**Free tips on how to practice piano  
Vera Haime**

**FOR BEGINNERS**

**Getting to know the keyboard**   
Go and sit at your piano. Now here is the first thing I want you to do.  
Just play the black notes and make up a tune of your own. Did you know that if you only use the black notes, it always sounds nice? Play them loudly, then quietly. Play them just with your right hand and then just with your left. Play them hands together. Have some fun with this. Be bold and don’t play the piano as though it can bite you. Just hit it and listen to which notes sound good together and which don’t.  
  
**Playing by ear**  
Now think of a tune that you know very well, for example, a song that you grew up with and have heard many times. Now fiddle around on the keyboard and try to find the notes that make up a bit of that tune. You might surprise yourself! Don’t be afraid to fail. It’s not a test. If you can’t do it that’s fine.  
Go back to the black notes and make up more tunes.

**Strengthening the muscles in your fingers**When you first start, your fingers don’t know how to work separately from each other.  
Place your thumb and fingers over 5 white notes. Bend your fingers so they are crab-like. Play the notes one after the other up and down until your fingers start to ache a little. You are building up the muscles that you will need to play piano.

**FOR THOSE WHO GAVE UP**

With all the symbols and concepts that you are expected to grasp when you start to learn the piano, it’s no wonder that most people give up. I can fix that for you and it usually takes no more than an hour or two. Then you can make friends with the piano again! In the meantime, do this:

**Approaching the piano after a long time away**Start by sitting down at the piano and just put your hands on the keys**.**Play all the white notes from the bottom to the top**.** Play all the black notes**.**If there was anything that you used to be able to play, see if you can pick out a little bit of it now.  
Don’t worry if you can’t AND DON’T GET OUT YOUR OLD SHEET MUSIC!  
Just place your hands on the piano and start to make some nice sounds. Pick your favorite tune of the moment. It may be a theme tune to your favorite TV show, or even a commercial jingle. Anything where you know the tune really well. Now try to find those notes on the piano. Go back to the piano every day and just make some nice sounds by ear. You can also do some 5 finger exercises to get the strength back in your fingers again.  
I promise you that you will play the piano again!

**Vera’s Music Academy  
727-223-5658**