

HARP STUDENT HANDBOOK

REVISED SPRING 2020



KELA WALTON - HARP INSTRUCTION

www.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 make every good faith effort to attend lessons regularly.
- Students must listen to harp recordings of pieces they study and perform as part of their daily practice.
- Attending harp-related concerts, where the students themselves do not perform, is strongly encouraged.
- To develop solo and/or ensemble performance skills, students are expected to take part in performance opportunities that are mutually agreed upon by both student and teacher. Performances may include: harp studio recitals, informal performances, American Harp Society events, summer harp camps or festivals, and competitions when appropriate.
- Our goal is to develop compassionate hearts and disciplined minds through the study of music.

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 twice a month, and are available for 45 minute or 1 hour lessons.

LOCATIONS

In Person - Most lessons take place at my studio in Spartanburg. Students may play one of my Lyon & Healy lever or pedal harps during the lesson.

Online Video Lessons - Lessons via Zoom (or in some cases FaceTime or Skype) are available at my discretion to students who live further than 60 miles away from my studio. I also offer online video lessons when I'm traveling, during inclement weather events, or 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 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.

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 (September thru May).
- Floating Lessons: Floating lessons are scheduled at the beginning of each month via Fons.

RESCHEDULING & MAKE-UP LESSONS

1. Weekly lesson students can reschedule or make-up TWO absences per academic year (September - May), provided they give at least 36 hours notice prior to the absence.
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 family 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 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 \$25 fee plus 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 emergency declarations by the local authorities such as a stay at home order or driving bans. Students will receive an email or text about extreme weather or local emergency related cancellations.

In these types of situations, online video lessons are strongly encouraged if possible. Or a lesson will be available during the make-up lesson days at the end of each semester.

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.

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

- 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 any funds returned by the bank for any reason, in addition to reimbursement for the original amount of the funds declined and any bank fees.
- If lessons are terminated, payment will not be reimbursed or refunded.
- 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.

WEEKLY LESSON PAYMENT PLANS

- Students taking weekly lessons may choose to pay monthly OR at the beginning of each long session (September & February) during the academic year.
- Tuition is calculated based on 28 lessons divided by 9 months (September - May).
- All weekly tuition payment plans are based on the following fee schedule: 30 minutes = \$35, 45 minutes = \$45, 1 hour = \$60.

Option 1: Monthly Tuition - Weekly Lessons

LESSON LENGTH	2019-2020 MONTHLY TUITION (SEPT-MAY)
30 minute	\$110
45 minute	\$140
1 hour	\$190

1. The monthly payments are due on or before the 1st lesson of each month.
2. Students may begin the monthly tuition plan at anytime during the academic year.
3. 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.
4. 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.

Option 2: Long Session Discounted Tuition - Weekly Lessons

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

1. Students choosing to pay for the entire session must do so on or before the first lesson of September or February. There are 14 lessons per long session (Sept-Jan & Jan-May).
2. Payment accepted only in the form of check or cash. Online Fons payments are not accepted for the Long Session Discounted Tuition Plan.

SUMMER SESSION TUITION

Students are highly encouraged to continue taking lessons during the summer (June - August). The Summer Pick Six = 6 lessons purchased before June 1st at a discounted rate, and scheduled in advance during June, July, and August. Due to everyone's busy schedules in the summer, I find that 6 lessons is the average for most families. Additional lessons may be available as schedules permit.

LESSON LENGTH	SUMMER SIX PACK (JUNE - AUGUST)
45 minute	\$260
1 hour	\$350

FLOATING LESSON PAYMENT PLANS

Floating Lessons are available year round to adult students who do not take weekly lessons. Floating lessons are scheduled and paid for by purchasing packages of 2 or 4 lessons via Fons.

LESSON LENGTH	PACKAGE OF 2 LESSONS	PACKAGE OF 4 LESSONS
45 minute	\$90	\$180
1 hour	\$120	\$240

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, area harp ensembles, 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, either solo or a combined with another music student. 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 at the AHS, Inc. Summer Institute.

SPARKLE CITY HARP ENSEMBLE

The Sparkle Harp Ensemble co-directed by Anna Grace Bennett and Kela Walton is a new 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

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 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 you 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 devices are acceptable)
- Practice Planner** – such as: spiral notebook or Suzuki practice sheets (provided by teacher), etc.
- 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.

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. Purchased through me (our studio has a 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.

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

Melody's Traditional Music & Harp Shoppe: www.FolkHarp.com

Virginia Harp Center: www.vaharpcenter.com

Important Dates 2019 - 2020

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 9, 2019	First Day of Fall Session
October TBA	Possible Halloween Harp Recital
November 25 & 26, 2019	Make-up Lesson Days
November 27 - December 1, 2019	Thanksgiving Break - No Lessons
December TBA	Holiday Harp Ensemble Performance(s)
December 15 - 19, 2019	Make-up Lesson Days
December 20, 2019 - January 12, 2020	Winter Break - No Lessons
January 13, 2020	First Day of Spring Session
March 30 - April 7, 2020	Spring Break - Optional Make-up lessons
May 18 - 22, 2020	Make-up Lesson Days
May 25, 2020	Memorial Day - No Lessons
May 26 - 29, 2020	Optional Make-up Lesson Days
June 1, 2020	Summer Lessons Begin
June 19 - 25, 2020	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, or other publicity materials. Audio and/or video 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 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

2019-2020

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. 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 _____