



PRACTICE BOOT CAMP

Practice Boot Camp is **a mandatory event for the Year-Round students**. It is not a mandatory event for those who are on the Ala Carte and Semester Rate Plans, although I strongly encourage those students to attend.

WHY A "BOOT CAMP"?

Because it'll be fun. The term "Boot Camp" simply means "a training course" and participating students are "in training" ... learning how to "be their own teachers" and learning which practice strategies and methods to use to get the results they want.



WHY DO THIS?

The real learning does not happen during the lessons ... The student spends so much more time "practicing" without the teacher around (or they should be) than they do with the teacher next to them "having a lesson". **So, the real learning happens during practice time.** If the student isn't practicing very often or does so for only a short time or practices without thinking, then that's the kind of learning that is going on.



Since I can't be at every student's house every day for practice time, it is critical to the student's progress for the student to know how to motivate themselves to practice, plan their practice goals, "take charge" of their practice time, develop and use good practice habits & skills, and know how to choose the best "practice methods" to complete their weekly assignment.

In fact ... if a student really knows how to manage their practice time "fluently", they wouldn't really need a "teacher" at all after they learned "the basics". And since one of my goals as a teacher is to "teach my students how to learn songs on their own" ... it is actually more important to me that I teach them "how to practice effectively & efficiently" than it is to "teach them a song".

WHAT'S THE PLAN?

The Practice Boot Camp will be held **one week in June for Intermediate students** and **one week in July for Primer and Beginner Students**.

The main portion of the **Practice Boot Camp is 5 days long for 2-4 hours each day**. Each day will include:

- **a 30-minute lunch break** (water, chips, and fresh fruit will be offered by the Studio - byo sandwich).
- **four hours of Boot Camp for the Intermediate Students** on their week in June.
- ... and **three hours of Boot Camp for Beginner Students, followed by two hours for Primer Students** on their week in July.



Each year, the Boot Camp will be different, but will focus on the same practice-related “Topics of the Day”:

- Monday** - “*Not Wanting to Practice*” and “*Taking Charge of Practice Time*”
- Tuesday** - “*Learning New Pieces*” and “*Dealing with Problem Passages*”
- Wednesday** - “*Staying Focused*” and “*Saving Time*”
- Thursday** - “*Training Methods*” and “*Practice Methods*”
- Friday** - “*Managing Deadlines*” and “*Finishing a Song*”

Each day of Boot Camp is different, but will involve the same components:

- 🎵 **“Fitness Training”** - yes, actual physical exercise involving mostly the shoulder muscles, but also the hand & finger muscles.



- 🎵 **“Topic Presentation”** - these are fun PowerPoint Presentations that set the stage for the “topics of the day”.

- 🎵 **“Strategic Planning Pow-Wows”** - offering in-depth discussions about planning “daily practice sessions”, “meeting musical deadlines”, “learning new songs”, “working on trouble spots”, “finishing songs”, “finger training”, and so on.

- 🎵 **“Drills and Games”** - offering competitions such as Bean Bag Toss and Tic-Tac-Toe, with challenging questions that drill the students on the topics of the day.

- 🎵 **“Note Movement Races”** - in which the students play specific note movements (i.e. Pentascales, Broken Triads, & Trills) repeatedly (at the same time) until someone “makes a mistake”.



- 🎵 **“Group Practice Sessions”** - in which the students take on the same short song (level-appropriate), practice both at home and while at the Boot Camp, learn it in one week, and then perform it on Day Five.

- 🎵 **“Practice Competition”** - in which students compete to see who can practice the most minutes during the month of July.



- 🎵 **“Practice Campaign Challenge”** - in which the students take on a short but challenging Classical song, follow 25 very specific “Practice Steps” in order to fully master the piece, and then perform their song at the Boot Camp Finale Presentation. (See below for more details.)

Each student begins Boot Camp with a “Practice Rank” as follows:

- **“Practice Rookie”** - for the student who has had less than one year of lessons and/or has not exhibited any of the Boot Camp Practice Skills and Habits.

- **“Practice Trainee”** - for the student who has had less than three years of lessons and/or has exhibited their ability to use of some Boot Camp Practice Skills and Habits, but not all of them.
- **“Practice Master”** - for the student who has had more than three year of lessons and has exhibited their ability to use all of the Boot Camp Practice Skills and Habits.



Students will receive T-Shirts with these ranks printed on them. When they “move up in rank”, they will receive a new T-Shirt.



In addition, each day of the Boot Camp, students will go home with various “supplies”, such as tote bags, pencils, erasers, pencil sharpeners, rulers, highlighters, and such. They will be expected to use these supplies on their music studies (but of course they can use them for anything they want).

The entire Practice Boot Camp experience will conclude in mid-August with a **“Boot Camp Finale Presentation”**. At the final presentation, the students will perform their “Challenge Songs”, the award will be presented to the winner of the Practice Competition, and any student who moves up in “Practice Rank” will be awarded their new Practice T-Shirt.

The “Boot Camp Finale Presentation” is an outdoor concert, scheduled on a **Saturday evening in mid-August**, on the lawn at Hegarty Piano Studio. Students & guests should bring their own lawn chair or blanket (as if to a fireworks show). Bottled water will be served.

Limited parking is available on Monte Vista Court (aka Ledgewood Place), but parking is also available at “Floors To Go”, just 100 yards East, next to the freeway on-ramp, or at KinderCare across the street.

