

Practice Tips

Music lessons alone do not make a student a better musician. Instructors provide guidance, tips, and advice on how to play something, but musical growth comes from a consistent, well-structured practice routine at home.

Any student who wishes to progress on their instrument will need to spend countless hours developing their skills and knowledge. Positive encouragement and creating fun challenges with rewards will help students work towards their musical goals.

Practice Routine Tips



Set a Goal

It's been said: "If you aim for nothing, you'll achieve it every time." It's important to set a goal for each practice session. What are you trying to achieve? Ask your teacher to help set some goals for you for your practice sessions.



Practice Every Day

Schedules are busier than ever, and it can be tough to find the time every day to practice, but even 5-15 minutes a day goes a long way for developing musicians at the beginning level. The key here is consistency. Practicing a little bit every day keeps things fresh and sharp.



Find Somewhere Quiet

Perhaps this is obvious, but having a quiet place to focus can make all the difference in creating an effective practice routine. If there are distractions, your time will slip away and all the best intentions will be for naught.



Have All Your Equipment and Materials Nearby

If you need to constantly leave your practice seat to grab a pencil, your tuner, metronome, music, or a glass of water you're not going to get much done. Be prepared with all the things you might need before you start your session.



Warm Up/Cool Down

Start each practice session with a quick physical warm-up, do a few stretches, focus on your breath, play a scale or simple technique study to get you ready for the harder material. Finish your practice session by goofing around on your instrument, making something up, or playing through a song you know and love.



Practice SLOWLY

This is critical! We always want to play things fast, but playing slowly allows us to play songs correctly, with good technique and better tone quality. Whenever something is a challenge to play and you get frustrated, slow it down and try it again. The slower the better! Speed comes after playing something smoothly. Once you master something at a slow speed, you can start to play it faster and with more skill. The metronome is a great tool to help with this, and an essential for any serious musician.

Practice Tips



Don't Always Start at the Beginning

Why not? Often, the more challenging parts are later in the song. Be sure not to rush through those sections or skip over them. Start with the challenging stuff and practice it in tiny fragments and very slowly. Repeat it again and again and again until it feels comfortable. Then add a few more measures to the difficult part and see if you can string together more of the song. If something keeps giving you trouble make a mental note and practice it again the next day.



Use a Timer

Set a timer for the amount of time you are to practice. When it goes off, you're done!



Write it Down

Use a practice log to take notes at what you've been working on. It helps you see how much work you've done and what your challenges and achievements are over time.



Practice away from your instrument

Visualization is a powerful tool to help us practice when we're away from our instrument. Visualize how the music sounds and where you play it on your instrument. You'll be amazed how effective this technique can be! It can even inform what you need to work on when you do practice on your instrument.



Teach It

Teaching is a powerful way to underscore what you have learned. It helps you communicate what you are doing, and recognize areas that you are still unsure about and need to focus more of your practice time on. Ask your child to teach you what they are working on!



Listen...again and again

Listening to music intentionally and repeatedly is both a simple and lifelong way of practicing. Listening to a song in this way allows you to hear how others play your instrument, gives you the chance to play along, and inspires you to maximize your potential. The more types of music you listen to, the more you will be able to reference and appreciate about music as a whole. Listen to what you love, and then let exploration and curiosity take you down the rabbit hole and out of your musical comfort zone!

