

Come and join the fun! You are welcome here!

Music in Middle School

HERE ARE SOME ANSWERS FOR YOU!

What music classes can you take in middle school?

You can pick from band, orchestra, and choir starting in 6th grade.

How should I pick my instrument/music class?

You should pick the instrument/class that you like best. Ask yourself some questions to help you decide:

1. Do I like higher sounds or lower sounds?
2. Which instrument is the most comfortable for me to hold?
3. Is there an instrument I like the sound of the best?
4. Would I rather use a bow, blow into, or use my own natural instrument (voice)?

It's very important to try the instrument before you pick it because you might find out you don't like it the best or it's not the most comfortable for you. Music stores will let you try instruments for free. If you want to develop your own natural voice, choir is the choice you should make.

How is choir different from the music class we have in elementary school?

Elementary school music is a couple days a week and focuses on broad musical skills. Choir is every day just like band and orchestra, and it focuses only on singing. You learn how to read music, sing in different parts, and learn interesting and fun songs.

Is band or orchestra a trimester class or a year long?

Band and orchestra are both a full year because it takes time to learn to play. All districts around the state have them a year long because you wouldn't progress if it was shorter and everything would have to get repeated every year.

How often are the music classes?

Band, orchestra, and choir are not like music in elementary school. They are one of your six scheduled classes, like Math and Science, and you have them every day at a certain time. You don't miss "regular" class time to be in a music class. Having it every day means we make a lot of progress. You will be impressed with what you can do!

What kind of music do we do in band, orchestra, and choir?

All different kinds! We do some by famous composers like Mozart, some from other countries, some from movies, and more!

My friend wants to play one instrument, and I like another one. What should we do?

Remember you each should pick the one you like best, otherwise you might not like it as much and won't make as much progress. Or you'll be frustrated. If you both like to sing, or you both like a band instrument, or you both like an orchestra instrument – you don't need to do anything! You'll be in the same performing group. If the instruments you like are in different groups, you should still stay with the one you like best. You can teach each other your instruments, and you'll both be happier.

I want to do a sport – can I still do band, orchestra, or choir?

YES! A lot of music students do sports and play an instrument or sing in choir. All sports are afterschool – you pick the ones you want to do. You can do school sports or outside league sports. They don't conflict with band, orchestra or choir at all.

I want to do a club, or even more than one. Can I still do band, orchestra, or choir?

YES!! Clubs are also afterschool, so you can be in many different clubs (and sports!) and music at the same time.

I want to do a music class, but I also want to do another elective like art, forensics, coding, etc. Can I do both?

In 7th and 8th grade, YES you can! Art, forensics, leadership, and coding are exactly the same if you did them in 6th, 7th, or 8th grades – they're the same if you wait until 7th or 8th grade. You get more choices in 7th and 8th grades so you can do music and the other choice both at the same time. But the music classes have different levels. If you don't do it in 6th grade and you wait until 7th grade, you have to do the beginning level as a 7th grader. So, it's better to do the music class in 6th grade. That way, if you like it, you move to the 2nd level in 7th grade AND you get more choices as a 7th grader so you can do music AND art, or music AND coding, etc. You won't be behind in art or coding or the other classes because they just have one level, or it's easy to jump in at any time.

In 6th grade, there are a lot of clubs that do similar activities to those other electives like art, leadership, and coding. So even though you aren't in the class, you could be doing that activity. If you like coding, do Robotics Club, STEAM Club (or both!). If you like art, do Art Club, or be on the Stage Crew for the play. If you like leadership, be part of Culture Club or Gardening Club. There's also a Cookie Club! Then you could do that activity and have your music class at the same time!

Another reason 6th grade is THE time to pick a music class is that you are guaranteed to get your music choice, but you are not guaranteed to get your other choice because there might not be room. They will make room for you if you pick the music class.

I don't know how to read music or play an instrument. Can I still do band, orchestra, or choir?

YES! We will start at the beginning and expect that you probably don't know anything about reading music or playing your instrument! You don't need to worry at all! We will learn it together and it will be fun!

What if I take private lessons already on a band or orchestra instrument?

Private lessons are wonderful and we hope everyone can take private lessons! You learn very valuable things through them, and they work together with the school band, orchestra, and choir to focus on different skills. Talk to the band, orchestra, or choir teacher. They may have other options for you for your 6th grade instrument playing.

When should I get my instrument?

You should get your instrument at the end of August, or the first week of September if you are getting it from a music store. You can reserve it early at a music store. You do NOT need your instrument the first day of school.

How do I get an instrument?

There are local music stores that rent instruments. We have a list of some for you if you need it. If you have difficulty, the school has some you can use – make sure to ask the music teacher! We also have a lot of the large instruments at school for you so you don't have to think about getting it back and forth from home to school. Or your family might have an instrument already!

I found an instrument on a website for less than \$90! It comes with a case and lots of accessories! Should I get it?

We recommend NOT buying an instrument right away. Most students rent. Please ask us if you are looking at purchasing an instrument online.

Where does my instrument get stored during the day?

There are special music lockers for your instrument in the music rooms. Your teacher will give one to you. It's different than your regular school locker. Your locker will be locked, so if you can't take your instrument home a certain day it will stay safe.

What if I picked an instrument in 5th grade, but now want to play a different instrument in 6th grade?

Not a problem! You can email the music teacher, or just let us know when school starts. We expect that some people may not know for sure which instrument they want to play at the beginning of 6th grade.

What if I didn't pick music when the registrar came by and we signed up, but I change my mind and want to do it?

Hooray! We are excited to have you in our group! You'll love it! You can email the music teacher to let them know. Or you can fill out one of the green "Change Class" forms that your elementary music teacher has. You can give that to your music teacher, and they will send it to the middle school and you'll be a music group with us!

More questions? Feel free to ask us!

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