Scales and Arpeggios:
The Building Blocks of Music

Importance
- used as the bases for melodies
- necessary parts of understanding keys
- necessary components of mastering technique

Major Scales
- memorize and understand the circle of 5ths
- memorize and understand key signatures
  - last sharp of key = leading tone
  - next to last flat of key = tonic

Minor Scales
- every major scale (key) has a corresponding relative minor scale (key)
  - minor tonic = “la” of major scale
- use natural minor as the basis for the other forms
- learn natural minors in conjunction with the relative majors
- once natural minor form is mastered, others are relatively easy:
  - melodic minor = raised 6th and 7th ↑, natural minor ↓
  - harmonic minor = raised 7th (augmented 2nd between 6th and 7th)

Suggested Practice Procedures
- write out full 2-octave scale with both key signature and accidentals
  - remember to include the arpeggio!
  - include fingerings/positions and/or note names only where needed
- play on the piano to see, hear and feel the scale
- sing note names while moving valves or slide
- play slowly in rhythm on your instrument
  - breathe after the middle-octave tonic note (both directions) to have plenty of air for the highest and lowest notes
- sing with solfege to check intonation
- alternate playing from the page and from memory
- build solid (and correct) muscle memory by playing scales at least 3 times in a row perfectly before moving on
- once you get to know a scale, really get to know the key by playing patterns

Resources
- Arban, Complete Method, especially pages 64-87 and 160-167
- Clarke, Technical Studies, especially studies 2 through 6
- Parès, Pares Scales