

Modus Practica 1.5

Your Intelligent Practice Partner

Manual

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1. Introduction

1.1 Welcome to Modus Practica

Welcome to Modus Practica, your personal, intelligent partner for practicing music. This application is designed for musicians of all levels and aims to optimize your practice routine by utilizing scientifically proven learning strategies. Modus Practica is more than a simple logbook; it is an active guide that helps you learn faster, retain information better, and perform with greater confidence.

1.2 The Philosophy: Why is Smart Practice Better than Hard Practice?

Every musician knows that practice is essential. But 'a lot' of practice is not always 'effective' practice. The traditional approach, endlessly repeating passages, is often not the most efficient method for embedding knowledge and skills in long-term memory.

The philosophy of Modus Practica is based on a simple question: "What is the perfect moment to re-practice a passage for maximum learning effect?" The answer to this question lies in science:

- **The Forgetting Curve (Hermann Ebbinghaus):** Our brain forgets information according to a predictable curve. By repeating a passage precisely at the right moment – when you are just about to forget it – the memory trace is maximally strengthened. Modus Practica calculates this optimal moment for you.
- **Motor Learning (Dr. Molly Gebrian):** Learning music is also a physical skill. The app integrates Dr. Gebrian's principles of overlearning (practicing beyond the point of first success) and the use of short, focused practice blocks with breaks ('spaced practice') to consolidate your muscle memory.
- **Personalization via Machine Learning:** Everyone learns differently. That's why Modus Practica uses machine learning to analyze your personal progress and continuously tailor the schedule to your unique learning style.

By combining these principles, Modus Practica helps you achieve better results with less practice time, so you learn music more efficiently and remember it longer.

1.3 Who is this App for?

Modus Practica is designed for a wide range of musicians:

- **Amateur Musicians:** Get the most out of your limited practice time and accelerate your progress.
- **Music Students:** Build efficient study habits, prepare more effectively for exams and auditions, and gain insight into your own learning process.
- **Professional Musicians:** Manage a large repertoire, learn new pieces faster, and ensure older pieces remain readily accessible with minimal maintenance.
- **Music Teachers:** Use the data and scheduling as an additional tool to guide your students with a structured, data-driven approach.

2. Installation and First Start

This chapter guides you through the initial steps: installing Modus Practica, creating your personal profile, and importing any existing data.

2.1 Installation Instructions

The exact installation steps depend on how you received the application. Follow the instructions provided with your version (e.g., running an installer or extracting a .zip file). After installation, Modus Practica is ready for its first launch.

2.2 Creating Your First Profile

Modus Practica is designed to be used by multiple people (max. 3), each with their own music pieces, schedule, and statistics. Therefore, the first thing you do is create a personal profile.

1. **Start the Application:** Double-click the Modus Practica icon.
2. **Profile Selection Screen:** You will be greeted by the "Select Your Profile" window. Since you don't have any profiles yet, the "Load an existing profile:" list will be empty.
3. **Create New Profile:** Go to the field under "Or create a new profile:".
4. **Enter Your Name:** Type your name into the text field. This will be the name of your profile.
5. **Click "Create Profile":** Click the blue "Create Profile" button to create your profile.

Your profile has now been created, and all your data will be securely stored within it.

2.3 Importing Existing Data

If you have used an older version of Modus Practica (before profiles existed), the application will automatically detect this when you create your very first profile. You will then see the following question in a pop-up window:

"Legacy application data has been found. Do you want to import this data into your new profile? This is a one-time operation."

- **Click "Yes":** If you want to transfer your music pieces and practice history from the previous version. The application will automatically move all your data to your new profile folder.
- **Click "No":** If you want to start with a completely clean slate.

This import option is only shown when creating the very first profile. After this step, the main screen will open, and you are ready to use the application.

3. The Main Screen: An Overview

When you launch Modus Practica and select a profile, you enter the main screen. This is the command center of the application. The screen is composed of three main sections: the menu bar at the top, the status bar at the bottom, and the central workspace divided into two panels.

3.1 The Layout: Music Pieces and Details

The central workspace is divided into a left and a right panel, separated by a movable GridSplitter.

- **Left Panel (Music Pieces):** Here you manage the list of all your music pieces. You can add, select, search, and sort pieces.
- **Right Panel (Detail View):** This panel displays the details of the music piece you have selected in the left panel. You can manage passages (Bar Sections) here, view notes, and analyze progress via different tabs.

3.2 Left Panel: The Music Pieces List

This panel is your library.

- **Title:** At the top is the title "Music Pieces".
- **Search and Sort Functions:** The search bar allows you to directly filter the list by title or composer. The "Sort by:" dropdown menu allows you to sort the list by Title, Composer, Progress, Creation Date, or Color. The arrow button toggles between ascending (\uparrow) and descending (\downarrow) order.
- **The List:** This is the list of all your pieces. Each item shows the title, composer, creation date, and a progress bar. The background color of each item is the color you have assigned to it. If a piece is paused, a clear "PAUSED" indicator appears.
- **"New Music Piece" Button:** At the bottom is the button to add a new music piece to your library.

3.3 Right Panel: The Detail View

When you select a music piece in the left list, this panel displays all associated information.

- **Header:** At the top, you see the title and composer of the selected piece. The name of the active profile is displayed in the top right, so you always know which profile you are working in.
- **Tabs:** The core of this panel is a series of tabs that allow you to manage different aspects of the music piece:
 - **Bar Sections:** The most important tab. Here you divide a piece into passages, set goals, and start practice sessions.
 - **Practice Sessions:** A logbook of all your past practice sessions for this specific music piece.
 - **Notes:** A notepad where you can keep general remarks, interpretation ideas, or feedback from your teacher.
 - **Dashboard:** Displays visual statistics and graphs about your practice habits.
 - **ML Debug:** An advanced tab for technical users to view the activity of the machine learning model.
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3.4 The Status Bar

The bar at the bottom of the window gives you important system information at a glance:

- **ML Status:** Indicates whether the machine learning system is active.
- **ML Weight:** Shows how much influence (in percent) the ML model currently has on your schedule.
- **Total music pieces:** The total number of pieces in your library.
- **Notifications:** Important messages appear here, for example, when it is recommended to re-train the ML model.

4. Managing Music Pieces

Your library of music pieces is the heart of Modus Practica. This chapter explains how to add, edit, and organize your repertoire.

4.1 Adding a New Music Piece

Adding a new piece to your list is easy:

1. Click the "New Music Piece" button at the bottom of the music pieces list.
2. The "New Music Piece" window appears.
3. Fill in the

Title and Composer.

4. Choose a
- color** for the music piece.
5. Click the
- "Create" button.

4.2 Editing a Music Piece

If you made a typo or want to adjust the title:

1. **Select** the music piece.
 2. **Right-click** and choose the "**Edit**" option.
 3. Adjust the details in the "Edit Music Piece" window.
 4. Click
- "**Save**" to save the changes.

4.3 Pausing and Resuming a Music Piece

Want to temporarily not practice a piece, but not delete it either? Use the pause function. A paused piece will not be included in the schedule.

- **To Pause:**
 1. Right-click on the music piece.
 2. Choose

"Pause...".

3. Choose a date in the "Pause Music Piece" window.
 4. Click the "**Pause**" button. A "PAUSED" indicator appears.
- **To Resume:**
 1. Right-click on a paused music piece.
 2. Choose

"**Resume Now**" and confirm.

4.4 Deleting a Music Piece

Note: This action cannot be undone.

1. Right-click on the music piece.
 2. Choose
- "**Delete**".
3. Confirm your choice in the warning window. The practice history will be preserved.

4.5 Assigning Colors for Overview

Visually organize your repertoire with colors.

1. Right-click on a music piece.
2. Hover your mouse over

"**Set color**".

3. Click on the desired color.

The background color will adjust immediately.

4. **Working with Passages (Bar Sections)**

The core of Modus Practica is dividing pieces into smaller, manageable passages. This makes your practice sessions more focused and the app's scheduling more effective.

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5.1 The Importance of Breaking Down a Piece

- **Focused Practice:** Concentrate on specific technical challenges.
- **Intelligent Scheduling:** The app will schedule difficult passages more often.
- **Clear Progress:** See your progress per passage, which is motivating.

- **Psychological Benefits:** A small, manageable section feels less overwhelming.

5.2 Adding a New Passage

After selecting a piece, you can add passages via the "Bar Sections" tab.

1. **Select a Music Piece** and go to the '**Bar Sections**' Tab.
2. **Fill in the Fields:**
 - **Add new bar section:** Name the passage (e.g., "1-8", "Introduction").
 - **Description:** Provide an optional description (e.g., "Left-hand fingering").
 - **Start Date:** Choose the start date for scheduling.
 - **Target Repetitions:** Set your goal for correct repetitions per session.
3. Click **"Add"**.

The passage will be added and scheduled.

Note: You cannot add a passage with a name that already exists for that music piece.

5.3 Understanding the Passages List

The list of passages displays all relevant information at a glance, including the name, description, goals, progress, last practice date, and the app's recommended next practice date ("Next Due").

Please note, depending on your set practice time, a passage with "Next Due" might be set for tomorrow, but it may not appear in the calendar for tomorrow. This is because the App tries to fill the practice session according to the available time. If there is no more time, the App will schedule the remaining sessions for the next day.

5.4 From Passages to the Whole: Merging Sections

The goal of dividing a piece into small passages is to isolate and master difficult sections. Once you have marked several consecutive, smaller passages as

"Mastered", the intention is for you to merge them into a larger whole.

Recommended Approach:

- Create a **new 'Bar Section'** that encompasses the just-mastered, smaller passages (e.g., if you master "1-4" and "5-8", create a new passage "1-8").
- **Delete the old, smaller passages** (in this example "1-4" and "5-8") via the right-click menu. This is essential to keep your calendar clean and relevant and to prevent "overload".

By applying this cycle of dividing, mastering, and merging, you build up an entire music piece in a structured and scientifically sound manner.

6. The Practice Session: Your Focus Moment

When you click a "Practice" button, either on the main screen or in the calendar, the practice session window opens. This is your focused workspace, designed to guide your practice and record your progress in detail.

6.1 Understanding the Practice Window

At the top of the window, you will see the title of the music piece and the specific passage you have selected to practice. The window itself is divided into three columns, each with its own function.

6.2 The Timers: Measuring Time and Focusing

In the left column, you will find two types of timers to manage your practice time.

- **Session Timer:** This is a simple stopwatch.
 - Click **"Start"** to begin the timer.
 - Use **"Pause"** to interrupt the time.
 - Click **"Stop"** to stop the timer and reset it to zero.
- **The Pomodoro Timer (optional):** This is a tool to help you practice in short, concentrated blocks, a technique known to increase focus and reduce fatigue.
 - Choose a time duration for your focus block (e.g., 2, 5, 10, 15, or 25 minutes) using the radio buttons.
 - Click the **"Start Pomodoro"** button. The timer will begin counting down.
 - When the time is up, a sound signal will play. This is your cue to take a short break.

You can also choose to manually enter the duration of your session afterward in the right column, under "Session Duration (Manual Entry)".

6.3 Recording Repetitions and Attempts

In the middle column, you record the details of your performance.

- **Attempts Before Success:** Use the + and - buttons to indicate how many attempts you needed *before* you could play the passage correctly for the first time.
- **Correct Repetitions:** Count each successful, uninterrupted repetition of the passage with the + button. Your goal is displayed above.
- **Repetition Streak Resets:** Count each time you made a mistake and had to restart your streak of correct repetitions. This indicates the stability of your performance.

6.4 Setting Tempo and Difficulty

Below the repetitions, you can provide additional, optional context:

- **Tempo (BPM):** You can enter the target tempo ("Target Tempo") and the actually achieved tempo ("Achieved Tempo") here. The app also displays a handy reminder of the last achieved tempo for this passage.
- **Difficulty:** Indicate how difficult you found the passage during *this specific session*. The choices are "Difficult", "Average", "Easy", or "Mastered". This input directly influences the scheduling of your next session.

6.5 Taking Notes

At the bottom of the left column, you will find a large text field for notes. Use this to jot down discoveries, fingerings, or specific points of attention for next time.

6.6 Saving the Session

When you are done practicing:

1. Click the blue "Save Session" button in the bottom right of the window.
2. All your entered data will now be saved in your practice history, the status of the passage will be updated, and the next practice session will be automatically scheduled for you.
3. The window will then close automatically.

If you want to cancel the session without saving anything, click

"Cancel".

7. The Calendar: Your Practice Schedule

The calendar is the visual heart of your schedule. You can open it via the menu ("View" > "Show Calendar Overview") or via the "Calendar" button on the "Bar Sections" tab. The calendar gives you a monthly overview of all your planned practice sessions.

7.1 Understanding the Calendar View

The main screen of the calendar shows a traditional monthly view.

- **Days:** Each day is displayed as a cell in the grid. Today's date has a light blue background to distinguish it.
- **Sessions:** Planned practice sessions appear as colored blocks on the day they are scheduled. The color of a block corresponds to the color you assigned to the music piece. Completed sessions are crossed out and displayed slightly faded.
- Days with scheduled sessions show a small calendar icon ().

7.2 Navigating and Filtering

At the top of the window, you will find the controls to navigate and filter your schedule.

- **Navigation:** Use the " Previous" and " Next" buttons to browse through the months. The "**Today**" button immediately brings you back to the current month.
- **Filtering:** In the top right, there is a dropdown menu that allows you to filter the calendar. You can choose to view the schedule for "**All Music Pieces**", or you can select a specific music piece to view only the sessions for that piece.

7.3 Opening the Day Detail View

If you want to see the details of the sessions scheduled for a specific day, simply click on that day's cell. A new window will then open, the "Day Overview", in which all sessions for that day are clearly listed one below the other. In this window, you can also start a practice session directly.

7.4 Keeping the Calendar Up-to-Date

To keep your schedule relevant and realistic, there are two important processes in the application.

- **Automatic Action on Startup: Moving Missed Sessions**
 - **What happens?** Every time you start the application, the system checks if there are sessions that were scheduled in the past (yesterday or earlier) and that you have not completed.
 - **Result:** All these missed, 'overdue' sessions are automatically moved to today.
 - **Purpose:** This is a "catch-up" mechanism that ensures you never lose track of a planned practice session.
- **Manual Action: Optimizing the Entire Schedule**
 - **What happens?** When you click the "**Generate Practice Schedule**" button, *your entire, unfinished schedule is cleared and completely rebuilt*. The app recalculates the ideal next practice date for each passage.
 - **Result:** The app creates a completely new, optimized schedule, taking into account your set daily time limit. If a day is 'full', a session is automatically moved to the next day.
 - **When to use?** After a long break, after changing settings, or when you simply want a fresh, re-optimized schedule.

8. The Science Behind Modus Practica

Modus Practica is built on decades of research in cognitive psychology and neuroscience. This chapter explains the four scientific pillars that make the app so effective.

8.1 The Ebbinghaus Forgetting Curve: Finding the Perfect Moment

The oldest principle in the app is the "forgetting curve," discovered by Hermann Ebbinghaus in 1885.

- **The Principle:** Our brain forgets information according to a predictable curve.
- **The Solution:** By repeating a passage precisely at the right moment – when you are just about to forget it – the memory is maximally strengthened.
- **In the App:** Modus Practica uses a modern, mathematical version of this curve to calculate the ideal next practice moment for each passage.

8.2 Active Recall: The Engine of Learning

How you practice is just as important as *when* you practice. The most powerful learning technique is active recall (English: retrieval practice).

- **The Principle:** The act of actively trying to retrieve information from your memory is a much stronger learning stimulus than passively reviewing the information.
- **The Application:** For a musician, this means: try to play the passage without looking at the score. This effort strengthens the neural connections in your brain.

8.3 Overlearning & Spaced Practice: Dr. Gebrian's Method

The app integrates the insights of professional violinist and neuroscientist Dr. Molly Gebrian to optimize the

motor aspect of musicianship.

- **Overlearning:** This is the principle of continuing to practice beyond the point of first successful performance to automate a skill.
- **Spaced Practice:** Dr. Gebrian emphasizes the importance of short, focused practice blocks with rest breaks in between. The Pomodoro Timer in the practice window is designed to facilitate this effective working method.

8.4 Personalization via Machine Learning

The above principles form a powerful basis, but everyone learns differently. That's why Modus Practica includes a machine learning (ML) layer that makes your schedule increasingly personalized over time.

- **The Goal:** The ML model analyzes all your practice data to predict your personal forgetting curve.
- **The "ML-Weight":** The app has a "confidence score" for its own ML model. In the beginning, when there is little data, the app relies 100% on scientific rules (ML Weight = 0%). As you practice more, the ML model becomes increasingly reliable, and the 'ML Weight' will slowly increase. Keep in mind that the ML will only start to have an influence after approximately 200 to 300 sessions.

8.5 The Scheduling Cycle in Practice

To optimally utilize these scientific principles, Modus Practica follows a smart, phased approach for each new bar section you learn. The schedule progresses through the following three phases:

- **Phase 1: The Gebrian Basis (The First 3 Practice Sessions)**
 - Inspired by Dr. Molly Gebrian's research, the app first establishes a very solid foundation in your memory. When you begin learning a new passage, it is automatically scheduled for three consecutive days.
 - Practice Day 1: You learn the passage.
 - Practice Day 2: The app schedules a repetition.
 - Practice Day 3: A final direct repetition to anchor the memory trace.
 - After these three days, a mandatory rest day follows. This initial 'block' method is crucial to firmly embed the information in your brain before the intervals become longer.
- **Phase 2: The Intelligent Ebbinghaus Method (From Session 4 Onwards)**
 - Once the foundation is laid, the dynamic Ebbinghaus algorithm takes over. From the fourth practice session, the next date is calculated based on your performance. The app analyzes:
 - Your indicated **difficulty level** (Difficult, Average, Easy, Mastered).
 - The **number of attempts** you needed for the first success.
 - The **number of correct repetitions** during the session.
 - A difficult session will result in a shorter interval, while an easy session will receive a longer interval. The schedule is already smart at this point, but still universal.
- **Phase 3: AI Planner Active! (After ±200 Points & Good Score)**
 - This is the most advanced phase. Once you have collected sufficient data (approximately 200 usable practice points)

and the Machine Learning model has proven that it can make accurate predictions for you (a high R² score), the AI planner becomes active.
 - In this phase, the Ebbinghaus-calculated interval is combined with the prediction from your personal ML model. The influence of the ML (**ML Weight**) gradually increases as the model gets to know you better.
 - The result is a schedule that is not only scientifically sound but also completely tailored to your unique learning speed and pattern.
 - **Safety Net:** If the AI suddenly performs worse (for example, due to a change in your practice routine), the AI's influence will automatically decrease, and the algorithm can fully revert to the reliable Ebbinghaus Method. This guarantees high-quality scheduling at all times.

9. Settings

9.1 Opening the Settings Screen

You can open the settings screen via the menu bar:

1. Click "File".
2. Select "Settings...".

9.2 Regional Settings (Date & Number Format)

- **Application Region:** This dropdown menu affects how dates, times, and numbers are displayed, for example, from American notation (month/day/year) to European notation (day/month/year).
 - **Note:** This setting does *not* translate the interface language. A restart is required.

9.3 Practice Session

- **Active Coaching:** When this box is checked, the app proactively provides tips during practice.

9.4 Scheduling

- **Maximum daily practice time:** Here you set your personal limit for the total practice time per day. The "Generate Practice Schedule" function uses this limit.

9.5 Saving Settings

- Click the "**Save**" button to save the changes.
- Click "**Cancel**" to close without saving.

10. Additional Features

10.1 Managing Notes

On the '**Notes**' tab, you can create notes for each music piece.

1. Select a piece and open the 'Notes' tab.

2. Click

"**New Note**".

3. Enter a title and content.

4. Use

"**Add Timestamp**" to insert the current date and time.

5. Save with

"**Save Note**" (current note) or "**Save All Notes**" (all notes from all pieces).

10.2 Analyzing Your Progress (Statistics)

Open the statistics screen via

"**View**" > "**Show Statistics**".

- **Filtering:** Select a period at the top.
- **Cards:** See a summary of your practice time.
- **Graphs:** Visualize your practice time per period or per piece.
- **Export:** Save the data as a CSV file with the "**Export**" button.

10.3 Advanced Features

- **Creating Backups:** Via "**File**" > "**Create Data Backup...**", you can create a .zip file of all your data. To restore a backup, close the app and manually extract the .zip file to the

%AppData%\ModusPractica\ folder.

- **ML Debug Window:** For technical users. Open via the

"**ML Debug**" tab. Here you can track ML activity and manually start training sessions.

11. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. What happens if I miss a day and don't practice my scheduled sessions?

The app automatically moves all missed sessions to today. To realistically distribute these accumulated tasks, click "**Generate Practice Schedule**" in the calendar.

2. How do I best record one-time exercises, such as sight-reading?

Use the "Logbook Method": create a general piece ("Sight-reading Logbook") with one passage ("Daily Exercise"). Start a session, use the timer, and record the details in the 'Notes' field.

3. Why is my "ML Weight" in the status bar at 0%?

This is normal. The app needs data (ideally 200+ sessions) to learn. As long as the ML Weight is 0%, the schedule safely relies on the scientific Ebbinghaus model. The weighting automatically increases as you practice more.

4. Can I practice a passage that is not scheduled for today?

Yes. Go to the main screen, select the passage, and click the "Practice" button. The app will record your work and update the schedule for that specific passage.

5. My schedule is too full or too empty. How do I adjust this?

Go to

"File" > "Settings...". Under "Scheduling", adjust your

"Maximum daily practice time" and click "Save". Then go to the calendar and click

"Generate Practice Schedule" to apply the new limit.

6. Why does the app suggest only 2 repetitions for a piece I have already mastered?

This is an intelligent feature. When a passage is set to "Mastered", the app recognizes this as a 'review' session. To save your time, the app automatically reduces the goal to 2.

7. When I start a new passage, should I immediately count all attempts?

No. The recommended method is in two phases:

- **Phase 1: Free Exploration.** Start the timer and get to know the passage without counting.
- **Phase 2: Structured Attempts.** Once you are ready, start recording "Attempts Before Success" and then "Correct Repetitions".
-

8. What if I can't even play a passage correctly once?

You **absolutely must save the session**. This is valuable information.

- **Method:** Make sure the timer has run, leave "Attempts" and "Repetitions" at 0, set the "Difficulty" to "**Difficult**", and click "**Save Session**".
- **Result:** The app recognizes that the passage has high priority and will reschedule it at a very short interval (usually the next day).