

## Elements of Deliberate Practice

What elements qualify something as deliberate practice? Many researchers into cognition and learning describe it as follows:

- Practice has an express purpose.
- Practice demands attention and focus.
- Practice involves conscious repetition or rehearsal.
- Practice is geared to the individual.
- Practice takes careful timing.
- Practice is not inherently enjoyable.
- Practice develops new skills and knowledge.
- Practice applies to new endeavors.

### WHAT IS NOT DELIBERATE PRACTICE

**Deliberate practice is not the same as work.** “When I’m fixing something on my car,” said Ruben, “I might be doing my best, but I’m not exactly practicing a technique. I’m just trying to get the car repaired.”

**Deliberate practice is not the same as play.** “When I sit down with my guitar just for fun, I’m not necessarily trying to improve my technique or anything,” said Marquis.

**Deliberate practice is not the same as rote repetition.** All practice involves repetition. But unless they care about what they are repeating and why, students are “doing it just to do it”—not to learn. “We have to memorize chemistry formulas for the test,” said Christian. “But I never remember them later if I don’t get what they’re about.”

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