



# Miami Arts Studio 6-12 @ Zelda Glazer

The Rules to Good Practicing  
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# Decide your philosophy

- As a parent, you have to decide your parental philosophy regarding your child learning a musical instrument, as well as to their participation in orchestra magnet.
- If you do not have a philosophy about this, your child will most likely run into a motivation barrier and stop progressing.
- Think about why it's important for your child to learn an instrument.
- Think about what energy, time, and money YOU are willing to put into that endeavor as a parent and as a family.



# #1. Pick a consistent time

- Either pick a specific time every day that your child will practice OR have them practice at the same time in the order of their day (i.e. when they get home, after or before dinner, etc.)
- Having practice being part of the routine of their day makes it less of a point of argument or complaint.



## #2. Have a designated area in the house for practice

- Make sure that the area is quite and free from distraction
- Make sure that they area is clutter free
- Make sure that all their music materials are in the general area
- Make sure that they have **NO ACCESS** to electronics in the area or have the electronics removed to help them focus



# #3. Practice is NOT optional

- Practice should be enforced in your home, just like homework.
- If you feel like practice is an optional event in your home, your child will know and work to make sure that they do not have to practice by complaining until you give in.
- As an orchestra magnet student, every child is **REQUIRED** to practice for the time required by their orchestra level.



# #4. Practice is about QUALITY , not quantity....though quantity doesn't hurt!

- Good practice is very difficult to listen to. It should focus on a small section at a time and be VERY slow. All practice should start with clear goals and intention!
- Depending on the age and goals of your child their necessary practice time will change. On average, a serious string student with a private teacher will have a goal of practicing 60-180 minutes five days a week.
- Quality practice is very much like a meditation...it is complete focus. A child who is practicing well will lose track of time, and can be easily startled by passerby's.
- Practicing should focus on building technical, musical and performance skills. Students should usually focus on the DIFFICULT parts of a piece or exercise first.
- At the end of every practice session, at least 15 minutes should be reserved for "performance practice time," where the piece or exercise is played straight through without stopping with the goal of telling their story.



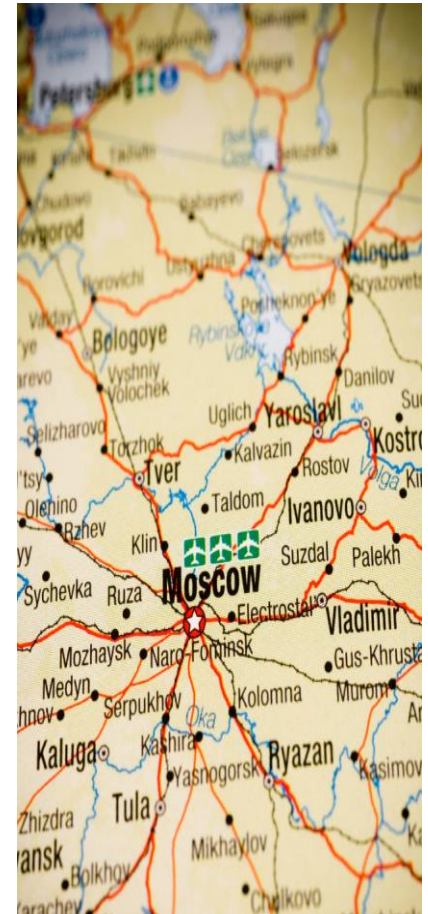
# #6. Students should have long and short-term goals.

- Students should review their long-term goals EVERY YEAR!
- Students should review where they are in relation to their goals at least every month or nine weeks.
- Students should have monthly, yearly and school level goals.
- Students should regularly look at the requirements needed to reach their long term goals.



# Students need a guide.

- If your child is eager to audition for honors and All-State groups, and is hoping to progress into Level 6 Orchestra, it is time to consider hiring a private teacher.
- When looking for a private teacher, make sure that you look at their qualifications and experience helping children reach similar goals that your child has. If you don't know how to read music qualifications, ask someone who does to help you.
- I strongly recommend having a trial lesson to see if the teacher and the student are comfortable with each other. A private teacher is more like a mentor and less like a school teacher, so it is very important that the student feels a positive rapport with the teacher.





# Students should have instruments that match their technical level.

- When a parent purchases an instrument for their child, that child sees their musical growth as very important to their parents, which makes it even more important for them.
- When a student has an instrument that is at their technical level, they have more motivation to practice and excel on their instrument because they are able to sound how they want and they are able to do the techniques they are learning in class/lessons.
- When a student has their own instrument that is the correct size and quality for their playing level, they feel special...no matter how much or how little the cost of the instrument.



# Being a parent of a musically gifted child is not always easy....

- Musicians, even young ones, tend to be very emotional, sensitive and perceptive. This can be very difficult as a parent to deal with, especially if you are not the same way.
- Young musicians experience the world around them differently. At times they can be very focused and determined while other times they can't get a tune out of their head and can become completely distracted by it. This can be annoying to parents, but it is completely normal.
- As parents of young musicians, it is important to focus on your child having balance. Balance is often a challenge....musicians tend to have the pendulum on one side or another.
- It is common for parents to think that because their child is musically gifted, they will want to practice. That is 100% untrue. Most children begin to fight practicing at one point or another. It is then that you have to decide if your child will make decisions about their music education, or if you will make those decisions for them.
- Many young musicians are perfectionists at heart. This can make them easily frustrated. It is important to teach them patience, especially when practicing their instrument. Practicing should be seen as neutral problem solving. Like putting together a complicated puzzle.
- When other people are laughing, crying, dancing, grieving...musicians practice or play their instruments. It's the way we laugh, cry, dance, giggle, heal and celebrate. It's strange, but it's the truth. Your child is in orchestra magnet, which means that music is in them...regardless of how much they make it a part of their lives. It is something that speaks to their heart like nothing else does. It doesn't mean that they won't show emotions like every other child does, it just means that they feel like music is a way to show them too. Knowing this can sometimes help parents of musically gifted children use their talent not only to learn an instrument, but also to learn about life and how to deal with the many emotions that we experience.
- Orchestra students tend to be introverted. It is important to give them time to be quiet or reflective. People with introverted personalities have wonderful friendships and a great time, they just do it in their own (usually quieter) way. Encouraging orchestra students to be social is a great thing, just make sure that it is shared with time for them to recharge how they like to relax, which is usually listening to music or being quiet.