

10 TIPS FOR STUDENTS AT A PRACTICE PERFORMANCE (RECITAL REHEARSAL)



Why not plan a practice performance for your students before their recital? This is an opportunity for students to go through the motions of their upcoming recital. Show how performance etiquette is relevant, and be a role model to show how to walk on and off stage and how to bow. You can also make it an enjoyable event by providing an opportunity for students to meet each other.

Consider creating a distraction game so that performers may know what to expect—babies crying, keys dropping, talking, noises, phones ringing, coughing, people entering or leaving, etc. Then challenge the performer to keep playing no matter what.

If possible, hold a practice performance for piano students in the recital hall where they can play the same piano they will be playing at the recital.

Suggested teacher's dialogue to students:

1. Use complete sentences to announce your name and the title of the piece you are performing, along with the name of the composer.
2. If you are performing more than one piece, bow after the first piece is finished, and announce the name of the second selection.
3. Before you start, take a moment to get centered and focused, maybe count to three before beginning to play, or think through the first couple measures to be sure you start with a good tempo.
4. When preparing to play:
 - a. On a wind instrument, place your hands over the finger holes in preparation for playing the first note of your song.
 - b. On a string instrument, place your feet in proper position. Then hold your instrument and bow in the correct playing position.
 - c. On a keyboard or piano, sit in the proper place on the bench and place your hands over the keys, ready to play.
5. Look at the audience and keep track of their reaction to see if they are enjoying your performance.
6. If a piano player is accompanying you or if you are performing a duet, look to the other partner to get in sync before starting the song. Decide ahead of time who will give the cue to start. Then remember that the accompanist follows the soloist on and off stage.

7. Focus on performing the piece straight through. Keep playing if you make a mistake. Address trouble spots in the song at a different time.
8. Look at the audience and keep track of their reaction to see if they are enjoying your performance.
9. Listen attentively to other students perform. At the end of their performance, wait until others begin applauding if you are unsure if player is finished.
10. Take a bow at the end of your song as a way to thank the audience for listening. Stand straight with your feet. Then bow from your waist, not from your neck, and bow your head. Keep your hands at your sides. Count to three while bowing, or say a phrase like “So many songs, so little time.” Then stand up straight and smile at your audience when you finish.

By the time you finish with the rehearsal performance, the student will know what to expect and the recital will go more smoothly.