

Efficient Practicing Template

Playing Without Pain: www.playingwithoutpain.com, Instagram: @playingwithoutpain

Efficient Practicing Strategies:

1. Create a repertoire list with deadlines
2. Assess repertoire difficulty and prioritize newest/most difficult pieces
3. Create a detailed daily practice schedule based on your time limit and your goals (see template below)
4. Slow practice on small, difficult sections will always prove to be more beneficial than running through sections you already feel comfortable playing

Daily Check-Ins:

- Am I hydrated and have I eaten enough/well?
- Do I feel well-rested?
- Do I feel anxious, stressed or overwhelmed? If the answer is yes, write down the reasons.
- If I am in pain, have I seen a doctor and talked to my teacher?
- Am I being kind to myself?

Additional Reminders:

- Repeat this hour-long cycle each time you practice, being sure to include physical warm-ups each time you re-enter the practice room throughout the day
- Always have a detailed plan of exactly what you wish to accomplish for efficiency
- Always record yourself and listen back. This helps you become your own best teacher and also gives you a physical break while you are listening
- This template can be altered to fit your needs, but be sure to include a 5-minute break every 15-20 minutes of practice time
- Don't underestimate the power of mental practicing, score study and listening to recordings, especially if you are injured
- Stay positive, even if you are having a bad day. Trust your process and be kind to yourself!

Directions:

- This template is designed to represent a 1-hour block of time that can be repeated throughout the day
- First start by listing the repertoire you are currently working on in priority order, then list 1-2 realistic goals that you could accomplish within the given time period.
- The musical warm-up should start slowly (long tones, harmonics, etc.) and gradually increase in tempo and difficulty (scales, arpeggios, etudes, etc.). If you prefer a longer warm-up time, plan for 30-45 minutes to warm up instead and remove the 10-minute warm-up section at the beginning of this template or add one more 10-minute block of detailed repertoire practice
- Each block of repertoire practice should focus on a different passage you are having difficulty with and should involve trial and error. Focus on finding solutions and slow, diligent practice. This work will stick with you more effectively and save time in the future.

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Date:

Time:

Goals:

Repertoire List in Priority Order:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Physical Warm-Up (5 Minutes): Slow arm circles, work with exercise bands, shoulder/arm/neck stretches, running in place, etc.

Musical Warm-Up (10 Minutes):

- 5 Minute Break (constructive rest, taking a short walk, drinking water, eating a snack) -

Detailed Repertoire Practice (15 Minutes):

- 5 Minute Break (see above) -

Additional Detailed Repertoire Practice (15 Minutes):

Under Tempo Run-Through (5 Minutes)