



# HV Bands

H o p e w e l l V a l l e y

## Practice Guide and Resources

*Source: Composer, conductor, clinician, and educator Chris M. Bernotas; edited David Schwartz*

### Develop a Practice Plan:

1. Set a specific time and day for practice. For example, Monday 3:45- 4:15.  
*Start with 30 minutes, 1 day a week with the goal of increasing your weekly practice time. More frequent practice sessions that are focused and shorter in length are better than very long practice sessions that only happen once a week.*
2. Set specific goals. Goals help you focus on the task at hand.  
*If you're not sure what to work on, check in with your teacher for suggestions on warming up and music*
3. Break down the practice session into approximate timed segments:

**Warm-up (5-10 minutes):** For example, for wind players: Major scale in whole notes concentrating on air support, listening to tone quality and intonation. For percussionists: Play sustained open and closed rolls listening for a clean and clear sound while focusing on the proper grip, stick height, and control. Rhythm Patterns with scales

**Literature (10-15 minutes) or Technique Study/Etude:** Focus on a passage that presents a challenge. Work through it slowly, applying skills taught in the band room (counting rhythms, checking finger placement, articulation patterns, etc.). Break the phrase down into smaller segments, one measure at a time, or even 2-3 notes at a time if it is a particularly difficult passage. The key is to focus on a specific challenge. Isolate and repeat. At first, the 'tricky fingering' will be awkward, or uncomfortable. After repeating it (correctly) the discomfort will lessen, and the technical challenge of the passage will become easier to play, resulting in a more enjoyable experience for the student and actually fun! Once these smaller segments become more comfortable, add them together to create longer segments, and eventually a whole phrase.

**Celebration (10-15 minutes):** Once the hard part is over, be sure to celebrate by performing, and reinforcing, the music you practiced today, and other days, ensuring that you retain that love of music, realizing that the hard work you put in helps make this celebration of the fun in music come to life.



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## Practice Plan

*A Suggested Guide*

### Warm-Up Checklist ( \_\_\_\_ minutes):

\_\_\_\_ Breathing/Stretching/Mindfulness (*prepare your mind and body!*)

\_\_\_\_ Long tones (*Sustain each note of your \_\_ scale for 10 seconds Was it a good sound? Was it supported?*)

\_\_\_\_ Scales/Rudiments (*pick a scale/rudiment that is challenging and work on it slowly*)

\_\_\_\_ Lip Slurs/Range Exercises (*focus on tension free, open, resonant sound*)

- Are you always playing with a great tone? Tone is **the** most important thing!
- Can you come up with your own exercises focused on improving your tone/articulation?

### Literature/Etude ( \_\_\_\_ minutes):

- Find 2 passages that need special attention.
- Isolate the specific areas of the passages that need practice.
- Do you need to work on the rhythm? Notes? Expression? Something else?
- Practice each section slowly and use your critical thinking skills to figure out a solution to what the problem is.
- Now, repeat the section 5 times correctly (*put a checkmark for each successful performance*):

1. \_\_\_\_      2. \_\_\_\_      3. \_\_\_\_      4. \_\_\_\_      5. \_\_\_\_      6. \_\_\_\_ (bonus!)

### Celebration ( \_\_\_\_ minutes):

- What was your favorite part of the piece you practiced today?
- What is your favorite piece you are playing in band?
- What is your favorite pop song? Can you figure out the melody and play along with it?
- Do you remember a piece you played last year in band? Can you play it from memory?



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## Practice Record

*A suggestion! Create your own log to help you keep track of your practice.*

Date:	Notes
Warm Up (Time: ____)	
What's Next:	
Literature/Etude (Time: ____)	
What's Next:	
Celebration/Fun (Time: ____)	

Date:	Notes
Warm Up (Time: ____)	
What's Next:	
Literature/Etude (Time: ____)	
What's Next:	
Celebration/Fun (Time: ____)	



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**Wynton's 12 Ways to Practice Music**



1. Seek out instruction
2. Write out a schedule
3. Set goals
4. Concentrate
5. Relax and practice slowly
6. Practice harder things longer
7. Practice with expression
8. Learn from your mistakes
9. Don't show off
10. Think for yourself
11. Be optimistic
12. Look for connections

Source: [Wynton Marsalis](#): musician, composer, educator, conductor

PRACTICE

MAKES

PERFEKT



Source [Tone Deaf Comics](#)

Practice Makes Permanent -

Be sure to practice for accuracy, beauty, control, precision, etc. Don't practice bad habits.