

Buzzing the Screech Out of Student

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A New York instructor in stringed instruments has invented a series of devices to enable students to teach themselves to play violin, banjo or guitar.

Patents of the Week A signal sounds when something is done wrong.

Burton Kaplan, who is on the music faculties of New York University and other institutions, has been granted patents on five pieces of instruction equipment, called Practice Partners. They warn when the instrument, the bow or the player's hand is in improper position.

Patents 3,726,174 through 3,726,177 were issued this week and Patent 3,730,964 will follow on May 1. Mr. Kaplan reports that students have shown rapid improvement with test models, and he is looking for a manufacturer.

Each Practice Partner has its specialty, such as checking the angulation of the instrument or bow or the spacing of the player's fingers. A sensor on the instrument, bow or hand is connected by wire to a signal box. Buzzing tells the student when he does something he should not, and keeps sounding until he stops.

Beginners can monitor their own movements in home practice with the devices. For class use, small headphones can be added.



Burton Kaplan demonstrating one of his Practice Partners, strapped to his arm. If he moves his hand incorrectly, the buzzer on his belt sounds. The buzzer is attached by a wire to the device on his arm.

A former member of the St. Louis and Cleveland orchestras, Mr. Kaplan is an instructor at City College, the Manhattan School of Music and the Third Street Music School. He pioneered in the use of videotape for

training students and teachers.