



The TakeLessons Field Guide for New Instructors

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By the team at TakeLessons

Intro from Steven Cox

So, you've found TakeLessons. Congratulations and welcome aboard!

My name is [Steven Cox](#). I started TakeLessons to help freelancers make a better living doing what they love. Using my background with several other Internet startups, I assembled a wonderful team to create America's premier source for finding, booking, and taking lessons. We've given millions of lessons through the site and helped hundreds of thousands of instructors earn a better living.

Every month, we get an email from an instructor letting us know they are having so much success that they quit their day job. It's a wonderful feeling helping people live their dreams.

I'm sure you're wondering how you can maximize your opportunity with TakeLessons.

In this guide, you're going to learn the secrets of using TakeLessons to grow your teaching business and earn more income.

Remember, this is not an overnight, quick-hit game. Just like with any other marketing channel, you have to put in the time and effort. But if you do, I'm betting you'll find great success.

Good luck on your journey. You're not alone - we're here for you each step of the way.

Steven

What is TakeLessons?

TakeLessons (<http://TakeLessons.com>) is an education technology company focused on the lifelong learner. We are an online marketplace that helps consumers find the right instructor. We are also a technology company that has developed tools for instructors. These tools help our instructors grow their student base, manage their business, and teach online through TakeLessons Classroom, our online video platform.

The Different Ways to Earn Money on TakeLessons

There are several ways to earn income with TakeLessons. In this guide, you'll learn how to maximize each one of these channels.

- Teaching private students
- Teaching group classes on TakeLessons Live
- Writing articles

Chapter 1: How to Get More Private Students on TakeLessons

The majority of earnings happen when instructors (we call you “Partners”) receive new students through TakeLessons. Over time, Partners continue to earn more income the longer the student takes lessons.

In this section, you'll learn how you can give yourself the best chance of success in acquiring new business using TakeLessons.

How students use TakeLessons

It's important to understand how students use TakeLessons. Students come to TakeLessons to find a class or an instructor. They provide us with information that allows the TakeLessons search engine to generate the best instructor recommendations for them.

The screenshot displays the TakeLessons search interface. At the top, the navigation bar includes the TakeLessons logo, 'Browse Lessons', 'How It Works', a phone number (800-536-6206), 'Log In', and a 'Teach with us' button. The search bar contains the text 'Singing'. To the right of the search bar, there are filters for 'Location' (629 PIKE STREET), 'Availability', and 'Student Age'. A dropdown menu is open under 'Location', showing 'Include results near my zip code' with a selected radio button and the address '629 Pike St, Seattle, WA 98101, U'. Below the search bar, there are related searches for 'Broadway Singing' and 'College Singing'. The results are sorted by 'Best Match'. The list of results includes four instructors: Kelly A. (Seattle, WA 7.5 mi away, \$40 / 30-min, 5 stars), Vanessa P. (Lynnwood, WA 17.1 mi away, \$35 / 30-min, 5 stars), Cyndi E. (Issaquah, WA 18.3 mi away, \$35 / 30-min, 5 stars), and Morgan H. (Seattle, WA 6.7 mi away, \$35 / 30-min, 5 stars). Each instructor profile includes a photo, name, location, subject, and a brief description of their teaching style.

Students search for local and online instructors through the TakeLessons search engine.

When students search, they are looking for specific information to help them determine the right match:

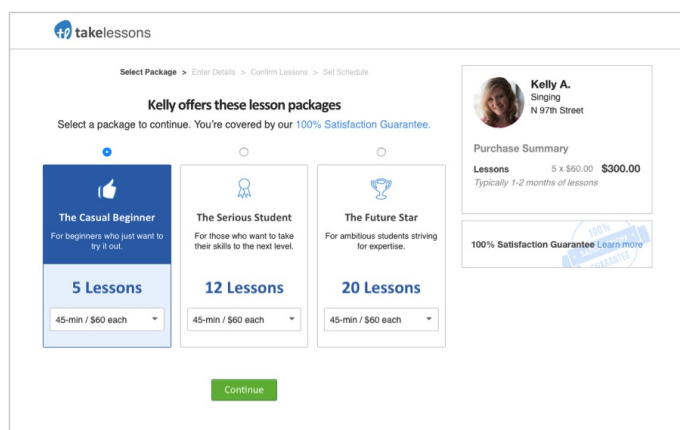
- Who teaches the subject I am interested in?
- Does the instructor teach online or in-person?
- Which instructor seems to be qualified?
- Which instructors have reviews (social proof that other students like them)?
- Will I get along with this particular instructor?
- Does this instructor have time slots that fit my schedule?
- How much can I afford? What price should I pay?

Students end up booking lessons in one of the two following ways:

Fully Online. About two-thirds of students will book directly through the website without talking to one of our Student Counselors. This means they search for their subject and location, then spend time reviewing different potential teacher profiles.

Because of this, it's easy to see why your profile is important. They are reviewing your bio, your reviews, your multimedia and pictures, and your vibe. Most students are comparing you directly against other teachers to choose the right fit.

This means it's also important that you price your lessons appropriately. We've found that Partners who price their lessons much higher than others have little chance for new business. We've also found that it's not necessarily the lowest-priced option that wins. Consumers are looking for the right balance of quality and price.



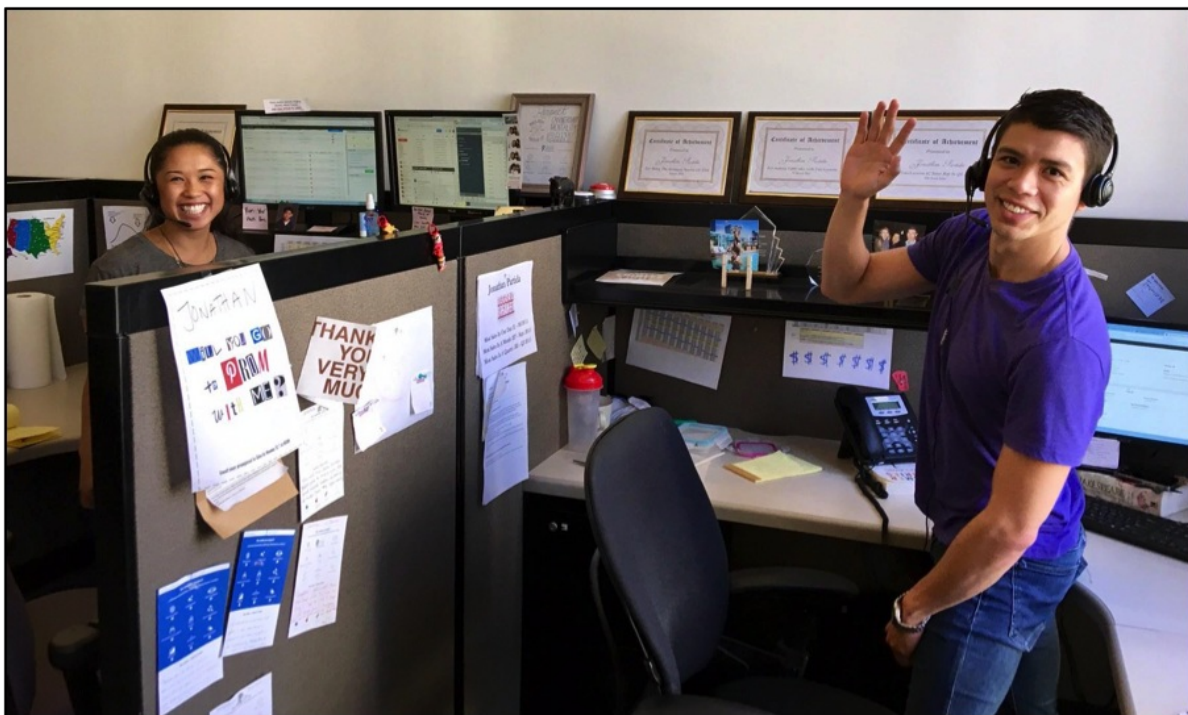
67% of students book directly online without talking to TakeLessons. This is why a complete, user-friendly profile and accurate availability are important.

Through a Student Counselor. About a third of students speak to a Student Counselor before booking. Our Student Counselors are trained to understand customer needs and help them select the right instructor.

During the call, the Counselor will review each Partner's availability, last login (is the Partner active on the site?), past retention rates (do students we place with a teacher stick around?), pricing, notes from our Customer Support team on past conversations, and a host of other factors to determine the right fit for the consumer.

This means we take a quantitative approach to matching. Not only do we put a high emphasis on your engagement (such as login and updated availability) but we also immediately can see a Partner's past retention rates. **If a Partner isn't keeping their current students, the Counselor will pass move on to the next Partner.**

But we take a qualitative approach as well. This is why it's also important that Partners are friendly with our staff. Our support team grades the friendliness each time we talk with our Partners. We figure that if a Partner is polite to us, they will probably be polite with students. And if a Partner is rude or demanding to the staff, they will probably act the same way to students - and we don't want that. We don't do drama or egos.



Jonathan and Raquel. Two of our awesome Student Counselors working hard to book students for you

Be Found: how to increase your ranking in our search engine

Google has developed an algorithm that seeks to provide the most relevant results to searchers. We do the same thing.

Our goal is for students to find, book, and stay with the right instructor. We intentionally arrange the search results daily in order to increase customer satisfaction.

The key to getting more students is ranking higher in our search engine. 76% of students click on a teacher in the top 6 positions.

Let me say that again.

76% of students click a teacher in the top 6 positions!

This means the higher you rank, the greater your chances of securing more interest from potential students.

TakeLessons Search Placement

Position	% of Inquiries
1st	35%
2nd	16%
3rd	9%
4th	7%
5th	5%
6th	4%
7th	3%
8th	3%
9th	2%
10th+	17%

So, you may be asking, “How do I rank higher in the TakeLessons search engine?”.

I’m glad you asked!

While I won't share the exact formulas and algorithms we use to rank Partners, this guide will certainly help you. The more you're able to follow the guidelines, the greater your chances to be ranked high. If you choose not to follow the guidelines, frankly, others will rank higher.

Factors that determine your search ranking

Our ultimate goal is to get the right teacher in front of the student as quickly as possible. We want the student to have a delightful, fulfilling experience from the second they land on TakeLessons, and we want that experience to continue for as long as they are a customer.

We know that when students have a great experience, they will tell others about our teachers and the site will continue to grow. This lets us place even more students with our teachers. So it works out for everyone!

Here is a list of factors and signals we may use to determine your search ranking.

Keep Students Longer. Retention Matters!

This is one of the largest factors we take into account when ranking teachers. Millions of lessons occur through TakeLessons, so we have a lot of data around the average length of time a student stays.

We routinely update our data to determine how long a Partner is keeping their students relative to other Partners who teach the same subject. This means we compare guitar instructors with other guitar instructors, and Spanish teachers against other Spanish teachers.

We take into account repeat purchase rates, age of student, distance, and other variables to give us a more holistic view of the relationship.

(2) Vanessa P. Provider Quality Score: 98% 

Singing



[Add To Inquiry](#)

Levels Taught:	Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced
Ages:	Male: 5 and up; Female: 5 and up
Reviews:	★★★★★ (9)
Last Login:	5 days
Bookable:	Yes
Years Teaching:	38 years, 1 months
Teaches Special Needs:	No
Services Offered:	Broadway Singing, Music Performance, Music Theory, Opera Voice, Singing, Songwriting, Speaking Voice
Languages:	Music! - Professional Proficiency English - Professional Proficiency

Each Partner has a Provider Quality Score, which is affected by retention. The longer a student is retained, the greater chance of a higher score.

This is why *it's extremely important* that Partners keep their students as long as possible. First, it's a strong signal that the student is satisfied. Second, the Partner earns more long-term income. Third, we can recoup our marketing costs. So, it's good for everyone.

Finally, recent students factor in higher than past students. So, over time, if a Partner continues to increase their retention rate with their most recent students, they can overcome earlier negative rankings.

But the opposite can occur as well. If a Partner begins to drop their most recent students, this could be a negative factor.

One more note. If a Partner is found pulling students off the platform, the Partner will be removed from the site. I know the temptation is there. Just don't do it. Please. It's not worth all the money you can earn in the future just to get a few extra bucks.

Develop and Maintain a Strong Profile.

The strength of your profile is also a determining factor in your ranking. Remember, TakeLessons is focused on ensuring a delightful experience for consumers, and they are happiest when they view profiles that have well-written biographies and excellent information. If you have minimal text and it's poorly written with spelling and grammatical errors, that doesn't provide a delightful

experience to users.

We gauge the quality of your profile based on how often a customer clicks from the search results to your profile. This gives us indication on how well your picture, pricing, and introduction are performing against your peers.

We also measure the 'dwell time', which is the amount of time a user stays and engages with your profile when they click on it. The longer someone interacts with your profile, the more reason we have to believe they are finding value there. Of course, eventually this leads to more lesson purchases (which we also measure). We find that a well-written biography, quality reviews, and several multimedia options (pictures and videos) help increase the amount of time people spend looking at your profile - which leads to more lesson sales for you.

Here are a couple articles to help you make an outstanding profile.

- [How to Supercharge Your Profile and Get New Students](#)
- [All About Your Teacher Profile Page](#)

The image shows a teacher profile for Vanessa P. and a reservation interface. The profile includes a circular photo of Vanessa singing, her name, a 5-star rating with 9 reviews, a 'Background Checked' badge, and her location in Lynnwood, WA. Below the profile is a 'Sing' subject area with a 'STUDENT FAVORITE' badge and a description of her teaching style. The reservation interface on the right shows a 'Reserve your spot with Vanessa!' header, a price of 'From \$35 / 30 min', and a 'See all prices' link. It includes three numbered steps: 1. Lesson location (192nd Place, SW (17.1mi)), 2. View availability (a calendar showing AM 9-10, 11-12 and PM 12-12:30, 1-2, 3-7, 8-10), and 3. Click 'Continue' to see lesson packages. A green 'Continue' button and a '100% Satisfaction Guarantee' badge are also visible.

Have a strong profile. Learn to sell yourself and show the student that you can meet their needs.

Have Availability Open.

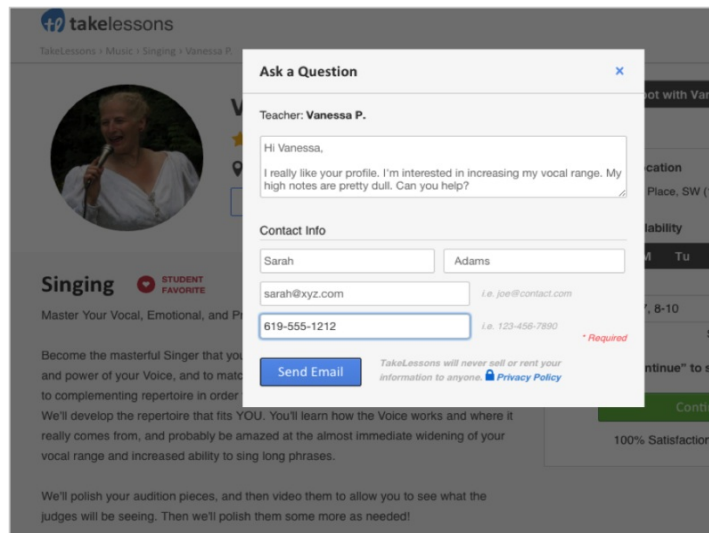
We review the availability of our Partners - both with respect to how much prime time availability (3:00 - 7:00pm) the Partner has and the frequency that they update their availability.

To rank higher, update your prime time hours and log in to confirm your availability regularly.

Respond Quickly.

Another factor we account for is how fast the Partner responds back to [Ask-a-Question](#) inquiries or other emails we send you.

The quicker and more consistently a Partner responds shows us that the Partner is engaged and will most likely respond to the student in a proper time frame as well.



Many students use the Ask-a-Question feature to get their questions answered before booking

Stay Fresh.

Freshness is measured by the last time the Partner logged into their account, and how often the Partner logs in. We also check the last time the Partner updated their availability.

Partners who has high levels of activity perform better than those who don't. So, the more recent and the more frequent, your activity, the better.

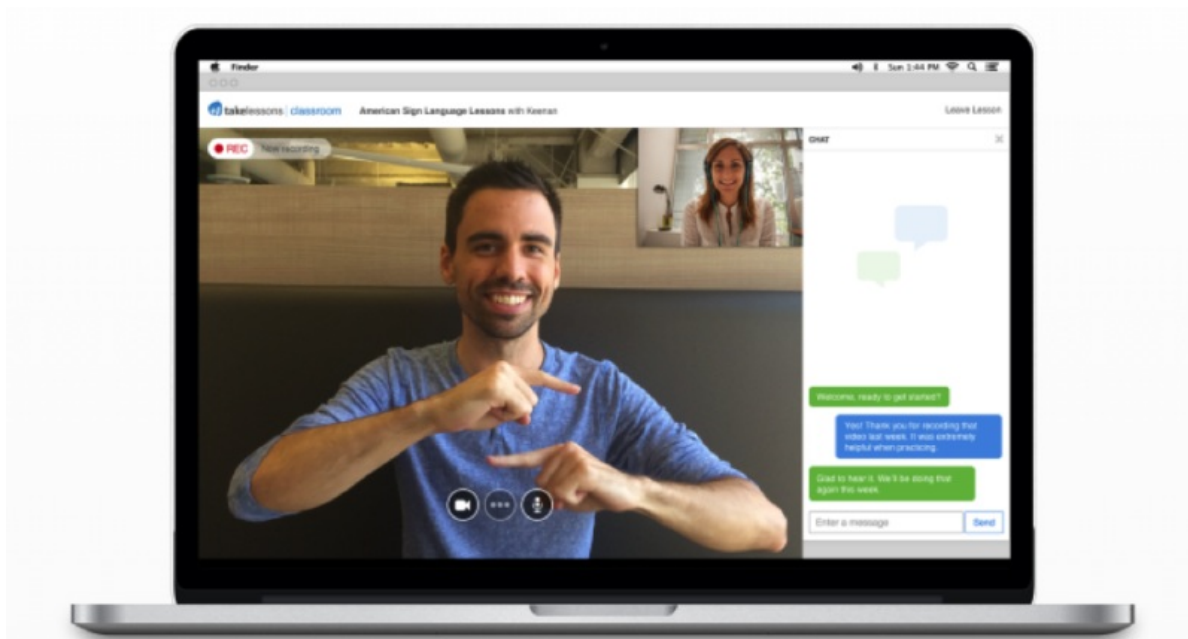
We also routinely review profile page content to see if there were any additions,

modifications, and improvements. This also signals fresh, up-to-date information.

Use TakeLessons Classroom.

The more that a Partner uses our full suite of TakeLessons products, the more comfortable we feel sending them more business. This means they will rank higher.

If you are an online instructor, we encourage you to use [TakeLessons Classroom](#) as much as possible. It was built for educators and provides an incredible experience to both instructors and students. Using Classroom opens the doors to a host of other tools, like the lesson journal, lesson recording, and screen sharing. This helps the student stay engaged while helping you retain students longer.



TakeLessons Classroom is an education-first online video platform built for your needs.

Use BookWithMe

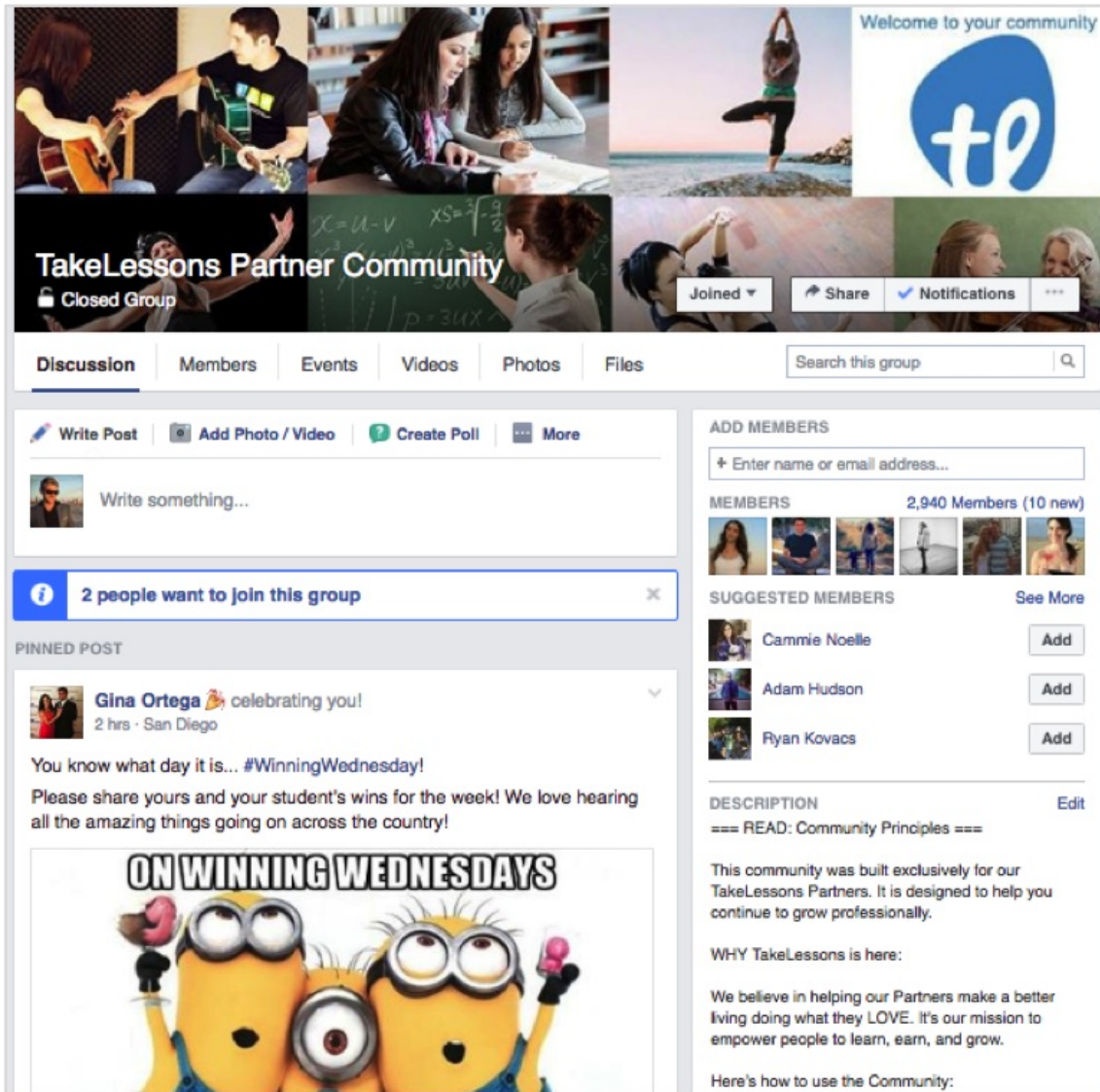
If you have students outside of TakeLessons, we encourage you to look at [BookWithMe](#). BookWithMe allows you to use your TakeLessons profile as your own website. Students can read about you and book you on the spot. Because you marketed the student, you only pay a small processing fee.

[Read more about BookWithMe here.](#)

Engage With the Community.

We also consider whether the Partner is a member of the TakeLessons Facebook Partner community and if the Partner is actively participating.

Here is a picture of our TakeLessons teaching community on Facebook.



The TakeLessons Community is an excellent resource for you to network, seek advice, and offer support.

The TakeLessons Partner Community can be found here .

(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1392288297758197/>)

Link to your TakeLessons Profile.

If you have your own website, Yelp profile, or Facebook page, consider linking to your TakeLessons profile or your BookWithMe profile. The more places you can show your profile, the better.

Be Courteous and Friendly.

Each time a Partner interacts with our internal TakeLessons team, we grade the conversation for friendliness. We want teachers on our platform that treat people with respect, dignity, fairness, and friendliness. We take this scoring into account when we rank instructors.



Stick Around.

A Partner who has been with us in good standing will score extra points. They have proven themselves over time, and that's worth an extra boost.

This doesn't mean that new instructors won't be found. We have ways to give our newbies a shot as well. Our algorithm is designed to give newcomers access to students - although not at the same rate as long-term teachers. If the newcomer performs well with the first few leads, their ranking and access to students will increase with time.

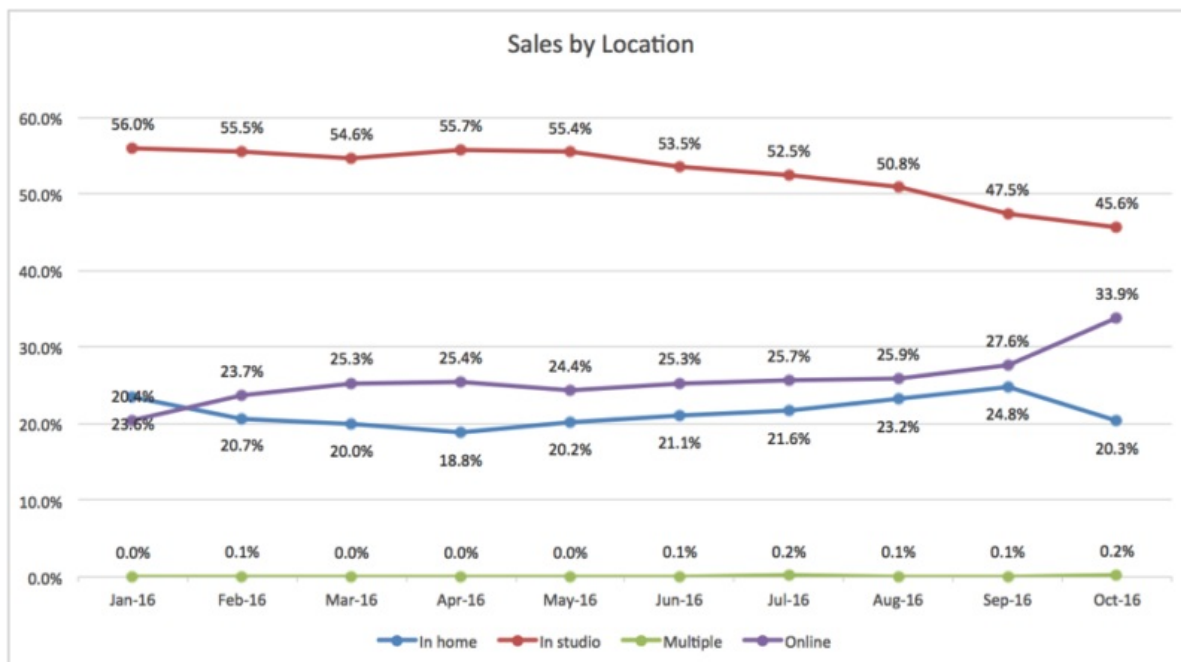
Other things to remember

More locations means more options.

If you teach in your studio as well as in a student's home, be sure to list both. There is a good mix of students who want one or the other, and you increase your exposure if you teach both.

Also, it is becoming more and more important that you teach online. Over 30% of all lessons now occur online and, in some verticals like languages, over 90% of lessons happen online through [TakeLessons Classroom](#).

Over the past 2 years, we have seen tremendous growth in the amount of people requesting online lessons. Here is a chart that shows a breakdown on where lessons occur. Notice that just this year, online lessons have grown from 20% of sales to over 33% of sales.



This means if you're not teaching online, you are potentially giving up 33% of your income. If you don't already, we suggest you consider teaching online. [Here is a guide to get you started teaching online.](#)

Your Subjects Have Different Customer Demand.

Remember that we can't manufacture demand for your subjects. Site traffic tends to follow the natural search patterns of the big search engines. So, this means subjects like guitar and singing will naturally get more interest than flute or harp.

If you teach less-popular subjects, just hang in there. It will probably take you longer to find new business. One way you can improve your chances is to teach online. This expands your teaching opportunity and exposes you to more potential students.

Chapter Summary

Here's what we learned:

- The TakeLessons search engine is used by millions of people to find an instructor or a class.
- By following TakeLessons' best practices, you can find yourself climbing in the search results. It doesn't happen overnight, but it can happen.
- Your profile is your sales page. Learn how to sell yourself and show the student how you can meet their needs.
- Partners with greater retention rank higher.
- If you're not teaching online, you may be giving up a significant opportunity.
- If you are teaching online, be sure to use TakeLessons Classroom for all your sessions.

Chapter 2: TakeLessons Live: Earn Money Teaching Group Classes

What is TakeLessons Live?

TakeLessons Live is a subscription service that grants members access to hundreds of live, online group classes each month. Members can choose their classes at times convenient for their schedule and take their class on their computer, tablet, or mobile device.

Classes continue to expand each month and cover topics in languages, music, art, wellness, personal growth, and business skills.

See it in action today at <http://TakeLessons.com/live>

Why did we start TakeLessons Live?

While most of the lessons on TakeLessons are private one-on-one, we found a gap for some customers that private lessons didn't serve. These customers were interested in an alternative to private lessons - one that let them try out different subjects at a more affordable price point.

TakeLessons Live serves that purpose. By offering hundreds of classes across multiple subjects, the customer gets to participate in one or several different categories.

We've found that many of our TakeLessons Live customers are also private lesson customers. The reason is that customers love getting the personal attention from their instructor and then being able to practice throughout the week in a group setting.

TakeLessons Live also provides a sense of community and camaraderie that is often missing from private lessons. Students forge friendships with other class participants and collaborate on assignments.

Supercharge your lessons

Learn faster and stay motivated with expert-led online group lessons — over 200 live lessons each month.

Try TakeLessons Live free for one month.

Hurry, offer expires soon

Start Your Free Trial



Unlimited Learning.

Choose from over 200+ online group lessons each month.



Expert Teachers.

Get instant feedback from hand-picked pro teachers.



Convenient.

Access classes online, at times that work with your schedule.



Priced Right.

Over 200 monthly lessons for less than 5 cents a class!



Gain Confidence.

Supportive, small group lessons help you improve.



Make Friends.

Meet other students who are studying what you are.

TakeLessons Live offers hundreds of live, online classes each month

How you can participate

If you are a TakeLessons instructor in good standing, with a well-defined curriculum, then we would like to hear from you.

TakeLessons pays instructors a flat fee per class, and you get paid even if no students attend your class.

To learn more about TakeLessons Live, reach out at TakeLessonsLive@takelessons.com.

Chapter 3: Earn Money Writing Great Articles

Each year, millions of readers visit the TakeLessons blog (<http://takelessons.com/blog/>) searching for articles, information, tips and tricks on learning everything from music to languages, arts and crafts to wellness.

If you are a subject matter expert that would like additional exposure for your profile, you have the opportunity to submit guest articles for consideration.

If your article is published, not only will you get your article in front of a large audience, but you will gain higher credibility in our search engine.

To learn more about becoming a guest writer for TakeLessons, check out this page: <http://takelessons.com/blog/submission-guidelines>

Summary

Thank you for joining the TakeLessons teaching community. Remember, follow this guide, be patient, and keep changing the world!

Wishing you success and happiness.

The TakeLessons Team

*** Information for Steven Cox ***

@steven_cox

<http://stevencox.com>

<http://facebook.com/StevenCoxPage/>

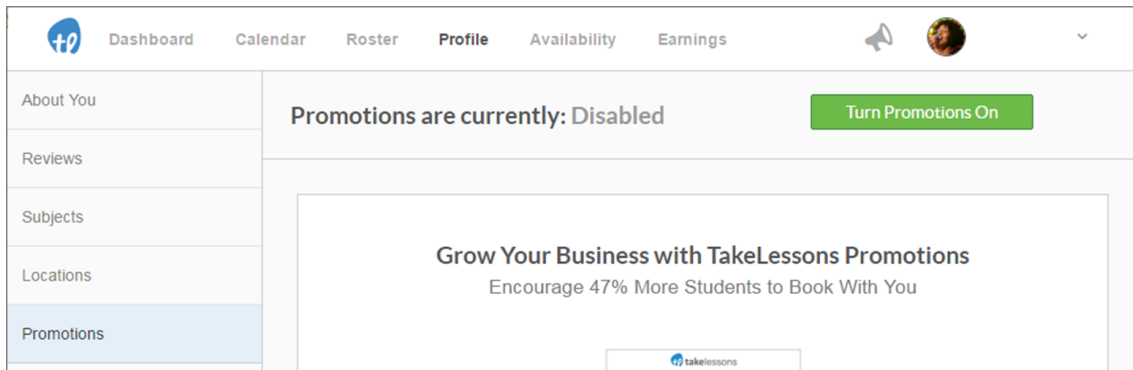
Addendum: Introducing TakeLessons Promotions

TakeLessons Promotions is a feature that helps teachers gain more exposure and popularity by discounting lesson prices for new students. When you **turn on TakeLessons Promotions in your profile**, you allow TakeLessons to include your profile in limited-time promotional sales, which are targeted to help you book more new students.

At TakeLessons, our main goal is to help new students connect with skilled, expert teachers like you-- and our data shows that promotional pricing can be very effective at giving potential students the final nudge to take the leap and start learning.

When we researched and tested this feature, we uncovered that new students were **47% more likely** to purchase their first lesson package when they are shown a promotional discount. To us, the message was clear: promotional discounts help you book more students. So, we developed the TakeLessons Promotions feature that gives you the option to include your profile in promotional sales designed to increase your business.

How it Works



1. Turn on TakeLessons Promotions in your Partner account. There is no upfront fee or cost to join.
2. At different times throughout the month and year, TakeLessons will feature select participating instructors in promotions such as email offers, search results, and more.
3. Students purchasing through those flows will pay the promotional rate.
4. When it's time for a promotional student to renew their lessons, they'll pay your usual (higher) lesson price. That means you'll see a big boost in your earnings once you teach a promotional student's first full price lesson (click here to review how earnings work).
5. You can turn the Promotions feature off at any time through your account.

What kinds of promotions will TakeLessons offer?

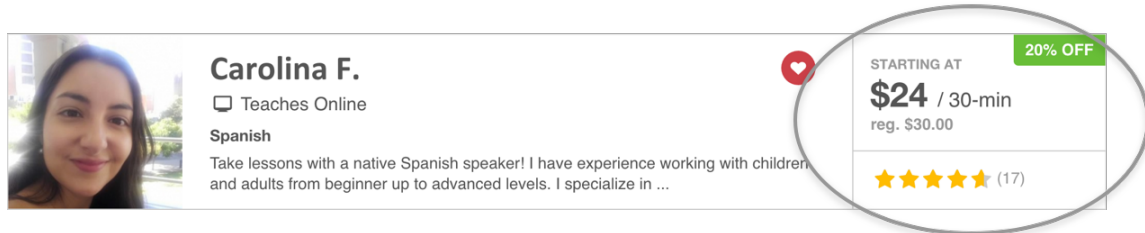
Our team works to maximize the total amount you earn. We will run a variety of discounts and offers throughout the year, to continually encourage more students to book lessons. These promotions can include (but aren't limited to):

- **A flat discount** (e.g. "\$25 off your first pack of lessons")
- **Percentage savings** (e.g. "30% off a pack of five lessons")
- **A free lesson** (e.g. "First lesson free with the purchase of five lessons")

In all cases, the amount discounted will never be more than 40% off your lesson price. Please note, the promotional discount may represent a discount exceeding 40% depending on the applicable list price. If the sale price represents a discount greater than 40%, TakeLessons will be responsible for the additional discount, and will pay for the additional discount out of our fees (i.e., you won't earn less if we end up discounting more than 40% of your lesson price).

Can I see an example promotion?

In The example below, Carolina F. has turned on TakeLessons Promotions. Based on extensive research on the potential students looking for Spanish lessons online, TakeLessons Marketing has designed a "20% off" promotion for certain students who are ready to make a purchasing decision.



The screenshot shows a teacher profile for Carolina F. On the right side of the profile, there is a price box with a green banner that says "20% OFF". The price box displays "STARTING AT \$24 / 30-min" and "reg. \$30.00". Below the price box, there are five yellow stars and the number "(17)".

Carolina's usual rate is \$30 for a half-hour lesson. If the student seeing this promotion purchases a package of five lessons, their lesson price will be \$120, or \$24 per lesson (20% off \$30 per lesson). Per the standard split with TakeLessons, Carolina will earn 60% of the \$120 paid by the student for the first five lessons.

When the student renews their lessons, they'll pay full price, and Carolina will earn 70% of the price for the next five lessons. (For a review of TakeLessons' earnings policies, see:

<http://support.takelessons.com/hc/en-us/articles/202972333-How-much-do-I-earn-per-lesson->

Where can I find more information?

To learn more (and see a breakdown of the example promotion), check out the FAQs section of the Promotions tab in your partner account:

<https://takelessons.com/provider/profile/promotions>