

# 8 SIGNS THAT YOUR CHILD IS READY FOR PIANO LESSONS

1. **Does your child know the difference between left and right?** Playing the piano requires the use of both hands, so being able to distinguish one hand from the other is an important skill.
2. **Does your child know the alphabet, specifically the first seven letters (A-B-C-D-E-F-G)?** The musical alphabet is made of seven letters. It is important for your child to be able to identify and name these letters in order to read music.
3. **Can your child count to ten?** With really young beginners (age 4-5), the focus is on counting to four. The note values and time signatures in beginner music focus on one count, two counts, three counts, or four counts. However, it is ideal if a child can count to a higher number as music is heavily based in math. Distance between notes (intervals) rely on counting the number of notes that separate them. Even the basic scale patterns are mathematically based.
4. **Can your child focus and pay attention for 30 minutes?** Many beginner lessons are 30 minutes in length. Many teachers reserve ten minutes of each lesson to do more hands on music activities, especially for really young beginners. As a result, students need to be able to focus and pay attention for a minimum of 20 minutes.
5. **Has your child expressed an interest in taking music lessons?** Children who have expressed an interest in taking piano are more likely to be motivated to practice.
6. **Can your child follow basic instructions?** Your child needs to be able to follow simple instructions for practicing the assigned material.
7. **How are the child's fine motor skills?** Can your child hold a pencil or cut with scissors? Playing the piano requires a lot of fine motor dexterity, so having well tuned fine motor skills makes a huge difference.
8. **Can your child read?** Teaching piano to a child who can read makes a lot of things easier, including practicing more independently and reading practice instructions on their own. Plus, beginner piano music tends to have lyrics for the child to sing while they practice. Being able to read allows the child to sing the lyrics while they play which can increase their rhythmic accuracy and timing.

## PARENTS NEED TO BE READY TOO!

Parents also need to consider the following when assessing whether or not their child is ready for piano lessons:

- **Are you willing to help your child practice?** Young beginners (ages 4-6) will need help reading instructions, practice suggestions, counting, and more.
- **Do you own an appropriate instrument?** If not, are you willing to purchase one?
- **Are you prepared for the cost and time commitment?**