

Introducing World Drumming

Welcome to the Introducing World Drumming course at Waltons New School of Music.

This course is designed to teach you about several world percussion instruments and how to play them, as well as the rhythms of different drumming traditions. We ask you to keep three important things in mind as you begin:

1. **The more you put into the course, the more you will get out of it.**
2. **Communicate with your teacher** if there is an area you're having difficulty with or something you don't fully understand. Your teacher is here to help you, so don't hesitate to approach him if you're having difficulty with anything.
3. **Bring a smart phone or camera to class** so you can take video or audio recordings of your teacher playing rhythms and exercises at the end of each class. You can then take these recordings home to practice and play along with. However, please be sure to put your ringer on 'silent' so the class won't be interrupted by phone calls!

Practice

Practice is an essential aspect of any music course, and we all know the phrase 'practice makes perfect'. Yet even the most eager learner might cringe when told to practice daily. Perhaps the most challenging aspect of learning a musical instrument is developing a healthy, productive approach to practice. Your teacher will give you guidelines on how and what to practice, but the real work is up to you, and mostly on your own time. Here are a few tips:

- **Be creative.** Although having a hand drum (djembe, bongos, etc.) at home to practice on is ideal, you can still practice rhythms and drumming techniques on a variety of household items, including upturned plastic paint tins, sturdy cardboard boxes or even kitchen tables!
- **Aim to practice every day.** Even a small amount of daily practice is much more effective than a long practice session the day before your next class. Make practice a part of your daily routine. Determine when is the best time for you to practice. If you like practicing in the morning, get up 30 minutes early so that you won't be late for work. If you're an evening person, do your practice before going to bed or before you become sleepy.
- **Make your practice area comfortable.** Is the room well ventilated? Is there good lighting? Is your mobile switched off or on silent? Make sure that your practice area is comfortable and free from distractions so that you can concentrate when practicing.
- **Practice for at least 20 minutes.** Why 20 minutes? We find that this is a manageable time for beginners. As your interest and skill level grows, you will find that your daily practice time will also increase.
- **Reward yourself.** If you have just learned to play something that you've previously had trouble with, by all means reward yourself! You don't have to splurge; just doing something you particularly enjoy will give you a morale boost and further inspire you to learn.
- **Focus on your practice.** Effective practice requires concentration and focus. If you are rushing to do it or are distracted by other things that need doing, you won't get much out of it. Try spending a few minutes in silence before you begin in order to take a few deep breaths and clear your head of other concerns.