

TOPIC: MEMORIZATION

RMTA Website / For Students / Practice and Performance Tips:

- <https://readingmusicteachers.org/for-students/for-students-practice-performance-tips>

The Musicians Way: The Four Stages of Memorization:

- <https://www.musiciansway.com/blog/2010/05/the-four-stages-of-memorization/>
- <https://www.musiciansway.com/performance/>

The Bulletproof Musician:

- Interview with pianist Stephen Hough:
 - <https://bulletproofmusician.com/stephen-hough-on-the-question-is-memorizing-music-really-all-that-important/>
- Molly Gebrian: On Efficient, Reliable, and Evidence-Based Memorization Strategies for Musicians
 - <https://bulletproofmusician.com/molly-gebrian-on-efficient-effective-and-reliable-memorization-strategies-for-musicians/>
- The Two Approaches to Memorization – One of Which Can Leave You Lost and Stranded if you Rely on It Too Much:
 - <https://bulletproofmusician.com/musicians-seem-memorization-naturals-can-become-one/>

Lois Svard - The Musicians Brain

- Practice Learning and Memory, four-part series
 - <https://www.themusiciansbrain.com/practice-learning-and-memory-part-i/>
- From Sightreading to Memorized Performance
 - <https://www.themusiciansbrain.com/from-sight-reading-to-memorized-performance/>
- Lois' recently published book "[The Musicians Brain](#)" is now available through [Oxford University Press](#).

Masterclass

- Itzhak Perlman's Tips for Memorizing Music Faster:
 - <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/violinist-itzhak-perlmans-tips-for-memorizing-music#7LUo95CxYrsGYv2eIc47ZZ>

Eastman School of Music

- Memorization: A necessary chore, or a path to a more enjoyable performance (audition) experience?
 - <https://www.esm.rochester.edu/general/2014/01/memorization-a-necessary-chore-or-a-path-to-a-more-enjoyable-performance-audition-experience/>

Tonebase

- Variety of articles on memory, practice, learning
 - <https://www.tonebase.co/piano/blog>

RE STUDENTS: Do your students memorize their music? Check any that apply	RE STUDENTS: Do you feel it's an essential life skill?	RE STUDENTS: If you do not teach or encourage memorization, can you explain why?	RE STUDENTS: If you DO encourage memorization, how it is achieved?	RE STUDENTS: Are there any particular methods or processes you teach the student to aid memorization?	RE STUDENTS: Any other comments you'd like to share.	YOURSELF: Have you personally performed by memory?	YOURSELF: Do you enjoy the experience or do you find it stressful?	YOURSELF: Do you enjoy performing in general, whether by memory or not?	YOURSELF: Any other comments you'd like to share?
Sometimes	Maybe	Depends on the student and their level of commitment. For those who are obviously good students and they put in the time for practice, the road isn't very long to memorize, and their performance is enhanced to not be encumbered by their music. However, for a child who doesn't practice very much and where memorizing would be difficult, I'm very happy to allow them to use their music for a performance. A positive experience and success trumps memorizing their music.	A little of both	Memorize the end of the song first and create "hooks" where they can start and stop within the music.		yes			
Sometimes; Only as required by a particular event/audition/etc	Maybe	The occasion/focus skill calls for something else.	A little of both	Section by section. Do what you can. Turn the music stand around. Sing before playing.	My students memorize all the time, but not everything. The reason is that it promotes repetition of skill. It's true that in the midst of those repetitions, somebody who's practicing can change the focus point or the layer of practice. Some layers include: rhythm, notes, fingerings, timing, articulations, phrases, bow distribution, tempo; all layers combined includes style.	Yes, many times.	Option 1	Sometimes. I prefer to perform by memory.	If I have the piece memorized, I can concentrate on its interpretation. I don't have to worry about turning pages. I have freedom to express; freedom to deal with my nerves; opportunity to adjust within the "stage" situation without being "distracted" by the music pages. I feel as though I can play to the audience just a little bit more. I have more freedom to move on stage. Certainly, I am anticipating what comes next; otherwise, nothing is coming next. The freedom to express in performance gives one more chance to try something new; after all, every performance is new and different than the previous in some way; memorization means no pages attached.
Always & everything!; Only as required by a particular event/audition/etc	Yes		Students do it on their own			Yes	Stressful	Yes	
Sometimes	Yes		A little of both	For beginner students, mostly just repetition. For more advanced students, I sometimes divide into chunks, number each chunk, and have them begin at any number. Sometimes we start at the end of a section and memorize backwards (start with the cadence, then add more beats each time until the troublesome section is memorized). Slow playing from memory with a metronome usually reveals any weaknesses in memory.		yes	If I'm well-prepared, it's great!	It's nice to have the piece memorized for performance, but I also like to have it there for reference in case my brain needs the crutch.	My struggle (in myself and also in some of my students) is the random memory lapses from a lack of focus. That's always been my challenge- my brain wanders, I begin to rely on finger memory, then they trip up and my brain has to scramble to get back on track... ;)
Sometimes; Only as required by a particular event/audition/etc	Yes	I might not focus on memory with kids w/certain learning issues, or anxiety issues.	A little of both	Form of the piece; divide into chunks with 'lifesaver' spots; write out the start and end; harmonic analysis; sing the words if appropriate; or make up words; "backwards chaining"; mapping; post-it notes;	I try to incorporate some memory work into every lesson most of the time without mentioning what we're doing.	yes	both	I enjoy collaborative playing more than solo.	I find it more difficult to memorize as I age. Decided to not worry about memorizing so I can enjoy the playing.