

Name _____ Inst. _____

How to Practice

Playing a musical instrument is a physical activity and like any physical activity, the body needs repetition for strength and accuracy. Every musician uses tiny muscles in his mouth and those muscles need conditioning – an act that merits **daily repetition**. Even practicing the same pieces help strengthen a student's embouchure.

Along with the tiny muscles in the mouth, daily practice helps with the student's accuracy. Ability could be defined as "being able" to duplicate without mistake over and over again. Daily practice helps students become more accurate in playing the intended note.

Where does your child practice?

Since practicing involves hearing, reading, and focusing, it is best to practice in a place with the least amount of distractions possible. Most elect to practice in a bedroom with the door closed. If at all possible, try to practice in the biggest room available and try to fill the entire room with a big, beautiful sound.

When does your child practice?

When to practice is not nearly as important as setting a practice schedule for every day. Decide the best time for practice and stick to your schedule. Even during busy times, a few minutes at least can keep the muscles in shape as well as the instrument. Unlike other machines, musical instruments get better the more they're played. The worse way to treat an instrument is to leave it in its case.

Do you hear these things from you child?

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| 1. Warm Up | 10-30 min. | Breathing, long tones, mouthpiece vibrations, lip slurs, etc . . |
| 2. Scales | 10-30 min. | Perfect the Bb, F, C, G, Db, Ab, Eb scales first. |
| 3. Chromatic | 10 min | Work on extending your range (at least 2 octaves) |
| 4. Rhythm | 10 min | Rhythm grid (4 th , 8 th , 16 th notes) |
| 5. Music | 20 min | Concert Music, musical lines, private lessons,, etc . . . |
| 6. Play | 15 min. | Something enjoyable, just for fun! |

* The times are estimations of the length it takes for these areas to improve. They are meant to be used as guidelines for student practice and can vary according to necessity. One suggestion is to have a certain goal in mind for every practice session and cater the other elements around that goal. Spend the most time on the chosen goal for the day and work of the other elements another time.

How to Practice?

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| 1. Break down each phrase into rhythms and notes. | 5. Put each measure together |
| 2. Practice each rhythm on a single pitch | 6. Put each phrase together |
| 3. Find all accidentals and think through each rhythm | 7. Put each section together |
| 4. Put together the rhythms and notes | 8. Add style, dynamics, phrasing, etc . . |

True practicing does not occur until after a piece is learned. Do not quit after playing something once without mistakes. Only after a piece is without mistakes should it be played over and over again multiple times.

_____ **Yes, my child is practicing everyday and working on the objectives assigned in class and sectionals.**

_____ **No, my child is not practicing everyday and working on the objectives assigned in class and sectionals.**

Parent Signature _____