

10 RULES TO:

IMPROVE AT

JAZZ

- I have been teaching music for **20+ years**, to students from **all over the world**.
- No matter where you come from, or how talented you are, the rules for **ANYONE** to improve at music are always the same.
- Follow these **10 RULES** I have compiled, and **I GUARANTEE** you that your musicianship will grow faster than ever before.

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1. THE 3 PILLARS

These should be the 3 pillars to ALL your practice sessions:

Technique, Harmony and Melodies/Improvisation.

1 - Technique: play exercises that strengthen your fingers, so you can perform at your finest.

2 - Harmony: study chord progressions, so you can play effortlessly any song that comes across.

3 - Melodies/Improvisation: build a strong song-list and jazz vocabulary, so you are ready to show professionalism in any gig or event that you take part of.

So, every time you sit in front of your instrument, make sure to practice at least a little bit of these 3, so you can improve all aspects of your musicianship at the same time.

2. TIME MANAGEMENT

Time, is a privilege.

I would actually argue, that time is the **MOST VALUABLE** asset a person has in life. So make sure to get the most of it.

If you have 30 minutes to practice one day, divide that into 3 parts. Dedicate 10 minutes to Technique, 10 minutes to Harmony, and 10 minutes to Melodies/Improvisation.

Set a timer if necessary.

Sometimes, of course, you might need more time with certain targets if you are working on something in particular, but generally speaking, try to stick to this “equality rule”.

Don’t underestimate the power of proper time management during your practice sessions. This will make a huge difference.

3. CONSISTENCY

This is an absolute **CHEAT CODE**.

I have seen it time and time again through my life. Either people who I studied with, or musicians that I have met along the way. So many great and talented musicians that wouldn’t stick to consistent practice. What an absolute waste!

Talent is overrated. Consistency is **WAY MORE POWERFUL**.

An average musician with consistency will always play better than an incredibly talented musician who doesn’t have consistency practicing.

4. LISTEN, IMITATE & REPEAT

Music **IS A LANGUAGE**, so study it as such.

How would you study a language that you still don’t know?

Would you learn how to write it? Or how to read it?

That would take forever, and you wouldn’t be able to communicate anything properly, because you still don’t know how to express the simplest thoughts, right?

So, don't do that with music either.

Because music is the same. Music is a language.

Listen to someone speak (preferably someone who is way better at it than you); **imitate** (the best you can); and **repeat** the process (as many times as you possibly can).

Listen to the jazz greats, take small fragments of their playing, imitate what they are doing to the best of your abilities, and repeat.

5. BUY A SMALL NOTEBOOK, AND A PENCIL

Track your progress.

The reason why this is important, is because you **NEED TO KNOW** where you are at.

“What did I practice yesterday?”

“When did I start playing this song?”

You can not remember everything you do.

That's why tracking your progress is key, because it will give you the perspective you need to know how long it takes you to learn new things, or how much you are improving in certain exercises.

6. LESS IS MORE

Music, like any other language, is more effective when it's clear and to the point. **Short and concise.**

The musician can express his feelings easier.

The listener can understand the musical message better.

This, **improves the communication** between the musician and the audience.

Don't overplay your instrument if you don't need to.

Play only what's best for the music in the moment. Otherwise, the listener might get confused, and your message won't get through.

7. SMALL STEPS, LONG VIEW

“A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step”

Big steps or **high goals** without the right direction can lead to frustration, anxiety, and **could potentially make you quit** in your musical journey.

Set **small**, achievable **goals** that make you **progress consistently** overtime. It could be a short melody, or exploring a new scale you didn't know before, or memorizing a lick by your favorite piano player.

Achieving small goals will make you feel good and satisfied. If you experience that feeling repeatedly, you will be more likely to stick to your practice sessions for a longer period of time. Therefore, the likelihood of you reaching your targets, will increase exponentially.

8. GET BETTER TOGETHER

As humans, we are **DESIGNED** to learn faster when we work in groups.

A **group of people** that work together, **evolve much faster** than an individual that works alone.

It's of course important to practice individually to gain knowledge of our instrument, or to understand, for example, music notation. But it's even more important to find the right circle of people with your same interests, so you can evolve faster.

If you already know someone who shares similar musical interests and goals than you, that's great! Time to make a phone call.

If you still don't, go to a concert, or find a jam session near you. There, try to connect with someone who might also have your **same goals**, and want to **practice together**. And then, who knows! Maybe you can start a band together one day.

9. STAY HUMBLE

Being humble means that you are **willing to learn**.

You are open to the idea of listening to someone that you might not agree with.

You know, that you can learn something from anyone, even if you don't like the person.

That makes a **HUGE DIFFERENCE** in the music world.

Being **willing to listen** to other people, **being accountable** for your mistakes, and being able to keep an **open mind**, will make you more available to receive information.

Therefore, you will grow faster.

10. MANAGE EXPECTATIONS

When I listen to great piano players I admire and respect, it makes me realize, every time, how much I still have to practice, just to be able to play a fraction of what they can do with a piano.

Sometimes I just feel that **I should just quit**, because I feel like **I will never be good enough**, I will never be as good as them.

The thing is, **those** same great **piano players** I admire and respect so much, **also went through the same**.

They also admired someone.

They also felt like giving up sometimes, because **they also thought they would never be able to achieve their goals**.

So, don't compare yourself with the people you admire.

Learn from them, and **compare yourself only to who you were yesterday**.

Keep practicing, music lovers,

J