



THE **DETROIT SCHOOL** OF ROCK AND POP **MUSIC**®

SIX QUESTIONS

EVERY MUSIC STUDENT SHOULD ASK

WHEN SEARCHING FOR MUSIC LESSONS

STOP PRACTICING... START PERFORMING®

THIS IS JASON

He's *excited*.



Why? This e-book is going to help prepare you for your journey into music lessons and beyond. And that's exciting.

Jason S. Gittinger is one of Detroit's most versatile studio and live drummer/percussionists. He has performed extensively in popular, jazz and classical circles. He is the founder and Executive Producer of The Detroit School of Rock and Pop Music®, a diverse musical community focused on the pursuit of excellence through a positive, motivating, and educational environment. As the Executive Director of The Live The Music Foundation, he sees first hand how positive music interaction can be a stabilizing and amplifying force in a person's life. He frequently is asked to speak to civic and music organizations and serves on many regional arts and community boards. He is passionate about bringing more people into the world of music and igniting their passions for it. He lives in Royal Oak, Michigan with his wife and two daughters.

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ARE YOU A **MUSICIAN** OR **PARENT** WHO'S LOOKING TO LEARN MORE ABOUT **MUSIC LESSONS**?

Then this e-book is for you. It will get you thinking about:

1. **WHY** AM I INTERESTED?
2. WHAT KINDS OF **EXPERIENCES**?
3. HOW IMPORTANT IS **LOCATION**?
4. **WHO** RUNS THE PLACE?
5. HOW MUCH WILL IT **COST**?
6. HOW WILL I MEASURE **SUCCESS**?

Without considering these, you're going to have a **MUCH LESS EFFECTIVE** lesson experience and possibly **WASTE A WHOLE BUNCH OF TIME AND MONEY**. Which is never good.





1. WHY AM I INTERESTED IN MUSIC LESSONS?

Music lessons are a **personal journey**. There is **no** such thing as a **cookie cutter** that works for everyone.

WHY AM I INTERESTED IN MUSIC LESSONS?



ARTICULATE WHO YOU ARE

Without defining what kind of musician you would like to become or how you would like music to be a part of your life, you'll have a difficult time narrowing down your ideal instructor or school to attend.

LIST YOUR GOALS



Be as detailed as you can be, and don't be afraid to go overboard. If you'd like to one day share the stage at the Grammy's with Katy Perry, write it down. You never know what might happen and where you might end up when you overshoot your dreams. People with meaningful specific goals are far more inclined to reach them than people with none at all.



START A DIALOG ABOUT YOUR INTEREST

Start discussing your desires to learn an instrument or your children's desires with others. You'll be amazed at what you hear back. Are you interested in taking lessons because you heard it's good for kids? Did you hear it's a good way to meet people? Is it your passion to connect with people through an art form and music is your passion? These types of questions with others will help you define and characterize your interest in lessons in ways that will make choosing a school or instructor much easier.

People are **drawn to music** from many **different** perspectives and **backgrounds** and tapping into **what you want to become** is the most important step.

Lessons can be as **simple** as your **neighbor** showing you something about your instrument, or a **dedicated facility** devoted to creating full-on **professional-level shows**.



2. WHAT EXPERIENCES AM I LOOKING **FOR?**

WHAT EXPERIENCES AM I LOOKING FOR?



INDIVIDUAL LESSONS

NOT JUST TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Individual private lessons can play an important role in one's development. The value in a private lessons is not in the technical information presented. Such information is available on the internet. The value is in the ability and experience of the teacher to direct the student to the right information at the right point of their development.

GROUP EXPERIENCES



YOU CAN'T DO THIS ALONE

The best motivator for progressing in music is putting yourself in situations to do it regularly with others. Some experiences to look for might be:

- **Band Rehearsals**
- **Live Shows and Performances**
- **Recording Sessions**
- **Television Shows and Videos**



STYLES OF MUSIC

YOU GROW WHEN YOU STRETCH

We come to music with pre-set desires to accomplish the music we love. Many find that over time some of the richest experiences and growth comes when they step out of their comfort zone and try other styles of music.

- **Rock and Pop**
- **Jazz**
- **Folk-Roots-Bluegrass-Country**
- **Classical**
- **Blues and Soul**

Weighing the private, group and styles of experiences available in each school and their importance to you will help refine your search.

A man with glasses and a white shirt is playing an electric guitar on a stage. He is looking down at his instrument. The background is dark with some framed pictures on the wall. There are microphones on stands in front of him.

3. HOW IMPORTANT IS LOCATION?

The **location** of your music school or lessons could be **very important**.

The **environment** and weekly grind of getting to your lessons can be a **huge factor** in your **follow through** and your **success**.

HOW IMPORTANT IS LOCATION?



QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT:

- Is it close?
- Is traffic a problem?
- Is convenience more important or exceptional experiences or mentorship for me or my child?
- Could I find all of the information online and stay home?
- Is my neighborhood a hotbed of artistic activity?



REGIONAL GOALS?

Depending on your goals, being close could work. If your intention is to learn a few songs to play at a company party or for Grandma at the next family party, going with the closest spot could work just fine.

If your intention is to find the best, location usually becomes more of a regional decision. The schools with great reputations have people that travel to them.

Nobody ever wants to **travel** very far regularly, but there's also only one **Julliard**, and it's in **New York City**.

EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES



The equipment and facilities that a teacher or school provides can make a big difference in outcome. If you are learning in a small cramped back room or basement that hasn't been cleaned in 15 years and smells like cat food, AND are playing on ancient equipment, it can diminish your desire to work hard each week. Playing great equipment in a cool environment can give a student a sense of pride in their hard work and accomplishment. The facilities provided for you to learn can also be a clear indicator of the level of detail that a school or teacher is going to take with your development.

You're **success** in a **music school** or lessons can only be attained when the **motivations** of the leadership, faculty and supporters **align** with yours.



4. WHO RUNS THIS PLACE?

WHO RUNS THIS PLACE?



LEADERSHIP:

- Who are the leaders/owners?
- What is their musical background?
- Did they found the school or buy a franchise?
- Do they continue to learn and grow with the staff and students?

Owners and leaders that are only business people or administrators can have a tendency to focus on dollars and not the growth of each student. Passionate leadership is key to a successful music school.



STAFF:

- How long has the staff been around?
- What is their musical background?
- Are they working professionals or hobbyists?

The staff at a music school is the lifeblood of the organization. Turnover shows a lack of commitment to teaching. Someone who only teaches, however, without playing professional gigs might not be learning new things. A balance is key to success for the students.



STUDENTS:

The students of music schools, past or present, can be a good indicator of what level of education is happening. Music is a long process. If the students come and leave quickly, either they were there on a whim, the school is attracting students that aren't passionate, or the staff is not very good. Churn and burn in the arts can be a bad thing. Quality learning, whether for hobbyists or future professionals, comes through a mentorship with professional musicians that care about the students AND through shared experiences and community with other students as passionate (or more) than yourself.

Whether the student is having fun, relieving stress or starting a music career, the people around them make a difference.

A photograph of two male musicians performing on a stage. The musician on the right is seated on a wooden stool, playing an acoustic guitar and singing into a microphone. He is wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt and jeans. The musician on the left is partially visible, also singing into a microphone. The background features a brick wall on the left and a wall with horizontal wooden slats on the right. A large, stylized 'Hard Rock CAFE' logo is projected onto the slatted wall. The lighting is warm and focused on the performers.

5. HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

It is **important** to weigh the **total package** of *experience*, *mentorship* and *community* elements of a program when determining a **cost difference** between schools or **individual** instructors.

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?



MENTORSHIP:

When weighing the cost of various programs, the first thing to consider is the mentorship experience.

Quality costs. There are no shortcuts. If however a kid down the street can show you what you need to know, then you have the mentorship you need and most likely cheap! If you run into trouble learning this way, seeking an experienced professional might be necessary. Someone who has had experience with not only the styles of music you enjoy, but others as well, can give you a well rounded education.



EXPERIENCE COMMUNITY:

A goal of many music students is to gain experience. The resources of a large group of people can not be replicated. Equipment, facilities and opportunities to perform and play together are all a direct benefit of engaging in a community. Whether in a basement or at a dedicated facility, community can add layers of complexity that can't be found alone.

Another benefit of community can be non-profit grants or scholarships for tuition support. These kinds of programs help students maintain consistency in the face of a tragedy or hardship.

COMPARE:



Costs for lessons and training vary widely so it is important to keep all aspects of the experience in mind when comparing.

Things to factor in price comparisons:
(In no particular order.)

1. Teachers
2. Reputation
3. Facility/Equipment
4. Location
5. Experiences
6. Outside Opportunities
7. Success/Results
8. Scholarships
9. Community
10. Student Body

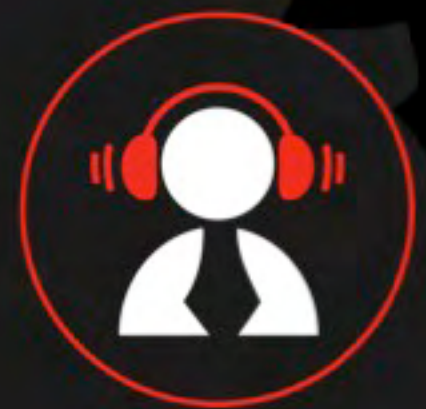
Tuition fees are usually directly tied to the experiences and commitment of the individuals helping you or your child.

Setting goals and expectations for yourself and your instructors will provide you clear mile markers to determine your success.



6. HOW
WILL I
MEASURE
MY SUCCESS?

HOW WILL I MEASURE MY SUCCESS?



EXPECTATIONS:

Setting clear expectations for your music lessons will help you refine the choices you have in instruction, and also help you clearly communicate them to the teacher or school that you are looking at attending.

Setting the tone of your interaction with the staff can empower everyone to work at your pace, slow or fast. Also, establishing expectations of yourself helps the teachers hold you accountable for your own wishes when things get tough and you want to slack off.



SET GOALS:

Your goals for your future in music can be as simple as playing a song for someone, or as complex as being involved in touring the world with your voice or instrument. Having a vision for where you're headed will serve to motivate you to keep at it.

Small goals should be set week to week to keep you on track. A good teacher will help you set these. A good school will also set milestone activities throughout the year to keep your motivation and experience functioning at a high level.



CURRICULUM:

A good music school or teacher will have a curriculum or road map for each student's success. It may be different for each student. An adult student who wants to play music to relax and have fun may have a simple curriculum over a few years to get started. A high school student who wishes to go on to a college level music program might have a far more aggressive curriculum that exposes them to many different styles of music, music theory, performance opportunities, and recording situations in a much shorter time. It's important to discuss these needs with your school or teacher of choice so you can stay on track.

Setting **goals** and **expectations** for **yourself** and your **instructors** will provide you clear **mile markers** to determine your **success**.

CONCLUSION:

AS A **MUSICIAN** OR **PARENT** WHO'S LOOKING TO LEARN MORE ABOUT **MUSIC LESSONS**, THERE ARE A FEW THINGS TO **DEFINE** BEFORE GETTING **STARTED** THAT WILL HELP THE **PROCESS** BE THE MOST **EFFECTIVE**:

1. **WHY** AM I INTERESTED?

Your specific goals for your music.

4. **WHO** RUNS THE PLACE?

The people helping you grow.

2. WHAT KINDS OF **EXPERIENCES**?

Who and what you will learn with.

5. HOW MUCH WILL IT **COST**?

A balance of instruction and experiences vs. dollars.

3. HOW IMPORTANT IS **LOCATION**?

Where you learn.

6. HOW WILL I MEASURE **SUCCESS**?

Your quantifiable goals and definition of success.



Without considering these, you're going to have a **MUCH LESS EFFECTIVE** lesson experience and possibly **WASTE A WHOLE BUNCH OF TIME AND MONEY**. Which is never good.



CONTACT US:

FEELING GOOD?

*Want some **help** on your musical **journey**?*

*Want to learn more about **The Detroit School of Rock and Pop Music** and how we compare?*

Contact us for a free visit and audition today.
We'd love to help you:
Stop Practicing... Start Performing®



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