

WESLEY SKINNER CELLO STUDIO

Studio Policies & Tuition Agreement

Effective August 1, 2026

Welcome

Welcome to the Wesley Skinner Cello Studio. This document outlines the studio's policies, tuition schedule, and expectations so families know exactly what to expect. Please read it in full, sign at the end, and reach out with any questions before signing.

My goal is to provide focused, high-quality instruction in a respectful environment where students are set up for steady progress. The policies below help us protect lesson time and keep communication clear.

1. Lesson Format & Location

In-studio and Zoom lessons only. Effective August 1, 2026, I no longer offer in-home (travel) lessons. All lessons take place at my home studio or via Zoom. The teacher travel fee has been eliminated.

Zoom is a fully supported alternative for families who prefer the convenience of learning from home or who need flexibility around travel time, weather, or illness.

2. What to Bring to Every Lesson

- **Required:** cello, bow, assigned music, rosin, rock stop/strap, and a METRONOME.
- A pencil, lesson notebook, and any required books or PDFs.
- PDFs should be readable on a tablet or printed out — not on a phone. Lesson time should not be spent searching for or printing materials.
- A cello strap/endpin holder, cello stool, or tuner as needed.
- **For Zoom lessons:** your own metronome is required.

Recommended app: Tunable (combined tuner + metronome).

3. Cello Maintenance

Cello maintenance is the student/parent's responsibility. I can offer guidance and limited help with adjustments, but please use a luthier or your rental source for regular maintenance and repairs.

4. Practice Expectations

Daily practice minimum: equal to the lesson length (e.g., a 30-minute lesson = at least 30 minutes of daily practice).

Students who complete a full practice session six days per week have earned a day off.

5. Lesson Notebook & Recordings

Students are required to keep a notebook of lesson notes to refer back to throughout the week and bring it to every lesson. Audio or video recordings of lessons are encouraged for the student's personal practice use.

If the student is too young to take their own notes, the parent should attend lessons and take notes.

Recording & intellectual property. Recordings are made available to the student and family for personal practice use only. The instructional content of each lesson — including teaching method, repertoire choices, exercises, and any custom curriculum materials — is the intellectual property of the Wesley Skinner Cello Studio.

Reproducing, posting publicly, distributing, or selling any portion of a lesson recording, in whole or in part, without my prior written permission is prohibited and may be subject to remedies available under copyright and intellectual property law. Performances by the student belong to the student.

Zoom recordings: please ask for permission before recording each Zoom lesson.

6. Parent Involvement

Parents are strongly encouraged to attend lessons to take notes and observe so they can support practice at home.

Students 10 years old and younger require parental supervision both during the lesson and during practice at home.

7. Communication During Lessons

Cellphones: not permitted during the lesson except for tuning, metronome, or recording. Please put phones in airplane mode (Wi-Fi off) unless the lesson is on Zoom. Keep notification sounds to a minimum, especially during Zoom calls.

Questions about school music or youth orchestra: please bring these up at the beginning of the lesson, not at the end. If a question is urgent enough to be answered today, it is urgent enough to be raised first.

8. Auditions, Competitions, and Performances

Please notify me as early as possible when the student plans to audition for an orchestra, competition, or other performance. These can require months of preparation, and early notice lets us build the right plan together.

9. Student Health

Students should arrive with fingernails clipped, hands washed, and in good health. Sneezing, coughing, or runny nose can indicate a contagious virus and should not be brought into the studio. If you or a family member is sick, please request a Zoom lesson; I am happy to be flexible in switching to Zoom for illness.

10. Learning Differences (Important)

If the student has, or you suspect they may have, a learning difference, behavioral difference, or mental-health concern, please let me know. This will not change my willingness to teach — it will help me adapt my approach.

11. Instrument Sizing & Purchases

Please consult with me before sizing up or purchasing a new instrument or bow. I can help evaluate options and avoid expensive missteps.

12. Scheduling, Cancellations & Late Arrivals

Cancellations & Rescheduling

Minimum 6 hours' notice is required to reschedule a lesson in the event of illness or genuine emergency. I am not obligated to reschedule emergency cancellations made with less than 6 hours' notice.

Zoom is always an option if the student is ill but still wants the lesson.

Plan ahead. Sports events, school conflicts, and vacations should be disclosed as far in advance as possible — ideally at the start of each month. Undisclosed vacations, scheduling conflicts, or cancellations to skip practice are not emergencies and will count as a lesson given.

Late cancellations, no-shows, or forgotten lessons will not be refunded and will count as a lesson given. Zoom connection or audio issues will be rescheduled.

Late Arrivals

I am not obligated to extend a lesson or add time to a future lesson to make up for a late arrival. Extra time is at my discretion. Please arrive about 5 minutes early (including for Zoom) so the student can unpack, tune, and get ready.

13. Tuition & Rate Schedule

Tuition rates are uniform across the studio for full transparency — every family is offered the same schedule. Families needing financial assistance are encouraged to apply for a need-based scholarship (see Section 17).

Effective August 1, 2026

Lesson Length	Rate	Late Fee	Notes
30 minutes	\$60	\$40	Per lesson
45 minutes	\$80	\$40	Per lesson
60 minutes	\$95	\$40	Per lesson
90 minutes	\$110	\$40	Per lesson

Effective August 1, 2027

Lesson Length	Rate	Late Fee	Notes
30 minutes	\$60	\$45	Per lesson
45 minutes	\$80	\$45	Per lesson
60 minutes	\$100	\$45	Per lesson
90 minutes	\$115	\$45	Per lesson

No travel fee. In-home lessons are no longer offered, so the previous teacher travel fee has been eliminated.

14. Payment Plans

Tuition must be PREPAID. I reserve the right not to teach an unpaid lesson. Families may choose one of three plans at the start of each semester.

Pay-in-Full Semester Plan (recommended)

- Each semester is a minimum of 15 lessons (August–December and January–May).
- **Due date:** by 11:59 PM on August 1 (fall semester) or January 1 (spring semester).
- A \$25 late-payment fee applies if tuition is not paid by the deadline.
- Any accepted payment method may be used.

Sample semester totals at the 2026 rate:

- $\$60 \times 15 = \900 (30-min lessons)
- $\$80 \times 15 = \$1,200$ (45-min lessons)
- $\$95 \times 15 = \$1,425$ (60-min lessons)
- $\$110 \times 15 = \$1,650$ (90-min lessons)

Semester Plan with Monthly Installments

Families who prefer the commitment of the semester plan but want to spread payments out may opt to split the semester total into five equal monthly installments, automatically charged to a card on file.

- **Auto-pay required.** A card must be on file. This plan is not available with cash, check, Zelle, or other manual methods.
- **Installment dates:** the 1st of each month within the semester (5 charges for fall, 5 for spring).
- Each installment is one-fifth of the semester total. The card-processing fee applies as it does for any card payment.
- If a card is declined, a 24-hour grace period applies before the late fee is added to that specific installment.

Monthly Plan

- **Due date:** by 11:59 PM on the 1st of each month. Payment received on or after the 2nd is considered late and will incur the late fee automatically.
- Monthly amount = (per-lesson rate) $\times$ (number of lessons that month). Most months have 4 lessons; some have 5.
- You will receive an invoice approximately one week before the end of the prior month, plus reminder emails as the due date approaches.
- Monthly billing offers flexibility but carries a higher risk of missed deadlines. Families who prefer simplicity are encouraged to use the Semester plan.

Late Fees & Refunds

- Late payments are subject to the late fee listed in the rate schedule (currently **\$40 per overdue invoice** through 7/31/2027, **\$45** thereafter). The late fee is one flat fee per overdue invoice, not per lesson.
- The late fee is applied automatically at 12:00 AM on the day after the due date.
- No refunds on any lessons. All paid lessons will be fulfilled.
- Lessons do not roll over from one calendar year to the next.
- Invoices and PAID receipts are provided automatically through the parent portal once it launches; until then, available upon request.

15. Payment Methods

Accepted: Zelle (preferred), Cash, Check (payable to "Wesley Skinner"), Venmo, Cash App, Apple Pay.

10% cash discount. Tuition paid in full with physical cash receives a 10% discount on the lesson rate. The discount applies only to physical cash payments — not to Zelle, Venmo, Cash App, Apple Pay, or check.

Not accepted: PayPal (due to the fees associated) and any cryptocurrency.

16. Zoom Lessons

Zoom lessons have been highly successful and remain a continuing option for any student. To get the most out of them:

- Use a tablet or computer rather than a phone whenever possible.
- Keep your Zoom software updated to the latest version.
- **Switch on the "Original Sound" setting for every lesson.**
- Find a quiet space with minimal distractions.
- Tune your instrument before the lesson to the best of your ability.
- Limit other internet use on your Wi-Fi during the lesson.
- Position the camera so I can see from your knees up to your head.
- Avoid Bluetooth headphones (e.g., AirPods); built-in or external speakers are preferred.
- A USB microphone improves the sound quality for me to hear your playing clearly.
- If I am still working with a previous student when you arrive, please wait patiently — do not leave.

17. Concerns & Communication

If you have any concerns about lessons, policies, or anything else related to the studio, please bring them to me directly first. I am committed to addressing concerns in good faith and resolving issues collaboratively.

False statements of fact made publicly that cause demonstrable harm to the studio's reputation may be subject to remedies available under applicable defamation law. This clause is intended to restate existing legal protections, not to limit honest reviews or feedback shared in good faith.

18. Scholarships

Because tuition is now uniform across the studio, families who need financial assistance to continue lessons are encouraged to apply for a scholarship. Scholarships are available on both a need-based and a merit-based track.

Application deadline: July 31, 2026, for scholarships beginning August 1, 2026. Applications received after that date will be considered as availability allows.

Note: ESA students may not request scholarships.

Need-Based Scholarship

Required for application:

- A short letter of request, submitted via the application form.
- A video of the student performing (max 10 minutes). If the student has fewer than 5 minutes of repertoire, please include their best scale and at least two pieces. Google Drive uploads preferred.
- Depending on the requested scholarship amount, additional financial documentation may be requested (e.g., tax return or W-2). You may redact your SSN.

Free lessons are not currently available; please review the options on the form and complete it in full.

Merit-Based Scholarship (up to two 50% scholarships available)

Video submission required, demonstrating:

- Major and minor scales: 16th notes at quarter = 100 bpm or higher (3-octave Galamian, separate-bow format — ask if needed). Major and minor scales may be submitted in two separate videos.

- One etude (Mooney, Duport, Popper, or Piatti).
- A piece of choice (5–10 minutes of music).

If you need financial assistance, please apply for the need-based scholarship rather than relying on a merit application. If both apply to your situation, you may submit for both.

Application form: <https://forms.gle/abSUXiyJp992nBxe6>

19. Privacy & Data Use

When you enroll a student, the studio collects information needed to schedule lessons, communicate with your family, process payments, and produce recital programs. Specifically: family name and address(es); parent/guardian name(s), phone(s), and email(s); student name (as you would like it shown in recital programs), birthdate, school, and break dates; and optionally student phone and email.

How this information is used. Your family's information is used solely for scheduling and lesson coordination, payment processing and invoicing, recital programs (with your consent), and direct studio communication. The studio does not sell, share, or use your information for marketing.

Communications with minor students. For students under 13, the studio collects student contact information only with verifiable parental consent and uses it solely to communicate about lessons and studio events. Parents of students 13–17 are asked to acknowledge studio communications with their minor. Students 18 and older manage their own contact information directly.

Retention. Records related to payments are retained for seven years to comply with U.S. business and tax record-keeping requirements. Other family records are retained while the student is active and for a reasonable period thereafter; archived recital programs may continue to display student names from past performances. You may request review or deletion of stored information at any time by contacting the studio directly.

Security. When the studio's online parent portal launches, payment card information will be processed exclusively by Stripe and never stored by the studio. Family information will be protected by industry-standard authentication and database access controls.

20. Acknowledgment & Signature

By signing below, the student and parent/guardian (if the student is a minor) acknowledge that they have read, understood, and agree to abide by the policies stated in this document.

Student name: _____ Date: _____

Student signature: _____

Parent/Guardian name (if minor): _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

Contact

Email: wesley.skinner@gmail.com

Cell: (480) 572-6233 (texting preferred)

Zoom Personal Meeting ID: 357 121 3220

Website: www.wesleyskinnercellist.com