



CMCB Instrument Care & Practice Habits String Department

Instrument Care:

- **DON'T** try to fix the instrument yourself.
- **DON'T** leave your instrument in the car.
- **DO** keep your instrument in a climate-controlled environment.
- **DON'T** push your instrument into the floor while putting on your shoulder rest.
- **DON'T** write your name on your instrument!
- **DON'T** touch your bow hairs when you loosen them.
- **DO** put your instrument away correctly (cellos, especially!)

Practice Habits:

- **DO** establish a routine or practice schedule.
- **DO** remember to set goals for your practice time.
- **DO** try to play for others (especially younger students!)
- **DO** try to learn to play a piece by memory.
- **DO** identify and use resources to help you! (Look online for recordings of your pieces, and use your phone for research)

Note: This list was compiled by select members of the CMCB In-House faculty. Your studio teacher may have more guidelines for you to follow!



CMCB Instrument Care & Practice Habits Winds and Brass Department

Instrument Care:

- **DO swab your instrument and clean your mouthpieces.**
- **DON'T play on broken reeds!**
- **DO rotate your reeds!**
- **DO store your reeds properly!**
- **DON'T let other people play or hold your instrument.**
- **DON'T store your instrument in front of A/C or heaters, or leave it in a car.**

Practice Habits:

- **DO use a music stand! Make sure you can practice standing and sitting, as your teacher recommends.**
- **DO practice smart, not just hard. Have a plan and set goals to accomplish each session.**
- **DO practice five days a week, minimum, and include warm-ups/fundamentals.**
- **DO use a good chair and play with good posture.**
- **DO remember to “Breathe, Set, and Play!”**

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CMCB Instrument Care & Practice Habits Guitar and Percussion Departments

Instrument Care:

- **DO pay attention to heat and humidity around your instrument (not too hot, not too cold).**
- **DO wipe down your instrument after playing.**
- **DO tune every time you play (if you know how!)**
- **DO make frequent string changes (for guitar).**

Practice Habits:

- **DO practice a little bit every day (if even for 5 minutes!)**
- **DO keep a practice log.**
- **DO remember to go “slow and steady”.**
- **DO practice your left/right coordination.**
- **DO remember that you can practice without your instrument!**
- **DO feel comfortable singing to yourself, either out loud or in your head.**

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CMCB Instrument Care & Practice Habits Vocal Department

Instrument Care:

- **If you are sick, DO remember that if you are not contagious, and it doesn't hurt to make vocal sounds, you can still practice and attend lessons.**
 - **But, if you ARE contagious, or it DOES hurt to make vocal sounds, DO stay home and reschedule!**
- **DO bring water (along with your music, pencil, and a recording device, if possible) to your lessons.**

Practice Habits:

- **DO remember that, YES, vocalists need practice, too!**
- **DO remember that practice includes warming up exercises, acting/characterization, memorization, and actively listening, NOT just singing your song all the way through.**
- **DO record your lessons!**
- **DO find a quiet, solitary place to practice without judgement or critique.**
- **DO remember that practicing often involves making deliberately ugly sounds.**
- **DO have an attitude of openness/intellectual curiosity.**
- **DO remember that your teacher assigns songs for a reason, and trying new music is good for you!**
- **DO remember that you are ONLY allowed to "hate" a song if you can explain to your teacher WHY.**

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CMCB Instrument Care & Practice Habits Piano Department

Instrument Care:

- **DON'T** put liquids on the piano!!
- **DO** keep the instrument in tune.
- **DO** remember to wash your hands before practice!

Practice Habits:

- **DO** remember to practice consistently – regular practice is always best (even if you can only practice for few minutes at a time!)
- **DO** try to practice without distractions.
- **DO** remember that correct posture is important.
- **DO** make sure to go over the trouble spots, too, not just the ones you can play well!
- **DO** remember to **HAVE FUN!**

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