

COMMUNICATING PRACTICE STRATEGIES

...from the first lesson





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ENGAGE

We all know that practice is important. The first couple of weeks of lessons is a fabulous time to establish good practice strategies and for them to learn effective ways to spend their practice time. It's also important to parents that they can see and hear their child engaging in playing their instrument at home. It's a happy cycle! Your student will experience faster progress and more success if they are practicing well, the parents will be pleased to see their child engaging with their new pursuit and you will have a student who is reinforcing their learning at home.

So how do you have that conversation?

Throughout the lesson, check-in with your student that they can recall the things they have learnt.

It's easy to make a game of it, ask if they can do it again all by themselves. This mini-review of learning will show you if they know how to do it when they go home (recall is vital for successful practice).

Review what they've learnt at the end.

Towards the end of the lesson, review what they've learnt, and ask them if they feel confident that they can play what they've learnt at home this week all by themselves. If they don't, you've still got an opportunity to play it again. A practice diary, or app can also be helpful for students to keep track of the things they are going to work on between lessons.

Why Practice is important.

At the end of the lesson I have a quick conversation with the parent and student, discussing why practice is important, and how they can practice this week. Parents being involved in this conversation helps to support the student as they develop these early practice habits.



If you're stuck, here are a couple of things I use:

- 1. I'd love it if you could show everyone what you learnt in your lesson when you get home tonight!**
- 2. I wonder if you will be able to play the things we learnt each day until you see me next?**
- 3. If you do a little bit of practice each day, the things you learnt today will be so good by next week we can start exploring some new things.**
- 4. Practising each day helps your brain and hands to move in the new ways they are learning. It's going to help you learn super fast!**
- 5. Do you like having a timer or prefer not to have that? Some of my students love using a timer to remind them to practice, or set themselves practice time goals each day. Other students prefer to have more open-ended time to explore their instrument. We'll find the things you like as we go along.**
- 6. When you're setting up your chair or practice space and checking your posture, do you think you could get mum or dad to take a photo for me so I can see too? (this is also an excellent way for you to see what their home practice set up is like and if they are sitting in a good position).**
- 7. I'm really looking forward to hearing how you went with your practice next week! See if you can explore all of the cool sounds you can make and really listen while you're practising!**