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Audition Tips

Here are some simple to follow, but important, steps to prepare *efficiently* for your audition:

MOST IMPORTANT: Do not practice mistakes. In the case of scales, make sure that you understand the key signature and are completely aware of the notes that are affected – and those not affected – by the key signature. Practice saying the names of the notes slowly and using the correct fingerings. Do this until you can do it perfectly without hesitating. Then practice the scale slowly, thinking the note names while you play.

Do the same thing for the etudes. Start with the key signature and say the scale for that key. Look through the etude for accidentals. Say the note names slowly in each etude as well. Your brain needs to recognize every note. Next, count the rhythm slowly until you can do so without hesitation and error free. When you can note-name and count the rhythm, then you will make far fewer mistakes the first time – while playing at a slow tempo! – and can avoid practicing mistakes.

Practice ALL the scales slowly every day. Practicing slowly will help develop even fingers and will build confidence. Don't try to go fast. Play cleanly and error free.

Note the difficult parts of the etudes and practice these the most. We like to avoid frustration and play the parts that sound good the quickest. That will not help you prepare. Work the more challenging parts first and make these the priority.

Record yourself. This is a great way to analyze what you are doing and make improvements. If you have a Mac, GarageBand is terrific as a recording tool. Audacity is a free application for both Mac and Windows. USB microphones are cheap and work very well.

Be patient. You have lots of time to practice playing at the marked tempo IF you do the above and practice slowly.

It's all about tone. Even the scales. Strive to make the best sound on every thing that you play. It's not the particular notes or rhythms that are important after you work them out – it is tone quality.

Be smart about how you approach practicing and make it efficient. Your time is valuable and efficient practicing gets better results in a shorter time.
