

FAQs

What ages do you serve?

For group class and ensembles — All ages! We have group classes for infants and toddlers with their caregivers, children's programming, teen classes, mixed age ensembles, and programs for senior citizens.

For private lessons — ages 6 and up for most instruments; ages 4 and up for the Suzuki program.

What instruments do you teach?

We offer lessons for over 20 different instruments. See the full list [here](#).

Do you offer financial aid?

Yes! We offer need-based scholarships to qualifying applicants. Learn more or apply [here](#).

Can I try out a lesson before committing to the whole year?

We do ask private lesson students register with the intention of continuing through the full academic year. However, we can sometimes arrange for students to have a single trial lesson during an open slot of a teacher's schedule before having to commit to the full year. These inquiries should be made directly with the Registrar.

Are parents allowed to watch/stay in the room?

For younger children this is highly encouraged. For the Suzuki program it is mandatory. For older children, check with your individual teacher for their recommendation and see what works best for your family.

Is NCMC accessible via public transportation?

Yes. Located on South Street in Northampton, we are on a PVRTA bus line the R41. We are also just a 10-minute walk from downtown Northampton's main bus stop at the Academy of Music.

What happens if I don't click with my teacher?

We encourage you to be honest with your teacher about your thoughts and concerns. Our teachers want this to be a good experience for you and them. If you have a conversation with your teacher and still don't know if it's the right fit, talk with the registrar to see about other faculty who might be a better fit.

Does NCMC provide accompanists for student recitals?

For certain classes, an accompanist is provided by NCMC. However, students are generally asked to pay a shared portion of the fee for an accompanist at their teacher's studio recital if one is needed.

Where should I park when visiting NCMC?

NCMC has an adjacent lot behind its building with ample parking. However, at times when the lot is full, visitors may park on surrounding streets where signage permits. We request that if you are going downtown, please remove your car to make space for other visitors.

If I don't own an instrument and I'm not sure what I want to commit to, can I rent one?

NCMC doesn't rent or sell instruments, but we can direct you to a number of great local music stores who do!

Is NCMC handicap accessible?

Yes, we are. We have two wheelchair lifts in the building that grant access to all three floors.

Are animals allowed inside?

Supervised and leashed dogs, and service animals are welcome when necessary. If any animal exhibits inappropriate behavior or triggers an allergic reaction, we will request its removal from the premises.

If I'm enrolled as a student, am I able to come anytime and practice in a free space?

Studio spaces will gladly be made available to registered students during the morning and early afternoon hours. It becomes more difficult to offer practice space during NCMC's prime program hours, but will will accommodate where we can. Always call ahead of time before to inquire about studio availability.

Can I observe a class before signing up?

If you would like to observe a class, please contact the Registrar to obtain permission from the teacher.

Is there a specific number of lessons I'm required to sign up for?

Students are required to register for the full 34 week academic year, or whatever ever number of lessons remain if registering mid-year.

Extenuating circumstances will be considered if brought to the attention of the Executive Director upon registration.

Does NCMC provide the sheet music for lessons and classes?

NCMC is not responsible for the purchase of materials for your private lessons or classes. There are certain classes and ensembles in which the instructor provides the sheet music.

Is NCMC smoke-free?

Yes, NCMC is a smoke-free facility. Please no smoking on the premises.

Are there any instruments that you don't teach?

You can see a list on our website of instruments we do teach here. If you don't see the instrument you're interested in, we might be able to recommend a teacher in the area.

With whom do I talk about my bill/lessons?

You can speak to our Registrar for questions regarding your account.

What music stores in the area carry the supplies I may need?

Stamell Stringed Instruments in Amherst

Downtown Sounds in Northampton

Gerry's Music Shop in South Hadley

Falcetti Music in Springfield

Birdhouse Music in Northampton

Mill River Music in Northampton

Policy-related:

If I have to cancel a lesson, do I still have to pay for it?

Yes. Students are responsible for all lessons. In extenuating circumstances, your teacher may offer a make-up lesson, but they are not required to do so.

If my teacher has to cancel a lesson or the school is closed due to weather, do I still have to pay?

Lessons cancelled by NCMC or faculty will be made up either online or in-person at a later date that is coordinated between the teacher and student.

What happens if I withdraw?

If you withdraw within 48 hours of your first lesson with us, there's no penalty. Otherwise we require two weeks notice (you can opt to attend those two last lessons or not), and a percentage of the cost of the remaining lessons, depending on when you withdraw. See our policies page [here](#) for more details.

May I take lessons less frequently than once a week?

Students are expected to attend weekly lessons. Occasionally, bi-weekly lessons will be accommodated if the teacher expressly agrees to it.

If I join a class or ensemble midyear, is the fee prorated?

For most programs, yes, but there are exceptions. Depending on when you join, the Registrar will calculate the prorated cost for you.

If I join a class but know I'll have to miss some classes, can the fee be prorated?

No. The class runs based on the commitment of everyone involved — students and teachers. If you have to miss certain days, we understand and ask that you let us know what dates you can't make so our teacher can factor that into their lesson plans, but we cannot adjust the fee.

If I begin lessons midyear, is the cost prorated?

Yes. We will calculate the number of lessons left in our academic year for you and only charge for those.

If you have any other questions, please call NCMC's main office directly at 413-585-0001.