



Scale Practice Tips

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Why?

- Scales are the most important building block of fingering technique and sight reading
- Scales help one understand major and minor key signatures
- Scales practiced all the way up to high notes early on will greatly help to play virtuosic solos later

How?

- Learn scales based on the notes/fingerings you know. Go higher as you learn the higher-note fingerings.
- For advanced students, learn scales up to the highest notes you can play:
 - Minimum high B or C
 - Strive for C# and D
 - If you think D is difficult and not getting better, go higher!

Practice Tip #1: Different Tempos

- Alternate tempos every other day. For example:
 - One day $q = 100$ or slower
 - Next day $q = 100$ or faster
 - Or choose other tempo groups that work for you!
- Practicing scales slowly will build control and technique
- Practicing scales faster will build virtuosity

Practice Tip #2: Slurring

- Slur your scales, so you can just focus on your fingers, and make sure they are moving precisely, and with the lightest touch possible
- If you can hear something is off with your fingers, but you can't tell exactly where, slur by beat. This way, you are listening in small groups of notes instead of one long string

Practice Tip #3: Minor Scales

- Minor key scale practice helps with minor key sight reading!
- Practice 1 major scale and all 3 parallel or relative minors all the way up and down
 - Natural minor: no alterations
 - Harmonic minor: raised/sharp 7th note up and down
 - Melodic minor: raised/sharp 6th and 7th notes up, but natural minor down
- Start slowly, concentrating on keeping your fingers relaxed and with the lightest touch possible
- Choose a number of scales to work on at once that makes sense for you. Perhaps work on one major and the relative or parallel minors for a week and then move on to another key

Practice Tip #4: [Scales for Jazz Improvisation by Dan Haerle](#)

- Each page has all variations of a certain mode, for example Ionian mode, in every key
- When you move onto Dorian mode, you will practice the same notes you did in Ionian, but starting and ending one step higher
- Try alternating different tempos up to the highest notes you can play
- Spend a length of time on each page or mode that works for you

Practice Tip #5: Speed vs. Tone Fingerings

- Check out my other video on [Alternate Fingerings](#)
- Practice your scales with speed fingerings, even when you are going slow: this way, when you increase your tempo, your fingers will hopefully move easily and precisely

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- Check out my website for more information and other media!
- Also, be sure to check out my book:
[The No-Nonsense Guide to Becoming a Professional Flutist](#), available on Amazon.com