

Expenses of a Professional Musician

Harris Academy of the Arts—Professional Musicians



Professional Musicians—The Facts

Hiring professional musicians can add the perfect personal touch to any special event or party, adding romance, elegance, and class that the guests will remember for years to come. [Harris Academy of the Arts](#) takes pride in their professional musicians and aims to provide the best quality musical performance possible. In order to provide such a service, certain costs ([A la Carte Selections](#)) are involved that need to be compensated for. These are a few things to consider when comparing prices for professional musicians.

Musicians are running a business

Being a musician also means you are running your own business. All the necessary costs of running a business apply to a musician—taxes, licenses, insurance, equipment, marketing, loans, instruments, music purchases, etc. Many musicians are self-employed, and therefore need to cover the necessary costs that come with running a business.

Experience and reputation of a musician

Many professional musicians have reached a level of education, expertise, and hours of practice time that is equivalent with that of a medical doctor, attorney, or other public official. This experience and reputation should not be taken lightly. Just as you would not pay a doctor at minimum wage, one should not expect to pay a professional musician a minimum wage while expecting a quality performance.

Actual number of hours you are hiring a musician for

When hiring a musician, as a rule of thumb, you are hiring from the time they dress into performance attire at their home, to the time they return at the end of the day. Don't forget the behind the scene rehearsals and practice time leading up to the event. Most musicians must depend on other income opportunities such as teaching music lessons or classes. As a result, the event could be taking away from the time they could be teaching students to further support their income.

One Hour of Performance Typically Involves:

- Private Practice Time (Average 1-2 Hours)
- A Rehearsal (Average 1 Hour)
- Round Trip Travel Time (Average 1 Hour)
- Consultation With Event (Average 1 Hour)

A musician paid \$100 per hour to perform (with roughly five hours invested), will end up making \$20 per hour. Other Professionals: Mechanic \$40-70 per hour; Plumber \$50-100 per hour; Accountant \$60-120 per hour

Estimated career expense: Male Violinist/Father/45 years of age/Lives in the Midwest

- Purchase A Tuxedo: \$200—\$2000 (Per Every 6-8 Years)
- Dry Cleaning After Performances: \$120—\$200 (Per Year)
- Rent a Tuxedo: \$50—\$200 (Per Performance)
- Baby Sitter For Nearby Three Hour Performance: \$32—\$60 (4 Hours of Time)
- Average Cost Of Professional Quality Violin: \$3,000—\$50,000 (Joshua Bell's Violin Valued at \$4 Million)
- Average Cost Of Professional Quality Violin BOW: \$200—\$1000 (Joshua Bell's Bow is Worth More Than the Value of His House)
- Re-hair Bow (Every 3—6 Months): \$40—\$400 (Per Year)
- Change Strings (Every 4—6 Months): \$150—\$450 (Per Year)
- Instrument Repair And Upkeep: \$100—\$250 (Per Year)
- Cost Of Insurance On Instrument: \$150—\$200 (Per Year)
- Equipment, Supplies and Instrument Accessories: \$200—\$1000 (Per Year)
- Violin Case: \$150—\$550 (Per Every 8-10 Years)
- Music Lessons From Age 5 To Age 24: Range Of \$18,240—\$136,800 (19 Years)
- Tuition For Four Year Music Degree: Range Of \$25,000—\$200,000 (4 Years)
- Estimated Music Purchases From Age 5 – Age 45: \$5,000 - \$100,000 (19 Years)
- Hours Of Practice From Age 5 – Age 45: 25,000 To Tens Of Thousands (19 Years) (Requires At Least 10,000 Hours To Master An Instrument)
- And Then, Of Course Are The Business Expenses (As Listed Under "Musicians Running A Business")