

## **A Resource: Elevate Your Practicing**

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This is a working document of practicing methodologies and resources. Use these as a means to motivate and inspire you to be your best self while practicing! Each time you go to practice, go with a plan, with focus, and to explore! Have fun with it. Switch your tactics and techniques up. Using effective practice strategies, and sticking with it (consistency), is empowering! You will see, hear, and feel the improvement you are making. That confidence and empowerment will ultimately transfer to the stage as well as to many facets of your life.

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### **Practice Techniques (...Create your own as well!)**

- [Rhythm Practice or Note Groupings \(Link\)](#)
- [At-tempo practice via chaining \(Link\)](#)
- **Whole-part-whole:** Let's say you're having trouble with a section of music, and there's one part in particular that's especially gnarly. Whole-part-whole would involve working on that little trouble spot in isolation, but then playing the larger section again to make sure you can nail that tricky bit in context.
- **Goal-selection:** Rather than simply diving in and getting stuck in the mindless loop of playing things over and over until they sound better, take a moment to (a) make a note of the key areas that need work and (b) create a plan for how you're going to solve these issues *before* you even get started. And prioritize them in some meaningful order – like working on the more basic, foundational things first, then moving to more advanced, higher-level issues. Or even in terms of difficulty – from most to least difficult.
- **Self-evaluation:** Rather than practicing until you can't take it anymore, take a quick break every so often to take stock of your focus level during practice sessions, spending a moment to ask yourself whether you're still practicing effectively or if you're distracted and zoned out and should probably take an honest-to-goodness break to recharge. Kind of like the 20-20-20 rule my kid's eye doc suggested (take a 20 second break every 20 minutes to rest your eyes by looking at least 20 feet away). This could also mean checking in with yourself to do a self-evaluation of how effectively your current practice strategy is working – and moving onto a new section, or trying a different strategy if what you're doing isn't really getting you anywhere.

- **Random Practice Schedules**

Length	Material to Practice
3 minutes	Excerpt A
3 minutes	Excerpt B
3 minutes	Excerpt C
3 minutes	Excerpt A
3 minutes	Excerpt B
3 minutes	Excerpt C
	Etc.

Length	Material to Practice
2 minutes	Long tone, scale, long tone, scale...
3 minutes	Excerpt A (using first rhythmic variation)
2 minutes	Third progression, arpeggio, third progression, arpeggio...
3 minutes	Excerpt B (using first rhythmic variation)
2 minutes	Long tone, scale, long tone, scale...
3 minutes	Excerpt A (using second rhythmic variation)
2 minutes	Third progression, arpeggio, third progression, arpeggio...
3 minutes	Excerpt B (using second rhythmic variation)
	Etc.

**Further Reading (Courtesy of [Bulletproof Musician](#))**

1. [Why I'd Spend a Lot More Time Practicing Scales If I Could Do It All Over Again](#)
2. [Struggling to Get a Tricky Passage up to Tempo? Why Slow, Accurate Practice May Actually Be the Problem.](#)
3. [Research-Tested Practice Strategies That Will Help You Learn New Pieces Faster](#)
4. [Why the Progress You Make in the Practice Room Seems to Disappear Overnight - PART 1](#)
5. [How Many Hours a Day Should You Practice?](#)
6. ["Quiet Eye": A Technique to Enhance Performance When You're Nervous](#)
7. [Having Difficulty Moving Past a Particularly Distressing Audition or Performance? "Just Think Positive" May Not Be the Best Strategy...](#)
8. [Why an "Improvisational Mindset" Could Be Vital to Reducing Performance Anxiety and Increasing Audience Engagement](#)
9. [Having a Bad Practice Day? Turn It Into a Good One With This 3-Step Self-Coaching Technique.](#)