

# HARP STUDENT HANDBOOK

2018-2019



KELA WALTON - HARP INSTRUCTION

[www.students.kelaharp.com](http://www.students.kelaharp.com)

# Studio Philosophy

“There is nothing difficult - only new things, unaccustomed things” - Carlos Salzedo

## EXPECTATIONS

- I expect my students to have a strong desire to learn how to play the harp well, and approach my suggestions with an open mind.
- Students are required to have at teacher-approved lever or pedal harp at home or school for daily practice as well as the required materials listed in this handbook.
- Students must devote ample daily practice time between lessons *in addition to* time spent in ensemble rehearsals in order to attempt new ways of playing.
- Students are expected to attend lessons regularly, and abide by the attendance policies.
- Students must listen to harp recordings of pieces they study and perform as part of their daily practice.
- Attending a minimum of two live harp-related concerts each year, where the students themselves do not perform, is strongly encouraged.
- To develop solo as well as ensemble performance skills, students are expected to take part in harp studio recitals, informal performances, American Harp Society events, competitions, and/or summer harp events.

## EXPERIENCE

I love teaching the harp! I began teaching harp lessons in 1998. I previously served on the harp faculty at Buffalo Suzuki Strings in Buffalo, NY; the Round Rock Independent School District in Round Rock, TX; Temple College in Temple, TX; the Moores School of Music Preparatory and Continuing Studies program in Houston, TX; Longhorn Music Camp in Austin, TX; and at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp in Twin Lake, MI. When I teach harp lessons the goal is not for my students to win competitions or become professional musicians (though some students do). My goal is the help students become noble people with compassionate hearts and disciplined minds, who love music.

My credentials include a Bachelor of Music in Harp Performance from the *University of Texas at Austin* and a Master of Music in Harp Performance and Pedagogy from the *University of Houston Moores School of Music*. My principal harp teachers include Gayle Barrington and Houston Symphony principal harpist Paula Page. My Suzuki training includes coursework in early childhood education as well as harp instruction with Sharon Jones, Delaine Fedson Leonard, and Dr. Laurie Scott. Additionally, I am an alumnus of the *Salzedo School* in Camden, Maine where I studied upon invitation with one of Salzedo's most famous pupils the Alice Chalifoux, former principal harpist of the Cleveland Orchestra.

# Studio Policies

## LESSONS

**Weekly Lessons** - Regular weekly lessons are available for 30 minute, 45 minute, or 1 hour. All school-aged students are required to take weekly lessons. Weekly 30 minute lessons are offered only to students under the age of 10, or beginners of any age in their first semester of lessons.

**Floating Lessons** - Adult students who do not wish to take regular weekly lessons may take Floating lessons. Floating lessons are only available for 45 minute or 1 hour lessons. *Floating lessons are purchased and scheduled in groups of two lessons to be used during the course of one month.*

**Group Class** - When enrollment allows, I offer 6 group classes per semester (typically 2 classes per month). In group class we play as an ensemble, learn how to take care of our instruments, and play music theory games. Group class tuition is \$120 per semester and students must bring their harp.

## LOCATIONS

**In Person Lessons** - take place at my studio in Spartanburg. Students are welcome to bring their harp for lessons or may play one of my Lyon & Healy pedal or lever harps during the lesson.

**Online Video Lessons** - Lessons via online video conferencing such as FaceTime, Skype, or Zoom are available to students who live further than 1 hour away from my studio, and at my discretion. I also offer video lessons when I'm traveling, and during inclement weather events.

In rare cases I may travel to students' homes to teach an occasional lesson for a slightly higher hourly rate. Travel to a student's home is only available for a one-hour lesson, at my discretion in special circumstances based on schedule, location, and need.

## Tuition

- Students must pay using one of the Tuition Payment Plans below.
- Payment must be in the form of personal checks, cash, or PayPal.
- There will be a \$25 fee for all checks returned by the bank for any reason, in addition to reimbursement for the original amount of the check.
- If lessons are terminated by the student, parent or teacher before the end of the payment period (semester or month), payment will not be reimbursed.
- Families with more than one student enrolled in harp lessons will receive a discount of 5% off the regular tuition fee for each student enrolled.
- All tuition payment plans are based on the following fee schedule:

30 minutes = \$35, 45 minutes = \$45, 1 hour = \$60.

- The Fall semester includes 14 lessons (September - January) , and the Spring semester includes 14 lessons (February - May).

### Monthly Tuition Payment Plan

Monthly tuition is calculated based on 28 lessons divided by 9 months (September - May) and rounded to the nearest even number creating equal monthly payments.

LESSON LENGTH	2018-2019 MONTHLY TUITION (SEPT-MAY)
30 minute	\$110
45 minute	\$140
1 hour	\$190

1. The monthly payment is due on or before the 1st lesson of each month. If payment is not received on or before the first lesson of the month, a \$20 late fee will be added for each week payment is not received.
2. If payment is not received by the second lesson of the month, the student will not receive that lesson or any further lessons until payment is made.
3. If payment is not received within thirty (30) days of the first lesson of the month, the regularly scheduled lesson time will be forfeited and possibly assigned to another student.

### Semester Tuition Payment Plan

Semester Tuition is based on 14 lessons each semester.

1. Students choosing to pay for the entire semester must do so on or before the first lesson of September or February and will receive a 5% discount as indicated below.

LESSON LENGTH	FALL SEMESTER PAYMENT - DUE SEPTEMBER 1ST	SPRING SEMESTER PAYMENT - DUE FEBRUARY 1ST
30 minute	\$465	\$465
45 minute	\$600	\$600
1 hour	\$795	\$795

### **Floating Lesson Tuition Payment Plan**

Floating Lessons are only available to adult students with busy schedules. Floating lessons must be purchased and scheduled in groups of two lessons and are only available for 1 hour lessons.

- 1 Hour Floating Lessons = \$120 for a set of 2

Floating Lesson Tuition is only valid for 2 lessons per month, and is due at the first lesson of the month.

### **Summer Lessons**

Students are highly encouraged to continue taking lessons during the summer. Summer lessons must be scheduled and paid for in advance at the beginning of each month. Summer Lessons are offered at the following rates: \$35 for 30 minutes, \$45 for 45 minutes, and \$60 for one hour.

## **Practicing & Tuning**

In my experience students who practice regularly outside of their lesson are the ones who enjoy playing the harp the most. Students please make every effort to observe the following guidelines:

- A **minimum** of 5 days of practicing per week is expected for all students.
- Students ages 5 and under: 5 minutes with enthusiasm 3 times per day!
- Elementary School Students: 30 minutes of harp practice per day - this can be divided into multiple sessions per day.
- Middle School students: 45 minutes of harp practice per day, in **ADDITION** to time spent playing in other ensemble rehearsals.
- High School students and above: 1 hour per day, in **ADDITION** to other ensemble rehearsals.
- Students preparing for college auditions and/or competitions at the state or national level: 1.5 hours (minimum) per day.
- Harps must be tuned a minimum of 3 times per week - tuning everyday is best for the harp. Students ages 12 and older are responsible for tuning their harp; parents must tune or supervise tuning for elementary students.

# Scheduling & Attendance

## SCHEDULING

The student's regular lesson time is theirs to keep for one academic year (September to May). Please refer to the online studio calendar at <http://www.kelaharp.com/calendar.html> for the most current information about the lesson schedule.

## ATTENDANCE

Consistent attendance at lessons is required. In my experience, students that commit to regular lesson attendance progress more quickly and get the most enjoyment from harp lessons.

I have set aside your lesson time to teach you so please be respectful of my time and make every good faith effort to be at your lesson.

To continue to be a member of my studio, all students must attend lessons regularly.

If you will miss your lesson for any reason, you must contact me directly via phone or text.

### Excused Absences

1. To obtain an excused absence the student (or parents) must contact the teacher more than 24 hours in advance about missing a lesson.
2. Each student can reschedule or make-up TWO excused absences per semester.
3. In cases of sudden illness or family emergency a student may obtain an excused absence, at the teacher's discretion, with less than 24 hours notice by contacting the teacher as soon as possible and **prior** to the original lesson time.

### Unexcused Absences

1. Unexcused absences will not be rescheduled, made-up, or refunded.
2. Payment must be made regardless of attendance for all scheduled lessons.
3. Canceling a lesson with less than 24 hours notice will result in an unexcused absence, except in cases of emergency determined at the discretion of the teacher.
4. Scheduling doctors appointments for well visits (check-ups, dentist, orthodontist, etc.) during your regular harp lesson time will result in an unexcused absence.
5. A failure to give notice about an absence - i.e. no call, no show - will result in the student paying a \$25 fee in addition to the usual cost of the lesson in question.

## EMERGENCIES & EXTREME WEATHER

In extreme weather or local emergency situations, lessons will be held or canceled based on the decisions of the student's local school district, or any driving bans between the student's home and my studio.

Students will receive an email and/or text about extreme weather or local emergency related cancellations. If in doubt about the weather situation, contact me.

In extreme weather situations, lessons via Skype or FaceTime are encouraged if possible, or a lesson will be available during the make-up lesson days at the end of each semester.

## RE-SCHEDULING & MAKE-UP LESSONS

**As the Teacher**, if a conflict should arise in my schedule with the student's lesson day and time, I will give the student notice about the conflict as soon as possible in advance. I will do one of the following:

1. Reschedule the lesson in advance at everyone's earliest convenience or during the allotted make-up lesson days scheduled in the calendar.
2. Offer a Skype or FaceTime lesson at a mutually agreed upon time.
3. Refund the lesson if necessary.

Should I need to cancel a lesson due to illness or emergency, I will call and/or email the student (or parent) to cancel with as much notice as possible before the lesson. A make-up lesson will be available during one of the make-up lesson weeks during the semester, or the lesson will be refunded.

**Students**, are allowed to reschedule or make-up TWO Excused Absence lessons per semester, provided the student (or parent) adheres to the attendance policy. After two excused absences in a semester, missed lessons may not be rescheduled and payment must be made regardless of attendance for all scheduled lessons.

If a scheduled make-up lesson is missed or cancelled by the student, a second make-up lesson will not be offered.

# SHORTENING OR TERMINATION OF LESSONS

## Shortening of Lessons

Should a student arrive for their lesson late or unprepared (i.e., without their music or lacking sufficient practice), I reserve the right to shorten or cancel the lesson at the student's expense. I have set aside my time to teach, therefore a lack of preparation is a lack of respect for my time.

## Grounds for Termination of Lessons by the Teacher

Lessons will be terminated for any of the reasons listed below, or at the discretion of the teacher. Students and families will be given one written warning via email, and the chance to change their behavior or resolve the problem.

- Failure to abide by studio policies
- Repeated lack of preparation (i.e. not practicing) or a routinely poor attitude
- Habitual absences or cancellations
- Repeated failure to follow the attendance policy
- Perpetual tardiness
- If the student has an unpaid balance due for more than 30 days then lessons will be terminated immediately, and the balance will still be required in addition to any late fees and court costs.

When the decision is made to terminate lessons, the student's regularly scheduled lesson time will be forfeited and possibly assigned to other current students or the next student on the waiting list. If lessons are terminated by the student or teacher before the end of a tuition payment period, payment will not be reimbursed.



# Performances & Events

## RECITALS

All students are expected to participate in studio recitals. Suzuki Students are encouraged to give recitals upon completion of each book. Additionally I encourage high school seniors to give a Senior solo recital, or a combined recital with another harp student. Community engagement performances at retirement homes and non-profits are also given by students as a soloist or in the studio harp ensemble.

## COMPETITIONS

Students are encouraged to participate in school, local, or national competitions, such as the American Harp Society National Competition held in odd numbered years at the AHS, Inc. Summer Institute.

## HOLIDAY HARP ENSEMBLE

The Holiday Harp Ensemble is open to students of all ages and levels, and will perform two or three ensemble pieces for our studio's Holiday Harp Performances. Students may choose from several performance dates at area senior living and community centers.

**Rehearsal Schedule:** The Holiday Harp Ensemble will have one dress rehearsal on the same day and at the same location as the concert. Students will also rehearse the music in their lessons and group class.

**Holiday Harp Ensemble Music:** Music will be chosen based on the skill levels as well as the cultures and traditions of students performing. I will provide all music required.

## SUMMER CAMPS, INSTITUTES & FESTIVALS

All harp students are strongly encouraged to participate in summer harp activities. A list of harp camps, Suzuki Institutes, summer festivals, and American Harp Society, Inc., national events can be found online at:

<https://suzukiassociation.org>

<http://www.harpcolumn.com>

<http://www.harpsociety.org>

# Communications & Social Media

- Students must provide their current mobile phone number to contact you in case of emergencies on your lesson day.
- Email is the primary way students and parents will receive updates, so please give me the address you check frequently.
- Email is typically the fastest way to reach me in non-emergency situations [harpist@kelaharp.com](mailto:harpist@kelaharp.com) Please use only this address and be sure you have this email address saved in your address book to receive important studio emails.
- Harp-related text messages on my cell phone are acceptable: 512-350-4018. I may also text students/parents in situations when I need to pass on last minute information quickly. No personal or holiday greeting texts please.

## WEBSITE

I've created a corner of the web just for my students where you will find the studio calendar, videos, photos, and more. <http://www.kelaharp.com/teaching.html>

## DROPBOX

We have a studio Dropbox folder that contains practice note pages, string diagrams, DIY flash cards, practice videos, etc. <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/b75hdw389xrrhv1/AACkzuXB9WgKpTwq8Oj61CgGa?dl=0>

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Follow me on the social media of your choice for updates about harp happenings, photos, and tips.

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/kelaharp/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/KelaHarp>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/KelaHarp>

Instagram: <https://instagram.com/KelaHarp/>

**Privacy Concerns** - I do not tag students in photos or use student's last names online. I do not friend students on my personal Facebook page, you are welcome to like my harpist page linked above.

## AMERICAN HARP SOCIETY, INC.

<http://www.harpsociety.org>

I encourage you to become members of the American Harp Society (AHS): benefits include discounted harp insurance, *the American Harp Journal*, competitions, scholarships, and more.

# Harp Student Supply List

## REQUIRED SUPPLIES

- Tuning Key** – All students must have their own personal tuning key.
- Electronic Chromatic Tuner** – Students (or parents of students under 12) must tune their harp a minimum of three days per week, tuning everyday is best for the harp. A separate electronic tuner, or an approved app on a mobile device is required.
- Tuning Pick-up Microphone** – This device plugs into your tuner or mobile device and clips onto the harp; it helps tune in noisy situations such as ensemble rehearsal.
- Metronome** – Must have a loud ticking sound that can be heard while playing. Can be an app on a mobile device.
- Practice Planner** – Either a: spiral notebook or Suzuki practice sheets (provided by teacher).
- One Three Ring Binder** – Students must have someplace to store handouts, ensemble music, and the occasional copies I may give them for their solo and theory work.
- Music** – Students are responsible for promptly purchasing and owning **original** sheet music and recordings of all solo music they perform, as well as other music as assigned.
- Adjustable Bench** – It is best to buy one sturdy adjustable bench, this way as the student grows or switches to a different sized harp they can always sit at the proper height.
- Music Stand** – Must have a sturdy desk (where the music sits) that swivels and the height should adjust. **Folding wire stands are NOT acceptable** because they are flimsy, easily collapse, and often damage the wood and finish of harps.
- Sproubeat** - Music Theory iPad curriculum for all levels and ages. Purchased through me (from my studio group account) \$50 per year.
- On Playing the Harp - Yolanda Kondonassis**: This 150 page method book is full of helpful information about harps and technique with pictures! It will last any harpist for a lifetime – required for pedal harp students of any age. Published by Carl Fischer. List Price \$26.95.

## FOR BEGINNING HARPISTS

- Grand Staff Flash Cards** - for students learning to read music, can be purchased ready-made or DIY print and cut.

Supplies can be purchased directly from me, and I offer shipping discounts on group music orders at the beginning of each semester. Or you may order directly from the retailers listed below.

### Harp Music & Accessories Retailers:

Lyon & Healy West: [www.Harp.com](http://www.Harp.com)

Melody's Traditional Music & Harp Shoppe: [www.FolkHarp.com](http://www.FolkHarp.com)

Vanderbilt Music: [www.VanderbiltMusic.com](http://www.VanderbiltMusic.com)

Virginia Harp Center: [www.vaharpcenter.com](http://www.vaharpcenter.com)

# Important Dates 2018 - 2019

Dates are subject to change. For the most current schedule information check the Online Studio Calendar at <http://www.kelaharp.com/calendar.html>

DATE	EVENT
September 4, 2018	First Day of Fall Semester
October TBA	Halloween Harp Recital
November 19 & 20, 2018	Make-up Lesson Days (Fall)
November 21 - 25, 2018	Thanksgiving Break - No Lessons
December TBA	Holiday Harp Ensemble Performance
December 17, 2018 - January 6, 2019	Winter Break - No Lessons
January 7 - 11, 2019	Make-up Lesson Week (Fall)
January 14, 2019	First Day of Spring Semester
March 30 - April 7, 2019	Spring Break - No Lessons
May 20 - 26, 2019	Make-up Lesson Week (Spring)
May 27, 2019	Memorial Day - No Lessons
May 28 - 31, 2019	Make-up Lesson Week (Spring)
June 9 - 15, 2019	No Lessons - Longhorn Music Camp in Austin, TX
June 16 - 22, 2019	No Lessons - American Harp Society, Inc. Board Meetings, AHS National Competition, & Summer Institute: UNCOSA - Winston-Salem, NC.
June 24, 2019	Summer Lessons Begin
August 12 - 16, 2019	No Lessons - BSS Harp Workshop in Buffalo, NY

# Photo & Recording Release Form

Harp student's accomplishments with photos may be featured in both printed and online studio publications - such as on Kela Walton's Harp Studio website, social media, or other publicity materials. Audio and/or videos recordings of student performances may also be published via YouTube and on other social media.

Only the student's first name will be published on the internet with any photo or video. Students will not be tagged on social media posts, but may tag themselves if they so choose.

**To grant permission for Kela Walton to publish images and/or recordings of you or your child, please indicate so below (check all that apply):**

\_\_\_ I approve the use of *photographs* of myself or my child *as an individual* for studio publications and on the internet.

\_\_\_ I approve the use of *recordings* of myself or my child *as an individual* for studio publications and on the internet.

\_\_\_ I approve the use of *photographs* of myself or my child *as part of a group* for studio publications and on the internet.

\_\_\_ I approve the use of *recordings* of myself or my child *as part of a group* for studio publications and on the internet.

**If you DO NOT wish Kela Walton to publish images and/or recordings of you or your child under any circumstances, please indicate so below:**

\_\_\_ I DO NOT approve the use of *photographs* of myself or my child for studio publications and on the internet.

\_\_\_ I DO NOT approve the use of *recordings* of myself or my child for studio publications and on the internet.

\_\_\_\_\_ Student's Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_ Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian's Name (if student is under 18)

\_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian's Signature (if student is under 18)

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

# Teacher, Parent, Student Agreement

2018-2019

## *As the Teacher...*

1. I will provide each student with a positive learning environment, individual attention, and the respect necessary to develop her/his skills and talents. To encourage success we will set goals together at each student's individual rate of learning.
2. I will come to each lesson prepared to teach all of the student's current assignments, and be prepared with new materials as needed.
3. I will seek out additional performance and learning opportunities for the student such as recitals, competitions, master classes, camps, workshops, etc.

Teacher's signature



## *As the Parent(s) and/or Guardian(s)...*

1. I understand and will observe all of the policies outlined in the Student Handbook.
2. I grant permission for images and recordings of my student to be used by Kela Walton in print and via internet media, or I have returned the Photo & Recording Release Form.
3. I will help my student to schedule daily practice time, and provide a home practice environment that is free from interruptions and distractions (such as: family, friends, TV, etc.)
4. I will encourage my student to participate in Concerts, Recitals, Workshops and Events.

Parent's signature \_\_\_\_\_

date \_\_\_\_\_

## *As the Student...*

1. I understand and will observe all of the policies outlined in the Student Handbook.
2. I will come to my lessons prepared. This means that...
  - I will wash my hands and make sure my nails are trimmed *before* playing any harp.
  - I will not wear jewelry while playing any harp (bangles, watches, dangly earrings, etc. damage the harp).
  - I will practice in accordance with the guidelines in the Student Handbook.
  - I will bring all music and materials that I am currently working on to my lesson.
  - I will treat each lesson as a mini performance - my chance to show my teacher how much I have progressed between lessons.
  - I will ask my teacher questions to be sure I understand all assignments.
  - I will use and refer to my assignment notes or practice planner on a daily basis.
  - I will complete all assignments using a metronome or other practice techniques as assigned in my notes or practice planner.

Student's signature \_\_\_\_\_

date \_\_\_\_\_