



instructor corner

Mark Salazar, B.M., Guitar Instructor

The Benefits of Playing With a Track and Recording Yourself

Ever since I can remember, I've always heard other teachers or fellow students say, "Play along with the song you are learning" or "learn that falseta [lick] and play along with the maestro." If I was learning a piece from my classical repertoire, my teacher always said, "Record yourself and you will hear what can be improved." I can't forget hearing "You ALWAYS need a metronome!" The truth is that music is like learning a new language, just without being spoken, and recording yourself is one way to get instant feedback.

There are many benefits to playing with a track - whether you're learning full-length songs or repertoire from your books. Along with getting an ear-training workout, playing along with a track will help you learn your material much faster. This is because you are trying to better match your playing to the track, which helps you learn it quickly. If something is too fast, I recommend breaking it down so you learn the notes first. Learning to play your part slowly before you speed it up is a great way to tell if you are ready. Slow practice will help your playing improve technically and, most importantly, give your music clarity. Patience and time will work with you. This brings me to my next step, which is using a metronome.

Metronome practice is another tool that will help your tempo and keep you from speeding up or dragging. It helps with accenting beats and defining the clarity of your subdivisions. After spending some time practicing with a metronome, bring your playing back to a track and see how close you can get to it. Remember, this may take some repetition before you start seeing results, and that's okay.

This next step is probably the most exciting, because you get to hear what you sound like. Recording yourself can be scary at first, but you'll see how much it can help you improve. When you start, you can simply use your phone's recording app or another device or software, such as GarageBand. After recording yourself alongside the track you are working on, listen back to what you recorded, and you'll hear the parts where you are strongest and the areas where you need improvement. Once you identify your weak and strong parts, I recommend approaching the weak points first, then the strong points of your playing. This is a great opportunity for you to improve as a young music student.

These practice methods can be applied to any instrument, style, or genre you wish to learn. This method helped me learn how to play Rock, Jazz, Flamenco, and Classical on the guitar—with the guidance of a good teacher.

upcoming events

RECITAL
SIGN-UP

NOV
7

Winter Recital Sign-up goes live
at 2pm
samusicacademy.com/signup



NOV
8

Paul Dattner's Birthday



NOV
9

15-Year SAMA Anniversary
Celebration
at Chicken N Pickle (2pm - 8pm)



NOV
11

Leslie Vela's Birthday



NOV
16

Music 4 Heroes Community Event
at Free Roam Brewing
(2pm - 8pm)



NOV
22

Khadijah Enriquez's Birthday

SAMA
BREAK

NOV
24-30

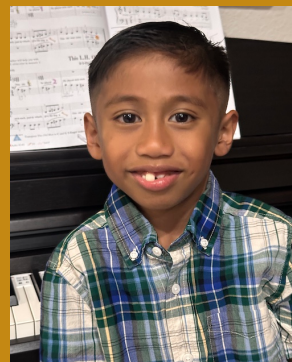
SAMA will be closed for
Thanksgiving Break

student of the month

Caiden R.

is a wonderfully talented student who plays difficult songs and has performed for his school talent shows and SAMA. He has advanced through his lesson books quickly. He is eager to learn and is always asking questions.

Sarah Norrie, B.A., Piano Instructor



student accomplishments



Congratulations to **Scarlett K.**, student of Khadijah Enriquez, for earning third chair in the TMEA Region Choir competition and advancing to Pre-Area!



Congratulations to **Raaid A.**, student of David Rueda, for making it into the TMEA Region 29 Orchestra for Viola!



Congratulations to **Haley H.**, student of Khadijah Enriquez, for earning 12th chair at TMEA Region, and to **Nathan H.**, student of Jake Ramirez, for earning 7th chair as a Bass 1!



Congratulations to **Katie L.** and **Saydee R.**, students of Khadijah Enriquez, for being cast in their school's production of Annie! Katie will play Grace, and Saydee will play Mrs. Greer and serve as Ms. Hannigan's understudy.



Congratulations to the following students on their 10-year SAMA anniversary

**Max B.
James C.
Giovanni D.
Avani N.
Adeline S.
Alejandro T.**

In recognition of 10 years of dedication and passion for music as a student of San Antonio Music Academy, we celebrate this milestone in your growth as a musician.



**15-YEAR
ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION**

NOV 9
@ CHICKEN N PICKLE

SAMUSICACADEMY.COM/15YEARS

**RSVP TO
ATTEND**

