

Practice "How-To's"

Environment

- Practice in a quiet room free of distractions.
- Check your instrument condition and perform required daily maintenance (oil valves, grease slides, grease corks, check reeds, etc.).
- Adjust your music stand so that the music is at eye level.
- Sit in a sturdy chair (not on your bed, sofa, etc.).
- Use your metronome.

Goals

- Set goals for your practice time. What do you hope to play better at the end of your practice session today? Keep a notebook with your stand and write these goals down if this helps you.

Warm-up and Scales

- Do your warm-up as assigned by your band director or private teacher.
- Choose a scale or two (as appropriate to your level of development) to learn well today. See "Practicing Smart" below for more information.

Literature Assignment

- Work on your individual assignments, such as private lesson materials, audition etudes, or solo and ensemble selections. See "Practicing Smart" below for more information.
- Work on your assigned band music. See "Practicing Smart" below for more information.
- Review any trouble spots from previous practice sessions.

Concluding Activities

- "Warm Down" by playing long, low notes.
- Clean your instrument and put it away properly.
- Did you meet your practice goals? If not, how can you improve this?
- Record your practice time on the reverse side of this page. *Have a parent sign it on Sunday. Practice cards are due every Monday in class.*
- Organize your materials for class.

Practicing Smart!

1. Break the music down into smaller sections.
2. Look at the key signature and find any affected notes.
3. Identify any unfamiliar notes or rhythms, and look them up.
4. Count and clap the rhythm with a metronome.
5. Finger/ stick through the music.
6. Play the passage slowly with a metronome.
7. As your accuracy improves, gradually speed up the metronome to performance tempo. Never sacrifice accuracy for speed!
8. Once you have prepared this section, repeat this process for the next section.
9. As multiple sections are learned, combine them into larger sections and work on continuity.