

MNjcc Suzuki Music Program 2026-2027

Frequently Asked Questions

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INSTRUMENTS & INTRO EVENTS/CLASSES

What instruments do you offer?

We offer violin, viola, cello and guitar (we do not offer piano)

Where can I learn more about the MNjcc Suzuki program?

Attend our FREE **Open House Tuesday, September 22nd, at 4:30-6:00 pm in room 318**. Children can try out an instrument, participate in a demo early childhood music class, and observe our Tuesday Suzuki program in action! [Click here](#) to register.

Alternatively, we are also offering a FREE **Parent Information Evening at 7:30pm in room 318 on Tuesday, September 22nd**. This is a one-hour introductory session for parents/caregivers only who are interested to learn more details about the Suzuki method and how our program runs here at the MNjcc. Parents will have the chance to meet some members of our team, ask questions, and learn how the Suzuki approach helps children develop confidence, skill, and a lifelong love of music. [Click here](#) to register.

Learning Accommodations:

We want everyone to experience the joy of music. Please contact suzukimusic@mnjcc.org to discuss how we can best accommodate your child.

PREREQUISITES

What are the program prerequisite requirements?

1. Think about whether or not your child is ready to start an instrument. Be aware of the time commitment for you, the parent as the home practice helper.
2. Choose an instrument: violin, viola, cello, or guitar. If you are not sure which instrument your child is interested in, you may find out in the observation process.
3. You must come observe with your child, a combination of at least 1 group lesson, and 2 private lessons. Observations help you and the teacher know whether your child is ready to start lessons. Observations also help parents begin to understand their role as a “home teacher.” For teachers’ private lesson schedules, and group lesson schedules, please contact: suzukimusic@mnjcc.org
4. Recommended reading [*Nurtured by Love*](#) by Shinichi Suzuki and [*Beyond the Music Lesson*](#) by Christine Goodner ([Audible version here](#)). For additional reading material check with your private teacher.
5. Start listening to the Volume I Suzuki CD of the instrument your child will be learning. The Suzuki recording can be found on all streaming platforms: Spotify, Amazon Music, Apple music as well as the CD in the back of your book.
6. If you are not sure your child is quite ready and may not yet have the focus required to learn an instrument, you may wish to consider registering for our **SECE (Suzuki Early Childhood Education) Music class** (0 to 4 years) + parent/caregiver on Sunday mornings (11:15am-12:00pm, **OR** consider enrolling in our **Jumpstart to Twinkles** (for 3 to 5 year olds) on Tuesdays, (4:30-5:15pm): See registration section for more information.

What age should my child be in order to start lessons?

Most children start anywhere from age 3.5 - 8 years. However, there is truly no age limitation with regards to starting. Younger children need more parental guidance. Older children usually move more quickly through the repertoire. In order to know what the teacher will ask the student to practice at home during the week, parents are required to be present during lessons.

What if my child is transferring from another Suzuki Program or already has Suzuki experience?

If you are not sure what class level your child fits into, they can come and “try out” one class before registering at no charge. You can also come and observe classes with your child, to get an idea of the level and pace for your child. If you need to find a new private teacher for your child, it would be best to observe private lessons of several teachers to find the teacher that best suits your child’s needs.

PRIVATE LESSONS

How do I arrange a time/place to observe a private lesson?

Usually observations of private lessons will take place either at the MNjcc and/or at the teacher's private home studio. Some teachers teach private lessons at the MNjcc if they are able to schedule them before and/or after their group-teaching schedule.

How do I select a private teacher?

During your observation time, you may have observed a teacher with whom you really "resonate," with whom you wish your child to study. Feel free to ask that particular teacher if they have an opening for your child in their studio. If so, please arrange your private lesson time with that teacher. If you need names of other teachers because the teacher you want has a full studio, please contact suzukimusic@mnjcc.org. We try to accommodate families by location as well, but please don't choose a teacher because of location. Choose a teacher because you know that teacher is the one you want for your child.

How long are private lessons?

Most children take a 30-minute private lesson once a week until they reach late Book 2, at which point we recommend 45 minutes. From Book 4 through advanced levels, the suggested lesson time is 45-60 minutes.

How do I pay for private lessons?

You arrange your private lesson payment schedule with your private lesson teacher. Private lesson payments are made directly to the private teacher according to their studio policies, (not to the MNjcc). Most teachers are accepting e-transfer. **Please be advised that parents opting to hold their private lesson at the MNjcc will now be charged a facilities fee.**

INSTRUMENT PURCHASES/RENTALS

How do I purchase or rent an instrument?

If your child is a beginner, please do not purchase or rent an instrument before you have spoken with your private teacher. (Violinists will not start on a "real instrument" until their private teacher says they are ready. The transition from a "pretend" box instrument to a "real" instrument varies according to ability, age, and level). Families can arrange to rent instruments from various musical instrument stores in the Toronto area. The following is a list of stores where you can either purchase or rent an instrument:

- [The Sound Post](#) (416) 971-6990 (violins, cellos, violas)

- [Long & McQuade](#) (416) 588-7886 (violins, cellos, violas, guitars). Regarding guitar rentals: Bloor & Ossington store, Acoustic guitar dept., upstairs.
- Philip Davis, luthier (416) 466-9619 (violins, cellos, violas)
- [Remenyi House of Music](#) (416) 961- 3111 (violins, cellos, violas, guitars)
- George Heintz & Co. Ltd. (416) 363-0093 (for purchase only - violins, violas, cellos)

With most stores, there is usually a rental “with the option to buy,” and/or a rental plan that is monthly and/or yearly. Parents of beginners should be prepared to rent a full-sized instrument for a short time (6 months to a year), in order to learn alongside their child.

CLASS LEVELS/DESCRIPTIONS

What are Suzuki group repertoire classes?

Group repertoire classes are part of your child’s Suzuki experience, and are required. Once your child has started private lessons, your teacher will advise what level will work best, and when/what level to register for group lessons. All groups are assembled according to playing level. When possible, age and social ability are also factored in. Group classes are organized and assigned by the Artistic Director and Suzuki faculty. Group class teachers focus on the level appropriate Suzuki repertoire that students study in their private lessons, adding to this with inventive games, improv, and various exercises to enhance playing ability, musical knowledge, and expression. All group classes will be scheduled for 40 minutes (Beginner Level- Book 7).

What are Ensemble classes?

We recommend that each child, Book 1 and above, enroll in two weekly classes on Tuesday afternoons: an instrumental group repertoire class, and one other level appropriate ensemble class from the following list (string orchestra, chamber music ensemble, guitar ensemble, music theory/note reading).

What is a chamber music ensemble? (Book 4+, students will be grouped by level)

Chamber music classes are for advanced students only, working in book 4 or higher, who are accomplished note readers. Students will be placed into duo, trio, quartet, quintet, sextet, or octet ensembles according to age and playing level. The ensembles will study classical through 21st century works by such composers as Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Dvorak, Britten, Barber, Hindemith, Glick, etc. If your child is a transfer student, and our staff is not sure of their level of playing, one of our chamber music teachers will ask them to audition.

What are improvisation classes? (Book 1+)

"Creative Ability Development" (CAD) is a method for developing uninhibited creativity in music performance. Through the improvisation games we play in CAD, each student is given the freedom to discover their own musical ideas and style. Each child will discover their own musical voice. With self-discovery comes renewed feelings of self-confidence, freedom of expression, and a true connection with musical creativity.

What is Opus 750 - String orchestra?

This large ensemble of violinists, violists, and cellists is for students who are late Book 2 and above, who have participated in beginner and/or intermediate note reading/theory classes, are confident with their note reading skills (I Can Read Music Book 2 and beyond). Students who are part of this ensemble have demonstrated to their private teacher and/or our string orchestra director, Nancy Lokan, that they are ready for more advanced ensemble playing. If your child is a transfer student, and our staff is not sure of their level of playing, one of the teachers will ask them to audition.

What is note reading ensemble including musicianship, theory? (Late Book 1+, students will be grouped by level)

Most students start in a beginning note reading ensemble when they are nearing the middle to end of Suzuki repertoire book 1, and have begun a note reading routine in their private lesson. Classes will be divided by ability to read music notation. All students who participate in note reading classes must also practice note reading during the week, and as well, follow through in their private lessons. Most of the MNjcc Suzuki teachers teach with Joanne Martin's I Can Read Music Vol. 1 & Vol. 2, and/or Carl Grissen Learn with Tunes Vol. 1, 2, & 3, or something comparable. During 2026-27, students will be grouped by level. Students are usually in book 2 to early book 3 upon completion of all levels of the note reading classes, at which point they would join the **Opus 750 - String orchestra** directed by Nancy Lokan.

When & where are group classes/ensemble classes/solo and large group recitals?

The group classes, ensemble classes and recitals are scheduled on Tuesday afternoons starting at 4:30 pm through early evening. A calendar of classes and special events is on our website. We have outlined above in the group/ensemble class descriptions how our classes will run using MNjcc rooms and classrooms on floors 2 and 3.

Solo recitals are scheduled for fall and spring terms. Large group and Ensemble class concerts are scheduled for winter and spring terms. On solo recital days, regularly scheduled group classes will not run.

REGISTRATION FEES

Suzuki Early Childhood Music (SECE) - 0-36 months old (with parent/caregiving)

Parents will enjoy watching their children develop rhythmic and melodic awareness, memory, and social skills. Teachers build a repertoire of lullabies, action songs, and nursery rhymes. No prior musical experience necessary. The SECE program provides a wonderful foundation before starting an instrument.

Sundays

11:15am-12pm

Oct 4 - Nov 29

*skip Oct 11 for Thanksgiving

[Click here to register](#)

Jump Start to Twinkles - 3-5 year olds (with parent/caregiver)

Building on the foundational music skills learned in our SECE program, this class is recommended for beginners who are not ready for the full Suzuki Program, and/or have not yet chosen an instrument.

Tuesdays

4:30-5:15pm

Oct 6-Nov 24

[Click here to register](#)

Group and Ensemble Classes

We recommend a group class and ensemble for all children book 1+ and up. We have three options to select from. Parents, please consult with your private teacher regarding the best choice for your child prior to registering. All classes, concerts and special events will be scheduled on Tuesdays between 4:30-7:30pm from Sept. 15 – June 1, 2027.

Please note - As of December 2026 we will be moving from our current registration system (amalia) to Sales Force. As a result, the Suzuki program, which is a full year commitment, will be divided into 2 terms. Sept-Dec (11 weeks) and Jan-June (19 weeks) Parents/caregivers will need to register at two separate times.

Registration for Term 1 opens August 4, 2026.

We recommend the following registration choices for violin, viola, cello, guitar.

Group Class & Ensemble - includes 1 group class and 1 ensemble class

Term 1 (11 weeks) - \$550

[Click here to register](#)

Term 2 (19 weeks) - \$950

Group Class ONLY – choice of 1 class)

Term 1 (11 weeks) - \$275

[Click here to register](#)

Term 2 (19 weeks) - \$475

Ensemble Class ONLY – choice of 1 class

Term 1 (11 weeks) - \$275

[Click here to register](#)

Term 2 (19 weeks) - \$475

Sibling Discount - 10% (for each child)

Faculty discount - 25% (for each child)

WICHIN PAXSON ABBERGER MUSIC FUND

This fund helps make innovative and dynamic music programs accessible to everyone, regardless of financial status or circumstances. There is availability for financial assistance towards all music programming. All applications are kept confidential. To apply email Davidkb@mnjcc.org

If you would like to make a donation to this fund to help support members of our Suzuki community, please [click here](#) to make a tax-deductible donation.

SUZUKI SUMMER CAMP 2027

2027 will mark our 16th in-person camp! July 5-9, 2027. For more information and program description, please check our website in December 2026, or email suzukimusic@mnjcc.org

We also offer an Adult Summer String Ensemble during that same week, July 5-9, 2027
Info available December 2026. For more information and program description, please
check our website, email gretchena@mnjcc.org

KINDNESS CLAUSE

In Suzuki, we teach our students to speak to and about others with kindness and respect. We ask that our parents abide by the same guidelines. Please be cognizant of the language you use when speaking with staff, administration, other Miles Nadal JCC community members, and in online chats. Jewish tradition speaks about the prohibition of lashon hara, or “evil speech.” Lashon hara is permitted, however, when it is intended for a constructive purpose. Please remember that the office door is always open to you if you would like to chat.