



# Junior Hoedowner

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## Eileen Walter on Practice Technique

"I recently received an email message from Lew Holt asking me to write something for publication in the Junior Hoedowner. He suggested something either about effective practicing, preparing for a contest, or developing a working relationship with a teacher. Instead of choosing one of these topics, I've decided to touch a bit on each of them.

If you work with a good teacher and if you practice properly, you will be ready to compete in a contest if you wish to do so. It takes time to develop a good working relationship with your teacher. Your teacher can help you set goals and develop plans to reach your goals, help you choose tunes and versions appropriate for your level and to help you advance to the next level, work on bowing and fingering techniques, help you work out bowings that work for your tunes, point out things you may not have noticed, keep you motivated, and remind you that the hard work is worth it when you sound great and can play your tunes with confidence.

If possible, practice at the same time and in the same place, as many days of the week as you can. Don't think about whether you feel like practicing or not, just make it a habit (like brushing your teeth). I highly

recommend the regular use of a metronome and a chromatic tuner (so you can check the intonation of your notes as you play). Listening to a recording of yourself can also be very helpful. Play your tunes slowly during part of your practice session, and be sure to isolate the more difficult parts and work on those separately until you can play them precisely.

If you make the most of your practice sessions, you will be successful and will enjoy playing your fiddle at jams and contests. Your best tunes that you might want to play in a contest will already be ready if you've been working on them all along. You'll feel more comfortable on stage if you've been playing your tunes with a metronome or a back-up musician. You should know the contest rules regarding what types of tunes, what order to play them in, and your time limit before you put your rounds together. Once you decide, play your tunes in that order for a few weeks prior to the contest. And don't forget to turn on your metronome -- it really is your friend! Really!!

Lew also asked me to submit a tune (see below, Tune of the Month). Here's one called "Granny, Will Your Dog Bite?" You'll notice in the 4th measure of the "B" section that there are 2 up-bows in a row (with a rest in

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between). You'll also see several up-bow slurs of 3 notes -- these are common in fiddling. Here are the chords:

A D/A D/A D/E A D/A A E/A REPEAT  
A A/G A E/A A A/G A E/A REPEAT

I hope to see you all sometime this year, and most of all, I hope you all have as much fun fiddling as I do! Eileen Walter"

### Tune of the Month

"Granny, Will Your Dog Bite?" is a West Virginia dance tune. One set of lyrics is:

Chicken in the bread pan peckin' out dough.  
Granny, will your dog bite? No, child, no.  
Circulate and promenade.  
And take that lady home.

Look this tune up on YouTube.

Granny, Will Your Dog Bite ?

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the tune "Granny, Will Your Dog Bite?". The score is written on six staves of music. The key signature is G major (two sharps) and the time signature is 4/4. The music includes various rhythmic patterns, including triplets and slurs, and features first and second endings. The piece concludes with a double bar line and the instruction "to beginning OR END".