

## Things to Know Before You Book...

If you are uncertain about anything, just remember that your first lesson with me will always be a taster lesson!  
This goes for whether or not you have played before - beginner, intermediate, expert. Anything!

If you *have* played before, we will spend time establishing where exactly your standard is up to, what you would like to achieve and - if you have been learning piano recently - addressing any issues that may have prevented you from continuing. This can range from anything between a bad experience, nervousness when playing, didn't get on with previous teacher etc.

If you are an absolute beginner or have only dabbled a little then I'll take a little time explaining the piano to you, teach you to navigate the basic keyboard, give you a couple of exercises to kickstart the development of your finger strength and independence, and have a look at some basic music along the lines of what you tell me you'd like to play. You may even be able to play it by the end of the lesson!

**There is no obligation to come back following a taster!**

The whole point is for you to establish if you enjoy playing piano, as if you do then we can continue!

## What You Need and What You Need to Bring

You may be surprised to learn that you *don't* need a piano if you are an absolute beginner.

You will, however, need an instrument to practice on.

The **minimum requirements** for an electric keyboard on which you can practice at home as a beginner are:

- 5 octaves (61 keys)
- Touch Sensitivity
- Weighted Keys
- Pedal (**Not a Footswitch!**)
- Appropriate Stool (*anything comfortable with no back*)

For intermediate learners onwards, you will need to look for nothing less than a full sized digital piano (*if not an acoustic!*)

I encourage beginners to purchase a workbook through which we can work together, and encourage further that you actively shop around for one that works for you (*go into a music shop and have a browse!*)

The workbook will give structure to the lessons and to your homework and practice, and we will work through it around learning music that you also want to play.

## What I Teach

As you learn with me, there are four areas in which I hope to develop your musical skill:

- **Technique** - This is the main one. As a pianist, your technique has to be developed to allow you to perform everything you want to as well as you possibly can.
- **Reading Music** - Whilst not everybody sees this as a necessity, I do actively encourage you to learn reading music - even if only on a basic understanding. It will open up your repertoire and make learning on the whole easier as a lot of books use standard music notation as a basis.
- **Playing by Ear** - I actively encourage you to listen to how melodies flow, how chords and intervals sound and how textured music is to encourage you to be able to appreciate music away from the piano (*as well as being able to play rather well without the aid of music*).
- **Musical Instinct** - It is essential to get your head round at least some music theory. This way, you can really unlock the doors on your creativity. Musical instinct will really help you with improvisation, composition and songwriting, and it will go hand in hand somewhat in playing by ear too!