



Melodics™

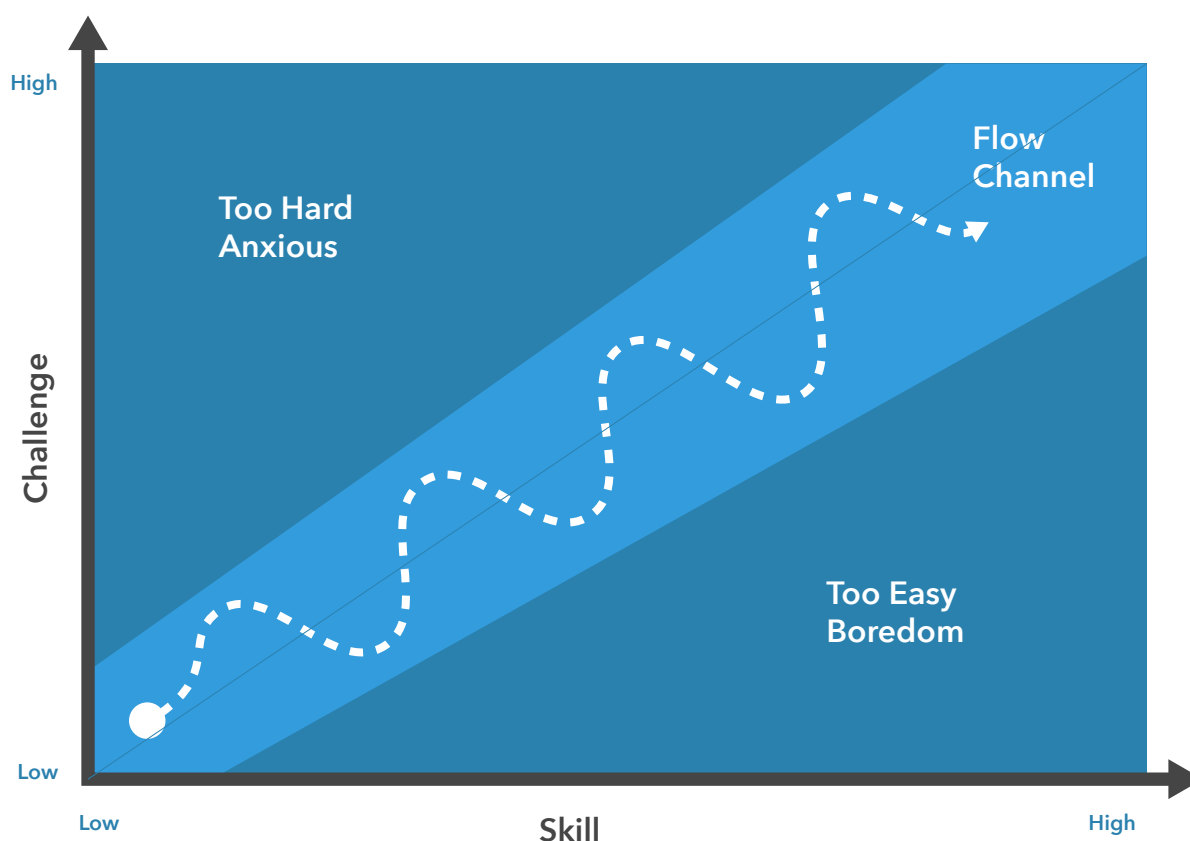
The Melodics Playbook.

Your guide to becoming a better musician.

Our philosophy: Learning by doing

We believe that learning is something that is done by you and not something that is done to you. Melodics puts you in control of your own learning through listening, performing, evaluation and practice.

Music is most satisfying when you're in a state of "flow". Too hard and it makes you anxious. Too easy and you get bored.



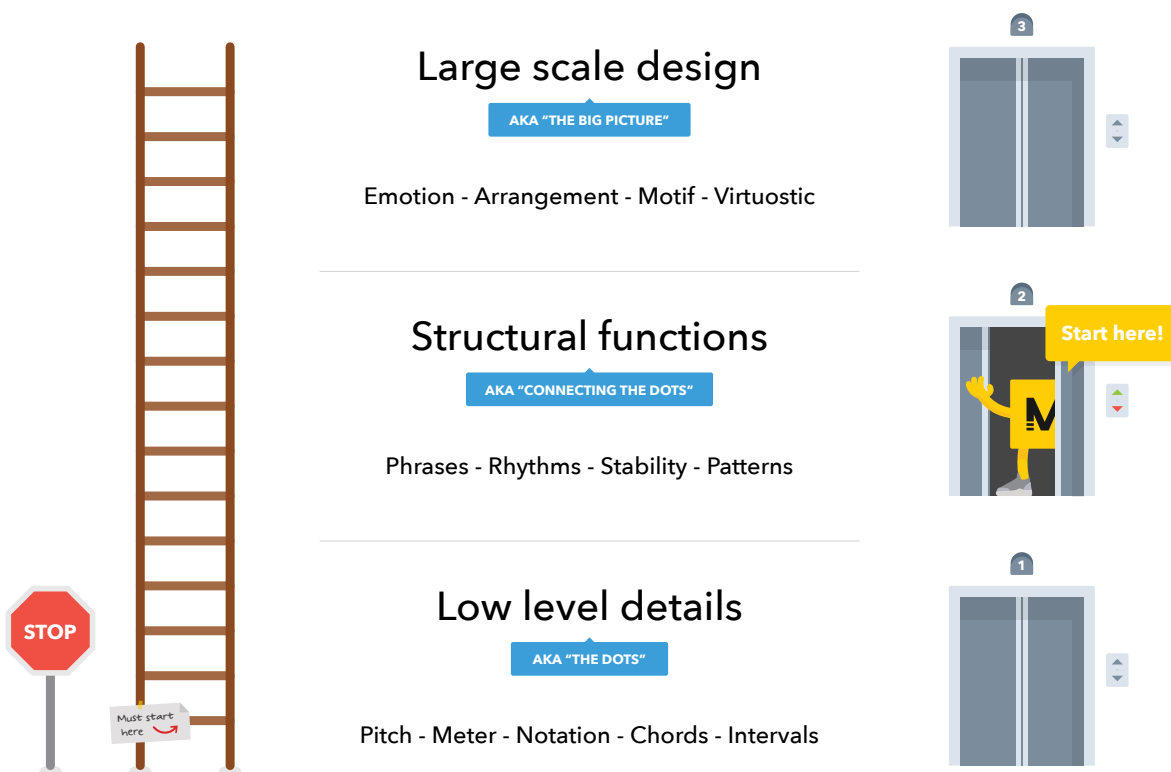
Flow is where challenge and ability meet. The result is a feeling of the task flowing from our bodies and mind effortlessly—hence the term flow to describe the feeling.

It's been argued that the primary purpose of music is to create deeply gratifying flow states, for both performers and listeners.

This channel will be different for everyone which is why we invite you to create your own pathway through our lessons and courses, rather than telling you what to do.

The ladder of learning

Music students usually have to start with single notes and work their way up to higher levels of complexity. That seems like common sense. But why do so many people give up?



This isn't the way we believe learning happens. Even as a total beginner you have so much knowledge from just listening to music, most of which is at a much higher level. When you listen to music you don't hear chords, notation or intervals. **You hear music.**

"We don't listen to 'notes' any more than we listen to letters printed on the page."

J Bamberger, 1996, Turning Music Theory On Its Ear.

The Melodics approach starts in the middle. You learn tunes, riffs and phrases, chord progressions, patterns. We then help you move up and down this ladder to learn micro details, and bigger structures.

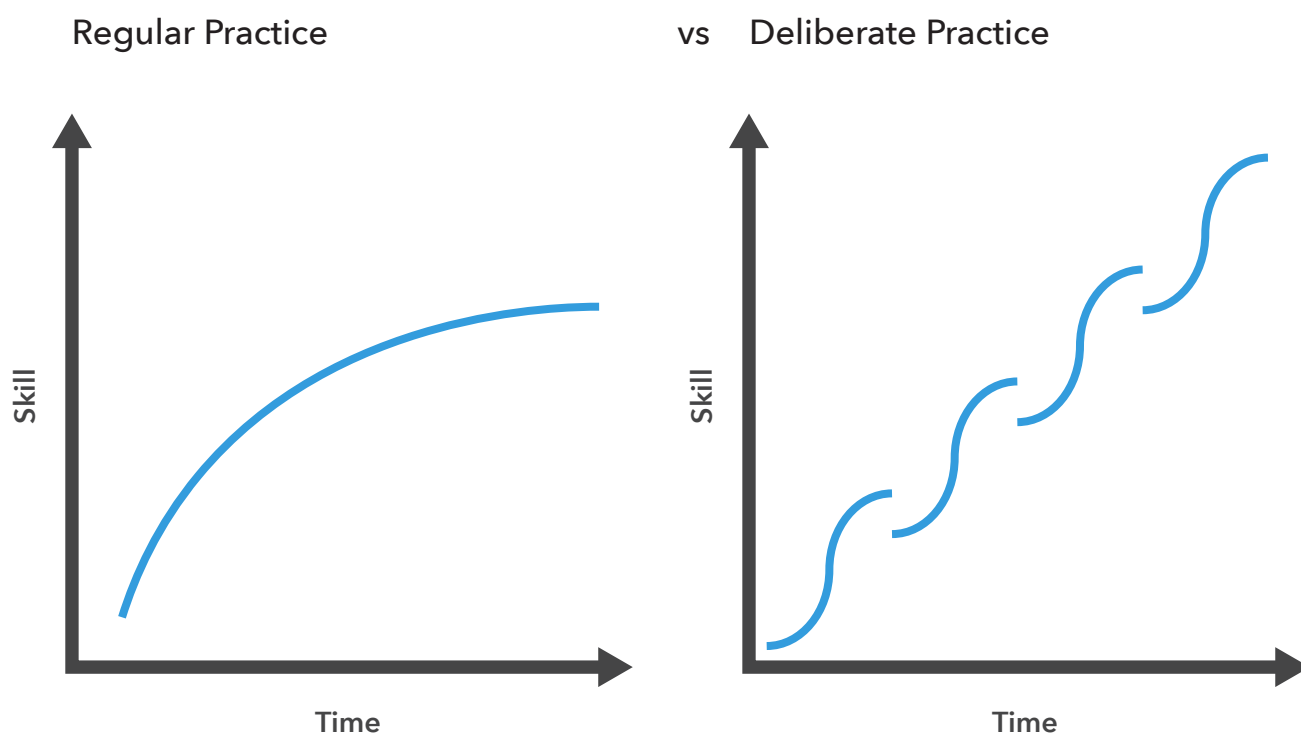
Why do we start there? Because as a beginner music has to be fun. We believe that theory comes from music, not the other way around. Many beginners give up simply because their experience of music learning is so far removed from the music they have in their head.

Melodics is built around music.

Deliberate Practice: How you pass lessons!

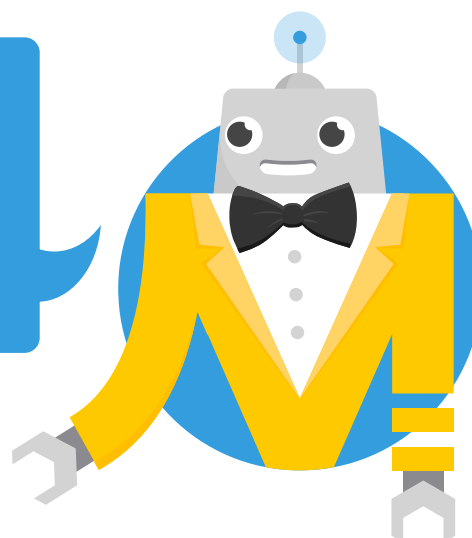
It's not what you practice, it's how you practice.

Deliberate, or effective practice is a concept borrowed from high performance sports as well as other fields where it's been researched widely. Rather than putting in long hours, it's the strategies you use in your practice that actually matter.



We don't recommend re-starting a lesson over and over until you pass. That's bound to lead to frustration, a huge motivation killer.

We have a feature called **Practice Mode** which should be used to help you pass lessons and make progress.



The key is to slow down and be methodical.
Here's how we recommend approaching your practice:

1

Orientation

Pick a lesson and listen to it as a whole. It's important to get familiar with the music you'll be performing using preview and orientate yourself to the finger placements.

2

Chunking

Divide the song into small steps or components and practice and memorize these separately. Then, link them together in progressively larger groupings. You'll notice that in the early grades we do a lot of the dividing into lesson steps for you. As the grades increase and the steps become more difficult, you might find it useful to divide them up even further using the Looping feature within Practice Mode.

3

Focus

Play with the tempo in Practice Mode, first slowing down and then speeding it up once your accuracy has improved. Slowing down helps you to focus more closely on errors, creating a higher degree of precision. Use features in practice mode such as Auto BPM or Wait Mode to build up your muscle memory and reflexes. Be patient with yourself, this can take a while!

4

Evaluate

Pick a part of the song you want to master, reach for it then evaluate the gap between your target and the goal and start again. You can track your progress each session and see how you're progressing. Detecting mistakes is essential for making progress.

5

Repeat

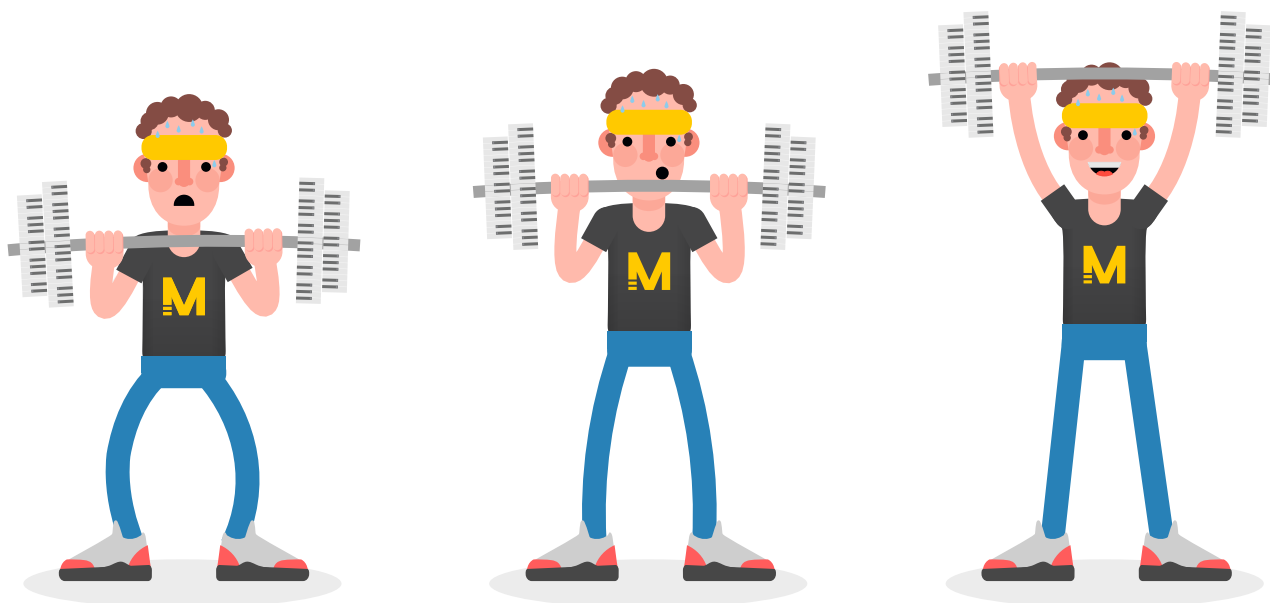
Keep practicing like this every day. This is the crucial part that so many people forget but even a small amount (5 minutes) of this deliberate and focused practice every day will lead to better results than large infrequent practice sessions that don't have a structure and focus.

What does progress look like?

Progress isn't just the highest grade you can pass. That's your ability. Progress is how far you feel you've come, and how much you've improved by.

Progress is also one of the biggest motivators for practice. But how do you see how much progress you've made? How do you know what you've learned?

The first way is through self-review. Going back through the easier grades and playing lessons you might have only scored 1 star on is a great way to see how far you've developed. You might be surprised to see how easily you can go back and collect stars you might have missed.



Also think about your strengths and weaknesses. Do you struggle with lessons that require more finger independence, or lessons that require more syncopation? You can use the lesson filter by "tags" to filter by these different skills so you can focus on these specific lessons in your next practice sessions.

You can also find other ways of challenging yourself. Turning off the guide notes, playing without looking at the screen and playing at a higher tempo using Practice Mode are all ways you can try and extend yourself.

Learning doesn't end with Melodics

Melodics is your home for practice and there's plenty you can do outside of Melodics to help make that practice time even more enjoyable and effective.

Music is an ongoing process. It doesn't get easier, you just get better at doing it. By choosing to learn about playing music, you're choosing to make music an active thing in your life.

Music for tens of thousands of years has been an activity. Something done with friends, family, the tribe. Over the last six or seven decades, music's role as an activity within daily life has subsided, as recorded music made this more passive.

Here's a few ways to build on the idea of music as an activity, how you can apply some of what you're learning in Melodics and how you can reinforce that learning.

Jamming!

Probably the most fun you can have with music is jamming. An easy way to start a jam by yourself is using Melodics. Just open any lesson and turn on Practice Mode, then set a loop, turn the guide notes off and just play along!

Try running Melodics in the background, and then play a song you like via Spotify / Apple Music etc. See if you can match up the right notes and play along, or add some of your own spice!



Listening

Listening can be a really powerful learning experience as well. Active listening just means making listening the focus, rather than the music being a soundtrack to whatever else you're doing. Try to listen in layers and pick out different elements each time. Here are some things to listen for:

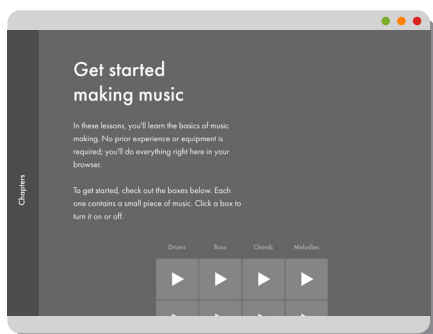
- Quality of the sounds
- Melodies and harmonies
- Rhythm
- Arrangement

You can read more about this in Ableton's Making Music Guide to Active Listening: makingmusic.ableton.com/active-listening



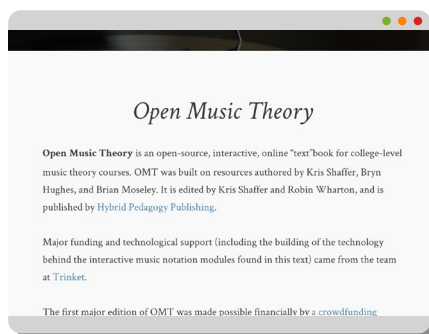
Reading

Here's a few great resources that we recommend checking out:



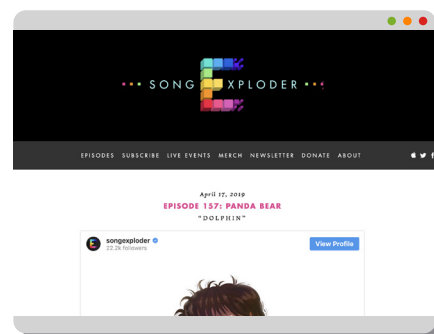
learningmusic.ableton.com

Explore the fundamentals of music via Ableton's interactive website.



openmusictheory.com

Open-source, interactive textbook for classical music theory



songexploder.net

A podcast where musicians take apart their songs, and piece by piece, tell the story of how they were made.

A note on theory

There's a tendency to gravitate to music theory as the special key that unlocks music. At the core of Melodics is the belief that theory flows from music, rather than the reverse.

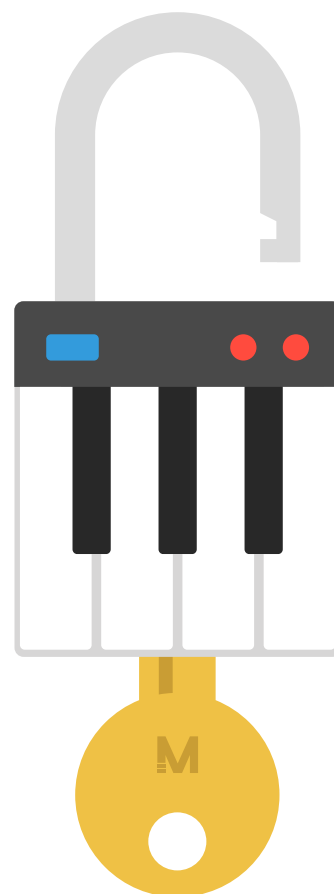
Our primary focus is **learning by doing**.

Music theory is a way of describing the things in music that different people, in different cultural contexts have found to sound good to them. It's not a rigid system of hard rules. In fact different musical genres actually require different ways to describe them.

If there are rules, they are being broken constantly - that's how music evolves.

Instead of having to read a theory textbook before you're able to perform music, we invite you to jump straight into playing and discover the theory and patterns that make up modern music through a process of exploration, recognition and practice.

Melodics is here to help you filter theory as it comes up, give you the confidence to know what's relevant to you, and where to focus your energies - because practice needs to be fun, and the only way to improve your skills is through building a good practice habit.



It's about the journey, not the destination.

There's no point where a musician sits on top of a mountain and thinks 'great, i've done it!'. Music is something that you do, and it's not something you finish.

One of the main motivation tools in Melodics is streaks. There's something really special about doing something every single day. It can be really powerful.

Having said this, don't beat yourself up about missing a day or a week here and there. What's more important is you keep at it over the long term. Here's what one of our 300+ day streakers had to say about this:

"Before this 300+ day streak came to be, I had like a 30 day streak and missed a day of practice, so my streak was reset to zero. I was really bummed out about that and stopped playing for two weeks or so.

Don't let that happen to you - your streak is just a number, a tool to motivate yourself to practice every day. As we all know, life happens, and there will be a day when sitting down with your instrument will be impossible. If you miss a day of practice, just shrug and practice even more the next day!"

How to make time for practice:

- Start a streak! Nothing like some skin in the game to motivate you to keep your practice schedule.
- Set up a dedicated practice space. You'll be more likely to practice if you don't have to make space, or set things up.
- Set goals for your sessions. If your practice is goal oriented you'll be more likely to do not skip the session.
- Work out the best time of the day for you to practice.
- Make your practice sessions smaller. You'll get better results if you do several short sessions rather than one long one. The ideal is 5 minutes a day, 4 times a week. It's not a big time investment, and you will notice the improvement to your rhythm and timing.

