

## *Practicing Tips:*

### 20 principles and ideas to guide you along your way

1. Practicing is about being both the teacher and the student. You are sitting down to give yourself a lesson.
2. Understand the phenomenon of *Muscle Memory*.
3. The body loves *routine*. Give it routine!
  - ...what to practice
  - ...time of day
4. Practicing is a *process*
  - ...of discovery
    - ...of ways to make things physically easier
    - ...of musical ideas
5. Include a variety of technical work (scales, arpeggios, slurs — and a variety within each category)
6. Cater your practicing to address your weaknesses.
7. Frequency is important, especially in the beginning stages.
8. “Musicians are athletes of the small muscles.” However, it’s *not* “no pain, no gain.”
9. Don’t skimp on, or skip, warm-up.
10. All notes are *not* created equal: some are more difficult than others; some are more important than others. Practice disproportionately. Playing your pieces from A to Z over and over again is inefficient.
11. Fix a problem *now*. Don’t use the “erosion” method.
12. “The shortest pencil is better than the longest memory.”
13. The right hand is just as important as the left hand. Establish fingerings in *both* hands as early on as possible.
14. There are different *kinds* of practicing:
  - ...technique
  - ...musicality
  - ...sight readingKnow what your goals are for any given effort.
15. Rhythm is tied for number one. Never shortchange rhythm or postpone rhythmic accuracy.
16. Don’t postpone musicality. Incorporate musicality as early on as possible.
17. Do postpone final tempo. Make tempo your ally, not your adversary.
18. Sure, it’s important how much you practice, but it’s even more important *how* you practice.
19. Record yourself occasionally. A major goal is to hear your own playing accurately.
20. It’s your show! *YOU* are in charge!

If you’re not sure what I mean by any of the above points, feel free to get in touch with me.