

Mr. Louie's Best Common Music Practices Document

Jan. 4, 2021

1. PRACTICE

- a. Get started
- b. Challenge yourself
- c. Have fun

2. LEARN

- a. Definitions
- b. Techniques
- c. Theory

3. PLAY

- a. Live
- b. Recording

4. BE CREATIVE

5. REPEAT

Definitions

NOTE - one sound

CHORD - multiple notes in harmony

PITCH (High - Low)

RHYTHM (Fast - Slow or Long - Short)

VOLUME (Dynamics) (Loud, Quiet, Piano, Forte, Mezzo-)

TECHNIQUE - The way you move to do something

THEORY - Talking about something when you're not doing it

REPEAT - Keep repeating. You are probably improving. Eventually you will be making the music you want to hear.

Ask Questions!!!

Repeat !

How we Learn to Play Music

1. Listening

2. Watching
3. Trying/Failing
4. Repeating

Listening

At an early age most people develop the ability to sense information through sound. This is common but it is not quite a universal experience.

Watching

Soon after learning to hear things like parents' voices, a lot of us begin to sense information through our eyes. One of my earliest memories is watching and listening to the theme song of the "Muppet Show." I watched and listened and recognized that I'd seen/heard it before.

Trying

Throughout my childhood, my dad was a professional musician. My aunt was a very skilled pianist and also taught me to read before kindergarten. I had toy pianos and started trying to play the real pianos around our house around age 4-5.

Repeating

After age 5-6 I started trying to copy sounds I heard from my family, plus music from record albums and TV shows. I had a very gradual realization that when I played the piano, it didn't sound as good as when grown ups played it. So I kept repeating things and over time tried to get closer to the sounds I heard. I imagined myself playing that "grown up" way and kept trying to do it.

January 5.

Turning General Concepts into More Specific suggestions for Practicing

Student Example: Bill, 10

Bill is a bright, energetic student who has been playing the piano for about 2-3 years.

Long-term goals: OWNERSHIP OF KNOWLEDGE. Putting knowledge into practice.

Bill might try to practice for the same amount of time, every day at the same time, for about 20 minutes, followed by unstructured play (#3 below). Additional unstructured play may happen any other time(s) during the day!

1. Get Started Estimated Time: 7 minutes
 - a. Easy: Play the following 5-note patterns 10 times each: (2 minutes)
C position (both hands)
G position
D position
One other 5-note pattern
 - b. Play scales (C,G,D,A,E) 3 times each, both hands, 2 octaves (3-5 minutes)
 - c. Play patterns from Hanon or other more challenging warm ups (1-2 minutes)
 - d. Make a note to yourself. Which warmups are fun? Which are challenging? Do you have a favorite? How many times can you play that one? How fast can you play these patterns?

2. Challenges (7-8 minutes)

Challenging music is often New music. (Not always!) Which skills are part of your long term goals? Can you make progress on a big challenge by doing a little bit today? Try to play something from a book if you get stuck.

Keep a running list of songs you're working on.

3. Have FUN! Be creative! Repeat something!

If you can, write down a few notes about what you played during practice time! Try keeping a notebook where you keep track of your progress.

Jan. 6

Take notes! Notes can be in any language. Try to keep the notes simple to start!

Jan 12

Sample Practice log

Hanon pattern in C major - 1 time

5 note patterns in C and D - 10 times each, both hands together

F major scale (challenging)

Repertoire :

Don't Stop Believing (intro both hands) (vocal melody) (next challenge - Left hand chords on verse)

Harp Song p 61, Beautiful Brown Eyes p65,
Happy Birthday to You,
Alouette p 82, Lavenders Blue p 84, London Bridge p 88,

New Challenge: Lone Star Waltz, p 90

Also check out p. 90-100

Sample practice log

Feb 16

Hanon pattern in C - 1 time

5 note patterns in C and D

D major scale 5 times

F major scale 3 times

Review: Don't Stop Believing - Chords used: F, C, Dm, Bb, Am
Alouette 2x - Great dynamics!

Newer challenging songs:

Lone Star Waltz - work on 6ths, movable and alternate positions.

Dancing Queen - getting started with basic elements esp. Melody and vocal harmony part.

Over the Rainbow - melody

Other repertoire: The Entertainer

New song: I'll stand by You (The Pretenders)

Oh susanna, got those blues ect.

Other new music from students in 2021:

Animal Crossing (video game) - KK Slider - "Welcome Horizons"

Undertail (video game) - "Meglovania"
Juice WRLD - "Lucid Dreams"
Beck - "Nacho Libre"