



# Treble Strings

## Music Lessons



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## Lesson Information

## Scheduling & Tuition

Invoices for scheduled lessons are issued one week before they are due. You will receive reminders to pay your invoice unless you have agreed to automatic payments. Reminders are issued so that you do not miss a lesson because you have forgotten to pay tuition.

*Table 1*

Duration	Frequency	Monthly Tuition
15 Minutes	Fortnightly	\$25
15 Minutes	Weekly	\$45
30 Minutes	Fortnightly	\$50
45 Minutes	Fortnightly	\$70
30 Minutes	Weekly	\$85
60 Minutes	Fortnightly	\$95
45 Minutes	Weekly	\$130
60 Minutes	Weekly	\$170

Students who would like extra help preparing for a performance or audition may schedule additional lessons individually as the instructor's schedule permits.

*Table 2*

Additional Lesson Duration	Cost Per Lesson
15 Minutes	\$10
30 Minutes	\$20
45 Minutes	\$30
60 Minutes	\$40

Alternatively, if you are unable to schedule lessons on a regular basis or would prefer to pay for lessons as needed, we also offer video exchange lessons, in which the student sends a video for feedback. We do not recommend fewer than two video exchange lessons per month.

*Table 3*

Student Video Duration	Cost Per Lesson
Up to 10 Minutes	\$10
11 to 20 Minutes	\$20
21 to 30 Minutes	\$30
31 to 45 Minutes	\$40

If you do not pay your invoice on or before the due date, we will not continue sending reminders, and we do not charge late fees. However, because not paying on time means your instructor has not been paid, we will let your instructor know and will cancel your lessons until your invoice has been paid in full, and you will not receive a discount for lessons canceled while the invoice remains unpaid. We understand that life happens, but it's also not fair to ask instructors to work when we cannot guarantee that they will be paid for doing so.

Invoices can be paid online using a debit or credit card. We are not able to accept other forms of payment.

## **Group Lessons**

Trebles Strings allows multiple students to share a 60-minute lesson. However, this requires the entire group to learn as a whole for the duration of the lesson. Students in the group will not receive individual instruction, and the lesson time cannot be split into individual lessons or divided among multiple instruments. Each student in the group must have an instrument and legal copies of all relevant books and sheet music. Students may not share devices or Zoom accounts. The name displayed on Zoom should be the student's name, not a parent's name or a screen name.

Lessons will begin and end at their scheduled times, whether or not all group members are present. Lessons will be recorded, and students who are not able to attend the lesson should watch the recording so that they do not fall behind. Lesson time will not be used to review previous lessons for the benefit of students who were not able to attend. Group lessons are \$10 per student per session regardless of the number of students enrolled.

## **Cancellation Policy**

Clients should cancel lessons by contacting the instructor directly. Instructors do not receive notifications for cancellations made through Square, so they will not know about the cancellation in advance unless the client contacts them directly. Refunds will not be issued for lessons canceled by the client or due to an unpaid invoice. However, if both the client and the instructor are able to reschedule, then the lesson may be held at another time. If the instructor cancels a lesson, then the client will receive a refund. If you must cancel, please provide as much notice as possible. Except in special circumstances in which you could not have known in advance that you would need to cancel, instructors need to be informed of cancellations at least one hour before the scheduled start of a lesson.

## **Tardiness**

A student is considered tardy if they are not logged in or otherwise not ready to begin the lesson at the scheduled time. Treble Strings acknowledges that factors outside the student's control may result in tardiness, and we therefore wish to extend a reasonable amount of grace to cover such things. However, we have to consider the schedules of our other clients as well as the personal schedules of our instructors. Officially, lessons end when they are scheduled to end, and we make no guarantee that instructors will be able to extend lessons for tardy students. If the instructor is tardy and is not able to provide the student with the amount of time for which they have paid, then the instructor will make that time up in a future lesson or provide a partial refund.

Instructors are asked to wait at least 10 minutes for a tardy student, and we ask clients to show the same courtesy to our instructors, since they might also be late for reasons beyond their control. Instructors are advised to call or text clients if they will be tardy and to keep records of these communications so that such records can be used to show when they attempted to inform the client of their tardiness. If the instructor is tardy by less than 10 minutes and you are not present or not logged in, they will attempt to contact you and also wait until 10 minutes after your lesson was scheduled to begin. Therefore, if you leave or log out before 10 minutes have expired and have no communication records to show that you waited for a reasonable amount of time, it will be assumed that you were never present, and you will not receive a refund.

## **No Shows & Insufficient Notice**

If a student fails to attend a scheduled lesson and does not cancel prior to the lesson time, they will receive an email reminder to inform the instructor in advance if they cannot attend their lesson. If a student fails to attend two consecutive lessons, both without cancellation, the lesson agreement will be terminated. If a student fails to attend two consecutive lessons, one without cancellation and one with insufficient notice, the lesson agreement will be terminated. If a student fails to attend four lessons in a three-month period, two without cancellation and the other two with insufficient notice, the lesson agreement will be terminated. If a student fails to attend three lessons without cancellation or sufficient notice, the lesson agreement will be terminated. In each of these scenarios, the client will receive no refund upon termination of the lesson agreement.

## **Weather, Disasters & Connection Failures**

If weather or other external factors in either your location or your instructor's prevent a lesson from occurring, you will receive a refund, just as if your instructor had canceled the lesson.

If you are unable to have a lesson due to technical difficulties, you will be issued a refund. However, recurring technical difficulties might result in a discussion about

whether recurring lessons are a suitable choice for you, and this discussion may in turn lead to alternate lesson arrangements, such as independent study or a termination of the lesson agreement.

### **Weekends, Holidays & Schedule Conflicts**

Lessons may be scheduled according to the instructor's availability. However, Treble Strings is not open on Saturdays or Sundays, and any messages received between 2 PM on Friday and 8 AM on Monday are not likely to receive a response until Monday.

Treble Strings will be officially closed for the following holidays: January 1 (New Year's Day), Martin Luther King's Birthday (third Monday of January), President's Day (third Monday of February), March 17 (St. Patrick's Day), Holy Week (Passover/Palm Sunday/Easter), Memorial Day (last Monday of May), Labor Day (First Monday of May), September 11 (Patriot Day), Columbus Day (second Monday of October), November 11 (Veterans/Armistice Day), Thanksgiving Week (the Monday-Friday that includes the fourth Thursday of November), and December 24-31 (Christmas Eve to New Year's Eve). Clients will not be charged for lessons that are not scheduled because of these holidays.

If you have an upcoming schedule conflict of which one is generally aware more than one month in advance, such as a birthday, anniversary, wedding, vacation, or school activity, please inform Treble Strings directly as soon as possible. We would rather not charge you for a lesson that conflicts with such events, but we will not refund you if your invoice has been paid before we are informed of such conflicts. If you have such schedule conflicts frequently, then Treble Strings may ask you to choose an arrangement that is more suitable for your schedule, such as a different lesson time or perhaps video exchange lessons. If you are unable to do so, then your lesson agreement will be terminated. Your instructor depends on regularly scheduled lessons as a source of income, and frequent cancellations are therefore unfair to them.

### **Daylight Savings**

Treble Strings is based in Kansas City, Missouri and uses local Kansas City time (i.e. Central Standard Time or Central Daylight Time, depending on the season). Recurring lessons will always be scheduled on the same day of the week and at the same time of day according to the Central Time Zone. For example, if you have lessons on Tuesdays at 6:00 PM, and you live in an area that does not participate in daylight savings or has a different schedule than what is used in most of the United States, your lesson will switch from 6:00 PM CST to 6:00 PM CDT or vice versa when daylight savings time begins or ends in Kansas City. Depending on where you live, you may need to adjust your lesson time up to four times a year. If your schedule is not flexible enough to allow for this time change, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to offer you a different lesson time. Therefore, we recommend

independent study for students who cannot adjust lesson times for daylight savings.

## Refunds

Treble Strings does not issue refunds for lessons that have already been scheduled and purchased except when lessons are canceled by the instructor without rescheduling and for reasons other than unpaid invoices. If we issue a refund, it will be at an hourly rate of \$40/hour, rather than a percentage of the monthly rate. For lessons longer than 60 minutes, 15-minute breaks are not included in the lesson duration.

*Table 4*

<b>Canceled Lesson Duration</b>	<b>Refund</b>
15 Minutes	\$10
30 Minutes	\$20
45 Minutes	\$30
60 Minutes	\$40

## Age Restrictions

Treble Strings does not offer instrumental lessons for children under the age of three. However, we encourage parents who have young children and no music experience to take lessons with us. If you learn to play an instrument, it will make you more confident in your ability to assist your child in learning to play an instrument. In the early stages of your child's development, you can nurture a love of music by singing, dancing, and playing your instrument for your child. Musical toys and recorded music are also helpful, but the best way to get your child interested in music is to show them that making music is fun.

Violin and cello lessons are available for adults and children ages 3 and up. Piano lessons are available for adults and children ages 6 and up. Viola students are required to be large enough to play a 14" viola, but exceptions will be made for viola students enrolled in an orchestra class at school. Children who are not yet large enough for a 14" viola are encouraged to study another instrument while they continue to grow.

## Books & Sheet Music

Everything we assign to violin, viola, and cello students is available as a free PDF but can also be purchased in print if you prefer. Instructors will not print sheet music for students. The files will be sent by email, and they will need to be printed before the next lesson. Alternatively, you may download the files onto a tablet. There will be written assignments that you will need to complete and email to your teacher, also before the next lesson.

If students require assistance with anything they are practicing that is not included in our curriculum, the instructor can only be of assistance if they have a legal copy of the sheet music. Students will need to provide the instructor with the music prior to the lesson. Photocopies and pictures of the music are not considered legal copies.

We use Faber's Piano Adventures for all piano students. Each student will be required to have books for their lessons, which will need to be purchased from a third party because Treble Strings does not sell books. At this time, we are only accepting beginners. The Piano Adventures books are divided into three age groups. Children ages 6-10 begin with the basic method. Children ages 11 and up begin with the accelerated method, which consists of Level 1 and Level 2, then merges into the basic method at Level 3A. Adults and teenagers who feel they are too old to begin with the accelerated method will use the adult method.

The student needs to have all assigned materials available during the lesson. The instructor will be unable to provide a lesson if the student does not have their

music. Therefore, if the student does not bring their music to lessons, this will be treated as tardiness if the student is able to obtain their music within the duration of the lesson or cancellation with insufficient notice if they are not able to do so.

## **Instruments**

Treble Strings does not provide instruments. Each student needs to have daily access to an instrument of appropriate size for practice and lessons. Violins, violas, and cellos cannot be "VSOs" and must be made of natural wood with a natural finish and setup by a luthier. The best way to ensure that you have a suitable violin, viola, or cello is to only shop at violin shops, not general music stores.

## **Pianos**

All students must have access to a piano with 88 keys and three pedals. We have no preference about what type of piano the student uses as long as it is functional and in tune. A smaller keyboard with at least 61 keys may be used for practice and even for lessons. However, some assignments even in the first book will require the full piano keyboard, so the student will be asked to record these assignments if they do not use an instrument with 88 keys for lessons.

## **Violins, Violas, and Cellos**

Each student will need an instrument of the appropriate size. Most people over the age of 12 use a full size violin or cello. Smaller sizes are generally intended for children, but there are some petite adults who are more comfortable with a 7/8 or 3/4 size. Viola sizing is stated in inches rather than fractions, to indicate the length of the instrument's body. Viola players tend to seek the largest instrument they can manage without hyperextending the arm or fingers.

Violin and viola students are required to have a chin rest and a shoulder rest, but the exact shape and design of each should be what works for the individual student. If the student is not comfortable with the chin rest that comes with the instrument, a luthier can remove the chin rest and replace it with one that is a better fit. We recommend visiting a violin shop in order to try different chin rests and shoulder rests and determine the best combination for you.

Cello students must have an endpin rest (also known as a rock stop) and a chair without armrests that allows them to place both feet flat on the floor.

A bow and case, rosin, a soft cleaning cloth, and a music stand are also required.

## VSO Policy

Violin-family instruments vary in quality, and they must be set up properly in order to function the way that they should. An instrument that does not meet the minimum standards of playability is often called a VSO, which stands for "violin-shaped object" but could also be "viola-shaped object" or "violoncello-shaped object" without assigning a different acronym. If an instrument is made out of the wrong materials, it will not function the way a violin should, and it therefore cannot be used in order to learn to play the violin. If an instrument is not setup properly when it is purchased, the cost of fixing the setup plus the original purchase price might exceed what you would have spent purchasing a better instrument. In either scenario, the instrument is considered a VSO because it either cannot be made suitable for a beginner or else doing so will cost more than the instrument is worth.

Treble Strings does not teach students who are using VSOs because you cannot learn to play violin, viola, or cello properly if you are not using a proper instrument. If you were to use a VSO for lessons, your instructor would be unable to provide the service you have purchased. As a result, if your instructor tells you that your instrument is a VSO, you will need to get a replacement instrument in order to continue taking lessons with us. In order to avoid VSOs, please rent or buy your instrument from a violin shop.

Painted violins are usually VSOs. Some are redeemable if amplified, but generally the paint will prevent the violin from resonating as it would if it had a natural finish, effectively muting the instrument. As a result, you will not be able to hear the cues from your instrument that are necessary in order to make subtle changes to your bow technique. Likewise, if you are using a mute or an electric violin, you will not receive the feedback you need. If your instrument doesn't provide such feedback, you will not learn to respond to it, which means your instrument will be too forgiving of your technique for you to learn proper bow control. Therefore, we do not teach beginners who are using anything other than a traditional instrument with a natural finish. Advanced students might choose to play a painted, electric, or perhaps a carbon fiber violin if they perform outdoors or with amplification, but they will still require a violin made of natural wood with a natural finish for lessons.

So-called "left-handed" instruments are built in reverse, from the inside out. It is not as simple as switching the strings because you would like to hold the bow in your left hand, and left-handed instruments are harder to find and tend to be of lower quality unless custom made by a luthier. If you have a disability that prevents you from using your left hand on the fingerboard, it might be possible to get a custom instrument and if necessary custom prosthetics that would allow you to play. However, if the only reason you wish to bow with your left hand is left hand dominance, doing so will be limiting. You won't be able to play with certain

ensembles, and you may not be able to find a comfortable shoulder rest and chin rest combination. Left-handedness is not a disability, nor is it a disadvantage in learning to play an instrument because right-hand dominant students must develop finger independence in the left hand. A left-hand dominant student would experience this same difficulty if using the right hand on the fingerboard and therefore would not solve anything by bowing with the left hand. We cannot accommodate students who do not have disabilities and yet choose to limit themselves as if they did. Unnecessary limitations prevent us from providing the service you have purchased. Therefore, if you do not need to play a left-handed instrument, Treble Strings will not teach you to play one.

## **Tuning Policy**

Your instrument needs to be tuned and setup before the lesson begins. If your instrument is not in tune when you log in and will require more than five minutes to tune, the instructor will report that your lesson was cancelled with insufficient notice because they will not be able to teach you using an instrument that is not in tune.

We will provide instructions for tuning your violin, viola, or cello. We do not recommend allowing children under the age of 12 to tune their own instruments.

Pianos need to be tuned at least once a year by a professional piano tuner.

## **Recording & Photography Policy**

All students are free to take pictures and record lessons, but you may not share pictures or recordings that include your instructor without your instructor's permission, and you may not post audio or video recordings of lessons online.

Any recordings of lessons that contain copyrighted music cannot legally be shared, copied, or posted online. The instructor will stop recording if you are playing copyrighted music. If you have your own lesson recordings containing copyrighted music, you may retain only one copy for personal use. Treble Strings is not responsible for copyright violations should you choose to ignore this warning.

## **Social Media Policy**

Treble Strings uses social media in order to promote our company and maintain relationships with our clients. Any Treble Strings client who abuses, scams, solicits, or otherwise harms any individual associated with Treble Strings through social media will be blocked online and have their lesson agreement(s) terminated. Profanity, illegal activity, and inappropriate images or comments posted on our Facebook page or groups or which include a link to Treble Strings will result in the

same. If you have problems with the service you have received from Treble Strings, please work with us to resolve it before posting on social media. Publicly broadcasting the problem makes it harder for us to fix it. We are not likely to be able to save the instructor-student relationship if you have complained about your instructor online, nor are we likely to be able to transfer you to one of our other instructors if social media slander is a factor in why you cannot continue with your current instructor.

## **Safety of Minors**

We require parents or legal guardians of children under the age of 10 to observe scheduled lessons or designate another responsible adult to do so in the parent's place.

Treble Strings will not enter into a contract with minor children nor accept payment directly from them. Some of our younger students pay for their own lessons, and while we support the decision to teach responsibility in that way, it needs to be handled as a reimbursement to a parent or guardian who has already paid tuition. We also will not knowingly communicate with children under the age of 13 by phone, text message, email, or social media.

## **Instructor Liability**

Treble Strings primarily uses independent contractors who provide lessons online or in the homes of our clients. It is not possible for us to monitor interactions between students and teachers because we don't have access to the locations in which these interactions occur. As a result, all contracted instructors are individually liable for their own actions. By signing the lesson agreement, you consent to release Treble Strings from liability. However, we are still very much concerned for the safety of our students, which is why we have established many of the policies above. We encourage clients to take precautions and to speak to us if you have concerns about your instructor.

Contracted instructors are not representatives of Treble Strings and, except where specifically noted above, are not authorized to make exceptions to Treble Strings policies, nor are instructors authorized to begin teaching a student on behalf of Treble Strings before the student has been registered.

## **Lesson Agreement**

Treble Strings does not use written contracts with students, but we refer to the arrangements with a client under the terms of this document to be the "lesson agreement." Both the client and Treble Strings can end that agreement at any time.