

## 15 Daily Piano Practice Reminders

1. **Develop a practice schedule.** Compartmentalize your time.
2. **Always warm-up.** Essentially keep your warm-up patterns slow and deliberate, so your muscles have had a chance to get used to moving before practice begins.
3. **Good posture at the piano.** When seated, ensure the stool is at the correct height (for you), sit up straight and try to eliminate slouching!
4. **Place feet firmly on the floor.** You will feel anchored or solid, in control and much more comfortable.
5. **Allow plenty of space between yourself and the keyboard.** Lots of space provides ample opportunity for free arm movement.
6. **Lower your shoulders.** Make sure they are relaxed (i.e. down in their natural position) at all times allowing your upper body to feel free.
7. **Keep an eye on your hand positions.** Knuckles should ideally be pronounced or at a higher, elevated position, thus forming an arched hand (think of grasping an apple).
8. **Wrists must be flexible.** Many find making small circular motions with the wrists helps enormously, disengaging any building tension.
9. **Play on the tips (or pads) of each finger.** Ensure all fingers work properly and all joints are fully engaged or active.
10. **Keep moving.** The more freely you move around the keyboard, the less chance there is of becoming 'stuck' or rigid and therefore tense.
11. **Mental focus.** Regular prompting will serve as a useful refocus when your mind starts to wander.
12. **Watch the sustaining pedal.** If possible, try to keep the right foot away from the pedal and listen to the sound and clarity produced by your fingers alone.
13. **Fingering.** It will make or break your performance. Write it all in the score; this will remind you to use the correct fingers every time you practice.
14. **Bar by bar practice.** Discipline yourself to work in small sections regularly.
15. **Always remember the music!** Dynamics, phrase marks, expression marks; these will all help to shape a performance and make it musically interesting.



"Lost the key? Come on now Rupert, these toy ones don't even lock!"