

Suggested Practice Guidelines for Winds

1. Play music that you find fun. Take out some of your favorite pieces and play through them.
2. Tuning exercise. Play the tuning disk starting with the appropriate Bb and play the concert Bb scale with that note. Practice making a full, rich, and consistent tone throughout this process. (Brass players should play the scale at least once on the mouthpiece and then on the instrument.) Listen carefully for each interval as you go up the scale. Experiment with playing the tuning note an octave higher, starting on the top note of the scale, and then coming down.
3. Scale work. Practice the scales that you know or that we are working on in either sectionals or band with the tuning disk. Strive to make every note in tune with a good sound. Practice scales slowly. Once you can play the scale in tune at a slow tempo, practice the 1; 1,2,1; 1,2,3,2,1, exercise. Again, go as slowly as necessary to be accurate before trying to play faster.
4. Assigned music. All students should have assigned music from their sectional group as well as the ensemble. You should know in what concert key the music is written and play with the tuning disc sounding that key note. Take the time to make sure everything is played correctly and practice in small chunks. Work out the difficult technical passages slowly and, if necessary, by removing articulations, particularly slurs. Then gradually speed up the passage to get to the tempo you need, adding articulations as it becomes more comfortable.
5. Try to play consistently. Taking a few days off can really stop your momentum. Everyday playing is much more beneficial for tone development and technical prowess.