

Tips for Teaching Music Online

Offering music lessons online allows you to teach students who are unable to meet in-person, and those who live far away. Online lessons also allow you to expand your teaching resources using digital tools that you may incorporate into in-person lessons.

Here are some suggestions to ensure your online teaching practice runs smoothly.



Improve your internet connection. Strong internet connection minimizes disruptions in your lessons. Here are a few suggestions:

- Connect your device to your router using an ethernet cable for a more consistent signal.
- Increase your internet speed by talking to your service provider. For online music teaching, internet speeds in the range of 25-80 megabits per second (Mbps) is recommended. Faster speeds will further enhance video and audio signal.
- Measure your internet download and upload speeds using a free online test such as [fast.com](https://www.fast.com) or [speedtest.net](https://www.speedtest.net)
- Reduce online activity, including online gaming, streaming videos, etc. during your live sessions. This will reduce delays and freeze-ups in your connection with your students.



Use an external microphone and/or speaker for your device (if available).

It will help you transmit and receive clearer sound compared to the built-in speakers/mic on your laptop or tablet.



Ensure that there is enough light on you and on your student's side to see each other well. Additional lighting such as a ring light can provide consistent, bright, and even lighting on you.



Use a second camera to show your instrument (if available). Mount a second device (such as an unused smartphone or iPad/tablet) so that students can see an overview of your keyboard or a close-up of fingering on your instrument.



Create a clean backdrop for online lessons. Aim the camera so that students will not see your family members or other distractions in the background. Reduce household clutter from the video frame to ensure that you don't have glare or reflections from lights behind you.



Teach in a quiet environment. It's difficult to communicate over background noise. Use headphones or earbuds if possible, to hear details in your student's playing.



Effective teaching is all about communication and making a personal connection with your students. Find ways to make the learning special for your students so that they look forward to your sessions, whether it is online or in-person.



Use digital tools and resources to engage students. Whether you are teaching in-person or online, use apps and digital resources such as the **RCM Ear Training Tool** to make learning fun and accessible.



Try an asynchronous approach to some facets of the lesson. Students can send a video or audio recording of an appropriate portion of their lesson or performance. You can then review and comment on them via text or email. Explain this approach to the student and their parents so that they don't feel shortchanged on face-to-face time in the actual lesson.



Keep your online teaching sessions with students brief, e.g., 45-60 minutes in length to help with concentration and focus. Offering a series of short, manageable online learning activities with students is preferable to one long session.

Keep Calm and Teach On!

