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Guitar Tip: Secret Benefits Of Using A Metronome.

By Craig Bassett

I'm sure you've heard that it is incredibly useful to practice with a metronome. Most books and teachers make it abundantly clear that using a metronome is a great way to improve your timing. This is true. But did you know that there are other HUGE benefits to using a metronome? Let's take a look at a few now...

*****Goal Setting*****

It's been proven time-and-time again that goals need to be specific and measurable to work. If you don't know exactly WHAT you are trying to achieve, how will you know WHEN you have achieved it?

I use my metronome all the time to help me set SPECIFIC goals for my technique development. For example, let's say that you would like to increase the speed at which you can play a particular exercise. If you use a metronome you can set an EXACT speed for your goal. For example, you might say that when you can play the exercise using sixteenth notes at 160 bpm (beats-per-minute), then you have reached your goal. Can you see how powerful this is? The metronome setting gives you a clear target to aim for!

*****Progressive Realization Of Goals*****

Metronomes allow you to progressively achieve your goals. What do I mean by this? Put simply, it means start slow and GRADUALLY increase the speed of your metronome. For example, let's say you want to get a particular lick up to 200 bpm. You could first master the lick at 40 bpm. Once mastered at this speed you could then increase the metronome speed to 42 bpm, then 44 bpm, then 46 bpm. You get the idea! You would work up to the target speed incrementally over a period of days, weeks or even months.

*****Developing Listening Skills*****

One absolutely vital skill to develop is the ability to play your guitar while still being able to listen to the people that you are playing with. This is especially true in jazz, where a large proportion of the song

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may be improvised!

Metronomes really help you develop this listening skill. As you practice you will also have to be listening to the click of your metronome. If you don't, you will soon be playing out of time with it!

Obviously, you'll develop this listening ability more fully by playing with other musicians, but playing with a metronome will definitely help as well. It's a great place to start and can often help build your confidence to play with other people.

Hopefully this article has inspired you to dust off your metronome and use it. It would also be a great exercise to think of some other benefits yourself. Practice hard and have fun!

Craig Bassett is a professional guitarist, author and guitar tutor. To gain TOTAL Fretboard Mastery, please go to:

<http://www.GuitarNoteMastery.com>

Guitar Lesson – How To Practice In 20 Minutes

By David Taylor

Many guitarists don't have enough time to practice for long periods of time. But if you want to progress fast, you need the guitar in your hands as regularly as possible.

It's better to practice for 10–20 minutes every day, than 4 hours on just one day of the week. Getting into a rhythm of regularly picking up your guitar for a quick practice session is a great habit to get into.

So if you don't have enough time for a full practice session, and you have 10–15 minutes to spare, here's some ideas for what you should practice:

Practice a chord change. Perhaps switching from an F barre chord to a D open is causing you difficulty? If you spend just ten minutes going over and over the change, you will increase your ability to do it at the level you require.

The key is to focus, and hone in on one skill that you can improve in a short period of time.

Work on a song you want to memorize. This will give you a chance to actually play some music! You need to have fun in your practice to keep you fresh and focused.

Listen to a song on a CD and jam along. This is a great way to improve your playing, and it's particularly suitable for short practice sessions.

An important part of learning guitar is to train your ear, and jamming along to a CD is the perfect way to do it.

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Work on a lick you want to learn. You'd be surprised how many times you can work through a lick in just a few short minutes. You can also combine this practice technique with practicing chord changes.

This will improve your skills in a short period of time.

Work on picking skills – do drills up and down the neck. You can use your metronome to work on speed picking skills, or you can slow everything right down and work on keeping your body in a relaxed so that you develop an ease to your playing.

Work up and down a scale. In ten minutes you can play through a scale around 50–100 times. This will improve your stamina and also help you build speed.

Remember to use a metronome when you're trying to build speed though. Because you want a smooth rhythmic sound to your speed picking, not a struggling, hurried sound.

So build up gradually.

Be Creative! Play some chords in combinations that sound good to you, or play some single note melodies. Again, this improves your ear and you could maybe work out some parts to a song of your own.

Okay, that's all the ideas I'm going to give you for now. Use your imagination to come up with more things you could try, and mix it up so it doesn't get boring.

Also, keep your guitar ready and set-up. Sure, it's protected all hidden away in your case, but if it's ready for you to have a short practice session, then you're more likely to pick it up and practice, even if it is just for a short time.

So keep that guitar out and ready to practice!

You may not think these short practice sessions help much, but doing this builds up your skills fast - and you'll surprise yourself by how much you improve just by having the guitar in your hands regularly.

However, you don't want to solely rely on these quick practice sessions. Like most things, you need to strike a balance. A good way of finding that balance is to set a routine.

When you have a routine, you will find it gets easier to find the time for practice. Once you're in a habit of practicing regularly, you'll find it harder to break out of, and that's a good habit to have!

Find more free guitar lessons at:

<http://www.guitar-secrets.net>



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