

1-1-2005

A Survey of Daily Routines

George Palton

Marshall University, palton@marshall.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://mds.marshall.edu/music_faculty

 Part of the [Composition Commons](#), [Music Pedagogy Commons](#), [Music Performance Commons](#), and the [Music Practice Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Palton, George., "A Survey of daily routines." ITEA Journal 32, no. 2 (Winter 2005): 58-60.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Music at Marshall Digital Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Research by an authorized administrator of Marshall Digital Scholar. For more information, please contact zhangj@marshall.edu.

A Survey of Daily Routines

By George Palton, Marshall University

In February 2004 a total of 150 surveys were mailed to professional tuba and euphonium players in the United States. A majority of the participants are current college professors, prominent freelance musicians, and musicians in professional ensembles such as military bands and orchestras. First, questions ranged from personal information such as instrument, current job, and their general practice habits. Then, specific questions were asked about their daily routine habits. Questions in this section focused on what specific components of tuba and euphonium playing they focused on. They were asked the likelihood of focusing on one particular aspect of playing, and if they did, how they did it, how long they did it, and in what order did they structure it. The respondents were also given a chance to write in detail about any of these things if they so desired. By November 2004, a total of 47 people have responded.

The results provided some worthwhile insight into the practice habits of many successful tuba and euphonium players. Many of them stressed a need for a consistent routine that still allowed for flexibility to meet the individual's current performing demands. For most of the components isolated in this survey, a majority of the respondents indicated that they work on them every day or almost every day. This shows that most of the professionals surveyed aim for consistency in their daily warm-up. Most of the respondents indicated that they work on a very standard list of components such as breathing exercises, mouthpiece buzzing, long tones, lip slurs, low range, high range, scales, and tonguing exercises. Many of those who were surveyed stressed the importance of using actual music instead of exercises as often as possible. Also, many advocated the need for regular sight-reading practice as well as to actively listen to music more as a part of a daily routine.

Participants

A. W. Lehman, U.S. Marine Band, "President's Own"
 Doug Whitten, Pittsburg State University (Kansas)
 Dr. Mark Thompson, N.W. State Louisiana University
 Jerry Young, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
 Joseph Skillen, Louisiana State University
 Bill Keck, Constitution Brass Quintet
 John Stevens, University of Wisconsin
 Steve Lamb, U.S. Coast Guard Band
 Steven Perry, Hartford/Springfield (Mass.) Symphony
 Michael Forbes, Illinois State University
 Steven Winteregg, Dayton Philharmonic
 J. Eric Paul, Freelance Musician
 Joe Dollard, U.S. Navy Band, Washington, D.C.
 Torrey Lawrence, University of Idaho
 Sy Brandon, York (Penn.) Symphony Orchestra
 Douglas Hunt, Orchestra/Quintet Musician
 Scott Cameron, U.S. Army Field Band
 John Cradler, U.S. Marine Band, "President's Own"
 Jas Linford, Freelance Musician
 Kyle Turner, Freelance Musician
 Ron Bishop, Cleveland Orchestra
 Michael Grose, University of Oregon
 Hank Feldman, Freelance Musician/ F.A.M.E. Foundation
 Joseph Williams, Amateur Musician
 Ben Pierce, University of Arkansas
 Fritz Kaenzig, University of Michigan
 John Mueller, University of Memphis
 Marc Dickman, University of Northern Florida
 Skip Gray, University of Kentucky
 Gene Pokorny, Chicago Symphony Orchestra
 Michael G. Know, Freelance Musician
 Joanna Hersey, Freelance Musician
 Neal Corwell, U.S. Army Band/ Soloist, Washington, D.C.

Kelly Diamond, U.S. Navy Band, Washington, D.C.
 Floyd Cooley, Retired, San Francisco Symphony/College Professor
 Willis Traphgan, Orchestral Musician
 Additional 10 Anonymous Participants

ITEA Members

Visit ITEA-Online's

"Pedagogy Class"

to download

George Palton's

Daily Routines Compilation

Daily Routines Survey Results

Section 1: Personal Information

1. Which of the following best describes you?
 - Amateur Musician—2%
 - College Tuba/Euphonium Professor—58%
 - Professional Musician—36%
 - Other—4%
2. What is your main instrument?
 - Tuba—73%
 - Euphonium—23%
 - Other—4%
3. What type of instrument do you regularly practice? (Tuba Players Only)
 - BB Flat—9%
 - CC—91%
 - E Flat—24%
 - F—68%
4. Euphonium Players: Do you regularly practice the baritone?
 - Yes—17%
 - No—83%
5. In an average week, how many days do you practice?
 - 7 Days/Week—30%
 - 4-6 Days/Week—57%
 - 1-3 Days/Week—11%
 - Never/Rarely—2%
6. How many hours do you average in a day?
 - 5 or more Hours—0%
 - 4-5 Hours—0%
 - 3-4 Hours—9%
 - 2-3 Hours—28%
 - 1-2 Hours—46%
 - 30-60 Minutes—17%
7. Do you regularly practice your secondary instrument?
 - Yes—34%
 - No—66%
8. How many days a week do you do a daily routine?
 - 7 Days/Week—28%
 - 4-6 Days/Week—59%
 - 1-3 Days/Week—9%
 - Never/Rarely—4%
9. On average, how long do you spend on your daily routine?
 - Less than 15 minutes—19%
 - 15-30 minutes—38%
 - 30-60 minutes—32%
 - 60-90 minutes—9%
 - Over 90 minutes—2%

Section 2: Daily Routine Habits

How often do you do each of the following?

1= Never

2= Rarely

3= About Every Other Day

4= Almost Every Day

5= Every Day

1. Breathing Exercises

1—7%

2—20%

3—9%

4—22%

5—42%

2. Mouthpiece Buzzing

1—7%

2—18%

3—7%

4—13%

5—55%

3. Long Tones

1—0%

2—4%

3—16%

4—24%

5—56%

4. Three or Five Note Lip Slurs

(Example: B Flat, F, B Flat, and back down)

1—2%

2—20%

3—16%

4—18%

5—44%

5. Flexibility Lip Slurs

1—0%

2—11%

3—9%

4—27%

5—53%

6. Low Register Exercises

1—2%

2—2%

3—7%

4—24%

5—65%

7. High Register Exercises

1—4%

2—11%

3—22%

4—27%

5—36%

8. Single Tonguing Exercises

1—4%

2—9%

3—17%

4—19%

5—51%

9. Multiple Tonguing Exercises

1—6%

2—21%

3—41%

4—17%

5—15%

10. Other Technique Exercises

1—17%

2—11%

3—30%

4—23%

5—19%

11. Lip Trill Exercises

1—30%

2—34%

3—21%

4—6%

5—9%

12. Scales

1—9%

2—0%

3—19%

4—26%

5—46%

13. Phrasing/Melody Exercises

1—4%

2—2%

3—15%

4—21%

5—58%

14. A secondary daily routine

(For tuba players who play on multiple tubas in different keys, or euphonium players who practice baritone)

1—45%

2—19%

3—23%

4—11%

5—2%

Section 3: Conclusions, Observations, and Quotes of Interest

Floyd Cooley—"Always practice in front of a mirror watching for unusual cues..."

Kelly Diamond—"I practice scales everyday every way. You can do anything and everything with scales."

"It is important to remember a daily routine is not set in stone. It must be flexible to accommodate changes in yourself or your circumstance."

"Your routine should be like home. Use it as a reference to gauge your needs, weaknesses and strengths. Also, use it to right the ship when something isn't working as well as you think it should."

Gene Pokorny—"It is very important to listen a lot more to music than we regularly do. To imitate great Artists is one of the best ways to learn."

Torrey Lawrence—"We do a Monday, Wednesday, Friday studio warm-up, it is great to do this in a group to keep it fun and build studio togetherness."

Steven Perry—"I went to a master class in grad school with Pinkus Zuckerman (viola/violin), and he said a survey was taken from players in the top 20 U.S. orchestras. The number one reason that helped them get a big gig was that they all had a regimented warm-up that they did religiously."

Other Notable Conclusions:

- The top non-tuba/euphonium method books cited were the Clarke and Schlossberg books.
- Many of those who were surveyed advocated regular sight-reading practice.
- Many of those who were surveyed advocated using real music as often as possible to focus on these elements of playing.
- Most focused on breathing, buzzing, long-tones, and flexibility early in their routine.
- A majority of those who were surveyed practice 4 or more days a week.
- A majority of those who were surveyed

practice 1–3 hours a day.

- A majority of those who were surveyed do a daily routine 4 or more days a week.
- A majority of those who were surveyed spend between 15–60 minutes on their daily routine.
- For most of the components isolated in this survey a majority of the respondents indicated they work on them every day or almost every day. This shows that most of the professionals surveyed aim for consistency in their daily warm-up.

Overall, the conclusion this survey brings is that the standard items stressed by many teachers for improving their playing and their students are items focused on consistently by professional musicians.

Any questions should be directed to the author (george@georgepalton.com). Thank you to all who have taken the time to participate. 