

10 Steps to Improve

Your Clarinet & Saxophone Section

1. Instrument & Mouthpiece Selection

a) Instruments (Saxophone) and models:

Students:

Selmer 400/600
Selmer La Voix series:
(280R); AS 42
Yamaha 26; 480 (high F#)
Vito; Yamaha 23

Pro:

Selmer Paris series:
II (52); III (62)
Yamaha 875EX; 82Z; (62)
Yanagisawa AW10

b) Instruments (Clarinet) and models:

Students:

Buffet Premium
Buffet E12
Vito
Yamaha YCL 255
Yamaha 450 (wood)

Pro:

Buffet R-13 family
Selmer Paris:
Signature or Presence
Yamaha CSVR

c) Hard Rubber (Saxophone) - best for classical; avoid plastic "stock" mouthpieces

- Vandoren Optimum AL3
- Selmer C* (S80 or S90)
- Rousseau classical (esp. on Yamaha)
- Fobes Debut (student model)

d) Hard Rubber (Clarinet) - also avoid plastic "stock" mouthpieces"

- Vandoren- available in Traditional/Profile 88 (angle of beak) and Series 13 (440 pitch)
- Vandoren M13 Lyre, M15, M30
- D'Addario Reserve (X0, X5)
- Richard Hawkins (S, B, and R)
- Walter Grabner
- Michael Lomax

e) Metal (Saxophone) - best for jazz, yet many players still have more control with hard rubber

- Berg Larson, Dukoff, Meyer, Morgan, Otto Link

f) Mouthpiece patches

g) Wash with warm water and soap or make a solution of cold water and white vinegar- soak for 5 minutes and wipe with a soft cloth to remove calcium deposits

h) Ligatures

i) Amount of mouthpiece in mouth (see Timbre)

2. Reed Selection

a) Brands (Saxophone)

- Classical: Vandoren (traditional), Vandoren V12, D'Addario Reserve
- Jazz: Vandoren (Java, V16, ZZ); D'Addario Select Jazz
- Legere (synthetic); useful for doubling; also for marching band? beginners?

b) Brands (Clarinet)

- Vandoren V12, Vandoren (traditional), Vandoren Rue 56 Lopic, Rico Reserve Classic
- Legere (synthetic) useful for marching band and perfectly acceptable with some mouthpieces

c) Color of Cut-Reed and Bark (golden yellow)

d) "Light-Test" (balanced reed? grain running through to end of tip of reed)

e) Strength must match mouthpiece

- shorter lay and smaller tip opening requires harder strength
- longer lay and smaller tip opening also requires harder reed
- longer lay and larger tip opening requires softer strength
- medium lay is best

f) Reed & Pitch

- reed too hard may play sharp; creates a stuffy sound with hard articulations
- reed too soft may play flat; creates a bright, thin, buzzy sound

g) "Seal-Test" (reed sealing to mouthpiece table and side rails?)

h) Fix warped tips

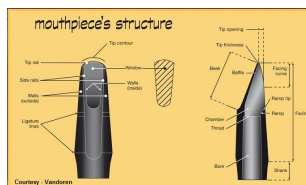
i) Keep back of reed flat; buy sandpaper (400 and 600 grade wet/dry)

j) "Quick Fix" for reeds too hard or too soft

k) Reed rotation

l) Store in reed guards

m) Ridenour ATG system- EASY way to balance tips of reeds



3. Timbre . . . identifying characteristic tone

a) Embouchure - drawstring analogy

- firm, yet relaxed
- curl lower lip slightly over teeth, and top teeth rest on top of mouthpiece
- 'paper test' for amount of mouthpiece in mouth
- Saxophone- drop and open inside mouth cavity "like holding a fragile egg in your mouth"; listen to the difference in sound quality with various shapes of mouth cavity: vowels a - e - i - o - u
- Clarinet- keep 'oo' shape on the outside, with 'ee' shape on the inside; stretch nostrils **downward** to achieve the characteristic 'flat chin'

b) Aural Models (classical and jazz)

c) Record yourself

d) Long Tones

e) Vibrato (saxophone ONLY) - when first learning practice with a metronome

f) Mouthpiece pitch (correct amount of mp, airstream, and tongue position)

Bb SSx = C Eb ASx = A Bb TSx = G Eb BSx = D

Bb clarinet = C Bb Bass clarinet = F#



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BOOK PUBLICATIONS:

1) **Teaching Instrumental Music:
Developing the Complete Band
Program** (Meredith Music, 2007)

2) **Developing the Complete Band
Program DVD** (Meredith Music, 2007)

3) **Tuning for Wind Instruments: A
Roadmap to Successful Intonation**
(Meredith Music, 2013)

4) **Intermediate Studies for
Developing Artists on the:**

a) **Flute**

b) **Oboe**

c) **Clarinet**

d) **Saxophone**

e) **Bassoon**

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4. Tongue position and oral cavity

- Saxophone
 - lower register** = lower tongue position (oh or aw)
 - higher register** = higher tongue position (ee or ih)
- Clarinet
 - higher tongue position for **all registers** (HEEEEE or EEEEEEE)

5. Air as Musical Fuel

- train** your lungs
- steady, **focused**, sustained air stream; no tension
- inhale** by dropping lower jaw vs. breathing through corners of mouth
- think "**home**" to inhale
- correct **posture** (sitting & standing)
- exhalation**: warm or cool air?

6. Articulation

- stylistic** articulation needs a steady, supported air stream
- just **behind** tip of tongue touches tip of reed; "tip of tongue to tip of reed"
- consider **speed** of tongue motion and **length** of time on reed
- developing tongue speed- practice **exercises** that include tension and release
- finger-tongue **coordination**; (practice articulation with scales with a metronome; practice articulating with air only)
- legato** (less tongue pressure; tongue stays on reed slightly longer)
- staccato** (point to beginning of sound with full resonance; end may also be pointed or with buoyancy depending on style of staccato desired)

7. Blending the Section Sound

- Know your **job** (solo, soli or tutti ensemble)
- flexibility** of tonal color
- similar **equipment** can help

8. Improving Section Intonation

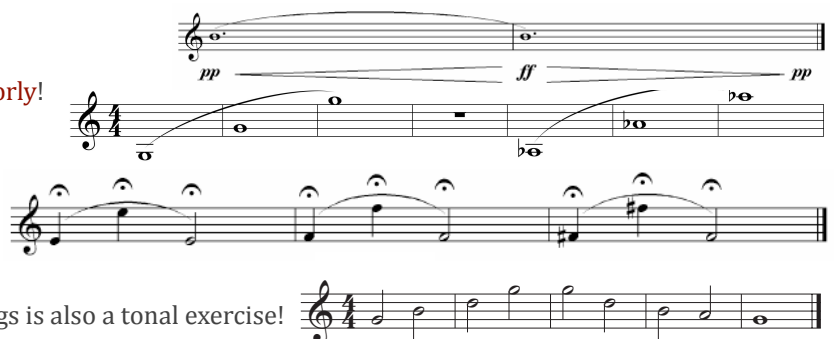
- Tuner** is your friend
- Quality **mouthpiece**
- Beatless** sound down the line; incorporate exercises into warm-up
- Mouthpiece sirens**; invest in earplugs!

9. Vibrato development (Saxophone only!)

- natural** sound (listen to vocalists and string players)
- develop **mature** tone before beginning vibrato
- "wu-wu-wu-wu" at quarter note = 60; practice control in various rhythms and tempos
- goal is to produce a **spinning** vibrato that is not metrical to the pulse

10. Tonal exercises

- Saxophone is **easiest** instrument to play --- **poorly**!
- long tones**
- octave slurs** -- without changing embouchure
- Tonal exercises**
- Listening** to live concerts and quality recordings is also a tonal exercise!



Saxophone (Classical) (compiled by Shelley Jagow)	Saxophone (Jazz) (compiled by Matt Warner)	Clarinet (compiled by John Kurokawa)
1. David, Vincent 2. Delangle, Claude 3. Fourmeau, Jean-Yves 4. Goury, Jean-Michel 5. Hemke, Frederick 6. Londeix, Jean-Marie 7. McAllister, Timothy 8. Murphy, Otis 9. Rousseau, Eugene 10. Sinta, Donald 11. Sugawa, Nobuya 12. Tse, Kenneth	1. Adderley, Cannonball 2. Brecker, Michael 3. Coltrane, John 4. Garrett, Kenny 5. Hawkins, Coleman 6. Lovano, Joe 7. Parker, Charlie 8. Rollins, Sonny 9. Sanborn, David 10. Washington, Grover 11. Woods, Phil 12. Young, Lester	1. Ardan, Laura 2. Bliss, Julian 3. Carbonare, Alessandro 4. Combs, Larry 5. Fuchs, Wenzel 6. Gigliotti, Anthony 7. Leister, Karl 8. Manasse, Jon 9. Marcellus, Robert 10. Meyer, Sabine 11. Shifrin, David 12. Wright, Harold