

Practice Techniques

Practice Steps

- 1 Count out loud: say rhythm while tapping foot. Use your metronome to help.
- 2 Finger: position fingers while saying note names out loud.
- 3 Articulate: Using open strings (without using the left hand), use the bow to create different types and lengths of bow strokes.
- 4 Play: 7 repetitions in a row without mistakes and then increase metronome speed.

If you practice effectively, you can conquer *anything*.

Here are some practice techniques to try with difficult passages:

Small Phrases	Even if you need to play an entire piece, don't play the whole thing every day. Take small phrases or phrase segments (between 1 and 8 measures) and perfect each one before moving on.
Slow Down	If you can't play it perfectly the first time, you're probably going too fast. Turn the metronome to a slower speed to make your practice time worthwhile.
Sing!	It doesn't have to be beautiful, but it does have to be confident. This exercise clarifies rhythm, and strengthens ear-training and intonation.
Chunk	Identify problem spot. Add one note before and after the trouble spot, then gradually add more notes before trying the entire passage again.
Chaining	Great for learning scales. Start with the first note, then with each repetition, add one more note. After finishing the entire scale (or passage), play through at least 5 times correctly before moving on.
Backwards	Sometimes it's helpful to play music backwards; it exercises the left (analytical) side of the brain.
Rocky Rhythm	Change around the rhythm of the passage: dotted eighth notes followed by sixteenths, triplets, swung eighth notes – the possibilities are endless! This is great for your brain to think of new rhythms and helps with muscle memory.