

Foundations Course Syllabus

Foundations Program Course Overview

The Foundations Program is a 12-session introductory piano course designed to equip students with the fundamental skills necessary for continued musical growth. Throughout the course, students will develop proper technique, music reading skills, rhythm comprehension, ear training, chord knowledge, and performance confidence.

The course culminates with a Student Recital on Saturday, September 5, where students will perform a prepared selection for family and friends.

Session 1: Piano Assessment & Goal-Setting Session

Topics Covered

- Student introductions
- Musical background assessment
- Discussion of musical interests and goals
- Evaluation of current skill level
- Overview of course expectations
- Selection of individualized learning objectives

Assignment

- Set up practice space at home
- Review course materials
- Establish a weekly practice schedule

Session 2: Keyboard Layout, Posture, Hand Position & Finger Numbers

Topics Covered

- Identifying black and white key patterns
- Finding Middle C
- Proper sitting posture
- Correct hand shape and wrist position
- Finger numbering system (1-5)
- Introduction to simple finger exercises

Assignment

- Practice finger number drills
- Locate groups of two and three black keys
- Identify Middle C independently

Session 3: Rhythm Fundamentals & Counting Exercises

Topics Covered

- Understanding the musical pulse
- Quarter notes
- Half notes
- Whole notes
- Basic rests
- Counting aloud while playing
- Using a metronome

Assignment

- Complete rhythm worksheets
- Practice counting exercises daily
- Clap assigned rhythm patterns

Session 4: Musical Alphabet & Note Location

Topics Covered

- The musical alphabet (A-G)
- Ascending and descending note patterns
- Finding notes across the keyboard
- Introduction to intervals
- Developing keyboard awareness

Assignment

- Locate assigned notes on the keyboard
- Practice musical alphabet exercises
- Complete note identification drills

Session 5: Treble Clef, Bass Clef & Sight Reading

Topics Covered

- Introduction to the grand staff
- Treble clef note names
- Bass clef note names
- Landmark notes
- Basic sight-reading strategies
- Reading simple melodies

Assignment

- Daily note-reading practice
- Complete sight-reading exercises
- Review flashcards or note drills

Session 6: Major Scales & Finger Technique

Topics Covered

- What is a scale?
- Introduction to the C Major Scale
- Proper fingering patterns
- Finger independence exercises
- Hand coordination development
- Technique-building exercises

Assignment

- Practice C Major Scale daily
- Complete assigned finger exercises
- Focus on smooth transitions and posture

Session 7: Building Chords & Understanding Harmony

Topics Covered

- What is a chord?
- Major triads
- Root position chords
- Basic harmonic movement
- Understanding I-IV-V relationships
- Applying chords to songs

Assignment

- Build major chords from assigned notes
- Practice chord transitions
- Identify chords within simple songs

Session 8: Playing Simple Songs with Both Hands

Topics Covered

- Hand coordination
- Playing melody and accompaniment together
- Maintaining steady tempo
- Balancing both hands
- Introduction to simple repertoire

Assignment

- Practice assigned song daily
- Focus on smooth coordination between hands
- Continue scale and chord review

Session 9: Playing by Ear & Chord Recognition

Topics Covered

- Listening for melodic patterns
- Recognizing common chord movements
- Identifying simple melodies by ear
- Ear training exercises
- Applying listening skills to familiar songs

Assignment

- Practice simple melodies by ear
- Continue chord recognition exercises
- Listen actively to music and identify patterns

Session 10: Dynamics, Expression & Musicality

Topics Covered

- - Loud vs. soft playing
- - Musical phrasing
- - Expression markings
- - Performance techniques
- - Stage confidence
- - Introduction of recital expectations

Assignment

- Apply dynamics to assigned music
- Continue recital piece preparation
- Practice performing for family members

Sessions 11–12: Recital Preparation

Students will focus on polishing their recital selections through:

- Performance practice
- Memorization (when appropriate)
- Stage presence
- Musical expression
- Confidence-building exercises

Student Recital

Date

Saturday, September 5, 2026

Time

12:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Each student will perform one prepared selection and receive recognition for their accomplishments throughout the Foundations Program.

Materials Needed

Students should have access to:

- Keyboard or piano (rental keyboards available)
- Notebook
- Pencil
- Assigned music and lesson materials
- Metronome app (recommended)

Course Goals

By the conclusion of the Foundations Program, students will be able to:

- ✓ Demonstrate proper piano posture and technique
- ✓ Read basic music notation on the grand staff
- ✓ Understand and perform basic rhythmic patterns
- ✓ Play major scales and simple chord progressions
- ✓ Perform simple songs using both hands
- ✓ Demonstrate beginning ear-training skills
- ✓ Perform confidently in a recital setting