

# Practicing as Perfect Repetitions

What one practices is what one performs. The mind memorizes the first information better than any other and will retrieve it in a stressful situation (like concerts). This is why “practicing” is so important to do in a certain way if you want dependable results. As a universal principle, this following technique is a good way to learn most anything.

The brain learns the quickest when things are EASY and connected to things it already knows. When learning something new, don’t eat the whole pizza in one bite. Slice it up and then bite off a small piece and chew it. In music, make learning easy by starting with only one small area of the music, master it, then add one more, etc.

Once the brain has the right information (a perfect copy of what is on the page), repeat it perfectly so there is only ONE memory of it, not a bunch of random mistakes and connections/associations floating around the brain.

Imagine that the brain makes spider thin thread connections between two points when you first learn a new concept or set of notes. Repeating them strengthens the thread by wrapping it (myelin sheath) with fat (phospholipids) so it can carry more electrical charge and information (like the plastic covering on an electrical cord). The more you **perfectly** repeat it, the thicker the cord becomes to carry more information, faster.

This is why breaking a habit is so hard. Don’t break a habit, replace it with a new habit and reinforce it by storing memories in the emotional, tactile, visual, and aural departments of the brain. Here is a sample of how to apply this principle, musically.

- 1) Find the right notes, slowly. Simplify the passage by playing the outline.
- 2) Work from the back to the front to reinforce what was already played.
- 3) Add more elements one by one (articulations, rhythm, dynamics, tempo).
- 4) Seat the memories in different quadrants of your brain (visual, tactile, aural).

Always stay within EASY limits so the brain stays bright and happy, not angry or stressed. Don’t move to the next note until you see the memory pop up like a sticky note, effortlessly, in your mind. This means you are retrieving the correct information and not reinforcing incorrect information.

For instance, look at this excerpt from Kopprasch Etude No. 6.



One goal is to find the easiest pattern to reinforce so the brain has a template on which to add and build much more information.