

**A Review of The Music Student’s Practice Journal: Tracking Your Artistry for Success, by Olivia Ellis and Davis Dorrough**

**By BJ Nicoletti**

**Also included are links to articles and video about practicing journaling!**

Overall, for me, this journal approach is familiar, comfortable and effective with the exception of the practice log not having space for tracking a specific goal, reflection on a specific goal and next steps for that goal. So, my favorite approach remains using a simple notebook using a similar overall approach to this publication. **But, for most, particularly with middle/high school and early collegiate players (maybe elementary players too), this approach certainly does much to add structure to students’ weekly goal setting, practice tracking and systematic and routine reflection.**

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**While there are many types of practice journals available, this one may be of particular interest due to it’s simple, but logical and meaningful set-up and content.** It was created by the authors after much testing and use in their own music studio. (see pic on next page)

* It has a well balanced focus on long and short term goals, practice strategy and outcomes, and learner reflection. In other words, it isn’t just about tracking “time spent.”
* In the true spirit of a journal, t is designed with plenty of room to write.
* While structured, it doesn’t lock the journalist too narrowly in because the open-ended questions leave room for in individual’s approach to narrating their practice, learning, and needs. See picture on next page (from the Amazon site).

More about the book can be found at this Amazon webpage, simply scroll down for the details including pictures of the page journals and their rationale for designing the book the way they did – [click here for more information.](https://www.amazon.com/Music-Students-Practice-Journal-Tracking/dp/B08KH3T6X5)



**Also on the topic of journaling, here are a few links that may provide additional insight and inspiration.**

Articles

* [The Ultimate Guide to Starting a Music Journal](https://www.theguitarjournal.com/the-ultimate-guide-to-starting-a-music-journal/#:~:text=What%20is%20a%20music%20journal,their%20progress%20on%20their%20instrument.)
* [Music Journaling Article from the OnlineMetronome](https://theonlinemetronome.com/practice-journal)
* [The Musicians Practice Journal and Why You Need One](https://www.musicindustryhowto.com/the-musicians-practice-journal-and-why-you-need-one/), by the Music Industry HOW TO website
* A very different approach, but sensible in several ways. This article also presents the idea of organizing by piece or type of work, including how to use the Evernote as a practice journal tool – [A Practice Journal System that Actually Works.](https://auditioncafe.com/article/a-practice-journal-system-that-actually-works/)

Video

* How to [use the Evernote App to help with practice](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VeKaunxqZnI), by FiddleHed (12:37) – integrating audio and text into your journal, and adding links to documents and recordings. You can write or type and easily include pictures.

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