

# New Student Questionnaire

## 1. Contact Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's daytime phone# \_\_\_\_\_

## Person to contact in case of emergency:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Student Information

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Grade in School \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have previous musical experience? \_\_\_\_\_

Can you read music? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you participate in school music programs? (Band, Orchestra, Chorus)

Do you participate in any musical groups outside of school?

Are you involved in other non-musical activities, hobbies or interests?

## 3. Musical Goals

What kind of skills do you expect to gain from music lessons?

What do you feel is the most important thing you can learn by studying music?

How hard are you willing to work to achieve your musical goals?

Realistically, how much time do you anticipate being able to practice per day?

Per week? \_\_\_\_\_

## Note to Students and Parents:

Thanks for choosing me as your teacher! It's my hope that this will be a long and productive relationship for both of us. This sheet will outline some of my musical goals as a teacher as well as some of my expectations from students.

First, since I get asked about it a lot, a bit about my academic background: I began playing clarinet and piano at age 8. At age 12, I studied clarinet privately with James Hopper who provided me with a valuable foundation during those early years. I attended college at the University of Denver's Lamont School of Music, and graduated with a Bachelor of Music with emphasis in Performance and Jazz Studies. While attending Lamont, I studied clarinet with Dr. Ramon Kireilis, saxophone with Arthur Bouton, and Flute with Jeanni Muhonen. After graduation, I relocated to Portland, where I spent an additional year of graduate-level study in Jazz Band and Jazz Combo at Portland State University. I am now involved in several working musical ensembles in the Portland area, and am high on the list of in-demand woodwind players here in town. All-told, I have been playing a musical instrument of some kind for 30 years, and I have been playing clarinet, saxophone, and flute professionally for the past 16 years.

As a teacher, it is my expectation that students learn to be self-motivated. As is often said, "In a way, every musician is self-taught." Meaning that my job as a teacher is to provide guidance and direction, not necessarily to 'crack the whip' of discipline. I don't consider myself a disciplinarian; students either want to learn or they don't, and no amount of negative reinforcement on the part of the teacher is going to force a student to learn something they don't want to learn. I can't **MAKE** anyone practice on a daily basis; I can't **MAKE** anyone learn to play a particular scale or passage of music. I can't **MAKE** anyone do anything. That part is up to you, the student. Instead, I consider my role to be one of guidance. I can assign the exercises, the scales, the performance pieces, but I can't make improvements in a student's playing ability unless that student does the work to make it happen themselves. No one else can do it for you!

That having been said, learning music IS a lot of work. It does not happen overnight; in fact it takes a lifetime. That can be a hard concept to grasp in today's instant-gratification society, but the fact is that it takes years to truly master an instrument. It is crucially important that students develop good practicing habits as early on as possible, even though results may not be immediate. **Parents:** you should spend some time encouraging your young one to get into the habit of making his/her practice session a part of the daily routine. This should not be made to feel like it's a chore or a punishment, but instead a normal, necessary daily activity.

The decision to study a musical instrument is a serious commitment of time, energy and effort. Many working professionals practice at least 4 and sometimes 8 hours a day. And while I don't expect my students to put in that kind of time unless they plan to pursue a professional career in music, I do expect that every student spend some time practicing every day. I'll put it this way: I get to see each student for exactly 30 minutes each week. The rest of the time you're on your own to make sure you put some time in

every day. I don't like to set limits based on the amount of time each student practices each day, but there does need to be some practicing taking place **every day** – no exceptions. Rather than set a limit based on time, I prefer to set a limit based on the amount of work that gets done. Every day, students should practice 1) **warm-up**; 2) **scale and technique exercises**; 3) **solo or performance piece work**; and 4) **free playing or “noodling”**. See the accompanying practice guidelines sheet for further explanation of these. If a student practices all of these every day, normally such a practice session will take 45 minutes to an hour, and that student will be able to see measurable improvement in their playing over time. If any of these are neglected, I can't guarantee any kind of results whatsoever.

Another crucial step in the learning process is training your ears. Every student should be **listening to music as much as possible**. The general idea is that what goes in through your ears will eventually come out through your playing. Students who listen to classical music at an early age will find that their own style of phrasing and articulation sounds classical. Students who listen to jazz music will find that their styling sounds jazzy. Same with rock, blues, rap, country, or any other style of music. The best musicians will have a well-rounded taste and will have listened to ALL styles of music early on.

When you listen to music, listen critically. Listen to what is going on in the melody (notes), harmony (chords), and rhythm (beat) as well as to how that music makes you feel when you hear it. An important bridge to cross is to be able to perform expressive music that makes a listener feel a certain way, and that process starts with being able to listen for that quality in music performed by others.

Finally, just as learning to be good at a musical instrument doesn't happen overnight, your musical ability doesn't go away overnight either. The skills you develop in music now will give you an entire lifetime of enjoyment, and will help you in everyday life in ways you can't even begin to imagine. Even if you don't decide to pursue music as a career, you'll find that developing an ear for music will increase your sense of self-worth, improve your ability to think and work in groups, and give you a lifelong source of entertainment and enjoyment. You are about to take your first steps into a greater world!

Sincerely,

Peter F. Petersen

## Required Materials:

1. **Instrument:** This should be a good quality student model or professional model instrument. It should be kept in good, clean condition and maintained in proper working order. It should be stored in a good case, which will keep it from being damaged by normal bumping and jostling. You should also be prepared to eventually purchase a mouthpiece that is of higher quality than the standard student-model mouthpieces that are normally packaged with the instrument. Mouthpieces come in all shapes and sizes and should be chosen after playing several, to find the one that fits the student the best. **Reeds** are also important; **you should always have at least 4 playable reeds in your case.**
2. **Reedguard:** Your reeds should be kept in a reedguard, instead of the plastic shell that comes with them from the box. A reedguard is a plastic (or metal) clip that keeps the reeds flat while they're not on the clarinet. This protects the fragile tips of the reeds and also makes sure they dry flat and don't warp.
3. **Accessories:** Mandatory accessories are: a good swab, a supply of good reeds, cork grease, and a mouthpiece cap. Optional (but recommended accessories are: a clarinet stand, a portable music stand, a "pad-saver" or "mouse", a cloth to wipe down keys and outer surfaces.
4. **Notebook:** I'll use the notebook to keep track of your progress, give you specific comments on the assignments you're working on, and other week-to-week notes and reminders.
5. **Metronome:** It is VERY IMPORTANT to practice with a metronome at home between lessons.
6. **Digital tuner:** Also mandatory for practice sessions.
7. **Music Stand:** Keep this at home and set up in a corner of the room. A folding stand is acceptable, but the more durable Manhasset-style stand is more durable and will last longer if you have space for it at home.
8. **Books and materials:** A technique book (usually the Rubank method is what I recommend), a Solo/Performance piece book (Concert and Contest Collection is a good book for Intermediate/advanced students), a duet book. I like to tailor the text materials to each student, so this may vary from person to person.
9. **A tape recorder or minidisk.** It's a good idea to record yourself practicing once in a while and listen back to it. The tape doesn't lie; it will hear all of your mistakes and play them back so you can work on improving them.
10. **A CD player, mp3 player or other listening device.** Remember that listening is a crucial part of music. From time to time I will give you CD's of music performances and expect you to listen to them with a critical ear. This will help you improve your own playing by strengthening your conceptualization and musicality skills. iTunes should be your best friend.

## Some Practice Guidelines:

1. **Warmup:** Just like any exercise, it's important to warm up at the beginning of your practice session. Athletes do a series of stretching exercises before they run or jump or swim or whatever it is that they do, why should playing an instrument be any different? Some things to do during warmup:

- Get your breathing operations going by playing long tones. Play one note and hold it. Listen. Try for a full, rich, deep sound. Hold that one note as long as you can, then take a deep breath and play it again. Do this until your tone is as clean and clear at the beginning and end of the note as it is in the middle.
- Loosen your face muscles. Smile as broadly as you can, hold, then frown, pucker or scowl as narrowly as you can.
- Get your fingers moving. Play partial scales, patterns, whatever you feel will do the most good toward making your fingers, arms, and hands loosened up.
- Practice good posture. Sit up straight (or stand) with your back in a vertical position. Work on breathing with your diaphragm (lower gut) rather than just your upper chest. When you feel good and comfortable, go on to:

2. **Scale/Technique exercises:** This is where you're actually improving your skills and abilities on your instrument. If you have a metronome, these exercises should all be practiced with the metronome on at a comfortable tempo.

- Start by playing a scale. Strive for even, controlled tone throughout the range of the scale and stay conscious of the duration of each note. Play as smooth and evenly as possible.
- Work on your tongue and embouchure. Play "ta-ta-ta" exercises, concentrating on maintaining an even tone as you attack each note. Blow through the note as you tongue it so the note speaks as soon as you play it, not half a second behind.
- Practice exercises out of your book. If your teacher has only assigned one line on a page of exercises, remember that nothing is stopping you from working on more than just that one.

3. **Solo Piece/Performance Piece:** If your teacher has assigned a solo piece, now is the time to work on it. Follow all of the dynamic markings and other guidances your teacher has given. Work with a metronome to achieve constant tempo. This is also a time when practicing music for your school band or ensemble is acceptable.

4. **Free playing or "noodling".** Play anything you feel. Improve your hand/ear coordination by playing whatever you are "hearing" inside your mind. Play along with a CD or the radio. Compose a song of your own. Play meaningless clusters of notes and rhythms. Feel what you play and play what you feel.

## Policies and other stuff:

**Lesson Duration:** Lessons will be given on a half-hour or hourly basis. Hour-length lessons are recommended for advanced students of high-school age or older at the discretion of the instructor.

Lessons take place at least once a week in order to achieve the most noticeable improvement in the student's musical ability. Students are required to spend at least half an hour per day practicing the material gone over in lessons; think of it as homework that is just as important as if it were math or science class.

**Cancellation policy:** Lessons may be cancelled any time up to 24 hours before the time of the lesson without repercussion. Any cancellation under 24 hours before lesson time may be subject to a fee up to but not exceeding the full amount of the cost of the lesson. I am willing to work with you if an emergency comes up, but I reserve the right to charge the full amount for lessons cancelled with less than 24 hours notice. More preferable than cancellation is rescheduling; I will always try to reschedule rather than cancel.

If an emergency comes up on my end, I will try to reschedule the lesson. If rescheduling is impossible, I will cancel the lesson at no cost to you and lessons will resume the following week.

Your **instrument must be kept in proper working order** to be able to get through lessons and practice sessions. If you show up to your lesson with an instrument that is not in acceptable condition, you will be sent home. No refunds will be given for lessons missed due to damaged or broken equipment.

**Tuition Pricing:** Lesson tuition will be \$100 per month (based on \$25 per lesson for one ½ hour lesson once a week.) Part of this fee goes to the rental of the studio room at Beaverton Music, the rest is my primary source of income and helps put food on my table and make my house payments. Payment may be made by cash or check, at the beginning of each month. Payment in advance may be made for as many months of lessons as you'd like to cover.

**Missed payments:** A 1 week grace period will be allowed; (meaning, if you forget to bring payment to your lesson, I'll still teach the lesson that week as long as payment is brought in within 1 week) – please try not to get more than a week behind as it really creates problems with bookkeeping. I reserve the right to cancel lessons if payment is behind by more than one week.

----- **(Please detach, sign, and turn in)** -----

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read the Policies sheet; I understand and agree to its terms.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read the Note to Students and Parents; I will make every effort to follow its guidelines.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read the Practicing Guidelines; I will keep a copy of it at my Practice Area and structure my practice sessions around it whenever possible.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(student's signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(parent's signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

## **RESOURCES:**

Here are some phone numbers for some repair shops in the area who do good work on woodwinds: (They also have instruments for sale if you're ready to upgrade)

Beaverton Music (503) 643-5431

Music Village (503) 644-7922

Aloha Wind and Brass Service (503) 591-8258

Tigard Music (503) 620-2844

Aloha Wind and Brass also has a VERY large selection of jazz workbooks, scale books, and other helpful texts.

Some helpful Apps for your iPhone (or iTouch or iPad)

Dr Betotte (Metronome) (also available as a standalone app for Mac)

<http://homepage.mac.com/seishu/ssworks/drbetotte/drbetotte.html>

ClearTune (Tuner)

iRealBook (chord changes to many jazz tunes)