

Stephan Kane | Classical Guitarist

Studio Policies & Procedures

Teaching Philosophy

Welcome! I look forward to us working together. I offer weekly 30, 45, and 60-minute guitar lessons in English worldwide over Zoom and in-person at my studio in Berlin, Germany.

Every student is unique, responds differently to music, and deserves a positive learning experience. As your teacher, I will guide you throughout your musical journey with the guitar.

My teaching style combines classical guitar technique with classical and contemporary repertoire. We will learn the fundamentals of concrete classical technique that will apply to virtually any style of music. This includes posture, sound production, reading music, performance tips, and other facets of becoming a well-rounded musician.

What can you expect from me?

- Tailored lesson plans that promote a successful pace for each individual
- Positive, constructive teaching style
- Feedback on student progress
- Performance opportunities

What do I expect from my students?

- A desire to learn guitar
- A respectful, receptive, and positive mindset
- Dedication to practicing the assigned materials each week
- Open communication regarding goals, expectations, and progress

Practicing

Developing a consistent, daily habit of spending time with your instrument is the key to success. Scheduled practice time needs to be purposely set aside on a daily basis.

A small amount of practice with mental focus is superior to a large amount of practice when the mind is not engaged. It's helpful to end every practice session with something that is enjoyable to play. It is encouraged that the student keep a practice log in a designated notebook to record what they accomplished and what can be improved upon.

Recitals

Recitals are a good way to celebrate each other's achievements. Having a goal to work towards creates a growth mindset and motivation leading to accelerated learning and success. We will have at least two recitals each year; one in the Fall and one in the Spring. Every student is encouraged to participate as performing is an integral part about playing music. For those who wish to not play in public, we can arrange a private performance.

Calendar/Scheduling

There are year-round lessons. This means that, aside from the dates mentioned below, lessons are still given on days that school may take off (US examples: Veterans Day, Presidents' Day, Spring Break, etc.)

When you sign up for lessons, you are reserving that time slot – please keep this in mind when you book your time slot. Your lesson time and day will only change if you reach out to me directly for a request to change your lesson time.

No lessons will be given:

- Thanksgiving Break (one week)
- Christmas & New Year's Break (two weeks)
- Spring Break (one week)
- Teacher vacation (two weeks to be used at teacher's discretion; advanced notice will be given)

Advance notice of the exact dates of when these breaks will occur will be sent out to each student ahead of time.

How do I pay my tuition?

German and non-US based students can pay their tuition by bank transfer or cash at the beginning of each monthly lesson cycle.

US-based students will be given a link to pay for their tuition online as a monthly flat-rate membership that includes automatic monthly payments on the same day of each month that the first payment was made until cancelled (please see "Discontinuing Lessons" below for cancellation procedures).

What does my tuition pay for?

- Reserving your lesson time slot each week
- Preparation for each lesson
- Printed materials

In-Person & Virtual Lesson Format

All lessons are conducted either virtually over Zoom live video streaming or in person at my teaching studio in Berlin, Germany. While in-person lessons are more traditional, virtual lessons add the benefit of zooming in on different points of the guitar and hand position with the camera for a close-up view of what is being taught. Virtual lessons also make it possible for you to tune in when traveling or on days that you cannot make it to the studio. Students have the option to have virtual or in-person lessons as they choose. For students under the age of 8, parents are encouraged to be present and take notes.

Tuition

My studio runs **46 weeks** per year (one week off at Thanksgiving, two weeks off at Christmas & New Year's, one week off for Spring Break, and two weeks off to be used at my discretion). Tuition is a **flat monthly fee**. Most months have four (4) lessons and some months have five (5) lessons, which act like a "bonus lesson." Some months have less than 4 lessons where holidays and breaks occur. In any case, it evens out to have 46 lesson weeks per year. Tuition is calculated as follows:

$$\text{-Lesson rate} \times 46 \text{ weeks} \div 12 \text{ months} = \text{monthly flat rate}$$

Make-up Policy & Rescheduling

No calls/no shows will forfeit their lesson and payment will not be refunded.

A student will be granted make-up credit when each of the following are met:

- 1.) 24-hour notice is given directly by email. There are no exceptions.
- 2.) The student must notify me of their desired make-up slot using the make-up calendar.

While you are actively taking lessons with me, make-up credit does not expire. Actively taking lessons means that there is no delay or lapse in the student's monthly tuition payment. If a payment lapse occurs, then all make-up credit accumulated by the student will be forfeited. Students are permitted to double up on lessons during a single week with the understanding that the student is expected to practice more to make the lesson time productive and worthwhile. However, taking lessons two days in a row is perfectly fine for the student. Students are allowed one lesson per day, whether it is a make-up lesson or a regular scheduled lesson.

I schedule a few make-up slots during the week as a courtesy to my students. I am aware that things come up unexpectedly and sometimes it is necessary for you to cancel a lesson. Make-up slots are on a first come, first served basis. If a lesson is cancelled with 24-hour notice, another student may use that time slot for their make-up lesson that week. Accordingly, you are entitled to use another student's regular lesson time slot as a make-up if they cancel. The calendar will be updated regularly.

If I have to cancel a lesson for any reason, I will reach out to you with available times to choose from to schedule a make-up lesson.

Discontinuing lessons*

Everyone's musical journey includes change – if guitar lessons are not the right fit for you or if for some reason you need to stop taking lessons with me, please let me know. I am completely supportive of doing what is best for my students.

*At least a **14-day written notice** is required by all US-based students before the next automatic payment occurs on your card in order to cancel lessons and avoid being billed for the next payment cycle. A 14-day notice is requested by German students before cancelling. The following applies to all students when cancelling lessons:

- 1.) All make-up credit will be forfeited at the time of cancellation.
- 2.) Cancellation will be effective immediately as of the next monthly payment is due. You may withdraw the cancellation at any time before it takes effect, but your lesson time slot cannot be guaranteed.
- 3.) Tuition is not transferable.
- 4.) I do not provide tuition refunds under any circumstances.
- 5.) I reserve the right to terminate a lesson membership at any time.

Media Release

My studio has an online presence on stephankane.com, Facebook (Stephan Kane), Instagram (@stephankaneguitar), Google, and Yelp. With permission, I post pictures and videos of what my students are learning and accomplishing. Students will only be identified by their first name. If you would not like your picture or your child's picture online, please let me know.

Parent Involvement

During lessons, I spend one-on-one time with your child to prepare them for a week of practice; however, individual practice time will be most effective when parent accountability is involved.

Please set aside a few minutes each week to check in on your child's practice sessions and make sure they are developing effective practice habits.

Ideas for practice accountability:

- Set a timer that you/your child can see as a count-down during practice
- Have your child perform mini "recitals" for siblings or other family members
- Sit with your child one practice session a week. Give your child the opportunity to teach you the materials they are learning and ask questions as if you are the student.

Illness and general safety:

If a student is ill on the day of their *in-person* lesson, the student must either cancel their lesson or request to have it over Zoom. I reserve the right to stop any in-person lesson if my health or safety is put at risk for any reason, including if I suspect that the student may be contagious, in which case the student forfeits the lesson.

Communication

Communication is key. Please contact me with any questions, comments, or concerns. Let me know how I can better serve you and/or your child. I look forward to us starting this musical journey together!

Contact information:

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