

PRACTICING WELL, WISELY AND EFFICIENTLY
(*And modifications for very busy days)

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THE WARM-UP

Examples: Hanon, Dozen a Day, Czerny, Scales, Arpeggios & Cadences, Sightreading

***Pick 1 of the above**

FOR EACH PIECE, FOLLOW THESE STEPS:

STEP 1 – TREASURE HUNT

Look through the music before you play to review key and time signature(s), tempo markings, dynamics, articulation, accidentals, ritards, accelerandos, etc. Think about the character of the piece and review or create either a story or visual image in your mind about the piece

STEP 2 – BE THE TORTOISE

Practice the entire piece or whatever part of the piece you are learning slowly, expressively & accurately without stopping. (You are playing too fast if you have to pause or stop.) Make sure to count outloud and/or use the metronome as instructed.

STEP 3 – SPOT CLEANING or PS (Practice Spots)

Review challenging spots in the piece 3 times each, slowly, expressively & accurately.

Think about how you are going to clean them up before you practice them.

***You can do this in 5-10 minute increments as study breaks, waiting for dinner, etc.**

STEP 4 – MEMORY WORKOUT (If memorizing – if not, proceed to Step 5)

It is never too soon to start memorizing. Memorize one phrase at a time. This does not need to be in order from the beginning. Study the music, looking for patterns, harmonies & the shape of the melodic line. Play the phrase slowly, thinking about these elements. Memorize each hand separately and then hands together. Repeat this process each day until memory is secure.

Don't bite off more than you can chew.

***You can do this in 5-10 minute increments as study breaks, waiting for dinner, etc.**

STEP 5 – THE TORTOISE RETRACES ITS STEPS

Repeat Step 2

***May be skipped on busy day**

STEP 6 – UN POCO PIU MOSSO

Practice the entire piece or whatever part of the piece you are learning at a slightly faster or $\frac{3}{4}$ tempo speed. If instructed, use the metronome as indicated to gradually increase the tempo.

STEP 7 – IN THE ZONE

In performance mindset, play through the entire piece or whatever part of the piece you are learning. This means total focus, ignoring distractions, and letting yourself get swept away by the music!

***ON THE GO – USEFUL VIRTUAL PRACTICING**

For days that you simply cannot get to a piano to practice, do the following in the car, on the bus, waiting for a sibling, etc.:

*Listen to recordings on You Tube, CD's or your own videos and follow along with your music.

Review notes with music in hand from recent lesson, festival adjudication, etc.

*Step 1 - Treasure Hunt

*Theory & Ear Training on a device (Tone Savvy is one of my favorites!)