

Tuition with Tony Gardner



Musical Bumps www.tonygardner.com.au

TERM 3 TUITION 14TH JULY- 19TH SEPT.

6 July 2014 Term 3 2014

I Joined a Gym. So now I have lost kilos and become fitter! NOT!
Just having the musical instrument doesn't mean that you play it! You have this fantastic opportunity to develop skills. Make the most of it. Set the time aside and practice. You will feel great about it and have fun as you become confident.



Yes I actually joined the Gym after 12 months off being regular. This results in very poor results. Now I have the Gym membership card I have become

really fit and healthy. Yes I can run 5 kilometres a night with this shiny card. I have become incredibly athletic. Since having this great membership card I have turned into a machine. Mmmm I don't think so! I have found I have to work at this very hard to become fitter. It does not always feel great. In fact I can't wait to get to the walking machine or the bicycle to let off steam from the other exercises that have been set out for me. It does get easier though.

In everything that we do it is essential that we work at it. It is important to be reasonably gentle on ourselves and work at our own pace. I will gradually become fitter over months of gradual work. You as aspiring musicians will develop your skills gradually also if you are patient and work at your set tasks bit by bit over the week. You have a musical instrument and you also come to music lessons. If you don't work at it, you will not feel

great about music and you will probably want to give up. There is no such thing as "I didn't have time to practice".

Remember as I have now said many times over in past newsletters to chip away at it in gradual short, frequent practice sessions. You will achieve and progress well over a period of time.

Are we there yet?

If you have been lucky enough to go away over the last break I hope you have managed to listen to some music. By that I do mean music that is somehow relevant to the instrument you are studying. I certainly have! I have been listening quite a bit to a recording of the combined talents of The Count Basie and Duke Ellington Big Bands. It was recorded in 1961 and was entitled "The Count Meets the Duke". I remember listening to this as a young student and marveling at the musicianship. These musicians on the album pushed all kinds of boundaries! Often fast and high stuff that you would not think possible. Of course this is not the only thing I listened to but purely an example of what is still inspiring as a musician. I still listen to this and am in awe of the musicianship. I do encourage you all to get to concerts and also listen to recordings. Experience the possibilities!

Jazz Improvisation

For those of you who are learning jazz improvisation skills with me you will already know that your practice time needs to be as structured as any other musical activity. You have to practice scales, chords, chord progressions and then approach pieces slightly differently with an understanding of the structure of the song. Listening to music performed on your instrument is so important. Now listening to any artist is really a click of the fingers away. Unfortunately I had to go in search to Palings Music in the city to find what I wanted. Well I am sorry I said unfortunately as really this was part of the adventure of discovering sounds that really switched me on.

If I heard a particular recording on the radio or introduced by a teacher I would look for more. I can remember the train trip to the city with pocket money in hand to get an record and then later a cassette recording. I would take a jazz musician's lines twist them around and play different ways. I would try to phrase like them as well.

If you are just starting to improvise try this little exercise. Have a listen to "The Modern Jazz Quartet". Find a nice slow blues track and get to work. Your parents may ask what you are doing but it must be done. I have learnt that this is an invaluable part of successful practice habits apart from your technical work which can be boring (only if you let it). Go to it!

There is also a great deal of stuff to play along with. Try the Jamey Aebersold Series Blues and the Basics Volume 2 and 42. This is a great start. You can order on line or Zephyr Music at Crows Nest is always reliable. The use of the playjazznow.com is a great resource also for obtaining playalong tracks and hints.

Tough Reading Music

Yup! First we learn to play our instrument and then we slowly get the concepts of reading and transferring this sort of picture language to our fingers. Well first we get the hang of the notes. It is a big ask to read as well! I had to work through a series of theory papers and this was a huge help to my reading skills. In this day of learning and getting things instantly we often expect this reading thing to happen quickly. I have suggested for some of you to improve your reading skills and general theory by using a website called teoria.com. It is a great website to improve your skills at all levels. I have used this also for classroom music in the past and it has proven to be a fantastic tool. I will be going back to some theory paper work this term for some of you that find the reading thing challenging and have not visited the website I have described.

There are also some great educational activities on the [musicaviva](http://musicaviva.com) website. It will also update you with some concert activity around town. Schools also tap into this as a resource.

Tuition Fees and Missed Lessons.

A quick reminder to please pay by the due date. If this is not possible please let me know. I do know what it is like juggling all this stuff as a parent. I have had two daughters go through all the tuition etc as well.

Missed Lessons. As you would know from reading "Terms and Conditions" on my website you know what happens. I will, with notification do my best to accommodate if I can. Last holidays I set aside the first Monday. This also gave a holiday lesson for some. I have done this before. As a parent myself I understood the process that if my daughters could not make the lesson I would forfeit the lesson. My parents also understood and respected this when I was learning too. I have always understood that if you are booking someone's time and expertise that we need to pay for it.....just ask my chiropractor who does not do make up sessions if missed.

Upcoming Gig

If you get to Manly on 8th August at 7.30pm you can see my group "The Benny Goodman Project" perform at Jazz in the Kirk. This is always a great night of good jazz and the best musos in town. This is at St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 56 Raglan Street Manly. To book... phone 99762801. You can dine nearby in town or the club opposite. Coffee, tea and cake is at the venue. EXCELLENT CAKE!!