

Band Practice

Eric was tuning his red guitar. Doug was putting the drum set together, and Roni was trying to get the volume right on his electric guitar.

"Let's do this right," said Carlton, the singer. "We've got to rock at the big dance!"

"Well, we shouldn't have cancelled our practices last week," said Doug, with a frown.

"Yeah, Doug, like you didn't go to the beach, too," snapped Roni.

Eric played a long, loud, irritating solo.

"Come on!" Carlton hollered. "We'll be fine."

So practice began. The band was seriously out of tune. They missed cues, messed up harmonies, forgot verses, and played everything too fast or too slow.

"You know, Carlton," said Doug after another song ended badly. "If we play like this, they'll kick us off the stage."

"I quit," said Roni, taking his cymbal apart.

Just then, Doug's sister, Rachel, slipped into the garage. "Hey," she said, "you guys don't sound bad. You're just making mistakes on the tricky parts. All you need is a little more practice time!"

"It's too late for that," said Roni.

"No, listen," Rachel said. "Call your parents. Ask them if you can stay for dinner. That way you can put in an extra hour of practice. You'll be home in time for homework."

After a quick dinner, practice was much better. The band finally started to sound like, well, a band. Eric, Doug, Roni, and Carlton were working with each other instead of against each other. Their warm-up session on Saturday morning was even better. At the dance, the band played song after song to thundering applause.