

1. **Schedule your practice time.** Decide how many days each week, and how many minutes each day, you will practice. Write a specific time for each day in your calendar to practice, and stick to it, just as you would any other scheduled activity, such as sports practice, a play rehearsal, or a class.
2. **Practice without distractions.** Silence your phone, and no texting. Avoid interruptions from family or friends coming in and out of the room where your piano is located. The more you can fully concentrate on your practicing, the more you will accomplish during your practice time.
3. **Divide up your daily practice time.** If you plan to practice 30 minutes each day, but don't have space in your schedule to do it all at once, you could do two 15 minute sessions, or a 20 minute and a 10 minute session, or any combination that adds up to the amount you intend to practice.
4. **Spread your practice time evenly over the week.** Do your best to practice the same amount each day. Doing all of your practicing or in one or two days won't work. Daily repetition is needed to accumulate new skills, and it can't be rushed or learned in one session.
5. **Have a plan before you start.** Decide (with the help of your teacher) exactly what you will practice each day, how you will practice it, and for how long. Be specific with your goals for each day, and for what you wish to accomplish in the week.
6. **Use your metronome.** Start slowly, at a speed you can play everything correctly. Gradually increase the speed as you become more familiar with the piece. You will learn music more quickly and accurately when you practice slowly; and you will feel more secure and confident with the finished work when you play it up to tempo.
7. **Start with scales.** Playing your scales (and any other technical exercises) first, not only helps get your hands warmed-up, but it also helps your mind to become focused and concentrated before working on your music. Also, if you put off playing your scales to the end of your practice session, you are more likely to skip it.
8. **Isolation and repetition.** Find and practice the most difficult measures first. Play those measures slowly and hands separately, before putting them together. Set a number of correct repetitions to achieve before moving on. For example, take two difficult measures and play the left hand alone 10x's, then the right alone 10x's, then hands together 10x's.
9. **Sight read every day.** Pianists who are good readers become so because they play new music frequently. The best way to learn to sight read is to read new music everyday. The more difficult your pieces become, the longer they will take to master, and you are likely to spend less time reading new music, which can result in weaker sight reading skills. Just take five minutes out of every practice session to read a new piece of music to keep your reading skills sharp.
10. **Memorize early and often.** Memory is like a muscle: the more you use it, the stronger it gets. And, the sooner you start to memorize a piece, the more secure your memory will be. Make memorizing part of the learning process. Even with pieces you don't intend to perform, memorize them anyway to help develop and strengthen your skill at playing from memory.

