

Practice Tips

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Opening the case

- A. Set a practice schedule
 - 1. Write it into your schedule
 - 2. Break it up into multiple sessions a day
 - 3. 30-60 minutes is a good length of time for each practice session
- B. Prepare your state-of-mind to that of a rehearsal, or better yet, a performance
 - 1. You're practicing to perform, so perform
 - 2. Always demand your best. Never settle for, "I'm just practicing."
 - 3. Know what sound you are striving for
 - 4. Get rid of all distractions

Setting Goals

- A. Always have a plan for your practice session
 - 1. Set small, achievable goals
 - 2. You might practice an etude, a solo, a section of either, the entirety of both, or just your scales
 - a. If it's new, break it up into small sections and work on them individually
 - b. If it's the day before your lesson/performance, perform it all
 - c. The day before your lesson should be for run-throughs, not new practice
- B. Performance goals
 - 1. Map out a macro plan to ensure preparedness for the performance
 - a. Will stamina be a concern? Range? Fingers?
 - b. Plan what you need to accomplish each week to maximize your success
 - 2. Plan on having half as much endurance in a performance as in practice

Types of practice sessions

- A. The Warm-Up
 - 1. This should be your first practice session
 - a. Establish a daily routine
 - b. Make this your "home base" – no matter where you are, or what you're playing, your playing day starts the same way
 - 2. Cover all aspects of your playing – Sound, Articulation, Flexibility, Agility, Range, Endurance
 - 3. While warming up, don't just practice, it's an assessment of your daily playing

- B. On the horn
 - 1. Technique – scales, etudes, Clarke studies, Arban studies, etc
 - 2. Repertoire – solos (recital/jury), chamber music, ensemble rep
- C. Away from the horn
 - 1. Listening
 - a. Listen to musicians you want to emulate
 - b. Listen to multiple pieces in the style you're trying to prepare to play
 - c. Listen to music that is not what you're working on in order to expand your horizons
 - 2. Singing – If you can sing it, you can play it
 - 3. Playing with and without the mouthpiece

How much you should practice

- A. This is determined by you and your workload
 - 1. Music Majors should generally strive for at least 14 hours a week of practice
 - 2. Music Minors should generally strive for 10-12 hours a week of practice
 - 3. Rehearsals do NOT count as personal practice, however...
 - 4. If your performance load is heavy, maybe back off on practice in order to prevent muscle fatigue/damage
- B. Divide up your time as needed
 - 1. There is no magic amount of time needed to prepare the Haydn Concerto versus a Concone etude
 - 2. It is up to you to determine how much time is needed
- C. You have practiced enough when the piece is performance ready

If you sound good on what you are practicing, you need to practice something else!