

How to Practice

Practice at home in between lessons is *essential* if you want to learn how to play a musical instrument.

Here are some tips:

1. Try to practice a little every day. If this isn't possible, 4 times a week is often just about enough to improve.
2. Short sessions are best. 10 minutes a day is plenty for beginners.
3. It's a good idea to practice at the same time every day, e.g. after breakfast or as soon as you get home from school.
4. Try to find a place where no one's going to disturb you and you're not going to disturb them. This can be difficult. Try the bathroom - it's often nice and echoey too!
5. It's best to practice standing up, but if you prefer to sit, use a hard chair. Don't slouch in an armchair and don't walk around. Turn the TV off!
6. Find a way to prop your music up, so you don't have to bend over or look down to see it. A music stand is best. They're quite cheap and you can get them from music shops or on line.
7. Warm up slowly. Blow warm air through your instrument. Move the valves or the slide. Play some short notes and some long ones. Don't try to play very high or loud at the start of your practice session.
8. Practice something you find a bit difficult – a new tune or scale. Don't worry if you can't get it perfect today. Try to make it a bit better than yesterday.
9. Finish off by playing something you already know and like.
10. When you've learnt something new, show someone else in your family. Make them listen to you! They're bound to be impressed.
11. Enjoy your practice. Sometimes it can feel like a bit of a chore, but in the long run it should start to make you feel really good.