

PRACTICING

Western Kentucky University | WKU Pre-College Strings Program

CHING-YI LIN

EFFECTIVE PRACTICING

- Great practice is about quality not quantity
- Don't practice "bad habits"
- Go back when something is wrong
- Pay attention to why it is not good
- Focus on weaknesses
- Isolate hard passages
- Don't always go back to the beginning
- Switch it up everyday to keep it interesting
- Study the full score

INTONATION

- Listen to recordings
- Make recordings of yourself
- Know what the note sounds like before playing it
- Bring a passage down an octave or use a different fingering until you know the pitches
- Know the whole and half steps
- Practice with a drone
- Practice with a tuner
- Practice with open strings
- Don't use vibrato
- Practice shifts: know the distances between notes (See example 1)
- Practice double stops: play each note separately before playing it together (See example 2)
- Practice slowly

FAST PASSAGES

- Group by strings (See example 3)
- Group by beats
- Group by shifts
- Group by playing to the first note of the strings crossing and then stopping
- Practice with different rhythm
- Practice with different bowings
- Practice stopping on different notes
- Practice with stopped bow
- Practice with a metronome

ISOLATION OF HANDS

- Practice opening strings - make sure right arm is good before adding left
- Practice legato passages - finger the notes, but bow on an adjacent open string (See example 4)
- Practice stopped bows - short notes to hear how it rings (See example 5)

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Example 1. Violin Sonata No. 2, Third Movement by Johannes Brahms, mm.1-12



Example 2. Violin Concerto No. 1 by Jean-Baptiste Accolay, mm. 28-32



Example 3. "Rigaudon," from Sicilienne and Rigaudon by Fritz Kreisler, mm. 18-20



Example 4. "Melody" from Three Pieces: Meditation, Scherzo & Melody Op. 42 by Piotr Tchaikovsky, mm. 1-8



Example 5. "Go Tell Aunt Rhody," from Suzuki Violin School, Volume One, 9, mm. 1-4

