

How to Teach Music Online - Webinar Series

Session 1: Preparing Your Teaching Practice for Online Music Lessons – FAQs

Can you record the Zoom lesson and send it to students for reference?

Yes, you can record Zoom lessons. You can also allow students to record the lessons to their computer as well. To see how, please visit [this Zoom support page](#).

Could you suggest external microphones?

An external microphone is not required to begin teaching online. However, it is helpful if you're looking to improve your sound quality. Here are [10 USB Condenser Mics](#) suggested by musiccritic.com.

Do both student and teacher need to enable Original Sound, or just one side?

Yes, both parties need to enable Original Sound if they're both playing. Check out [this YouTube video](#) for instructions on how to enable Original Sound.

Do you have any recommendations for specific hardware to get a good angle of my hands and keys from a bird's eye view for students? Specifically, something that can attach my laptop, iPad, or iPhone to a tripod?

One of our presenters, Michael Berkovsky, suggested using a smartphone tripod adapter/holder similar to [this one](#) (Amazon link). You may find other ones which will work the same way.

How can I make myself (or someone else) primary presenter in a video call to be seen by everyone when demonstrating with students?

If you're using Zoom, as a host, you can [spotlight video](#) (either your own video or another student's) so that everyone will see that video regardless of who's talking. If you'd like to hide gallery view so that students only see the speaker, you can [switch to Speaker view](#) from Gallery view.

What is the best setup in my studio to teach piano online? What is the best placement for my student's device so that I can see their fingers, their face, and their music?

We have created a few guides to help you set up your studio. You can find them at [rcmusic.com/teacherupdates](#) under Resources > Resources for Teaching Music Online. On the student's side, you may have to test out different camera angles to find the optimal view. They may need to adjust their camera position during the lesson. For younger students, it may be helpful to ask their parents to help with these arrangements when necessary.

What is the solution for an echoing sound coming from one of my student's tablets when I use Zoom on my laptop?

It's possible that the echo is caused by the tablet picking up your sound as it comes out on their tablet's speaker and sending it back through their microphone. Asking the student to wear a headset may help with the sound. Additionally, Original Sound takes a bit longer to process and can cause a slight delay on the listener's end, resulting in them hearing you a bit later than your actual speaking. We recommend turning off Original Sound during long periods of speaking.

How can I host a virtual recital for my students when the timing of their performances is not synched up because of the sound delays in a video conference call? Can I have them record individually and merge videos together? If so, what video program could I use for that?

You can use [iMovie](#) if you're on an Apple device or download free software such as Shortcut or VSDC Free. Here's a YouTube video with more details: [Video Editing for Beginners \(Using Windows PC\)](#).

I'm having trouble showing hand-drawn diagrams to my students. What is the most effective way to allow them to see these?

You can take a picture of the diagrams and share it during your lessons. Alternatively, you can join the session on a smartphone, switch to rear-facing camera (on the back of the phone) and hold it in front of/above your diagrams to show your progress. Of course, it's easier if you have something to hold your device (e.g. a phone holder, phone tripod).

The piano seems to sound different through these online platforms, and sometimes it's hard to hear the dynamics. Is it always like that? How can I improve this?

This is an ongoing challenge for many musicians. If you're using Zoom, you may find the "Preserve Original Sound" option helpful. Original sound allows you to preserve the sound from your microphone without using Zoom's echo cancellation and audio-enhancing features. Check out [this YouTube video](#) for instructions on how to enable Original Sound. Alternatively, it may be helpful to request that students submit recordings of their performances. Recording is possible on most smartphones, tablets, and laptops.

What program are you using to display and annotate your scores on your iPad?

Our presenter used Apple Books or iBooks to annotate his scores via screen sharing in the video. You may find other annotation apps in the Play Store or App Store of your device.