility. I cannot give refunds for missed lessons, which is why I highly encourage that you manage your attendance and *pursue make-up lessons whenever you can.* This not only makes the most of your

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tuition, but also makes the most of your opportunity to grow as a musician during our time together in the studio.

Music Purchase Policy:

When possible, I will provide repertoire from public domain sources or from my own library, but you are responsible for buying any repertoire or vocal exercise book that you may require for your lessons.

Visitor Policy:

Visitors are welcome in my studio, as long as the student has agreed to the visitation prior to the lesson. Any immediate family of the student who wishes to observe a lesson may do so as long as I am given 24 hours' notice of the observation. If any other person wishes to observe the lesson, 24 hours' notice is required, including written agreement of the student and of any relevant guardian to the observation. I may also ask a visitor to wear their facemask while observing, in light of COVID-19 health advisories, in order to ensure the safety of the visitor, the student, and myself.

Masterclasses and Recitals:

Monthly, the Mason Voice Studio will hold a Masterclass at the studio location or remotely, as safety guidelines require. Attendance is mandatory for those who have chosen 60 minute lessons. This gives students an opportunity to be inspired by their peers and learn in an active performance environment. I may ask a student with a 30 minute lesson to attend or sing in a masterclass, but they are not required to do either. An accompanist will be provided by the studio for each masterclass.

Additionally, the Mason Studio will hold a recital each semester. Attendance is mandatory for all students, and 60 minute lesson students will be required to perform at least one piece. A 10\$ accompaniment fee applies to any student who performs in this recital in order to compensate the provided accompanist.

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-----Please Sign and Return to Instructor-----

I, _____, have read the above policies and agree to abide by them. I understand that Mason Voice Studio is within their rights to terminate lessons should failure to comply with these policies occur.

- I have chosen the [Semesterly] [Monthly] payment plan for [30 minute] [60 minute] lessons.
- I prefer [In-Person] [Remote] Lessons.
 - For Remote Lessons, I prefer [Facetime] [Zoom] [Skype]
- Within Mason Studio's listed hours, the times I am most available for lessons are:
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
- I [do] [do not] agree to let Mason Studios use any recordings or images of myself in promotional material or media posts.

Signed: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

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Welcome to the Mason Voice Studio!

I am thrilled to be working with you on your journey as a musician. Together, we will build your skills in vocal technique, musicality, performance, and knowledge of classical music. I look forward to getting to know you and your unique voice, seeking healthy technique that works in conjunction with your sound and personal style.

Expectations:

I expect you, as the student, to arrive to your lesson time promptly. I expect you to bring a pencil, your music, and a willing attitude to each lesson. Your music should be in its book or in a three-ring binder for ease of use. Feel free to bring a notebook in which to make notes. You may also record your lesson on your phone or another recording device, if that helps you. I also expect you to come to your lessons having practiced the skills and material that we discussed in our last lesson.

During the lesson, I expect you to take ownership of your learning. If something feels wrong, or of something does not make sense, please ask questions about what you are experiencing. I will be happy to clarify any material or redirect you as necessary. You know your own voice and sensations best, and it makes the learning process much more productive if you remain vigilant about your own learning. I also expect you to try, at least once, what I ask you to try. Much of music-making relies on experiencing a range of sounds and sensations in order to find what works best for your voice, and what is healthiest and most effective.

Practice:

As musicians, we commit to improving our skills and knowledge not only in the studio, but outside of it as well. By committing to voice lessons in my studio, you have committed yourself to rehearsal time and practice on your own. I recommend at least the length of your lesson time (30 or 60 minutes) five times a week. But *how* do you practice?

- **Do:**

- **Warm up:** take the time to get your voice ready to sing by doing warm up exercises that you have learned in the studio or in another musical setting.
- **Work in small sections:** don't try to tackle the entire piece at once. Start with small sections, working first on rhythm, then adding melody, then adding text. This allows your brain to process the music more quickly and more efficiently.
- **Use a mirror:** give yourself the opportunity to see what you are doing as you sing. You could use a video recording of yourself instead of a mirror; both provide the same instant feedback without the bias of our constant inner monologue.
- **Make note of what you practiced:** write down not only what you did or which songs you rehearsed, write down what went well or what went poorly. Write down what gave you trouble, or any discoveries you made while practicing. You can use a journal or a practice log, like the one included in this letter, to make these notes.

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- **Warm down:** Just like any athlete, after you have used your “singing muscles” you ought to give them a chance to wind down. Do some slow, easy vocal exercises before moving on.
- **Silent Score Study:** Practice your music silently. Research the composer, the piece’s history, the time period, and the text of the piece. Listen to others perform the piece to find inspiration for artistic interpretation.
- **Don’t:**
 - **Oversing:** this includes spending too much time on warm up exercises, singing a difficult note too many times or too loudly, or tiring your voice by overusing it after a long day. Take cues from your body, and if something hurts or is feeling shaky, don’t push yourself unnecessarily. Instead, pursue silent score study or simply play through your melody.
 - **Practice poor habits:** Repetition builds habits, whether they are good or bad. Poor singing habits can be hard to break, so be aware of your posture, breathing, and tension even as you practice little things or learn notes. Your body learns the summation of an experience, which makes bad habits harder to isolate once they are learned. If you notice a bad habit within your practice, stop immediately and correct it.
 - **Rely on recordings to learn your piece:** Youtube, Spotify, and Soundcloud are great resources for singers, but they should not take the place of independent learning. Take the time to play your melody out on the piano, or practice your sight singing while checking yourself against the piano. Learning solely based on another’s performance of a piece can instill bad habits and change your sound production because you have begun imitating someone else’s unique voice instead of focusing on your own.

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PRACTICE LOG

Day:	Day One	Day Two	Day Three	Day Four	Day Five
Warm Ups					
Repertoire					
What Went Well					
What You Struggled With					
Total Time					