

HOW TO PRACTICE EVERY DAY!

PREPARE TO PRACTICE

Come to the piano with a GREAT attitude and be ready to work hard!

Be Positive!

Get rid of distractions!

Concentrate!

SET DAILY PRACTICE GOALS

Ask yourself – “What am I going to accomplish today?”

Set specific goals that can be done in one practice session.

Think small – concentrate on only one or two problems each day.

RELAX!

Prepare hand position and body posture.

Warm-up with finger exercises – technique book, scales, chords, arpeggios...whatever has been assigned during the lesson.

5 MUSICAL MILESTONES

Milestone #1: Notes, Rhythm, Fingering

Goal: To play from beginning to end at a slow and controlled tempo without stopping, pausing, or repeating.

Step 1: Complete “Tips for Learning a New Piece”

Step 2: Practice what you don't know, not what you already know. Practice trouble spots only...do not start at the beginning of the piece. Trouble spots will be small areas – several notes or one phrase only. Practice efficiently...Drill trouble spots to solve the problem.

Trouble Spot Tips:

Tricky Fingering – Pencil in a comfortable fingering and then use the same fingering consistently.

Tricky Rhythm – Clap, tap, or count aloud.

Difficult Passages – Practice HS, then HT when HS is mastered. Practice in rhythms, block the chords, accent different notes.

Tricky Position Changes – Practice the moves and hand shapes silently and/or without looking. Memorize how it feels.

Step 3: Build Musical Bridges

Extend practice to include notes before and after each trouble spot.

Build a bridge to the trouble spot by adding one or more measures before.

Build a bridge from the trouble spot by adding one or more measures after.

Build larger bridges by drilling the entire practice section.

Continue practicing section by section, connecting sections for entire piece.

Milestone #2: Dynamics, Articulation, Pedaling

Goals: Play the piece musically, with all dynamic markings and articulation.

Play the piece slowly and confidently.

Understand all the musical markings – dynamics, tempo, phrasing, accents.

Shape phrases, ending gracefully.

Correct balance between the melody and the harmony.

Milestone #3: Interpretation and Tempo

Goals: Gradually increase tempo day by day, with the help of a metronome.

Perform the piece up to tempo and with confidence and control.

Express the mood/character of the piece.

Add your own flair and spirit.

Milestone #4: Memorization

Milestone #5: Performance