ASSEMBLING THE SAXOPHONE

The mechanism of the saxophone is rugged, but the long rods, connecting levers, and side keys may be bent out of line if the instrument is not handled carefully. Do not put pressure on keys or rods when putting the instrument together. Before starting the process be sure the cork on the neck of the instrument is well lubricated with prepared cork grease. The following procedure is an efficient one for beginners:

1. Take the neck strap out of the case and put it into position around the neck. Examine the device which adjusts its length, and become familiar with its adjustment.

2. Grasp the instrument by the bell away from the keys. Holding it by the bell, hook the neck strap onto the body. Remove the end plug which protects the connecting lever for the octave key.

3. Check the tension screw(s) which holds the neck in place on the instrument to see that it is loose. Check the sleeve which fits into the body, and the end of the body itself to see that they are clean. If the neck fits into the body of the instrument with difficulty, it may be lubricated with cork grease or vaseline. Hold the neck in the palm of the right hand so the octave key is held down firmly. Holding the body of the instrument with the left hand, push the neck on. Avoid turning the neck in such a way that the connecting lever will be bent. Line up the brace on the bottom of the neck so that it is centered on the connecting lever on the body of the instrument. Tighten the tension screw to hold the neck firmly in place.

4. Hold the mouthpiece (with the ligature and reed removed) in the palm of the right hand, with the left hand on the neck, palm holding down the octave key. The weight of the instrument is on the neck strap. Push on the mouthpiece so that at least half of the cork is covered, the exact distance is determined by the tuning process. If the instrument has a tuning screw on the neck in addition to a cork, the mouthpiece must be pushed on to cover the entire cork.

ADJUSTMENT OF REED AND LIGATURE

To avoid chipping the tip of the reed it is best to place the ligature loosely around the mouthpiece first, then slip the reed down inside it. The reed is placed exactly in the center of the lay (the flat part of the mouthpiece). Check both the tip and the butt end of the reed to see that they are properly centered. The tip of the reed should be down from the tip of the mouthpiece so that about a sixty-fourth of an inch of the mouthpiece can be seen when looking directly at it. After the reed is properly placed locate the ligature so that its edges are over the guidelines etched in the mouthpiece, and tighten the screws slowly so that the reed is not moved out of place. The ligature should be just tight enough to hold the reed firmly. Proper placement of reed and ligature is of the utmost importance for ease of tone production and control. Practice reed and ligature adjustment to develop accuracy in placement.
1. The saxophone is held to the right of the body with the instrument resting against the side of the leg (Figure 23). The instrument is slightly out of the vertical position with the bottom further back. The right arm is relaxed with the elbow pushed back very slightly to put the right hand into the best playing position (Figure 24). The weight of the instrument is on the neck strap, and is balanced by the right and left thumbs and the mouthpiece in the mouth. Adjust the length of the neck strap so that the end of the mouthpiece touches the center of the lower lip.

2. The right thumb contacts the thumb rest on the flesh to the side of and at the base of the nail, with the ball of the thumb against the body of the instrument (Figure 25).

3. The left thumb has the function of operating the octave key. It is placed at a diagonal angle across the instrument so that the fleshy part of the ball is on the plate provided for it, and the tip of the finger is touching but not pressing the octave key (Figure 26). The octave key is controlled by vertical movements of the first joint of the thumb.

4. Guide Position. The left little finger touches lightly the G-sharp key, the right little finger the C key, and the remaining fingers fall into a natural curve without tension to contact the pearl buttons of their tone holes. With all the fingers in position a guide position is established which should be maintained constantly (Figure 27). Check this guide position often until it becomes automatic.
EMBOUCHURE FORMATION

Follow the directions of your instructor or use the following procedure which is one of the standard saxophone embouchure formations. Check regularly with a mirror until the formation is established.

1. Keeping the lips lightly together, drop the lower jaw so that the teeth are about three-eighths of an inch apart.

2. Shape the lips as if saying the letter "O" with the corners of the mouth slightly compressed and there are slight wrinkles in the lips.

3. With the teeth open and the lips in the "O" position the rim of the lower lip which divides it from the chin should be directly in front of the top edge of the front teeth. Feel this with a finger and raise or lower the jaw until this relationship is correct.

4. Maintaining this position, insert the mouthpiece of the saxophone into the mouth allowing the reed to push the lower lip over the teeth. If the wrinkles on the lower lip are maintained, the line dividing the lip from the chin is directly over the front edge of the lower teeth. Students with thicker than average lips should adjust so that less lip is over the teeth.

5. Contract the lips and especially the corners of the mouth inward and around the mouthpiece so that no air can escape.

6. In order to vibrate freely, the end of the reed must be clear of any contact with the lip for three-eighths to a half inch on the alto saxophone, more on the tenor. The amount of mouthpiece in the mouth is determined by the mouthpiece itself—some require more mouthpiece in the mouth than others.

7. The upper teeth rest, but do not press, on the top of the mouthpiece somewhat forward of the position of the lower teeth.

8. The lower teeth remain in the open position established in step three above, and must not bite or exert pressure against the lower lip.

9. The reed and mouthpiece are supported and controlled by inward pressure toward the center of the mouthpiece by the upper and lower lips and by the corners of the mouth.

10. Proceed with the preliminary tone production described in the following.

PRELIMINARY TONE PRODUCTION

Before producing a tone on the instrument, practice with the mouthpiece alone.

1. Place a carefully selected reed on the mouthpiece in the proper place and adjust the ligature.

2. Form the embouchure, using a mirror to check its formation.

3. Using standard abdominal breath support produce a tone, checking to maintain the proper embouchure formation.

4. Continue practicing until you can produce a steady natural tone of the highest pitch for at least ten seconds.

5. When you can do this easily you are ready to proceed with exercise 1.

CARE OF THE SAXOPHONE

The instrument should be thoroughly dried and put in its case after each use. Disassemble in the reverse order of assembly. A swab made for the saxophone is used to clean the inside of the body of the instrument, and a special neck cleaner for the inside of the neck. Using a
chamois or soft cloth wipe the inside portion of the bell, then the body of the instrument to keep it clear of fingerprints. If dust accumulates beneath the key mechanism it can be removed with a soft watercolor brush. The mechanism should be oiled three or four times a year. A special "key oil" is commercially available. A drop of oil on the end of a needle or toothpick, or with the applicator provided with the oil, should be put at each pivot screw of each key.

Remove the reed and dry the mouthpiece and reed with a chamois or soft cloth. Reeds are preferably kept in a reed holder or case especially made for this purpose. Reeds left loose in the case are soon damaged beyond use.

Place the parts of the instruments in the case, being sure to replace the plug which fits into the small end of the body. The mouthpiece, ligature, reed case, neck, and neck strap are placed in a small compartment in the case to protect them. Do not force the case closed.

Keep the neck cork well lubricated with prepared cork grease, and the sleeve and its connecting part of the body clean and well lubricated.

Keep all instruments away from all sources of heat and out of direct sunlight.

TUNING AND INTONATION

Saxophones are transposing instruments. To sound the standard pitch of A-440 the alto saxophone plays F-sharp and the tenor saxophone B-natural. If a B-flat is sounded as a tuning note as it frequently is in bands, the alto saxophone plays G-natural and the tenor saxophone C-natural. The saxophone is tuned with the mouthpiece. If the instrument is flat when tuning, push the mouthpiece further on the cork, if the instrument is sharp when tuning, pull the mouthpiece out so less cork is covered. In general saxophones are made to sound A-440 when approximately half the cork is covered by the mouthpiece. Some saxophones have an adjustable tuning screw on the neck of the instrument in place of a long cork. On these instruments the mouthpiece is placed over the entire cork, and the tuning is done with the screw.

Intonation on a saxophone is determined by several things: (1) the construction of the instrument itself; (2) a mouthpiece which fits the instrument and whose tone chamber is properly designed; (3) a correctly formed and developed embouchure; and (4) a well adjusted reed which fits both embouchure and mouthpiece. Virtually all standard brand instruments are acoustically well in tune, and can be played in tune if other things are correct. Generally speaking a reed which is too hard tends to make the instrument sharp, while a reed which is too soft tends to make the instrument flat. The embouchure is the primary controlling factor in intonation. The amount of mouthpiece in the mouth is critical, too little will make the higher notes flat, too much mouthpiece in the mouth tends to make the general pitch of the instrument flat, as well as making it virtually impossible to control the pitch of individual notes. Biting with the lower teeth causes numerous complications. The angle at which the saxophone is held determines the way in which the embouchure can control it. A standard brand mouthpiece should be suspected of causing intonation problems only after embouchure and reed have been determined to be in good shape.
Since the Alto saxophone is the most widely used, dis-
sions in this chapter will center around it, with special
blems and differences between it and the other in-
struments in the family noted in the course of the
discussion.
Except for some models of the Soprano and Bass
which do not have the two lowest notes, all the in-
struments in the family have the same theoretical written
range:

but all are transposing instruments and sound in dif-
frent ranges.
The transpositions and ranges in which each instru-
ment sounds is as follows:

1. B-flat Soprano: Sounds a whole step lower than
written.

2. E-flat Alto: Sounds a major sixth lower than
written.

3. B-flat Tenor: Sounds a major ninth lower than
written.

4. E-flat Baritone: Sounds an octave plus a major
sixth lower than written.

5. B-flat Bass (rarely found): Sounds two octaves
plus a whole step lower than written.

In addition to the preceding instruments a Soprano
saxophone in C, sounding the pitch as written is oc-
casionally found. The C-melody saxophone is a Tenor
saxophone in C. Although it is obsolete an occasional
beginning student will bring such an instrument from
home since it is identical in appearance with the B-flat
Tenor and considerable diplomacy is necessary on the
part of the teacher to explain why it can’t be used.
The reason it can’t be used is simply that there is no
music written for it to play in a band or in a beginning
class.

PLAYING RANGES

Because of the acoustics of the saxophone, the be-
ginner on this instrument can extend his playing range
more rapidly than on the other woodwinds. In actual
practice, however, the highest notes are not utilized
on the Tenor and Baritone instruments as much as
they are on the Alto. A very advanced player on the
Alto, and to some extent the Tenor through use of addi-
tional harmonics, can extend the playing range of his
instrument above the normal high F. This is discussed
later in this chapter, and fingerings for these notes given
in an additional section of the fingering chart.
The three playing ranges on the instrument are de-
scribed as the easy range, the normal range, and the
extended range:

Easy Range Normal Range Extended Range


PARTS OF THE SAXOPHONE

Parts of all members of the saxophone family are
the same: body, neck, mouthpiece, ligature, mouthpiece
cap, reed, and neck strap, and differ only in size. The
instrument pictured is an Alto. The type of case il-

1. The Soprano is normally straight and with body and neck as a
single unit.
THE MOUTHPIECE

The search for an ideal mouthpiece will continue as long as wind instruments are used, and it should be understood that no cure-all for your problems can be found. Our aim is to get started in the right direction. At one end of the pole we have the "mouthpiece-itis" sufferer, who spends more time changing mouthpieces than practicing; at the opposite end, the person who is afraid to try anything new or different. Somewhere between these two viewpoints lies the practical approach to this problem.

Just a few of the factors which prevent the use of an identical mouthpiece by all saxophonists are the differences in: (1) the shape and musculature of the face, (2) the bony structure, (3) the teeth, and (4) the size and thickness of the lips. Add to these the varied individual tonal concepts and the various styles of playing, plus demands of many different types of engagements. In spite of the apparent confusion, certain physical principles, which should be considered in the selection of the correct mouthpiece for each individual, are involved in the construction of all saxophone mouthpieces.

The mouthpiece that is supplied with a standard instrument should suffice for the beginner, until his own individuality asserts itself. These mouthpieces are usually of medium facing and chamber, which is desirable for the new student. If there is any reason for a change, the teacher or an experienced saxophonist will be able to discover this immediately. Young students should not run to the music store and purchase a new one unless they have specific instructions as to make and facing. Much money is wasted by the uninformed in selecting a mouthpiece for its color, material, outside shape, the fancy wrapping, or some other sales gimmick. Often this purchase is exactly the wrong one for him, and will do more harm than good. Another trap to avoid is the buying of a mouthpiece because some well-known personality uses "facing X42D of the Shotgun Special." It is just as logical to assume that every little leaguer in the country should go out and buy a bat of the same weight that Babe Ruth used! The mouthpiece is one of the most important elements in the building of an embouchure, and should not be treated casually. It is not a gift that your aunt should buy you for Christmas, unless she has obtained the exact specifications from an expert who is acquainted with the musical status of the prospective user.

THE MATERIAL

Saxophone mouthpieces are made of hard rod rubber (ebonite), glass, metal, and plastic. Each of these has slightly different properties related to manufacture and results. A preference as to material used is up to the individual, and the advantages of each are a matter of controversy. Mouthpieces of various materials which have exactly the same dimensions, including the chamber and outside measurements as well as the facing, play very nearly the same. The feel of the various materials undoubtedly has a psychological effect on the player, but it is difficult for the listener to differentiate between them if the dimensions are the same.

The glass mouthpiece for saxophone is more or less a rarity at present, although it has many adherents among clarinetists. It is quite fragile, and a slight bump on the tip may cause it to chip. Its chief structural advantage is the permanence of the facing. Metal mouthpieces have the advantage of ruggedness and can be tooled to fine tolerances. The outside dimensions can be made smaller, since metal need not be very thick to have the necessary strength. This is an advantage to tenor and baritone players who have a small mouth and prefer the feel of a smaller mouthpiece.

Plastic has proved to be a good material and is in wide use. The quality has been improved, and it no longer has a tendency to crack. Plastic has a high degree of permanence and strength, and is popular in student mouthpieces, where ruggedness and precision are required at low cost.

The rod rubber, or ebonite, mouthpiece, which has been the standby for many years, is still universally preferred. It can be refaced and tooled easily, will not crack under ordinary circumstances, and is permanent in holding a facing, if not misused. The tip and facing will be injured if bumped or dropped, and it should always be handled with care.

All mouthpieces should be wiped dry with a soft cloth after each use, both inside and out. They can be washed in soap and lukewarm water—never hot
the narrow rail offers so little resistance that it is difficult to control. Fine for a buzzy type of projection, and sometimes used by those who are willing to risk an occasional squeak to produce this type of sound. It should be used only by an experienced player.

4. The Chamber. This is the primary resonance chamber of the tone. While the facing is of great importance, it is axiomatic that a well-designed chamber will produce good results with any reasonable facing. A small chamber leading directly into the mouthpipe will give more volume and more edge to the sound than a large chamber. Straight side walls allow for more of the higher partials; curved side walls produce a more mellow tone. There are so many shapes of the inner chamber that it is impossible to make valid generalizations.

The selection of the ideal mouthpiece for you is a difficult and lengthy process. It is best to start with the so-called medium or standard type mouthpiece. As your ability on the instrument improves, your style and taste will take definite paths. Moderation and caution is urged so that you do not have to retrace these paths. Bad habits or conditions resulting from improper procedure can be long and costly in their correction. A mouthpiece that is too radical can set your playing back more than you imagine. Consider the case of a young person who, in his early stages of playing, purchases a long, open facing. The only way he can get the upper notes is by biting, and he has to drop his jaw considerably to produce the low tones. Soon this becomes a habit which may take years to correct, even though he has changed to a more moderate type of mouthpiece. This type of situation is not unusual, as any experienced teacher will bear out. The self-taught student is prone to bad habits, but some of them can be eliminated through the use of a moderate or "medium" type mouthpiece.

MISCELLANY

Refacing a mouthpiece will not change its tone quality to any marked degree. It may make playing easier and thus have a psychological advantage for the user. The tone quality depends largely on the mouthpiece chamber and the baffle. A good refacing job will also include the tip rail and the baffle.

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Use of a rubber pad on the top of the mouthpiece eases the vibration through the teeth, which is annoying to some players. It also opens the mouth more and makes the tone more mellow.

***

If the mouthpiece is too high, it can be cut down carefully with a fine file and repolished. Care must be exercised so that you do not go all the way through. It is best to have a repairman do this for you.

***

It has been the hope of most saxophonists that mouthpiece manufacturers would standardize the system of marking the facings, so that they would have some semblance of meaning to the uninitiated. This, even if approximate, would eliminate some of the confusion. At present it is impossible to sort out the meaning of some of the hieroglyphics pertaining to facings and tip openings.

***

If you are comparing mouthpieces, be sure to tune each one separately. Some mouthpieces are longer than others, and require a different placement on the cork.

***

The basic principle of mouthpiece construction is the same for the entire saxophone family. However, because of the differences in mouthpiece size, you need not always use the same facing and make of mouthpiece if you are doubling.

***

Remember, any mouthpiece will do only so much for you. It will not compensate for a poor embouchure or insufficient air support.
water—at regular intervals. Regular washing is important not only because of the obvious fact that an unclean mouthpiece is an excellent breeding ground for germs but also because a calcified sediment, which is almost impossible to remove, collects in the inside chamber and changes the inner dimensions.

THE DESIGN

Mouthpiece design is a matter for serious consideration, since its dimensions and shape have a definite effect on tone quality, pitch, volume, equality of registers, flexibility, and ease of playing. A knowledge of the factors that control these aspects of tone production is helpful in the selection of a satisfactory mouthpiece. Tone quality has its birth in the inner chamber of the mouthpiece, with the reed and mouthpiece acting as the generating mechanism. This mechanism sets up the relationship of the fundamental tone to its various partials, which affects the nature of the tonal quality.

It might be well to clarify “medium facing” before proceeding. The accepted usage of this term defines the measurements with which most saxophonists can get the best results. This has been determined by trial and error, which does not imply that it is the perfect design, but only a starting point from which the discriminating musician can proceed. With this in mind, we will discuss the factors which control the performance of a mouthpiece.

1. **The Facing.** The shape of the curve which leaves the flat table of the mouthpiece. Its extent controls the distance between the tip of the reed and the tip of the mouthpiece, known as the *tip opening*. The distance from the tip to the beginning of the curve is known as the length of the facing. The *long facing* induces biting, as more pressure is needed to close the reed to the point where it will vibrate. It requires a shorter bite and a soft reed, which weakens the high notes. The *short facing* reduces embouchure control and flexibility. The tone is thin and the low tones are inclined to break. It is comparatively easy on the embouchure, but lacks dynamic range. The *wide tip opening* makes soft playing difficult, the tone coarse, and gives a false sense of volume. A soft reed is required unless the embouchure muscles are powerful. The *narrow tip opening* requires the use of a harder reed, produces a thin tone, and the high register is apt to be sharp. The general consensus seems to be that the curve of the facing should be the arc of a perfect circle. This view is supported by scientific findings, discussed in the chapter on reeds, which indicate that the reed actually closes the tip opening. The following diagram, shown to illustrate this principle, emphasizes the point that an infinite number of facings can be produced by moving the axis of the arc.

2. **The Baffle.** The portion of the mouthpiece directly back of the tip which receives the first shock of the vibrations as they leave the reed. A *high baffle* leaves little space at this point between the reed and mouthpiece, and reinforces the upper partials, giving an edge or buzz to the sound. It is likely to be the cause of squeaks. Tone projection is good, but quite rough. The *low baffle* produces a dark, dead sound that lacks carrying power. It creates resistance too close to the tip of the reed and is hard to blow.

3. **The Tip Rail.** The broad rail might be described as a defensive device. It is excellent for soft playing but incapable of projection, emits a pure sound with an absence of higher partials and no edgy quality, but has very little flexibility. The *narrow rail* is a dangerous one, and is probably the main cause of chirps or squeaks. The reed must fit perfectly since
The soprano saxophone is one of the most rewarding and challenging members of the saxophone family. For most players it takes longer to master its intricacies than those of the alto, tenor, or baritone saxophones. While the soprano is most frequently used as an ensemble instrument in a saxophone quartet, it continues to gain popularity as a solo voice in both jazz and classical music. Below are some suggestions for taming the often-wild soprano saxophone.

INSTRUMENT SELECTION

The difficulties involved in selecting a high quality soprano are greater than those encountered in choosing any other saxophone. There are fewer sopranos manufactured, so even finding one for sale in your area can be a problem. There are also very few used sopranos available, so the initial purchase becomes the first major obstacle to overcome.

Buyers must be wary of the many cheap (both in price and quality) soprano saxophones advertised on internet websites. Many of these cannot even play a true scale, since the intonation patterns are terrible. Fortunately, a few of the major manufacturers have recently developed very good soprano saxophones in the intermediate price range. Whether purchasing one of these intermediate models or a true professional model, careful testing is paramount to a successful purchase.

If you do not already play the soprano saxophone at a high level, then find someone to help you in making the selection. This could be a teacher, a proficient colleague, or a professional who lives in the area. Try to find a music store that has more than one instrument in stock so that you can try different models and, if possible, multiple instruments of the same model.

If you already play soprano be sure to use your own mouthpiece when testing new instruments to avoid confusion caused by both a new instrument and a new mouthpiece. During the tests play the same material on each instrument, initially playing each one for only about five minutes. First impressions can mean much in eliminating choices so trust your instincts. Be sure to test pitch (use a tuner), response in the extreme registers (both highs and lows), and the key layout for comfort (especially the placements of palm keys and "pinky-keys").

BREAKPOINT CHECK

One of the most important initial items to address when first learning the soprano saxophone is the breakpoint check. The breakpoint is the place where the reed and mouthpiece first come into contact; this is the fulcrum point against which the reed vibrates. This check helps you determine how much mouthpiece to place into the mouth. Too little mouthpiece and the tone is muffled, thin, and pinched; too much mouthpiece and the tone is raucous, spread, and loud.

Check the breakpoint by slipping a piece of paper downward in the space between the reed and mouthpiece table. Reposition the paper several times to see where it comes to a natural resting spot. Mark this spot on the reed with a pencil to locate the breakpoint. Place the left thumbnail on the mark and roll the thumb down, so it is resting flat against the ligature. When you put the mouthpiece into the mouth, the point of the thumb will hit your lower lip indicating how much mouthpiece to take in.

PITCH CHECK

The second most important item is the mouthpiece pitch check. After checking the breakpoint place the mouthpiece alone into the mouth. Using what you believe to be a normal embouchure, blow a well supported mezzo-forte tone. The resulting pitch should be on or around a concert C. If the pitch is higher, the embouchure pressure is too tight. If the pitch is lower, the pressure, and possibly the oral cavity setting, is too low. Be sure that the tone is the best full tone you can get on the mouthpiece alone. Many people try to relax the airstreams to lower the pitch, but this is the wrong technique to use. This test is for embouchure pressure and oral cavity setting only, so keep the airstream fast and constant. Note that the mouthpiece pitch check works well on any saxophone and produces these pitches: alto (A), tenor (G), and baritone (D).

SOPRANO SAXOPHONE EMBouchure

The soprano saxophone embouchure is best described as a cross between a clarinet and an alto saxophone setting. On the alto saxophone the jaw is slightly down with the corners pushing inward, forming a circle of muscles around the mouthpiece. The clarinet embouchure requires a raised jaw position with the corner muscles firmer and pulled back slightly. The soprano setting should be more of a focused "eeu."

SOPRANO SAXOPHONE PROBLEM AREAS

Reeds

Without a doubt the biggest problem area on the soprano saxophone is tone. It is easy to create a weak, thin, and bright tone on this instrument. The "checks" I mentioned earlier will be of great value in establishing the correct embouchure and oral cavity settings from the very beginning. Although many classical players find a #3 reed strength to work best on the alto and tenor saxophones, a #3 1/2 strength works best on the soprano saxophone. This is assuming the player uses the traditional #3 regular style Vandoren reed as a model. Select other reed brand strengths based on their relationship to this model. The #3 1/2 strength tends to darken and warm up the soprano tone, and allows for greater control with this slightly firmer embouchure setting.
Intonation

The second most difficult area when playing the soprano is intonation. Because the length of the tube is so short, compared to that of the other saxophones, little embouchure or oval cavity variation is needed to create major pitch changes. This is why it is so important to check the intonation pattern carefully before making a purchase, and with the help of a trained soprano player is highly beneficial.

Palm Key Height

Be particularly careful with the height of the palm keys. Compressed cork on the key foot can cause a key to open too much, thus making these upper notes very sharp. The low B and Bb are often particularly sharp. To help this problem, tape a four inch by two inch piece of Dr. Scholl's Molefoam inside the bell directly across from the low B and Bb tone holes. This will effectively decrease the bell diameter, which acoustically acts to lengthen the tube, thus lowering these pitches.

High Note Consistency

High note consistency, especially in the palm keys, is also another problem area. Many saxophonists can play the instrument rather well, but fall short of mastering the upper two or three notes (high E, F#, and G). Those players who have good success with the altissimo register on alto will find that a similar oral cavity setting is the secret. Approach the soprano high E through F#/G as if they were the altissimo G through Ab on the alto saxophone. Soprano players cannot merely push the palm keys, but must change the oral cavity position to help these notes to speak. This area is even more problematic when the notes must be articulated. Use an air attack, with the syllable “hee,” to make a quick, pointed attack with the air stream alone. Practice staccato eighth-note scales in the upper range to master this air attack technique.

SUGGESTED REPERTOIRE

One ideal use of the soprano saxophone is for learning Baroque, Classical, and Romantic period repertoire. The soprano can be played with a particular lightness, which can replicate the sound of the flute, violin, and oboe. When playing pieces originally written for these instruments, be sure to maintain the sound and dynamic limits of the original instrument. This means that the dynamic range must be more compact, so that a forte may only be a strong mp or delicate mf. Players can make their own transcriptions by purchasing original scores and merely transposing the solo part up a full step. With today’s music writing programs it is easy to make a professional looking edition on a home computer. There now are also numerous professional editions available, which players can choose. Listed below are a few transcriptions and original pieces for soprano saxophone that are well worth investigating.

Transcriptions (with piano accompaniment)
Bach, Handel, and Telemann Sonatas (originally for flute, oboe, and violin)
Mozart’s Concerto in C Major (originally oboe)
Poulenc’s Sonata (originally oboe)
Platti/Rousseau's Sonata (originally flute)
Ravel/Viard’s Piece en forme de Habenera (originally voice)
Schumann’s Three Romances (originally oboe)

Original Pieces For Soprano Saxophone (with piano, unless otherwise indicated)
Charles Rochester Young’s Sonata
Dana Wilson’s Calling, Ever Calling (also with orchestra or wind ensemble)
Dana Wilson’s Luminescence (also a version with classical guitar)
Dana Wilson’s Liquid Gold (also with wind ensemble)
Heitor Villa-Lobos’ Fantasia (also with orchestra)
Jean Baptiste Singelée’s Caprice, Op. 89 and Fantasie, Op. 89
Jindrich Feld’s Sonata and Elegie
Michael Torke’s Concerto (also with orchestra)
Richard Rodney Bennett’s Sonata
Rodney Rogers’ Lessons of the Sky
Ronald Caravan’s Sonata
Walter Hartley’s, Sonata and Diversion
William Schmidt’s Sonata §
Wouldn’t it be splendid if our tongue could bounce effortlessly on and off the reed at rocket speed?

Take a long, well-sharpened wooden pencil and hold it near the eraser between your thumb and index finger. Drop the pencil lead once against a hard surface (keeping your hand a few inches above), and notice how it bounces rapidly after the initial impact. The first impact is the loudest; the following “hits” are rebounds. The fingers are not actually controlling the pencil except for the first motion, much like a stick hitting a snare drum to start a roll.

Imitate this motion by tonguing repeated notes as follows: Play open g as two rapid sixteenths; the first note should be accented quite noticeably, while the second should be much softer, echoing the first.

The first note is accented and the repeated note rebounds from the first (think “TA-da,” or “TA-la”). Continue by playing three notes (think “TA-da-da,” or “TA-la-la”). Follow with four notes: “TA-da-da-da,” or “TA-la-la-la.” Continue with five, six, then seven notes, and so on. Make sure that the number of notes gradually increases one at a time.
After five or six notes, it becomes confusing to count them. Play open g, holding the clarinet with the right hand, and count the notes with your left fingers until you have played 10 or 12 notes. Remember to accent only the first note, following with effortless soft notes, decreasing the dynamic to virtually nothing.

As you become more agile and comfortable with this exercise, you will notice that the tongue will actually start moving by itself (somewhat uncontrollably), and literally "shake" in a very rapid staccato. Imagine a strong wind blowing through a flag and how the fabric emits a staccato-like noise. Use your air stream to stimulate the tongue to do the very same thing as the flag. In time, you will notice the speed at which your tongue will start to bounce naturally and effortlessly. Carefully monitor your ideal airflow speed and the position and firmness of your tongue for the rapid motion to start happening by itself.

Practice the exercise, playing repeated notes in all registers. Experiment with various dynamics, always strongly accenting the first note more than any other. Continue the exercise by attempting to change notes instead of repeating them, playing basic ascending and descending scales. Later, practice passages across various registers, making sure all notes sound evenly.

If the tongue movements become stiff, think of the soft rebound notes as a rapidly repeating "th" sound, as in the word "thee," instead of "da" or "la."

This technique will soon be of tremendous help in performing challenging orchestral excerpts such as the Scherzo from A Midsummer Night's Dream by Mendelssohn, The Bartered Bride by Smetana, and the Allegro from Symphony No. 4 by Beethoven.
Over the past several years alto saxophonist Patrick Cornelius has emerged as an exciting and dynamic new voice in the New York jazz scene. An instrumental virtuoso who counts Charlie Parker, Louis Armstrong, Joe Henderson, Claude Debussy, and Peter Gabriel among his greatest influences, Patrick has made a name for himself as an emerging artist with seemingly limitless potential. The son of a highly decorated U.S. Air Force officer, Patrick was raised in such diverse locales as Germany, Georgia, Texas, and Great Britain. His parents took great pains to nurture his deep love and appreciation for the fine arts, exposing him and his brothers to the theatre, concerts, museums, poetry readings, and classic literature. Patrick began studying the piano at the age of five, and gravitated toward the alto saxophone as a teenager, shifting his musical focus from the works of Debussy, Grieg, and Bartok to the sounds of Charlie Parker, Sonny Rollins, and John Coltrane.

Patrick's performing experience includes established venues such as The Blue Note, The Monterey Jazz Festival, Jazz at The Lincoln Center, and The Kennedy Center, as well as some of the most popular New York "underground" clubs, including The Jazz Gallery, Fat Cat, The 55 Bar, and Kavehaz. He cut his teeth playing local gigs around his native San Antonio while still in high school, before attending both Berklee College of Music and The Manhattan School of Music on full scholarships for undergraduate and graduate studies respectively. In 1999, Patrick was recognized by the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz, and spent four months attending workshops and seminars in their facility on the campus of USC in Los Angeles. Upon returning to Berklee, he was chosen to receive the 2000 Billboard endowed award, presented by the publication to one aspiring musician each year. More recently, Cornelius garnered back-to-back Young Jazz composer awards from ASCAP in 2005, 2006, and 2007 for his compositions Unfinished Business, Winds of Change (from Lucid Dream), and Brother Gabriel.

Patrick's solo recording debut, Lucid Dream, features the collaborative efforts of some of the most exciting talents on the New York jazz scene today: rising stars Aaron Parks (piano), Kendrick Scott (drums), Nick Vagenas (trombone), Gretchen Parlato (voice), and local veteran Sean Conly (bass). Lucid Dream features seven strikingly memorable original compositions from Cornelius' current songbook, as well as spirited, unique arrangements of Charlie Parker's Billie's Bounce and Peter Gabriel's classic pop anthem, Don't Give Up.

Patrick's 2006 performance schedule included a very successful U.K. tour to promote Lucid Dream. His residency included some of England's most established venues, such as Pizza on the Park, The Vortex, Club 606, and Queen Elizabeth Hall. Patrick's 2007 European tour will feature a headline berth at The London Jazz Festival, as well as dates in Switzerland, Luxembourg, France, and Denmark.

Patrick is currently available for concerts, private functions, clinics, individual or group instruction. Please contact info@patrickcornelius.com for more information.

PRACTICE TECHNIQUES AND PHILOSOPHIES

Ever since I was a wee lad I've been told that as individuals, people are all different from each other. We're all special and unique, in ways both large and small, both obvious and subtle, and both physically and psychologically. It stands to reason, therefore, that our practice routines should vary in ways that reflect the differences in our learning styles and personalities. While I firmly believe that no musician should avoid the mechanical rigors of strengthening her musical fundamentals, my own practice routine evolves monthly, weekly, and even daily in order to keep pace with my distractible nature and cripplingly short attention span. But I still hit all of the bases needed to facilitate my growth as a saxophonist and as a creative improviser.

I play an early Selmer Mark VI alto with a Yanagisawa 7 stock rubber mouthpiece and Java 3.5 reeds. There's really no rhyme or reason behind my mouthpiece choice other than it provides me with the easiest access to the sound in my head. As a jazz musician, the voice I hear for myself is an amalgam...
of the tones of my four favorite altoists: Cannonball Adderley, Johnny Hodges, Charlie Parker, and Dick Oatts.

My mouthpiece produces a basic tone that is neither bright nor dark, allowing me the freedom to sculpt my sound on the fly, depending on what's musically appropriate. Whether the music calls for a tone that is warm and lush like Hodges, or cool and dark like Desmond, it's important to maintain a solid but flexible home base embouchure that affords me consistent intonation and tonal center. In service of that goal, I highly recommend The Art of Saxophone Playing by Larry Teal. I think I've read this text from cover to cover five times over the past ten years, taking Teal's basic philosophies of embouchure, tone, articulation, and other basic instrumental fundamentals, and formulating my own exercises with them.

**SOUND AND TONE CONCEPT**

Long tones make up the cornerstone of my tonal exercises, although I find different ways to practice them each day. Sometimes, when I'm feeling particularly focused, I'll practice them simply (with a metronome and a tuner) in a chromatically descending or ascending manner paying strict attention to maintaining good intonation while creating a smooth and even rate of crescendo and decrescendo from one note into the other. When the exercise is this basic it's easy to zero in on other important fundamentals of tone production, such as precise and consistent note attacks and releases.

On other days, I'll open my father's old Methodist hymnal, choose a hymn or chorale at random, set the metronome to some insanely slow rate (like eighth note = 80), and play through the song with as even a tone as possible (without vibrato), transposing it into different keys that exploit each of the instrument's registers. With this sort of exercise I can multitask while working on my long tones with practicing some easy transposition, which is about as invaluable a skill as you can develop as a saxophonist. The most useful transpositions for an alto player are up a major sixth (from reading a concert score), down a minor third (for reading a concert score that's too high), up a major second (in case you're playing soprano), and up a perfect fifth (in case you have to read from a B flat score.) I'm always sure to hit those transpositions every time, just to keep my mind and ears sharp.

**PRACTICING CONCEPTS**

Another one of my favorite workouts involves picking a ballad (from any style of music, from Schubert to Gershwin to Peter Gabriel), and playing it through multiple times while varying the color or emotion of the sound. For example, let's say I want to learn the tune Skylark (again, this can be another way to multitask: learning a new song while working on tone). In a tune such as this it can be useful to read through the lyrics first in order to get a concept for the phrasing and vibe of the song. Before I play through the piece I'll think of either a color (light blue or green, perhaps), or a feeling (wistful, slightly melancholy), and try (abstractly, admittedly) to evoke this feeling or visualize this color while playing the melody.

Upon playing the song a second time I'll try something markedly different, like the color dark red or the feeling of deep sorrow. It can be useful to record yourself performing this exercise, and to listen critically for the types of contrast that you can create with sound and inflection alone. The freedom to shape and color the character of sound is one of the saxophonist's greatest artistic advantages over our woodwind brethren. Our instrument's extremely vocal nature is the reason why there is such variety among individual saxophonists.

To this end, I strongly recommend finding a group of singers from across different styles of music (opera, jazz, pop, rock, etc.) whose musical deliveries most represent how you want your sound to carry emotion, and emulate them as you would your favorite jazz soloist. In my opinion, the harmonic or rhythmic content of an artist's lines are secondary to her ability to reach out to any audience member with a single note. Some of my favorite singers are Frank Sinatra, Billie Holiday, Peter Gabriel, Stevie Wonder, Sarah McLachlan, and Joni Mitchell. I listen to and emulate these artists' phrasing and vocal colorings regularly.

Exercises such as long tones and chorales will help you hone the quality of your saxophone tone. However, it is the character of your sound that will distinguish you as an individual artist, and that is a highly personal aesthetic that must evolve from studying your instrument's rich history. In that respect, a saxophonist's articulation is nearly as important a component of one's sound as tone quality and character. My ear is most attracted to saxophonists who use articulation colorfully to enhance or punctuate. The most important way to develop good jazz articulation is to learn and play along with your favorite solos by ear, emulating the styles and nuances of your favorite musicians.

**ARTICULATION AND STYLE**

My favorite saxophone articulators are Charlie Parker, Syd­ney Bechet, Sonny Rollins, Wayne Shorter, Dick Oatts, and Joe Lovano. I frequently play along with their recordings in order to get the flavor of their styles in my head before addressing a particular concept in articulation.

For tongue technique, my favorite exercise is to set the metronome to the slowest rate on the dial (quarter note = 40 or so), and say and repeat out loud the articulation syllable I wish to work on (Li, Di, Ti, Tu, or Tut). I'll choose a single note from each of the instrument's registers, and articulate a series of measures subdivided into increasing numbers. For example, I start with two measures of half notes, then two measures of three half note triplets, then four quarters, five quarter quintuplets, six quarter note triplets, 7 quarter septuplets, and on and on. After I've finished a complete cycle, or until I can't tongue the subdivisions evenly and cleanly, I move on to the next syllable. These are the only two dedicated articulation exercises that I use routinely. However, I always try to incorpo­rate articulation into my other areas of practice.

For example, when practicing scales (I'm currently shed­ding harmonic major with a flatted second) and their arpeg­gios, I use a different tonguing and syllable pattern for each pattern iteration. If I'm playing the C major scale from prime to octave I might try articulating every note with the “Ti” syllable. For the next pattern (say, from supertonic to 9th), I'll tongue every upbeat with the “di” syllable. Those are the most basic examples. When I've been at it for a few days, and feeling particularly good, I'll start to pepper in the kind of articulation that I would use in my bebop phrasing, like (starting on the downbeat of one): C(Ti), D(Di), E(no articulation), F (Li), G (no articulation), A (Tu), B (no articulation), C (Di). Then, I'll mix and match the syllables in less logical ways, figure out ways to emphasize the unusual beats, such as the downbeat of 2, just to get the sound of that kind of tension in my head.
OTHER PARTS OF MY PRACTICE ROUTINE

I also apply these sorts of articulation games to other parts of my practice routine, which typically include classical etudes, transcribed solos, and improvisation exercises. I love practicing and preparing classical etudes and musical works. Of course, I would never have the courage to perform them in public, humbly aware as I am of the fact that my jazz sensibility influences every note that comes out of my instrument. Nevertheless, they are a valuable and enjoyable part of my regular practice routine.

Sometimes, I'll feel like actually learning and working up a formal piece of the repertoire, such as the Ibert Concertina da Camera the Dahl Concerto, or a serious saxophone centric etude or short work, such as those by Karg-Elert or Guy Lacour. I'll usually spend an hour a day on the piece in question for a week or so, or until I get sick of it and want to move onto something else. Again, the point is not to perform the piece in public, but to study it and have it inform our technique and musicality.

SIGHT READING

Another thing I love to do is sight-read and sight-transpose standard etudes from various instruments. My three favorite texts for this are Bach's Two-Part Inventions for piano, which are great for getting the sound of linear voice leading in your head, as well as relatively easy diatonic melodies for transposing to different keys and reading from the bass clef. Perling's 48 Etudes for Saxophone or Oboe is an absolute staple of the literature, and Berbiguier's 18 Exercises or Etudes for Flute contains some very difficult, yet melodic interval studies that translate very well onto the saxophone.

Whenever I've had to take a week or so off from heavy practicing I feel that learning a new Charlie Parker solo will always lock in my time, articulation, technique, and phrasing. After memorizing the solo by ear I practice it very slowly, just like the classical etudes described earlier, in order to execute it carefully. I also practice making the phrasing swing in different tempos, and move it around in different keys. When transposing a solo or phrase into different keys I always try to choose the next key at random, rather than progressing through a cycle, like by step or by fourth. That why I make sure that I am actually able to recreate the phrase in any key I want by actually hearing it, rather than by rote learning the pattern with my fingers' motor memory.

PHILOSOPHY

My philosophy of improvising with a musical instrument is that I want to be able to execute the music I hear in my head as I'm hearing it, and the way I'm hearing it. I always try to avoid memorizing and regurgitating patterns and licks, instead focusing on training myself to play a phrase the way my mind hears it. And in turn to hear new things by listening to as much music as possible, while isolating what intrigues me about it.

MY FAVORITE EXERCISE

My absolute favorite exercise in the world, for both beginning and advanced improvisers, involves singing. Unfortunately, God cursed me with about as unmelodious a voice as ever croaked on his green Earth, but I've managed to hone it as a tool to teach my fingers how I want to play tunes and create melodies. My only other tool in this is a metronome, because I always want to be swinging no matter how far into left field my ear may want to stretch.

First, I sing a phrase, then I play it back on the instrument in time. If I don't quite get it I'll try to repeat the same phrase. Be sure to really listen to yourself, because it's easy to forget. Keeping phrases you've just played in the back of your mind as you improvise will help you play in a more compositional and motivic manner, and give it another shot.

If I'm successful then I'll sing a new phrase and attempt to play it back to myself again. After a while, it'll start to feel like you're playing call and response to yourself. Once you're comfortable with this you can start to actually answer yourself in a more antecedent and consequence manner. This can be quite an addictedly fun little exercise that will most definitely bring your fingers more in line with your ears and your mind.

TRANSCRIBING

While practicing etudes is important and can be fun, transcribing improvised solos is the most important thing any aspiring jazz musician can do. Transcribing is like the deadlift or clean-and-jerk. Please excuse the gratuitous weight-lifting references of all the practice methods. It hones so many important skills at the same time in an organic sort of way. When I first started learning Charlie Parker solos, almost exclusively by ear, I hardly ever wrote any solos down unless there are a few specific passages that I wish to analyze. I was training my ears, improving my instrumental technique and articulation, and laying the foundation for my vocabulary and style as a jazz improver. Charlie Parker is a great musician to start transcribing, if you've never done it before, because most of his solos are short, harmonically logical, and his vocabulary largely informs the language of modern jazz. I still transcribe Charlie Parker solos today, though not for the sake of vocabulary anymore.
1. Examine all pads for splits and seating, including octave key pads. Replace as necessary.

2. Check operation of the octave key. Finger G and operate the octave key. The pad on the neck vent should remain closed, the pad on the body vent should open and close. Finger A and operate the octave key. The pad on the neck vent should open and close, the pad on the body vent should remain closed. Lubricate if needed. If it still does not work correctly, consult a repairman.

3. Finger middle finger C. Check that the little pad just above the first finger of the left hand closes. On Yamaha saxes adjust the left stack screw. On other makes a repairman must shim with cork or felt.

4. Finger 1-4 and 1-5 Bb. Check for proper adjustment by depressing the Bis Key. Adjust at the setscrew just above the F pad.

5. Finger D and work the G# key. The G# pad should remain closed and the tone should not change. If the G# pad opens even slightly it will prevent low C#, B, and Bb from speaking and prevent proper use of articulated G# fingerings. Adjust the G# setscrew.

6. For advanced players: Check intonation of low Eb, D, C#, C, and B. Adjust the felt bumpers. Use a good tuner for this!

7. If all else is O.K., doping the pads helps even on new pads! Old stiff pads are sometimes softened with pad dopes. Use the Lavoz "Pad Saver" swab. These two steps will greatly extend pad life, more than paying for the cost of the pad dope and swab.

8. Lube the neck cork with cork grease, Chap Stick, or Vaseline. I use Singer Sewing Machine Oil on keys. Oiling the keys twice a year is adequate.

9. Wipe the sax several times a week with a damp cloth and buff dry. Wax with Pledge several times a year, or spray with Runyon Lacquer Life. Silver colored keys on student line saxes are nickel plated and need no special care, just wipe clean.

10. Never leave the reed and ligature on the mouthpiece when the instrument is stored. Wash the mouthpiece daily with lukewarm (never hot) water. At the very least, wipe dry with a tissue or cloth after playing. Use a brush if necessary—a Gerber baby bottle nipple brush works well. Soaking the mouthpiece overnight in vinegar will remove saliva stains. Keep a minimum of 4-8 reeds at all times. Keep reeds in a good reed holder such as Vito or Lavoz Reedguard VI. Never store your reeds in the plastic "Novapack" containers that reeds come packaged in. Never play the same reed two days in a row. Play reeds on a rotation schedule and they will last much longer. Wrap the mouthpiece and neck in soft cloths (old gym socks work well) or commercial neck and mouthpiece bags. Do not allow them to rattle around loose in the accessory compartment of the case. Mouthpieces are often damaged beyond repair this way.

11. When transporting your instrument on the bus (or shipping) place bubble wrap in the case around the sax and accessories. Do not use a "Gig Bag" unless you are willing to hand carry your instrument at all times and hold it in your lap for trips. Compact "Flight Cases" are available that have minimum size and the strength necessary to protect your instrument. I can recommend the SKB Contoured Pro Sax Cases (my personal choice), the Winter Flight Cases, Pro Pac Contoured Cases by Pro Tec, and the Selmer Walt Johnson Gig Cases (used by the Air Force's Airmen of Note). These are all truly "roadworthy".
Selmer Saxophone Clinic        March 18-20, 2004

Brandon Jazz Festival

5 great saxophone recordings:
1. Cannonball Adderley Somethin' Else
2. John Coltrane Blue Train
3. Charlie Parker w/ Strings “The Master Takes”
4. Sonny Rollins Saxophone Colossus
5. Dale Underwood Classic Pastiche

5 big band recordings to check out:
1. Count Basie Straight Ahead
2. Rob McConnell Two Originals
3. Tom Kubis Slightly Off The Ground
4. GRP All-Star Big Band
5. Woody Herman Best of the Concord Years

5 Jamey Aebersold play along CD’s to own:
1. Charlie Parker Volume 6
2. Miles Davis Volume 7
3. Sonny Rollins Volume 8
4. Duke Ellington Volume 12
5. Maiden Voyage Volume 54

5 scale types to learn and memorize:
1. All 12 Majors scales full range of your horn
2. Major and Minor Pentatonic scales
3. Chromatic scale from low Bb to high F# with correct fingerings (ascending and descending)
4. H/W diminished scales (there are only 3)
5. Whole Tone scales (there are only 2)

5 good mouthpiece options:
1. Selmer C* band (alto,tenor,bari)
2. Meyer 5M band/jazz (alto)
3. Berg Larsen jazz (alto,tenor,bari)
4. Vandoren V16 jazz (alto,tenor)
5. Rousseau 4R band/jazz (alto,tenor)

5 magazines on saxophone or jazz:
1. Saxophone Journal
2. Down Beat
3. Jazz Times
4. Jazz Iz
5. IAJE Journal (comes with a membership to IAJE)
5 websites worth investigating:
1. www.iaje.org
2. www.jazzbooks.com
3. www.selmer.com
4. www.allmusic.com
5. www.jazzkc.org

5 good saxophone books:
1. Guy Lacour etudes volume 1, 2 (beg/int.)
2. Ferling 48 etudes (adv.)
3. The Art of Saxophone Playing by Larry Teal
4. Playing the Saxophone by Bob Mintzer
5. Saxophone Altissimo by Robert A. Luckey

5 classical solos to learn:
1. Aria Eugene Bozza
2. Sicilienne Pierre Lantier
3. Scaramouche Darius Milhaud
4. Chanson et Passepied Jeanine Rueff
5. Concerto in G Minor G.F. Handel (tenor saxophone)

5 things to request for your birthday:
1. metronome
2. tuner
3. saxophone stand
4. clarinet
5. flute

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Dust wires
Good instrument + bad mouth < good mouth + bad instrument

Keeps
Find something that works well.
Compromise — keep warp in reed
Check for cracks.
Suck on it.
Boning — or make sure your reeds play better.
Send them!  Also grade them.
Cleaning Inside the Body of the Saxophone

1. The Pull-Through (or "Swab")

This is a cloth attached to a piece of string with a small weight on the end. You can buy these or else make one yourself by attaching a weight to one end of a piece of string (or any type of thin cord) and a piece of chamois or cloth to the other. The string needs to be slightly longer than the length of the saxophone body from top (without the neck or crook) to bell if you imagine it straightened out. The weight must be smaller than the opening at the top, and the cloth must be small enough to fit snugly in that opening, but large enough to touch the sides as the instrument flares out (as far as possible).

To clean the sax just pop the weight in the bell, turn the horn upside down so that it comes out of the opening where the neck goes and pull the pull-through through. You can also clean inside the bell with just a plain old cloth or chamois. Do not use any cleaning product or polish for this as it could get onto the pads which might cause the leather to stick and/or shorten the life of the pad.

Tips

- A small piece of lead or other heavy metal is good for the weight on a swab, but you might like to cover it with some material, plastic or leather to stop it from scuffing the inside of your saxophone
- An e-cloth can make a good pull-through for this as they are very absorbent
- You will need to pull the swab through a few times and not too fast if you want to get the maximum benefit from it.
- I have seen commercial pull-throughs with a chimney sweep type bristle behind the cloth. This is useful as it will hold the cloth against the wider parts of the bore

2. The Padsaver

This looks like a thin fluffy Christmas tree and fits inside the body. These are possibly better at collecting water from the wide part of the bore, but not so good at the very bottom of the bow as they don’t reach down that far. I prefer not to leave these inside the saxophone while packed away unless it has had a good chance to dry out first. Give it a good clean every now and again in some warm water and detergent, then rinse well and dry.

Which One Is Best, swab or padsaver?

They each have pros and cons, so a combination of both is useful.

Sticking Pads

Some dealers will try to sell you special products to stop pads sticking. These can be worse than useless. Although they might work in the short term, any kind of powder or liquid product will attract more dirt and goo so sooner or later the problem will return with a vengeance.

First of all check that the problem is not caused by a weak, loose or bent spring (if in doubt visit your friendly repair person). You can sometimes retension the spring by bending it with a special tool (or a pencil tip which has had the lead broken off or a screwdriver that has had a groove filed in the tip). If the problem is caused by a build up of residue on the pad, you can remove this with plain old lighter fluid on a pipe cleaner or by closing the pad gently on piece of clean rag with lighter fluid and pulling it through. In an emergency on a gig a clean piece of paper (e.g. new £20 note or dollar bill) might work for a while.

Pad Clamps
Another practically useless product that will part you from your money. If the pads are seating properly these are totally unnecessary. If the pads are not, then clamps may help in the very short term, but if they do help that’s a sure sign your saxophone needs a trip to the repairers. They may even do harm as they are compress the normally open pads much more than a closed pad is normally held by the pressure of the spring, and could cause the leather and felt to lose some of the natural springiness.

Cleaning Inside the Neck and Mouthpiece
There are swabs and small padsaver type things available for this, but I find it better to use a bottle brush or small toothbrush followed by a rinse through with tap water - some antiseptic mouthwash won’t do any harm either. It’s best to do this regularly (at least once a week) or very nasty smelly beige coloured gunge will build up and your saxophone repairer will give you nasty looks when you take the horn in for a service. You can also use the fluffy brushes that are made for recorders, but like the padsaver, wash these occasionally and don’t leave inside the neck or mouthpiece when they are packed away.
If the build up is bad, it can be a good idea to soak first in warm water and detergent. If the gunk is really dried on, then apply vinegar on a small pad to the inside affected bits and leave for a while.

Cleaning Outside the Body of the Saxophone
I prefer a plain e-cloth for this. They are good because they are designed not to need any cleaning products or polish which could get on the pads, springs or inside the rods where they would probably cause some eventual harm.
THE A-B-C OF PLAYING AND TEACHING THE SAXOPHONE

BY DR. EUGENE ROUSSEAU

A. Instrument

1. Well constructed, good design
2. Pads not leaking
3. Springs working properly
4. Regulated properly (e.g., articulated G-sharp)
5. Adequate mouthpiece
   a. Medium facing
   b. Good material
6. Reed:
   a. Resilient, medium strength
   b. At least three playable ones
   c. Not warped
7. Ligature:
   a. Proper size
   b. Proper tension

B. Embouchure

1. Lower lip:
   a. Curved over lower teeth
   b. Drawn towards center for proper cushion
2. Top teeth rest on mouthpiece
3. Chin normal, relaxed, not pointed
4. Corners of mouth in towards center, giving round feeling
5. Embouchure must be shaped solidly, but not tense

C. Air

1. Inhale quickly and deeply
   a. Through corners of mouth
   b. With least amount of disturbance to embouchure
2. Small amount of air pressure needed
3. Large quantity of air needed
4. As one plays the larger saxophones (tenor, baritone):
   a. Air pressure decreases
   b. Air quantity increases

Test for embouchure/air balance using mouthpiece alone
(All pitches given are concert. Always test at FFF dynamic level.)

Soprano Alto Tenor Baritone

Yamaha

Schmitt Music Centers

Downtown Minneapolis, Downtown St. Paul, Edina Galleria, Ridgedale, Burnsville Center, Rosedale, Brookdale,
Brooklyn Center Warehouse Showrooms, Crossroads Mall in St. Cloud, Apache Mall in Rochester, Muller Hill Mall in Duluth,
Downtown Virginia, Downtown Fargo, West Acres Mall in Fargo, Empire Mall in Sioux Falls and Downtown Eau Claire.
Doigtés de correction
A) Permettant de monter l'intonation des notes

Corrective fingering
A) Allowing for a sharpening of notes

Fingersatzkorrekturen
A) Für eine höhere Intonation

---

B) Permettant de baisser l'intonation des notes

B) Allowing for a flattening of notes

B) Für eine tiefe Intonation

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FOR EDUCATIONAL USE ONLY
Alto Saxophone Models

Student Models — Grade 5+
- Beginning students
- Marching band, indoor or outdoor use
- Range to high F
- Least expensive: $1000-1600

Examples: Keilwerth ST90 ($1030), Selmer (Bundy) AS300 ($1000), Yamaha YAS23 ($1525)

Intermediate Models — Grade 8+
- Intermediate students – college
- Recommended for indoor use only
- Better intonation, sound, and response
- Various lacquers and finishes
- Range to high F#
- More expensive: $1600-2200

Examples: Cannonball Big Bell ($2100), Keilwerth EX90 ($1835), Selmer AS210 ($2129), Yamaha YAS475 or Allegro ($1675), Yanagisawa A901 ($2100)

Professional Models — Grade 11+
- Advanced students – professionals
- Indoor use only
- Best intonation, sound, and response
- Various lacquers and finishes
- Range to high F#
- Most expensive: $2500-4000

Examples: Keilwerth SX90R ($3150), Selmer Series II ($3500), Selmer Series III ($4000), Yanigasawa A991 ($2850), Yamaha YAS875EX ($2600)

Soprano, Tenor, and Baritone Saxophone Models

The above-mentioned features and models are available for soprano, tenor, and baritone saxophones. (Note: the specific model numbers may be slightly different.) The same general guidelines apply to choosing an appropriate level instrument.
**Saxophone Mouthpieces**

**Beginning Students - Grades 4-5**
Use mouthpiece from rental instrument; if broken, replace with Yamaha 4C ($25).

**Intermediate Students - Grades 6-8**
- Selmer C* ($71)
- Selmer Larry Teal ($106)
- Meyer 5 -- Jazz ONLY ($74)

**Advanced Students - Grades 9-12**
- Selmer C* ($71)
- Selmer C ($71)
- Selmer D ($71)
- Meyer 5 or 6 -- Jazz ONLY ($74)

**Jazz mouthpieces (Advanced students)**
- Meyer 6 ($74)
- Berg Larsen
- Otto Link ($66)
- Dave Guardala ($350)
- Bari ($88)
- Beechler ($62)
- Vandoren ($65-80)

**Not recommended**
- Bundy ($35)
- Goldentone
- Brillhart ($10)
- No name

**Ligatures**

*For Intermediate-Advanced Students*

- Selmer gold professional metal ($20)
- Rovner -- esp. jazz ($19)
- Winslow ($70)
- BG ($27)
- Bay ($47)
- Bonade ($14)
Saxophone Reeds

Beginning students - Grades 4-5
Rico 2, 2\(\frac{1}{2}\) -- Do NOT allow students to play strengths 1 or 1\(\frac{1}{2}\).

Intermediate students - Grades 6-8
Hemke 2\(\frac{1}{2}\), 3
Hemke Premium 2\(\frac{1}{2}\), 3
Vandoren 2\(\frac{1}{2}\), 3

Advanced students - Grades 9-12
Vandoren 3 (3\(\frac{1}{2}\))

Other reeds for advanced players:
Glotin 3, 3\(\frac{1}{2}\)
Vandoren V-16 3 (3\(\frac{1}{2}\)) — JAZZ ONLY
Vandoren Java — JAZZ ONLY
Rico Royal — JAZZ ONLY

Reeds NOT recommended for any level:
  Rico #3-5
  Plasticover
  LaVoz
  Marca
  Roy J. Maier
  Queen
  ANY plastic reed

*** Do NOT allow students to play strengths 4, 4\(\frac{1}{2}\) or 5.

Reed-Working Tools

◦ Reed knife
◦ #400/#600 Wet-dry black sandpaper
◦ 9x12 plate glass (1/4 to 1/2 inch thick)
◦ Film canister for water
  Pocket knife
  Reed trimmer
  Reed rush
  Fine-grade file
◦ Denotes required tools
Make it EASY to find the right ligature!

Here's how to use the chart:
1) Find your mouthpiece on the chart.
2) Find the ligature you'd like.
3) Follow the chart to the ligature model you need and order by the model number. It's that easy!

**SOPRANO**

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All Prices Subject to Change Without Notice
Saxophone Articulation

Articulation: The tip of the tongue touches the tip of the reed. The top side of the tongue must contact the flat underside of the reed approximately 1/32” from the tip. Correct articulation uses a small up-and-down motion of the front of the tongue. Incorrect articulations include: tonguing into the mouthpiece opening; anchor tonguing; moving the lips, jaw, or throat; tonguing the teeth or roof of mouth; moving tongue front-to-back, sideways, or circularly; tonguing with motion of air rather than tongue; tonguing with extreme tip or underside of tongue. Be sure to correct any incorrect articulation as soon as symptoms are apparent. Correct articulation syllable: tah

Slur (\(\cap\)): The tip of the tongue touches the tip of the reed for only the first note of the slur. [See articulation for exact directions.] The remaining notes do not use any motion of the tongue, as it remains in a stationary aaaah position. Incorrect articulation involves moving the tongue in any manner while playing notes under a slur. Correct articulation syllable: taaaaaaaaaa

Staccato (\(\cdot\)): Two methods of staccato are possible: tongue-stop and air-stop. Both methods start with the articulation described above. (1) In tongue-stop staccato, the tongue returns to the tip of the reed end the note. This method is most often used in fast, repetitive passages. Correct articulation syllable: teet. (2) In air-stop staccato, the tongue does not re-connect with the reed to end the note. Instead, the diaphragm halts the flow of air to end the note. The air should not be stopped with a “cutting-off” motion of either the throat or lower jaw. This method is most often used in slow, semi-legato passages where an abrupt note ending would be inappropriate. Correct articulation syllable: tah—

Accent (\(\rangle\)): A standard accent is a variation of standard articulation. Follow the directions for articulation but add a stronger tongue-stroke to produce the stress on the beginning of the note. Advanced players may also add a slight air push to the beginning of the note. Correct articulation syllable: Tah

Cap accent (\(^\wedge\)): A cap or “carrot” accent produces a cross between an accent and a staccato. The tongue strikes the reed harder to begin the accent on the note and the note is ended by a tongue-stop. Correct articulation syllable: Taht

Slur-accent (\(\triangleright\)): Sometimes it is necessary to produce an accent under a slur. Two methods are possible to produce this type of accent. (1) A slight push from the diaphragm effects a stress on the note. (2) In fast passages when the diaphragm is not able to effect a stress, a slight articulation from the tongue may be used. Correct articulation syllable: huh

Legato (\(\!
\)): Legato is produced in much the same manner as a standard articulation. Although the air should never stop between articulated notes, it is imperative that the air is used in a constant flowing motion when playing legato. In this manner, correct, flowing, attached legato is produced. Correct articulation syllable: tah—

Detached legato (\(\!
\)): Detached legato is the combination of a lengthened staccato. The articulation must produce a feeling of detached connection. While there are several ways to produce this articulation, the best method is to use air-stopped staccato. Simply lengthen the length of the note to produce the desired note length. Correct articulation syllable: tah—|
Transposition

B♭ soprano saxophone sounds a major second below the written pitch. Rule: **Written C sounds B♭**

Written:

Sounds:

Eb alto saxophone sounds a major sixth below the written pitch. Rule: **Written C sounds Eb**

Written:

Sounds:

B♭ tenor saxophone sounds a major ninth below the written pitch. Rule: **Written C sounds B♭**

Written:

Sounds:

Eb baritone saxophone sounds a major thirteenth below the written pitch. Rule: **Written C sounds Eb**

Written:

Sounds:
Saxophone transpositions
All saxophones read ONLY treble clef.

**Eb Soprano**
- Use: saxophone ensemble
- Sounds m3 higher than notated

*Bb Soprano*
- Use: solo, chamber music, saxophone ensemble (band, wind ensemble, orchestra)
- Sounds M2 lower than notated

**Eb Alto**
- Use: solo, chamber music, saxophone ensemble, band, wind ensemble, (orchestra)
- Sounds M6 lower than notated

*C Melody*
- Use: no longer used
- Sounds octave lower than notated

*Bb Tenor*
- Use: solo, chamber music, saxophone ensemble, band, wind ensemble, (orchestra)
- Sounds M9 lower than notated

*Eb Baritone*
- Use: solo, chamber music, saxophone ensemble, band, wind ensemble
- Sounds octave+M6 lower than written

**Bb Bass**
- Use: saxophone ensemble, (band, wind ensemble)
- Sounds octave+M9 lower than written

**Eb Contra-bass**
- Use: saxophone ensembles
- Sounds 2 octaves+M6 lower than written
Saxophone Progress Flow Chart

This chart is designed to aid the instrumental music teacher who is choosing reeds, mouthpieces, saxophones, and music for student use. It presents a logical flow for the ideal situation. However, a degree of flexibility is maintained to allow for differences in program level, interest, and economics.

**Years 1-3 of Study (Grades 4-6)**
- Rico reeds: 2 and 2 1/2 (years 1-2)
- Hemke reeds: 2 1/2 (year 3)
- Plastic LaVoz reed holder
- Student mouthpiece: often no name, Bundy, Yamaha, Vito, or Brillhart
- Student instrument: purchased, rented or borrowed. Yamaha or Selmer/Bundy are most common.
- Music: Beginning band method of choice; level 1-2 solos

**Years 4-5 of Study (Grades 7-8)**
- Begin systematic upgrade and replacement of equipment in following order: reeds, mouthpiece, instrument, accessories
- Hemke reeds: 3 to 3 1/2
- Plastic LaVoz reed holder
- Introduce Selmer S-80 C* mouthpiece (only one recommended at this level)
- Begin discussion with parents of serious students: if child continues, they may wish to purchase a professional instrument in the next few years.
- Music: Intermediate level studies: David Hite Melodious and Progressive Studies; level 3-4 solos
- Entry of committed students into solo/ensemble competitions; chamber ensembles
- A few students will study privately at this level

**Years 6-9 of Study (Grades 9-12)**
- Continue to upgrade and replace equipment
- Vandoren reeds: 3
- Selmer S-80 C* mouthpiece; Meyer 5 mouthpiece may be used for jazz at this level
- Reed holder: plastic LaVoz; Vandoren; plate glass; any number of expensive holders
- Neck strap: original nylon or string strap; padded straps of all sorts; do not allow students to use a strap that bounces while playing ie. Neoprene straps
- Students may still be playing on student instruments; however, some students at this level will begin to purchase professional level instruments. Recommended instrument is Selmer Super-Action 80 Series III. Other instruments commonly recommended are Keilwerth (esp. jazz players or musical doublings) and Yamaha YAS-62 or Custom model (very piercing and bright sounds; does not blend well in ensembles)
- Possible change of ligature to: Selmer metal; Rovner; BG; Bay; Winslow (this change is often made in consultation with a saxophone specialist)
- Music: Intermediate-advanced level studies: Rubank Selected Studies; Ferling 48 Famous Studies for Oboe/Saxophone; level 4-6 solos; integration of basic music theory and ear-training into lessons
- Preparation for solo/ensemble festivals; college entrance auditions
- Many students will study privately at this level, especially those interested in music
- Advanced saxophonists may begin to learn other woodwind instruments, piano, or voice
A Saxophonist's Study Guide by David Hite

... an outline of seven performance levels with goals and repertoire for each level

INTRODUCTION

This saxophonist's Study Guide outlines seven levels of study. It can be used to identify a student's level of accomplishment and provides a list of publications for study and performance at each level. Although not complete, these listings constitute a thorough course of study.

Individual progress will, of course, vary greatly, and some students may find it appropriate to work in materials from different levels simultaneously. For remedial work at more advanced levels, slower scales, interval studies and expressive melodic etudes are recommended.

It is important that students realize that careful, thoughtful daily practice is a primary requirement for effective progress. Inspired guidance from a good teacher and good ensemble experiences are vital contributing factors, but in the end the student must do the learning himself.

All music editions listed in the Study Guide are published by:
Southern Music Company, P.O. Box 329, San Antonio, TX 78292, U.S.A. Phone: 1(800) 284-5443

A Saxophonist's Study Guide by David Hite

LEVEL 1

Making the first sounds on a musical instrument is quite a thrill. Learning where to put fingers, how to shape and control the mouth muscles and how to put the reed on the mouthpiece are among the very important questions at this formative stage. It is best to take private lessons for individual attention in addition to class lessons at school for ensemble experience. These two learning environments complement each other ideally. A minimum of thirty minutes a day should be devoted to individual practice. In the beginning two fifteen minute sessions are recommended.

It is extremely important to invest in a good mouthpiece for the beginner. Mouthpieces furnished with beginning instruments are not always ideal. A poor or damaged mouthpiece can defeat every effort to play well.

Students should learn early on about proper care of their reeds, mouthpieces and instruments. The mouthpiece and reed should be cleaned, and the neck of the saxophone swabbed after every playing session before storage in the case.

A special note for beginning saxophone students: Most commercial saxophonists play both clarinet and saxophone; many also play flute. Many teachers feel that it is best to learn the clarinet first because it is somewhat difficult to add later. Consultation with an instructor should include consideration of this question.

There are many class and private study saxophone methods available for early study. Personal preference will vary. The class and band methods used by most schools are compatible with methods designed for private study when used simultaneously.
Technique basics

- Know the chromatic fingerings from low Bb to high F including alternate fingerings (a total of 32 notes). Learn good finger position and movement.
- Develop a full round tone that comes from a proper embouchure (mouth muscles), deep breathing, a good reed, and a good mouthpiece. Always listen carefully. Practice making small embouchure and breathing adjustments each day to make the sound better. Listen to good players.
- Learn the proper use of the tongue. Start the tone by releasing the tongue from the tip of the reed. A common mistake is to strike the tongue to the reed. Instead, blow, then release. Learn both legato and staccato tonguing styles.
- Practice to control all technical aspects in solid rhythmic contexts.

Theory basics

- Know the G clef (the names of the notes on the spaces and lines), ledger lines and accidentals (sharps, flats and naturals).
- Construct and perform the major scales and related tonic chords in the keys of C, F, G, Bb and D. Play one octave in eighth notes at 60 beats per minute.
- Understand time signatures and the related time values of notes and rests.
- Learn all the terms and signs encountered in music at this level.

LEVEL 1 STUDY MATERIAL

Hovey, Nilo
Skornika, J.E.
Herfurth, C. Paul
Haines & McEntyre

Rubank Elementary Method
Rubank Intermediate Method
A Tune a Day, Books 1, 2 and 3
Division of Beat, Books 1A, 1B and 2

LEVEL 1 REPERTOIRE

FOR ALTO SAXOPHONE WITH PIANO
Burkhardt, Joel
Haydn-Wienandt
Hinton-Howard

Chanson
Serenade
Laverne

FOR TENOR SAXOPHONE WITH PIANO
Hinton-Howard
Houlik, James

Laverne
Two Lyric Pieces

LEVEL 2

With the student's advancement into level two, he should begin to feel at home with his instrument. He can begin to focus on how to play music rather than how to play the saxophone. Continue to improve and stabilize tone and technic. Participation in school concerts, solo contests, studio recitals and everyday rehearsals will reinforce these objectives. Daily practicing should be gratifying. As muscle stamina develops, practice time should be increased to forty five minutes a day.

Study and practice in the Melodious and Progressive Studies, Book 1, and in the Forty Progressive Melodies will most likely not be completed on this level. Although significant progress can be made playing these studies a first time, much can be gained by repeating these studies to perfect easy, accurate performance and to give primary attention to elegance of musical expression. While initial study will consume the student's attention in reading notes and maintaining accurate rhythm and tempo, later more attention may be placed on dynamics, subtleties of musical style and creating a musical mood. It is best not to rush learning at this stage; take the time to settle into the musical meat of this material. This process will make music in the following levels much easier to grasp.
As his basic theoretical background expands, the student should begin to study music carefully before playing. More will be achieved during practice periods with this thoughtful advanced preparation.

**Technique basics**
- Refine finger motion and control.
- Develop the ability to sustain long tones for ten seconds. Continue to improve tone quality.
- Improve tongue and finger coordination. Always maintain clean articulation. Strive for control at faster speeds.
- Continue to develop solid rhythmic concepts and control.

**Theory basics**
- Know and perform major scales and tonic chords up to three sharps and three flats. Construct minor scales and minor tonic chords up to three sharps and three flats.
- Aurally and visually recognize intervals up to a fifth.
- Aurally identify major and minor triads.
- Expand vocabulary of tempo and style terms.

**LEVEL 2 STUDY MATERIAL**

**Hite, David**  
*Foundation Studies*  
Contents:  
Baermann Method, Part III

This volume serves as a lifelong daily study book which can be used to solve nearly every technical problem the saxophonist will encounter. "How to practice" routines and general advice sections are included.

**Hite, David**  
*Melodious and Progressive Studies, Book 1*  
Contents:  
- Demnitz 18 Expressive Studies (based on scales)  
- Demnitz 18 Expressive Studies (based on chords)  
- Nocentini 9 Melodic Studies  
- Baermann 14 Melodic Etudes, Op. 63  
- Kayser 5 Progressive Studies, Op. 20  
- Hite Major and minor scales

This popular study book contains musical, progressive style studies. These studies extend to four sharps and four flats in major and minor keys, using basic time signatures, rhythms and articulations.

**Hite, David**  
*40 Progressive Melodies by A.M.R. Barret*  
Contents:  
- Barret 40 Progressive Melodies  
- Dont 8 Progressive Exercises  
- Hite Scale studies

The Barret melodies are wonderful studies for melodic phrasing. They include an accompaniment for a second saxophone to emphasize the development of rhythmic independence, intonation, balance and flexible tonal concepts. Later, these studies can be used as transposition exercises. The Cont exercises provide daily exercise for the tongue. This book can be used with or following the *Melodious and Progressive Studies*, Book 1.

**LEVEL 2 REPERTOIRE**

**FOR ALTO SAXOPHONE WITH PIANO**

- Giovannini, Caesar  
  *Romance*  
- Haydn-Voxman  
  *Adagio Cantabile and Presto*  
- Hoffman, Earl  
  *In Modo di Trentotto*  
- Loeillet-Merriman  
  *Sonata, Op. 4, No. 9*  
- Mahler-Hemke  
  *A Ruckert Song*
A Saxophonist's Study Guide by David Hite

LEVEL 3

With progress through level three comes a real sense of accomplishment. The player should become a good, competent member of the saxophone section in the school band. An interest in stage band or ensemble music could be developing. One hour a day practice sessions should be routine, and as a result, the fingers should become totally comfortable in the patterns of the most used keys.

The activities that support continued development should be cultivated. Reeds should be carefully selected for vibrancy, response, tonal clarity and good dynamic range. Playing on old worn out reeds should be avoided. At least three well adjusted, broken in reeds should be maintained at all times.

If the alto saxophone has been the primary instrument up to this point, consideration might be given to playing tenor or baritone saxophone. If possible, a personal mouthpiece for the additional instrument(s) should be purchased. Care should be taken to select mouthpieces with a matched feel to avoid the necessity of severe embouchure changes when changing instruments.

**Technique basics**
- Improve reliable and accurate reading of music, making school band and ensemble music routine.
- Develop a quicker, more self assured approach to newly assigned music.
- Learn to sense proper tempos.
- Continue to refine tone in four aspects: greater beauty and depth; more power and softer dynamics; agility to control crescendos and diminuendos; development of a tasteful vibrato.
- Master all articulations, staccato, legato and slurring, in any combination.
- Perform scale patterns in thirds.
- Perform solos publicly.

**Theory basics**
- Know all major and minor scales up to four sharps and four flats.
- Understand the construction of the tonic, dominant and subdominant chords and how these chords relate to the scales; recognize the scales and chords in the music being studied.
- Develop the ability to sing and/or recognize any ascending interval up to a fifth from a given note.
- Expand vocabulary of terms, signs and tempos encountered in the music being performed.
- Study phrasing including the recognition of phrases and how they relate to one another.
LEVEL 3 STUDY MATERIAL

Hite, David

*Foundation Studies*

Contents: Baermann Method, Part III

Continuing work in this volume, the familiar scales should begin to flow accurately. The tonic chords, broken chords and dominant seventh chords, and the interrupted and returning scales should flow well. The four sharps and four flats keys should be routine.

Hite, David

*Melodious and Progressive Studies, Book 1*

Contents: (See level II)

Continued study in this book should develop good reading and style fluency. Efforts to stabilize a beautiful sound should be pursued carefully before approaching etudes requiring greater speed. Sensitivity to dynamics and tonal flexibility should be stressed and developed at this time.

Hite, David

*Melodious and Progressive Studies, Book 2*

Contents:
- Gambaro 16 Caprices
- Lazarus, Ries, Ferling 6 Studies for the Development of the Tongue
- Mozart, Mazas, Fiorillo 4 Expressive Studies
- Lazarus, Ries 3 Studies for Nimble Speed
- Depas, Venzl 3 Chromatic Studies
- Berr, et al. Studies for Flexibility
- Kreutzer 2 Studies on Trills
- Dont 14 Etudes, Op. 37
- Hite Scales in thirds

While refining the slower Nocentini and Baermann etudes of Book 1, it is well to begin practicing these Gambaro studies for finger and tongue dexterity. The key signatures of these etudes stay within three sharps and three flats so that these scale and chord patterns can be totally mastered. The studies for extra work in specialized areas - tongue, speed, chromatics, trills, etc. - can be approached as needed.

Hite, David

*Forty Progressive Melodies* by A.M.R. Barret plus *Eight Progressive Exercises* by Dont

Continued use of this volume can constitute recreational playing, giving vent to imaginative phrasing style with slight variation each time these studies are played. When the studies have been securely mastered, a teacher or friend can add the second part, helping to develop rhythmic independence and dynamic balance.
LEVEL 3 REPERTOIRE

FOR ALTO SAXOPHONE WITH PIANO

Bach-Leeson  
Bournonville-Gee  
Cailliet, Lucien  
Glazunov-Leeson  
Handel-Gee  
Pierre-Gee  
Reed, Alfred  
Vadala, Kathleen  
Walters, David

 LEVEL 4

While working through level four, the opportunity for many performance responsibilities should emerge: auditions for solo chair positions at school, solo and ensemble contests, scholarship auditions, talent shows, and solos in band and orchestra concerts. Summer enrichment programs, music festivals and regional band-orchestra chairs should be pursued.

Continuation of private study is important to effectively focus on detailed preparations for solo appearances, contests and auditions. If possible, a professional level instrument should be obtained to attain the best in sound, intonation and technique. An interest in mouthpieces, better reeds and the skill of adjusting reeds should continue to evolve.

More extensive listening habits should be developed. Following good music radio stations, learning the classical orchestral repertoire, learning about great composers, and identifying music periods and jazz styles will cultivate high performance standards and ambitions.

**Technique basics**
- Develop more sophisticated tonal concepts and control: a vibrato that is a natural part of the tone, not an addition to it, natural use of dynamic flexibility, and awareness of perfect intonation. Observe the effects of mouthpieces, instruments, reeds, rooms, halls, recording techniques and geographic location on tonal voicing.
- Use acquired techniques to create a mood experience for the listener. Avoid lackluster mechanical playing.
- Sight-read music of an appropriate level with fluency.
- Prepare and maintain good reeds.
- Perform major solo works by memory.
- Begin study of extended pitch range above high F.

**Theory basics**
- Understand the cycle of major and minor scales.
• Know and perform the chromatic, diminished and whole-tone scales. Begin work on performing scales in intervals.
• Aurally and visually identify all intervals within the octave, and learn to sing these intervals from a given pitch.
• Sight sing unfamiliar melodies.
• Routinely study assignments without the instrument before practice, analyzing each etude as to key, scale and chord patterns, phrases, tempos rhythms, alternate fingerings, etc.

**LEVEL 4 STUDY MATERIAL**

Hite, David  
*Foundation Studies*  
Contents: Baermann Method, Part III  
Practice should extend into the intervals of thirds, fourths and fifths. Work on the scales, chords, interrupted scales and returning scales in five and six sharps and flats, as well as chromatic scales and diminished chords should be in progress. Keys of four sharps and four flats should now be well routined.

Hite, David  
*Melodious and Progressive Studies, Book 2*  
Contents: (See level III)  
Continuing study should encompass all the Gambaro studies in advanced speeds. The Dont etudes develop dexterity in larger intervals requiring not only finger coordination, but also eye and ear coordination for tonal consistency. The expressive etudes should be analyzed so that they can be played with consummate style. The tonguing exercises strengthen the tongue and increase staccato speed and clarity, while the trill and chromatic studies promote finger dexterity.

Hite, David  
*Four Sonatas by A.M.R. Barret and Five Melodious Studies by D. Alard*  
Study of these three movement Barret Sonatas focuses on refinement of musicianship, accuracy of reading and stability of performance. Intermediate in difficulty, they can supplement the *Melodious and Progressive Studies, Book 2*, and are also appropriate for concert performance. The Alard studies provide a solid review of technique and articulation.

Rossari-Iasilli  
*53 Melodious Etudes, Book 1, No. 1-25*  
These supplementary studies develop routine, accurate reading in major and minor keys up to four sharps and four flats.

Gee, Harry  
*Progressive and Varied Etudes*  
Contents:
- Gee Misc. Studies, Scales and Etudes
- Barret 13 Etudes
- Bach, Sellner, Ferling, Koehler Misc. Etudes
- Combelle, Ferling Misc. duets

This volume broadens and varies the practice options. Scales and chords are classified and drilled, and practice routines are suggested. Jazz style etudes are introduced.

**LEVEL 4 REPERTOIRE**

FOR ALTO SAXOPHONE ALONE  
Kawarsky, J.  
*Te’ Amim*

FOR ALTO SAXOPHONE WITH PIANO  
Anderson-Leeson  
Sonata, No. 1  
Bozza-Hite  
Divertissement  
Colin-Cailliet  
Eighth Solo  
George, T.R.  
Introduction and Dance  
Von Kreisler, A.  
Two Impressions  
Leclair-Gorner-Hemke  
Sonata in G Minor

http://www.jdhite.com/study/saxophone-p.htm
A Saxophonist's Study Guide by David Hite

LEVEL 5

The student advancing through level five is seriously dedicated to the saxophone. In many high schools there is very little competition on this level. However, all-city and all-state ensembles offer unique learning and performance experiences that provide lifelong memories. College music students on this level will find new motivation by associating with capable colleagues and participating in more mature performing groups. Soloing in recitals and with ensembles brings special artistic self identity. Opportunities for professional work in the locale should be sought.

Career plans should be contemplated at this level in order to give more specific direction to immediate goals. Consideration should be given to opportunities in commercial studios, service bands and educational institutions. Professional engagements should be sought. Depending on individual interests, study of other woodwind doubles might be pursued at this point.

Subscriptions to the North American Saxophone Alliance-periodical (c/o David Lovrien, 2232 Bowie Dr., Carrollton, TX 75006) and the Saxophone Journal (P.O. Box 206, Medfield, MA 02052) provide additional insight into the saxophone world.

Technique basics
- Develop a personal performance repertoire in two categories: prepared and rehearsed solos with piano ready to be performed on short notice, and memorized solos to play with band or orchestra.
- Establish memorized daily practice routines for the maintenance of basic techniques including tonal inflection, finger control and speed, and tonguing skill.
- Organize daily practice to include a well rounded balance of mechanics, etudes and repertoire.
- Observe important support activities: selection, adjustment and maintenance of reeds; instrument care; music storage; and selection of a practice area with good acoustics, lighting, air and temperature.

Theory basics
- Understand and perform: major and minor scales in all keys in the order of the cycle of fifths or fourths and chromatic order; the
chromatic scale (over the entire range); whole tone scales; diminished scales; modal scales.
• Recognize and perform: major and minor chords, primary and secondary chords, and chord progressions; diminished, augmented, seventh and other added note chords.
• Study and recognize musical forms: aria form, sonata form, dance forms, theme and variations, jazz forms, etc. Analyze music as to form and style.
• Learn to take musical dictation, first melodic, then harmonic.

LEVEL 5 STUDY MATERIAL

Ferling-Andraud 48 Famous Studies and 3 Duo Concertants
Standard in most teaching curriculums, these studies are excellent for refinement of style and technique. To play the duets and the Trio, Op. 87, by Beethoven included in this volume, it is necessary to buy a separate book for the second part.

Rossari-Iasilli 53 Melodious Etudes, Book II, No. 26-53
Like the first volume, these etudes are excellent reading material providing the opportunity to digress from usual practice fare and to self examine accuracy and impromptu style.

LEVEL 5 REPERTOIRE

FOR SOPRANO SAXOPHONE ALONE
Kawarsky, J. Awake, North Wind

FOR ALTO SAXOPHONE WITH PIANO
Anderson, Garland Sonata, No. 2
Anderson, T.J. Sonata, No. 1
George, T.R. Suite
Knight-Leeson Sonata
Lacombe-Andraud Rigaudon
Leeson, Cecil Concertino
Leeson, Cecil Sonata, No. 1
Lunde-Leeson Sonata
Moritz-Leeson Sonata, No. 1, Opus 96
Pierne-Gee Canzonetta
Rabaud-Gee Solo de Concours
R.-Korsakoff-Leeson Flight of the Bumble Bee
Schubert-Leeson L’Abeille (The Bee)
Schumann-Hemke Three Romances
Snyder-Hemke Seven Epigrams
Tuthill-Leeson Sonata, Opus 20

FOR TENOR SAXOPHONE WITH PIANO
Devienne-Jaeckel Adagio and Rondo
Lacombe-Andraud Rigaudon
Pasquale-Hemke Sonata
Pierne-Gee Canzonetta
Sherman-Leeson Sonata
Stein-Leeson Sonata
Tuthill-Leeson Concerto, Opus 50
Tuthill-Leeson Sonata, Opus 56 (1968)
Weiner, Lawrence Etude

http://www.jdhite.com/study/saxophone-p.htm
FOR BARITONE SAXOPHONE WITH PIANO
Bach-Kasprzyk Suite, No. 1
Bach-Kasprzyk Suite, No. 3
Bach-Kasprzyk Suite, No. 4

A Saxophonist's Study Guide by David Hite

LEVEL 6

At level six a commitment to continuous refinement of artistic style and tone should be made. Career plans may be leading to the field of education in either the public schools or college level, or to self-employment as a performing musician and private teacher.

On this level it is important to broaden personal tastes in music - not only music for saxophone, but also music for other woodwinds, brass, strings, keyboard, voice and ensembles. General music education should encompass the study of both classical and jazz history, theory, conducting and education.

In metropolitan areas various professional playing opportunities can be obtained through local music contractors. The musicians' union paper announces auditions for open positions.

**Technique basics**
- Continue to develop, refine and routine musicianship. The inspired, ambitious college student will want to give frequent recitals, not just the required one(s).
- Participate in as many different performance groups as possible. Private practice is essential but ensemble skills can only develop by playing with other musicians.
- Continue to search for the very best playing equipment (instrument, mouthpiece, reeds and ligatures).
- Expand memorized repertoire.

**Theory basics**
- Extend harmonic vocabulary to include secondary chords and their relationship to key. Recognize them in performance music.
- Recognize and understand modulation.
- Continue to improve dictation and sightsinging abilities.

http://www.jdhite.com/study/saxophone-p.htm
LEVEL 6 STUDY MATERIAL

Hite, David

_**Foundation Studies**_

Contents: Baermann Method, Part III

These studies may now be used as a daily warm-up or as a test for new reeds. Use them for maintaining the sharpness of basic technique. They can be employed in making small embouchure changes or developing flexibility or endurance. These Baermann studies are an excellent place to learn to refine mobility over large intervals and legato flow at all dynamics.

Devienne-Andraud

_Six Sonatas_

These sonatas provide excellent material for reading fluency in the classic style.

Karg-Elert-Lerner

_Twenty-Five Caprices_

Through these Caprices (plus an atonal sonata), the composer attempted to raise the level of musical expression of the saxophone above the limited scope of the time, 1915-1929. Each Caprice is a different dance form. The harmonic vocabulary is advanced, relating to all major and minor keys and various modes. This quality material is well worth study, analysis and practice.

Parisi-Iasilli

_40 Technical and Melodious Studies, Bk II_

These etudes explore the virtuosic spectrum of technique in mid-nineteenth century style. They offer a challenge that can be met with a variety of objectives: reading fluency at an advanced level; effective review of nineteenth century style; maintenance of articulate sharpness.

LEVEL 6 REPERTOIRE

FOR ALTO SAXOPHONE WITH PIANO

Anderson, Garland  
Beall, John  
Cho, Gene J.  
Demersseman-Hemke  
Karlns, M. William  
Mason, Thom David  
Moritz, Edvard  
Raphling, Sam  
Thornton, William  
Weinberger, Jaromir

_Adagio_  
_Sonata_  
_Sonata, 1971_  
_Le Carnaval de Venise_  
_Music for Alto Saxophone and Piano (utilizes expanded pitch range)_  
_Canzone da Sonar, 1974_  
_Sonata, No. 2, Opus 103_  
_Sonata, No. 1, 1945_  
_Sonata, 1987_  
_Concerto, 1940_

FOR TENOR SAXOPHONE WITH PIANO

Karlns, M. William

_Music for Tenor Saxophone and Piano_

FOR BARITONE SAXOPHONE WITH PIANO

Anderson, Garland

_Sonata, Opus 6_

FOR ALTO SAXOPHONE WITH BRASS QUINTET

Tull, Fisher

_Concerto da Camera_

http://www.jdhite.com/study/saxophone-p.htm
LEVEL 7

Formal study of the saxophone culminates at this level. Special interests such as contemporary styles, artistic study abroad or special research are possibilities at this point.

Some career objectives may have specific prerequisites. For example, teaching at the college level requires graduate study. Graduate assistantships with a modest stipend can provide experience in teaching undergraduate students while pursuing a graduate degree tuition-free. A secondary specialty field such as music history, theory or conducting is often useful. Many small to medium size college teaching situations offer the opportunity to combine self-generated sources of income such as teaching, playing, contracting and recording.

Professional performance experience is generally required for the top college positions. Universities that offer graduate degrees usually require that their faculty members have doctoral degrees in addition to an artistic performance background. After settling into a performing or teaching position and gaining recognition, clinician-soloist engagements may be pursued to enrich basic employment.

LEVEL 7 REPERTOIRE

Creston, Paul
Creston, Paul
Debussy, Claude
Glazunov, Alexander
Ibert, Jacque
Milhaud, Darius
Wilder, Alec

Concerto
Sonata, Opus 19
Rhapsody
Concerto in Eb
Concertino da Camera
Scaramouche Suite
Sonata

http://www.jdhite.com/study/saxophone-p.htm
Advanced Saxophone Repertoire

Saxophone and Piano
Albright: Sonata
Bach/Mule: Sonata No. 4
Bach/Mule: Sonata No. 6
Bassett: Music for Saxophone
Bocolm: Lilith
Bonneau: Suite
Bozza: Aria; Concertino; Pulcinella
Creston: Concerto; Rhapsodie; Sonata; Suite
Dahl: Concerto
Descenclos: Prelude, Cadence et Finale
Debussy: Rhapsody
Dennisov: Sonata; Two Pieces
Dubois: Circus Parade; Sonata
Eccles/Rascher: Sonata
Fiocco: Allegro
Glazunov: Concerto
Handel/Mule: Sonata No. 2
Handel/Rascher: Sonata No. 3
Hartley: Poem (tenor)
Hindemith: Concertpiece (2 saxophones); Sonata
Husa: Concerto
Ibert: Concertino da Camera; Histoires
Leclair/Mule: Adagio, Allemande et Gigue; Sonata in D
Lennon: Concerto; Distances Within Me
Martin: Ballade (tenor)
Maurice: Tableaux de Provence
Milhaud: Scaramouche
Muczynski: Concerto; Sonata
Pascal: Sonatine
Rogers: Nature of this Whirling Wheel
Rorem: Picnic on the Marne
Tcherepnine: Sonatine Sportiv
Tomasi: Concerto
Whitney: Rumba
Wuorinen: Divertimento
Villa-Lobos: Fantasia (soprano)

Solo Collections: Saxophone and Piano
Debussy/Rae: Saxophone Album
Rascher: The Rascher Collection
Teal: Program Solos; Solos for the Saxophone Player

Unaccompanied Saxophone
Bach/Londeix: Suite No. 1
Bach/Rascher: Suite No. 3
Berio: Sequenza IXb
Bonneau: Caprice en Forme de Valse
Bozza: Improvisation et Caprice; Piece Breve
Lauba: Steady Study on the Boogie; Hard
Noda: Improvisations I, II, III
Persichetti: Parable
Rolin: Aphorismes
Tanada: Mysterious Morning

Etudes/Studies/Methods
Andersen: 18 Petites Etudes
Bassi: 27 Virtuoso Studies
Berbiguer: 18 Etudes (flute)
Bozza: 12 Etudes-Caprices
Cappelle: 20 Grand Etudes
Cavallini: 30 Caprices
Dorn: Multiphonics
Felting: 48 Famous Studies (pub. Southern)
Filas: 90 Top Register Studies; 56 Top Register Studies (flute)
Gatti: Studies on Major/Minor Scales
Higgins/Allen: High Notes for the Saxophone
Karg-Elert: 24 Etudes
Klose: 25 Daily Studies
Labanchi: 33 Concert Etudes
Leonard: Extended Techniques
Londeix: Les Gammes
Mule: 53 Etudes after Terschak; Etudes after Soussman
Nash: Studies in High Harmonics
Rascher: 24 Intermezzi; Top Tones
Rousseau: The Altissimo Register
Sinta: Voicing
Small: 27 Melodious and Rhythmical Exercises
Teal: High Notes
Voxman: Selected Studies

Jazz Studies
Bower: Bop Duets
Coker: Patterns for Jazz
Nelson: Patterns for Improvisation
Niehaus: Jazz Conception for Saxophone
Advanced Saxophone Repertoire

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- Albright: Sonata
- Bach/Mule: Sonata No. 4
- Bach/Mule: Sonata No. 6
- Bassett: Music for Saxophone
- Bolcom: Lilith
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- Debussy: Rhapsody
- Dennisov: Sonata; Two Pieces
- Dubois: Circus Parade; Sonata
- Eccles/Rascher: Sonata
- Fiocco: Allegro
- Glazunov: Concerto
- Handel/Mule: Sonata No. 2
- Handel/Rascher: Sonata No. 3
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- Hindemith: Concertpiece (2 saxophones);
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- Husa: Concerto
- Ibert: Concertino da Camera; Histoires
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- Rogers: Nature of this Whirling Wheel
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- Londeix: Les Gammes
- Mule: 53 Etudes after Terschak; Etudes after
  Soussman
- Nash: Studies in High Harmonics
- Rascher: 24 Intermezzi; Top Tones
- Rousseau: The Altrissimo Register
- Sinta: Voicing
- Small: 27 Melodious and Rhythmical
  Exercises
- Teal: High Notes
- Voxman: Selected Studies

**Jazz Studies**
- Bower: Bop Duets
- Coker: Patterns for Jazz
- Nelson: Patterns for Improvisation
- Niehaus: Jazz Conception for Saxophone
Notes on Notes

Melodious and Progressive Studies
Books 1 and 2 for saxophone

edited by David Hite
published by Southern Music Co.

Looking for study materials to follow beginning method books ... for the young saxophonist's second or third year of playing? Perhaps you want to refine or expand your basic tonal skills and need some easy but musically valid phrases to turn. Maybe you need some etudes that are not terribly difficult to help you get back in shape if you've been away from the sax for awhile. Take a look at the two volumes of the Melodious and Progressive Studies.

Melodious and Progressive Studies (MAPS, for short), Book 1 provides the intermediate student a perfect challenge for continued development of his musical and technical pursuits. Not only are these classic woodwind studies a joy to practice and learn, they are a pleasure for the teacher as well. Written in the nineteenth century European diatonic style, these etudes will help players develop proficiency in keys up to four sharps and flats, rhythmic fluency in all the basic meters, and basic articulation skills.

These studies can be used effectively on a great variety of levels. After the student has mastered them for rhythmic and reading accuracy, additional work can be effective in guiding the student's awareness of and ability to play with style, expression and rhythmic inflection.

For more advanced students who may want to make some basic changes to refine their tone -- making embouchure changes, for example, and incorporating advanced techniques in breathing -- it is wise to simplify the study materials. Attention can then be focused more fully on stabilizing the newfound techniques rather than on other difficulties of the music at hand.

Many fine college saxophone professors incorporate this book during the first semester while making the needed corrections to a student's basics: tone, finger movement, articulation, rhythmic precision. Learning to do the simple basics really
well while strengthening muscular reflexes can be very tedious. This material can help do the job!

While refining the slower Nocentini and Baermann etudes of Book 1, it is well to begin practicing the up-tempo Gambaro studies in Book 2 for finger and tongue dexterity. The key signatures of these etudes stay within three sharps and three flats so that these scale and chord patterns can be totally mastered.

The Don't studies, originally for violin, challenge the student to develop not only greater finger coordination, but also the ability to maintain their best sound while connecting notes of more extended jumps in pitch.

Additional studies concentrating in specialized areas - tongue, speed, chromatics, trills, etc. - can be approached as needed.
*Impractical. Impossible at high speed.

- Trill Key.
- Both keys together.
- Alternate, using same finger.

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**Saxophone**

**ASSEMBLY**

1. TAKE THE MOUTHPIECE IN THE LEFT HAND AND THE NECKPIPE IN THE RIGHT HAND. JOIN THEM TOGETHER WITH A GENTLE TWISTING MOTION.

2. PLACE MOUTHPIECE AND NECKPIPE IN LEFT HAND. PLACE MOIST REED ON MOUTHPIECE. HOLD IN PLACE WITH LEFT HAND. PLACE LIGATURE CAREFULLY OVER REED. TIGHTEN LIGATURE FIRMLY BUT NOT TOO TIGHTLY.

3. JOIN NECKPIPE TO SAXOPHONE BODY WITH TWISTING MOTION. AVOID DAMAGING THE OCTAVE KEY MECHANISM.

**HOLDING**

1. THE SAXOPHONE IS SUPPORTED BY THE NECK STRAP AND THE RIGHT THUMB IN THE THUMB REST.

2. HOLD SAXOPHONE AWAY FROM BODY, DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF THE BODY.

3. CURVE FINGERS TO DEPRESS KEYS.

4. MAKE SURE THAT HEAD AND NECK ARE STRAIGHT. (ADJUST NECK STRAP)

5. KEEP SHOULDERS RELAXED.
Teach this lesson without showing the music to the students. Students should concentrate on producing a good sound. Attempting to read music will distract from all that is needed to produce a good sound.

The note is sustained for a comfortable length of time. Counting is not necessary for the first note. Tell the student the name of the note after playing it. Have the student play the note again, and then have the student name the note.

Students should play the note four times in a steady count. All students not playing should count out loud with the band director.

Follow the same procedure as above.

Follow the same procedure as above.

Three blind mice. Hot cross buns.

First song. Counting rhythms is not necessary the first time. A quick accomplishment is paramount.

Mary Had a Little Lamb

ASSIGNMENT: First, hold each note, then play each note four times.
Play "Three Blind Mice."
Challenge: Who can play "Mary Had a Little Lamb" using the three notes learned today? Be positive; wish everyone a nice day.

BE ENTHUSIASTIC!
Altissimo Fingering Chart
for Eb Alto Saxophone

This fingering chart represents my preferred fingerings for altissimo notes above third-line F above the staff. The first fingering shown (left to right) is my 'first' choice fingering; however, the others may prove more efficient or responsive based on a particular passage or reed strength. Experiment. Practice this register daily in conjunction with your overtone/voicing exercises. Gradually, integrate these fingerings into your scales and rudiments as outlined in your Levels and Jury requirements. The altissimo register is no longer an option, it is a necessity for the aspiring saxophonist. Good Luck!! - T.M.

F#/Gb

G

G#/Ab

http://www2.potsdam.edu/CRANE/mcallitp/Altissimo
G#/Ab

Back to Studio Main Page
Chromatic Fingerings: Saxophone
Saxophone

- Invented around 1850 → saxhorn was also invented, but no longer survives
- Patented in 1846
- Invented by Adolfe Sax
- Made as a cross between woodwind and brass --. Wanted the woodwind qualities for agility and the brass qualities for power (French Military Bands)

Middle Ages 900-1300
Renaissance 1300-1600
Baroque 1600-1750
Classical 1750-1825
Romantic 1825-1900
20th Century 1900-

Model

Mouthpiece → Neck
Reed → Body

Types

- Eb Soprano – not used
- Bb Soprano – lines up with Clarinet (don’t teach until 9th grade)
- Eb Alto – lines up with Alto Clarinet (can teach in 5th or 6th grade)
- Bb Tenor – lines up with Bass Clarinet (can start in 5th or 6th grade)
- Eb Baritone – lines up with Contra Alto Clarinet (don’t start until 7th grade)
- Bb Bass – lines up with Contra Bass Clarinet (college if ever)
- Eb Contra Bass – not used
Ranges

Always read in treble clef

Reeds
- Beginners (2 years of playing) – ico 2 r 2 ½
- Intermediate (2-4 years) – Hemke 2 ½ or 3
- Advanced (4-6 years) – Vandoren 2 ½ or 3 (don’t play 4’s)
- Jazz – Vandoren 2 ½ or 3 (green box- Java) (black box – ZZ)

Mouthpieces
- Beginner – whatever is in the case
- Intermediate – (8th grade +) – Selmer c* ($80)
- Advanced (good highschool +) – Selmer C*
- Jazz (grade 11+) – Meyer 5 ($80)
- Tenor – Selmer D ($100)
- Bari – Selmer C** ($125)

For Tenor Sax Jazz mouthpieces, have the student ask their private teacher for their suggestion

Ligatures – Rovner (black fabric)

Models
- Beginner
  - Make sound
  - Cheap
  - Durable
    - Yamaha, Selmer - $800
- Intermediate
Vibrato

- 3 methods
  - Jaw (90% of vibrato done this way)
  - Diaphragm (flute)
  - Jaw and diaphragm (simultaneously) – don’t teach students
  - Done for stylistic purposes

Teach to kids in 7-8 grade that have played for 4 years
1. Controlled Pitch
2. Stable pitch

Teaching Vibrato to students:
1. Start with B above middle C (has stable pitch, easy to manipulate)
2. Ask the student to bend the pitch downwards repetitively (should be able to go down at least a semi-tone – eventually a whole step)
3. All exercises are at quarter = 60

- don’t move to the next exercise until the student is able
- after 5th exercise, move to unmeasured vibrato
- have students over exaggerate – it is easier to do less than more
- often in the low register vibrato is not used

2 systems of vibrato:
- French: (mechanical style)
  - No matter what they play, they always use vibrato
  - Done one speed
  - Done in one width only
- American: (vocal style)
  - Used for colour
  - Done in variable speeds
  - Done in variable widths


- Used for quarter notes and notes of more length
- Used generally for solo work, but occasionally for sax quartet
- Basically, if it sounds good, use it

Pitch Tendencies

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Alternate Fingerings

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Altissimo
- A.k.a really high notes that no one wants to hear

When do you teach it?
Wait until college
1. they have an ear
2. fingering technique
3. they won't mess around
4. when they are playing literature that requires it
Start in jr. high/high school
1. they aren't afraid
2. they make bad sounds anyways
3. they'll be ready for future use
4. it's the next step in learning

Overtone series

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Note:
Fingering as:

Front Fingerings

(Handed as note in parenthesis) + front lever

Embouchure

- classical – controlled, not tight
- jazz – more flexible (manipulate jaw) – lower jaw to produce breathy “sub force”

Sound Production

- inhale
- place top teeth on mouthpiece
- set embouchure
- close reed with tongue
- create air pressure behind reed
- remove tongue
- sustain steady tongue
- thinking ooh/ahh produces open throat and produces warm resonant tone
- breathe in rhythm
- keep top teeth on mouthpiece and bottom lip on reed while breathing
- tah and dah for clean articulation

**Rule to Remember**

1. Pitch is more easily lowered than raised
2. Notes with longer tube length/more closed keys are less flexible
3. High register is more flexible than the low register

**Tuning**

1. Lip adjustment
2. Changing shape of oral cavity (voicing)
3. Airspeed
4. Alternate fingerings
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**REED COMPARISON INDEX**

**TABLEAU SYNOPTIQUE DE COMPARAISON**

- Traditional: 1
- Rico 56 USA: 1.5
- Rico Royal: 2
- V16: 2.5
- Jazz: 3
- Rico Jazz Select: 3.5
- La Voz: 4

Additional notes:
- 2.5: 4
- 3: 4.5
- 3.5: 4.5
- 4: 4.5
- 4.5: 5

Specifics:
- Rico 56 USA: 3, 3.5
- Rico Royal: 3.5, 4
- Rico Jazz Select: 4, 4.5
- La Voz: 4, 4.5
The Different Parts of a Reed

- The top of the reed is thicker.
- The bottom of the reed is thinner.

Enlarged View

- The tip is shorter than the bottom.
- The reed is thicker at the tip.

The Differences of Cut of Vandoren Saxophone Reeds
The Different Parts of a Reed

- Facing (part in contact with the mouthpiece)
- Vamp
- Heel
- Scoring the bark for the Traditional reed only
- More rounded shape at the tip of the V/16 and the 22 reeds
- Different bevelling of the four reeds

Selected cane is cut into small pieces.

Cane tube is then divided into four pieces.

The quarters are cut to standard size.

The reed is sanded to produce a uniform surface.

The reed is cut to a conical shape.

A rough cut is performed to begin the shaping process.

The bark of the whole tip is removed.

Final shaping ends the cutting process.

The tip is cut to exacting standards.

Vandoren signature is stamped.

After strength testing and final cutting, the reed is stamped.

Each reed is packaged in its own protective sleeve.

Reeds are packed in boxes of 10.

Boxes are wrapped in cellophane to protect the reeds from moisture.

A convenient 50 reed pack is available with protective cellophane.

View 3D diagrams of the reeds
Traditional
Traditionnelle
### TABLE D'ÉQUIVALENCE DES BECS DE SAXOPHONE

**SAXOPHONE MOUTHPIECE COMPARISON INDEX**

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#### ALTO - Classique et Jazz

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Nouveautés
New products
Becs Vandoren conseillés pour le classique
Vandoren mouthpieces recommended for classic
Becs Vandoren conseillés pour le jazz et jazz fusion
Vandoren mouthpieces recommended for jazz and fusion
# Bass Clarinet Mouthpiece Chart

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# Eb Soprano Clarinet Mouthpiece Chart

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Tip openings in thousandths (.001) of an inch. For comparison purposes only. Individual mouthpiece openings may vary.
| Soprano Mouthpiece Facing Chart |

*Tip openings in thousandths (.001) of an inch. For comparison purposes only. Individual mouthpiece openings may vary.*
Now sing (DON'T PLAY!) the fourth tone of this scale. If necessary, begin to sing on C and sing step by step to the fourth tone of the scale. Be certain that you sing exactly the fourth tone in THAT octave. (This is not within the normal voice range for men, but it is quite easy to produce this tone with "falsetto" voice.) When this fourth tone of the C scale has been sung, finger (again, DON'T PLAY!) low Bb. Now, without any change of the finger position (no octave key please!) sound on the saxophone the tone you just sang. For best results don't force; the tone will come quite easily. It might be necessary to select our tone from several tones, offering themselves. But this selection will not be difficult if our aim, that is, the tone we sang, was then and still is clear in our mind. Remember: it is the mind, that gives the order; diaphragm, embouchure, etc. will carry it out only when and if it is clearly given. The activity of the mind must precede that of our bodily organs.

We have just produced the third partial (the fourth tone in the C scale, i.e., middle F) on the fundamental (finger position) low Bb. The following exercises will serve to develop great facility in this endeavor. Whole notes indicate the tones to be produced. Where they appear above a black note or a horizontal line (below the staff), they are played as overtones. Black notes indicate only finger positions, not pitch. They represent the fundamentals on which the overtones are built.

Accurate intonation is of extreme importance. Always compare a harmonic within the normal range with the same tone, produced with the usual fingering, and control with octaves and fifths. The pitch of harmonics above the normal range should be compared with the pitch of the octave and fifth below the aimed-for tone. Begin each tone smoothly. Tongue release as well as air-stream release should be practiced.

Now I hear someone ask, "Can these exercises be played at all? Are they possible? Why must I waste my time on such childish stuff?" All are well-known bursts of anguish. But even for a student who does not aim to play a single tone above "top" F, there is no better single exercise to develop tone production and intonation than the playing of a few overtones each day. As said above, this corresponds to the lip slur on a brass instrument.
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**Soprano Mouthpiece Facing Chart**

Tip openings in thousandths (.001) of an inch. For comparison purposes only. Individual mouthpiece openings may vary.
# TABLE D'ÉQUIVALENCE DES BECS DE SAXOPHONE

## SAXOPHONE MOUTHPIECE COMPARISON INDEX

### SOPRANO - Classique et Jazz

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**Nouveautés**

- Becs Vandoren conseillés pour le classique
- Becs Vandoren conseillés pour le jazz et jazz fusion
There are many frequently used alternate fingerings on the saxophone. It is best to teach these as you teach the standard fingerings.

Insist on correct hand position so that the right hand does not inadvertently open the side keys. When side keys are necessary, the student should use the side of the index finger or the side of the palm where the index finger connects. It is important for the student to try to manipulate these keys without taking the right hand too far away from its standard position.

Third-space C (usually played with the middle finger of the left hand) can be substituted with index finger (B) and the second side key of the right hand. This is also used as a chromatic fingering.

It is helpful for students to know and use the most common fingerings for B-flat. The B key together with the bis provides a B-flat which is usually very well in tune and is comfortable to use in most instances. A with the side B-flat key is often used in chromatic passages, particularly when the music calls for legato articulation. This is also a good trill when the music moves from A to B-flat. B with the F key of the right hand is usually used when the B-flat is either preceded or followed by an F. B with the E (F-sharp) key of the right hand is used when the B-flat is either preceded or followed by a G-flat.
• The two most common F-sharp fingerings are G with the middle finger of the right hand (E or F-sharp key) or F with the fork F-sharp key. The forked fingering is usually used in chromatic passages and F to G-flat trills.

• Some saxophones have an extra key on the body of the instrument which is specifically used for high F-sharp (above the staff). Some advanced saxophone literature calls for the use of this note and the extra key enables the player to execute the note without having to resort to altissimo fingerings.

• The two most common fingerings for high F above the staff are the octave key with all three left hand palm keys and the top right hand side key, or the high C fingering plus the key above the B key in the left hand (this second fingering choice is used primarily in arpeggiated passages).

• Palm key high E-flat without the octave key can sometimes substitute for fourth line D. This is highly dependent upon the pitch tendencies of the particular instrument and the player’s ability to adjust intonation.

• Using the right hand keys to “cover” or close the open hole keys when playing open third space C-sharp can help to adjust pitch and also darken the tone.

• Some baritone saxophones are equipped with a low A key which allows the saxophone to extend a half step below its normal range.

• The upper range of the saxophone can be extended by using altissimo fingerings coupled with advanced embouchure and air stream techniques. The altissimo should be attempted only by advanced students who have a firm foundation in the fundamentals of playing.

• Be sure that students always trill UP from the written note (never down) understanding the principles of trilling within the key and using trill accidentals. It helps to have the trill fingerings available at all times. (See appendix p.75)
**Trouble Shooting**

**Problem in bold**
- Correction in italics

**Neck will not fit on main body easily.**
- Tenon bent. Don’t force it.
- Twist together gently, but do not wiggle side-to-side as this will loosen the connection.
- Be sure that the tenon is clean and fits snugly into the receiver.

**Key is stuck open or closed.**
- The rod may be bent. First try loosening the screw which holds the rod. If this does not help, the instrument may need to be fixed professionally.

**The fingering has changed but the note sounds the same.**
- A spring has popped out of place. Fix it by pushing the spring back into place with a small screwdriver or spring hook.
- Check the inside of the saxophone for foreign objects which may be obstructing the air flow.

**Keys are wobbly.**
- Tighten the screws that hold the rod in place.
- A spring may have popped out of place. Fix it by pushing the spring back into place with a small screwdriver or spring hook.

**Key will not close all the way.**
- Check bumper corks to be sure they are providing the necessary lift or cushion to seal the pad.
- An adjustment screw may need to be repositioned.
- A flat spring may have become dislodged or its connecting screw may have become loose. Replace spring or tighten screw.
- Check tone holes for foreign objects which may be inhibiting the key.

**Screws keep coming out.**
- Use a drop of clear fingernail polish on the screw head.
- Place a strand of hair under the screw and tighten it.
- Excess oil may have accumulated on the screw or rod. Remove, clean, and replace.
- Screw or receiver may be stripped. Take to competent repair person.

**Some notes are difficult to produce.**
- Pads may be worn. Check pads for seating and leaking. Reset or replace if necessary.
- Springs may be bent. Gently bend back into position.
- Adjustment screws could need tightening or loosening.
- Check that all side, table and palm keys are closed as they sometimes open due to spring problems encountered in storage.
- Check bumper cork placement as they can become dislodged and create problems.
- Check neck cork. Replace if worn or cracked.

**Notes speak in upper register but not in lower register.**
- Student may be biting on the mouthpiece. Remind the player to drop the jaw and open the oral cavity. It also helps to think of blowing the air in a downward direction.
- Check for leak.
- Octave mechanism may be stuck open or leaking. First, check the position of the neck on the body to be sure that the octave mechanism is in its proper position. If not, adjust. Then, check the pad in the octave key on the neck. Replace if it appears worn or is missing.

**Saxophone will not produce more than one or two notes.**
- Check palm, table, and side keys. They may be stuck in an open or closed position.
- Check the instrument for any foreign object which may be lodged inside.

**Thin sound, “nanny-goat” vibrato.**
- Tight throat. Fix through opening throat with “polite” yawn with lips closed and dropping jaw.

**Sound is airy.**
- Remind student to blow through the entire length of the instrument and keep a focused air stream.
- Check embouchure to be sure it is firm and not leaking air through the corners of the mouth.
- Check to see if reed is chipped, too soft, too hard, waterlogged, or warped.

**Sound is “stuffy”**
- More air support is needed.
- The reed may be too stiff. Try a lower numbered reed.
- The reed may be old, warped or have lipstick, lip balm, or other residue on it. Replace the reed.
- The reed tip may be below the tip of the mouthpiece. Remove reed and reset it on the mouthpiece.

**Sound is “foggy”**
- There is too much lower lip in the mouth. Reset the embouchure and insert more mouthpiece into the mouth.

**Student is “scooping” the pitches.**
- The jaw is moving while tonguing or moving between notes. Set the embouchure and the air behind the tongue before starting the note.
- The tongue could be moving too far away from the reed after the initial attack. Try to have student articulate the “EEE” sound to improve this.

**Tone quality and intonation problems.**
- These concerns are usually associated with a problem reed, reed placement on the mouthpiece, poor embouchure or breath support, or incorrect body posture. See the sections above for solutions.

**No sound.**
- The reed is too soft and is closing against the mouthpiece.
- The reed is far too hard and the student is unable to make it vibrate against the mouthpiece.
- The embouchure is too firm, inhibiting reed vibration.
- The embouchure is too relaxed, causing the air stream to spread so that the reed fails to vibrate.
- Too little mouthpiece is being taken into the mouth by the student.
- A foreign object is lodged inside the body of the instrument.

**Upper notes are sharp, lower notes flat.**
- Student is pinching the reed and not blowing through the entire length of the instrument in the upper register.
- Student may be compensating for a leak in the instrument by dropping the jaw in the lower register.

**Upper notes are flat.**
- Air support is weak.
- Key height may need adjusting.
Difficulty in moving from high note to low note with the same basic fingering.

- Octave key is not closing completely. Check position of neck on body of saxophone.
- There may be some main body key leaks.
- Student may need to drop jaw more when moving to the lower note.

Reed is warped.

- After soaking it in the mouth, take thumb and hold tip of reed on the flat part of the mouthpiece to eliminate warping. Depress the reed on both sides.

G-sharp will not sound.

- The key is probably stuck shut. Gently lift it open with the fingers.

CARE AND MAINTENANCE

While many of these items are common sense, it is easy to forget to explain this important part of instrument use to students. Classes must also be provided with ample time for proper cleaning and storage of instruments. Here are a few items specific to the saxophone that students should know.

- Swab the main body of the saxophone after each use with a soft, clean cloth attached to a line with a weight on one end. Remove the neck and place in the case for a moment. Take the weight and drop it down through the bell of the saxophone. Tip the instrument upside down so that the weight falls out through the small end of the instrument (the neck receiver end). Gently pull the weight and line with the attached cloth through the saxophone body. Repeat this process. It is important that the cloth is big enough to clean all portions of the inside of the saxophone, yet not so big as to become stuck in the smaller end. Also, be sure that the line is longer than the length of the instrument.

- Some students use a pad saver. This fuzzy device is placed inside the body of the saxophone where it will remain during storage. Moisture is absorbed into the pad saver and away from the body of the saxophone. Some teachers feel as though this device does not allow the interior of the instrument to dry while others feel quite confident that it works very well. Pad savers also act as the saxophone end plug, protecting the rod which connects the octave mechanism. If a pad saver is not used, the student should use an end plug when storing the saxophone.

- Use a soft cloth to wipe off the keys and the main body after each use. Students must be made aware that the instrument must not become wet. Younger students may attempt to wash the instrument if they are not aware of this.

- Occasionally it is a good idea to clean out the neck of the saxophone. A good device for this is a neck brush, a cleaning brush which is attached to a tightly woven cable. Simply insert the brush into one end of the neck and swab.

- The mouthpiece of the saxophone requires daily cleaning. It can be wiped out with a soft, clean cloth in order to remove moisture and dirt particles. The mouthpiece should also be washed from time to time. Using a very mild soap and lukewarm water, the mouthpiece should be scrubbed thoroughly, using a soft cloth. Rinse the mouthpiece and allow it to dry completely prior to storage.

Saxophone

- A small amount of alcohol on a cotton swab may be used to clean the saxophone body where dirt and dust accumulate between tone holes and around springs.

- Store all saxophone supplies and accessories in the appropriate section of the case. These items include cork grease, cleaning swab, superfine sandpaper, mouthpiece and mouthpiece cap, neckstrap, reeds and reed guards.

- Be sure that the neck tenon is clean and fits snugly into the receiver of the main body of the saxophone. The receiver should be clean as well.

- Pulling a dollar bill across the pads with the keys lightly closed, or a very small amount of alcohol on a cotton swab wiped over a pad can help cure a problem with sticking keys.

- Oil the keys once a month. If this is neglected the friction causes the rods to wear down making the keys rattle and seem loose. Just one drop of key oil placed where the rod connects to the rod post is sufficient.

- When assembling, twist the neck onto the body of the saxophone in a gentle, back and forth manner, never going completely around. Avoid wiggling from side-to-side as this will loosen the connection.

- Avoid playing after eating, drinking or chewing gum. Food particles and residue can accumulate on the pads and inside the instrument and mouthpiece causing pads to wear and bacteria to grow.

- Younger students should not attempt to adjust the screws or bend keys.

- Handle the saxophone carefully when laying it down to rest. Never let a saxophone rest on the floor.

- Check bumper corks and felts as they can become dislodged and create problems.

- Never store anything in the saxophone case that could possibly bend a key when the case is closed.

- Reeds should never be left on the mouthpiece when the instrument is being stored. Always remove the reed and place into a reed guard. Reed guards are relatively inexpensive and can prolong the life of the reed. It forces the reed to lay flat, inhibiting warping. It also allows the reed to dry evenly. It is advisable that each student have at least three playable reeds at all times.

- Use superfine sandpaper to carefully remove lip residue which may accumulate on the reed.

- Check the saxophone case occasionally. Be sure that the latches are working. When latches fail, the instrument can tumble out and be severely damaged. Check the handle of the case to make sure that it is not worn. Vacuum or brush the interior of the case every few months to remove debris.

- Examine pads periodically and replace when they become worn. Reheat the key cup and reseat pads when they are loose.

- Using a mouthpiece cap will protect the mouthpiece from damage while it is being stored inside of the case. It also acts to protect the reed and mouthpiece when the instrument is being used but is at rest.

- The length of the key rods on the saxophone make them particularly vulnerable to bending. Handle with care.
Each instrument has its own idiosyncrasies with regard to frequently seen repair problems. Many costly repairs can be avoided with proper care and careful usage. Some repairs can also be made by the director or student.

- Check springs first when a saxophone malfunctions. Push a dislodged spring back into place with a small screwdriver or a spring hook.

- The F key (right hand index finger) commonly leaks since it works in tandem with other keys. Most saxophones have an adjustment screw near this key which can be turned to fix the leak.

- Sometimes a gentle bending of a key is needed to accomplish a repair. This should be done very slowly by an experienced person, never a beginning student. It is often advisable to remove the key from the instrument before attempting to bend it. If pliers are needed, wrap the key in a towel or a soft cloth before applying pliers to avoid scratching the key. Be sure that the pliers are smooth and have no teeth.

- A loose key rod will cause many notes to malfunction. Check the alignment and tighten. In some instances, the rod may need to be loosened before proceeding with a repair.

- If a screw keeps coming out it may be that the threads are stripped. It may help to place a hair in the hole before tightening the screw. This will often provide enough of a filler to allow the screw to tighten. Avoid over-tightening the screws as this may cause stripping. Additionally, be sure that the threads of the screw match the threads of the receiver. Forcing a screw into a place where it does not belong will strip the threads.

- Emergency repairs to a right hand side key that remains open can be made by keeping it closed by applying the pressure of a rubber band wrapped around the body of the instrument and the key. Remove the rubber band immediately after use as it will leave a mark on the instrument. Check the spring and adjust or replace.

- Sticky pads can be temporarily fixed with a very small amount of alcohol on a cotton swab.

- If a foreign object is stuck inside the main body of the saxophone, try to gently prod it out through the nearest main opening (not a tone hole) with a screwdriver which has been covered with a soft cloth or a pair of needle-nosed pliers. Push the object out, going from the smaller end of the cone to the larger end. If the object remains stuck after these efforts, send the instrument to a professional repair person.

- Should the tenon joint between the main body of the saxophone and the neck be too loose, it may result in unwanted neck movement. A temporary way to repair this problem is to wrap a piece of paper around the tenon until the two joints fit together snugly. Follow this emergency repair with professional maintenance.

- When a pad falls out of a key cup (not the type which snap in or screw in, but those which are glued), simply place the pad in the key cup and gently heat the underside of the cup with a match or lighter. Carbon will collect on the key. This is not harmful and the key can be wired clean with a soft cloth. Generally there will be enough glue left in the key cup so that when it is heated the glue will liquefy and reattach the pad. Place a soft cloth over the key and hold it shut for 30 to 60 seconds so the glue has time to harden and reseat the pad.

- At times, bumper corks may fall off the instrument. When this occurs, coat one side of the cork with a thin layer of contact cement. Do the same on the area from which the cork dropped. Allow the contact cement a few moments to dry. When dry, press the cork onto the receiving area and hold for several moments, until the contact cement seals. Since some of these bumper corks are extremely thin and therefore need to be replaced more often than some thicker corks, it is a good idea to keep pieces of thinner cork on hand rather than having to shave a thicker piece of cork. Corks of all thicknesses can be purchased from several instrument repair supply companies.

- Because of the position and size of the keys, leaks are often found in the low C, B, and B-flat keys. Be sure the mechanism is allowing the key to close completely before reseating the pad. Inspect the tone hole to make sure that it is clean and free of dents or foreign matter which might impede sealing.

- A leak light can find problems that are not immediately obvious.

- A repair kit with several sizes of screwdrivers and a magnifying glass can be of great assistance.

- Visiting your woodwind repair person and watching them fix any of the woodwind instruments is time well spent.

**OTHER INSTRUMENTS IN THE FAMILY**

The saxophone family consists of the B-flat soprano, E-flat alto, B-flat tenor, and E-flat baritone. Although the B-flat bass saxophone does exist, it is used rather infrequently as is the C-melody saxophone (a concert pitched relative of the tenor saxophone). All saxophones have the same basic fingerings and employ similar playing techniques. Most young players begin on the alto, primarily because of its size and relatively lower cost. Later, switches to the other saxophones are usually successful and are necessary to compliment any complete band program.

- All saxophone music, regardless of its sounding pitch, is written in treble clef.

- The soprano, tenor, and bass saxophones are pitched in B-flat. The soprano is written a major second above where it sounds. The tenor is written one octave plus a major second above where it sounds. The bass saxophone is written two octaves plus a major second above where it sounds.

- Sometimes a director will come across a soprano saxophone which is pitched in C. This instrument is non-transposing. This is an important point to remember when asking a saxophone player to read a B-flat part. Soprano saxophones sometimes look like a smaller version of the alto (curved), but most appear straight.

- The alto and baritone saxophones are pitched in E-flat. The alto is written a major sixth above where it sounds. The baritone is written one octave plus a major sixth above where it sounds.
To continue the discussion started by Peter Rickard in the last issue of Australian Clarinet and Saxophone, I would like to introduce Dr John Sampen, who is the Distinguished Artist Professor at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. Dr Sampen is one of America’s leading concert saxophonists and is particularly recognised as a performer of contemporary music. He has recorded with Belgian and Swiss National Radio and is represented on the Orion, Albany and Capstone record labels. In addition to contemporary literature, Sampen regularly performs traditional saxophone repertoire in recital with pianist/composer Marilyn Shrude. He holds degrees from Northwestern University and has studied with Frederick Hemke, Donald Sinta and Larry Teal. He is an active member of the North American Saxophone Alliance, of which he has held the post of President.

Prerequisites
1) Secure a mature embouchure with consistent control of traditional range and a centred tone on palm keys and front high E and F.
2) Acquire a personal knowledge of throat/tongue position and its relationship to tone and pitch.
3) Mentally prepare for a long-term learning project—security in the high register generally requires years of experience and work.

Beginnings
1) Finger front F and practice adding side Bb to secure a high F# pitch (without using high F# key). If there are problems, adjust tone/qulaity and support for high F. Always use this note as a tonal measuring guide. Most problems in the higher range can be corrected with the proper production of high E.
2) For problem solving, experiment with the following: a) tongue location (high/low or back/forward), b) arch of tongue (usually a higher arched tongue for altissimo), c) air direction (high or low), air focus.
3) Relate desired tone to pre-imagined pitch. Practice singing the tone before attempting to play.
4) Experiment with varied fingering possibilities (as shown in this list) and isolate successful choices. Gradually expand range and personal adaptations.
5) Immediately work into literature (e.g., Creston Sonata, Hartley Duo, Full Sarabande and Gigue). Prepare for initial performance failures—this range demands extreme experience and confidence.

Secondary Option
If unsuccessful at this point, start “overtone” studies (e.g., bugle calls) to help condition throat/tongue placement. Such study may also be useful for advanced students who need additional security. Studies of traditional “top tone” books may be useful (e.g., Lang Beginning Studies In The Altissimo Register, Londeix Hello Mr. Sax, Nash Studies In High Harmonics, Rascher Top-tones, Ross Altissimo Repertoire Studies, Rousseau Saxophone High Tones, Sinta Voicing).

Additional Suggestions
1) Generally a positive and optimistic attitude produces the best results. It is helpful to take an analytical approach in diagnosing the problematic conditions (e.g., when an altissimo note is missed, did it “squeak” too high or too low?) Such information helps define a throat/tongue strategy for correcting the problem.
2) Engage in short altissimo sessions, usually near the end of a practice session to help save the lip.
3) Playing along with the teacher/friend often seems to encourage successful results.
4) Never consider altissimo playing as impossible or difficult; this is a long-term learnable skill. If possible, start the learning process in high school—younger students are more adaptable to the necessary physical adaptations of the altissimo range.

Key to fingering chart
Most notations are quite obvious, but the exceptions are:

- Dr. John Sampen

The fingering chart has been adapted from Dr Sampen’s extensive list by James Nightingale. We have not included suggestions above Double High D#, but if you would like a copy of the complete list, either contact James: (email <jwnightingale@primus.com.au>) or Dr Sampen (email <jsampen@bgnet.bgsu.edu>) directly.
Possible Combinations of 1 2 3 5:

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Quarter-Tone Exercise #1 is merely a simple scale from low D to high D. A sample fingering is given for each note, but experimentation is needed to find fingerings that work best. Quarter-Tone Exercise #2 is based on a segment of the quarter-tone scale and is good for speed work.

In the diagrammed fingerings, the three circles above and below the horizontal line indicate the left- and right-hand pearl fingers. Black circles mean the key is depressed and white circles mean the key is open. Added small case letters refer to side or palm keys, capital letters refer to low note keys, and O.K. refers to the octave key. The downward arrows below some fingerings mean that the note should be lipped down to produce the correct pitch. Experiment with ranges above and below those printed. Approximate Playing Time: Exercise #1 — 2:00 at J=60; Exercise #2 — 2:50 at J=60 (with repeats).

QUARTER-TONE EXERCISE #1

Use various tempi and rhythms
...from middle to high C, up and down. Now sing (DON'T PLAY!) the fourth tone of the scale. If necessary, begin to sing on C and sing step by step to the fourth tone of the scale. Be certain to sing exactly the fourth tone in THAT octave. (This is not within the normal voice range for men, but easy to produce this tone with "falsetto" voice.) When this fourth tone of the C scale has been sung, finish (DON'T PLAY!) low B♭. Now, without any change of the finger position (no octave key please!) sound saxophone the tone you just sang. For best results don't force; the tone will come quite easily. It may be necessary to select our tone from several tones, offering themselves. But this selection will not be difficult if our aim, that is, the tone we sang, was then and still is clear in our mind. Remember: it is the mind, that gives the order; diaphragm, embouchure, etc. will carry it out only when and if it is clearly given. The activity of the mind must precede that of our bodily organs.

We have just produced the third partial (the fourth tone in the C scale, i.e., middle F) on the fundamental (finger position) low B♭. The following exercises will serve to develop great facility in this endeavor. Whole notes indicate the tones to be produced. Where they appear above a black note or a horizontal line (below the staff), they are played as overtones. Black notes indicate only finger positions, not pitch. They represent the fundamentals on which the overtones are built.

Accurate intonation is of extreme importance. Always compare a harmonic within the normal range with the same tone, produced with the usual fingering, and control with octaves and fifths. The pitch of harmonics above the normal range should be compared with the pitch of the octave and fifth below the aimed-for tone. Begin each tone smoothly. Tongue release as well as air-stream release should be practiced.

Now I hear someone ask, "Can these exercises be played at all? Are they possible? Why must I waste my time on such childish stuff?" All are well-known bursts of anguish. But even for a student who does not aim to play a single tone above "top" F, there is no better single exercise to develop tone production and intonation than the playing of a few overtones each day. As said above, this corresponds to the lip slur on a brass instrument.
Getting the right set up of mouthpiece and reed is essential to good sax playing. There are a huge variety of saxophones, mouthpieces and reeds out there, so it's well worth getting a qualified person to help you out with the right set up.

There are however some things you can check for yourself:

- The reed should be centred squarely on the mouthpiece
- The tip of the reed should be level with the tip of the mouthpiece
- You may find adjusting the ligature slightly up or down improves the air movement through the reed.

**Mouth Position**

- Draw the lower lip back over the teeth
- Rest the reed lightly on the lower lip
- Make sure the jaw muscles are relaxed
- The upper teeth rest gently on the mouthpiece - **without** biting!
| Tip openings in thousandths (.001) of an inch. For comparison only. Individual mouthpiece openings may vary slightly. |
### Soprano Saxophone Mouthpiece Chart

| Tip Opening | Blowing Resistor | DMA | McCann | Lark | Gandini | Palat | Palm | Hey | John | Jeckler | Yanagisawa | JP | 5C | 6C | 7C | 8C | 9C | 10C |
|-------------|------------------|------|--------|------|---------|-------|------|-----|------|--------|-----------|——|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| 40-41       | X                | 6    | X      | X    | X       | X     | X    | X   | X    | X      | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 42-43       |                 | X    |        | X    | X       | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 44-45       |                 |      |        | X    | X       | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 46-47       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 48-49       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 50-51       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 52-53       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 54-55       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 56-57       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 58-59       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 60-61       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 62-63       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 64-65       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 66-67       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 68-69       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 70-71       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 72-73       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |

### Alto Saxophone Mouthpiece Chart

| Tip Opening | Blowing Resistor | DMA | McCann | Lark | Gandini | Palat | Palm | Hey | John | Jeckler | Yanagisawa | JP | 5C | 6C | 7C | 8C | 9C | 10C |
|-------------|------------------|------|--------|------|---------|-------|------|-----|------|--------|-----------|——|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| 40-41       | X                | 6    | X      | X    | X       | X     | X    | X   | X    | X      | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 42-43       |                 | X    |        | X    | X       | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 44-45       |                 |      |        | X    | X       | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 46-47       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 48-49       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 50-51       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 52-53       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 54-55       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 56-57       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 58-59       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 60-61       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 62-63       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 64-65       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 66-67       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 68-69       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 70-71       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |
| 72-73       |                 |      |        |      |         | X     | X    | X   |     |        | X         |——|—— |—— |—— |—— |—— |——  |

Tip openings are in thousandths of an inch. Mouthpiece charts are for comparison purposes only. Actual tip openings may vary. Specifications are subject to change without notice.
The search for the perfect mouthpiece can be a slippery slope of indecision, uncertainty and frustration. But the reward is great when you do find the right piece. Better self expression, happier practice sessions and even more work as a musician can be yours when you are truly at peace with your mouthpiece.

Here are some suggestions that should help smooth the ride and increase your chances of success in finding the perfect mouthpiece for you.

Reeds — You should be open to experimenting with reeds any time you switch to a new mouthpiece. Don’t expect a good reed that you’ve been playing for a while on your old mouthpiece to play well on a new mouthpiece. That good old reed may not seal properly on a new mouthpiece that has a perfect table. I suggest testing new reeds on your old mouthpiece so that you know for sure that you have some good ones. Then use these new good reeds to test on the new mouthpiece that you are trying out.

Ask the manufacturer — Purchase your mouthpieces from The Woodwind & Brasswind and use their staff for suggestions but don’t be afraid to get recommendations from the manufacturer. Who can better advise you than the actual mouthpiece maker. I believe that the goal of a mouthpiece maker should be to guide you to the model and racing that will best suit you.

Close Your Eyes — When you narrow your choice of mouthpieces between a 6* and a 7* for example, or two different models which both play well, my advice is to go with your instinct rather than your intellect. In other words just close your eyes and don’t pay attention to which facing or model is which. Pick the one that instinctually feels the best.

If Joe Famous Sax Player Plays It — Celebrity endorsements can help guide you to a mouthpiece that is geared to a certain sound that you may be after. But remember having the same mouthpiece as someone else does not guarantee that you will have the same sound as they will. We all have different ways of playing and different physical makeup which is called morphology. The best thing for you is to be comfortable with a mouthpiece so that “your sound” will come out.

Good luck in your search and may the best mouthpiece, for you, win.
Blues Scales

Major Blues Scales

Chord/Scale Workout
Main points of support and contact on the saxophone are the neck and neckstrap, left thumb, right thumb, and embouchure.

When monitoring the beginners' hand position, be sure they have "skipped" the appropriate keys and are not opening or closing extra keys.

Using finger pads instead of the tips will help to assure correct hand position.

"Little" fingers should rest on top of the keys, never under them.

The size of the instrument and the player will generally dictate whether the student is able to play comfortably with the saxophone directly in front and between the legs, or to the side. Regardless of where the saxophone is played, all rules of good posture and embouchure formation apply. (refer to photos 6.06 & 6.07)

Make sure the student brings the mouthpiece to the mouth rather than reaching for it. Push forward with the right thumb until the mouthpiece is in the mouth, or adjust the neck strap.

The position of the mouthpiece should be adjusted so that the student's head is straight and level.

Sit forward and upright on the chair, keeping elbows off the knees. Some younger players have a tendency to prop the instrument with a chair or, if held to the side, try to support it with the right knee. Adjustment of the neck strap and gentle reminders from the director will help them to avoid these bad habits.

Keep the weight on the neck strap and not the fingers.

It may help to have the student stand to achieve correct neck strap position so the mouthpiece falls correctly into the mouth, then seat the student and maintain the same posture.

Keep the head up to promote better breathing, tone quality, and attention to the conductor.

Tone Production

Most musicians would agree that the production of a characteristic tone is of ultimate importance. It is therefore essential that students have appropriate models as well as expert instruction. Embouchure, breath support, and the reed are primary elements in producing a good sound, and the following ideas may be of help.

Think of an exaggerated “A” to firm the lips to the teeth, then say “U” to bring in the corners of the lips. This helps to form the embouchure and creates even pressure from the top, bottom and sides.

The completed embouchure shape looks more like an “O” than a smile.

The lip meets the reed where the reed meets the mouthpiece side rails.

The bottom lip is a cushion between the reed and the teeth. The amount of lip may vary from player to player. However, too much lower lip may result in the hindrance of reed vibration.

Too tight an embouchure creates a thin, weak sound, while an embouchure which is too loose produces a squawk.

Rest the upper teeth on the top of the mouthpiece. Wrap the lips around the mouthpiece like a rubber band or drawstring. Some even think of a wagon wheel where all of the spokes point to the center, much the way the muscles should complete a seal around the mouthpiece.

To closely approximate the correct amount of mouthpiece one should take in the mouth, the student can put a piece of paper between the reed and the mouthpiece, without forcing it in any farther than it will easily go. Mark this point on the mouthpiece with a pencil. Have the student put their thumb on the pencil mark and insert the mouthpiece into the mouth to the thumb.

The top teeth are the major points of contact with the mouthpiece. If the student practices thinking about pressure on the mouthpiece from the top down, pressure on the bottom lip should be relieved.

Drop the jaw but not the lower lip for low notes. It often helps the student to think of having a light bulb in the mouth, yawning, or eating hot potatoes to help relax the throat, open the inner chamber, and lower the tongue. It also is helpful to ask the student to blow “slow, warm air” for lower notes and “cold, fast air” for higher notes.

Think of saying “OH” in the lowest register, “AH” when producing notes in the low to middle register, and “EEE” when play-
• Energy in the air stream is created by using abdominal muscles, the same muscles used in coughing and blowing out a candle. In order to keep the air moving and focused, students are sometimes helped by being told to “spin” the air through the saxophone.

• Breathe through the mouth, not the nose. Let old air out before taking a new breath.

• Work toward increased air stream control by extending the number of seconds the note can be held with a good sound.

• Work for good support of air from the diaphragm by taking a big breath and playing a note softly, making a crescendo and decrescendo over several seconds.

• Practice making a good tone on the lowest notes possible. This tends to improve upper register tone which is often heard as thin and piercing when played by young, inexperienced players.

• “Bunching” of the chin is sometimes evidence of too much pressure from the bottom lip on the reed. The chin should look natural and flat.

• Different mouthpieces, reeds, and mouthpiece/reed combinations produce different tone qualities on the saxophone. It is essential that every saxophone student have at least three good quality reeds. Reeds can be purchased from most local band instrument dealers. Synthetic reeds have a somewhat different tone color, but are sometimes preferred for younger students as they may be easier to play and more resistant to breakage. Consult a professional saxophonist, university teacher, or trusted music dealer when choosing a “step-up” mouthpiece model or professional quality reed.

• While saxophone mutes do exist, they are rarely used in school saxophone playing. Should a piece of music require a mute (for instance, in a saxophone solo piece), a wooden curtain ring wrapped several times in a soft cloth usually works well in dampening brightness. Generally, this is not an important accessory for most school saxophonists.

• The use of a mirror to help the students visualize their embouchure progress is often very helpful. Provide a place in the music room where students can look in a mirror. Encourage them to practice in a room with a mirror at home.

• Have students play various articulations with just the mouthpiece and neck while touching one hand to the chin. This is a good way to detect unwanted chin movement while tonguing.

• Pinching the reed or biting down on the mouthpiece often cause the pitch to become sharp. This is often a player’s tendency when playing in the extreme upper register of the saxophone. Remind the student to continue to blow air through the entire length of the instrument and keep the oral cavity open.

• If the embouchure is too relaxed, the pitch will become flat.

• To raise the pitch, aim the air stream up and firm the embouchure muscles to make the oral cavity more narrow.

• To lower the pitch, aim the air stream down bringing the tongue down a little more than usual to enlarge the oral cavity.

• Pitch can be adjusted by moving the mouthpiece in or out on the neck cork. Moving the mouthpiece in will raise the pitch while moving it out will lower it.

• Use a chromatic tuner to discover and practice the best possible embouchure and breath support adjustments for each note (See Intonation Evaluation exercise in appendix on page 77).

• It is helpful to have beginners play with a more advanced player to match tone and pitch.

• Fourth line D is usually sharp. This can be adjusted by dropping the jaw, causing the oral cavity to open further.

• Third space C-sharp is usually flat. This can be adjusted by “covering” the note by depressing combinations of right hand keys, or by playing the low C-sharp with the octave key.

• When tuning the saxophone section, be aware of the pitch discrepancies between the alto or baritone saxophones and the tenor saxophones. Tune all saxophones to their low and high G (three fingers down) as this is a fairly stable note on all saxophones. Tuning the resultant octaves and open fifths will help the students become aware of intonation.

• If the intonation of the instrument is still grossly in error after several tuning techniques are used, consider taking it to a professional repair person who may adjust the height of some keys as key height will sometimes affect the intonation of an instrument.

It is difficult for any individual teacher to be familiar with all possible alternate fingerings and fingering combinations. However, it is important to recognize special fingering considerations that arise frequently in teaching.

• When checking the beginners’ hand position, be sure they have “skipped” the appropriate keys. (Refer to Photos 6.09 & 6.10)

• Keep the fingers down and close to the keys when not using them. This will facilitate better technique when the student becomes more advanced.

• Left hand palm key and table key fingerings are sometimes confusing for young players. Frequent review and referral to a fingering chart will help the student to remember these fingerings and alleviate confusion.

All instruments have their own idiosyncrasies when it comes to playing in tune. Pitch on the saxophone is easily changed when embouchure and/or breath support are altered. Students must be taught to continually listen and adjust to the pitch of the ensemble. Here are a few common solutions to problems.  

• Lack of air support and air speed cause the pitch to become flat.

• Low notes tend to be flat and high notes tend to be sharp.