

Tips for Successful Practice

1) Find a quiet place.

- The less distractions the better.
- Whether it's a certain room or the corner of the living room, a special practice area will help students mentally prepare for focused work.

2) Have your supplies nearby.

- Pencil, metronome, tuner, music stand
- Instrument and music
- Recording devise

3) Set goals for each practice session.

- Work to reach a small goal each practice session.
- Use daily class routines as a guide.

4) Don't always play through from the beginning.

- While this is good to do at times, it is not helpful in working out specific problems.
- Isolate the measure(s) that give you trouble. Play those notes slowly to focus on the fingering, air control, and playing accurately.
- Once you've fixed the problem, gradually increase the speed.
- Work on one–two measures at a time (chunking). When those measures can be played confidently, work on another chunk and put the measures together.

5) Record yourself.

- Record yourself playing an exercises or section of music. Listen to the recording and analyze how you sound.
- How is your tone? Are you rhythmically accurate?

6) Challenge yourself physically.

- Practice standing up sometimes – this increases air flow.
- Scientific research has proven that if you add a physical challenge to a difficult task, such as trying to play that part while standing on one leg or while walking, your brain is likely to carve our new neural pathways – and the original task will be easier when you return to just doing that.

7) Take some time to practice mentally.

- If your mouth, hands, etc. begin to get tired, practice mentally.
- Read your music and imagine the sound you would be playing while you practice your fingers/sticking.
- This improves concentration and reinforces accuracy in your hands and fingers.

8) Create good habits.

- Everything done during practice should be reinforcing **good habits**.
- Use good posture and hand position, take deep breaths, etc.
- Try to practice at the same time each day.
- Consistency is the key to success!

