

GET GOOD!

An informative guide to instrumental practice

“Don’t practice until you get it right, practice until you can’t get it wrong”

Much like professional athletes, the muscles to play your instruments need constant conditioning. Building the muscles in your fingers and embouchure are much like doing push-ups to build strength in your arms. The more repetitions, the stronger you become.

Air is the foundation of a good sound

“Fill the tank”

- Imagine your lungs and diaphragm as a compressor; much like filling a tire, the tank needs to be full before it can handle filling the tire! You can't have a good sound without proper breath support
- Visualize filling your lungs from the bottom up. (Imagine watching a glass of water being poured) filling every space in the glass.
- Exhaling comes from “compressing the air” into the instrument. Controlling speed of that air is what will affect pitch, register and dynamics. Steady airstream creates a solid dark warm sound

Posture

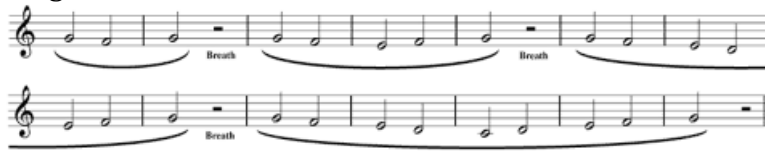
- Posture is just as important as filling the tank. Students with proper posture sound better, have a better high register and more endurance on their instrument.
- Keep your feet on the floor, your back straight and elbows off of your rib cage. Give yourself room for the “compressor” to expand!
- Poor posture results in tension that will affect tone, expression and control of the instrument



“Soft and slow”

- Read notes first! Take your time match fingerings with correct note on the staff
- Count through exercises first. Understanding the rhythm enhances the music you are playing.
- Tone quality! Work on creating the best tone on your instrument.

- Start playing “low and slow”. Long tones are the best practice to build beginning embouchure.



- Work on flow studies that constantly expand from the middle range of your instrument. You aren't going to start your practice day playing notes in the basement or the executive suite, you want to warm up from the middle of your instrument and up!



- Visualize the exercise you are playing. Focus on the first pitch and begin exercise.
- Practice dynamics! It is much harder to play soft than it is loud! Learning to control your breathing while playing soft constantly builds muscles needed to play with a solid fundamental tone.

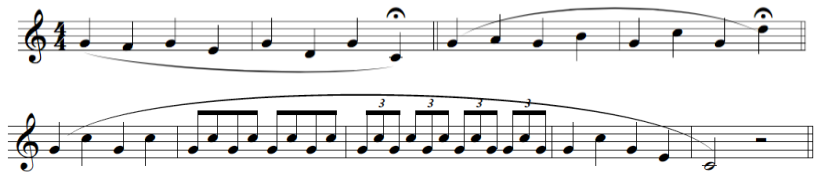
“Technique success! The three F’s fundamentals, foundations, fun!”

- Begin by identifying each aspect of an excerpt.
 - Time Signature
 - Key Signature
 - Tempo
 - Glance through to find accidentals
 - Rhythms
 - Dynamics
- Sectionalize! Don't try and tackle an entire piece in one day! This leads to frustration and unhappy playing! If an exercise is 8 lines long, practice the first two on day one, lines 3-4 on day two and 5-6 on day three etc. As you improve on these lines, you can then work on playing more lines at a time.
- Articulation is imperative! Beginning an etude or exercise with proper articulation sets up how you play throughout the entire exercise. Proper articulation for your personal instrument is arguably the most important characteristic to a quality sound. Learn different scale patterns with different articulations to build a fundamental articulation.



- slur exercises

- Work on Slurs with a metronome. Focus on sound and wait till the last possible second to change pitch. This will align the sound and the slur to create a stable solid slur. Don't speed up the tempo until you have mastered a slow comfortable tempo.
- As lower ranges of the instrument improve, begin to expand registers and work focus on the quality of sound!



- Ear Training

- Ear Training is one of the most important musical attributes a student can have. Practicing ear tunes should be fun but has incredible benefits!
- Try singing your music. Play an initial starting pitch and then sing or hum what you think your part should sound like.
- Interval training is also very important. Start with a major scale and move up by steps hearing how each pitch relates to the first note of the major scale.
- Play popular songs on the radio! Try and figure out melodies of songs you like to listen to. Over time, this gets fun and your ears will improve immensely!
- Learn Each song in more than one key! Included in this packet is a list that you can learn and try transposing into different keys!

Overall, practicing music should be FUN! Students should work all of these aspects into a lesson by finding a way to make it fun and enjoyable for them. Practice time is sometimes hard to come by, but trying to isolate the “foundation, fundamentals and fun” into a daily practice routine will give you the most musical bang for your buck!

Ear Tunes for Beginners

Frere Jacques
 This old man
 Mary Had a Little Lamb
 Oh When the Saints
 I've Been Working on the Railroad
 Twinkle Twinkle
 Happy Birthday
 Joy to the World
 Kumbaya
 Three Blind Mice
 ABC Song
 If Your Happy and You
 Know it
 Row, Row, Row Your Boat
 Farmer in the Dell

Popular Ear Tunes

Yesterday (the Beatles)
 Star Wars
 Somewhere Over the Rainbow
 Sweet Caroline
 Hey Jude
 Smoke on the Water
 Seven Nation Army
 Blister in the Sun
 Harry Potter Theme
 Blackbird
 We Are Young (FUN)
 Take on Me
 Iron Man

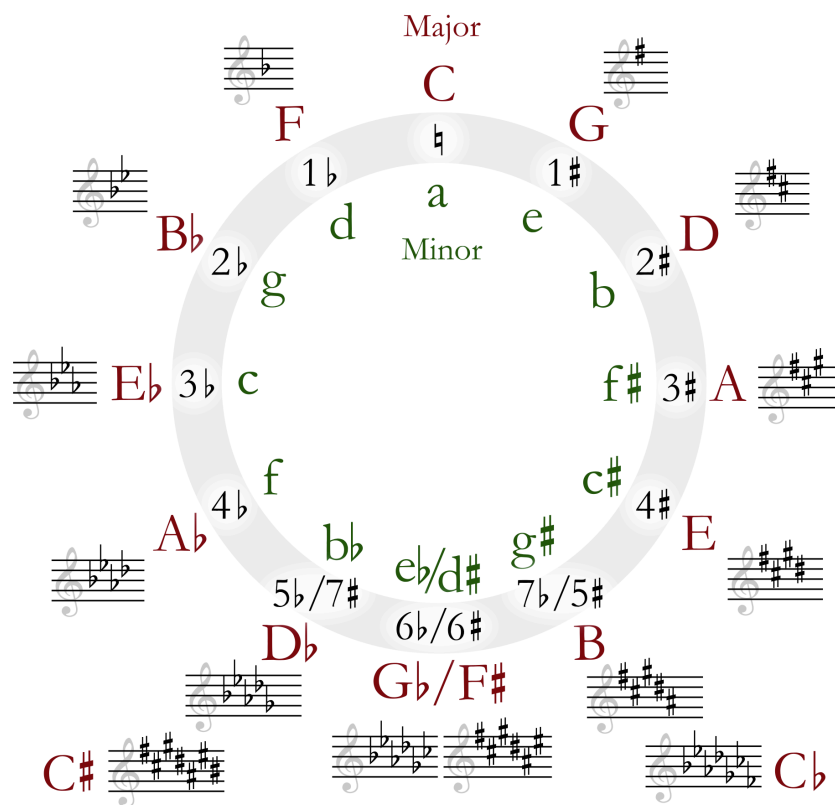
Easy Blues Tunes to Memorize

C Jam Blues
 Nows the Time
 Blue Monk
 Freddie Freeloader
 Tenor Madness
 All Blues
 Billies Bounce
 Mr. P.C.

Easy Jazz (non-blues) tunes to Memorize

Blue Bossa
 Autum Leaves
 Take the A Train
 So What
 All of Me
 Cantaloupe Island
 Lady Bird
 Solar
 Tune Up
 Black Orpheus

MAJOR KEY	RELATIVE MINOR
C Major	A Minor
D Major	B Minor
E Major	C# Minor
F Major	D Minor
G Major	E Minor
A Major	F# Minor
B Major	G# Minor
D Flat / C# Major	B Flat Minor
E Flat / D# Major	C Minor
G Flat / F# Major	E Flat Minor
A Flat / G# Major	F Minor
B Flat / A# Major	G Minor



Transposition Chart



Concert Pitch: Violin, Flute, Oboe	C	C# Db	D	D# Eb	E	F	F# Gb	G	G# Ab	A	A# Bb	B
Bb Instruments: Clarinet, Tenor Sax, Trumpet, Baritone T.C., Bass Clarinet	D	D# Eb	E	F	F# Gb	G	G# Ab	A	A# Bb	B	C	C# Db
Eb Instruments: Alto Sax, Alto Clarinet, Baritone Sax	A	A# Bb	B	C	C# Db	D	D# Eb	E	F	F# Gb	G	G# Ab
F Instruments: French Horn	G	G# Ab	A	A# Bb	B	C	C# Db	D	D# Eb	E	F	F# Gb
Bass Clef Instruments: Trombone, Baritone B.C., Tuba	C	C# Db	D	D# Eb	E	F	F# Gb	G	G# Ab	A	A# Bb	B

12 Major Flute Scales and Arpeggios

Key	Scale	Arpeggio
C		
F		
Bb		
Eb		
Ab		
Db		
Gb		
B		
E		
A		
D		
G		