

# HARP STUDENT HANDBOOK

2020 - 2021 ACADEMIC YEAR



KELA WALTON - HARP INSTRUCTION

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

# Studio Philosophy

The ultimate goal is to develop compassionate hearts and disciplined minds through the study of music.

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

## I EXPECT MY HARP STUDENTS TO:

- Aspire to Learn to play the harp well.
- Approach my suggestions with an open mind.
- 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.
- Devote ample daily practice time between lessons *in addition to* time spent in ensemble rehearsals in order to attempt new ways of playing.
- Make every good faith effort to attend lessons regularly.
- Listen to harp recordings of pieces they study and perform as part of their daily practice.
- Attend harp-related concerts, where the students themselves do not perform.
- Participate in performance opportunities that are mutually agreed upon by both student and teacher, to develop solo and ensemble performance skills. Performances may include: harp studio recitals, informal performances, American Harp Society events, summer harp camps or festivals, and competitions when appropriate.

# Studio Policies

## LESSONS

**Weekly Lessons** - Regular weekly lessons are available for 45 minutes 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 8, 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 take place at least twice a month, and are available for 1 hour lessons only.

## LOCATIONS

**In-Person** - at my studio in Spartanburg. Students may bring their own harp, or play one of my Lyon & Healy lever or pedal harps during the lesson.

**Online** - using a combination video conferencing via Zoom as well video recording submissions. Regular online lessons are available at my discretion to students who live further than 60 miles away from my studio, and have completed one year of harp study in-person. Online lessons are also offered to all students when I'm traveling, in combination with in-person lessons, during inclement weather events, as a precaution during pandemics, or in other emergency situations.

## TUNING

- Harps must be tuned a **minimum** of 3 times per week.
- Tuning everyday BEFORE practicing 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.

## PRACTICING

Students who practice regularly enjoy playing the harp the most. I suggest following guidelines:

- A **minimum** of 15 minutes a day and 5 days 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: 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.

## ATTENDANCE

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

## SCHEDULING

- All lessons will be scheduled AND must be confirmed via our studio's online scheduling platform Fons <https://fons.app>
- Weekly Lessons: The student's regular lesson time is theirs to keep for one academic year.
- Floating Lessons: Floating lessons are scheduled at the beginning of each month via Fons.

## RESCHEDULING & MAKE-UP LESSONS

1. Students can reschedule or make-up TWO lessons per session (Fall, Spring, or Summer), provided they give at least 36 hours notice prior to the original lesson.
2. Rescheduling requests must be received and approved via Fons.
3. Lessons canceled with less than 36 hours notice, will not be made-up and will be charged the usual lesson fee.
4. In cases of sudden illness or emergencies, lessons may be made-up (at the teacher's discretion) as long as notice is given via phone or text as soon as possible and **prior** to the original lesson time.
5. If a rescheduled or make-up lesson is missed or cancelled by the student, a second make-up lesson will not be offered.
6. A failure to give notice about an absence prior to the lesson time - i.e. no call, no show - will result in paying a \$35 fee plus the usual cost of the lesson in question.

## EXTREME WEATHER & EMERGENCIES

In extreme weather or local emergency situations, in-person lessons will be held or canceled based on the decisions of the student's local school district, or emergency declarations by the local authorities (such as a stay at home orders, driving bans, etc.). Students will be notified via text or email regarding emergency related in-person lesson cancellations.

In these situations, online video lessons will be offered when possible. Or the lesson will be rescheduled during the make-up lesson weeks at the end of each session.

## TEACHER CONFLICTS

Should a conflict arise in my schedule, I will give notice as soon as possible and do one of the following:

- Reschedule the lesson in advance at everyone's earliest convenience or during the allotted make-up lesson days at the end of each semester. OR
- Offer an online video conference lesson at a mutually agreed upon time.

Should I need to cancel at the last minute due to illness or emergency, I will call and/or email the student (or parent). A make-up lesson will be available during one of the make-up lesson weeks, or the lesson will be refunded.

## SHORTENING OF LESSONS

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

Students who are visibly ill or showing signs of contagion may be asked to leave in person lessons.

## TERMINATION OF LESSONS

Lessons will be terminated for any of the reasons listed below, or at the discretion of the teacher.

- Failure to abide by studio policies
- Repeated lack of preparation (i.e. not practicing) or a routinely poor attitude
- Habitual absences or cancellations
- Perpetual tardiness

Students and families will be given one written warning, and one chance to change their behavior or resolve the problem. 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.

# Tuition

- Tuition includes lessons as well as recitals and occasional group classes.
- Accepted payment forms: personal check, cash, or online via Fons <https://fons.app> (a service for ACH bank transfers or credit card payments).
- There will be a \$25 fee for funds returned by the bank for any reason, in addition to reimbursement for the original amount of the funds declined and bank fees.
- If lessons are terminated, payment will not be reimbursed or refunded.

## WEEKLY LESSON TUITION PAYMENT PLANS

Tuition for weekly lessons is paid either monthly or at the beginning of each term. Weekly lesson tuition plans include up to 14 lessons per four month term (Sept - Dec, Jan - April, May - August).

### Full Tuition Payment per Term (5% Discount)

LESSON LENGTH	FULL TUITION PAYMENT
30 minute	\$465
45 minute	\$600
1 hour	\$795

1. Those who choose to pay for the entire session must do so on or before the first lesson of each term in September, January, and/or May.
2. Full Tuition payments must be in the form of cash or check.

### Monthly Tuition Payment Plan

LESSON LENGTH	MONTHLY PAYMENT
30 minute	\$125
45 minute	\$160
1 hour	\$210

1. Monthly payments are due on or before the 1st lesson of each month.

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. A \$25 late fee will be added for each week payment is not received.
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.

## SUMMER TUITION

Students are highly encouraged to continue lessons during the Summer Term (May - August). Summer 2021 lessons will be held online due to my commitments.

Students who would like to continue regular weekly (14 lessons) in the summer may continue to do so and pay using the monthly or full tuition plans outlined above.

Families with lots of travel and camps in the summer, may prefer scheduling only 8 or 10 lessons rather than take weekly lessons during the May-August Summer Term. These packages of lessons are only available in 45 minute or 1 hour lessons, and must purchased and scheduled before June 1st.

LESSON LENGTH	SUMMER 8	SUMMER 10
45 minute	\$340	\$430
1 hour	\$460	\$580

## ADULT FLOATING LESSON PAYMENT PLANS

Floating Lessons are available year round to adult students who do not take weekly lessons. Floating lessons take place at least twice a month, and are available for 1 hour lessons only.

LESSON LENGTH	PACKAGE OF 2 LESSONS	PACKAGE OF 4 LESSONS
1 hour	\$120	\$240

Floating lessons are scheduled and paid for by purchasing packages of 2 or 4 lessons via Fons.

## SINGLE LESSONS

My single lesson rate (for audition prep, competition prep, etc.) is \$65 for an hour, or \$100 for a 90 minute lesson.

# Performances & Events

## RECITALS & COMPETITIONS

To develop solo as well as ensemble performance skills, students are expected to take part in at least one of the following every academic year: harp studio recitals, informal performances, harp ensemble, American Harp Society events, competitions, and or summer harp events.

Suzuki Students are encouraged to give recitals upon completion of each book. Additionally I encourage high school seniors to give a Senior recital. Community engagement performances at retirement homes, schools, and non-profits are also encouraged.

I am happy to help students prepare for local, state, or national competitions, such as the American Harp Society National Competition held in odd numbered years.

## SPARKLE CITY HARP ENSEMBLE

The Sparkle Harp Ensemble is an ensemble opportunity open to upstate harp students of all ages and levels. Registration is by semester and the fee includes music. More info at [www.kelaharp.com/harp-ensemble.html](http://www.kelaharp.com/harp-ensemble.html)

## HOLIDAY HARP ENSEMBLE

Students are encouraged to join their fellow studio members and perform two or three ensemble pieces for our studio's Holiday Harp Ensemble tour. Students may choose from several performance dates at area senior living and community centers. Holiday Harp Ensemble music will be chosen based on the skill levels as well as the cultures and traditions of students performing. Students are also encouraged to play a solo at these events.

**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.

## SUMMER CAMPS, INSTITUTES & FESTIVALS

All harp students are strongly encouraged to participate in summer harp activities. Lists of harp camps, Suzuki Institutes, summer festivals, and the 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, so I can contact you in case of emergencies on your lesson day.
- Email is the primary way students and parents will receive updates, so please provide 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.

## 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 all harpists to become members of the American Harp Society (AHS): benefits include discounted harp insurance, *the American Harp Journal*, national events, 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! (Apps or stand alone devices are acceptable)
- Practice Planner** – such as: spiral notebook or Suzuki practice sheets (provided by teacher), etc.
- One Three Ring Binder** – to store handouts, lesson notes, music, etc.
- Music** – Students are responsible for promptly purchasing and owning **original** (physical or digital) 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.

## FOR BEGINNING HARPISTS

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

## ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Sproutbeat** - Music Theory iPad curriculum for all levels and ages. Student accounts are purchased through me (our studio has a group account) \$25 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.

Music and supplies can be purchased directly from me. I offer shipping discounts on group music orders at the beginning of each semester, or you can purchase directly from the following retailers:

### 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)

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

# COVID-19 Policy Updates

## LESSONS

- In-person lessons are temporary suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- All lessons will take place using a combination of both online video conferences using Zoom and video recording submissions
- Together we will create practice strategies based on both the Zoom sessions and video submissions.

## ONLINE LESSONS VIA ZOOM

- The preferred platform for online video conference lessons is Zoom. <https://zoom.us>
- Information about how to configure your space as well as your computer or mobile device for online lessons is located on my website here: <https://www.kelaharp.com/online-lessons.html>
- Recordings of your Zoom lesson will be available to view (privately) if you need to review something from the lesson for one month in Dropbox before being deleted.

## VIDEO RECORDINGS

- Students will also submit a video recording of one piece (currently in the polishing stage) between lessons. It is much easier to hear musical nuances like dynamics and phrasing in video recordings, than it is to hear these things via Zoom. Therefore, these recordings are an essential part of the online lesson process.
- Students can upload videos to [Dropbox](#) or [Google Drive](#), or text videos to me if you do not have one of these online file storage systems.
- I will provide positive comments and suggestions for improvement on the video performance much I would during a lesson.
- I may also share customized practice videos occasionally as needed.

## IN-PERSON HELP

- Occasional in-person help sessions may be requested for replacing strings or other harp maintenance.
- In-person help sessions will take place outside my studio (or in my garage if needed).
- Masks must be worn by all parties for any in-person sessions, until further notice.
- In-person help session rates are \$65 per hour.

# Important Dates 2020 - 2021

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
August 31, 2020	First Day of Fall Session
September 7, 2020	Labor Day - No Lessons
October 10, 2020	Upstate Harp Society Workshops - Online
October 24, 2020	Halloween Harp Recital - Online
November 25 - 29, 2020	Thanksgiving Break - No Lessons
December TBA?	Holiday Harp Ensemble Performance?
December 14 - 18, 2020	Make-up Lesson Days
December 19, 2020 - January 3, 2021	Winter Break - No Lessons
January 4 - 8, 2021	Make-up Lesson Days
January 11, 2021	First Day of Spring Session
April 5 - April 9, 2021	Spring Break - Optional Make-up lessons
April 26 - 30, 2021	Make-up Lesson Days
May 3, 2021	First Day of Summer Session
May 22, 2021	Harp-B-Que (Backyard recital & potluck)
May 31, 2021	Memorial Day - No Lessons
June 16 - 23, 2021	No Lessons - American Harp Society, Inc. Board Meetings, AHS National Conference: Orlando, FL.

# 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, etc.. Audio and/or video recordings of student performances may also be published via YouTube and on other social media.

Student's names will NOT be published on the internet with any photo or video, without their permission. Students will not be tagged on social media posts, but may tag themselves.

**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 in print and online.

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

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

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

**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 in print and online.

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

\_\_\_\_\_ 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

2020-2021

## *As the Teacher...*

1. I will provide each student with an environment, individual attention, and the respect necessary to nurture their growth. To create a successful experiences 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, harp events, 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 for publications in print and online, OR I have returned the Photo & Recording Release Form.
3. I will help my student schedule daily practice time, and assist with practice as assigned.
4. I will provide a home practice environment that is free from interruptions and distractions (such as: family, friends, video screens, mobile devices, etc.)
5. I will encourage my student to participate in performances and other harp 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. because they 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 planner *before* each practice session.
  - I will complete all assignments using a metronome or other practice techniques as assigned in my notes or practice planner.

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

date \_\_\_\_\_