Pepe Romero - On Daily Routine

"The reason we work on technique every day is to clear the path." - Pepe Romero

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Comfort

Take a moment before you practice to look at and appreciate your guitar. Take the extra time to make sure that when you sit down with the instrument that you are **comfortable**.

Tuning

Start making sounds on the instrument. Listen intently to each note and its overtones. Use those overtones to **tune the guitar**. It's important when tuning to listen to the guitar. Think of it as tuning both the guitar and yourself, so that you are both ready to practice.

String flexing

Take another moment to **feel the strings in your right hand**. Push into the guitar and become aware of their flex and tension. Play through something, not necessarily to work out repertoire, but something to make noise and sound in the different registers. In Pepe's case he begins with **Spanish Dance No. 5.**

Listen and feel for control. How much does the string push against the fingers? How much pressure does the left hand need? Make adjustments based off of these observations.

Waking up the instrument

As you play through some music, always listen to the guitar and how it is **'waking up.'** Listen for how it is producing harmonics and overtones, and become aware of how you are beginning to perceive them.

Overtones

Overtones, to Pepe, are one of the most important aspects of the guitar. They are the hidden nuances happening behind the obvious. Becoming aware of them allows us as musicians to access the reservoir of different colors and emotions in the music.

Finger Exercises

But before **'waking up'** the guitar, start by waking up the shoulders and neck. Do a few sets of light shrugs and arm circles to make sure the entire guitar playing mechanism is loose and ready.

Next try a few sets of **finger exercises**. Hold onto all but one or two fingers, and draw slow circles with the fingers. Do this in both hands.

Warming up on the guitar

When the mechanisms are loose, bring the workout to the guitar. Then you can begin your daily scales, chromatic workouts, and arpeggio exercises. Giuliani's set of 120 right hand exercises is a great warm up tool to use.

When doing Giuliani's exercises, or any other technical exercise, always listen for balance, dynamics and direction.

Rasgueados

Rasgueados are another great way to warm up and work out the hands each day.

How much to warm up

Pepe recommends reserving an hour and a half to two hours for warming up and technical exercises. Use the time to work on your major and minor scales, along with Giuliani's 120 right hand exercises.

Reconnecting

The reason we work on technique every day is to clear the path, so we don't feel obstacles in our way. Every day we have to **reconnect with the instrument**, so it's best to clear everything out of the way first. Stress from performing, or even everyday life can get in the way of reconnecting, so it is important to take the time to clear that away before starting your work.

Repertoire

Once the path is clear, you can begin working on your music. As a tip, set aside what you have to work on the night before, so when you are done warming up you can simply start working.

After around two to three hours working on repertoire, take a break for lunch, relax and listen to some music.

Later on

In the evening, make time to play for yourself. Your work is done on the instrument, and now you can play what you are in the mood to play. Play a concert for yourself of music that feels good to you.

Additional Resources

Try incorporating these practice techniques into your repertoire. Check out the additional resources to this lesson below or ask Pepe a question by emailing us at **team@tonebase.co**!

1. Interview with Pepe Romero (San Diego 2018)
2. Thomas Viloteau's lesson on **Warming Up**