

# *Donna Benier*

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**HARP ♦ PIANO ♦ ORGAN**  
*Gentle, Romantic Music  
for your special occasion*

**My teaching philosophy:** Learning and playing music should be fun and enjoyable! I encourage, but I don't intimidate or threaten a student to learn music. We proceed at the pace of the student. If the student practices regularly, he/she will progress. It is the student's responsibility, [with parental encouragement, if applicable], to practice daily and attain new levels of music ability.

**Length of lessons:** Beginner students (with no background reading music) start with 30-minute lessons for the first year. Adult beginners may take 30 or 45 minute lessons. All other students take 45-minute or 1 hour lessons, unless this poses a financial difficulty or is inappropriate for the student's level. All of the songs, scales, theory, etc. that the student has been assigned are reviewed at the lessons. **I teach September through early June**, and sometimes make arrangements with my continuing adult students for lessons during the summer.

**Payment for lessons:** **Payments for lessons are due monthly at the first lesson of the month for that month.** No lessons are given on school breaks. **Late payments: add \$5 per wk.**

**Missed lessons:** **There is no credit given for a missed lesson.** However, please notify me with as much advance notice as possible (at least 24-hour notice preferable). Occasionally, I will need to be gone when a lesson is scheduled, and will give you advance notice and credit for that lesson.

**Lessons may be terminated for:** habitual absence, repeated failure to practice, consistently late payments.

**Music books:** I believe all styles of music contain learning experiences; we can supplement lesson books with music the student most enjoys playing. I will purchase a book for you and have you reimburse me, or let you know that you need to purchase the book during the week.

**Practicing during the week:** I ask that all of my students try to practice a few minutes each day, rather than longer time periods just one or two days during the week. Lesson pages that I provide have a chart where students will write in the number of minutes music is practiced each day. This information lets me know that the level of music is appropriate for the time being spent on it.

**Lesson content:** I strongly believe in learning to read notes! Beginner students learn to read notes with flashcards, which should be reviewed each day as part of their practice time. I will also review during the lesson. Students play through each song assigned, as I watch for fingering, placement, and correct notes, and share ways to improve. Students also learn scales, chord progressions, and arpeggios in preparation for improvising music later on; fingering technique, timing, music terms and symbols, and musical expression.