

Recording Yourself

Music

The single fastest way to find out what you actually sound like.

Playing and listening use the same attention, so you cannot fully do both at once. A recording separates them, and hears things the player structurally cannot.

FREQUENCY
Weekly

KIT NEEDED
A phone

LISTEN
3 passes

- Tempo drift is nearly invisible while playing and obvious on playback.
- Dynamics are almost always flatter than they felt.
- Rushing shows up mostly after long notes and rests.
- A phone microphone is entirely adequate for this purpose.
- Listen once for timing, once for tone, once for phrasing.
- Keep recordings — a month of them is the clearest progress you will get.

LOOK FOR IT

Record a passage, then play along with the recording. Where you disagree with yourself is where the timing is loose.

The discomfort of hearing yourself back fades in about three sessions. The usefulness does not.