

Basic Instrument Information

A positive and successful experience depends on having a good quality & well-sized instrument.
Do not obtain an instrument for your child before your teacher approves the size.

**The Brooklyn Conservatory does not sell or provide instruments.
Read below for recommendations and information specific to your instrument.**

For Violins/Cellos/3/4 size basses, we recommend renting from Johnson Strings: (800) 359-9351

We have an arrangement with Johnson Strings which allows you to pick up/drop off at Brooklyn Conservatory, which will save you money on shipping. They will make a delivery prior to the first day of the semester.

Rentals usually include insurance against damage. Building up credit towards a future purchase is usually possible with rental. Make sure the company allows you to trade a size easily.

Bass: The Suzuki Parent should order a $\frac{3}{4}$ size bass with GERMAN bow from Johnson Strings to be delivered by the first day of the semester, for 6 months. **DO NOT** order an instrument for your child. Your teacher will size your child before the children start their lessons in November. For small basses, contact Johnson Strings or Gene Rebeck: erebeck@comcast.net (517) 896-2788.

Bass Rental Rates – including insurance (as of Jan 2019): 6 Months = \$474 for Adult 3/4 size; Beginner (ex. 1/10 size) 12 months = \$474 from Johnson Strings.

Cello: The Suzuki Parent should rent a FULL SIZE cello from Johnson Strings to be delivered by the first day of the semester, for 6 months. **DO NOT** order an instrument for your child. Your teacher will size your child before the children start their lessons in November. Also order a Xeros Anchor for Cello – otherwise known as an Endpin Rest – which holds the endpin in place on the floor.

Cello students are required to bring their own stools to classes. This ensures that students have the correct height stool at home to practice as well as during classes. Families will receive info sheet from dept head for stool options in September.

Standard Cello Rental Rates – including insurance (as of Jan 2019): 6 month = \$276; 12 month = \$450

Guitar: The Suzuki Parent should purchase a guitar for him/herself to be delivered by first day of the semester. **DO NOT** order an instrument for your child. We recommend Ruben Flores: rubenflores@verizon.net. All guitars must be a nylon string CLASSICAL guitar, with a *solid* cedar or spruce soundboard. If you have small hands, order a 63.6cm guitar; if you have large hands, order a full size. Small size guitars will be obtained through Brent Weaver. For more information, email Michele Horner. *Resale of guitars is facilitated by Guitar Department, so that changing sizes is easy and affordable. \$465. See attached page for more info.* Email Michele Horner with questions: Michele.Horner@bkcm.org.

Guitar students are required to bring their own stools to classes. This ensures that students have the correct height stool at home to practice as well as during classes. See separate info sheet for stool options.

Violin: The Suzuki Parent should order a FULL SIZE (4/4) violin for 6 months from Johnson Strings to be delivered by the first day of the semester, as well as a full size (4/4) firm contour sponge. **DO NOT** order an instrument for your child. Your teacher will size your child before the children start their lessons in November. **Standard Violin Rental Rates (as of Jan 2019):** 6 month = \$168.00; 12 month = \$270.00

Flute:

Piano: We require that all piano families have a real piano with strings and hammers (no digital keyboards, no exceptions) by the first day of the semester.

New pianos starting at \$5,600 (Essex, Boston & Steinway); Previously owned starting at \$3000+
Rental from \$85 - \$120/ mo. Tuning \$150 2X per year; Delivery cost: \$275 - \$300 upright/\$375 – grand
See also separate handout “Acquiring a Piano” for more info.

Suzuki Piano: Why A Real Piano Instead of a Keyboard?

At the Brooklyn Conservatory of Music, the Suzuki Division requires that families obtain a real piano for their home by the first week of class. With prior approval, an extension can be obtained until the sixth week of class at the absolute latest, but this will delay your progress.

The piano may be upright, baby grand, or grand. There are many options – to rent, to buy new, or to buy used. Information on where to obtain an instrument is available upon request. Electric Keyboards, even with weighted keys, are not accepted, for the following reasons:

Tone & Technique

An electric keyboard is not a piano. Electric keyboard have a very different action from the real piano, even with weighted keys. The keys are harder to press, and children learn to bang the keys. This affects their technique at a fundamental level.

In Suzuki, we say that “habits learned first, are learned best.” So, if a child learns an incorrect technique at their keyboard at home, it will be very difficult to change the habit later on.

The keyboard also affects the ear and concept of tone quality. Keyboards do not have the rich, ringing tone and coloristic range that the actual piano can give you. After all, music is about sound.

Belief in Success from the Very Start

At the orientation, we often hear families say, “What if my child decides they don’t want to play anymore?” In Suzuki, we refer back to the language learning analogy. Did you ever wonder whether your child would be able or would be interested in learning to speak? Of course not!

We have an expectation of success from the very start. If you don't invest and obtain the real piano, it sends a message to your child that the process might not work, that you have doubts, that you don’t expect success.

Cost

Music education is an investment with ongoing costs, such as lessons, tuning, buying sheet music & supplies, instrument repair, instruments, etc. We must be prepared to provide our children with the proper equipment from the start.

Motivation

We can not expect to engage children if they don't have the right equipment. Children are not going to be inspired if the only time they get to play on the real instrument is at their lessons.

When they go home, they have to go back to the reality of practicing on the electric keyboard. Children will of course be reluctant to practice under this condition.