



Renaissance Kids, Inc.

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Music Practice Tips

Learning an instrument can be fun, challenging, confusing, frustrating, exciting, and most of all rewarding. Learning music is most rewarding when the student and the teacher are functioning as a team. It is the teacher's job to explain clearly, patiently, and in manageable steps, taking into account the needs of each particular student. It is the student's job to show up, listen as attentively as they are able, to try, and to keep trying. It is also the student's responsibility to practice, and to keep practicing. To that end, here are some tips that we hope you will find helpful:

1. Make practice a habit. Much like exercising, practicing becomes more consistent and effective if it becomes part of the daily routine, like brushing your teeth. Find a time of day that works on most days, and try to stick to it.
2. Be comfortable when practicing. Try to practice in a place free from distractions. Also, be sure you are sitting in a comfortable way and position yourself at your instrument as your teacher has instructed.
3. It is the frequency of the practice that matters the most, not the length of each practice session. For a young beginner, fifteen minutes of practice five or six times per week will yield big results. Frequent, short practice sessions are much more effective and enjoyable than only practicing once or twice per week for an hour. With only once or even twice per week of practice, much tends to be forgotten in between practice sessions, leading to frustration and poor results.
4. Before beginning to practice, carefully read any notations that your teacher may have written on your music. This will help alert you to any problem that you may have encountered and are trying to correct, or any tricky areas.
5. Practice SLOWLY, and deliberately. This can not be over-emphasized. Play at the slowest speed you can. Super slow. The slower the practice, the faster the learning and the more secure the learning.
6. If you have identified a part of the song that is giving you trouble, practice only the trouble spot for a while. If the difficult spot is longer than three or four notes, break the difficult area down into small sections, practicing each section slowly and repeatedly.
7. Practice without your instrument sometimes. Just reading through a song, without having to concern yourself with actually playing, can have a benefit, too. If you are working on keeping your rhythm steady, read your music and clap the beat. If you are working on your note reading, read your music and say the note names out loud.