

## RETURN TO PLAY SCHEDULE

Practice Sessions per Day	Minutes of Playing
Two sessions shadow playing	3-5 minutes
Two sessions on instrument	3-5 minutes
Two sessions	5-10 minutes
Two sessions	15 minutes
Two sessions	20 minutes
Three sessions	15 minutes
Three sessions	20 minutes
Four sessions	20 minutes
Four sessions	30 minutes
Three sessions	45 minutes
Three sessions	60 minutes
Two sessions	90 minutes
Two sessions	120 minutes

Start with **S**imple, **S**low and **S**oft music

Double minutes of playing every few days

Drop back a level if pain is elicited

Gradually progress repertoire difficulty

A 5 minute break is encouraged every 20 minutes at the higher levels of playing

Yeovil District Hospital   
NHS Foundation Trust

# MUSICIANS

## Good Practice Habits and Return to Play Schedule

**Hand Therapy Service**

[www.yeovilhospital.nhs.uk](http://www.yeovilhospital.nhs.uk)

## **GOOD PRACTICE HABITS**

### **Early Recognition**

- Take the first sign of an injury seriously but it may not be necessary to completely stop playing

### **Frequent Breaks when Practising**

- Practice only as long as you can maintain concentration
- Take a 5 minute break every 20 minutes so your muscles are more responsive (ie water or stretch break)

### **Warm up to Practising**

- Warm up **AWAY FROM THE INSTRUMENT** such as adhering to a short fitness regime prior to playing
- Warm up **AT THE INSTRUMENT** with easy music concentrating on slow perfection to find easy postures and positions (re: relax thumb if tense)

### **Cool Down**

- Cool down **AT THE INSTRUMENT** and **AWAY FROM THE INSTRUMENT**
- Stretches and icing overworked areas of the body may be necessary

### **Maximise Playing Time in Good Posture**

- Adjust seat and music stand for optimal posture
- Keep wrists and thumbs in the neutral position as much as possible by using forearm rotation
- Good posture on stage communicates **COMMAND** and **PRESENCE**

## **Technical Awareness**

- Often the technical solution to a problem is also its musical solution
- Extreme fatigue can indicate something is wrong technically (ie inappropriate fingering)
- Volume and resonance can be produced with muscle release and by using gravity

## **Instrument Supports**

- Neck straps, floor stands, customised chin rests, individualised thumb stops or keys, instrument posts, backpack style carrying cases or wheels on instrument cases are available to minimise extraneous loading

## **Mental Training**

- Strive to **REDUCE** practice time prior to a performance and increase mental training
- Score read **AWAY** from the instrument to analyse and memorise the music out of the habitual posture
- Use visualisation to hear and see your performance

## **Fitness/Relaxation**

- Balance relaxation with fitness activities that minimise the risk of injury and help to alleviate your particular muscle imbalances (professional advice may be required)
- A strong flexible muscle resists strain better than a strong inflexible muscle

**YOU CAN CORRECT A PROBLEM WITHOUT  
SACRIFICING PERFORMANCE**