

# Policies for Parents and Students

Welcome to Gist Piano Academy! We firmly believe that students of every age can benefit from piano lessons and it is our mission to provide you with the perfect mix of top-quality instruction, musical development and good, old-fashioned fun that will keep you playing for the rest of your life! No matter what your personal goals, we look forward to helping you experience the magic of making music.

Please take a moment to review the following policies regarding piano study at GPA. These policies are enacted to provide you with a clear and complete understanding of our studio environment.

## Section 1: Scheduling and Attendance

- **Private Lessons** – Gist Piano Academy offers weekly private lessons in half-hour intervals. Students will meet with their teachers once per week at their regularly scheduled lesson times for a minimum of four lessons per month. In cases where the month contains five weeks, the fifth week may be used as a make-up lesson or purchased in advance as an “extra lesson” (pending instructor approval).
- **Group Lessons** – Gist Piano Academy offers weekly group classes at various times throughout the year. Registered GPA students are welcome to sign up for these classes during their specified R.S.V.P. times. Rates, times and subject matters will vary.
- **Lesson Attendance**
  - **Tardiness** – Students should arrive a minimum of five minutes (and a maximum of 15 minutes) before their regularly scheduled lesson time. The student’s lesson time cannot be altered to accommodate tardiness. Students who arrive late will forfeit any lost lesson time.
  - **Instructor Cancellation** – If an instructor must be absent, (s)he will notify affected students ahead of time and schedule a make-up lesson or class on a Saturday or on the fifth week of an upcoming month (as appropriate).
  - **Student Cancellation** – Weekly lesson attendance is critical to a student’s success. Any student who is unable to attend a regularly scheduled lesson must notify his/her teacher a minimum of 24 hours in advance. If the absence is due to illness, a family emergency or inclement weather, the student may schedule a make-up lesson with his/her teacher at the teacher’s discretion. GPA teachers reserve the right to refuse a make-up lesson in cases of excessive absences or in cases where improper notification is given.
  - **Severe Weather** – In the interest of student safety, GPA reserves the right to cancel lessons when inclement weather is deemed unsafe. Cancellation information will be released via social media and [www.gistpianoacademy.com](http://www.gistpianoacademy.com). GPA instructors will call their students to inform them of the lesson cancellation and to schedule make-up lessons.
  - **Make-up Lesson Scheduling** – Make-up lessons are available to qualified students in good standing. They may be scheduled for a fifth week in any upcoming month or on a Saturday at the teacher’s discretion and subject to studio availability.
- **Piano Recitals** – From time to time – and at the teacher’s discretion – students may be called upon to prepare for and perform in a piano recital. Piano recitals are extremely valuable to the development process for students of all ages. Though this experience is not mandatory, it is greatly encouraged. In addition to “traditional” recitals, Gist Piano Center will offer theme recitals as part of the Partner In Education program. Students who wish to participate in these “for fun” recitals may do so at their teachers’ discretion.
  - **Finding Your Recital Time/Date** – Once the recital time and date is confirmed with The Studio Coordinator, the teacher will announce his/her recital in writing. Recital details are available at the “Calendar” page in the “News and Events” section of [gistpianoacademy.com](http://gistpianoacademy.com). Students or family members who wish to confirm the date, time or location of a recital must do so online or at their lesson. The Studio Coordinator will be unable to answer these questions via telephone or email.

- **Recital Etiquette** – Student performers are nervous enough without distractions. Please observe the following guidelines to ensure that your student and his/her peers have the best recital experience possible:
  - **Pre-Recital Rehearsals** – Any rehearsals on the recital piano must be scheduled in advance through the teacher. Students may not rehearse directly prior to their recital start time.
  - **“Borrowing” Books** – It is the student’s responsibility to bring all necessary materials to his/her lesson and/or recital. All books, instruments, metronomes or any other Gist Piano Center inventory items must be purchased prior to use. Students may not “borrow” items for studio use.
  - **Doors Open / Close** – Unless otherwise noted, doors will open 30 minutes prior to the scheduled recital start time and close 30 minutes after the recital’s conclusion. Family members are asked to arrive and/or depart accordingly.
  - **Leaving Early** – Leaving a recital before its conclusion causes distractions and damages other students’ self-confidence. Out of respect to student performers and their families, this is highly discouraged. Family members who must leave early are asked to sit at the back of the recital hall near the door and leave during an applause break only.
  - **Electronic Devices** – Electronic devices can seriously disrupt a student’s confidence. All electronic devices, including portable televisions, mp3 players, game systems, radios, etc. must be turned off and put away during recitals. Cellular telephones may be left on, but must be silenced during the program.
  - **Children** – Parents with restless or disruptive children are asked to maintain control of their children at all times. Gist Piano Center employees reserve the right to ask parents to intervene when a child is disruptive.
  - **Arriving Late** – To prevent disruptions and damage to student confidence, family members who arrive late to a recital are asked to wait until an applause break before entering and finding a seat.
  - **Photography and/or Recording the Recital** – Gist Piano Center records every studio recital and provides one free DVD to each participating family. Family members who wish to take photos or to record the recital must do so without blocking an aisle, the Gist camera or another audience member’s view.
  - **Flash Photography** – Due to its disruptive nature, flash photography is prohibited during recitals and special programs at Gist. Cameras with flash may only be used after the program or at specifically designated times.
  - **Recital Discount** – Gist Piano Center offers students and their family members a special 20% “Recital Day Discount” on all print music, print-on-demand titles and accessories. These discounts are good on the day of the recital only.

## Section 2: Tuition and Payments

- **Registration Fee** – Gist Piano Academy charges a registration fee of \$50.00 to all new students prior to the first lesson. Families who sign up several students at the same time may pay one \$50 registration fee for the first family member and then \$25 per additional family member. Students who join the GPA studio with their teachers will be offered a specially-discounted registration fee of \$20 per student. Student registration expires after two months of inactivity. Students who wish to take lessons again after two or more months of inactivity will be charged a second registration fee.
- **Monthly Tuition** – Upon registration, GPA will charge the lessons registration fee, the first month’s tuition and a pro-rated fee for any additional lessons scheduled to take place prior to the first full month of lessons. Future lessons charges will be billed automatically to the student’s (or legal guardian’s) credit (or debit) card on or about the 3rd of each month. It is the student’s (or legal guardian’s) responsibility to notify GPA of any changes to their billing address, credit card account number or any other information that will cause a disruption in billing. Students will be charged a \$25 processing fee for any declined charges. Students will not be allowed to continue lessons until the credit card has been accepted and monthly billing can resume.
- **Additional Expenses** – At the teacher’s discretion, students may be asked to purchase additional materials for lessons. These materials may include (but are not limited to) the following: print music, a metronome, flash cards, software, MIDI files, etc.

## Section 3: Studio Policies

- **Parking** – Gist Piano Center students and their families are welcome to park “at your own risk” in the parking lot adjacent to our store. Students and their families are asked to park respectfully and to avoid parking spaces that are specifically designated for other businesses.
- **Respect for Others** – In order to ensure that each student receives the best possible experience, all students and family members are asked to conduct themselves in a manner which is appropriate for a family learning environment. Loud, disruptive, destructive, profane or other forms of inappropriate behavior will result in Studio Coordinator intervention and possible dismissal of the student(s) involved.
- **Controlled Substances** – Controlled substances of any kind are prohibited on GPA premises. This includes alcohol, amphetamine, cocaine metabolites, marijuana metabolites, opiate metabolites, phencyclidine, barbiturates, benzodiazepine, methane, methaqualone, and propoxyphene. Gist Piano Center and GPA are designed No-Smoking facilities.
- **Food and Drink** – Food and Drink are permissible in the lesson waiting area, but students and their family members may not bring these items into lesson rooms. Please deposit trash into appropriate receptacles.
- **Dropping Off / Picking Up Students** – Parents or legal guardians of GPA students are solely responsible for their students’ safety and must act in their students’ best interest. GPA encourages parents/guardians to personally accompany children to their lessons, wait in the designated waiting area and personally escort them back to their vehicles. GPA instructors are unable to take responsibility for students outside of the lesson room or the regularly-scheduled lesson time. Students may not be left without parent or legal guardian supervision on GPA premises.
- **Repertoire Choice and Pedagogical Authority** – Registration with GPA implies understanding and intent to comply with any repertoire choices or pedagogical decisions made by GPA instructors, including: recital participation, practice assignments, practice instrument recommendations, additional studio policies and additional required materials.
- **“Borrowing” Books** – It is the student’s responsibility to bring all necessary materials to his/her lesson and/or recital. All books, instruments, metronomes or any other Gist Piano Center inventory items must be purchased prior to use. Students may not “borrow” items for studio use.
- **Student Discipline** – GPA instructors reserve the right to discontinue or terminate lessons or classes for student disciplinary reasons. Disciplinary infractions of any kind will be referred first to the parents/guardians and, if continuing, may result in student dismissal. Students dismissed from lessons for disciplinary reasons will not receive any refunds or credits for missed lessons.
- **Complaint Process** - Any concerns regarding lessons policies, discipline issues, scheduling or pedagogical decisions should be discussed with the instructor first. If the instructor is unable to resolve the concerns, parents/guardians should discuss them with the Studio Coordinator.
- **Media Permission** – Registration for lessons or classes at GPA indicates consent for Gist Piano Center and its employees to use and reuse photos, video footage, news footage and other media for promotional purposes at Gist Piano Center’s discretion, including use on social media sites, in-store signage, email newsletters, flyers, www.gistpianocenter.com and more. Gist Piano Center is released from any and all claims arising out of or in connection to the use of news stories or media releases, including any and all claims for libel.

## Section 4: Work from Home

- **Practice Requirements** – Daily practice is essential to success and parents/guardians are encouraged to attend all lessons and to assist in a daily practice routine with their students. The instructor will issue weekly practice assignments. Required daily practice times are subject to the instructor’s recommendation and to the individual needs of the student. Students are expected to come prepared to each lesson. Parents are urged to be supportive and not overly aggressive in their demands on students.

- **Teacher Contact** – GPA instructors are solely responsible for scheduling make-up lessons, group classes, recitals and special events. Any questions regarding lesson times, missed lessons, make-up schedules, etc. must be directed to the instructor. Each student will receive their instructor's contact information along with a copy of the instructor's policies at the first lesson. Gist Piano Center staff will be unable to answer these questions via telephone or email.
- **Practice Instrument** – GPA students are required to have an acceptable practice instrument within the first 60 days of lessons. During registration, each student will receive a copy of the GPA Minimum Acceptable Practice Instrument Policy. Acoustic instruments must be tuned a minimum of once per year. Failure to comply with this policy will hinder the student's education and could lead to dismissal from the studio. The practice instrument should be located in a prominent and well-lit location within the home. It should be placed in an area to which the student has easy and regular (undisturbed) access.

## Section 5: Discontinuing Lessons

- **Student Dismissal** - GPA reserves the right to dismiss any student who is persistently tardy, absent or lacking in preparation. GPA also reserves the right to dismiss any student for disciplinary reasons or for lack of compliance with Gist's Minimum Acceptable Practice Instrument Policy.
- **Discontinuing Lessons** - It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to complete and sign the lessons cancellation form with the GPA Studio Coordinator 30 days or more prior to the next month's billing. Students are welcome to continue lessons during the 30 days, but they are not required to do so.
- **Refunds/Credits** - GPA participates in automatic monthly billing that cannot be altered on a case-by-case basis. Thus, we do not offer refunds or credits.

## Section 6: Policy Revision and Distribution Plan

- **Policy Revision** - Changes to this policy may occur randomly and without prior warning.
- **Policy Distribution** - The GPA Studio Coordinator will issue each student a copy of the GPA Lessons Studio Policy during the registration process. Students may ask for an updated copy of the GPA Lessons Studio Policy from the Studio Coordinator at any time or may download the Policy in PDF form at [www.gistpianoacademy.com/pianolessons](http://www.gistpianoacademy.com/pianolessons).
- **Concerns** - Concerns about policies or procedures at Gist Piano Academy should be taken up directly with the Studio Coordinator.