

Practice Workshop Intensive: Summary Sheet

Introduction: What causes you the most frustration when practicing? What would your ideal practice look like?

Joaness

- Development takes time
- There's too much to practice
- How many times to reshuffle routine?
- When to practice something different?
- Forget what to practice
- What's the limit? Will I forget something if I practice too much for too long?

John

- Overwhelmed by too many things
- Don't know where to start
- Playing pieces from start to end is the final hump

Jean-Francois

- Overwhelmed with complex timing
- Difficulties turn me away
- Fingering: what's the best fingering? Don't want to waste time struggling with a bad fingering!
- Lack of excitement by feeling overwhelmed
- Tremolo is something I want to improve
- Finding time is challenging
- Middle-ground to practice and improve
- Motivation
- Setting realistic goals, not thinking "I'll play this like John Williams in 1 week".

Yvonne

- Practice routine is organized but eventually I don't follow it.
- How to go from conquering bits to a full piece
- Balance practice vs. performing esp. old pieces

Shirley (harpist)

- Left and right hands to have right timing
- Lost in the music, middle-ground between memorization

Deb

- Work commitments
- Only focus on pieces I'm learning
- Progressing too slowly
- Not judging myself
- More planning needed

Some ideas to help solve these problems:

A routine to establish

- Warm up
- Studies
- Old Pieces
- New Pieces

Following this routine helps you feel a sense of accomplishment as your practice unfolds over time.

Practice Tools

- Mirror
- Pencils
- Metronome
- Timer

These are tools of self reflection, which can help you make the most of your practice. Make sure they are in close range of where you practice!

When to analyze a piece?

- Analyze the basic features of a piece first: form, keys and phrases for example.
- Next get the piece under your fingers
- Finally, do a more in-depth study of chords, counterpoint, etc.

If you analyze a piece in-depth from the beginning, it might feel overwhelming and overly intellectual.

Please refer to the Practice Set Up document for more information
[Click Here](#)

Summary of Practice Methods

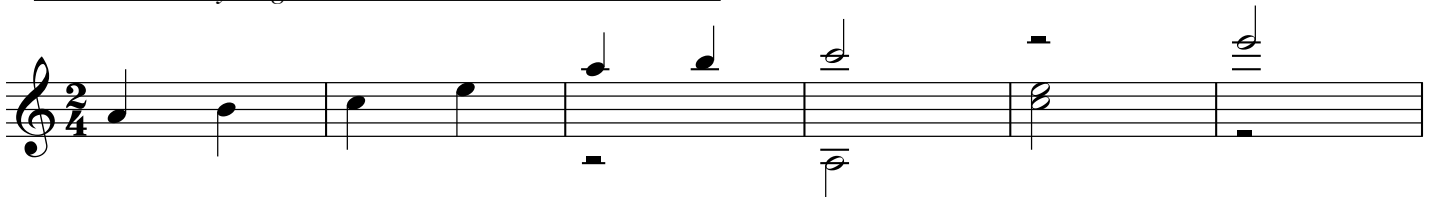
Slow Practice: Joannes plays Maria Luisa by Sagreras

- When asked to play at a slow pace, the tempo is not much different.
- After imagining the music being written in slower note values, Joannes then played it significantly slower.

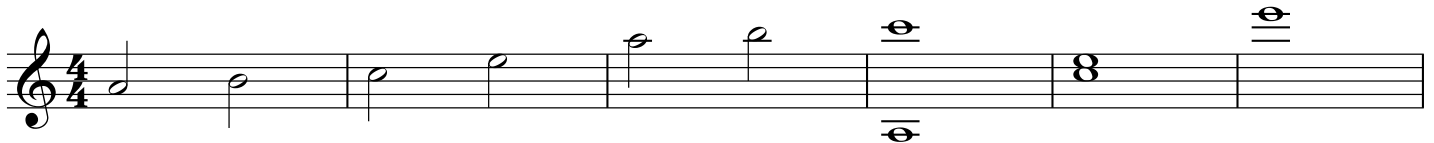
Maria Luisa by Sagreras: Original note values



Maria Luisa by Sagreras: Doubled note values - slow



Maria Luisa by Sagreras: Quadrupled note values - very slow



What piece can you apply this thinking to, to “trick” yourself into playing super duper slow?

As an extra exercise, you could write out a passage in slower note values. The eye plays a powerful role in how we perceive music and sound. If it looks slower, it's easier for us to play it slower.

Looping: Shirley plays O'Carolan's Weclome by O'Carolan

- Shirley played 3 bars of this piece and focused on two different enhancements
- The first enhancement was to increase the legato. Shirley looped the 3 bars 3 times and by the third one, managed to significantly enhance the legato. The first two runs were like a journey to figure out how to achieve the desired effect.

O'Carolan's Welcome by O'Carolan

m a m
i
p

Loop this 3 times in a row and increase the legato each time

- Shirley next decided on some dynamics to shape the music with.
- It's really crucial to write these decisions into your score!
- Shirley they looped the same passage again three times and dramatically enhanced the dynamic shape of these bars.

m a m
i
p

Loop this 3 times in a row and increase the dynamic execution each time

What piece can you apply this process to, to enhance the execution of your interpretation.

Ensure that you write in any decisions you make into the score (dynamics, fingerings, thoughts), as that can help your ideas crystalize and increase the amount that you commit to your decisions.

Looping: Deb plays El Negrito by Lauro

- Deb wanted to enhance the dynamic effect that she desired to execute. Deb wanted the end of each sub-phrase to taper off in volume.
- This started as a more general idea and then became more specific (especially through reference to the score).
- Studying the harmony also helped add some further dimension into the dynamics. The G major harmony can be painted with a brighter color, while the A minor and E minor harmonies can be painted with a darker one.
- Deb looped these bars about 5 times and significantly enhanced the dynamic shaping by the end!

El Negrito by Lauro

The image shows a musical score for 'El Negrito by Lauro' in 3/4 time. The score is written on a single staff in treble clef. It consists of four measures. The first measure is a pickup measure with a whole rest on the first beat and a quarter note on the second beat. The second measure contains a quarter note on the first beat and a half note on the second beat. The third measure contains a quarter note on the first beat and a half note on the second beat. The fourth measure contains a quarter note on the first beat and a half note on the second beat. Handwritten annotations in blue ink include: 'poco pont' under the first measure, 'G' above the second measure, 'am' above the third measure, 'Em' above the fourth measure, and 'tasto' under the third measure. Blue arrows point from the annotations to the corresponding notes in the score.

Don't just refine technical details, but more importantly, refine musical details.

Looping can help your musical interpretation and expressive effects become ingrained into your execution.

Separate Parts: John plays Arioso BWV 156 by Bach

- John chose a perfect example for this kind of practice method, where you separate the melody and accompaniment (or whatever various parts there are) and practice them individually.
- The melody was practiced first to great effect. To start with, this method is excellent for our sight-reading.
- What does playing the melody on its own reveal? How do you want to shape it and express it?
- The accompaniment was next. John found some extra dimensions and layers within the accompaniment part and this produced a great effect when the parts were combined together again.

Arioso BWV 156 by Bach (arr. Boyd.) (N.B. John used arr. David Russell)

The image shows a musical score for the piece 'Arioso BWV 156 by Bach (arr. Boyd.)'. The score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff for the melody and a bass clef staff for the accompaniment. The melody is marked with 'A' and 'B' in boxes. The accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4 and 5. Dynamics include 'p' (piano) and 'a' (accents). There are also some performance markings like 'CII', 'CIV', and 'i m i m'.

Melody only

The image shows the melody part of the piece 'Arioso BWV 156 by Bach (arr. Boyd.)' in G major, 4/4 time. The melody is written on a treble clef staff. It starts with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and then a series of eighth notes: B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7, D7, E7, F7, G7, A7, B7, C8, D8, E8, F8, G8, A8, B8, C9, D9, E9, F9, G9, A9, B9, C10, D10, E10, F10, G10, A10, B10, C11, D11, E11, F11, G11, A11, B11, C12, D12, E12, F12, G12, A12, B12, C13, D13, E13, F13, G13, A13, B13, C14, D14, E14, F14, G14, A14, B14, C15, D15, E15, F15, G15, A15, B15, C16, D16, E16, F16, G16, A16, B16, C17, D17, E17, F17, G17, A17, B17, C18, D18, E18, F18, G18, A18, B18, C19, D19, E19, F19, G19, A19, B19, C20, D20, E20, F20, G20, A20, B20, C21, D21, E21, F21, G21, A21, B21, C22, D22, E22, F22, G22, A22, B22, C23, D23, E23, F23, G23, A23, B23, C24, D24, E24, F24, G24, A24, B24, C25, D25, E25, F25, G25, A25, B25, C26, D26, E26, F26, G26, A26, B26, C27, D27, E27, F27, G27, A27, B27, C28, D28, E28, F28, G28, A28, B28, C29, D29, E29, F29, G29, A29, B29, C30, D30, E30, F30, G30, A30, B30, C31, D31, E31, F31, G31, 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