

Suggested Practice Guidelines

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 track 1. Lower the pitch first, then raise the pitch to match the tuning note. Practice making a full, rich, and consistent tone throughout this process. Listen carefully to the beats that happen when the two sounds clash. The slower the beats, the closer you are to playing in tune. If the beats start getting faster as you raise the pitch, go back the first step and lower the pitch again. Do this exercise on all strings.
3. Tone exercise. Pick a note and play it many times to make the sound better. Practice your bowing in the mirror. Make sure that the bow is going straight (perpendicular to the strings). Keep your elbow in the same place. Reset your bow grip before changing strings. Concentrate on making each note sound better than the last. Also concentrate on the beginning, middle, and end of the note to make sure all are correct. A good guideline is to play the note you are working on 50 times.
4. Scale work. Practice the scales that you know with the tuning disk. Strive to make every note in tune with a good sound. Practice scales slowly as well as fast.
5. Assigned music. All students should have assigned music from their sectional group as well as the ensemble. Whether it is an item on a sticker chart or a piece that will be played in a concert. Take the time to make sure everything is played correctly, use the tuning disk, and practice in small chunks.
6. Try to play consistently. Taking a few days off can really stop your momentum.