



Studio Policies & Tuition Updated 4/16/24

SuzukiGuitar.org (843) 324-0452
1123 Chuck Dawley Blvd. Mt Pleasant, SC 29464

LowCo Suzuki Guitar Studio strives to provide an exceptional musical education based on a supportive home environment with opportunities to share music in our community. I encourage you to become a member of the [Suzuki Association of the Americas](#) which will give you access to parent forums and a subscription to the Suzuki journal, among other things.

Tuition Information

- **Quarterly Tuition Fee: \$460, due second lesson of each quarter**
 - **Typically 30min Lessons (or 45 minute lesson tuition of \$660)**
 - \$10 Penalty if Paid over a month late
 - \$10 Fee for to split Tuition into Multiple Payments
 - Late Payment may result in forfeiture of scheduled private lesson time
 - **Sibling Discount**
 - %5 sibling discount is discontinued as of April 2024
 - \$15 Recital Fee will be billed to each household during Spring and Fall quarters.
- **Includes:**
 - **Private Lesson Time Slot: Reserved Weekly**
 - Approximately 10-12 private lesson time slots reserved for student per quarter
 - See Make Up Policy
 - **Group classes**
 - Due to covid, group classes have been temporarily reduced or suspended (TBA)
 - **Recitals, jams, and chances to join instructor for community performances**
 - Parents should help Students prepare for participation in recitals.
 - If children are too shy to plan, at this time, please insist on attendance to listen
 - Parents may plan a guitar neighborhood party or performance for their child or the group
 - **[Tutorials](#) available for registered students and parents online**
 - **Zoom or FaceTime Lesson during sickness or travel, ie: lice, cold or flu.**
- **Quarterly Schedule:**
 - **Summer Quarter** – 2/3 of Tuition due for August & September.\ul> - Flexible July Month
 - Reserve any number of lessons, or wing it *a la carte*, for Flex-Month based on travel schedules
 - Aug-Sept. for 2/3 of Quarter (2/3 of Tuition Fee)
 - August – Partial Quarter Begins
 - 1st of August with Group Lessons
 - 2nd week Private Lessons start (typically when CCSD starts)
- **Fall Quarter** - (Oct-Dec)
 - Major Holiday Weeks (TBA) may suspend Private Lessons in lieu of Group lessons (zoom or in person)
 - Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years holiday weeks
 - This allows a simple flat quarterly fee and simpler schedule during everyone's travel/family time
 - Students are offered opportunity to participate in multiple group instruction. Dates and times TBA.
- **Winter Quarter** - (Jan-Mar)

- 1st week of January may only be group lessons Zoom or in person TBA
- Private lessons begin 2nd week of January

- **Spring Quarter** – (April-June)
 - Holiday Weeks with No Private Lessons, Group lessons instead:
 - Easter or Spring Break, TBA

- **Absence and Make-Up Policy - Individual Lessons**
 - Quarterly or monthly Tuition pays for the scheduled private time slot at a fixed rate, regardless of the number of lessons in any given quarter. See [*Economicist/Suzuki Parent's Point of View*](#) for more info.
 - No reduction in tuition during holiday breaks or personal vacation time. **
 - Lessons Cancelled Due to Instructor
 - Optional Make Up may be offered to multiple students at once.
 - It's unlikely Instructor's schedule allows for multiple private make up lessons
 - Allows students to observe others' working piece
 - Fine tune ensemble pieces
 - Instructor reserves opportunity to find a substitute for private lessons in the case of instructor absence.

- **Student Absences**
 - Credits will not be given to Students that miss their scheduled lesson time,
 - rescheduling with advanced notice is possible, but not guaranteed
 - Students are encouraged to arrange a lesson swap if they know that they will be missing a lesson.
 - When a conflict with your scheduled lesson arises, arranging a swap with another student is a way to avoid an absence.
 - Decreases the need for make-up lessons with minimal interruption.
 - Parents should notify the teacher when a swap is arranged.
 - In the event of an emergency cancelation, a make-up may be offered at the teacher's discretion if an opening is available the week of the cancelation. If no opening is available that week, the lesson will not be made up nor credited.

** Exception: If a parent notifies the Studio before a Quarter begins that the student will miss **four** consecutive lessons, or a student misses four consecutive lessons due to sickness, the tuition for that month will be reduced by 50%. This will reserve the scheduled time slot of your private lesson for your return.

Participation, Practicing, and Parent/Student/Teacher Commitment

Parent Education

Opportunity to brainstorm for the benefit of the students.

The Unalterable Parental Commitments

1. Practice daily

1. Quality
 1. Figure out what will keep your child focused and ensure that they are able to complete the assigned tasks
 2. Repeat a task three times well rather than six or ten times lazily
2. Consistency -more important than the amount of time put in
 1. “Only practice on the days you eat.” - Dr. Suzuki
 2. Never skip days
 3. During vacations
 4. Throughout the day
 5. Particular time of the day - routine
 6. Teaching lifelong habits
 7. Importance of going slow
 1. Success
 2. Muscle & mental memory, practice makes habit
 3. Attention to detail
 4. Time the phrase/piece – play it twice as slow – take twice the time
3. Singing
 1. Memory
 2. Less technique or physical struggle
 3. Develop ear and connect voice to pitches and instrument
4. Plan out spontaneity
 1. Games & activities within reach
 2. Review lesson notes before sitting down
5. Tuning
 1. Developing ear – accurate pitches important!
6. Begin at home with bow, focus
7. Vary volume & tempo – soft = less tension
8. Three phases in skill acquisition (Bill Starr, *To with Love*)
 1. Student understands what he is supposed to do (to change or strive for)
 2. Meaningful practice with appropriate feedback
 1. Knowledge of results
 2. Children need help in learning to focus their own awareness on what they are doing as they play -Passive, uninvolved practice impedes progress
 3. Automatic execution

2. Listen to the CD daily

1. Progress is directly related to how much he/she listens – just like “momma”
2. Listen to the new piece at least 10 times in a row
3. **Different kinds of listening:**
 1. Passive listening – the music is in the background, do this several times a day, without concern for whether the children are listening attentively.
 1. You absorb tone and intonation. You should be able to sing the piece.
 2. Parallel listening – Listening to future pieces and other music.

3. Active listening – Targeted listening to hear 1 aspect of the music such as slurs, form, repeats, articulation
- 3. Efficient body use & healthy posture**
- 4. Continually strive for a beautiful tone - tonalization**
 1. Warm, even, loud and soft.
 2. Benefits:
 1. Personal centering: concentration and focus
 2. coordination of L & R hands
 3. Refinement of critical listening
 4. Technique
 3. Nails on right hand
- 5. Maintain all review pieces**
 1. Improve old pieces, master the technical studies

Student Expectations

The Studio Lesson

1. Arrive a little early for lessons for snack, bathroom, drink, etc.
 - Cut your (left) nails every week, leave nail clipper in case or guitar bag
2. Allow teacher to critique
 1. Avoid *two on one* or overloading
 - 2. Allow teacher to develop working relationship with student**
3. Parents take copious notes
 - Helps organize at home and for next lessons review
 - Pictures and video recording welcome
4. Eventually children decide to 'test' parent & teacher with undesirable behavior
 1. Refusing to cooperate, acting bratty, tantrums, simply tired and testing our patience
 2. Parents should exit studio with child and have a brief talk without teacher
 1. Drink, bathroom, stretch?
 3. If this doesn't work parent should ask to be excused and leave lesson early
 1. Bring about positive behavior in future
 2. This *million dollar lesson* may only have to happen once or twice
- Attendance and attitude
 - No cell phones during the lessons including texting, calls, reading – Airport mode?
 - Siblings, if necessary and without distraction. Sit behind student unless observing
5. Observe others' lessons
 - One tenet of the Suzuki Method is that all children should be encouraged to observe and, when appropriate, be invited to participate in, the “private” lessons of other students. You are welcome to bring your child to lessons early and to stay late, in order to provide opportunities for this kind of joint learning. It must be understood, however, that even under the best of circumstances, the arrival or departure of another family can temporarily disrupt the flow of a lesson already underway. As a consequence, standards for behavior must actually be higher for those children who are observing, than for those whose lesson it is. Please, when entering the studio with your child, be mindful of the potential impact your arrival may have on the student who is already in session. If your child appears prepared to sit and observe quietly, by all means, bring them in. If, however, their mood suggests that their behavior may be difficult to manage, please wait with them in the car until the other student’s lesson is nearly finished. Thank you for your consideration.

- Practice daily! Practice daily the assignments you are given each week. This is by far the best way to make progress and to enjoy learning to play the guitar!
- Listen daily to your Suzuki recording. Attend concerts, listen to lots of music and watch youtube videos of great artists.
 1. Suzuki CD
 1. 300 Years of Guitar Masterpieces, Manuel Barreuco
 2. Christopher Parkening, John Williams
- **Home Coach Presence and Participation:** Either the home coach or a responsible adult will be present for all of the child's lessons and group classes. Please have a notebook and take notes during the lesson as new tasks are assigned.
- Roles of teacher, parent & child – *Suzuki* Triangle to help child feel good about progress
 1. **Teacher**
 1. Desire to create and develop musicianship through the use of phrasing, dynamics and form
 2. Commitment to growth
 3. Responsibility to communicate
 4. Commitment to repertoire
 5. Present challenges with success in mind
 6. Fun!
 2. **Parent**
 1. Motivational ideas for continued growth
 2. Appreciate value of musical education
 3. Fostering enjoyment of learning process
 4. Appreciate every child's great potential
 5. Commitment to development of a good working relationship with teacher and child
 6. Organize weekly material into units of practice and support with motivational ideas
 7. Understanding the balance of discipline and freedom in music
 8. Understand basics of reading music
 9. Fun!
 3. **Child**
 1. The need to enjoy the learning process
 2. Continued need for feeling of success through positive reinforcement
 3. Need for strong emotional support system from parents and teachers
 4. Need to be creatively motivated to higher musical development
 5. Need to understand balance between freedom and structure within discipline

Daily Home Practice/Lesson Procedure

1. Find a special corner of your house where you can keep the things you need
 1. Sometimes practice in different locations for fun
2. Seat
3. Minimize distractions
 1. Should not have to be shared time with younger sibling
4. A bit of warning helps smooth the way: “In 10 minutes, it will be time to practice. Find a stopping place in your book/game/puzzle.”
5. Focus on one thing at a time to avoid overload
6. Give child some choices and to feel a sense of control during practice
 1. Let the child decide with a “yes” or “no” if they have accomplished a goal
 2. Involve them in decisions: tempo, tone quality, which phrase or game to start with
7. Try to end lesson on an 'up note' – get it?
8. Gentle positive criticism
 1. Express specific positive aspect of your child's playing first
 2. Use the word *and* not *but*. *i.e.*: *I liked the way you played/did _____ and I know we could make it more beautiful by _____. Do you think you could make it more beautiful? How?*
9. Process – 10-20 min for beginner Twinklers
 1. Tuning and small talk
 2. Bow
 3. Posture – relaxation
 4. Tone/Technique
 1. Arm & finger placement,
 5. Review
 1. Previous phrases, scale, song or other
 6. Current/new piece: Twinkle variations
 7. Music skills as introduced in group class
 8. Take a bow and congratulate
10. Post Twinkle
 1. A typical 30-minute practice session for a child in late Book 1 or 2 might involve 3-5 minutes of scales or tonalization exercises, 10 minutes on their ‘working piece’, 5 minutes of polishing their most recent piece, and 10-12 minutes of review
11. Record and list to a practice session on occasion. Objective feedback.
12. Sense when practice is over. It's more important to anticipate returning to the instrument with enthusiasm tomorrow than to force a few extra minutes today!
13. Once/twice a week – Home Concert for the *other* parent who usually does not supervise

Keeping Motivation Alive

1. Play guitar enthusiastically
2. Listen enthusiastically
3. Attend concerts
4. Games – ensure fun during repetitive practice. Esp for younger.
5. Self-directed, self-motivated – how would child like to set daily practice schedule?
 1. Make a Chart together
 2. **Ask** child what the teacher said, and what is to be learned
6. You are acknowledging effort—not achievement.

7. Avoid comparing your child to other students
8. Children learn best through doing not through explanation

Games & Fun Activities – Parents stay in charge

1. Board game
2. Bounce ball to set tempo – student must watch and play as ball hits
3. Dice
4. Jenga – stack high after each repetition
5. Tic Tac Toe
6. Hangman
7. Pictionary ? Guess the drawing
8. Domino drop
9. Connect Four
10. Pennies in a Jar
11. Monster face on fingertips
12. Put a piece in a puzzle
13. Ring a bell if there's a problem, or let child ring bell if goal is reached
14. Transfer pile of marbles or pennies
15. Listening skills include
 1. Are two notes the same or different?
 2. Is the 2nd note higher or lower?
16. Deck of cards
 1. Dynamics, string #'s, repetition #
 - 2.

- **Discussion Groups & Parent Meetings:** Please attend parent meetings – it will benefit veteran parents and new parents and contribute to the community and successful of our children's musical experience!
- **Performances - Attire & Timeliness:** Unless otherwise specified, LowCo Suzuki Guitar Studio students will be required to wear a dark gray or black skirt or slacks, and a white dress shirt or blouse to all public performances referred to as “recitals”.
 - Bring footstool, tuner, and chair as needed
 - Your Church or Home?
 - Recital Dress – black slacks, shoes, white shirt
 - The arrival time for all recitals and public performances is ½ hour before the scheduled start time.
 - Outside Jams/Performances ; Casual or TBA at teachers discretion
- **Volunteers for Events**
 - Food & refreshments
 - Promotion to community: flyers, facebook, etc
 - This will help Teacher focus on the children's performance quality and other details
- **Group Classes**
 - Group participation is very important for children's success and enjoyment.
 - Allows students to hear and see repertoire performed by a variety of students
 - Social validation – a MUST for classical music and children
 - Let's not rely on peers at school to validate taste in music, mmmmbop?
 - Teaches students to 'Keep going' and get over mistakes in ensemble – catch up
 - Performance opportunities to build confidence



- May backfire for children who do not have a consistent practice routine
- Volunteer to host at your home?
- Enthusiasm – emphasize the fun of a group, let child decide when to participate
- It's OK not to know the whole song
- Please RSVP via Google Calendar invite (or email if necessary)
- Currently, there's only room for parents of the youngest/newest students to stay
- Group lesson etiquette
 - Arrive 5 min early, tune.
 - Please do not drop your child off with out setting him/her up to tune in hall or studio.
 - It is very distracting when a student shows up 5 or 10 minutes late and needs to tune amidst the beginning of our lesson.
 - Bring footstool, tuner, and chair
- Attendance
 - Group lesson attendance may affect priority when requesting schedule changes on the start of a new quarter/year
 - Regular group class attendance is critically important for your child's musical development. Material missed due to late arrival or absence will be covered during the student's next private lesson. Moreover, frequent absence, on the part of any child, has a significant negative impact on the quality of the group experience for their peers. As a consequence, group class attendance will be tracked, and a child who accumulates more than 3 "misses" (see also "No Shows:" and "Timeliness:", below) in a given quarter may be excluded from the next studio recital.
 - Make-ups will not be given for group classes missed by the student. If your child will be unable to attend a group class for any reason other than last minute illness, please let us know by the end of business the day before so that lesson plans can be adjusted accordingly.

Dismissal from Studio

- Poor attendance for private and group lessons
- Failure to attend recitals
- Failure to meet minimum practice standards
- Non-payment or repeated late payments
- Disrespectful attitude towards instructor or other students/parents

By signing this document, we acknowledge that we have read, understand, and agree to adhere to all of the above policies.

Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/2015



**LowCo Suzuki Guitar
Permission Form for Use of Student's Name or Image
for Education or Promotional Media**

There may be an opportunity in the lesson where I ask you to photograph, or ask if I may photograph or video your child's guitar playing, posture, or hand placement. There will be an opportunity for photography/audio/video recordings of recitals or other guitar events.

I hereby give LowCo Suzuki Guitar permission to use my child's name, picture, photo or audio/video recording for lawful purposes of education or entertainment to promote the guitar studio or events through a variety of media such as websites or posters:

Yes _____ No _____ Maybe in Future _____

Student Name: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/2015

The Suzuki Approach:

- **Parent Involvement**

- Parents will have an important role as "home teachers" as a child learns an instrument. In the beginning, one parent will learn to play before the child, so that he/she understands what the child is expected to do. The parent attends the child's lessons and the two practice daily at home. This allows a parent to gain an understanding of what the child will go through and participate as a "home teacher".

- **Early Years**

- The early years are crucial for developing mental processes and muscle coordination in the young child. Children's aural capacities are also at their peak during the years of language acquisition, and this is an excellent time to establish musical sensitivity.

- **Listening & Repetition**

- The Children will absorb the language of music just as they absorb the sounds of their native language. With repeated listening to the pieces they will be learning, children become familiar with them and learn them easily.

- **Encouragement**

- As with language, the child's efforts to learn an instrument should be met with sincere praise and encouragement. Each child learns at his/her own rate, building on small steps so that each one can be mastered. This creates an environment of enjoyment for child, parent and teacher.

- **Learning with Other Children**

- Music promotes healthy social interaction, and children are highly motivated by participating in group lessons and performances in addition to their own individual lessons.

- **Graded Repertoire**

- The Suzuki repertoire for each instrument presents a careful sequence of building blocks for technical and musical development.

- **Delayed Reading**

- Children are taught to read only after their ability to speak has been well established. In the same way, Suzuki students develop basic competence on their instruments before being taught to read music. This sequence of instruction enables both teacher and student to focus on the development of good posture, beautiful tone, accurate intonation, and musical phrasing.

<http://suzukiassociation.org>

The importance of self enrichment in the long term development, music is a medium through which a child may develop:

Personal Discipline – Mastery of ones self

- Responsibility to commitment
- Understanding cause and effect
- Following Directions

Music and the Brain: Cognitive Abilities

- Focused attention and concentration
- Ability to perceive components and patterns
- Prioritization
- Creative Problem Solving
- Perceptual Capabilities
- Understanding limitations and capabilities of the body

Spiritual

- Recognition and appreciation of higher values
- Desire to elevate one's fellow man
- Broadening and deepening the understanding of one's emotional life
- Elevation of finer emotions through music of the masters

Sense of accomplishment and self esteem

- Affecting one's environment
- Sense of making a contribution – pleasing others
- Goal setting (achievement)
- Self Acceptance – It's OK to make mistakes

Social Awareness

- Appreciation of other cultures and times
- Awareness of and sensitivity to others
- Appreciation of non-threatening and close, working relationships
- Working with others to achieve common goals, cooperation not competition
- Appreciation for family

Other Expenses Required to Participate:

- Guitar Tuner – clip on is best
- Music Stand
- Footstool
- Suzuki Guitar Book 1 (and consecutive books/CDs as needed)
- Suzuki CD for Book 1
- Suzuki Association of the Americas Membership (Quarterly Journal and online access to events)
- Music Theory Book, etc, TBA.
- Guitar Arts Flash Cards

Quality Instruments:

Those that are committing to the Suzuki Guitar program: I am happy to assist you in ordering or renting full size guitars for parents, as well as for students. We want to develop children's sensitivity to quality sound and musical expression while making the learning process easier – hence the need for a quality instrument not your average \$50 cheap-o guitar. I recommend Flores, Kremona, Strunal or Eduardo Moore Guitars. Guitars should go up to child's belly button when standing up straight.



Please consider looking quickly at Suzuki Guitar instrument options and philosophy: <http://www.suzukidad.com/guitar-gear-for-suzuki-students/childrens-guitars/>

Dear LowCo Suzuki Guitar families,

A reminder in regards to the Quarterly invoicing:

Your quarterly tuition rate – rather than individual lesson fee - allows me to avoid typical supplemental fees such as annual registration and separate group lessons (and administrative work) that are typical of exceptional music programs (ie, my former association with Ashley Hall, Charleston Academy of Music). Your tuition here also includes Group Lessons, Performances (TBA), and online resources made just for my students. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns as I appreciate your business as an independent artist/teacher and special musical relationship with your child and family.

August – September Partial 2/3 Quarter
Oct-Dec Full Quarter, etc...

I hope summer break was awesome and you're looking forward to another year of academic and creative growth with your little guys and gals! It's an honor and joy to continue with their development through music – thank you!

Gregory Guay
LowCo Suzuki Guitar