

How To Practice

It's simple. Practicing your instrument every day will make you a better musician! We Wiley Band students know that for our band to succeed, each and every one of us must practice at least 15 minutes per day, 5 days per week. Here are some tips to help you get the most out of your practice time.



Find a distraction-free place to practice, and practice there every day.

Having a regular place to practice can help you focus and grow musically.

Begin by playing a scale or rhythm slowly. Think about these things:

- Do I like my sound? Is it pretty and full?
- How is my posture?
- (for winds) Am I breathing deeply and blowing a steady stream of air through each note?
- (for percussion) Am I using my fulcrum, and moving only my wrists when I play?

Practice in front of a mirror as much as you can.

- Check your posture.
- Make sure your hand position is correct.
- Make sure your embouchure is correct: centered, without tension or puffy cheeks.

Spend time on scales.

First, play your scales slowly to solidify your understanding of the notes. As you get more familiar with the notes, start working on speed and memorization.

Work from your band book each day.

Try to stay several lines ahead of the class. Work for accuracy and make sure to use techniques like counting, sizzling, and fingering to make your practice even more detailed.

Practice your concert music.

Find spots in the music that are tricky and focus on them. Practice your trouble spots slowly at first to make your notes and rhythms accurate. Once you're able to play a trouble spot five times without mistakes, you're ready to go faster.

Pay careful attention to details like:

- Correct notes and fingerings
- Rhythms and subdividing
- Key signatures and accidentals
- Dynamics
- Articulations

Think, Think, Think!

Ten minutes of thoughtful practice is better than hours of playing on "auto pilot." Make sure to think about what you're doing while you practice. Set goals and ask yourself questions--it'll help you become a better musician fast!