

Developing Effective Practice Habits

“Your time IS VALUABLE! Efficient practice habits help us get the MOST out of our practice time.”

Practice at least
30 minutes per day,
5 days per week

- Eliminate distractions: no TV, no radio, no iPod/iPad, no cell phone, no computer, no dog, no interruptions. This is a time for you to be alone and immersed in music.
- Set goals for each practice session and make sure you understand the “point” of your assigned exercise(s).
If you don't, call, text or email Mr. Jackson for help.
- Practice in front of a mirror to watch your hand movements.
Pay close attention to your arms, wrists, and fingers.
- Start out with a warm-up like “16-on-a-hand” or “400-on-the-hands” and practice at a slow to moderate tempo for about 5 minutes (to concentrate on your technique)
- Then begin your assigned exercise slowly, using your metronome EVERY TIME you practice.
- Play the exercise at least 10-20 times or more until you're comfortable; then 6 times in a row “cleanly” (without mistakes)
- Once you're comfortable with that tempo, increase the tempo 5 bpm, and repeat the process
- Repeat the last step until you can no longer play the exercise comfortably and “cleanly” - then go back down 5 bpm and play another 10-20 times

*****BE PATIENT - TAKE YOUR TIME*****
REWARD yourself for good practice!

Tips for Efficient Practice

- Practice quietly - use your pad to practice hand technique and rudiments; use headphones or earplugs for drumset practice.
- Slow, quiet practice helps the brain process new information quickly and efficiently
- Practice the new hand motions of an exercise slowly to let them “play” themselves - don’t force anything EVER
- Slow practice will help you gain CONTROL at many dynamic levels and tempos
- Slow practice lets you experience some success with new concepts before frustration ensues
- HEAR the rhythm, idea or part in your head, then SING it to yourself before attempting to play it. This will help you truly internalize the music.
- USE A METRONOME EVERY TIME YOU PRACTICE!
Soon your time will BE as consistent as the metronome
(and other musicians will smile!)
- Get “in the groove” with the metronome before beginning the exercise, piece of music, beat, or song. Start by “grooving” to the quarter note pulse, then lock in to the subdivision.
- A great way to check your progress is to record yourself - on your phone, iPod/iPad, computer, or other recorder. This will give you an objective view of your progress.
- Be sure to reward yourself for a productive practice session!