

PRACTICE ROUTINE

Most students approach their practice with the wrong attitude. They assemble the instrument, toot a few notes, and play through their favorite pieces. **THIS IS NOT PRACTICING!!** In order to accomplish the most in the least amount of practice time, you must have a plan.

Mouthpiece: Concentrate on embouchure, mouth placement, proper air stream, and tone.

- Flutes: Low and high note on head-joint only capped and uncapped (4 total).
- Reed players: Proper embouchure with the mouthpiece and barrel or neck.
- Brass players: Work on a steady, sustained buzz, and then play a siren.

Long Tones: Playing long tones develops a characteristic tone quality.

- Play very long notes with fast air
- Play very long notes on a scale pattern, up or down.
- Concentrate on embouchure, good hand and horn position, and deep breathing.

Tone quality is the single most important skill in playing an instrument. If you don't sound good, no one will want to listen to you.

Scales: Scales teach key signatures, technique, and flexibility.

- Major and Minor Scales: memorize scales and arpeggios in low and high ranges.
- Articulations: use different combinations of tonguing and slurring.

Work the music that needs fixed:

- Fix mistakes by saying each rhythm while fingering the notes at the same time.
- Practicing slowly makes sense because your brain has more time to think.
- Isolate problem areas (practice one or two measures at a time).
- Circle areas that still need fixing. Mark notes that you miss often.
- Play larger chunks of music, working in the isolated sections.

Play the fun stuff, but always play with good tone quality!

Play a short recital for someone in your house (even if it is your dog).

Finally, disassemble your instrument properly (be sure to dump water or swab your instrument) and place it safely in its case.

Place your instrument and music where you will remember it for school.

This entire process should take about 30 minutes. If you practice with this plan every single day (even on weekends and holidays) you will be amazed at your progress. Remember this rule:

**PRACTICE, BY ITSELF, DOES NOT MAKE PERFECT.
PERFECT PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT.**