Categories of Practice Material
(and suggested time distribution for a typical hour’s practice)

Slow, legato exercises (5 minutes)
Scales, arpeggios, etc. (20 minutes)
Etudes (20 minutes)
Repertoire (15 minutes)

I. Slow, legato/tuning/tone exercises (from UNT Clarinet Handbook)
   1. EVERYTHING in this category should be played slowly and with a tuner.
   2. Concentrate on:
      a. correct breathing. Challenge yourself to take deeper, fuller breaths and
         control the breath flow.
      b. correcting any faults with the embouchure noted in lessons.
      c. producing a clear, focused, even tone from register to register.
      d. incorporating new fingerings into your playing (throat tone resonance
         fingerings, high register, etc.)
      e. correcting any problems in hand/finger position noted in lessons. Since
         these exercises are easy to memorize, practice them in front of a
         mirror and watch carefully and critically for good hand/finger
         position (and embouchure)
      f. accurate intonation. The daily use of a tuner is vital.

II. Scales, arpeggios, etc.
   1. Concentrate on:
      a. “carrying over” all of the considerations from the previous category.
      b. incorporating new fingerings and finger techniques.
      c. control. Don’t try to play any technical material faster than you can
         control it.
      d. using a metronome regularly, and keeping a record of metronome
         speeds to chart weekly progress.
      e. even tone quality and even rhythms.

III. Etudes
   1. Understand what the study is designed to develop: finger technique, dynamic
      control and shading, wide interval control, articulation, reading accidentals.
   2. Use your dictionary of musical terms to learn any unfamiliar terms.
   3. Printing errors are common in the standard etudes. The indicated metronome
      marking may not be the best one.
   4. Look for opportunities to apply new playing techniques, and constantly “carry
      over” what was practiced and developed in the previous categories.
   5. Try to make all etudes “musical.” Project clear phrase endings, climaxes, a
      wide dynamic range, rubato, etc.

IV. Repertoire (Solos, Chamber Music, Orchestral Literature, etc.)
   1. If the work is new to you, learn something about the composer, the historical
      setting of the work, the clarinetist it was written for, availability of recordings,
      etc.
   2. To become more familiar with the whole work, and not just the clarinet part,
      listen to a recording with a full piano or orchestral score in hand.
   3. Learn to pronounce foreign-language names and terms correctly. You will
      probably encounter them throughout your career.
   4. As with any work (or etude) you study, know all of the terminology contained
      in it.