

## Practicing Strategies – Guitar Program:

- **Point and name the notes out loud** - Practice the part you are having trouble with by following the music with your finger, naming the notes out loud (in rhythm) as you go. Go as slow as you need to get the note names right.
- **Write in the Counting** - Write in the counting underneath the rhythms you are having trouble with. By saying the counting out loud you can get a better idea of what the music sounds like. Ask your teacher if you need help with figuring out the counting. Also works well with clapping the rhythm.
- **Fingering Chart** - Use a fingering chart in your guitar book to help you locate unfamiliar notes on the fretboard.
- **Clap the Rhythm** - Clap the rhythm of sections you are having trouble with so you hear what it sounds like. Do not try to play it until you can clap it correctly. You need to write in the counting before doing this.
- **Name the notes while you play** - Play the music SLOWLY, naming the notes out loud as you go. This will help you to recognize the notes from the page on your guitar.
- **Sing Your Part** - If you can sing it in the correct style, then you will be better able to play it in the correct style. This also helps you hear what it sounds like.
- **Repetition** - Play sections over and over until you can consistently do it correctly. You may want to start slower and gradually speed up.
- **Listen to a Recording** - If you can't figure out what it sounds like, then listen to a recording of it.
- **Bar by Bar** - When you are practicing something that is difficult, set small goals for yourself. Learn the section or song one bar at a time. Once you learn a few bars, try putting them together.
- **Note by Note** - If the "Bar by Bar" method doesn't work, try learning tough parts note by note. Play the section as if every note was a whole note. When you can do that, make every note a half note, then quarter note, etc. Once you can do the notes, try the correct rhythm.
- **Practicing Slowly** - When you practice, practice slow enough to play everything correctly. Speed will come when you know the music better. If you practice faster than you can play it then you are practicing and learning the mistakes. Once you learn something incorrectly, it is much harder to re-learn it rather than learning it correctly the first time.
- **Practice with a friend** - Sometimes practicing with a friend can help you fix mistakes you have been experiencing while practicing on your own. Also, playing music with someone else makes you think about rhythm in a different way, as you need to keep time with someone else.
- **Practice with a Metronome** - Practicing with a metronome allows us to hear when we are speeding up or slowing down. It is the best thing you can do to improve your sense of time. If you do not have a metronome, you can find one on the internet at <http://www.metronomeonline.com>.

**REMEMBER:** Practicing a lot of the time should not sound good. If it always sounds good then you probably are not practicing the things you are having trouble with. We can only build on our strengths if we face and overcome our weaknesses.