DIAMOND PIANO

creating lifelong musicians

User Guide: Teacher Account

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Welcome to Diamond Piano!

Diamond Piano is a unique combination of text *and* tech. *The* Diamond Piano Method *is a dynamic, comprehensive and fun piano curriculum for students of all ages. The online practice assistant at* DiamondPiano.com *seamlessly integrates the material presented in the text via video instruction, audio files and provides progressively more challenging games and tests to improve student skill and knowledge. It also organizes and archives your administrative tasks and makes lesson planning a breeze!*

As a teacher, we have two options for setting up your account and billing your families: *Teacher Neighborhood* or *School Account*. This guide is for teachers looking to set up a **FREE Teacher Neighborhood.** Read below to see the differences and benefits of each. If you decide to set up as a School, you should switch to our School User Guide.

Teacher Neighborhood

With a Diamond Piano Teacher Neighborhood, you have *FREE* access to all the administrative tools within DiamondPiano.com:
- consolidated student list – by lesson day and also as an entire group
- automatically emailed and archived assignments
- view of your students' weekly progress from their online activities within DiamondPiano.com
- options for communication – email all parents from a single account
- ability to upload and store your own material or performances on our secure and ad-free site

You can also access the following materials:
- **all the audio and video files**
- **the teacher edition of the text**
- **the worksheet and ear training answer keys**
- **teacher accompaniments for every song in the curriculum**
- **all materials uploaded by you and by other teachers**

Teachers within a Teacher Neighborhood do **NOT** have access to the following:
- DiamondPiano.com games
- DiamondPiano.com Pod tests
- Build a Band gold records and bands
- Diamond Piano Method student text

To use DiamondPiano.com through the Teacher Neighborhood, you will invite parents to join your newly created Neighborhood and they will purchase the text and the online access directly through the site. You can see more about our pricing here. Their DiamondPiano.com account will exist within your Teacher Neighborhood. You will be the guide for each of your students, you will make

the assignments and you will score their progress with the text material. Just as with any other piano curriculum, the text will belong to the parent as will the DiamondPiano.com account.

School Account

With a Diamond Piano School Account, you will still have access to all the administrative tools that are available to teachers within a Teacher Neighborhood, but you **will also have access to all the Diamond Piano Method text in pdf form.**

As a school, you still will not have access to the student games, tests and incentives, but you will be able to access all the video and audio materials, teacher accompaniments, and all answer keys, same as with a Teacher Neighborhood.

If you choose to use DiamondPiano.com as a School, the most noticeable change is that we would bill you (the School Administrator) a set amount for each student you have enrolled in your school. Most teachers include this monthly cost of materials and service into their regular tuition. We offer a multi-student discount and you can see our pricing schedule to determine what your price per student would be for your school.   Click here to go to our School Guide.

Getting Started with a DiamondPiano.com Teacher Neighborhood

Create free teacher account

If you don't already have your own personalized Teacher Neighborhood, visit DiamondPiano.com and click "Free Teacher Account". Complete the information in the form fields and check the box which indicates you have read the Teacher Agreement which includes the *Terms of Use*. We know it's boring, but it's important stuff!

Your neighborhood

Click **Sign Up** and then you will then be directed to your *Neighborhood* page. On the right, you will see a scheduler with the days of the week listed. Since you don't have any students or classes yet, there's not much to look at there.

On the left you will see a menu of the following options:

Student list

Not surprisingly, this link will take you to a listing all of your students, but also their status (active or inactive), their parents (for minor students), day and time of lesson, last login and an option to edit each one. If you are just starting out, you will see that it is, of course, empty.

Once you have added parents and those parents have purchased a DiamondPiano.com subscription, you will have a list of students.   Clicking on the student's name takes you to a *Student Detail* page which lists
- parent
- day of the week for lesson
- online access expiration date
- current book assignment
- current **Pod** assignment (*Pod* is our term for *Chapter*)
- **Pod List** of all online progress for each individual Pod
- **Activity Log** archiving all online activity
- **Add Assignment** link
- archived list of assignments
- songs in the student's repertoire

**Add/manage parents*

*Only available to independent teachers with a Teacher Neighborhood – not to teachers within a DiamondPiano.com school – parents and students are added by the school administrator in a School Account.

There are many items in this area to check out or mess with:

Add New Parent

For **young students**, this is where you will add your student's parents to the system and invite them to create an account. Your personal invitation is how they will receive permission to purchase the text materials and online access. It is also where you would add **adult students** as their own parent and as the student (awkward, I know, but we're working on it!)

When you click on the words, **Add New Parent**, you will be directed to a page which asks for you to input some information and to select a book for each student. (For assistance in choosing the appropriate level in the Diamond Piano Method curriculum for each student, view the Curriculum Overview found in the About Us section at DiamondPiano.com.)

Underneath the box where you input the student name, there is an option to **Add another Student**. Click here and another box will open up for student name and book selection.

Finally, there is an option which allows you to craft a personal invitation or note to the parent. This email includes an automatic template which explains what Diamond Piano is and how to proceed once the emailed invitation has been received. Your additional message will personalize it for your student and his/her family.

To view the email that will be sent out to your parents before you send it, click on the words, **View Text of Parent Email to be Sent**. Then you can click the button, **Send Email to Parent**.

New Parents Awaiting Sign Up

This is where you will see a listing of all the parents you invited to create an account at DiamondPiano.com. You will see the parent's name, email address, date the last email was sent and an option to resend the email if no response has been taken.

Parent Accounts

Here you will find the names of all your parents, their email addresses, sign up dates and an option to *Add Student* of the same family.

Email Parents

Say you'd like to send an email to a specific group of people; perhaps to all of your Thursday students or all your parents at once. No problem! Just select the group you wish to contact from the drop down menu of recipients, type in the subject of your email and enter the text of your message in the box provided. When finished click, **Send Email** to send or **Cancel** to delete your message. An

email will be sent from you (using your own email address) via DiamondPiano.com to all the recipients you have selected. Voilà!

Pod Materials

What is a "Pod"?

We use the word "Pod" to encompass ALL of the materials – both text and tech – that would be associated with the traditional word "Chapter". This includes all the text in the Diamond Piano Method Pod as well as all of the online support within DiamondPiano.com. The online Pod materials are perfectly paired to coordinate with the theory and songs introduced in the text – all of our videos, audio files, games, tests and incentives are there to support the theory being taught within that particular Pod text and those prior.

Clicking on the *Pod Materials* link will take you to a listing of all the Pod materials available in conjunction with each Pod of the Diamond Piano Method text.

All you have to do is click on the Pod number you'd like to view and you'll be transported to a page outlining all the Pod materials available to you as a teacher. Some of these are the same materials as the students can view, some are teacher-specific. Look here to find Pod specific:

- *Instruction Videos - professionally produced, thorough explanations of concepts introduced in each Pod*
- *Getting Started Videos – professionally produced, tips for how to approach each song in the Pod*
- *Piano Only Demo Videos – professionally produced, view of hands only for each song*
- *Full Orchestration Demo Videos – professionally produced, view of hands only for each song with the addition of vocals and other instrumentation*
- *Ear Training Videos - answer key to the ear training exercise for that Pod*
- *Teacher Overview Video specific to that Diamond Piano Pod – learn how to approach the material introduced in that particular Pod*
- *mp3 Audio Files* of all the songs in that Pod
- *Book 4 and 5 PDFs* – technique sections available for the Pods in those books
- *Teacher Accompaniments* for all the songs in that Pod
- *Teacher Copy* of the Diamond Piano Method Text
- *Student Certificate* for that Pod
- *Supplemental Songs* (will only appear if available for that Pod)
- *Songs* - Listing of the songs in that Pod

- *Extra Material added specifically to coordinate with that Pod – pdfs, audio or video files (only visible when Extra Material is available for that Pod)*

Worksheet Answer Keys

This link will take you to a page which lists all the Answer Keys. Click on the Pod number and you will find a pdf of all of the worksheets for that Pod with the answers filled in.

Edit Account

Again, no surprises here.   This is where you can change the *Teacher Neighborhood* information you originally entered upon registering.

*Edit Image/Message

Only available to independent teachers with a Neighborhood – not to teachers within a DiamondPiano.com school.

This is where you would enter a message particular to your *Neighborhood* from you that your students and parents will see on the landing page when they sign in.   Each task – adding a message or adding an image – must be done separately. First add your message (this will appear left justified on your landing page) and then select "Edit Message".

Next, you can also upload an image to display on your *Neighborhood* page. The image needs to be a .jpg or .gif and should be no more than 700 x 400 pixels. Images that exceed that size will be scaled to fit. After you have chosen your file from your computer, select "Upload Image". This will be right justified on your landing page. You can view your work by selecting, "View Image/Message" from either the top of this page or from the left-hand menu bar.

*View Image/Message

Only available to independent teachers with a Neighborhood – not to teachers within a DiamondPiano.com school.

Guess what you'll find here?? If you wish to view the image or message you have already uploaded, click on the words **View Image/Message** either within the *Edit Image/Message* page or on the Main Menu in the left column. You can view your image and message as it would be seen by users. There is also a link to **Edit Image/Message** if you wish to change it after viewing.

*Your Extra Materials

Only available to independent teachers with a Neighborhood – not to teachers within a DiamondPiano.com school.

If you are interested in uploading any material for your students that is your original work or of public domain, this is the place to do it. **No copyrighted or protected materials may be uploaded.** You can add .pdf, audio or video files. Click on the type of file you wish to upload and you will be directed to a page for you to enter information about the item you wish to add. All uploaded materials are subject to Diamond Piano approval. When you have entered in the correct information and selected the file to upload, click the button **Submit for Approval**. You will receive an automated email when your submission has been received and then an additional email when your submission has been approved or declined. These materials will be available to all your students and can be found in the particular Pod to which you have identified as being the appropriate level.
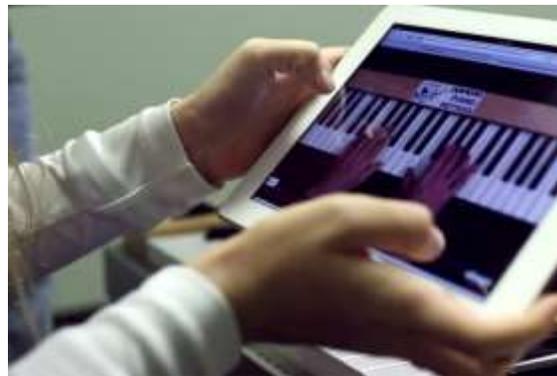
Items for Peer Review

When you are ready to submit files to be considered as material shared with the **ENTIRE** DiamondPiano.com community, this is where you go! Click on the link to take you to a page where you can upload .pdf files, audio and video files. No copyrighted material will be allowed and all submissions are subject to approval by the Diamond Piano staff. You will receive a notification that your submission has been received and is under review and then an additional email notifying you of your submission's status.

Diamond Piano Overview Video

Click on the words **Diamond Piano Overview Video** and you can see a video of Gerry Diamond, author of the Diamond Piano Method, sharing the benefits of Diamond Piano over other piano curricula. It is the full director's cut, so grab a cup of joe and settle in!

Help/FAQ

Click here to take you to a selection of video tutorials for both students and teachers.

Maximizing Student Progress with Diamond Piano

There's no right or wrong way to become acquainted with Diamond Piano, but here is the approach we recommend:

Diamond Piano Method Text

For a broad overview of the topics covered in the Diamond Piano Method books, see our Curriculum Overview in the About Us section on the DiamondPiano.com homepage. Or watch the Diamond Piano Overview Video found on the left-hand menu bar of your Teacher Account.

Teacher Materials

Download your **FREE** copy of the watermarked teacher version of the student text from all 5 of the Diamond Piano Method books. Clicking **Pod Materials** in the left sidebar can access this text. Next, give this student text a good "once over" so that you have an idea of the pacing and format of the curriculum.

Transitioning Experienced Students

For each of your students with experience, develop a game plan for the optimal starting point within the curriculum and the likely pacing that should be employed early on. As a guide, use our Curriculum Overview in the About Us section of the DiamondPiano.com homepage. We recommend transitioning students at Pod 18 or lower to give them sufficient experience with transpositions.

DiamondPiano.com

The online materials available on DiamondPiano.com will support the text in every conceivable way – videos, audio tracks of the songs, games to enhance knowledge, speed and accuracy, tests to keep knowledge fresh and meaningful, and incentives to provide motivation *without cost to you.* **AND** – DiamondPiano.com can be used on any device, anywhere!

Watch the videos and listen to the audio files

Familiarize yourself with the supporting video and audio materials to which your students will have access. We recommend that teachers encourage their students to use the materials this way:

- First view the *Instruction Video*, then the *Getting Started Video* for the specific song and then use the *Demo Videos* to match song rhythm with the performer
- Use the downloadable mp3 files for each song as a "play-along" when ready (first "hands separately" and then "hands together.")

Explore the Games and Pod Tests

Learn how the *Games* and *Pod Tests* work by viewing the video tutorials that explain them in the [Help/FAQ section](#) in the left column of the Main Menu.

For you, as a teacher, we also recommend signing up for our series of FREE Trials. We have selected one Pod from each of the 5 Diamond Piano Method books to offer a full, 24-hour test run. You will be able to use the online games, Pod tests and incentives as your students will. Take each for a test run and see how perfectly the tech materials match the text!

Sign in with Your Students

In the students' first few lessons with Diamond Piano, help them sign in to DiamondPiano.com and play the games and take the tests and find the videos so that they know how to correctly use the online materials at home. For young students, we highly recommend involving a parent in this part of the lesson.

How to Use DiamondPiano.com

Finding Your Students

As soon as a student (or his/her parent) purchases a DiamondPiano.com subscription, the student will show up in your student list alphabetically by last name. The system is set up so that as you log in, you see the students scheduled for that particular day. Click on any day of the week to see the students that are scheduled for that specific day or "Student List".

Creating Assignments

To see a video explanation of [creating assignments for students](#), see the FAQ section within DiamondPiano.com.

When you select a student by clicking his/her name, you will be taken to the individual *Student Detail* page. There is a heading on this page called *Assignments* and just to the right of this are the words **Add Assignment**. Clicking **Add Assignment** takes you to a page that allows you to select up to three Pods from which you'd like assign material (you must select at least one Pod), and a place to enter the assignment text that you would like a student to see (you must enter some text). Now, click the **Add Assignment** button that you see below the text field, and the assignment is automatically added to the student's main page. An email is also sent to the email address associated with the student's account that contains the assignment details and a subject line alerting the recipient to the presence of a new assignment for the student. Parents can 'opt out' of these email alerts if they choose. They simply follow the link at the bottom of the automatically generated email.

Awarding Scores for Student Performance

To see a video explanation of <u>awarding scores to students</u>, see the FAQ section of the Teacher site within DiamondPiano.com.

The scoring of the songs in the Diamond Piano Method text unifies the curriculum to the online material scores on DiamondPiano.com. Student online incentives (Build a Band "Gold Records") and Certificates of Mastery are only available to your students once you have scored at least one song.

Song scores are based on a 30-point system broken into five categories, each worth between one and six points (one being "poor" and six being "excellent").

- *Notes* – based on accuracy of notes played
- *Rhythm* – based on accuracy of rhythm played
- *Technique* – hand position, posture, dynamics, phrasing, musicianship, etc.
- *Worksheet* – based on the worksheet of the song
- *Effort* – reflects how hard a student is working at learning the material (this is a great way to give some points to a student who is really trying, but struggling with technique or rhythm and not scoring that well in general).

The transposition exercises at the end of each Pod are also scored, but these are scored differently: two points for each of the 12 possible keys, and six points for effort. **PLEASE NOTE***:* It is imperative that the transposition exercises be done in every Pod. Please don't gloss over them. These transpositions pay huge dividends when it comes to the arranging and improvisation that is emphasized in the later portions of the method.

The song score total is an **average of all the song scores** awarded. For example, if you have given a song score of 20 points for the first song in Pod 1 and a song score of 10 points for the second song in Pod 1, the student will have a total of 15 as a total song score. Students will need to have a score of at least 20 points total to be eligible for Build a Band "Gold Records" and a score of at least 28 points to be eligible for their Certificate of Mastery.

Using the Data within DiamondPiano.com

When on the *Student Detail* page, look for the link that says **Activity Log**. Clicking this will bring the teacher to a page (or several pages) of information about every visit the student has paid to DiamondPiano.com and all the work they have done during the visit. The information is listed beginning with the most recent. A teacher can see with great

detail how the student is using DiamondPiano.com and what results they are achieving. Areas in which the student is succeeding and areas in which the student needs more work are evident in the data. This can give teachers great insight into what the focal points of the next lesson should be.

More than just Fun and Games

Note Hunter is a terrific way to build note reading speed and accuracy. It's fun and appropriately challenging to each level the student is working in. Note Hunter covers both G-Clef (Pods 1-37) and F-Clef (Pods 2-37).

Beat Buster is a great way to ensure that students are really able to count out rhythms and that they are not just achieving the right playing results by "feel" or "sound". Like the Note Hunter Games, Beat Buster progresses gradually throughout the Pods and is challenging but achievable.

Scale Scorcher is the perfect way to drill scale structures in a way that emphasizes pattern recognition over physical memory.

Chord Builder is fantastic for drilling triads. Mastery of this game helps tremendously with the arranging and improvisation components of the latter portion of the Diamond Piano Method.

Chord Detective is ideal for increasing chord recognition skills.

Pod Tests

The Pod Tests are 10-question, multiple-choice tests randomly generated from a database of questions appropriate to the student's level. Each test is self-checking and

prescriptive in nature. All incorrect answers include helpful pointers on where to find the information. Six of the 10 questions are pulled randomly from the database specific to the particular Pod in which the test is generated. Four of the 10 questions are pulled randomly from the databases of all the preceding Pods. This ensures a constant review of concepts, which is something that is a very challenging task for a teacher who only sees a student once a week for a very limited period of time. There are over 2,000 questions in the Pod Test database and each test is completely unique!

Reviewing a student's Pod Tests to see which questions have given them trouble is incredibly valuable for a teacher. Every Pod Test that a student ever takes is cataloged on DiamondPiano.com within the students' *Test Score History* and can be viewed at any time by the teacher.

Automatic Scoring of Games and Pod Tests

The activities provided by DiamondPiano.com are designed to strengthen student skills and technique while encouraging students to strive for success at the next level. The system only counts the student's highest score(s) for each of the Games/Tests when assigning scores for a Pod. For example, a student in Pod 1 who has taken 5 Pod Tests and has received scores of 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 would have a score of "27 out of 30" because DiamondPiano.com would count only the three highest scores of 8, 9, and 10 and wouldn't count the lowest scores. The student is not penalized for bad test/game results, and in fact, provides incentive for them to want to take the test or play the game until they've achieved the maximum possible score (which is always possible with time and dedication).

Build a Band Incentive Program

Diamond Piano's fun way to celebrate a Pod's completion! In order to further motivate students to keep playing the games and taking the Pod tests, we have created an online incentive program called, *Build a Band*.   Students rack-up points for successful completion of the DiamondPiano.com activities while you, as the teacher, provide the final points needed by awarding their song scores. With 90+ points, the student automatically earns a corresponding *Gold Record* in their Build a Band. The *Gold Record* allows the student to "wake" one of the band members. With more gold records, more band members can be added to the band. There are a total of 10 bands with 3-4 musicians in each. Students can name their band, choose the venue and learn a bit about arranging as they hear each part individually and together with other instruments or vocals.

Why I Wrote the Diamond Piano Method

Why did I write the Diamond Piano Method and why do I continually update it? It's simple: I want everyone taking piano lessons to develop the skills they need to become lifelong musicians playing the music they love.

I had ten enjoyable years of classical piano lessons as a child. But throughout this decade, there was a disconnect between the piano music I practiced and the popular music of the day. I loved that pop music; it spoke to my heart in a way that my classical piano repertoire didn't. Sadly, my studies hadn't taught me that the harmonic building blocks of **both** genres were the same.

As a teen, some of my friends started a garage band. Seeing my peers actively participating in pop music was transformational. Suddenly, I knew that I wanted to create and play music with others, but, despite my thorough technical background, I had no idea how to play without written music. Still, I joined that band, and thanks to a lot of trial and error, I slowly taught myself a little about improvisation, and I loved it. It was magical for me.

I enrolled at Berklee College of Music in Boston, MA, graduating summa cum laude with a BA in songwriting in 1989. The music theory I learned at Berklee made it so much easier for me to read music, learn pieces by ear, improvise, and write music. **And, the theory was so simple that I wondered why these basics hadn't been an integral part of my study when I was a child first learning piano.**

After graduating from Berklee, I began teaching piano lessons and discovered how much I loved sharing music with others. I could not find a curriculum that made a sustained, progressive effort to develop a piano student's arranging and improvising skills, so I created handouts and songs to supplement my students' lesson books. In 1995, I organized these supplements into a series of lesson books, and my Diamond Piano Method was born.

Since then, I have been continually developing the Diamond Piano Method, most recently, harnessing the full force of available technology to create the online practice support of DiamondPiano.com. I remain committed to sharing my love of music with all piano students and to giving them the opportunity to truly understand music so that they can take their own music wherever their hearts desire.