



A quick guide for MLC parents as their daughters start to learn a musical instrument.

1. WORK OUT WITH YOUR DAUGHTER WHAT KIND OF PRACTICE ROUTINE WORKS BEST:

- It is really important to establish a daily routine;
- It is not essential that it is at the same time every day, but that might help IF that is truly practical;
- Keep it short at first – just 20 focused minutes a day is likely to produce excellent early progress;
- Always, always practise on the day of the lesson after the lesson!
- Use a practice chart or plan to help manage regular practise;
- Avoid punishments and be very careful indeed with rewards – the joy of music must be the reward.

2. MAKE SURE PRACTICE SPACES ARE COMFORTABLE AND INSTRUMENTS ARE CARED FOR:

- Provide good seating (not sitting on the bed), lighting, music stands (not instrumental music cases doubling as music stands);
- Eliminate distractions like the TV, mobile devices, chatter and noise;
- Get all equipment ready – instrument, music, music stand, metronome;
- Make sure instruments are really cared for and treated with respect.

3. KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR POSTURE THAT LOOKS NATURAL (EITHER STANDING OR SITTING):

- Ask your daughter what kind of posture she has been told to adopt and why.

4. NEVER DOUBT YOUR ABILITY TO HELP AND SUPPORT, EVEN IF YOU THINK YOU DON'T HAVE “ENOUGH” MUSICAL EXPERTISE.

- Remain a supremely interested (not interfering) audience;
- Regularly seek your daughter's opinion about appropriate parental involvement;
- Don't withdraw from engagement with claims of “I know nothing about music”.

5. LISTEN FOR FLUENCY AND FUN:

- Is your daughter able to play through pieces, set by her teacher, for her own enjoyment, and for the enjoyment of others (i.e. you and your family)?
- Is there evidence of personal connection to some of the pieces she is playing?
- Does your daughter play for fun and for “practice”?
- Encourage her to play “old/favourite” pieces, rather than just dumping them as soon as a new piece is set.

6. LISTEN FOR ATTENTION TO DETAIL

- Is your daughter attempting to fix things that aren't sounding right?
- Does she have strategies to do so?
- Is she persevering with a challenging passage or is she just going from one piece/exercise to another, regardless of errors and in the absence of fluency, until the agreed practice time “is up”?

7. LET YOUR DAUGHTER TEACH DAD AND/OR MUM THE TASK THAT THEY ARE TRYING TO MASTER ON THE INSTRUMENT.

- Yes! Have a go at actually doing it! Be patient students.
- Make sure you ask questions to understand what the task is about and what the skills are that can manage it!

8. COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR DAUGHTER'S MUSIC TEACHER

- Use the Music Record Book every week;
- Contact the Tutor personally (by e-mail) if you need to;
- Come along to a lesson from time to time – please contact your daughter's Music Tutor first.

9. NEVER BE NEGATIVE AROUND INSTRUMENTAL LEARNING

- Don't make negative comments about the quality of tone. Your daughter should not have to develop immunity to comments about “killing the cat” or “taking the squeaky noise somewhere else”;
- Don't make negative comments about repertoire, teachers, ensemble commitments or transporting of instruments.

10. BE PATIENT AND HAVE FUN!

- Remember, your daughter is building a discipline that takes time and persistence, but your daughter must have fun while she is building it!
- Remember, you've got music and so has she!