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## HOW TO CHOOSE A MUSIC TEACHER

### MAKE AN INFORMED DECISION



The process of choosing a music teacher is similar to that of choosing a physician, attorney, accountant or other professional. All these professionals provide services tailored to your individual needs; convenience and cost are not the sole deciding factors. Selecting a music teacher should be no different.

Before investing in music lessons for yourself or your children, consider the significant role music teachers play in making music study a rewarding and life-enriching experience. Making a careful and informed selection of a music teacher helps to ensure that your investment in music lessons yields the highest possible return.

Base your selection on compatibility of goals and personalities, a feeling of trust and, most importantly, the qualifications and abilities of the professional to meet your individual needs. In your search for a qualified music teacher, this means: Get recommendations, attend studio recitals and arrange to audit a lesson. Set up interviews with prospective teachers to discuss studio policies, requirements for daily practice and performance opportunities. Ask about short- and long-term objectives, instructional materials and any particular teaching methods the teacher may use. Look for MTNA Certification.

Above all, you should evaluate a prospective teacher's credentials. One essential criterion to look for during your search is certification by Music Teachers National Association. An easy way to identify an MTNA-certified teacher is by looking for the service mark NCTM: Nationally Certified Teacher of Music. MTNA certification was established in 1967 to assist you in recognizing high standards of music teaching. Earning MTNA Certification means that an independent music teacher's qualifications have been evaluated and approved by a board of leaders in the field. MTNA Certification represents outstanding achievement, assuring you that a music teacher is educated, accomplished, ethical and professional.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK A PROSPECTIVE TEACHER

Music experience should be rewarding and life-enriching, beginning with the very first lesson. It is important that parents and students choose a professional music teacher who provides structured, individualized instruction. The relationship between teacher and student should be one that promotes encouragement and development of the musical potential of each student. These factors, as well as compatibility of goals and personalities, trust, and confidence in the abilities of the teacher, help to ensure the highest possible return for the investment in lessons.

Here are some specific questions that you may want to ask during an interview with a prospective teacher:

1. What are your qualifications?
2. What is your studio policy with regard to fees, cancellations, and make-up lessons?
3. What other policies should I know about?
4. What strategies do you use to motivate students?
5. Do you use any music other than classical music?
6. Do you provide performance opportunities for students?
7. How much practice time do you require each day?
8. How can I (as a parent) help my child's progress in music?

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