

# PRACTICE TIPS

## What can you do?

- Have 5-minute breaks.
- If something doesn't turn out the way you want it to, try again later or try playing it differently.
- Find a suitable time and place for practicing (good concentration, when you are not tired, etc.).

- Spend the same amount of time practicing each week.
- If you have to play more often or change how you play, make the changes gradually.
- Stop if you are uncomfortable.

- Buy a bag with broad straps that can be worn like a backpack.
- Choose something you enjoy.
- Don't make you practice too much.
- Buy well designed accessories that reduce weight and help your body's natural posture.

## How can your parents help?

- Set up a good space: light, temperature, good ventilation and acoustic reverberation.
- Ensure you have the right measurements and sizes for your body.
- The most famous musicians do the exercises on the following page...

## Test of most common problems:

- Have you ever felt uncomfortable or experienced pain when you play?  Yes  No
- Do you get tired when you play?  Yes  No
- Do your arms, back or mouth hurt after playing?  Yes  No

- Are you tenser than you need be?  Yes  No
- Is any one finger harder to move than the others?  Yes  No

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, we are sorry to say you are made of flesh and blood just like other musicians! So to prevent future problems and improve your performance you should look after your body.

Make sure all the pieces are finely-tuned



# Are your made

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# muscles of steel?

# WARMING UP AND COOLING DOWN

## Recommended exercises for before and after playing an instrument:

- Do these exercises always before and after playing, during breaks, when you feel discomfort...
- Breathe naturally.
- Movements should be slow and smooth; do not tug or make abrupt movements.

- The exercises should never cause you pain.
- Everybody has a different level of flexibility. Don't compare yourself with other people when you do the exercises.
- If you don't feel well, see your doctor.

### SHOULDERS

Roll your shoulders backwards in a circle.

Repeat 10 times.



### NECK STRETCH

Roll your head slowly from one side to the other as far as you can. Try not to raise your shoulders.

Repeat 10 times.



### FRONT NECK STRETCH

Lower your head towards one shoulder, without raising the shoulder.

Hold for 20 to 30 seconds then repeat on the other side.



### FRONT NECK STRETCH

Lower your head towards your shoulder, without letting it rise. From this position stretch your head forwards and feel the tension in the back of the neck.

Hold for 20 to 30 seconds then repeat on the other side.



### FIST

Clench your fist, with the thumb tucked inside. Hold your fist with the other hand. Bend your wrist while you stretch your forearm.

Hold for 20 to 30 seconds then repeat with the other forearm.



### OUTWARDS HAND STRETCH

Use one hand to gently pull the wrist of the other hand backwards, keeping the fingers and elbow stretched.

Hold for 20 to 30 seconds then repeat with the other forearm.



### PALM

Bring the tips of the fingers on both hands together. Then bring your hands together so that the fingers are touching fully. Don't stretch the wrist backwards or lower your elbows. Don't bring your palms together.

Hold for 20 to 30 seconds.



### PECTORAL

Lean your arm against a corner or doorframe with the elbow bent and the shoulder stretched behind. Bring the shoulder forwards.

Hold for 20 to 30 seconds then repeat with the other arm.



### BACK

With both legs slightly bent, let your body fall forwards, arching your back.

Hold for 40 to 50 seconds.

