

## **SUGGESTED PRACTICE SCHEDULE**

(Use of a timer is recommended)

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| Pre-Kindergarteners | (5–10 minutes) with direct Adult Supervision                             |
| Kindergarteners     | (10–15 minutes) depending on attention capability Plus Adult Supervision |
| Grades 1 – 5        | (30–45 minutes) 2 to 3 sets of 15 minute duration per day                |
| Grade 6 – 12        | (1 Hour) 30 minute splits early evening( after school) and late evening  |

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARENTS FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICING**

1. Decide on a practice time and Post a written daily practice schedule on your refrigerator. This makes time–management possible, so that practice is not skipped. FYI: To be prepared for a classical guitar lesson, a student should not skip practicing any day during the week.
2. If your child is a beginner, it is necessary to sit down next to your child during home practice times on the day after the lesson. The day after a lesson session is the most important day to start practicing a new assignment—this way the child is able to RETAIN what was taught.

Other practice days, you can try giving the students the responsibility to practice on their own. Remember that some children experience a feeling of isolation when practicing a musical instrument and lose motivation if no one is nearby to listen to them practice.

3. At least once a week check student notebook entries to see if practice technique suggestions are being followed. Parents are to ensure that a minimum of 6–days of PRACTICE ENTRY is made on the PRACTICE ASSIGNMENT SHEET. Weekly lesson notebook journals make provision for this form of tracking.

Remember that confident piano–playing happens as a result of regular daily careful practice, not from “crammed” practice done at the last minute. Habits of procrastination create anguish and failure in a “performance.”

4. Fingernails of left hand must be clipped and kept VERY short to allow correct hand position. It is impossible to learn to play the classical guitar correctly unless the fingertips touch the strings on the fret board at all times, with fingers standing COMPLETELY VERTICAL at the tips. Then, the first joints above each fingernail can learn to be firm and stable, not wobbly, for control and mastery of the touches required. Fingernails of right hand must be trimmed, sanded and kept clean regularly so that there is always a minimum of 1/16 inch of fingernail. The little amount of fingernail helps students produce a louder and clearer sound from their guitar.
5. Provide a music stand–lamp or other good lighting for the student’s music page. Students hate to practice if they can’t see the music well. Good lighting also prevents eye–strain.

6. A good firm practicing bench allows for proper posture which creates a good sound on the instrument. Also, make sure the distance between the bench and the footstool is NOT TOO FAR since this will prevent the upper leg (thigh)– and the lower leg (shin) from forming the “L” shape necessary to be able to support hold the guitar well.
7. Children younger than 4th grade may need help with ATTENTION SPAN so that MINDLESS PRACTICING doesn’t happen. Set a timer for 10 minutes of practice, then a 2 – minute break. These breaks allow the mind to rest, since CAREFUL PRACTICE demands EXTREME CONCENTRATION. (Minimum: 3 sets of 10 min.)
8. For Teacher assignment in practice for “performance by memory” a great strategy is to form an “AT HOME” audience of one or more persons sitting QUIETLY to listen—no talking allowed, so that the student builds TRUE CONFIDENCE and the ability to concentrate on his SOUND of DYNAMICS (louds and softs).

These performances allow the student to become accustomed to the atmosphere he/she will experience at a “festival,” even though a festival only allows the “judge” to be present in the room—no other audience.

NOTE: “AT–HOME” Performances CAN ALSO INCLUDE NEIGHBORS and other friends and family. Performance before less familiar people helps build confidence. For this project you may use worksheet included in your child’s music journal note book.

9. Encourage the student to work long enough periods with the guitar to concentrate. Getting up for a drink, a snack, a phone call are common occurrences. For older students, a break planned in advance is fine.
10. Listen for technical work—scales, arpeggios, chords. These are usually assigned with each lesson.
11. Listen for the metronome. (Metronome practice is required for all intermediate and advanced students.)
12. If your child is racing through a piece, ask what his/her goals are for that particular piece that week.
13. Take your child to concerts! Classic guitar recitals or good concerts of any musical instruments are available at South Bay Guitar Society.
14. Listen to classical guitar recording while avoiding unprofessional youtube videos which might distract and lower the expectations of the students. Young children love sonatas and studies by Sor, Giuliani and Carulli as well as concert pieces by Tarrega and Albeniz. Listening is of vital importance to the developing musician.
15. Make gifts of music that your child enjoys listening to. A trip to the music store to browse can be fun and motivating.