



PIANO ALIVE INFO PACK

In-Person Multi-Keyboard Group Learning at Encore Creative Center

(Additional Video and Printed Class Companion Materials - *in development, 2024*)

*Now with **TestUps** for 2024!*



"Class is done? That felt 2 minutes!" -**Jack, 10 year old Piano Alive student**

"It's hard to believe that such serious music can be presented in a way that's just so fun." -**April, Piano Alive Parent**

"This program has brought me so far so soon. It's so eye-opening. I wish this was how I was taught piano when I was a child, but at least now I can know piano this way for the rest of my life." -**Gail, Adult Piano Alive Student**





What is Piano Alive?

Piano Alive is a holistically-graded music method for all ages to progress through, within a group setting. Based off **practical theory**, it enables pianists to **love playing** both **on the page** and **off the page**, and know **the why** and **the how** behind it. Younger ages learn through color and games, older ages learn through **musical "math"** and quizzes, and everyone learns through **real-world creative collaboration** and songs that don't bore learners or listeners.

Piano Alive connects students with a range of learning styles to music as a whole, with piano as the tool to express themselves and experience excellence in technique, application of amazing theory that matters, and the joy of group playing.

This refreshing method has been developed over the past several years by full time instructor and pianist Danika Starrhart. The results are proven to provide an exceptional foundation and creative springboard in piano -- the kind of inspirational pedagogy we wished we would've had in past generations!

Our track record shows... 95% of students who take a trial class sign up for one or more seasons. 80% of students who have complete a Piano Alive season are still studying/playing piano today. Long-term Piano Alive students transition seamlessly into learning whatever classical pieces they desire, writing songs and improvising intelligently, and playing in groups with confidence.



About Danika Starrhart

Known for inspiring the highest potential from her students and her welcoming, down to earth nature, Danika has been a full time music teacher for 20 years. She is a consummate creative performer on the piano who has released multiple vocal-instrumental albums, and her compositions have won awards both in film festival circuits and in statewide and national singer-songwriter associations. As a symphonic composer and multi-instrumentalist, Danika has conducted local orchestras and performed at concerto level on 7 different instruments. She currently performs with her group Starrhart Symphonic, conducts Canyon County Youth Symphony, scores independent films, owns and operates Encore Creative Center in Idaho, and teaches and improvises and composes music daily.

2024 Session Dates

April 22-June 14 ●●●●● June 24-Aug 16 ●●●●● Aug 26-Oct 18 ●●●●● Oct 28-Dec 20

Learn with your same group for 8 weeks, then have the opportunity to test up and move to a new class!
Each 8-week session costs \$150.

It's like martial arts classes -- you build skills in your level until you test up. TestsUps are held every 8 or 9 weeks with Danika (currently on Saturdays). TestUp events are free of charge to enrolled students, unless you cannot make an existing scheduled TestUp event and need to book a private TestUp on your own schedule as Danika has opening (15 minutes for \$25).

Be assured it is normal to take multiple sessions of any one level (but also fine, on some exceptions, if the student is able to move forward more quickly). Every class week is a new adventure you shouldn't ever have to tire of no matter how long you're in a level. All review is not designed to feel redundant, but is covered in a way that provides new perspective on ever-present foundational skills.

2024 Schedule Options

MERIDIAN

Monday (during summer, Meridian Monday times move earlier 3 hours)

1:00 - 1:45 PM Piano Alive Ready-to-Play (4-6) Instr. Kristin Jenkins
1:45 - 2:30 PM Piano Alive Lvl. C (7-12) Instr. Kristin Jenkins
2:30 - 3:15 PM Piano Alive Lvl. B (7-12) Instr. Kristin Jenkins
4:30 - 5:15 PM Piano Alive Lvl. D (7-12) Instr. Kristin Jenkins
5:15 - 6:00 PM Piano Alive RTP (4-6) Instr. Sharon Lucas
6:00 - 6:45 PM Piano Alive Lvl. A (7-12) Instr. Sharon Lucas
6:45 - 7:30 PM Piano Alive Lvl. B (7-12) Instr. Sharon Lucas

Tuesday (during summer, Meridian Tuesday times move earlier 3 hours)

3:15 - 4:00 PM Piano Alive Lvl. A-C (13-99) Instr. North Gill
4:00 - 4:45 PM Piano Alive Ready-to-Play (4-6) Instr. North Gill
4:45 - 5:30 PM Piano Alive Lvl. A (7-12) Instr. North Gill
5:30 - 6:15 PM Piano Alive Lvl. D-G (13-99) Instr. Danika Starrharrt
6:15 - 7:00 PM Piano Alive Lvl. B (7-12) Instr. North Gill

Wednesday

4:30 - 5:15 PM Piano Alive Lvl. C (7-12) Instr. Kristin Jenkins
5:15 - 6:00 PM Piano Alive Lvl. B (7-12) Instr. Kristin Jenkins

Thursday

1:45 - 2:30 PM Piano Alive Lvl. A (7-12) Instr. North Gill
2:30 - 3:15 PM Piano Alive Ready-to-Play (4-6) Instr. North Gill

EAGLE

Monday

10:00 - 10:45 AM Piano Alive Ready-to-Play (4-6) Instr. Bailee Morrison
10:45 - 11:30 AM Piano Alive Lvl. B (7-12) Instr. Bailee Morrison
11:30 - 12:15 PM Piano Alive Lvl. A (7-12) Instr. Bailee Morrison
1:00 - 1:45 PM Piano Alive Ready-to-Play (4-6) Instr. Bailee Morrison
1:45 - 2:30 PM Piano Alive Lvl. A (7-12) Instr. Bailee Morrison
2:30 - 3:15 PM Piano Alive Lvl. B (7-12) Instr. Bailee Morrison
3:15 - 4:00 PM Piano Alive Lvl. A (13-99) Instr. Bailee Morrison

Tuesday

1:00 - 1:45 PM Piano Alive Lvl. A (7-12) Instr. Bailee Morrison
1:45 - 2:30 PM Piano Alive Lvl. C (7-12) Instr. Bailee Morrison
2:30 - 3:15 PM Piano Alive Lvl. D (7-12) Instr. Bailee Morrison
3:15 - 4:00 PM Piano Alive Lvl. B (7-12) Instr. Bailee Morrison

Wednesday

4:30 - 5:15 PM Piano Alive Lvl. A (7-12) Instr. North Gill
5:15 - 6:00 PM Piano Alive Lvl. B (7-12) Instr. North Gill
6:00 - 6:45 PM Piano Alive Ready-to-Play (4-6) Instr. North Gill
6:45 - 7:30 PM Piano Alive Lvl. D-G (13-99) Instr. Danika Starrharrt

Thursday

4:30 - 5:15 PM Piano Alive Lvl. C (7-12) Instr. Bailee Morrison
5:15 - 6:00 PM Piano Alive Ready-to-Play (4-6) Instr. Bailee Morrison
6:00 - 6:45 PM Piano Alive Lvl. A (7-12) Instr. Bailee Morrison

WHAT IS LEARNED IN EACH LEVEL?

The following lists of practical concepts are used in teachers' syllabuses and used to test up to each next level. Each week in class, select concepts will be introduced and/or reviewed in the context of many different songs, games, and exercises.

Students are given assignments to practice at home each week to support what is learned in class. Home practice is essential for seeing a result of musical skill improvement.

Levels (Concept Groups) are a basic framework to attempt linear measurement on what is naturally a holistic process of absorption that strengthens by time and use. Different students will master different concepts on different weeks at their own development pace. Class groups are small enough where each student's progress is noticed, and personalized tips and challenges are able to be provided. While our goal is to help all students confidently move forward, you will never regret having more reinforcement, strengthening, and ear training at whatever level you are currently in.

Level A Concepts

- Identify higher than/lower than sounds by ear, and know correlating left-right directions
 - Identify finger names and corresponding "Body Songs"
 - Move each finger independently in bubble shape
 - Keep steady beat at three different speeds
 - Create opposites: dynamics, speeds, legato vs. staccato
 - Clap quarter note/rest rhythm patterns
 - Identify sets of 2 black keys/3 black keys
 - Identify C, D, E, F, G, A, B in random order on the keys
 - Repeat short melody pattern across each octave
 - Play 5-finger scale in C: CDEFGFEDC, each hand
 - Play 5-finger songs in C, each hand
 - Trill as a finger strengthener
 - Identify clefs and space vs. line notes
 - Play intervals 2nd-5th in each hand
 - Name C-G on each clef
 - Play 5-finger scale in C, hands together- Know what the 4 parts of musical language are: *Listening (training ears, cooperating with each other), Speaking (improvising), Reading (to understand, not just memorize), and Writing (composing)*

Level B Concepts

- Play 5-finger melodies with two hands together in unison
- Clap and count quarter, half, dotted half, and whole notes/rests
 - Play and identify intervals up to an octave
 - Play full octave C Major scale with crossing
 - Play 5-finger scales in Am, Dm, G
 - Transpose 5-finger songs between C, Am, Dm, and G
 - Build a triad and find it across all octaves
 - Identify and play primary and secondary chords in C
 - Improvise a one-handed melody in position
 - Understand and play block vs. broken chords
 - Play and transition between I and V7 chords with eyes closed
- Play songs with one hand on melody and the other hand on I to V7 chords
 - Identify and play dynamic range markings
 - Understand 3/4 vs. 4/4 meters (time signatures)
 - Follow 4-chord patterns in beat
- Know the associations of the 3 elements of music: *Melody/Mind, Rhythm/Body, Harmony/Soul*

Level C Concepts

- Play full octave scale hands together: parallel motion and contrary motion (mirrored)
 - Understand major to minor scale relationship
- Play 3 relative major/minor scales and know their key signatures
- Identify and play primary and secondary chords in 3 keys (C, G, and D)
 - Create 4-chord patterns
 - Improvise on top of chord accompaniment
 - Improvise thoughtfully with one hand in free positions
 - Name any note on either staff (know the acronyms)
 - Sightread to the quarter beat
 - Understand common articulation markings
 - Play rounds and duets with the class
 - Play 2 hands with opposing rhythms
 - Play cross hand arpeggios
 - Read and memorize easy lead sheets
- Clap and count up to 16th notes/rest (Beat Tree mastery)
 - Play the chromatic scale

Level D Concepts

- Understand 6/8, 9/8, 12/8, and cut time meters (time signatures)
 - Understand and use circle of fifths
 - Understand and use chord families
 - Play 6 relative major/minor keys, multi octave, hands together
- Understand and memorize whole/half step patterns for major/minor scales
 - Sightread to the eighth beat
- Understand and play inversions all across the piano for 6 majors/minors
 - Multi-octave scales, hands separate and together
 - Minor intervals, 2nd-octave
 - Use clean pedaling in songs
 - Create and play 8-bar chord patterns
 - Add trills and ornaments to songs
- Understand and use suspended chords and 6 chords
 - Play easy pop charts
- Play and memorize simplified, multi-position classical literature

Level E Concepts

- Play 12 relative major+minor scales (hands together and octave blocks)
 - Play 12 relative major+minor arpeggios
 - Play 12 relative major+minor inversions
- Play mix scales (one hand major, one minor / moving in harmony in 3rds, 6ths, and 10ths)
 - Play mix inversions (each hand on different inversions)
- Understand and play scale types: Pentatonic, Harmonic Minor, Melodic Minor, and Blues
 - Understand and play the 12 bar blues form
 - Sightread to the sixteenth beat
 - Create and play chord patterns in harmonic minor
- Understand and play augmented and diminished triads
- Play intermediate classical literature (think Sonatas)
 - Play rock or pop charts of choosing
 - Play easy ragtime (syncopation)
- Create smooth voicing for a given chord progression

Level F Concepts

- Understand and use the 3 common 7th chords
- Understand and express dynamic contouring of a song
 - Understand and use speed reading techniques
- Analyze structure of sheet music and song form
 - Sightread anything, slowly
 - Understand complex meters
- Create drumtrack style rhythm accompaniment between both hands
 - Create rhythmic, creative accompaniment patterns in the LH
 - Create rhythmic, creative accompaniment patterns in the RH
 - Play "Canon in [D]" pattern through all 12 keys
 - Simplify sheet music
- Improvise in call and response collaboration with the class

Level G Concepts

- Understand 3rd stacking to create any chord (7th, 9th, and beyond)
 - Understand and use uncommon 7th chords
- Understand physical-emotional content and relationship of chords
 - Create moving melodies from the mind
 - Play consciously by ear
- Dress up chord charts and lead sheets in various genres
 - Expand simpler sheet music on the fly
- Improvise advanced melodies and chords from scratch
- Create chords and harmonization for an existing melody
- Play advanced classic literature (think Joplin, Debussy)
 - Transpose simple classical pieces