



Welcome to our Studio!

Parent Training

If your child is age 4-10, you will be attending lessons and practicing daily with them at home. They will need your help in: 1) Establishing good posture 2) Maintaining focus for 30-45 minutes of practice, and 3) Scaffolding their learning in a way that effectively builds their skill. As middle schoolers they will continue to benefit from some gentle parental oversight in their practicing. Once they have developed the necessary organization, self-awareness, and discipline, they will be able to practice fully independently.

BEGINNING STUDENTS: In order to support you in your role as practice parent, *our team is open to meeting with you for ONE- TWO lessons before your child begins, so you can be more helpful (and feel more confident and knowledgeable) when you practice with them.* **STRINGS:** You are welcome to bring your own violin if you have one; otherwise I will provide a violin for you to use during our meeting.

During these two weeks before your child begins lessons, you will want to begin establishing a practice routine each evening. Some of your family's usual routines will need to be adjusted to accommodate this additional evening activity. I suggest easing into this practice routine over the next two weeks by doing a violin-related activity each day at the appointed practice time — for example, watching a video of a violin performance. This will help give you a sense whether the practice time you've chosen will work well.

Choosing a Playing/Practice Area

On a related note, you will also want to set aside a specific area in your home which is reserved for music practice. Having a dedicated practice area helps your child (and you) focus more fully on your practice time, without other tasks and distractions pulling on your attention. The practice area should be relatively quiet and free from distraction from other family members. Ideally the area should include just one chair (for you), a high-quality music stand ([here](#), or for taller families [here](#)), and some pens and pencils. Eliminating cushy furniture from the practice area will help your child build the discipline of standing throughout the practice.

Instrument Recommendations:

PIANO/KEYBOARD: If you have a piano already than we recommend keeping it in a cool spot in your home away from any risk of water damage. If you would prefer to purchase a keyboard we recommend this option with weighted keys/pedal or one of similar quality. [OSS #1 KEYBOARD RECOMMENDATION](#) OR [#2 KEYBOARD RECOMMENDATION \(COMBO / BENCH PACKAGE ETC.,\)](#)

VIOLIN/ VIOLA: After your child "Earns Their Violin", bring them to the shop to rent or purchase a violin (PLEASE VISIT OUR preferred REPUTABLE shops [HERE](#)). The assistants there will measure your child for the appropriate size. To avoid bad habits being formed, please have your child refrain from playing the violin before our first lesson.

UKULELE: We recommend the Halo or Kala Ukulele to purchase for our group classes. These are quality ukuleles that have a great tone and keep their tuning pretty well. We are happy to provide a Rent to Own Halo Ukulele if you prefer.

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Vero Beach, FL 32961



Parents' Role in the Lesson

All parents attend their child's lesson and we strongly encourage you to take notes and/or short videos, which will guide your home practice. My in-person studio has a " DO NOT DISTURB cell phone rule" to ensure that parents do not get pulled into a conversation and miss key points of the lesson. A good practice parent will be writing notes more or less continuously throughout the lesson. Please turn off your cell phone reception to a Do Not Disturb function so that it does not present a distraction.

Your child and their musical journey will blossom when the space for the lesson is held in high esteem. And we welcome your creativity and unique input during your weekly playing time together. There are literally limitless ideas we can try!

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation and we look forward to beginning your musical journey with us!

Warm Regards,

Nicole Ballinger

Director/ Lead WAVE (Wonder Achieving Visionary Educator)



INSTRUMENT & BOW CARE

String Instruments need to be treated like they are humans.. which means we treat them like we would like to be treated- or even better- as we would treat a small child ;-). Follow these suggestions and you will not only make an excellent musician but a parent someday!

* DO: Take your "baby" with you wherever you go while in transit/ travel. DON'T: We would not leave a small child in a hot car, truck, van or bus OR outside in sub zero temperatures. The heat can cause the varnish to bubble or the glue to melt. The cold can cause an instrument to crack.

* DO: Wash your Hands before playing your instrument. Sweat does wear out the quality of strings and other materials. DON'T: Clean or wash your instrument and/or Bow in water. It is NOT waterproof.

* DO: Wipe off your instrument after playing with an untreated micro fiber or lint free cloth. Rosin does come off the bow and settle on the strings and instrument- which if not cleaned- will eventually cake and tarnish the varnish as well as the sound of your musical baby.

*DO: Loosen your bow before returning it to your case. Bow hair will stretch if not loosened beforehand.

* DO: Remove your shoulder rest from your instrument and properly store it in the case before closing the case or you could crack the top of your instrument when closing it.

* DON'T: Actually NEVER do Home Repairs! One false move could destroy your instrument. All repairs should be done by a string instrument Doctor/Luthier at a reputable shop.

* TUNING: There are points of no return with our pegs- especially when its turned past the desired pitch of the string. Even new strings that are stretched too far will break. So, let's play POP! Goes the Weasel for music and not our strings. We are happy to assist you with tuning at each lesson and to teach you how to tune in a safe way. ;-)

* STRING CHANGING: This is not as messy as a diaper but... If all strings are removed at once, this will lose proper placement of the bridge and the inside sound post may also fall down. Have your teacher or another skilled musician help you remove one old string at a time.

ONLINE LESSONS: FORTE CHECKLIST



Device

You need a device to stream online lessons. You can use a desktop computer, laptop, or tablet. Please be sure that your device is charged or plugged in during your online lesson.



High-Speed Internet

Your internet speed should be at 5mbps upload and download speed. If you're not sure what your internet speed is currently you can check by going to www.speedtest.net.



Video Calling Software

Please download calling software (Skype or Zoom) to your device for online lessons. Let me know what your username is prior to the first lesson so I can add you as a contact.



Instrument

You obviously need your instrument during online lessons. Make sure that your instrument is ready and in tune for your first lesson.



Stool or Tablet Stand

Please find a stool or desk to place your device. The device should be positioned so I can clearly see you and the instrument. If using a tablet use a tablet stand. [Click here](#) to view a few recommended stands and tablet holders.



Music Materials

I'll let you know which exact method books and materials you'll need for your lessons. Be sure to have these ready to go before your lesson time begins so we can get started right away.

[Recommended Tablet Holder Stand](#)



OSS Supplies & Resources Check List

Instrument Rental/Repairs-

Atlantic Strings * 1379 W New Haven Ave. West Melbourne, FL 32904
phone: (866) 284 6546 email: allen@atlanticstrings.com website: www.atlanticstrings.com

William Harris Lee * 410 South Michigan ave. Chicago, IL
phone: 800-447-4533 email: info@whlee.net website: www.whlee.com

Muni Strings* 433 W New England Ave D, Winter Park, FL 32789
phone: (407) 951-6256 website: <https://munistrings.com>

Shar Music

phone: 800.248.7427 email: sharserv@sharmusic.com website:www.sharmusic.com

KEYBOARD RECOMMENDATION

Books/Strings etc.- Your First Curriculum Book/Folder will come with your enrollment to our studio. If your educator recommends additional books these may be purchased additionally:

METHOD BOOK(s): _____
(Circle: Violin or Viola)

ETUDE BOOK: _____
(Circle: Violin / Viola)

Recommended Strings: Tomastik Dominant

Shoulder rest- (Mach 1, Kun, Viva or Sumi)

Rosin

Tuner/Metronome: Tunable -\$10 Apple App Store

Webcam for Laptop

Forte App OR Zoom App- Free Downloads on App Store

(Links will be sent via Lesson Reminders)

Tonara App- www.tonara.com – Included with Studio Enrollment

Suggested Supplies Check list

Music Folder

Music Stand

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STRONGLY RECOMMENDED READING FOR STUDIO PARENTS

"Nurturing with Love"- Shinichi Suzuki

"Helping Parents Practice- Ideas for Making it Easier" – Edmund Sprunger

"The Practice Revolution"- Phillip Johnston

"Practiceopedia"- Phillip Johnston

STUDIO CLUBS

EXTREME SCALES SOCIETY- Students who join must be ready for challenge! The studio will set 1-2 weekly and monthly GOALS on the studio smart music program.

HARDCORE SIGHTREADING CLUB- to develop insane levels of proficiency in sightreading. Club classes are in conjunction with the monthly fiddle group class. 1-2 students will be selected each semester to perform a piece at our recital that they've never seen before!!!

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE- NOT FOR THE FAINT OF HEART! FOR THE MOST AMBITIOUS AND CAPABLE OSS STUDENTS TO STRETCH THEIR OWN PERSONAL BESTS! RANGES OF CHALLENGES INCLUDE: *Perform a piece for 10,000 people *Perform a different duet with each student in the studio *Produce an epic Acapella recording *Produce a book of their own pieces (with drawings and recordings) *Record an entire set of etudes or Scales in different rhythms *Perform in a flash mob with the studio and make it on the news!.. There are LIMITLESS IMAGINATIVE IDEAS FOR STUDENTS in this club!

OTHER STUDIO RESOURCES:

OSS YOUTUBE CHANNEL- www.youtube.com/user/oceanstrings

Come visit us often! We have plenty of fun and supportive VIDEO clips to help students appreciate and understand how to perform their pieces!

Welcome to Ocean Strings Studio!

We're looking forward to beginning or continuing your musical journey!

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SHARE YOUR WAVE PREDICTION!

STUDENT NAME: _____

How would you like to feel and what would you like to have accomplished by the end of the year?

1) List 8 (adjectives) words of how you feel about beginning your music journey or how you want to feel by May 2023:

- _____ Inspired _____
- _____ Joyful/ Excited _____
- _____ Brave/ Courageous _____
- _____ Adventurous _____
- _____ Thrilled _____
- _____ Amazed _____
- _____ Growthful _____
- _____ Soul-full _____

2) What I want to accomplish by May 2023 (Name a Specific Musical Goal(s):

We can't wait to put this in the Studio Wave Time Capsule and re-visit this with you with your future self! Let's see how close we can come to your prediction!

Warm Regards, Ocean Strings Studio Family

OCEAN STRINGS *Studio*



Meet Our Educator

Nicole Ballinger

Nicole has been performing for over 30 years and started learning the violin with the Suzuki and traditional methods at 6 years old. She studied for several years under the direction of Ed Edwards, Cindy Nordstrum and other teachers in Rhode Island. After her move to Florida she returned to music performance with her husband Richard. She has performed with several chamber groups and community orchestras, among them the Indian River Pops and the Treasure Coast Symphony and is currently performing with the Vero Beach Chamber Orchestra. She has co-founded and is the event coordinator for Ocean Strings- several group ensembles for special events. She enjoys teaching multi-genre strings to beginning and intermediate students at their studio in Vero Beach. She is a current member of ASTA (American String Teachers Association) and SAA (Suzuki Association of the Americas). In addition, she has passionate interests in community volunteering both with the public school orchestra programs as well as with spiritual education. Nicole is also integrating the award winning Kindermusik curriculum as part of her new studio classes for children- newborn to age five and their caregivers.

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