

What will the total cost be?

There is not a precise number until the end of the project, in part because of the nature of overall recording process itself. What follows is an outline to provide a clearer picture of this process from start to finish:

Before the recording session begins, the piano is tuned, and the space is set up to your particular ensemble arrangement. (You do not pay for the time it takes for me hook up microphones, or to run cables, etc.) Your actual recording begins when you warm-up because I am adjusting the microphones and recording settings. Everyone's playing style is different and this has to be taken into consideration in each session.

RECORDING SESSION:

Let's take an example where there are 3 full takes of a piece. Overall, you like the 3rd one the best, but you prefer the middle section of the 1st take more, while the ending of the 2nd take is the best. Also, there are 5 split/squeaks/dropped notes that you are not happy with and choose to repair them. You will play these problem measures again – usually 3 or 4 times each – and select the best of the bunch. Your preferences are noted and you leave, secure in the knowledge that you have an accurate presentation of your performance, even if it is stretched over 3 hours of recording time and lies in bits and pieces inside the computer.

It is now the recording engineer's job to extract all the parts from different takes and glue these bits and pieces together to create a complete and "perfect" performance. This is the function of "editing" – to create a wholly integrated and seamless performance.

EDITING:

Good editing is, quite honestly, an art form. Every edit has two parts – where it starts and where it ends. Some edits are simple (between rests, for example) and these take virtually no time whatsoever – less than 5 minutes for the entire edit. Other edits are significantly more challenging (repairing notes within fast-moving scale passages, differences in note attacks from different takes, etc.). These take more time – perhaps 5 minutes or more on both sides of the edit. A good rule of thumb is to calculate 10 minutes per edit. In addition, for every edit, crossfades (in and out) need to be inserted to make sure the edit imperceptible.

Editing experience is where the engineer shines – and saves you money. Few studio engineers in the country have the ability to edit at the level of detail we provide at BPC Recording. Even with the very best equipment and software to expedite this process, it just takes time. Some clients prefer to sit in on this part of the session, others prefer to leave. It is a personal choice, but it is extremely boring to watch.

MIXING AND MASTERING:

Once a performance is completely edited, the final MIX takes place – manipulating the sound to evenly balance the piano, or to make sure the piano doesn't drown out the instrumentalist. (This is why recording with 4 microphones provides the most flexibility.) Next comes "MASTERING." This turns a good recording into a great recording by equalizing the frequencies (EQ), and the addition of reverberation (reverb), and compression. (There

are people at major record labels that **only** do mastering.) This can also take some time, but the advantage is that Dr. Hall is used to working in this recording space, so some fundamental similarities exist between the different recording projects.

BOUNCE TO CD:

BPC Recording Studio records its sessions at a very high quality (usually at 24-bit/96kHz – although we have the capability to record at sample rates up to 192kHz for an extra fee). The final master recording is “bounced-down” through a “dithering process” to a CD burned on a special drive at 2x speed (at the red-book standard 16-bit/44.1kHz). A bounced CD therefore takes 10 minutes to burn 20 minutes of music.

CD ARTWORK: J-Card, CD Cover, Tray Card

The artwork phase includes 3 parts: The **J-Card** is the front cover of the CD case. This is most often designed around the photo or artwork the client submits. Each J-Card is unique (unlike Naxos Records where virtually every cover has a generic design with a different painting on the front). The J-Card is printed with a high-quality laser printer giving it the look of a cover from the printing press. The **Cover on the CD** is also individually designed with the client’s name, instrument, and the pieces with track numbers and accurate timings in the order designated by the client. The **Tray-Card** is the back card that lists all the pertinent information about the pieces, the recording date & time, and the performer name on the spine of the Jewel Case.

All the above is included in the Student/Teacher Package for up to 4 hours of recording or editing time. Variables are how many times it is necessary to record the piece initially to get a strong take, how many edits are necessary to bring your project up to a level you are happy with, and occasionally, the mastering can take a little time. Within the package arrangement, any additional time is charged at a reduced rate.

This information is also available within the BPC Recording Brochure.