



Some Overall Practice Suggestions

1. Use the time before class begins to practice.
2. Get in the habit of practicing every day. Each day, set aside time to practice to commit things to long-term memory, you need to practice the same things consistently over a period of time. Larger instruments, like baritone, may need to work out a different schedule due to logistics.
3. Record your minutes right after you are done practicing, so that you do not forget.

Suggestions for Efficient Practice

1. **Have a Plan** - Possibly keep a notebook to track what you want to accomplish, and the steps you need to take to meet your goals. Record the progress you make each day.
2. **Practice “Chunks” of Music** - Don't just run through all of your music each day and call it good. Instead, take short sections (1-4 measures) of the hardest parts of the music, or the section you are having trouble with, and practice that small chunk.
3. **Use a Metronome/Slow it down** - Using a metronome will help keep all of your rhythms even, and will help you get used to playing in time. You can also use a metronome to slow down difficult sections or passages that you are having trouble playing. Play through the tough spots as slowly as you need to in order to get it right. Once you can play it correctly at the slow tempo, then move the metronome up a few notches, and continue to practice the section. Repeat this until you can play the section at tempo, or even faster than the listed tempo.
4. **Use a Tuner** - Practice with a tuner so you can always check to see if you are playing in tune. You should also know the pitch tendencies for your particular instrument, and any alternate fingerings.
5. **Practice makes PERMANENT, not Perfect** - If you practice things incorrectly, then you are going to start to learn those mistakes, and it will take longer to undo the bad habits. Once you get a hard section learned, try to play it 5 times without a mistake. This will help commit the section to part of your muscle memory.
6. **Move on!** - Sometimes it seems like things we practice over and over just aren't getting any better, and that's when people tend to get frustrated. If this happens, move on to something else you need to practice, or take a break from practicing for a few minutes. This will give you a mental break from the frustrating section. Come back to the same spot later, and continue to work on it.
7. **Simplify** - Work on difficult sections by breaking it down to the most basic elements of music. Practice just the notes of a section one at a time, not in tempo. Work on just the rhythms of a section by clapping or saying the rhythm. Practice the first 2 notes of a section, and then add more notes as they become comfortable. Be creative!
8. **Record Yourself** - Use a tape player, computer, phone, or anything else you might have to record yourself playing through some of your music. We don't often listen to ourselves play, and sometimes you can identify problems much easier if you listen to a recording of yourself.