

Koto Basics

Section 1

Instructor/Title	Haruna Iguchi / Assistant Professor
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【Course Outline / Description】

Students will learn to read koto tablature while practicing the instrument. Assignments will be based on students' progress. We will begin with the best-known Japanese song, Sakura, followed by other Japanese songs; mainly classics. Students will be expected to sing while playing, therefore, will be required to learn Japanese songs and their scales.

Section 2

【Course Objectives/Goals/Learning Outcomes】

Students can understand Japanese culture and koto tablature through basic Koto performance. Also, students will learn how to properly set up the instrument and store it.

Section 3

【Class Schedule/Class Environment, Literature and Materials】

1	Introduction of Basic rules for this course. Preparation of koto picks. Learn how to properly set up the instrument and store it.	Students must buy koto tsume (picks). It is approximately 3,200 yen. Do the assigned readings about koto and note any questions. Also, list things you didn't understand in class.
2	Learn how to properly set up the instrument and store it. Study tuning method.	Do the assigned readings about koto and note any questions. Also, list things you didn't understand in class. Review koto tablature. Learn the string name (kanji) of the koto.
3	Learn the basics of playing with the right thumb. Learn basic techniques playing with the right hand (Sukui-zume).	Do the assigned readings about koto and note any questions. Also, list things you didn't understand in class. Review koto tablature. Learn the string name (kanji) of the koto.
4	Learn basic techniques playing with the right hand and left hand (Sukui-zume, Oshi-de). Practice for basic koto performance.	Do the assigned readings about koto and note any questions. Also, list things you didn't understand in class. Review koto tablature. Learn the string name (kanji) of the koto.
5	Practice for basic koto performance. Learn basic techniques playing with the right hand (Awase-zume). Study of various styles of rendition of repertoire and practice.	Do the assigned readings about koto and note any questions. Also, list things you didn't understand in class. Review koto tablature. Learn the string name (kanji) of the koto.
6	Practice for basic koto performance. Study of various styles of rendition of repertoire and practice.	Do the assigned readings about koto and note any questions. Also, list things you didn't understand in class. Review koto tablature. Learn the string name (kanji) of the koto.
7	Practice for basic koto performance. Learn basic techniques playing with the right hand and left hand (Wari-zume, Hiki-iro, Ato-oshi, and so on). Study of various styles of rendition	Do the assigned readings about koto and note any questions. Also, list things you didn't understand in class. Review koto tablature. Learn the string name (kanji) of the koto.

	of repertoire and practice.	
8	Practice for basic koto performance. Study of various styles of rendition of repertoire and practice.	Do the assigned readings about koto and note any questions. Also, list things you didn't understand in class. Review koto tablature. Learn the string name (kanji) of the koto.
9	Practice for basic koto performance. Practice to play koto while singing in Japanese. Study of various styles of rendition of repertoire and practice.	Do the assigned readings about koto and note any questions. Also, list things you didn't understand in class. Review koto tablature. Learn the string name (kanji) of the koto.
10	Practice for basic koto performance. Students will try the ensemble. Study of various styles of rendition of repertoire and practice.	Do the assigned readings about koto and note any questions. Also, list things you didn't understand in class. Review koto tablature. Learn the string name (kanji) of the koto.
11	Learn each part of the ensemble piece little by little.	Do the assigned readings about koto and note any questions. Also, list things you didn't understand in class. Review koto tablature. Learn the string name (kanji) of the koto.
12	Review the last lesson. Study of various styles of rendition of repertoire and practice.	Do the assigned readings about koto and note any questions. Also, list things you didn't understand in class. Review koto tablature. Learn the string name (kanji) of the koto.
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21	Review the last lesson. Study of various styles of rendition of repertoire and practice.	You may practice in the studio, when permission is given.
22	Review the last lesson. Study of various styles of rendition of repertoire and practice.	practice
23	Review the last lesson. Study of various styles of rendition of repertoire and practice.	practice
24	Review the last lesson. Study of various styles of rendition of repertoire and practice.	practice
25	Practice for recitals	practice
26	Practice for recitals	practice
27	Practice for recitals	practice
28	Practice for recitals	practice
29	Practice for recitals	practice
30	Performance of recitals	Students should performance with both solo and ensemble.

【Textbooks/Reading Materials】

There are no assigned textbooks. Materials and tablatures will be distributed in class, and a file to keep them will be needed.

Section 4

【Learning Assessments/Grading Rubric】

Genuine, active participation; 30%

Assignment (You will be able to master accurate fingering, to sing a Japanese song while playing koto, to enjoy the performance like an ensemble with another melody.); 40%

Last performance; 30%

Section 5

【Additional Information】

1. Students interested in music are preferable, however, having played the instrument in the past is not a prerequisite.
2. Like all other studio courses, regular attendance and active participation are required.
3. The maximum number of students for registration is limited to 16 per class.
4. In this course, kakuzume, (square-shaped picks) of Ikuta school style will be used.
5. Students will also be required to sing along while playing the koto.
6. Since Koto tablatures are written in Chinese numerals, students will be encouraged to learn to read basic Chinese (kanji) characters.
7. Usually, this class is conducted in Japanese, but I add explanations in English or Chinese, as needed.
8. Don't forget to bring your koto tsume (picks) and tablatures on the day of koto class.