

BANDMASTER STUDIO

Clarinet / Sax / Flute

"The Art of Practicing"

Old sayings:

1. Practice for results
2. Practice makes perfect
3. Practice when you are at your peak
4. Practice daily for daily improvement
5. Practicing correctly yields higher proficiency
6. Remember, there is a correct way to practice

Recommended Practice Session:

1. Warm up (Long tones—Work for greater control and beauty of the sound)
2. Technical Studies (Concentrate heavily on scales, thirds, and arpeggios)
3. Etudes (Approach them as an unaccompanied solo)
4. Solos and Excerpts (Reflective of and dependent on the level of the player)
5. Sight Reading (Duets and rhythmic patterns)

Practical tips before starting to Practice:

1. Determine what you intend to accomplish. Some sessions might focus more or less in certain areas, (scales, chords, technical passages, etc) but know what you need to work on and stick to it. Having a list is a great idea, and use it to check things off as you progress through it.
2. Work with your metronome. Practice at a variety of tempos, always progressing slower to faster.
3. Utilize a variety of articulations when practicing scales and arpeggios.
4. Apply what I call the "3 to 5" rule. If you can play something accurately 3 times, bump up the tempo. If you can play it accurately 3 times, then playing it 5 times is even better.
5. Above all, learn to be a critical listener. This doesn't mean you beat yourself up every time you make a mistake, but that you genuinely begin to evaluate your own playing. Don't be lured into proud mediocrity.

Practical factors for good tone production:

Characteristic embouchure, proper breath control, good posture, and listening.

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