

PRACTICE TIPS

- Attach practice to an existing routine. Straight after afternoon tea, before screen time, or after brushing teeth works better than “whenever there’s time.”
- Aim for consistency rather than long practice sessions. Ten focused minutes x3 times a week is more effective than one stressful 30 minute play the day before a lesson.
- Keep the instrument visible and accessible. Children are far more likely to practise if the instrument isn’t packed away in a cupboard.
- Lower the definition of “success.” Some days practice might simply mean playing one song, reviewing tricky bars, or even setting up the instrument independently.
- Encourage “micro-practice.” Five minutes while dinner cooks or before sport training still counts and keeps momentum going.
- Focus on progress, not perfection. Comment positively on effort, confidence, posture, rhythm, or persistence rather than only correct notes.
- Let children perform informally. Playing for grandparents, siblings, pets, or even a phone recording gives practice a purpose.
- Use listening as practice too. Listening to pieces in the car helps children absorb rhythm, tone, and musical style even when they’re too busy to play.
- Accept that some weeks will be chaotic. Exams, sports tournaments, illness, and family commitments happen. A missed week is not failure — just restart gently.
- Avoid turning practice into a battle. A calm, encouraging environment usually builds longer-lasting motivation than pressure or punishment.
- Ask the teacher for a “minimum practice plan.” Many teachers can suggest a realistic version for particularly busy weeks.
- Celebrate tiny wins. Learning four bars smoothly, remembering to unpack the instrument, or practising without being reminded are all genuine achievements.
- If your child is exhausted, shorten the session rather than skipping entirely. Ending with success helps maintain confidence and habit.
- Remember that music education is about more than musical skill. Children are learning perseverance, listening, discipline, creativity, confidence, and emotional expression.

