

Compiled by Jaeryoung Lee

## **Why practice scales?**

Because it leads to the Mastery of the following:

### **1. Timing**

Students need to have good internal time in order to play together with others. One of the best ways to develop this is to practice scales with a metronome.

### **2. Co-ordination**

During music practice students have lots of things to remember and the really difficult thing is to remember to do them all at the same time. Scales give students an opportunity to focus on bringing all of those elements together.

### **3. Dexterity**

One part of learning an instrument involves training parts of the body to do new things, to repeat them and then do them very quickly. Playing scales are a great training partner. They will help students refine and improve the speed.

### **4. Muscle Memory**

This is a really big benefit of practicing scales. When students have practiced a scale for a while, students will begin to 'just get it' and the scale will flow naturally from your instrument. What students have done is to begin to develop muscular memory. This is a very useful thing to have. When students see this scale again or indeed a similar one, they will be able to rely partially on this muscle memory.

### **5. Ears**

If students can't hear what is wrong, they can't correct it. This is true of all of music practice. Playing scales will student pay attention to tuning, articulation, tone quality, consistency etc.

## **6. Sight Reading**

If students can translate the notes they see on the page quickly into sounds on their instrument, they can develop good sight reading. Knowing scales will give their sight reading a boost as they will frequently come across patterns and groups of notes with which they are familiar.

## **7. Theory**

Key signatures, chords, modulations, modes and many other areas of music theory are much easier to understand if students know scales. A "win-win" for the Music Department.

## **8. Exams & Auditions**

Most musicians do these at some point and they invariably involve scales. If students already practice scales regularly, they will have a head start on those that don't.

## **9. Building Blocks of all music**

Scales are the things from which most music is made. Their importance cannot be underestimated.

## **10. Intonation**

For most instruments (piano aside) there is a need to make sure we are playing in tune. Scales are a great way to check the tuning of each and every note. The distance between each should be just right. Careful listening is very important here.