

# Piano Performance Mastery



5 steps you can apply  
in your Piano practice  
now

## **Body reset**

Before you sit for your daily practice, let's first bring the body back to its natural 'elastic' state. Stand up straight, and just allow the arms to hang naturally from the shoulders. Swing them gently, so you feel the elbow loosen, and the wrists become flexible too.

Walk around a few times, and imagine all the tension melting away, through the top of your head, down to your feet.

Repeat this a few times until the body feels loose, and you're in a more 'present' state of mind to practice.

## **Slow practice**

Playing piano is like being an athlete. You have to train your body and mind as you practise. Remember when you put a movie in slow motion. The actors still have the same expression and intention in their acting, as when the movie is watched at normal speed.

Slow practise is one of the best ways for you to play with all the details in the music, and to listen to what you're doing. As well it can benefit any technical challenges, practising it right more often than becoming frustrated

Challenge yourself to always practise a piece slow as a warm up, before you attempt to play it through, or before a performance.

Try it for 3 days, before you start playing the piece faster, and you'll be amazed how easier it will be to keep control of your hands at higher tempos.

## **Deep breaths**

When you're working on a difficult passage, make sure that you're breathing naturally to the bottom of the stomach. This will train your mind and body to stay calm when approaching a very difficult passage, so that tension doesn't come from anticipating the difficulties. Focus on your musical intention to replace these thoughts as well.

## **Backwards**

I love to practise in a way that keeps your mind focused, and most importantly keeps your passion for the music fresh. If you play a passage backwards, slowly at first, then you can untangle any hesitations you have whilst playing the piece normally.

This method is especially good for any large jumps you have in both the left and right hands, as you practise both directions of the jumps movement, so that you can naturally land on the written notes. Treat a piece like a car, that you can drive forwards, and backwards, fast and slow!

## **Maintain natural posture**

Many problems in playing both psychological and physical, arise from Tension that builds up when you're working at the Piano. Having a constant awareness of shoulders, elbows and wrists get staying loose, can enhance your music making. Check that you're sitting up with a straight back, allowing the shoulders to relax, and the wrists to be loose and flexible. As well make sure your neck is free, and that your head is not facing down straining the neck. If you check this every five minutes during a practise session, then you'll soon build a great awareness of any habits that you may have acquired from impatient, rushed practising.

Thanks for reading!

I truly hope that this information serves your Piano concerts, and give you more clear ways to prepare, free from stress and tension



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