

Improve your Practice by Improving Your Space - The Benefits of a Peaceful Practice Area

By Christina Thompson

An easy way to become a better musician is to make your practice more effective. One way you can enhance your practice is to set up a special place and time to practice each day.



Many people practice in noisy, distracting places, or try to squeeze in practice whenever they find some free time. Doing either of these things can make practice difficult and unrewarding. Practice is a focused activity like studying, so finding a quiet practice spot and setting up a special time to practice can help you become a better musician in less time. This article will show you how to create your own practice area and time, so that you can begin to reap the benefits of focused, purposeful practice.

Begin by finding a place that helps you concentrate. Many people work best in a quiet place that is out of the way of other people, like in a bedroom or garage. Practicing in a private area cuts down on distractions, keeps you focused on the task at hand, and makes it easier to hear what you're playing. Choosing a practice space with some privacy can help you detect and fix mistakes that you might miss in a busier area.

Make sure your practice area has adequate lighting and enough space for you and your instrument to move freely. Having plenty of light in your practice area makes it easier to see what you're doing, and helps you stay focused on your work. Making sure you have enough space to move around comfortably can help you practice more effectively as well. If your practice spot is cramped, you won't feel comfortable and won't enjoy practicing as much. By playing in a cramped area, you may also put yourself at risk for developing bad posture habits that can affect your playing. On the other hand, if your practice space is comfortable and well-lit, practicing will be much easier and healthier.

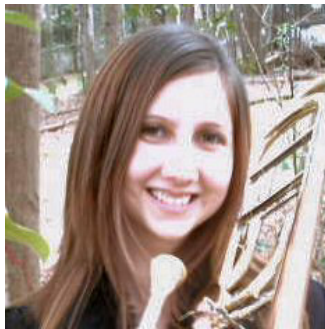
Next, equip your space with materials you'll need for a successful practice session. At the very least, you need your instrument, a chair and a music stand. Since playing music is a physical activity, having a glass of water nearby is a good idea. Drinking water during practice keeps your body hydrated and working its best. Keep a pencil, your music books, and a notebook to jot down what you're working on in your practice space as well. As you begin learning more advanced concepts, consider adding a metronome and a tuner to your practice space, so you can do more detailed practice. Keep all your materials in your practice space; that way, you can spend your time practicing, instead of searching for your stuff.

After you've found a nice spot and equipped it with tools to help you work on music, consider

when you'll practice. Practicing can be hard work, especially when you're just getting started, so leaving your practice time to chance often leads to no practice at all! Try setting up a regular practice time each day and sticking to it. Practicing at a certain time every day gets you into the habit of regular practice--and regular practice helps you become a better musician!

While you don't want to have too many distractions in your practice area, you can still make it your own. Hanging up pictures of your favorite musicians or adding decorations can make your practice space more comfortable and inviting. As long as you have plenty of space to move around and your decorations don't get in the way of your practice materials, decorating your place can make practicing more fun.

People create special places and times to work, play, and sleep. Creating your own special place and time to practice can help you get more done, make practicing easier, and encourage you to do it more often!



Christina Thompson is a professional trombonist and music educator living in Raleigh, North Carolina. Christina is dedicated to helping trombonists of all ages discover, develop, and enjoy their signature musical sound in a positive, healthy environment. For more information, please visit <http://www.summerqlen-music.com>.