

## When to Start Piano Lessons

Knowing when to start your child on piano lessons can be complicated. While research shows that children exposed to the piano as early as two or three years of age reach higher levels of creativity and independent thinking as they reach their school-age years and move through young adulthood, the answer is not as easy as throwing out a specific age. Children grow and learn at different rates, so what is right for one might be detrimental to another. To determine if your toddler or child is ready to start taking piano lessons, ask yourself the following questions.

### Does Your Child Express an Interest?

This doesn't have to mean that your child will sit at the piano for hours, working his or her way up the scales. A child who is interested in music might enjoy listening to classical sounds on the radio, he or she might enjoy dancing no matter what the rhythm, or he or she might want to touch the piano, curiously exploring the sounds that are emitted.

This natural interest in music is vital when it comes to piano lessons. A child who has no interest in music isn't likely to "take" to piano lessons, since his or her interest might lie elsewhere the entire time. Although some parents may choose to enforce piano lessons as a way to develop skills and interest later down the road, this should typically be put off until the child attends school regularly.

### What Does Your Child Know?

All children develop their skills at independent rates. If your child can recognize around 10 numbers and knows the letters A through G in the alphabet, he or she should have sufficient knowledge to take basic lessons or to start learning through the Suzuki method.

Of course, your child's ability to sit still for extended periods of time is also an important factor. Most toddlers are an active lot; sitting still for 15 minutes at a time and being focused on the piano might be more than he or she is ready to handle. Forcing a child to sit still at the piano for longer than he or she is able only contributes to feelings of frustration and an overall lack of joy toward music - which is never the end goal of piano lessons.

### You're Never Too Old

While most parents are more concerned about their child being too young to start taking piano lessons, equally valid is the question of being too old. The good news is, there is no age cap on taking lessons and enjoying the piano. If your teenager has expressed an interest or if you want to start tickling the ivories, there should be no barrier to getting on track with lessons right away. Toddlers, children, teenagers, and adults alike can all benefit from the incredible joys of playing the piano.