INSTRUMENTS OF THE SAXOPHONE FAMILY

E-flat Sopranino Saxophone

B-flat Soprano Saxophone

E-flat Alto Saxophone

B-flat Tenor Saxophone

E-flat Baritone Saxophone

B-flat Bass Saxophone

INSTRUMENTS IN THE SAXOPHONE FAMILY

Eb Sopranino Saxophone

- Sounds a minor 3rd higher than written
- Concert F is a written D
- Smallest instrument in the saxophone family
- Comes in one piece (no detachable neck)
- Keys are very close together
- The very small mouthpiece requires very small adjustments with the embouchure
- The best option for a ligature is a strip of velcro ½ inch thick
- Recommended reed strength is size 3
- Costs about $9000 ($13,000 MSRP)
- A school-owned instrument is very rare.
- Never to be used in middle school or high school; advanced undergraduate college students will have difficulty playing this instrument.
- Used in: *Feste Romane* by Ottorino Respighi as transcribed by Merlin Patterson

Bb Soprano Saxophone

- Sounds a whole step lower than written
- Concert F is a written G
- Sometimes a school-owned instrument
- Used in high school by advanced students
- Recommended reed strength is size 3.5
- Costs about $4,500 ($7,300 MSRP)
- Used in advanced Solo and Ensemble Saxophone Quartet literature (SATB as opposed to AATB)
- Almost every work written for concert band by Percy Grainger will have a soprano saxophone part.
- Many soprano saxophones will have a straight neck and a curved neck. The straight neck will produce a slightly brighter tone and the curved neck will produce a slightly darker tone.

Eb Alto Saxophone

- A student-owned instrument
- Sounds a major 6th lower than written
- Sounds one octave lower than Eb sopranino saxophone
- Concert F is a written D

- Students should begin instruction on the alto saxophone.
- Step-up instruments cost about $4000
- The alto saxophone is accepted as a part of standard concert band instrumentation.

Bb Tenor Saxophone

- A school-owned instrument
- Sounds one octave and one whole step lower than written
- Sounds one octaves below Bb soprano saxophone
- Concert F is a written G
- Should be used in middle school and high school, but not in the beginner year
- Costs about $5000
- The tenor saxophone is accepted as a part of standard concert band instrumentation, but if your ensemble does not have a tenor saxophonist, the part may be played directly on a Bb bass clarinet with no part re-writing necessary.

Eb Baritone Saxophone

- A school-owned instrument
- Sounds one octave and a major 6^{th} lower than written
- Sounds one octave lower than Eb alto saxophone
- Concert F is a written D
- Costs about $8000
- Standard instrument for middle school and high school students, but not during the beginning year
- Baritone saxophones will have the options of high F# and/or low A. The high F# is not necessary, but the low A is necessary in advanced middle school literature.
- While the part will be written in treble clef, scores will often notate the baritone saxophone part in bass clef.

Bb Bass Saxophone

- A school-owned instrument is very rare.
- Sounds one octave lower than a tenor saxophone
- Sounds two octaves and one whole step lower than written
- Concert F is a written G
- Can be used in a high school band
- Costs about $20,000
- A baritone saxophone mouthpiece will fit on a bass saxophone neck, but a bass saxophone mouthpiece with bass saxophone reeds will sound much better.
- Many Percy Grainger works have a bass saxophone part, but it is non-essential; also used in *Music for Prague* by Karel Husa

***The larger the instrument, the more susceptible they are to bent keys, bent rods and leaks.**

<u>Middle School and High School Inventory</u>

- **Tenor Saxophone**
- **Baritone Saxophone**

CHARACTERISTICS WHEN RECRUITING AND SELECTING SAXOPHONE PLAYERS

Physical Characteristics/Factors

- As the embouchure is rather simple to form correctly, many students are able to play saxophone with the exception of those that have severe underbites.
- Unlike playing flute and high brass instruments, having braces does not hinder students playing saxophone.
- It is actually acceptable to recruit students on saxophone who are double-jointed, because the size of the instrument and the strength of the key springs support the fingers more than smaller woodwind instruments.
- There are fewer physical characteristic factors when considering saxophone than most other woodwind instruments.

Non-Physical Characteristics/Factors

- The alto saxophone is the most expensive student-owned instruments; thus, use the cost to limit the class size.
- Parents need to understand that the monthly cost can be anywhere from $50-$70 per month—**excluding** the maintenance kit.
- As much as possible, avoid placing students on saxophone whose family would have problems supporting the cost of the instrument, upkeep and accessories.
- Even though it is easy to place students on saxophone, it should not be treated as a "dumping ground". Depending on the number of returning students, the goal should be to allow between **six to nine** students in your saxophone class.
- Try to have a separate class for your saxophones. If this can not happen, combine the saxophone class with your double reed class. Your double reed class will move as fast—if not faster—than your saxophone class.
- If combined with double reed students, find a private teacher or a specialist to periodically instruct your saxophone students. If a specialist cannot be found for your saxophone students, find a specialist/private teacher for your double reed students and pull those students out periodically.
- **DO NOT** combine your saxophone class with your flute or clarinet classes. Flute and clarinet classes will move much slower than your saxophone class because of the amount of time spent on the embouchure, hand position and flexibility (flute). Your saxophone students will become bored and possibly cause classroom management problems.
- The saxophone class needs to be taught in a smaller room. Not only will you be able to limit the class size to 6-9 students, but you will find it easier to dissuade pushy parents/administrators from trying to force additional students into the class. Place your

saxophone class opposite a larger class like trumpet, clarinet, or flute. Place the larger class in the band hall and the saxophone class in a smaller room.

- Allowing a student to play the tenor saxophone in a beginner class should only be allowed under extreme financial circumstances…..or with an unexpected move-in that allowed the student to play tenor saxophone at their previous school.

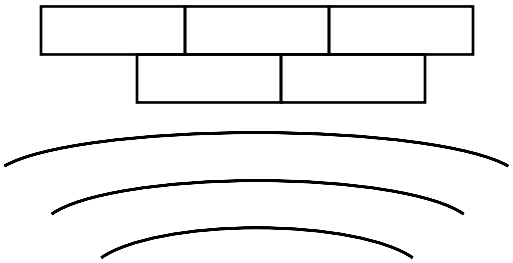
BEGINNING SAXOPHONE CLASSROOM AND ENSEMBLE SET-UP

Beginning Classroom Set-Up Considerations

1. Your beginning saxophone class should be taught in a smaller room (i.e. ensemble room or secondary band hall).
2. Configure your classroom based on how many students you have in the class.
3. Start off the semester by putting students in alphabetical order so you can learn their names faster. Once music stands and mirrors are utilized in class, hanging name tags can be used if you have not yet learned every student's name.

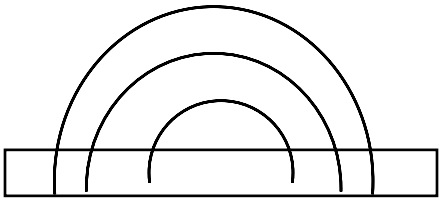
Band Hall Set-Up

1. Arched set-up



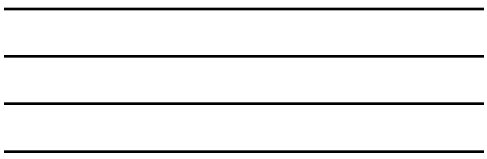
- If using your "ensemble set-up" for your class, have students sit in a "box", so everyone gets the same amount of attention/eye contact from you.
- Have students sit in every other chair (if all chairs have to remain in your set-up throughout the day).
- The aisles between your rows must be large enough so that you will have quick and easy access to any student-both from the front and the back.
- As much as possible, have students in "windows."
- You must be able to see everyone from the front. With that said, you are not always able to correct student's posture, hand position, etc. from the front of the room. Thus, you need to be walking around the room often.

2. Horseshoe set-up – not recommended. Why? You have a limited range of vision.

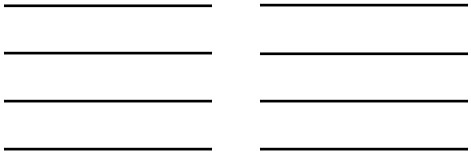


3. Arched with aisle

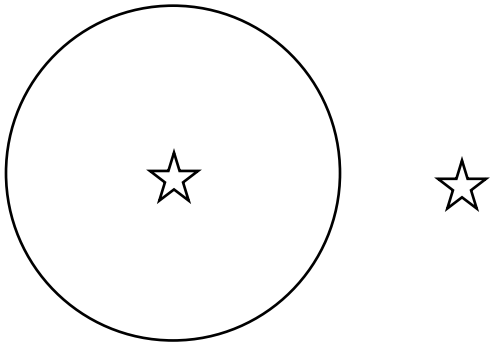
4. Straight line set-up



5. Straight line set-up with aisle

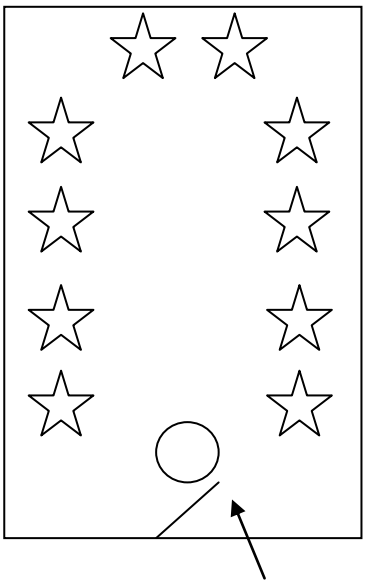


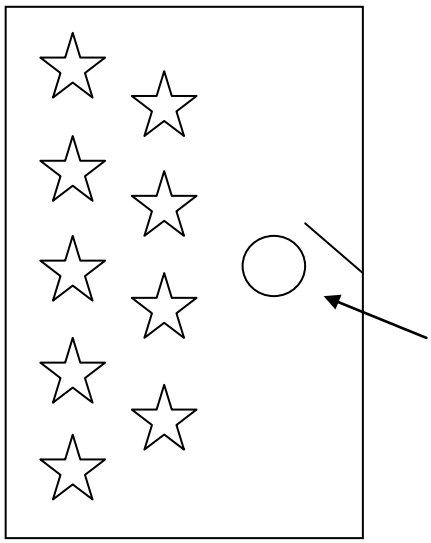
6. Circular set up – one teacher teaches from the inside and one from the periphery. Students face in towards middle.



Ensemble Room Set-Up

- Beginner Classroom set-up

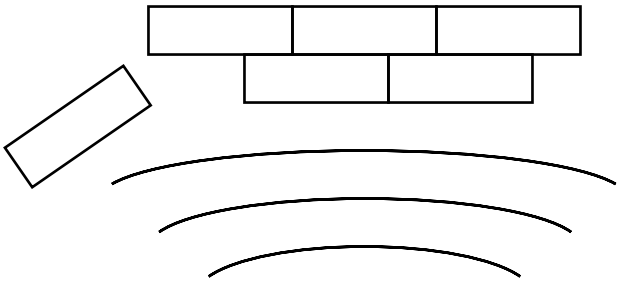




- Remember: 90% of tone holes are on the right side of the instrument

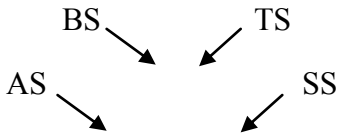
In ensemble set-up

- 1st alto saxophone player should be near 1st French horn player
- There should be a pod of low woodwinds. This is because they have similar parts in their music.



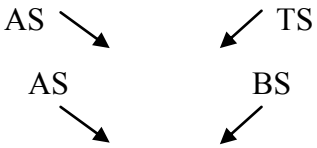
Saxophone Quartet

UH



Audience

Generic Quartet Set-up

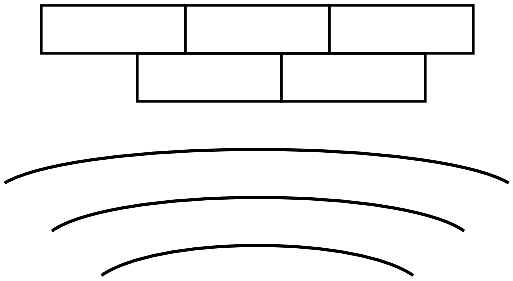


Audience

- All players should be angled in toward the audience

Full Ensemble Set-Up

1. Also saxophone players need to be in the middle of the ensemble. First chair needs to sit next to the first French horn player so they can more easily balance and match in terms of balance, pitch, etc.



RECOMMENDED SAXOPHONE BRANDS

Alto Saxophone

Beginner:

Brand: Yamaha

Model: YAS-23

Pricing:
$1,759 – (wwbw.com)
$1,812 – (musicarts.com)
Monthly Rental Price:
$49.99 – Music & Arts Center

- Rent-to-Own
- All payments go toward the instrument
- Parents can do a "trade-in" to a step-up instrument--$100 off sale price of new instrument
    - Will be encouraged to pay off instrument and use as marching saxophone

Description:

- Great beginner saxophone
- Can be used through high school
- Mid-grade construction quality (pearls tend to fall off if ill-treated) in regard to materials
- Machine-manufactured (as opposed to hand-made)
- Great for use as a marching saxophone (in better financial situations)
- No high F-sharp key

***Intermediate*:**

Brand: Yamaha

Model: YAS-475

Pricing:
$1,937 (wwbw.com, musicarts.com)
Purchase only

Description:

- Great step-up saxophone (and less expensive than the professional models)
- Gold-lacquer finish
- Great for more advanced high school students
- Good quality construction – based on the Yamaha professional models
- Machine-manufactured (as opposed to hand-made)
- High F sharp key
- Lighter weight
- Consistent/accurate tuning
- This model replaced the YAS-62

***<u>Professional</u>*:**

Brand: Selmer Paris

Model: 52 Super Action 80 Series II

Pricing:
Lacquer w/ out engraving - $4,400
Lacquer w/ engraving - $4,199
(wwbw.com, musicarts.com)
Purchase only

Description:

- Great step-up saxophone
- Yellow brass finish
- Great for advanced high school students and college students
- Good quality construction – hand made
- High F sharp key
- Heavier weight
- Richer sound

Brand: Yamaha

Model: YAS-875EX "Custom EX" (gold lacquered);
<u>not</u> EXG (gold-plated) or EXZ (Custom Z)

Pricing:
$3,490 – (wwbw.com)
$3,490 – (musicarts.com)
Purchase only

Description:

- Fantastic step-up saxophone – ***highly recommended***
- Gold-lacquer finish

- Great for advanced high school and college students
- Very good quality construction – machine made
- High F sharp key
- Lighter weight
- Very responsive
- Secondary octave key mechanism improvement – gives top of the staff G and first ledger line A more "meat" to the sound
- Improved key action for smoother playing
- Rich sound
- Very consistent/accurate tuning
- Has a darker sound

Tenor Saxophone:

Brand: Yamaha

Model: YTS-875 EX

Pricing:
$3,976 – (wwbw.com, musicarts.com)

Description:
- Good school-owned instrument
- Gold-lacquer finish
- Good quality construction – machine made
- High F-sharp key
- Responsive and smooth key action
- Consistent/accurate tuning
- Rich sound
- A heavier instrument which results in a darker, warmer tone—makes it easier to play in terms of response and resistance
- Less expensive than the Selmer models

Brand: Selmer Paris

Model: 64 Super Action 80 Series III

Pricing:
Lacquer w/ out engraving: $4,879
Lacquer w/ engraving: $5,329
Silver: $6,029
(wwbw.com, musicarts.com)

Description:

- Great school-owned instrument - ***highly recommended***
- Yellow brass finish
- Good quality construction – hand made
- High F sharp key
- 30% thinner than Series II
- Plays like Yamahas
- Beautiful sound – "plays itself"

Brand: Selmer Paris

Model: 54 Super Action 80 Series II

Pricing:
Lacquer w/ out engraving: $4,449
Lacquer w/ engraving: $4,879
(wwbw.com)

Description:

- Good school-owned instrument
- Yellow brass finish
- Good quality construction – hand made
- High F sharp key

- Heavier instrument
- Has more resistance than Series III (more difficult to get a good sound)

Baritone Saxophone:

Brand: Selmer Paris

Model: 55AF Super Action 80 Series II

Pricing:
Lacquer w/ out engraving: $6,679
Lacquer w/ engraving: $8,699
(wwbw.com, musicarts.com)

Description:
- Great school-owned instrument
- Lacquered brass
- Good quality construction – hand made
- High F-sharp key, Low A key, tilted B-flat spatula key (helps smaller hand-spread

Brands to Avoid (only in my opinion ☺)

Vito
Buscher
Bundy
King
Simba (Sam's Club)
First Act (Walmart)
Jupiter
Conn
Cannonball
Blessing
J Erich
LA Sax
P. Mauriat
Buffet

Additional Information:

- The newer Yamaha saxophones have highly improved key action, and are smoother to play and have a better "feel".
- The Yamaha saxophones tend to be more consistent instruments due to the fact that they are machine-made as opposed to hand-made.
- In general "heavier" saxophones result in warmer/darker sounds, thus making it easier to play in terms of response and resistance.
- While the Yamaha alto saxophones are highly recommended, the tenor and baritone Selmer saxophones have a very good sound quality.
- For quality reasons, if possible, avoid the *alto* saxophone Selmer Super Action 80 "Series III".
- Avoid the Selmer "Mark VI" and "Mark VII", which are no longer made, but are "out there". These models are hand-made, have a darker sound, have heavier key action and are not recommended.
- Avoid the Yamaha "Custom Z" model. This model produces a brighter sound, but has an easier lower register.
- In the Austin area, there is a large presence of Mark VI alto saxophones. These instruments were manufactured between 1958-1967 and currently cost around $6000; thus, they are obviously considered professional models. Although *some* may say this instrument has the most desirable sound quality, others would argue that point and say they are very difficult to play.

RECOMMENDED SAXOPHONE MOUTHPIECES AND LIGATURES

Alto Saxophone Mouthpieces

Brand: Vandoren Optimum
Model: AL3
Price: $109.95 (prowinds.com, wwbw.com)
Description:

- Hard rubber
- Smaller mouthpiece
- More circular chamber
- Sound is easier to control
- More responsive

Brand: Selmer
Model: C* (S-80 series)
Price: $129.99 (prowinds.com, wwbw.com)
Description:

- Hard rubber
- Larger mouthpiece
- Rectangular chamber
- Great for beginners (requires more air, which gets the air moving MORE)
- Sound not as focused—more "spitty"

Brand: Vandoren Optimum
Model: AL4
Price: $109.99 (prowinds.com, wwbw.com)

Description:

- Hard rubber
- Wider tip opening (the gap between the tip of the reed and the tip of the mouthpiece is wider—which results in less control)
- Produces louder sound
- Harder to control
- Should be used only for jazz playing

Alto Saxophone Ligatures

Brand: BG
Model: Traditional
Price:
Gold-Lacquered - $73.99
Gold-Plated – $89.95 (preferred)
(prowinds.com)
Description:

- Great ligature
- Pairs best with the Vandoren Optimum mouthpieces (but will work with any)
- Offers only two points of contact with the reed, which allows it to vibrate more freely and results in a more resonant sound
- Gold-plated preferred over gold-lacquered (vibrates better)--but is more expensive

Brand: Bonade
Model: Inverted
Price: $20 for brass (prowinds.com)
$21 for nickel (prowinds.com)

Description:

- Good ligature
- Pairs well with the Selmer C* or the Vandoren Optimum mouthpiece; however; using it with the Vandoren Optimum will not have as good of results
- Allows the reed to vibrate more freely than the "stock ligature"

Tenor Saxophone Mouthpieces

Brand: Vandoren Optimum
Model: TL3
Price:
$129.99 (wwbw.com)
$119.99 (prowinds.com)
Description:

- Hard rubber
- Produces a more projecting sound
- Makes the sound less edgy
- Produces a good sound
    - The tenor saxophone is notorious for being a very stuffy or thin sounding instrument. This mouthpiece makes the saxophone easier to play and produces a much better sound by focusing the air with the more circular chamber.

Brand: Selmer
Model: C* (S-80 series)
Price: $139.99 (wwbw.com)
$149.99 (prowinds.com)
Description:

- Hard rubber
- Larger mouthpiece
- Rectangular chamber

- Great for beginners (requires more air, which gets the air moving MORE)

Tenor Saxophone Ligatures

Brand: BG
Model: Traditional
Price:
Gold-Lacquered - $76.95
Gold-Plated - $106.95 (preferred)
(prowinds.com)
Description:

- Great ligature
- Pairs best with the Vandoren Optimum mouthpieces (but will work with any)
- Offers only two points of contact with the reed, allows it to vibrate more freely and results in a more resonant sound
- Gold-plated preferred over gold-lacquered (vibrates better) but is more expensive

Brand: Bonade
Model: Inverted
Price: $22.49 (wwbw.com)
Description:

- Good ligature
- Pairs well with the Selmer C* or the Vandoren Optimum mouthpiece
- Allows the reed to vibrate more freely than the "stock ligature"

Baritone Saxophone Mouthpieces

Brand: Vandoren Optimum
Model: BL3
Price: $214.99 (wwbw.com)
$209.99 (prowinds.com)
Description:

- Hard rubber
- Produces a more projecting sound
- Makes the sound less edgy
- Produces a good sound

Brand: Selmer
Model: C* (S-80 series)
Price: $220 (wwbw.com, prowinds.com)
Description:

- Hard rubber
- Larger mouthpiece
- Rectangular chamber
- Great for beginners (requires more air, which gets the air moving MORE)

Baritone Saxophone Ligatures

Brand: BG
Model: Traditional
Price:
Gold-Lacquered - $73.95
Gold-Plated - $119.99 (preferred)
(prowinds.com)

Description:

- Great ligature
- Pairs well with the Vandoren Optimum mouthpieces (but will work with any)
- Offers only two points of contact with the reed, allows it to vibrate more freely and results in a more resonant sound
- Gold-plated preferred over gold-lacquered (vibrates better) but is more expensive

Additional Information Regarding Mouthpieces and Ligatures

Mouthpieces to avoid:

- "Stock" mouthpieces that come with the instrument
    - You can, and SHOULD ask your roadman to replace the "stock" mouthpiece or ligature with the ones you want. ***It will affect the rental price of the saxophone..***
- Metal mouthpieces for middle school and high school students, with the exception of advanced jazz players
    - A private lesson teacher should be the one to suggest a metal mouthpiece to a more advanced student who is in your jazz ensemble. Metal mouthpieces should not be used under <u>any other</u> circumstances.
- Students are recommended to keep their "beginner" mouthpiece and ligature if and when they move to a step-up instrument, so they can use them for marching band.
- Selmer "Soloist" mouthpieces
    - Chamber of mouthpiece is too large

Ligatures to avoid:

- Rovner and BG leather
    - Eats up the sound
    - Produces a darker, non-resonant sound
    - Inhibits projection
    - Prohibits reed vibration
    - Does not hold the reed properly
    - Material stretches over time

***If you **do** use these ligatures, the fabric is on the side of the reed and the screw is on the **right.**

How to store the mouthpiece and ligature:

- Do not allow students to leave the reed they are currently playing on the mouthpiece.
- ***Do NOT allow students to simply store the <u>assembled</u> mouthpiece and ligature in the case!***
- Ideal way to store the mouthpiece/ligature:
    - Students should put an unused, ***dry*** reed (that has never been played on before) on their mouthpiece which is secured by the ligature while it is stored. Tighten the screw to its first point of resistance. This prevents the ligature from losing shape and the face of the mouthpiece being scratched.
    - Students should have a plastic mouthpiece cap over the mouthpiece/reed/ligature while in the case **<u>at all times</u>**. Caps protect the entire "set-up."

Cleaning the mouthpiece:

- After **EACH CLASS**, students need to use the end of their ***silk*** swab to dry out the receiver <u>and</u> tip of the mouthpiece. It is recommended to use the pinky so that it can fit into the receiver and the tip.
- At home, students are recommended to clean the *inside* of the mouthpiece by using a damp cloth with warm running water and antibacterial soap.
- At home, students are recommended to clean the *outside* of the mouthpiece by putting it in a tea/coffee cup with water and lemon juice. The mouthpiece can be submerged. This should be done at least 1-2 times a year for 30 minutes.
- When cleaning the outsides of mouthpieces, students should be very careful not to scratch the mouthpiece with any hard brushes, sponges or "other" things (ligature, pencil, pen, etc.).
- ***DO NOT BOIL THE MOUTHPIECE OR USE HOT WATER TO CLEAN IT! It is hard rubber, and will be destroyed!***

RECOMMENDED SAXOPHONE NECK STRAPS

For all saxophones, having the proper neck strap is very important. The proper neck strap is not only important for comfort, but also to ensure the instrument is being played correctly.

- The neck strap affects the way students play the instrument.
    - Hand position
    - Angle of the instrument into the mouth
    - Ability to use air correctly
    - Posture

General Neck Strap Information

- Avoid "spongy/stretchy" neck straps, such as the Neotech neck straps.
    - the older the neck strap gets, the more the materials stretch out
    - does not create ease when holding instrument correctly
    - hard to place height correctly
- Try to use neck straps without excess padding.
    - Alto saxophone players can use the "stock" neck straps that come with the instruments, which cost between $10-$15.
    - For tenor saxophone and bari saxophone players, some padding may be necessary for comfort with younger students, because these instruments are heavier. These cost between $10-$15. Avoid neoprene material (same material Neotech neck straps are made of).
    - For young bari saxophone players, a harness may be necessary. These cost around $25. Again, try to avoid neoprene material.

"spongy/stretchy" neoprene neck straps to avoid

Recommended regular neck strap with a reliable hook—metal is not recommended because it scratches the instrument

Acceptable, more cotton-like padded neckstrap for tenor and bari player's comfort

Acceptable bari saxophone harness

SAXOPHONE MAINTENANCE KIT LIST - RECOMMENDED ITEMS

Vandoren Traditional Alto Saxophone Reeds

$25.99 @ wwbw.com

- These reeds come individually wrapped in cellophane because their quality fluctuates due to climate changes.
- Students are encouraged to unwrap all the reeds in the box to allow the reeds to adjust to the climate.

****See additional handout regarding packaging.**

Vandoren Mouthpiece Patches

Package of 6: $8.99 @ wwbw.com

- Patches are flat, clear, and inexpensive
- Preferred over the Runyon rubber patches, which are spongy and add height to the mouthpiece
- Ideal for students who have braces or are getting braces
- Keeps teeth from slipping off the mouthpiece and does not dampen the vibration as much as the Runyon patches
- Over time, teeth marks will appear making the student more aware of how much mouthpiece to use.
- Recommended for use in marching band

One of the following reed guards can be chosen depending on socio-economic environment, availability, or preference.

Vandoren Reed Guards

Holds 4 - $9.95 @ muncywinds.com
(includes a humidity deregulator with charcoal)

- It is recommended to remove the included de-humidifier in climates of higher humidity. The de-humidifier is detrimental to the lifespan and quality of the reed (due to the environment). The de-humidifier can cause the reeds to dry out very quickly and become warped, or cause the moisture to linger and grow mold.
- Each reed slot is already numbered with dots.
- Tips of the reeds face toward the bottom of the reed case to prevent students from damaging the tips of the reeds.

Holds 8 - $27.49 @ wwbw.com

- Does not include a de-humidifier
- Tips of the reeds face toward the hinges to prevent students from touching the tips of the reeds.

La Voz Reed Guard

$3.69 @wwbw.com

- La Voz is another type of reed guard that is less expensive than Vandoren.
- Recommended for marching band use
- Will need to be numbered with a silver sharpie, paint-pen, or stickers

Yamaha Plastic Mouthpiece Cap

$3.99 @ wwbw.com

- Plastic is absolutely preferred to metal to protect the tip of the mouthpiece and reed.
- Make sure that students playing on an "attic horn" have a mouthpiece cap.

Protec A305 Sax Strap

$10.99 @ wwbw.com

- Comes with a built-in neck cushion, as well as a sturdy plastic enclosed hook (like a keychain)
- The ring has to snap over the hook.
- Avoid any straps with open hooks.

One of the following can be chosen when assisting students with proper maintenance regarding corks.

Selmer Tuning Slide and Cork Grease

$2.99 @ wwbw.com

- The Selmer cork grease is a liquid and lasts much longer than the normal *ChapStick*-style grease.
- Caution should be used when using this because it is very sticky.
- Must be stored in a plastic *Ziploc* bag as it may explode.
- If it hits something in the case or if exposed to heat, it will damage other maintenance kit items.
- To apply, squeeze a tiny bit of the grease up and down onto the cork. Then, with an index finger, work it into the cork to create enough friction to properly lubricate the cork.

Woodwind Cork Grease

$1.25 @ wwbw.com

- Must be stored in a plastic *Ziploc* bag as it may explode or melt.
- Do not leave out at home unattended, as younger children may actually use it as *ChapStick*.
- To apply, use a tiny bit of the grease up and down with an index finger and work it into the cork to create enough friction to properly lubricate the cork.

GEM Swabs Silk Saxophone Swab

$11.49 @ wwbw.com

- Do not use a cloth swab or a "shove-it" (currently called "Pad Saver"), which are often found with "attic horns." Neither of these items will take sufficient moisture out of the body of the instrument. They also tend to get stuck.
- Very absorbent and features a tapered cut to limit the chance of getting stuck in the instrument
- The GEM swabs have a weight that is to be put through the bell and pulled through the body of the instrument. Be careful that it does not go through the key holes, as tension from pulling the swab will create leaks or may harm the pads.
- Do not yank or pull the swab from side-to-side. Pull the swab straight down and leave the neck strap on to prevent the instrument from being dropped.
- Hand wash the swab with dish soap or *Woolite* and warm water.
- The swab should never be pulled through the neck.

8x10 Plexiglass

Binswangerglass.com

- Prices vary depending on where mirrors are purchased.
- Mirrors purchased through Binswanger can be purchased in bulk and cut to a desired size. They will also be made of plexiglass.
- Purchasing mirrors at a home improvement store is also an option; however, mirrors will have to be individually cut by a band parent or yourself.
- No matter where mirrors are purchased, it is vital that they are made of plexiglass and not glass. Plexiglass ensures that students will not accidentally hurt themselves or shatter when dropped.
- To receive a better price, attempt to find other band directors who would be willing to place an order as well. Assuring the company that you will place annual orders may also result in a discount.
- Self-portrait mirrors from art supply stores are acceptable.
- Car clip-on mirrors are not recommended because they are too small and the hinges break easily.
- Makeup mirrors are not recommended because they are too small and oddly shaped.
- It would be best if there was a box for the mirrors in <u>each separate class location</u>. Students can then easily obtain a mirror out of the box before class and return the mirror after class.

SAXOPHONE MAINTENANCE KIT - *OPTIONAL* RECOMMENDED ITEMS

EZO Denture Cushions

$4.49 @ Walgreens—must be purchased in-store only

****See additional handout for specific information.**

Giardinelli Lacquer Polishing Cloth

$5.99 @ wwbw.com

- A lacquer polishing cloth is helpful in maintenance of a saxophone, as it may accumulate many fingerprints and a lot of dust that will destroy the lacquered finish of the brass.
- The lacquered polishing cloth is specifically designed to prolong the life of the finish of a saxophone.
- Removes moisture, acid, and cork grease from the student's fingers.

One of the following reed cases can be chosen depending on socio-economic environment, availability, or preference.

Selmer Reed Case

Holds 5 - $34.99 @ wwbw.com

Holds 10 - $39.99 @ wwbw.com

- Has a flat glass plate that allows the reeds to dry on a flat surface, keeping them warping
- Has latches which are notorious for breaking
- The butt of the reed will go toward the hinges to prevent students from touching the tips of the reeds.
- Must be stored in a plastic *Ziploc* bag

Vandoren Hydrocase

$70.00 @ weinermusic.com

- Holds 8-20 reeds
- Battery-operated and has a syringe filled with water to keep the desired humidity

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One of the following music stands can be chosen depending on socio-economic environment, availability, or preference.

Hamilton Folding Music Stand

$10.90 @ musicarts.com

- Collapsible and easy to transport

Selmer Music Stand with Bag

$8.16 @ brookmays.com

- Collapsible and easy to transport

One of the following can be used depending on socio-economic environment, availability, or preference when selecting a suitable metronome.

Qwik Time QT-5 Metronome

$9.99 @ wwbw.com

- This metronome does not have a subdivision function.
- Credit card-sized
- A-440 tuning tone
- Low-battery indicator

Korg MA-1 Metronome

$19.99 @ wwbw.com

- Beat-Counting display makes it easier to practice rhythm and phrasing.
- Tap Tempo function makes it easier to quickly set the desired tempo.
- Beat display offers from 1 to 9 beats, plus 8 rhythm types to practice any style of music.
- Can tune any instrument using the 12-step (C4 – B4) chromatic reference pitch
- Adjustable calibration setting (410 – 480 Hz)
- Earphone jack with adjustable volume
- Memory backup function and auto power-off function
- Up to approximately 290 hours of continuous operation

Korg TM-40 Digital Tuner Metronome

$29.95 @ musicarts.com

- Offers both a tuner and metronome, which function simultaneously or independently
- Contains 13 types of rhythms that cover 0-7 beats per measure as well as doublets, triplets, triplets with center beats omitted, quadruplets, and quadruplets with center beats omitted
- Tempo is easily adjustable in a range of 40—208BPM.

EZO DENTURE CUSHIONS AND CIGARETTE PAPER

Uses

- Students who have developed bad habits with biting will not be able to produce a sound until they relax their jaw and lips
- Allows students to play longer without the painful effect of the teeth cutting into the bottom lip
- For students who bite with their lower lip
- Can be used for students with braces
- Protects the bottom teeth from cutting into the lower lip
- Good for relieving tension during long rehearsals

Characteristics of Ezo/Procedures of Usage

- Can be found at Walgreens or CVS, and is often found in the dental care aisle next to denture creams and fixtures
- Made from wax and contains 15 total denture molds
- Cut each piece into four squares around the corners; cut off the excess and throw away
- Instruct the student to place it on their tongue and mold the square over their bottom teeth with their saliva
- It molds onto (over) the bottom teeth and becomes a "part" of the embouchure (thought of and treated like a retainer)
- Provides smooth surface for bottom teeth.
- Each piece is reusable a few times as long as the student does not have particles of food inside their mouth
- Discouraged if used for a long period of time
- A new piece moves around for 1-3 days
- Pieces need to be kept in a zip-loc bag
- When a piece discolors (no longer is pink) it should be discarded

Disadvantages of Usage

- Students should be aware that use of Ezo increases the distance between the bottom teeth and the reed. Inconsistent use/non-use of Ezo may provide discrepancies in pitch and lip pressure on the reed.

Instruments Recommended for Ezo

- Clarinet
- Saxophone

Cigarette Paper

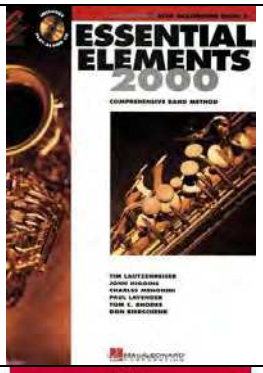
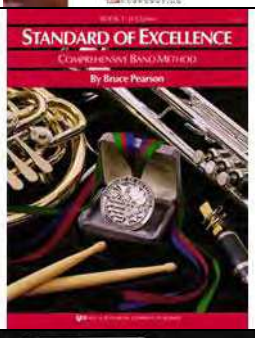
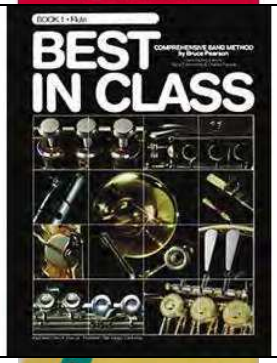
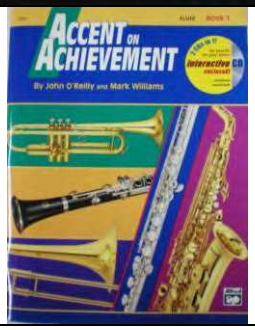
Characteristics/Usage

- Can be used in a pinch like Ezo but has multiple uses
- Coated with wax
- Used to dry pads with excess moisture as a result of playing

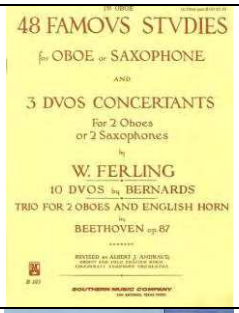
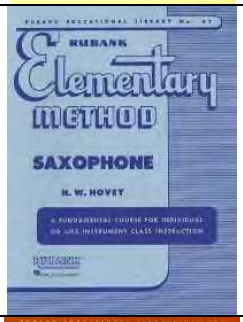
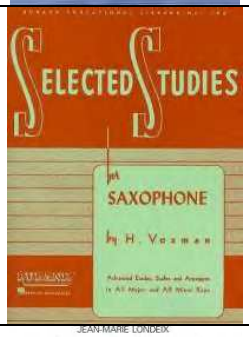
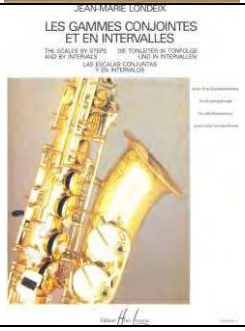
Brand

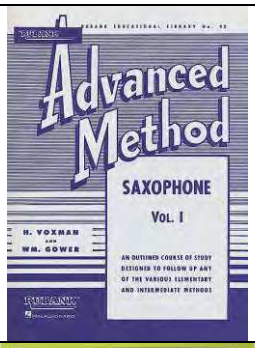
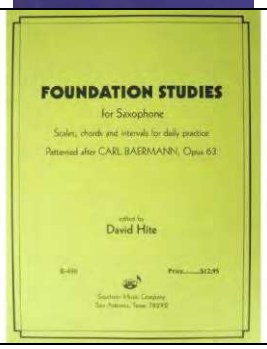
- Recommended brand is Zig-Zag
- Price is ~$3.00 and contains a pack of 40 and can be purchased in a convenience store

SAXOPHONE METHOD BOOKS

Essential Elements 2000	
Standard of Excellence	
Best in Class	
Accent on Achievement	

SAXOPHONE SUPPLEMENTAL BOOKS

48 Famous Studies for Oboe or Saxophone by Ferling	All-State etudes frequently come from this book	
Elementary Method for Saxophone by Rubank	A more advanced book than beginner book	
Selected Studies for Saxophone by Rubank	All-State etudes frequently come from this book	
Les Gammes Conjointes Et En Intervalles Pour Tous Les Saxophones by Jean-Marie Londeix	The scales by steps and by intervals	

Advanced Methods for Saxophone Vol, I & II by Rubank	A more advanced method book	
Foundation Studies for Saxophone by David Hite	Full range scales, chords, dominant scale patterns, plus everything in the Les Gammes book	

ALTO SAXOPHONE CASES, IDENTIFICATION OF PARTS AND REMOVING IT FROM ITS CASE

General Information About All Woodwind Instrument Cases

- Most cases have distinguishing marks somewhere on the case. Identify these marks, and their relationship to the top and bottom of the case. Most cases have the handles placed on the bottom section of each case. Check to make sure.
- Place all saxophone cases on the floor in front of the student.
- Be sure the student understands where each part of the instrument belongs in the case. Give detailed information on removing the parts from the case. Make sure the student waits for each instruction before performing the task. Be sure the parts of the instrument are returned to the case in the reverse order they were removed.
- All instruments must be assembled in a specific order. Follow this procedure explicitly **every time**.
- Never leave a closed case unlatched. Most latches open from the bottom up, but this is not always the case. Sometimes buttons slide from side to side, etc. Check each opening mechanism carefully before presenting the information to your students.
- Cases should be protected at all times. Try to find a safe space in the classroom setup for each student's case. If using an ensemble room for the class, the cases may be opened in the hall. The empty case will remain closed and latched in the hall during class.

Identifying Parts of the Saxophone and Removing It Safely From Its Case

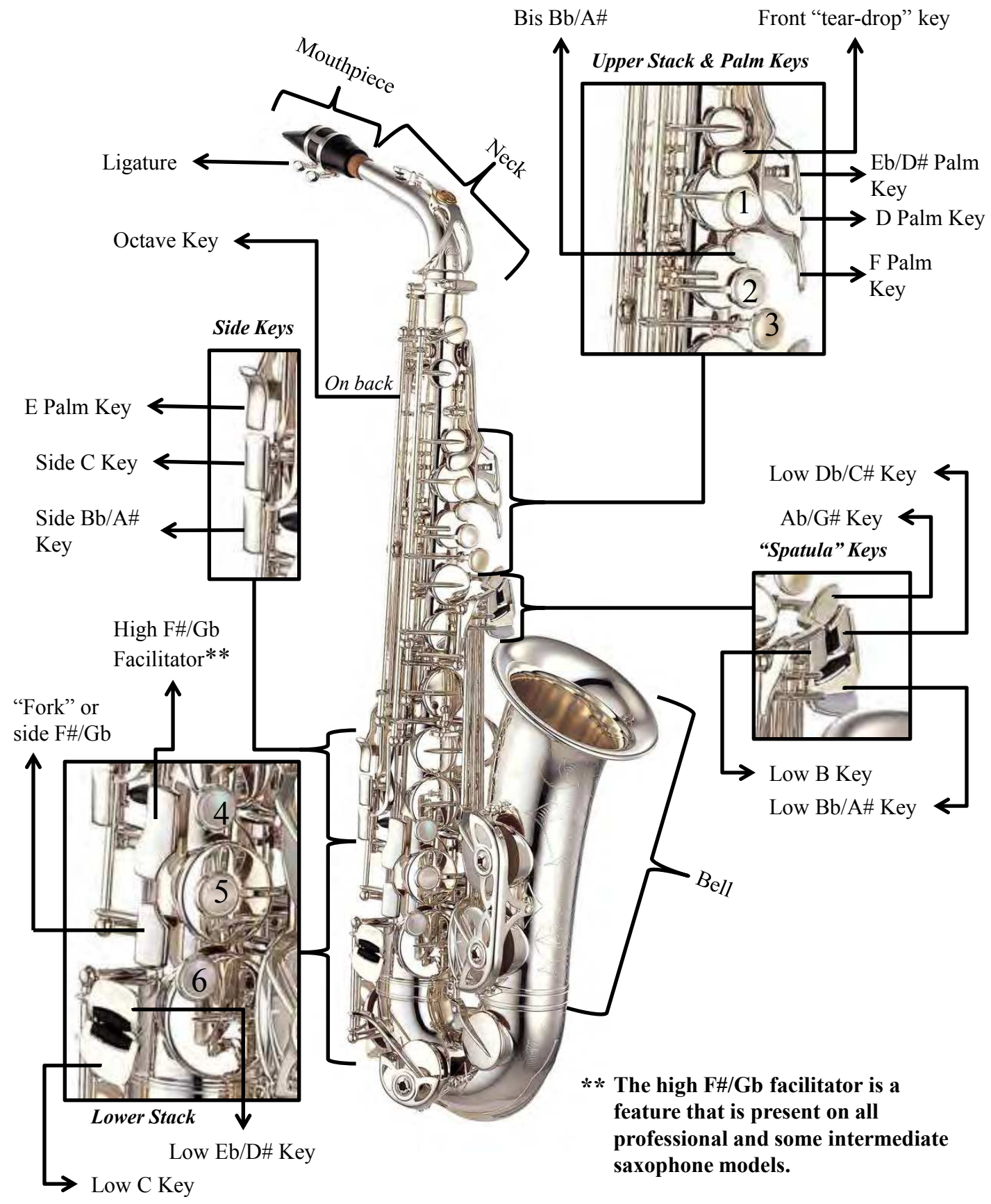
- Once the case information is understood, place the case on the floor. Never let the student place the case in his lap.
- Open the case from its correct position. Remember, most latches will lift up.
- As you begin to teach the saxophone, give only the body of the instrument to the students. Place the other parts in a plastic bag with the student's name on it, and place it in a locked cabinet in your office.
- Tell the student as soon as he proves he can take care of the body of the saxophone, he can be given other parts to his instrument.
- To sell this concept to the parents, explain the money factor. It is almost as expensive to replace one broken item as it is to buy an entire instrument.
- Identify the neck strap and demonstrate its use.
- Identify the neck, mouthpiece, ligature and reed.
- **SEND SEGMENTS OF THIS INFORMATION HOME TO PARENTS. CHOOSE THE INFORMATION YOU THINK WOULD BE HELPFUL FOR HOME PRACTICE AND INSTRUMENT CARE.**

- Look at the case in relation to the parts of the saxophone. Most cases are molded to the shape of the particular parts. Be specific when making this point to your students. Take your time, and repeat the information many times.
- Corks on the neck of a new beginner instrument are usually really fat. The mouthpiece will not easily fit on the neck. Only someone with experience should carefully sand the cork to the proper size. Use a very fine sand paper (400). Be very careful. Take off a very small amount and test many times until you have the correct fit that can easily be controlled by a small child.
- After sanding, apply the correct amount of cork grease for the student the first time. Even if the student understands how little is needed, you still must watch them apply the cork grease several times before you trust them to do the job alone. Never let the student have his own tube of cork grease in the beginning of the learning process. After he has proven his competence, he may have the tube. If the cork looks dull, and the mouthpiece is difficult to fit with the neck, a small amount of cork grease may be needed. Teach him to ask you first before applying. Once you know he has made the correct analysis, the student may make his own decisions. Cork grease can mess up the inside of the case if the tube is not completely closed, and can even damage the key mechanism if it comes in contact with the metal.
- The body of the saxophone is one "unit" in its case and is easily placed into and taken from the case.
- The mouthpiece has a thin end and a fat end. The top is curved, and the bottom (table) is flat. The importance of these features will be explained later.
- The ligature is usually metal for the beginning instrument. The screws for the ligature will always appear on the right side of the mouthpiece as the student looks at the mouthpiece from the flat side. This will be demonstrated. Screws for ligatures will **never** appear on the left side of the mouthpiece. The ligature has a large end and a small end.
- The reed is basically the same shape as the mouthpiece. It has a thin end and a fat end…..a flat side and a curved side.
- The reed/mouthpiece cap (protector) should be made of plastic for the beginning instrument. If metal protectors are used, be aware that they will most likely scratch the mouthpiece and perhaps damage the tip of the reed. Using a plastic protector will result in fewer broken reeds.
- The table (flat part) of the mouthpiece may not necessarily be exactly flat. To fix this, use the finest sandpaper (400). Place the sandpaper on a piece of glass. Rub the table of the mouthpiece on the combined surface of sandpaper and glass. Check often to see if the mouthpiece does not "rock" when placed against the plate glass.
- Periodically have mouthpiece checks. Check for chips on rails and on the tip. Also check for chips on the **inside** of the tip. Give written work to your students while you check each mouthpiece carefully. A chipped mouthpiece can be devastating to a beginning saxophone student's embouchure development.
- Have frequent reed checks. Do not allow your students to use chipped or dirty reeds. Reserve the right to break a reed at any time in the most professional

manner possible. Make sure the parents understand the reason for this action. This is why we suggest you start with less expensive reeds for the first few weeks. After students learn to take care of their reeds, more expensive reeds can be used successfully. Reeds will warp. A demonstration will be given of how to moisten and "straighten" a reed that has warped. Using a reed guard will help keep reeds from warping so badly.

- All students should have a reed guard, and all reeds should be placed in the guard at all times. Four-slotted reed guards are recommended, and are manufactured by Vandoren. The dehumidifier will need to be removed. Students should either number or "letter" each slot. Each time a student plays their saxophone, a different reed should be used in rotation.
- Consider using an old or unused DRY reed to be placed on the mouthpiece at the end of each playing session, whether it is at school or at home. This will allow the ligature to always remain in the shape it is in when the student is "playing" the saxophone.
- Students should have a lint-free cloth in their cases. It can be used in various ways such are wiping moisture off keys, etc. after use. No music, folders, or unnecessary objects may be placed in the case at any time. Only the parts of the saxophone should be allowed in the case.
- The use of the swab must be carefully explained, and a quality silk swab should be included in the cost of the maintenance kit. Even more importantly, the student should be given **CLASS TIME** to clean out his instrument, and store his reed and instrument properly in the case. Always leave the ligature on the mouthpiece with a dry reed replacing the "class reed." This will prevent damage, and allow the ligature to form and bond more correctly with the mouthpiece. **DRY REEDS MUST BE USED FOR THIS PURPOSE. A "USED/WET" REED WILL RESULT IN MOLD OR MILDEW FORMING ON THE REED, IN THE MOUTHPIECE AND THE CASE.**

PARTS OF THE SAXOPHONE



** **The high F#/Gb facilitator is a feature that is present on all professional and some intermediate saxophone models.**

SAXOPHONE ASSEMBLY AND INSTRUMENT/BODY RATIO

- *BE VERY SPECIFIC!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!*
- *The student's hands must be touching the part of the saxophone he is assembling at all times.*
    1. Before removing the neck strap and saxophone, put the reed in the mouth to moisten and smooth the top and bottom of it. Moistening the bottom of a reed helps create a seal, which will result in better response.
    2. Take out the neck strap and put it on.
    3. Take out the neck and put it in a safe place.
    4. Take the body out and clip it onto the neck strap. Never trust that the neck strap will secure the saxophone, because the hooks can easily snap. Grab the body with the right hand and support the back of the saxophone with the left hand. DO NOT LET THE SAXOPHONE HANG FROM THE NECK STRAP.
    5. Remove the plug from the saxophone. **All saxophones must have a plug.** The plug protects the octave key mechanism, which is very expensive to replace.
    6. Pick up the neck.
    7. Hold the octave key open on the neck with the palm of the hand.
    8. Twist and push the neck onto the body of the saxophone.
    9. Turn the screw that supports the neck to the first point of resistance.
    10. Place the mouthpiece without the ligature on the neck using slight, twisting motions. Leave 1/4 to 1/3 of the cork showing on the neck for beginners.
    11. Place the large end of the ligature over the mouthpiece carefully. Make sure the screws are on the right as you look at them from the table of the mouthpiece.
    12. Lift the ligature slightly with the thumb and forefinger of a chosen hand, and carefully slide the reed onto the table of the mouthpiece. The reed is placed fat to fat, flat to flat and thin to thin.
    13. Line the sides of the reed up with the rails.
    14. Look for the thin black line/sliver at the tip of the mouthpiece.
    15. The ligature should be slightly below the line on the bottom of most quality mouthpieces.
    16. Tighten the lower screw snuggly, and the top screw to its first point of resistance.

Instrument Disassembly

1. Unscrew the neck and put in a safe place. Be sure the octave key is depressed with the palm of the hand as the neck is removed.

2. Unhook the body of the saxophone from the neck strap. Swab the body of the instrument.
3. Replace the plug in the body.
4. Replace the body in the case.
5. Pick up the neck and mouthpiece. Unscrew the ligature and remove the reed. Blot the reed and put in the reed case.
6. Remove the ligature from the mouthpiece.
7. Remove the mouthpiece from the neck.
8. Swab the neck once the mouthpiece has been removed.
9. Replace the neck in the case.
10. The ligature must be left on the mouthpiece with a dry reed and a plastic protector.
11. Replace the mouthpiece in the case.

Instrument/Body Ratio

- Familiarize the student with the instrument/body ratio by using the fully assembled saxophone but without the reed. Be sure the saxophone is adjusted to the student by adjusting instrument placement and neck strap length.
- There are three balance points when holding the saxophone:
    1. both thumbs
    2. side of the leg
    3. neck strap
- Make sure that the body is in its natural playing posture when finding these balance positions. The student should feel comfortable at all times. The right arm should follow the line of the upper body. It should never be placed back behind the chest cavity. When these balance points are focused on at one time, the posture will look very natural. This will be demonstrated.
- Correct playing position will be realized when all of the aforementioned details from previous seminars are understood. The weight of the saxophone is difficult to balance without the fulcrum created by the combination of the three balance points.

SAXOPHONE HAND POSITION

- RIGHT HAND POSITION
    1. Always place the right hand first.
    2. The second knuckle of the thumb should be placed under the right edge of the thumb rest.
    3. Fingers should be placed on the pearls. The fleshy part will touch the pearls.
    4. The little finger should rest on the roller keys. "Home position" will be the E-flat key, which is the higher of the two keys.
    5. Fingers should be curved and round—not flat.
    6. The wrist must stay in line with the rest of the forearm.
    7. Practice moving the fingers up and down from the big knuckles. Do not let the other two knuckles move. The finger pads should stay on the pearls at all times. In the beginning the little finger can move up and down also.
    8. Do not include side keys in the initial hand position information. If asked, tell them once the hands can move correctly using the rings and tone holes, they will be allowed to learn to use the keys on the side.

- LEFT HAND POSITION
    1. The left thumb rests on the back thumb rest and never leaves. The second knuckle should basically be in the middle of the thumb rest.
    2. Place the index finger on the first pearl.
    3. Ship the small pearl.
    4. Place the middle and ring finger on the next two pearls. The finger pads should stay on the pearls at all times.
    5. The little finger should rest at the "home key" on the G-sharp key.
    6. Fingers should be curved and round—not ever flat.
    7. Keep the hand in an adjusted "Flat-C" position and the wrist slightly up. The wrist must stay in line with the rest of the forearm. This will be demonstrated.
    8. Always feel the palm of the hands to check for the softness of the fingers. There are more bones in this area of the hand than any other part of the body. If the palm is soft, all other parts of the hand will be as naturally soft as is possible. The little fingers should have comfortable "home keys" they touch all of the time in the beginning stages.

- FINGER EXERCISES
    1. All fingers in each hand move together. Call out the hand you wish to move. The students move all of the fingers in that hand down never leaving the pearls. The right hand thumb obviously does not ever move

when the teacher asks for “RIGHT”, but the left hand thumb can move with the fingers of the left hand when the teacher asks for “LEFT”.

2. Next, we move the fingers one at a time beginning with the left hand. The thumb and first finger are already down in this exercise, and each additional finger in both hands will be numbered two through six from top of the body to the bottom of the body. The fingers will move down or up depending on their starting position, as the number is called by the teacher. We do not use the little fingers when we first begin this exercise.
3. Watch the fingers to see that they move smoothly in constant contact with the pearls, in natural position and move up and down from the big knuckle only. The student should understand that the movement is aided by the soft tissue of the palm of the hand, rather than the bony texture of the top of the hand.
4. Next, we move the fingers in combinations: one, two….one, two three…….one, two, three, four……one, two, three, four, five…..one, two, three, four, five, six……six, five, four, three, two, one……five, four, three, two, one…….four, three, two, one……three, two, one……two, one…… Later the development of moving the first and second finger separately is added.
5. Using these exercises, the fingers move in all of the ways they move to play the saxophone: all together, one at a time, and in combinations. This exercise will be demonstrated.
6. Refer to your supplemental page regarding exercises to perfect the usage of the roller keys and palm keys. These exercises must not be introduced too early in the development of a student’s hand position.

SAXOPHONE REEDS

Brands of Reeds

- Vandoren reeds are ***strongly recommended*** for beginners and most 7th/8th grade students as well. These reeds are in the traditional blue box which contain ten reeds per box.

- Another choice students have is the Vandoren V12s (gray box), which are for more advanced players.
- Rico Reserve reeds are mediocre reeds (green/white box).
- Rico Reserve Classic reeds (green/white box) are wonderful reeds, but should only be used for professional playing.
- Do not use Vandoren Java (green box) or Vandoren ZZ (black box). are file-cut Java reeds)
- Do not use Vandoren V16's, which are reeds used for jazz (green box).
- Do not use Vandoren "hand select" reeds (black box). They are over $40 a box.
- La Voz is a cheaper option of a reed, but is not recommended for long term use. They are fine, however, to use with beginners.

Brands to Avoid

- Rico (or at least for long-term use), Riyin
- Any flavored reeds
- Any plastic reeds

In handouts given out at the beginning of the year, inform parents about purchasing reeds. Try to arrange it so students only buy reeds from the school. Be sure the parents know that by purchasing the reeds from the school, they will receive a "___ percent" discount. Make arrangements with your road man to facilitate this process.

Reed Strength

- Vandoren: Beginners should begin on 2 ½ . **It is perfectly acceptable for a first/second year student to remain on 2 ½ for a long period of time**. Students may progress to 3's as time goes by. Every student will change reed strength at different times. Most advanced students should remain on 3's for classical saxophone playing.
- 1, 1 ½, and 2 reeds are made.
- 4 and 5 strength reeds are made as well, but should be used by older players who know how to shave them down.

- 1/2 La Voz: medium or soft strength
- MS/JH tenor and bari saxophone players should begin on Vandoren 2 ½'s.
- HS tenor sax players may progress to 3…maybe 3 ½'s.
- HS bari sax players may progress to 3's.

Finding a Good Reed

- Just because a reed is new, it does not mean that it will sound good.
- You can tell a good reed from a bad reed by sight.
    - Good reeds are yellow or crème colored on the heart.
    - Bad reeds have visible veins.
    - Bad reeds are transparent.

-You reserve the right to tell a student that a reed can no longer be played. Use sensitivity when telling a student a reed is bad.
- To monitor quality of reeds, be sure to hear students play EVERY DAY!

Reed Guards

- Each student must have a reed guard.
- The recommended brand is the Vandoren reed guard which holds 4 reeds.
    - The dehumidifier may be removed.
    - Be sure students wipe off excess moisture before returning reeds to the reed guard.
    - Students should never get down to only one reed in the holder.
    - When student is down to the last 4 reeds from their box, they must buy new reeds!
- Students MUST have their reed guard in class <u>every day</u>.

Reed Rotation

- Reed guards must have slots that are labeled
- 4 reeds should be in the rotation
- Reeds should be rotated each time a student plays

Warped Reeds

*This process should not be done by middle school students

- Wet the reed.
- Rub it on a clean piece of paper in circles.
- Also rub the top of the reed and try to work the warps out of the cane.

Scraping Reeds

- Check reed in the light to see if it is balanced.
- Scrape parts to make an equal balance on either side of the reed.
- Be sure to not scrape the tip or the heart of the reed.
- Be careful not to scrape off too much.

SAXOPHONE EMBOUCHURE

- Students must be able to use air correctly before beginning to learn the saxophone embouchure.
- Use the neck and mouthpiece for better control.
- The teacher should place the neck and mouthpiece in the beginning. Place the bottom lip first, then the upper teeth and top lip.
- The student needs to remember how it feels and sounds.
- Once the teacher has demonstrated how it feels and sounds, the student can hold the neck and mouthpiece in place and watch his face in a mirror to make sure nothing moves or looks unnatural. Then, the student remembers how it looks, feels and sounds.
- It is best to hold the neck and mouthpiece with two fingers and a thumb in a balanced manner. The fingers should have absolutely no contact with the mouthpiece or ligature.
- The mouthpiece is held by the teeth, not the lips.
- The upper teeth rest on the mouthpiece material (patch).
- The lower teeth feel the reed through the lower lip that covers them.
- The lower lip covers the lower teeth like a fitted sheet covers a mattress.
- The back teeth are naturally apart.
- The tongue is in the "ah" or "ew" position…..**and not pulled back**. For tenor saxophone, the tongue is in the "ah" position, and "oh" for the baritone saxophone.
- Using the index finger, gently push the lower lip toward, but not rolled over the lower teeth. Lick the part that goes over. That is the correct amount.
- The saxophone embouchure is created with a natural overbite position with a slight valley in the chin.
- The corners are toward the mouthpiece. Ultimately, the corners will be toward the mouthpiece and down.
- There should be no wrinkles in the lower lip and red flesh must be seen on either side of the mouthpiece.
- The lower lip that is not under the reed stays in front of the teeth.
- Never tell students to pull their lips over their teeth. Pulling and stretching makes lips thicker.
- The upper lip rests on top of the mouthpiece in front of the upper teeth.
- The upper lip should be soft and pliable, and follow the shape/contour of the mouthpiece.
- Both the top and bottom lip should always feel soft and natural.
- There should be no lines or dimples that do not appear in the natural face. The face essentially should be "zombie"-like.
- The air is directed through an imaginary dot, which is at the center of their mouthpiece and reed.

- Enough mouthpiece must be past the lips into the chamber of the mouth to allow the reed to freely vibrate. Usually less than half the mouthpiece is sufficient.
- There must be a resonant second space treble clef concert A-flat sounded.
- If the sound is stuffy, the student may be holding the mouthpiece with the lips.
- If the sound is strident and brittle, the student may have too much mouthpiece in his mouth or may be using too much unfocused air.
- Be sure the student can control the air well enough to find the correct balance of air and resistance to create the sound you want on the neck and mouthpiece.
- Remember that the mouth can be too open; the teeth can be out of position; the lips can be too loose and puffy or can grip; the tongue can be too far back in the mouth; the student can be lifting too little. All of these will result in a sound you will not wish to create.
- Keep making subtle adjustments to the angle, amount of mouthpiece taken, etc. Just a slight movement can really improve the resonance of the vibration.
- Keep the body and face calm and still while learning this embouchure.
- The embouchure is a constant work in progress. Special attention should be given to the contact of the upper teeth with the mouthpiece material. The teacher can attempt to move the mouthpiece out of position to make the student aware that something is incorrect.
- It is easier to make something firmer than to get rid of unnecessary tightness.
- If the sound is not clear, instant and resonant on the neck and mouthpiece, the sound on the saxophone will not be resonant and beautiful.
- When the neck and mouthpiece is placed on the body of the saxophone, the first attempt at sound production should be made with the teacher's assistance.
- If a student plays above pitch, they may be biting down on their mouthpiece or the mouthpiece may be too far in the mouth. If a student is below pitch, their air may be too slow, their embouchure may be too loose, or their mouthpiece may be out too far.

Qualities of Uncharacteristic Sounds and Their Causes

- Grainy sound: tension in the mouth~~or "waterlogged" reed
- Buzzy sound: reed is too hard~~or too much tension from the bottom lip
- Thin sound: reed is too thin/soft~~or not enough mouthpiece~~or insufficient amount of air
- Unfocused sound: too much mouthpiece~~or uncontrolled air~~or too soft of a reed
- No sound: lower teeth not in contact with the bottom lip~~or reed too hard
- Flat sound: corners not firm~~or cheeks uncontrolled (puffing) ~~or teeth not on the mouthpiece

MAKING THE FIRST SAXOPHONE MOUTHPIECE AND NECK SOUND

- Initial sound production cannot be introduced until correct posture and breathing has been successfully taught. Include these two essential components as "part" of the first sound attempt(s).
- Relax position and ready position should already be taught and drilled prior to sound production. As sound production is occurring, playing position must be incorporated. Students need to understand that ready position means they are **ready** to play. Playing position means that they are **set** (physically) to play. Students should not be allowed to sit in relax position during class, except maybe during announcements, paperwork or things not pertaining to **playing**. If one word instructions are preferred, then use "ready" and "set."
- Try to get every student to make a sound on the first day of sound production. If you will not be able to accomplish this, make a disclaimer before you start. The students who do not end up getting to make their first sound—on the first day—will be the first students you will start with on the second day! Students should not be surprised or frustrated if you do not get to them on this first day.
- On day <u>one</u> of sound production, make another disclaimer if you suspect that you will not get far enough along to allow <u>any</u> of the students to take home their "set-up".
- At the end of each class, you must make the decision to allow just those who you assisted to take home their set-up…….or not allow set-ups to go home until <u>everyone</u> has made sounds with your assistance (day one, day two, etc.).
- Once you allow and require set-ups to go home on a daily basis, students should be recording their practice time on whatever form of practice card you are using. Be realistic when designating ____ minutes to be spent on their set-up sounds during their home practice.
- It is not necessary to have students make sounds on <u>just</u> the mouthpiece (without the neck). It will be much easier for you……and eventually less awkward for the students…….to hold the mouthpiece <u>and</u> **neck**. If you <u>choose</u> to start on just the mouthpiece, then you are encouraged to add the neck very soon.
- Do not use a metronome when assisting students to make their first sounds. A metronome should not be added until the class is at the point of making <u>group</u> sounds.
- Remind students that lipstick, Chapstick, etc. cannot be worn during class. Students need to understand that their reeds will not last long, and they will begin to see mold. ☹
- When working one-on-one with students in your beginning class, it is important that the students are ready as soon as the teacher reaches them. While other students are waiting, they must either be paying attention to what you are doing…..or working on a music theory worksheet, etc.
- While going around the room, students should not be allowed to make sounds on their set-up—even if they have already been assisted. They should also not be

allowed to improperly hold their set-up (i.e. putting a finger in the bottom of their neck…..twirling or playing with the set-up in general……etc.

- **The instructor must place all mouthpiece and neck for students.** This may continue for 2-5 days (if not longer), depending on the size and overall ability level of your class.
- You should be directly in front of each individual student when assisting them, and not to the side. It would be most effective if students were standing and "finding their horizon**." Music stands should be elevated to the proper height, and a mirror should be properly positioned on each stand**. You will learn to maneuver around each student's equipment, etc. At this point, all cases should be directly under or to the side of their chairs.
- As you are working with each student, your goal is to assist **each student** in making a quality sound on or **in the vicinity of** the correct pitch (second space A-flat). Do not get on to students who do not produce the exact pitch—especially if they are using brands of mouthpieces and ligatures that may be inferior and/or not on your recommended list. When listening to each student, listen for:
    - quality of sound
    - consistency of sound
    - pitch
- Unless the saxophone is your primary instrument, you should **not** be modeling sounds on the set-up. As you assist each student, you will eventually find a "star student" who will become the model for future reference. Be sure to periodically use a keyboard or a metronome—with pitches—so as not to "lose sight" of the correct pitch (regardless of whether or not a model is used).
- Be aware of fragile and/or teary-eyed students. Move on to the next student in the interest of time, but make an effort to return to these students by the end of class. Do not let a student leave class feeling unsuccessful. If possible, offer a pass for struggling students to come in at lunch or before/after school.
- The set-up always goes **to** the student; **not** the student to the set-up.
- Before bringing the set-up to the student, check for:
    - ligatures that have been placed correctly
    - ligature screws that are too tight
    - proper mouthpiece angles
    - proper alignment of the reed
    - condition of reeds
- Train students not to move their faces or body when you are placing the set-up. It may take certain students multiple tries, and if they move after each attempt, they (and you!) basically have to start over each time.
- When students breathe, do not allow their corners to pull back at all. Furthermore, upper lips should not be coming off the plastic of the tops of the mouthpieces. Students should breathe only through their corners, keeping their upper lips on the tops of the mouthpieces.
- With the set-up, students should progress through the following steps:
    - **air** (The sound starts and ends with air, making students aware of how they can control their air. This also helps students avoid undue tightness in the embouchure.)

    - **air~vibration~air** (The air "turns into" a vibration and returns to air.)
    - **air~vibration**
    - **vibration** (ultimate "final" sound)
- No articulation syllable should be used when making set-up sounds. The ultimate goal is for students to start their sounds with air. An articulation syllable will be assigned after all students are making characteristic and consistent sounds on the set-up, as well as the fully-assembled saxophone.
- Students need to direct their air through an imaginary dot, which is at the center of their mouthpiece and reed, in order to achieve the desired sound.
- Make sure the students understand that "a sound" may not happen the very first time. This is a trial and error process and may take multiple tries.
- Once the set-up has been placed correctly and students are making the sound you want, they need to remember:
    - how it ***looks*** (by looking in the mirror)
    - how it ***feels***

  Allow and instruct them to take the set-up from your hand **without moving their body and embouchure**. Have them try to reproduce the sound on their own. Be prepared to further assist them if necessary. When the sound is correct, students need to remember how it ***sounds***.
- Train students to freeze their body, face and embouchure at the end of whatever type of sound is being made (whether it is air, a tone, etc.) The student should not move anything until the director calls the students to ready position. This aspect of playing should transfer to any—and everything students play in the future (i.e. after last notes of lines out of the book, last notes of songs, etc.)
- Whether students are making individual or group sounds, they need to stop when they feel like they are running out of air. It should never be thought of as a contest to see who can hold their sounds the longest. That serves absolutely no benefit.
- If a student feels dizzy or faint, allow them to bend over in their chair for a little while until they feel better.
- If you feel air escaping from the student's embouchure, the student is most likely not sealing properly. This is usually caused by students pulling their corners back. Students need to constantly be told to bring their corners forward. After a student has been made aware that they are leaking air, the expectation should be stated for the student to return to class the next day without that issue.
- While students are playing, it may be necessary to gently wiggle their mouthpiece from side to side, during which you will hear pitch variation. This is simply making the student aware that their corners are not firm and/or their top teeth are not on the top of the mouthpiece. Ultimately, you should not be able to move the mouthpiece at all.
- The teacher should always forewarn a student before removing the mouthpiece from the student's mouth. The mouthpiece can easily scrape the teeth or create discomfort.
- If you are *too easily* able to slide the mouthpiece out of a student's mouth, their top teeth are most likely not on the top of the mouthpiece like they should be.

This also means that students are holding the mouthpiece with their lips instead of their teeth.

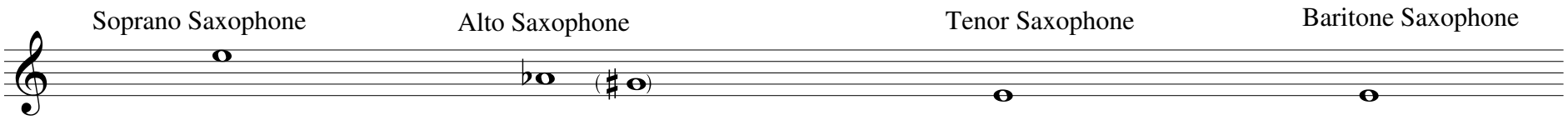
- Extraneous noises at ends of sounds are a result of students collapsing their embouchures and/or postures. Have students sing "la" or "dah"; then, apply that to the end of their sound.
- It is your job, as the teacher, to diagnose any problems through this trial and error process. As you go around the room, it may be helpful to you to take written notes on students having problems. Jot down any catchphrases, analogies or specific things that you said to them that helped them in <u>any</u> way!
- If you are struggling in your efforts to assist multiple students…..or are unsure about what you are doing in general, then hire an outside consultant or **experienced** private lesson teacher to come to your class and help. As this professional goes around the room to hear your students, **you need to follow them……watch exactly what they are doing…..and take notes as well.** No matter the scenario, reference these notes as you see fit in future classes.
- If you have a large class, it may be necessary for "waiting" students to re-soak their reeds after _____ students have played.
- After _____ days, students will eventually need to be able to place their set-up and make a sound <u>without</u> your assistance. The amount of time will vary year to year, taking into consideration the size of the class, the overall quality of their sounds, and how many times you have assisted the students.
- **<u>Students need to constantly be reminded that characteristic and consistent set-up sounds are stepping stones to making sounds on the fully-assembled saxophone! Students who do not practice their set-up sounds at home are not only slowing the class down, but are not contributing to the daily progress and quality of the class.</u>**

****Much of this information is applicable to beginner interviews.**

SAXOPHONE NECK AND MOUTHPIECE PITCHES

It is important when teaching embouchure to have students begin with the neck and mouthpiece.

Sounding pitches the saxophone neck and mouthpiece will produce:



When teaching other concepts such as articulation and vibrato, have students begin on the neck and mouthpiece.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD SAXOPHONE SOUND

Resonant

Consistent

Relaxed

Full

Rich

Clear

Smooth

Focused

Vibrant

Centered

Buoyant

Open

Free

SAXOPHONE EXERCISES FOR GROUP SOUNDS

Group exercises—whether on the neck and mouthpiece ("short instrument" or "baby instrument") or the fully-assembled saxophone—should be performed with the assumption that you have gone around the room as much as necessary before allowing students to make sounds on their own in this group setting.

You must make the decision as to when to allow short instruments to go home with your students.

The use of mirrors is imperative so students are consistent with everything they are doing.

Breathing should already be introduced by this point.

The metronome should already be introduced by this point.

For exercises 1-6, articulation has not been taught at this time; therefore, air starts are used. The tongue should remain naturally at the bottom of the mouth.

Remind students to always be thinking pulse……as well as "start" and "stop" when appropriate.

When appropriate for a specific exercise, audiation of note names with actual pitches is highly recommended.

MOUTHPIECE AND NECK EXERCISES

1. Drill "ready position" and "playing/set position" DAILY.
    a. Call students to "ready position"….then to "playing/set position"……..and back to "ready position", etc. For shorter/faster instructions, simply say "ready" and "set/playing."
    b. Repeat this over and over and over.
    c. This teaches students how to set their short instruments.
    d. Students should look at their mirrors! DO NOT make them look at you.
2. Allow students to make sounds on their own.
    a. Students must exhibit good posture.
    b. Students should be holding their short instrument correctly.
    c. Students should be taking proper breaths.

d. You, the instructor, need to monitor students. DO NOT bury your head in the stand.

For all exercises that use the metronome, students can lightly tap their right hand fingers on top of the neck for keeping track of the beats. Quarter note = 80 (with subdivisions) is a good tempo to perform all exercises at.

3. With a model playing (or you if saxophone is your **primary** instrument)

    a. All students should be looking at the model, who should be standing directly centered and in front of the class. The instructor should be walking around the classroom and monitoring students.

    b. There should never be an overlap of sound between the model and the class; always place a whole rest between the model and the class.

    c. Teach students the "start…stop" drill (using audiation).

    d. The model and the entire class should breathe on beat 3 (when in 4/4 time).

    e. Sound the subdivision on the metronome at ALL TIMES. Start this at the very beginning. If students are having trouble, help them with their foot tap by putting your foot on top of theirs.

    f. During rests and while the model is playing, you must talk to students about the necessity about staying **completely set**. This will more quickly help students to learn where exactly to place their short instrument. The students should look so still to the point that they look like they are still playing!

    g. The only embouchure movement that is allowed is for students that are having difficulty making a sound…..and need to adjust something in order to achieve a sound.

4. Model, Student A, Model, Student B, Model, Student C, etc.

    a. Always place a whole rest in between the model and the student.

    b. After every few students play, have the entire class play as a group.

    c. The model should be walking around the classroom with the instructor, so that all students can easily see the model's embouchure, etc.

    d. Depending on the size of your class, it is your decision to have students stay in "playing/set position" the entire time…..or instead allow students to be in "playing/set position" after every ___ students.

5. Have all students stand and individually play one sound; if they do not get a sound for any reason, they have to sit down. ☹

    a. The metronome is not used for this exercise.

b. Tell students that do not get sounds that they need to practice more at home!

c. Have some sort of incentive for those students who are still standing at the end of one or more rotations.

6. Entire class—without a model—playing whole note, whole rest, etc… with the metronome.

    a. Perform this type of exercise when you feel the class is ready.

    b. Before students play, have them audiate using "start……..stop."

7. Entire class playing two articulated and connected whole notes followed by a whole rest, repeat, etc. **At this point, articulation must have already been taught.**

    a. Again, students can audiate the "start….stop" drill.

    b. Students are thinking "dah."

8. Entire class playing two articulated and connected **half notes** followed by a whole rest, repeat, etc.

    a. Again, students can audiate the "start….stop" drill.

    b. Students are thinking "dah".

9. The instructor or model performs random—yet not complicated—rhythms, while the entire class imitates.

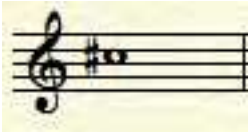
    a. Perform this exercise both with and without whole rests in between the model/instructor and the class.

    b. It would be a good idea to incorporate rhythms—from the beginning band method book used in your class—that not not yet been introduced.

EVERY CLASS FOR 1-2 WEEKS **MUST BEGIN WITH SOME SORT OF A MOUTHPIECE AND NECK EXERCISE!!!!**

FULLY-ASSEMBLED SAXOPHONE EXERCISES

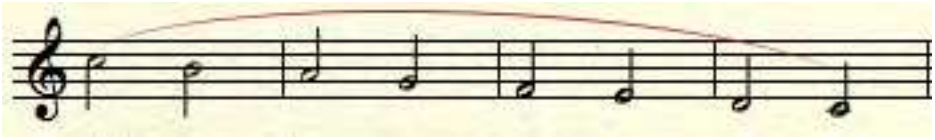
1. The first note students should play is 3rd space C#/Db.



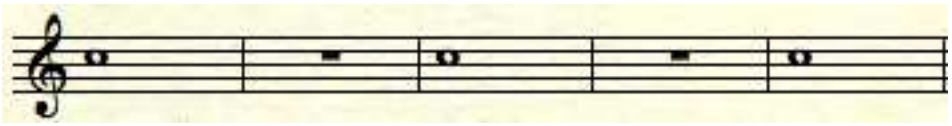
- This note can be played before teaching actual hand position.

<u>At this point, hand position should already be taught.</u>

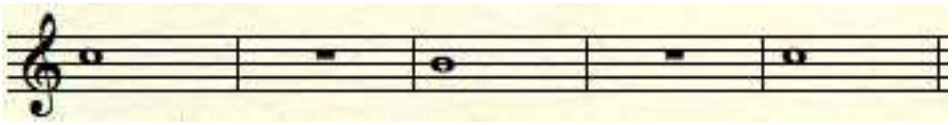
2. Slur diatonic notes from third space C down to middle C.



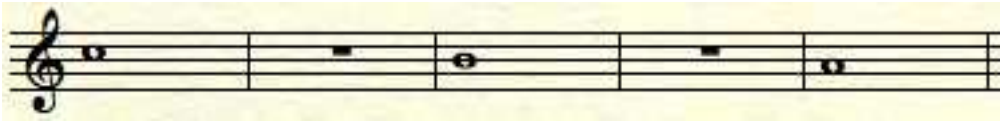
3. Typical exercises you will see in most beginner method books



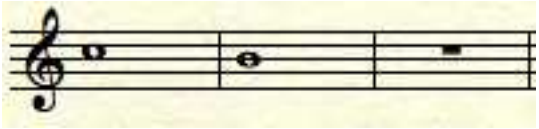
- Should be audiated on pitch with actual note names…as well as with "start" and "stop".
- Can be performed with or without articulation



- Changing notes; can be performed with or without articulation



- Progressive adding of more notes; can still be performed with or without articulation



- When you approach the first line in the book—which contains two or more back-to-back notes—these notes must obviously be articulated. Therefore, you must have already taught articulation with the proper syllable before these lines can be attempted.
- WHEN YOU TEACH ARTICULATION, YOU MUST FIRST INTRODUCE IT ON THE MOUTHPIECE AND NECK.

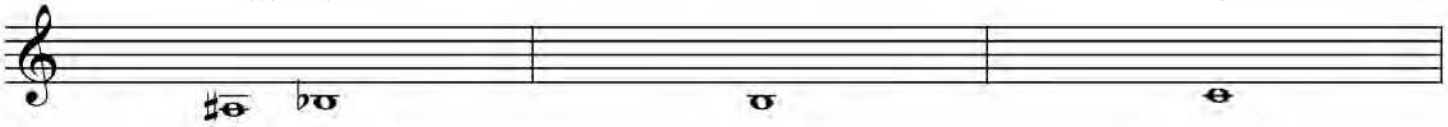
SAXOPHONE - TEACHING FINGERINGS AND USING FINGERING CHARTS

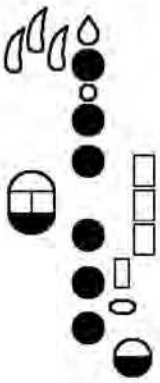
- It is your choice whether or not you use the fingering chart in your book with your students.
- When you begin learning new notes, learn only a few notes per day.
    - DO NOT overwhelm your students!!
- Upper register notes should not be attempted until you have taught all necessary flexibility exercises in order to perform octave slurs (Set 1, Octave Slur Exercises and Palm Key Exercises). By the end of the beginning year, all students should have mastered these vital exercises.
- Monitor unused fingers while students are playing.
    - NO FLY AWAY FINGERS!
- Make it your goal to teach new fingerings before you get to the new fingering (or even the note itself) in the method book.
    - This will make the students feel like they are smart, and that they are moving more quickly through the book

Saxophone Fingering Chart

John Benzer

A#/Bb





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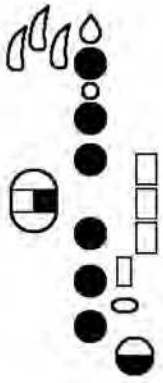
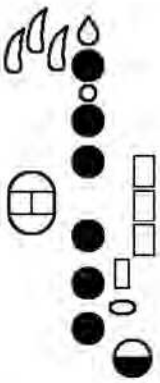
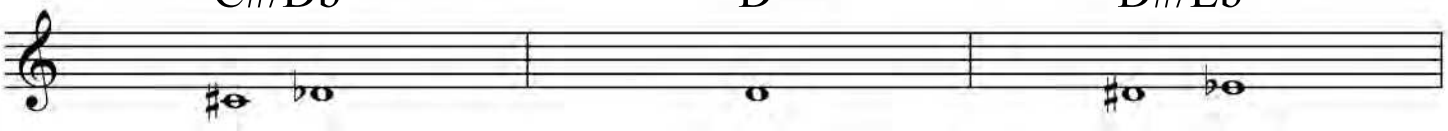
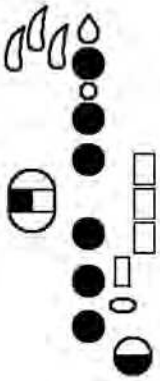


C



C#/Db





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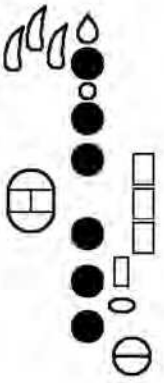
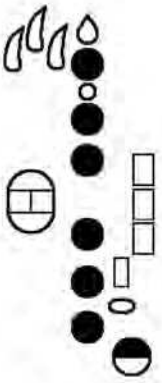


D#/Eb



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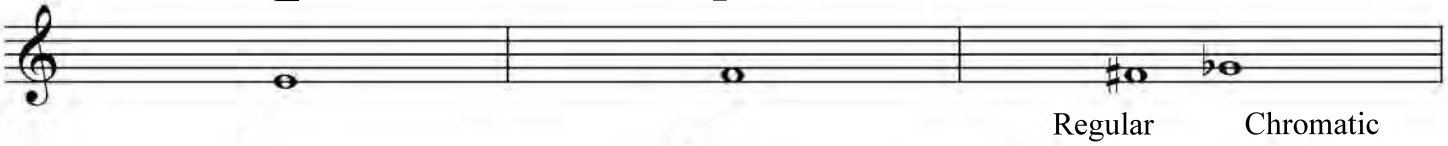

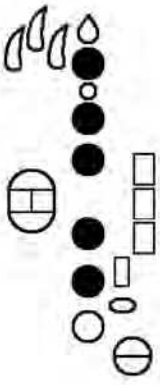

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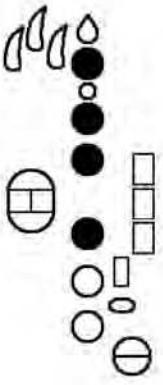
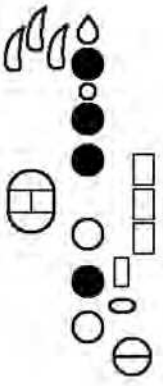
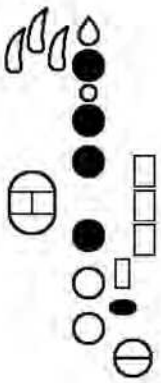


F#/Gb

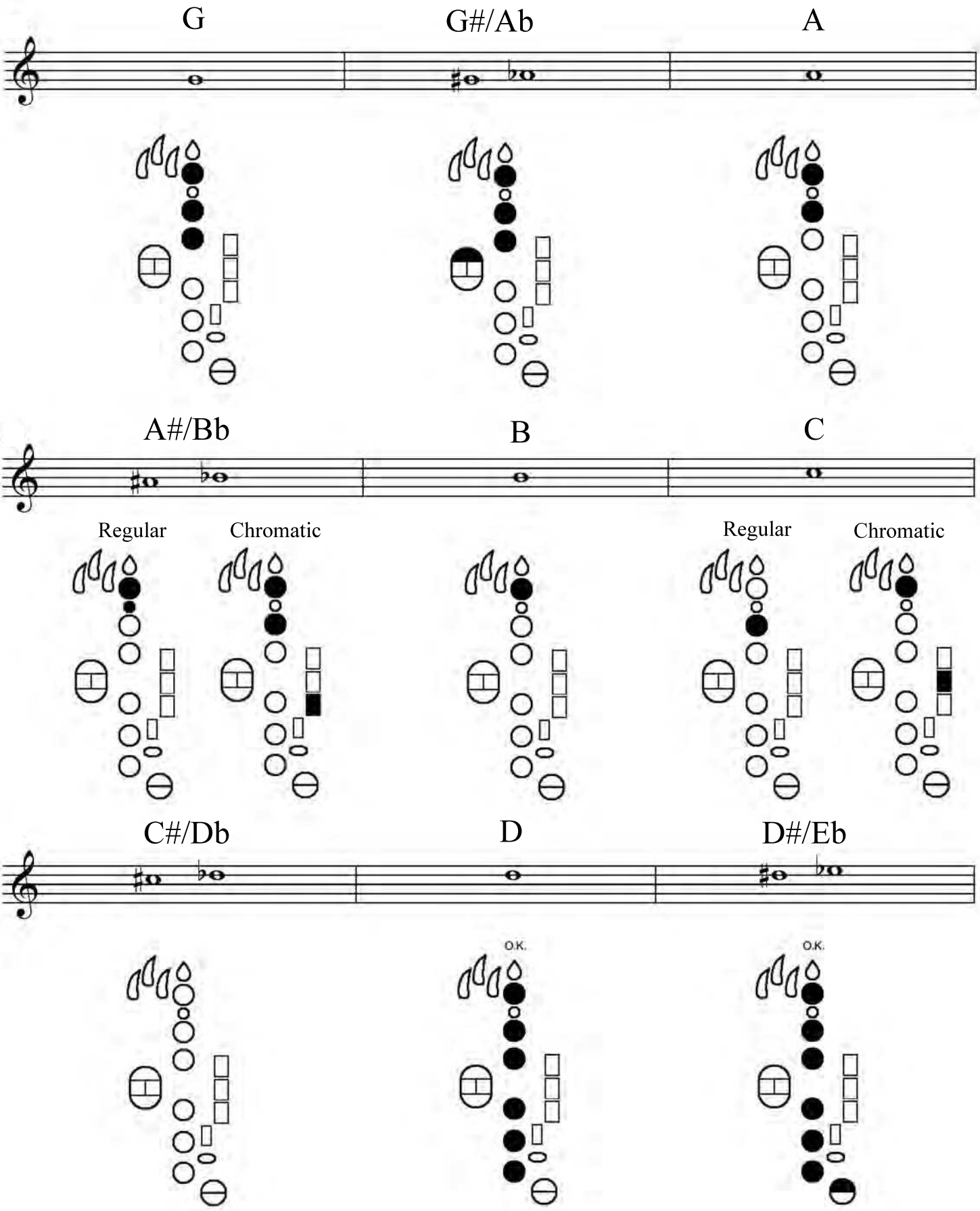
Regular



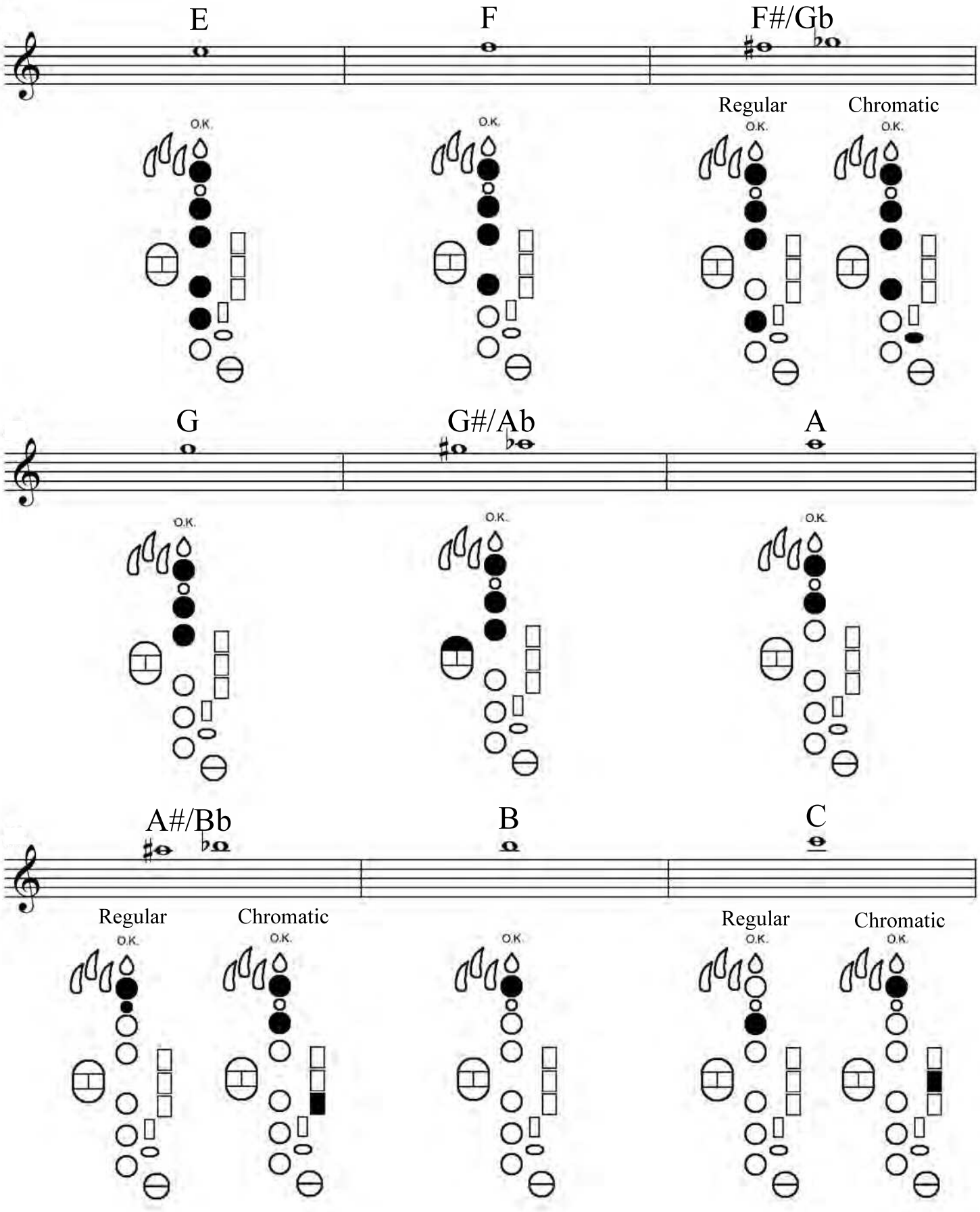
Chromatic



Saxophone Fingering Chart

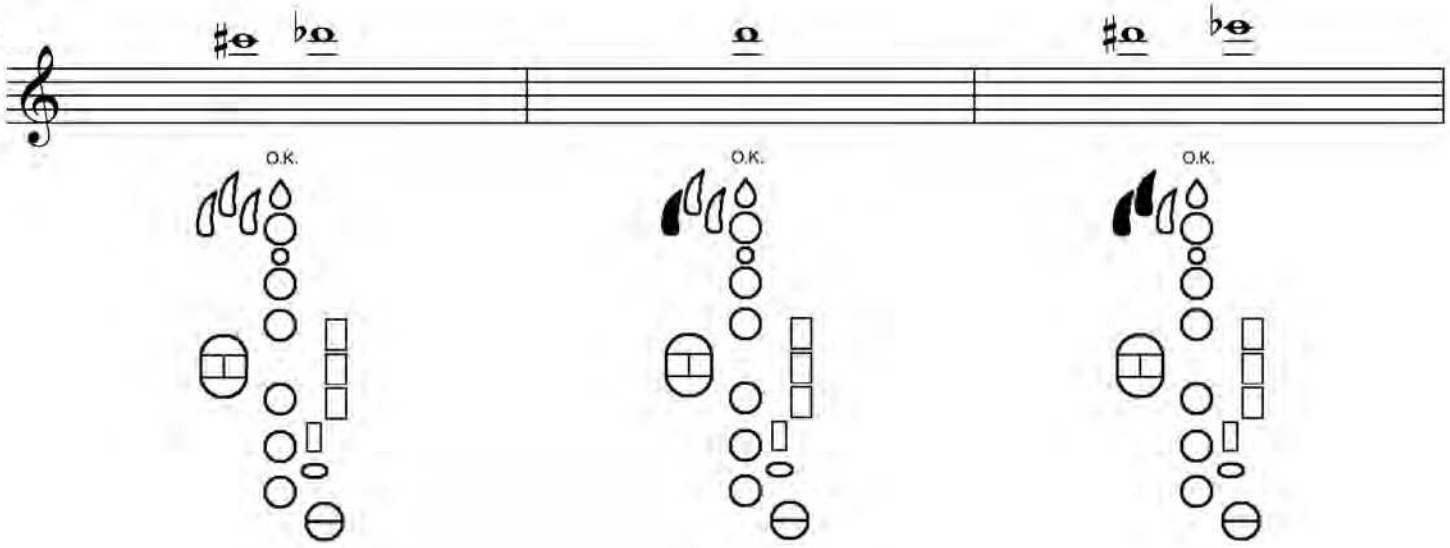


Saxophone Fingering Chart



Saxophone Fingering Chart

C#/Db



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D#/Eb

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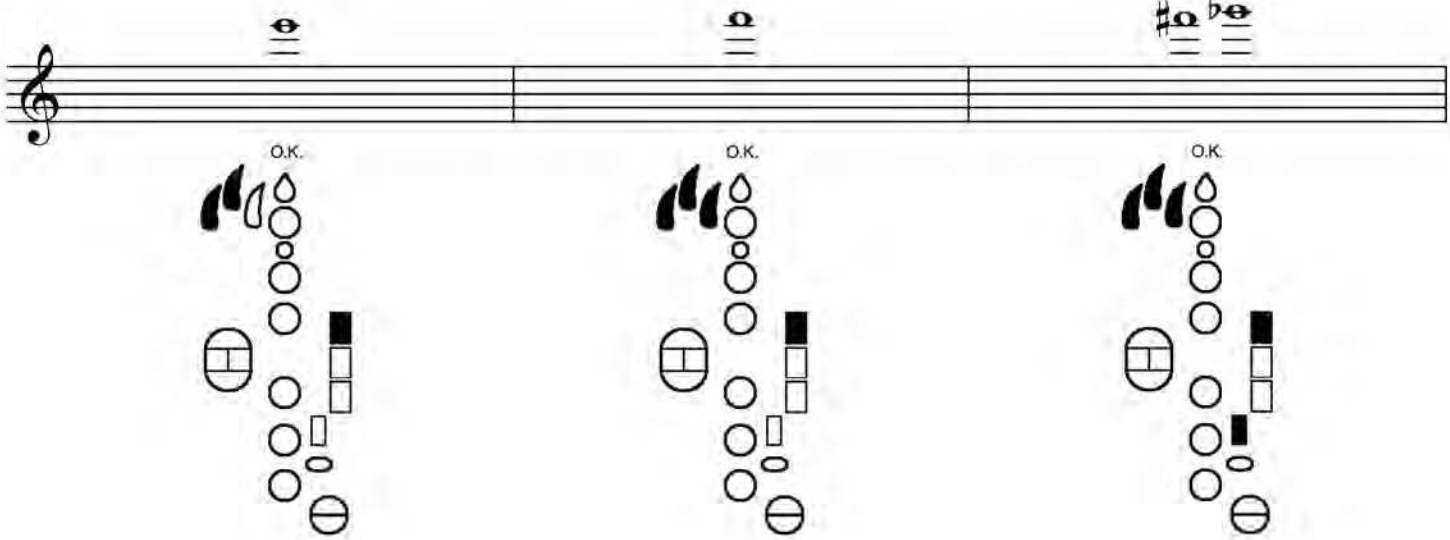


F

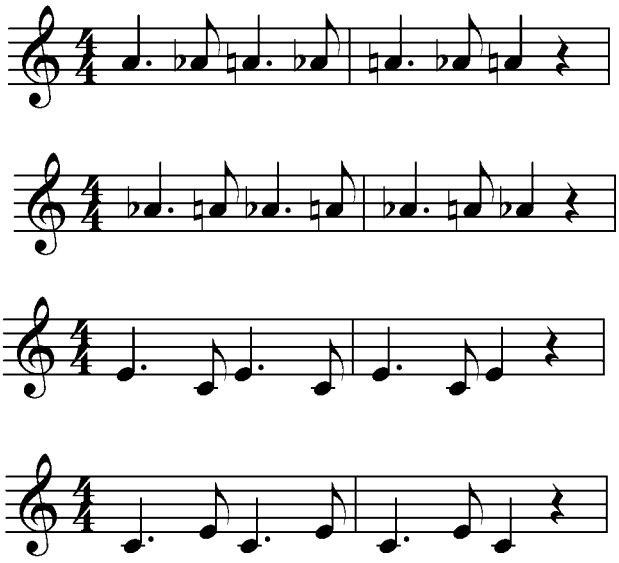
F#/Gb

WORKING OUT SAXOPHONE BLIPS AND FINGER/TONGUE COORDINATION PROBLEMS

Blips

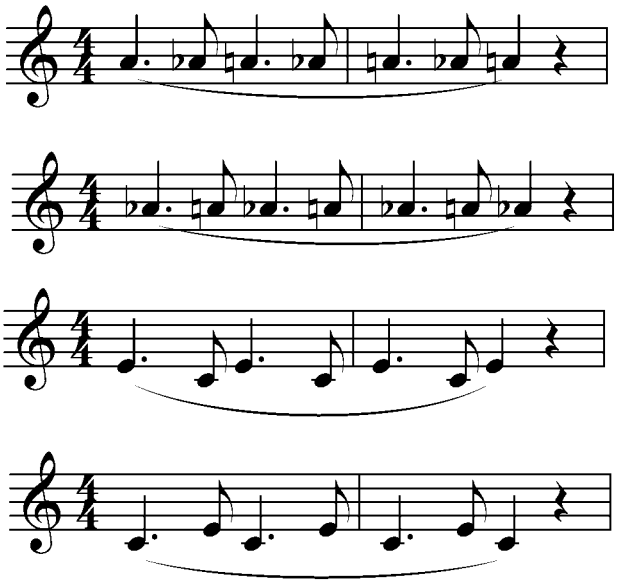
Blips can be defined as the uncoordinated movement of multiple fingers that should be moving at the same time—but are not. As with the teaching of all woodwind instruments, the most problematic fingers in both hands are the ring finger and the pinky. Most blips occur with the use of either or both of these fingers.

- Use uneven rhythms with everything tongued.



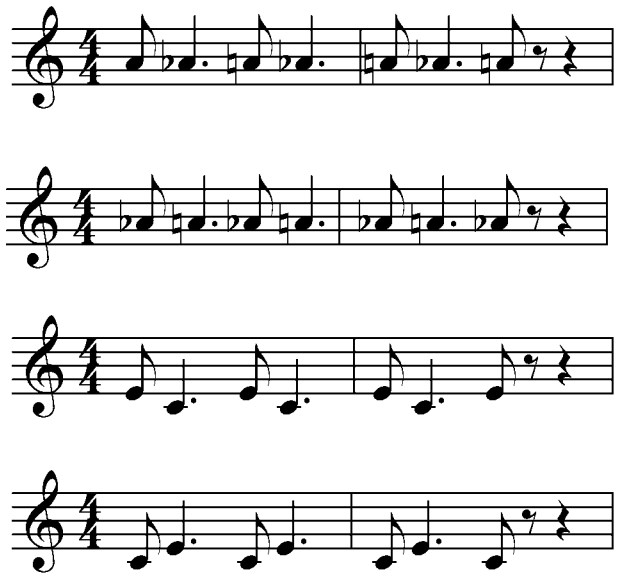
- Students can audiate the counting while they are positioning
- Students can audiate "long…short long….short long…short long," while they are positioning

- Use uneven rhythms with everything slurred.



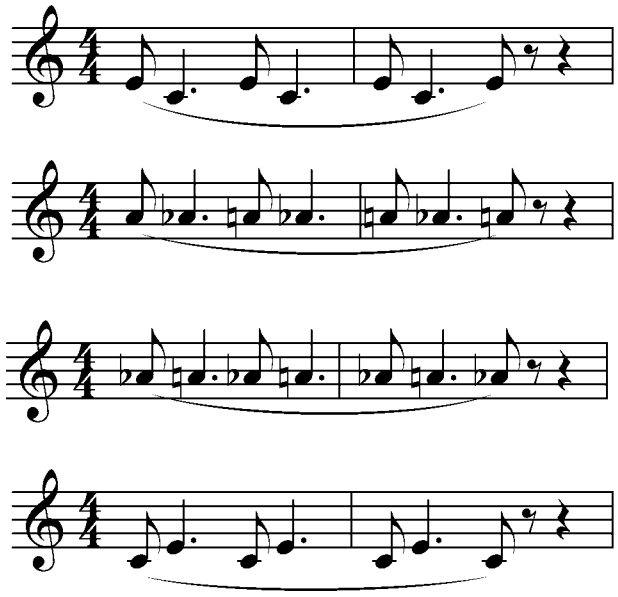
- Students can audiate the counting while they are positioning.
- Students can audiate "long…short long….short long…short long," while they are positioning.

- Use uneven rhythms with everything tongued.



- Students can audiate the counting while they are positioning.
- Students can audiate “short long….short long…short long….short,” while they are positioning.

- Use uneven rhythms with everything slurred.



- Students can audiate the counting while they are positioning.
- Students can audiate "short long….short long…short long….short," while they are positioning.

- These exercises can be very effective, **but must be audiated and positioned at the same time.**
- Playing tests can be given over these exercises being applied to certain sections of music to promote the practicing of them.

Finger/Tongue Coordination Problems

There are two types of finger/tongue coordination problems that occur when passages are articulated:

1. students changing to the next fingering before they articulate (**most** common)
2. students articulating before they change to the next fingering

- Students can audiate the counting.
- Students can audiate their note names.
- Students can do their air and position through their embouchures—without their saxophones in playing position.
- Students can do air and position through their mouthpiece and neck.

SAXOPHONE EXTENDED FINGER TECHNIQUES

Extended finger techniques refer to the use of the pinky keys of the left and right hand as well as the palm keys. Developing efficient technique in these areas is vital to the student's ability to play technically.

Palm Keys

- High D – "PK 1"
  - Use the LH index finger, 1st (big) knuckle.
  - Keep the other fingers curved and hovering over the pearls.
- High D # - "PK 1 and 2"
  - Use the LH index finger, 2nd (middle) knuckle
  - Keep the other fingers curved, relaxed, and hovering
  - This is where tension begins to creep into the palm – keep it relaxed
- High E – "PK 1 and 2" plus RH top side key
  - Left hand remains the same – keep it relaxed.
  - Add the top side key in the RH – use the space between the big and middle knuckle.
    - It is VERY IMPORTANT that the student's right hand position stay as close to normal as possible. Ensure the right hand fingers stay as close to hovering over the pearls as possible. Students tend to contort and move the entire hand to activate this key, which is inefficient.
- High F – "PK 1, 2 and 3" plus RH top side key
  - Left hand adds the third palm key using the 2nd (middle knuckle) of the LH middle finger….not the index finger!
  - Keep the palm soft and relaxed.
  - Hand should remain curved.
  - Like high E, the RH hand position should stay as close to normal as possible.

Beginning students have smaller hands, so you will have to be forgiving if their hands are not quite big enough to execute the technique exactly as listed. Some exceptions will have to be made. Have students practice palm key exercises (provided) every other day for short intervals as their hands will get tired.

Pinky Keys

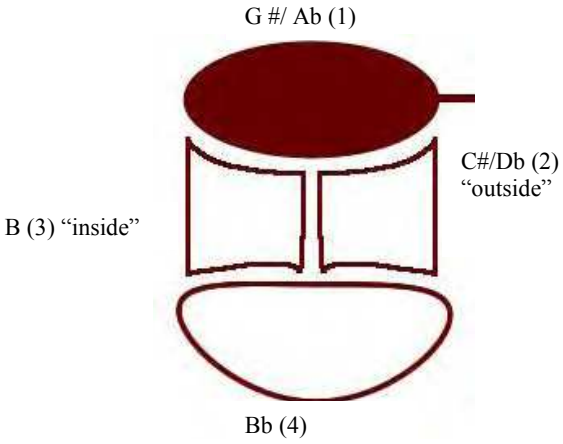
It is most important that the pinkies to do not "lock up" when engaging these keys in the left or right hand.

Right Hand

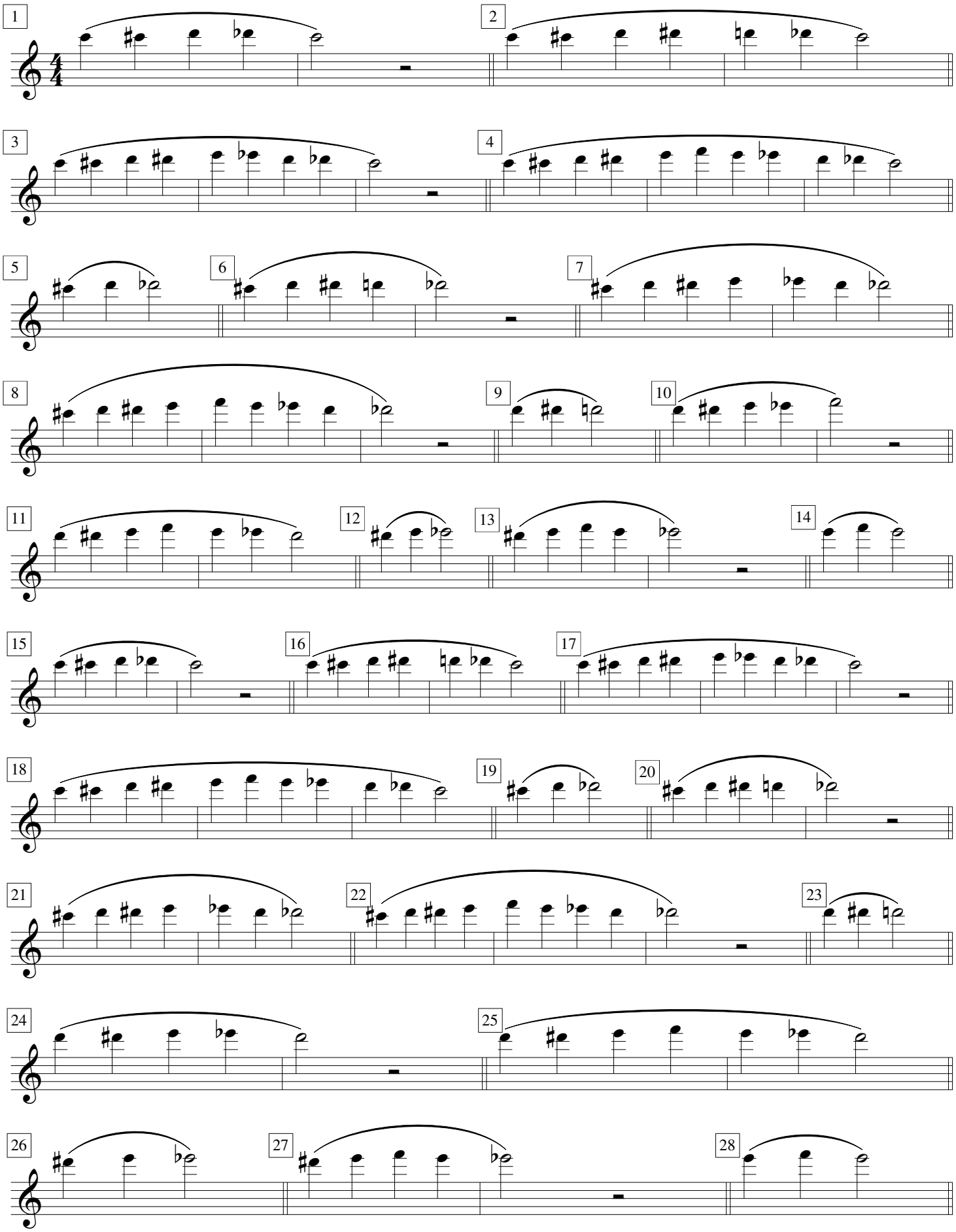
- When moving from the E flat (upstairs) key to the C (downstairs) key, it is important to land on the roller, never past it. Slide roller to roller, NOT key to key.
- Practice exercises moving from E-flat to C not playing and playing. Practice these in short intervals as the pinkies will get tired. Teach your students to work on these two or three times during their practice session for short amounts of time every other day.

Left Hand

- When using the LH pinky, it is important that students NEVER pick the pinky up when moving between keys!
- When using the C#/Db and the B key, slide roller to roller, NOT key to key.
- When using Bb, students can either move roller to roller, or pivot the LH pinky down.
- Practice exercises moving from C#/Db to B, and B to B-flat (harder). Same practice rules apply.



SAXOPHONE PALM KEY EXERCISES



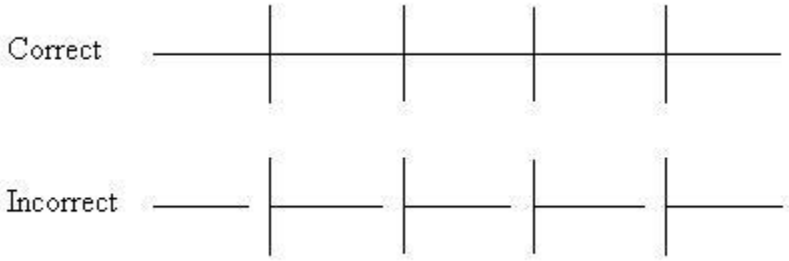
SAXOPHONE ARTICULATION

- Do not attempt to teach articulation until all students are producing characteristic and consistent sounds on the neck and mouthpiece, as well as the entire saxophone.
- Introduce articulation on the neck and mouthpiece.
- The tongue is down 98% and up 2% of the time.
- The tongue moves up and down, not back and forth.
- The tongue never touches the teeth or gums.
- The purpose of the tongue is to release the air which causes the reed to vibrate which creates the sound. The tongue's release of the air simply defines the beginning/start of the vibration/sound.
- Articulation is used to define the vibrations necessary to create musical rhythm, style and movement--to contrast the use of slurring (which also creates similar musical entities).
- Use the DOG drill; singing "dah", etc. as with the teaching of brass articulation.
- One taste bud of the student's tongue should touch where the flat part of the reed where the imaginary "dot" at the tip has been all along. The tongue touches this spot, and immediately returns to its "at rest" position.
- The student must always touch and interrupt a **vibrating reed**.
- The articulation does not **stop** the reed vibration.
- There should be no movement in the face, chin or throat. All that moves when the student articulates is the air and the tongue.
- The tongue must touch in the same spot with the same energy every time. The spot should be where the flat part of the reed meets the tip.

YOU WILL NOW BE SHOWN COMBINED EXERCISES THAT WILL HELP IMPROVE THE STUDENT'S TONE QUALITY IN ALL OF THE REGISTERS, INCREASE RANGE, CREATE EVEN ARTICULATION IN ALL REGISTERS, AND TEACH YOUNG STUDENTS HOW TO CONTROL THE ENTIRE INSTRUMENT DURING THE FIRST YEAR.

SAXOPHONE ARTICULATION EXERCISES

- When starting articulation exercises, the use of mirrors is vital.
- Remind students that the tongue only interrupts the air – it never stops the air.
- Articulating with black notes as opposed to white notes, encourages students to move their tongues down quicker.
- Make sure from the very beginning, students sing and play in a connected/legato style.



- Exercises to be taught in the following order:

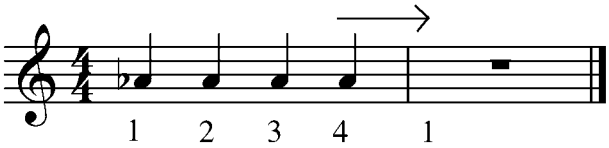
1. Have students sing on "dah" and then ultimately on the French syllable "dih" or even "doo." If students are unable to sing in a connected style, they should not progress to the next step.
2. Have students put their hand or index finger in front of their face and feel their air. Students should feel continuous air and not "puffs" of air.
3. Go around the room and have each student tongue air at your hand, so you can assess their ability to do it correctly.
4. Using a mirror, students should articulate with or without their hand/index finger, making sure that their face, chin, and throat are not moving.
5. When you feel students have mastered the previous exercises, allow them to articulate – using the syllable "dah" or "dih" – on the mouthpiece and neck. Students should put their left hands under their neck so they can feel a continuous stream of air while they are articulating. Students who do not feel continuous air need to be verbally made aware that they are <u>not</u> articulating correctly.

**** Students should start with their tongue on the reed to create the articulation. The tongue then falls down and returns to its "at rest" position in the bottom of the mouth. One taste bud of the student's tongue should touch the flat part of the reed, where the imaginary "dot" at the tip has been all along. The air and tongue go to this same "dot."**

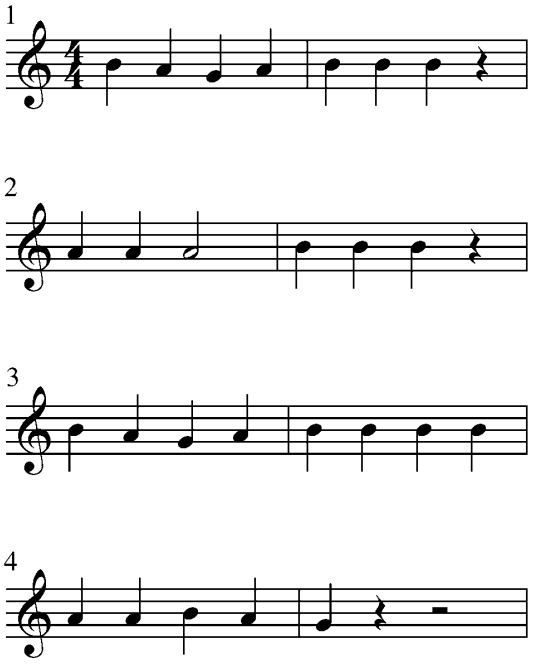
6. Allow students to articulate as fast as they can.
7. Allow the students to start the sound and use the "ta-day" syllable.
8. Allow the students to start the sound and articulate by snapping your finger on command.
9. With the metronome, begin to incorporate easy follow-the-leader rhythms with you singing or modeling – and the students echoing on their mouthpiece and neck. Whole rests may or may not be necessary between you and the students. As with your initial

sound production exercises, students need to continue counting with their fingers – with their left hand – while they are playing. This ensures that students are thinking internal subdivision.

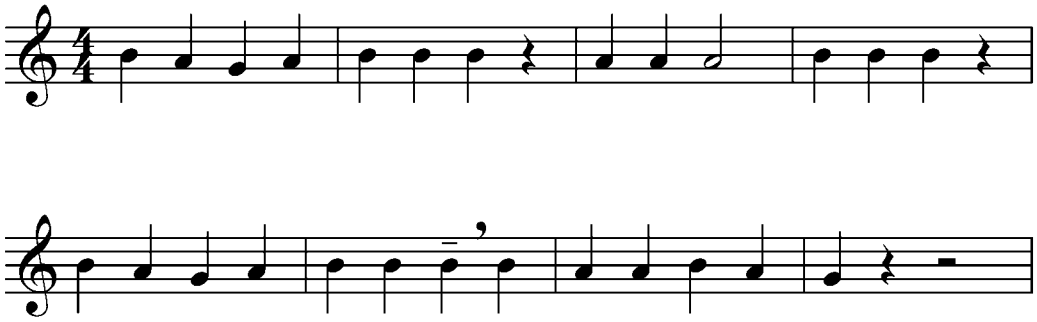
10. Before progressing to the fully-assembled saxophone, assign the following playing test on the mouthpiece and neck:



- Attach the mouthpiece and neck to the saxophone and begin articulation. Students must be constantly reminded that they should be articulating in the same way as they were when just using the mouthpiece and neck.
- Whether students are playing white notes or black notes, they must constantly be reminded that the tongue moves down quickly.
- When students can successfully sing note names on the same pitch, allow them to articulate multiple notes on the same pitch.
- When pulse and foot pat are learned, students articulate every time their foot touches the floor – and then when their foot touches the floor and as it comes up.
- Once the student is able to read music, call the articulation "rhythmic articulation". Students should be tonguing as the music moves across the page.
- Do not allow students to articulate back-to-back notes on *different* pitches until they are playing with absolute connected style on notes of the *same* pitch.
- When the tongue is moving correctly, you must decide when it is appropriate to have students begin coordinating finger movement with articulation.
- When students articulate back-to-back notes on *different* pitches, they cannot stop their air as they change fingerings.
- Teach *Mary Had a Little Lamb* in four segments by singing and then playing:

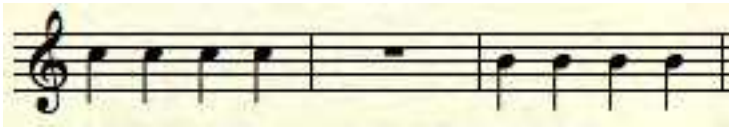


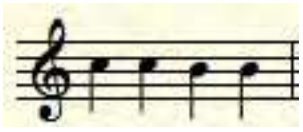
- After all students have successfully played each segment of *Mary Had a Little Lamb*, begin to string together the segments into the following finished product:



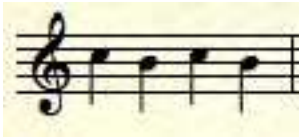
- Ultimately, students should be able to execute any or all of the following on a daily basis:
  - articulate as fast as they can
  - articulate using the "ta-day" syllable
  - articulate on command
  - articulate with foot pat and articulate rhythms
- When playing exercises out of the method book, you can return to previously-learned lines and add articulation. Do not feel like all lines must be executed again during class; assign students to perform all lines at home with articulation.

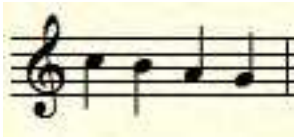
SAXOPHONE-LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR ARTICULATION

1. 

2. 

   - Introduces skill of tonguing and finger change at the same time

3. 

4. 

   - Introduces skill of tonguing and multiple finger changes within a measure

4 Teaching Techniques

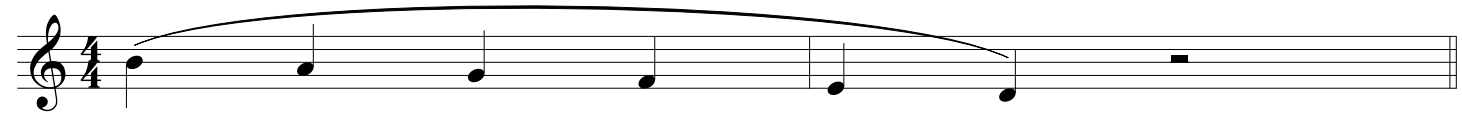
1. Sing on note name and position
2. Air and position
3. Position only
4. PLAY ☺

SAXOPHONE SET 1

Level 1

All exercises are performed on the same airstream.
Make sure all sounds have the same resonance.
Move from the center of the note to the next center of the note.
Be sure all fingers move easily and naturally and that the pads of the fingers stay on the pearls.
The following exercises prep the student for octave slurs.

1



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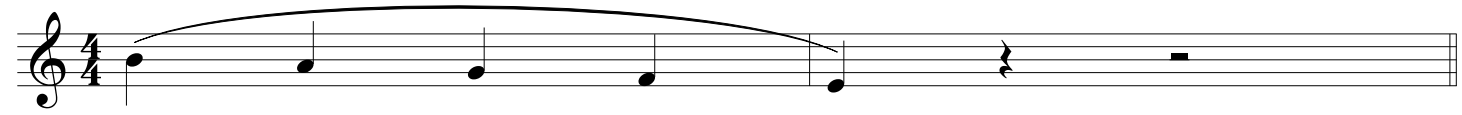

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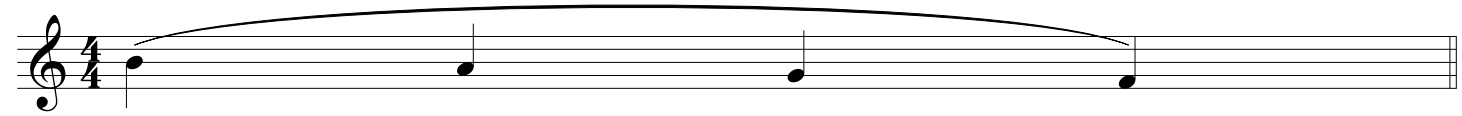

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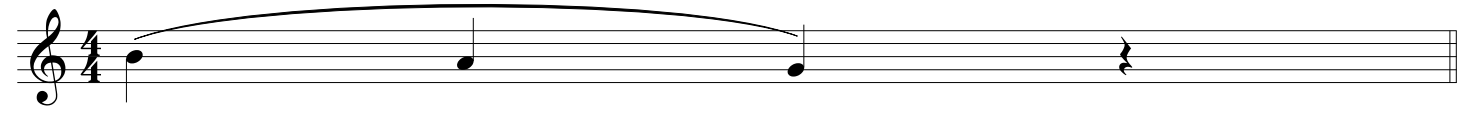

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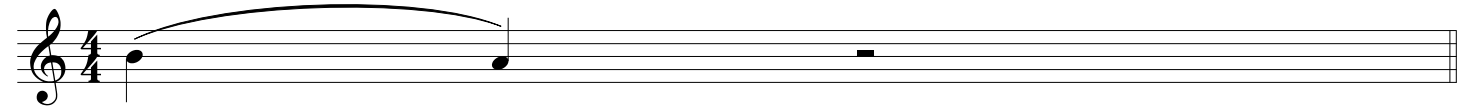

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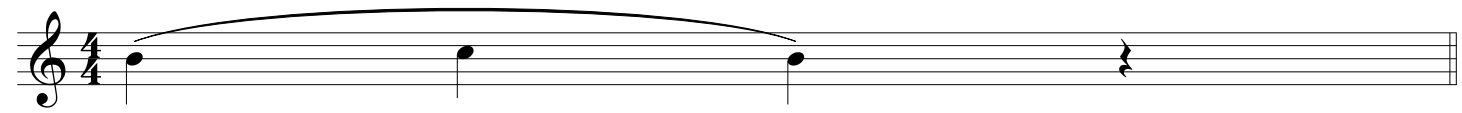
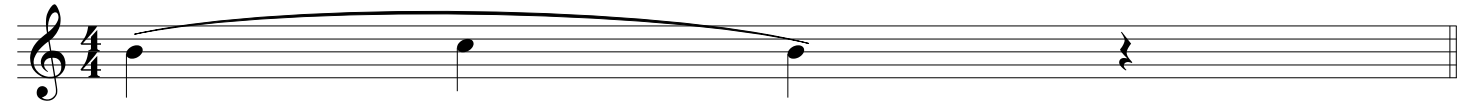


This exercise should be performed with regular C.

7



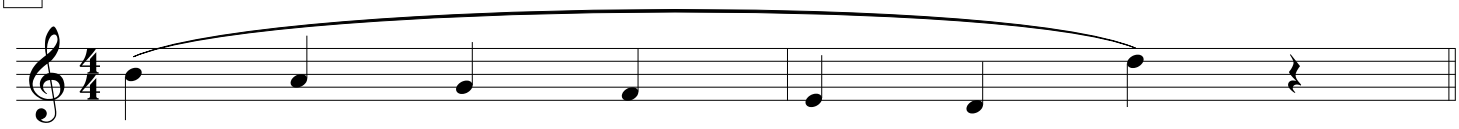
This exercise should be performed with side C.

SAXOPHONE SET 1

Level 2

All exercises are performed on the same airstream.
Make sure all sounds have the same resonance.
Move from the center of the note to the next center of the note.
Be sure all fingers move easily and naturally and that the pads of the fingers stay on the pearls.
The following exercises prep the student for octave slurs being performed at the end of each line.

8



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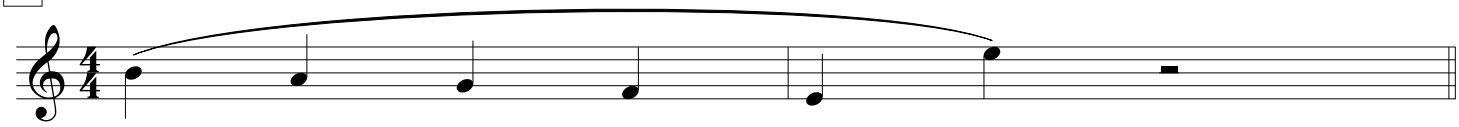

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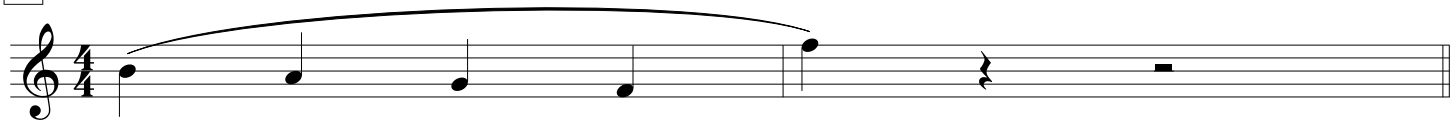

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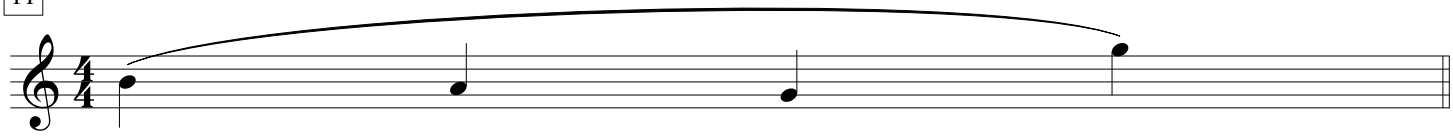

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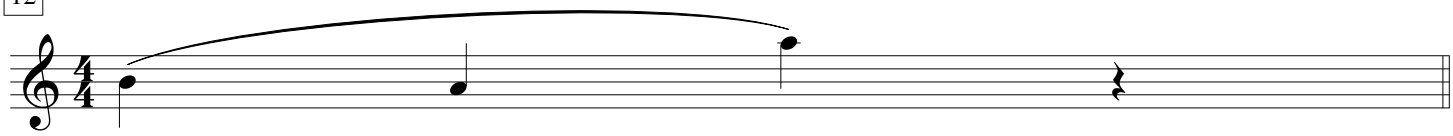

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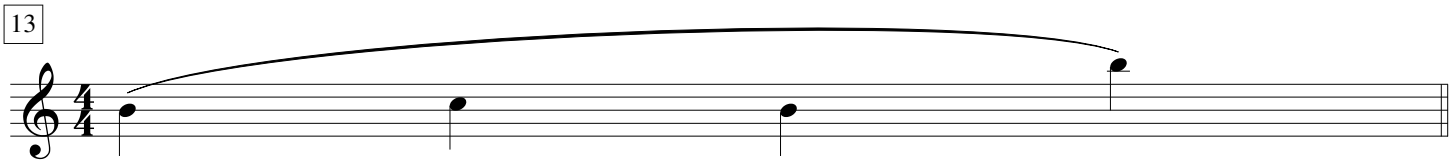
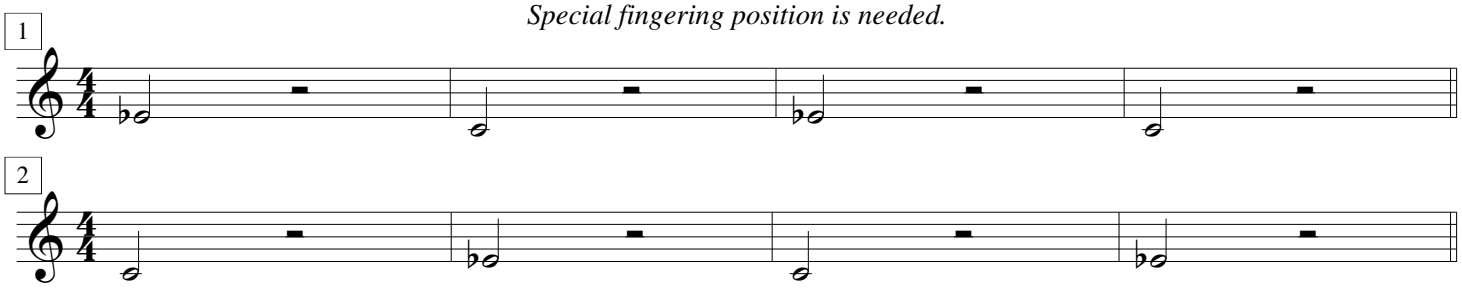


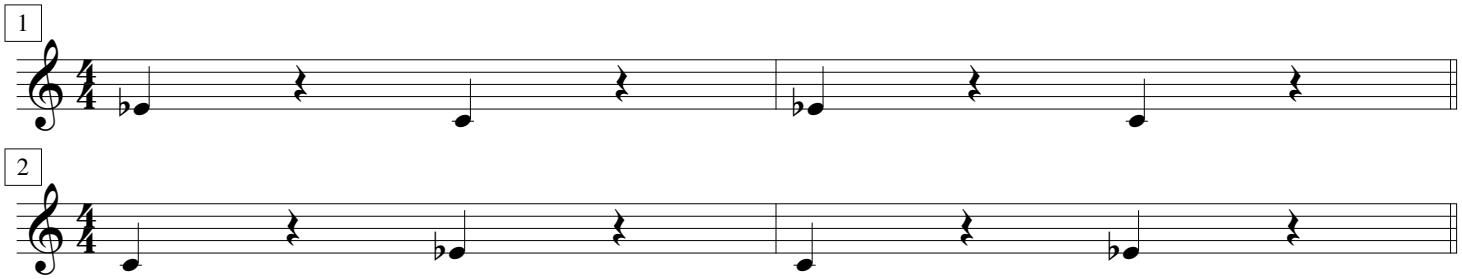
SAXOPHONE SET 2

Level 1

Keep the palms soft and pliable.
Roll the right pinky over the rollers.
Special fingering position is needed.



Level 2



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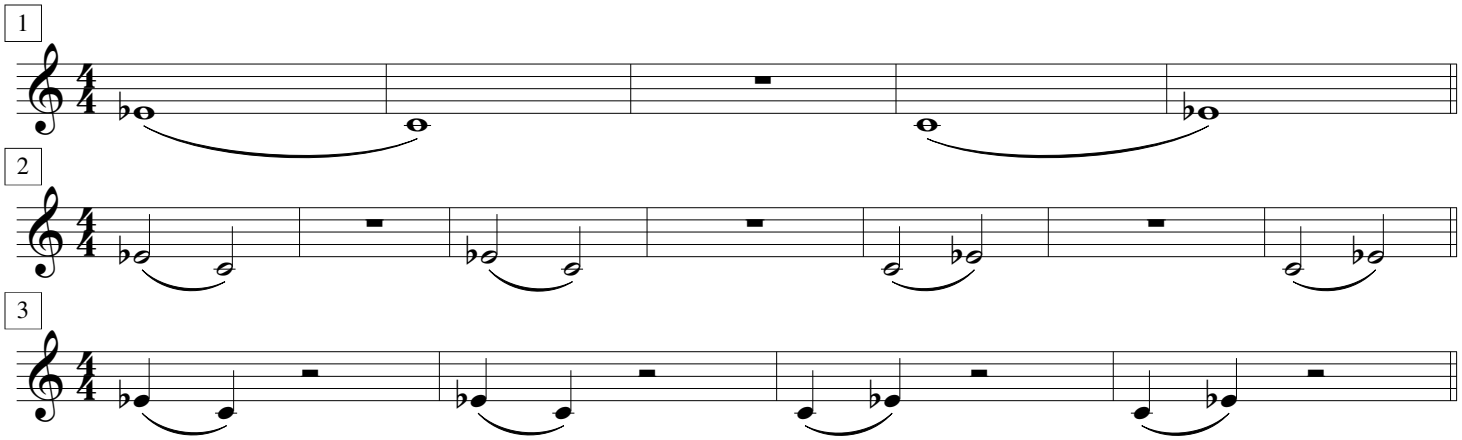

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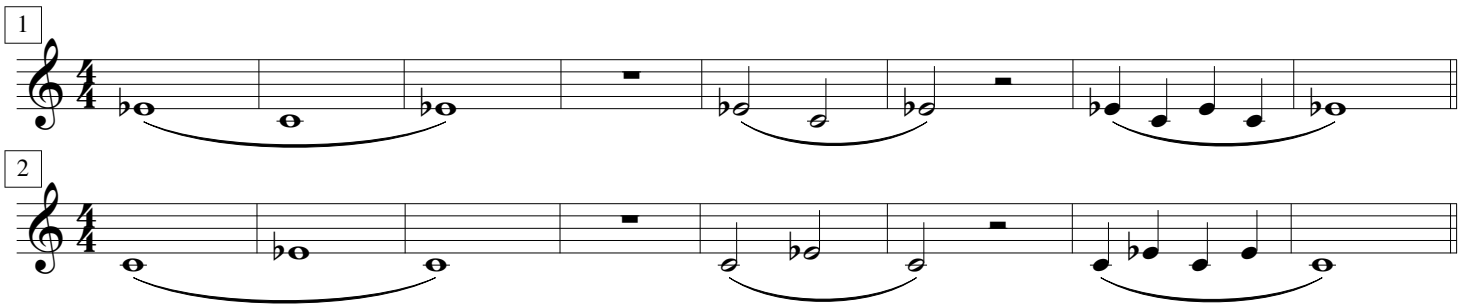
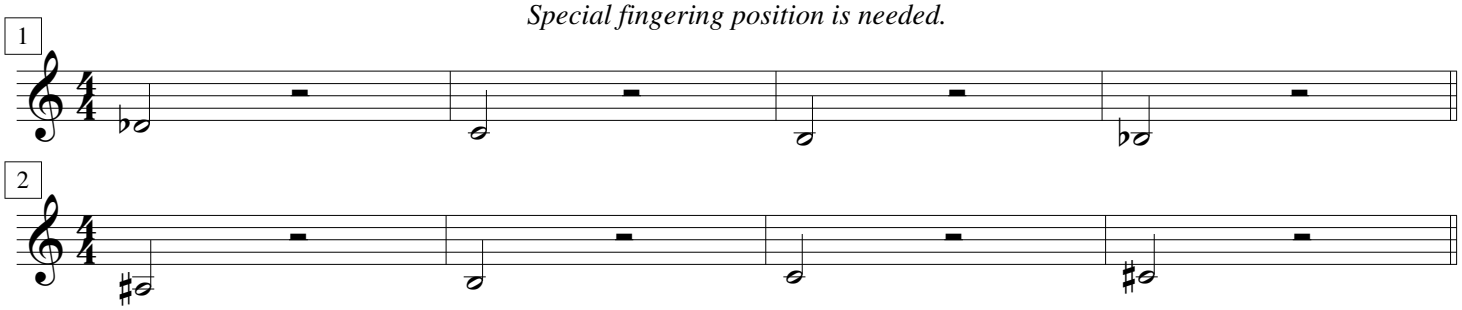


SAXOPHONE SET 3

Level 1

Keep the palms soft and pliable.
Roll the right pinky over the rollers.
Special fingering position is needed.



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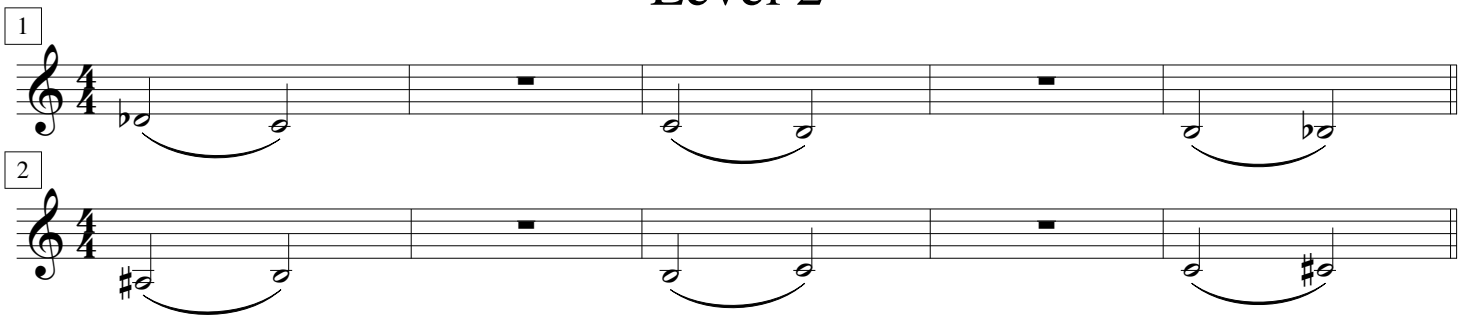
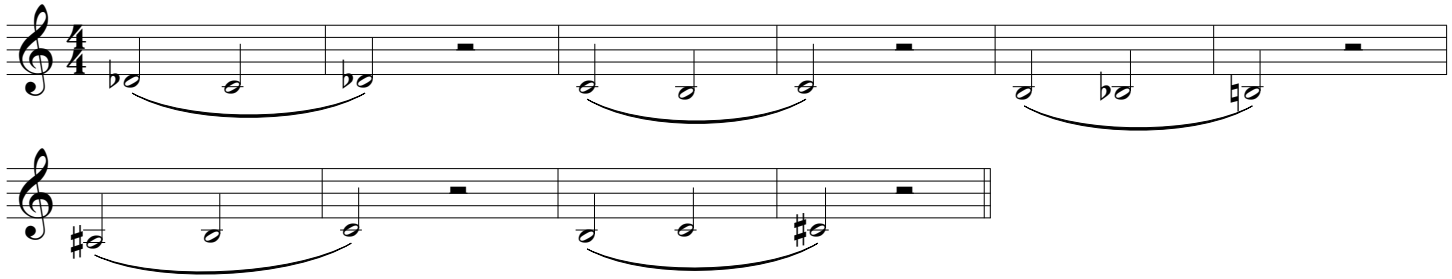


Level 3



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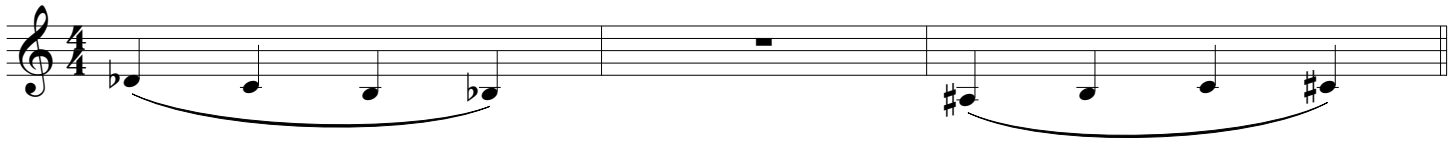
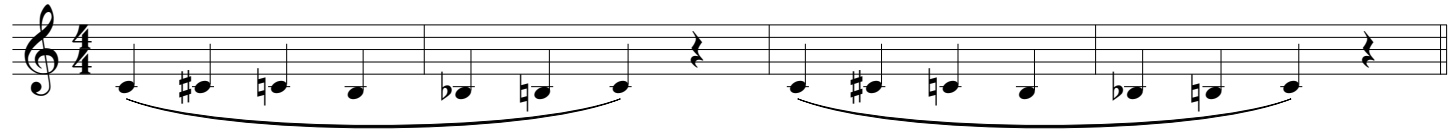


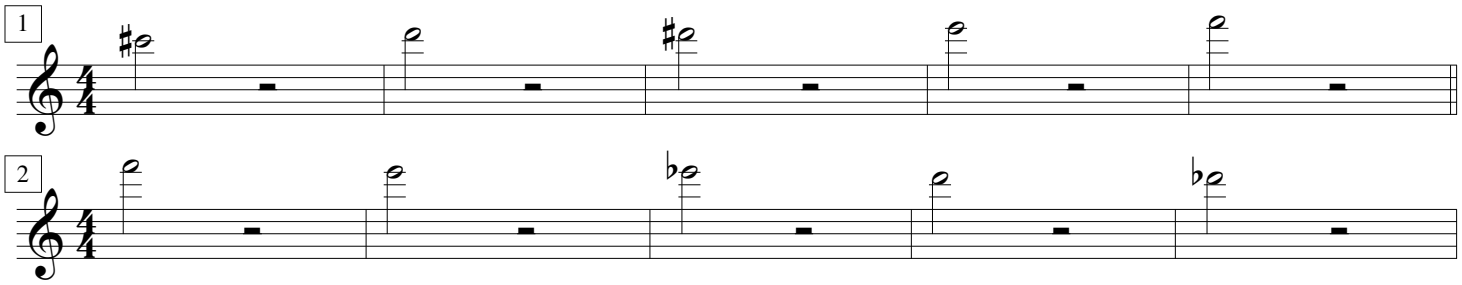
Level 5



SAXOPHONE SET 4

Level 1

Keep the palms soft and pliable.
Special fingering position is needed.



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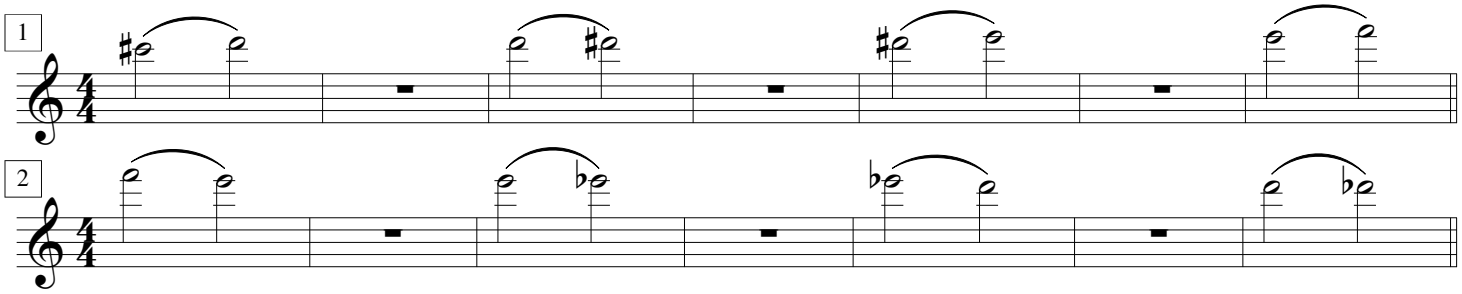
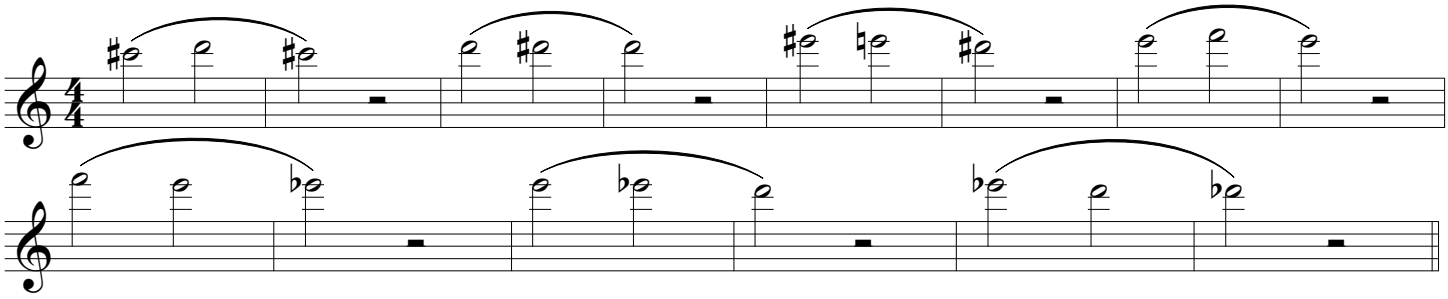


Level 3



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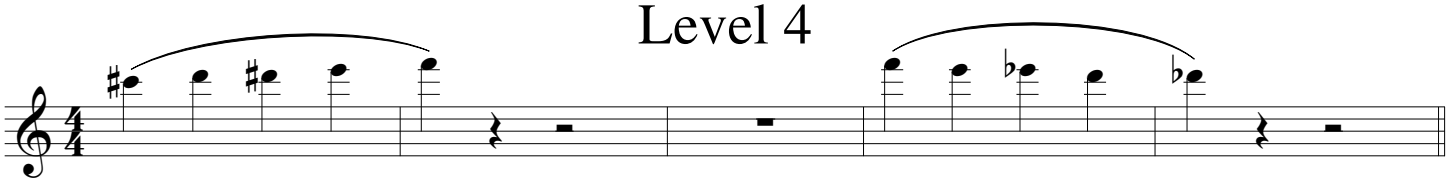

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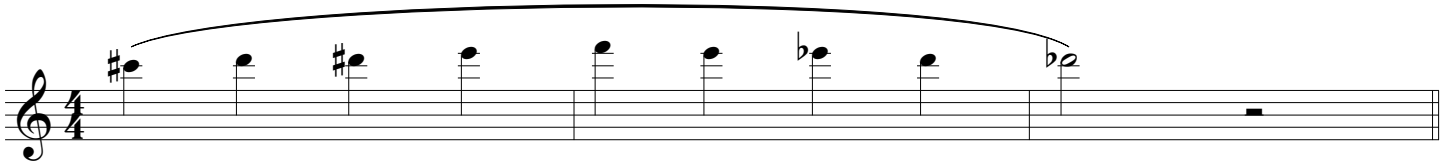
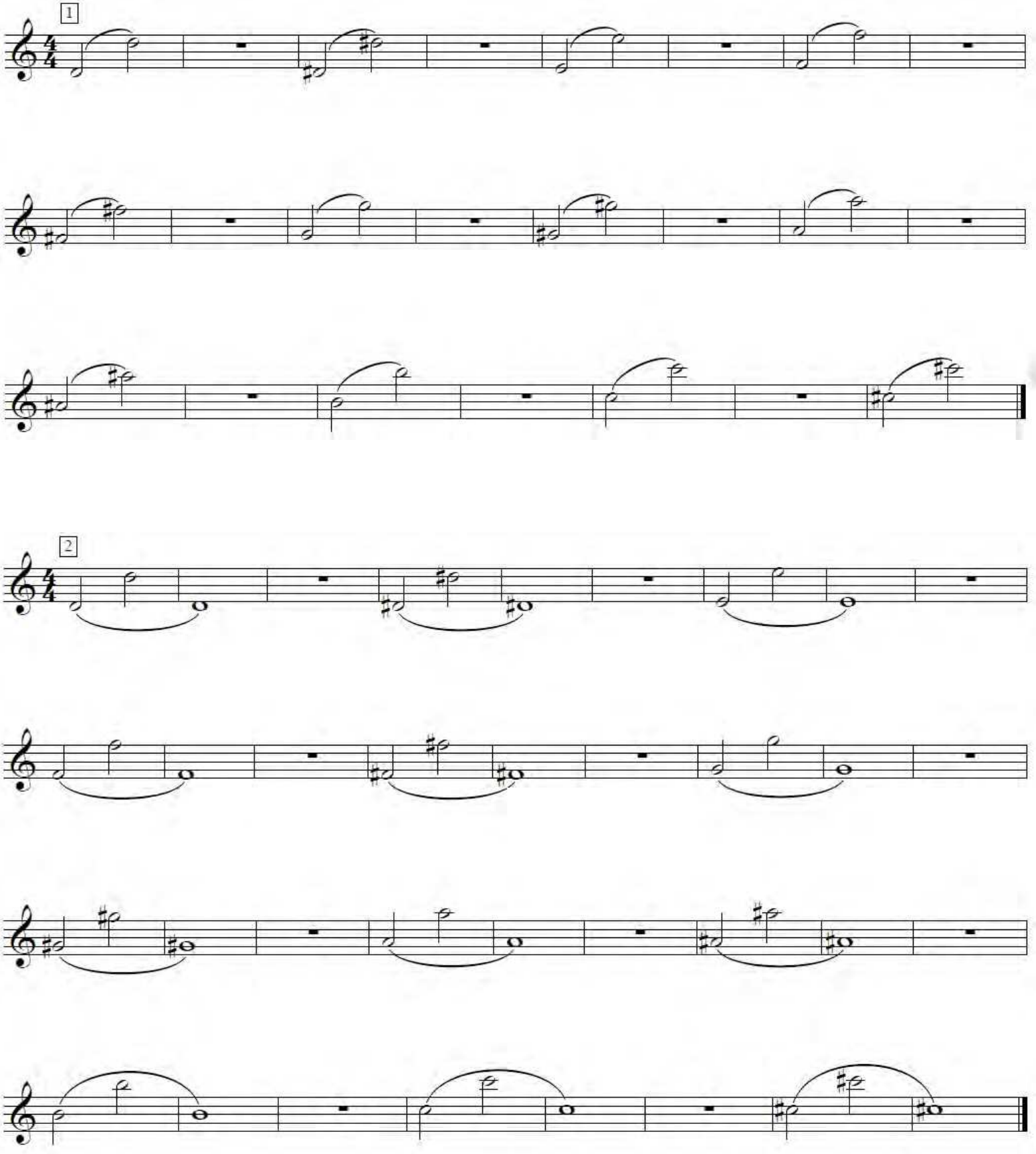
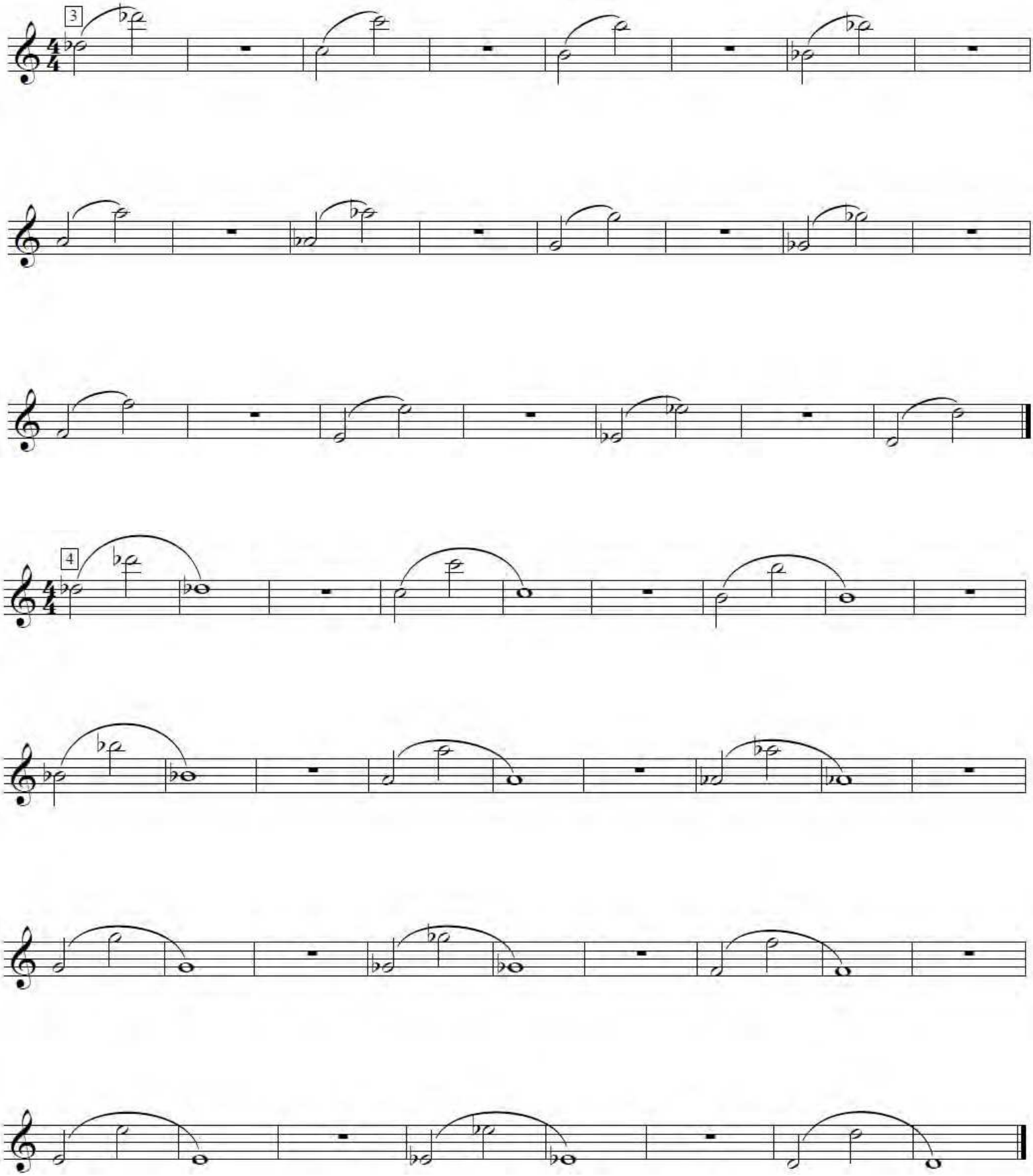
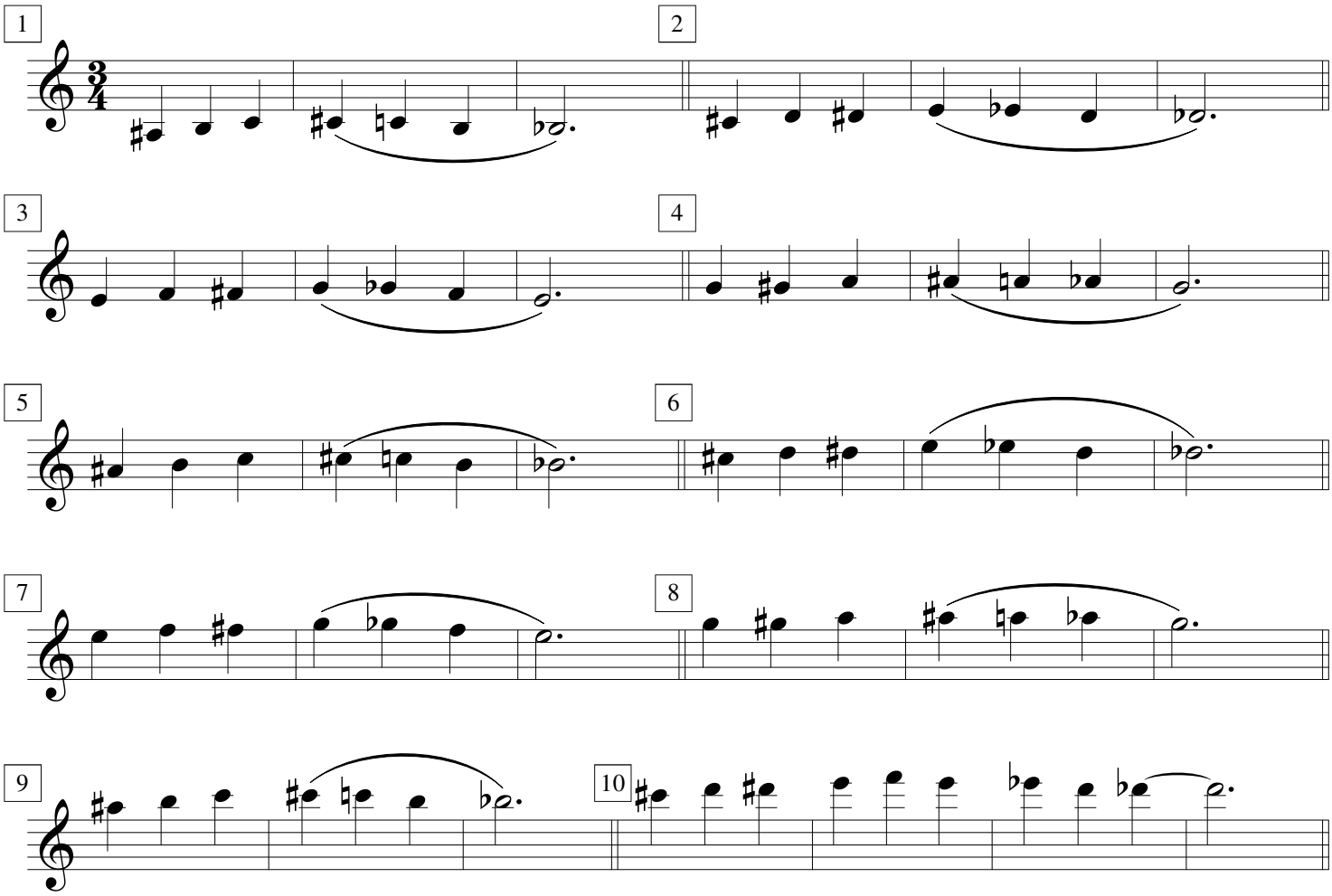


SAXOPHONE – OCTAVE SLURS




3
4

SAXOPHONE CHROMATIC SCALE GROUPS



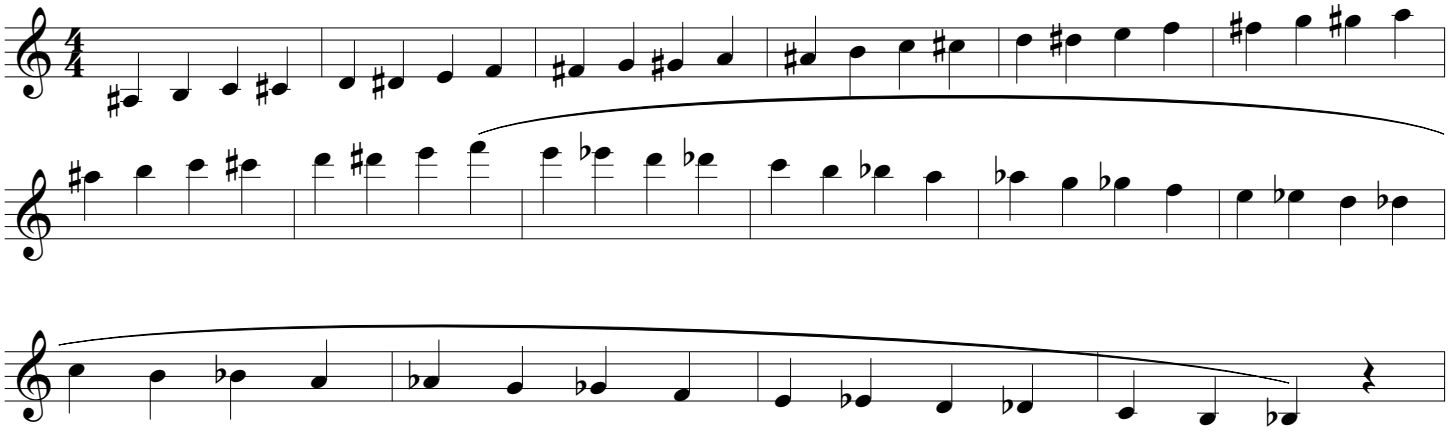
SAXOPHONE CHROMATIC SCALE

Level 1

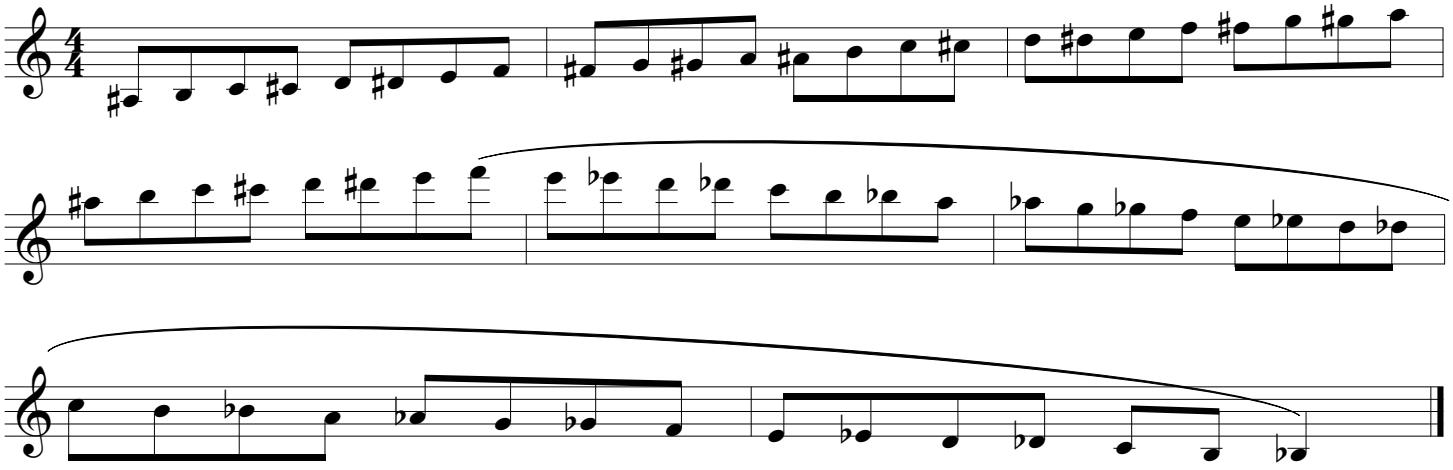
All students should be made aware of the importance of making consistent, characteristic sounds on all notes regardless of register.

Do not continue past the note when sound consistency changes. Work your way up one note at a time.

Realistically, the chromatic scale may not be introduced until the second semester.

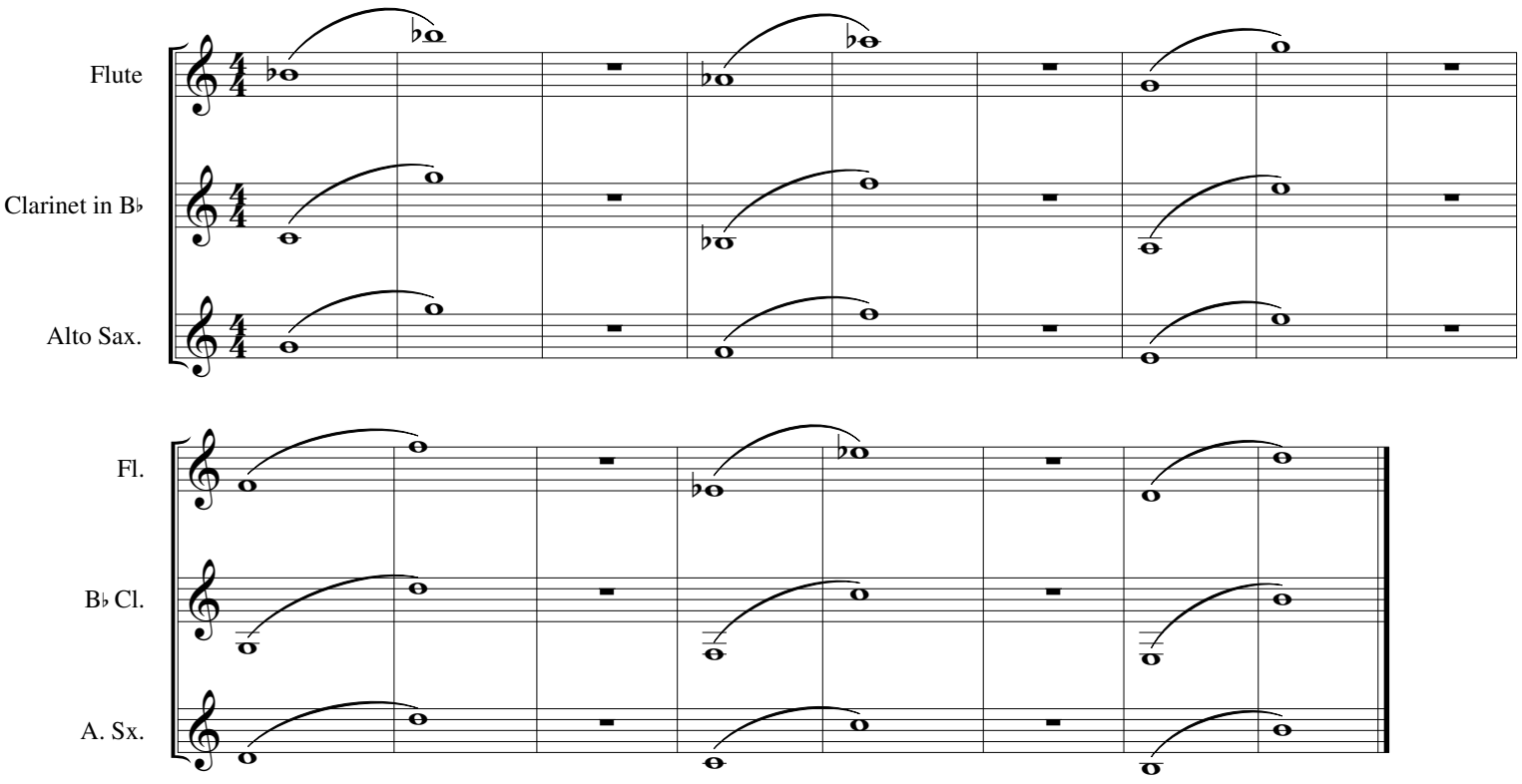


Level 2



FLUTE, CLARINET, AND ALTO SAXOPHONE OCTAVE AND REGISTER EXERCISES

Set 1



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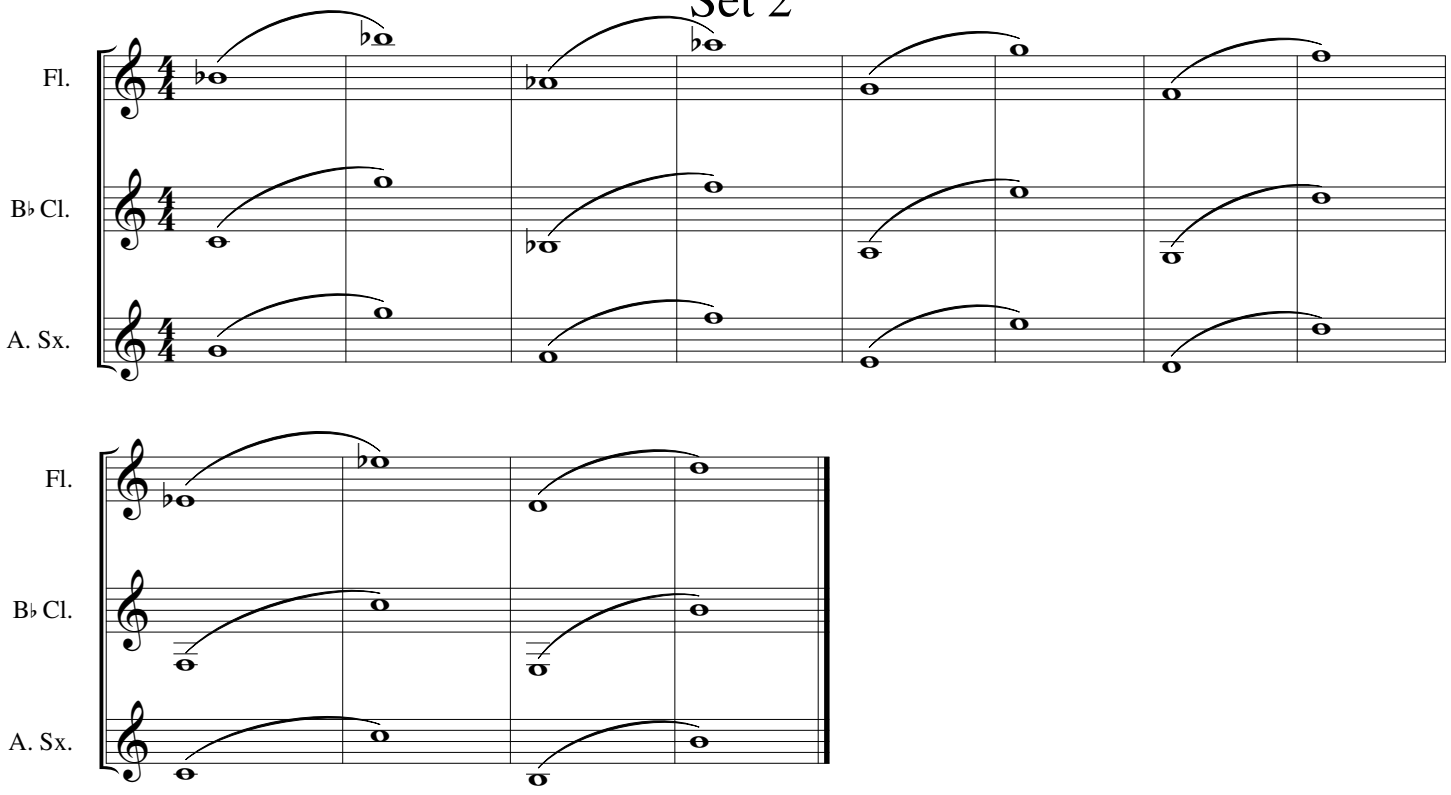
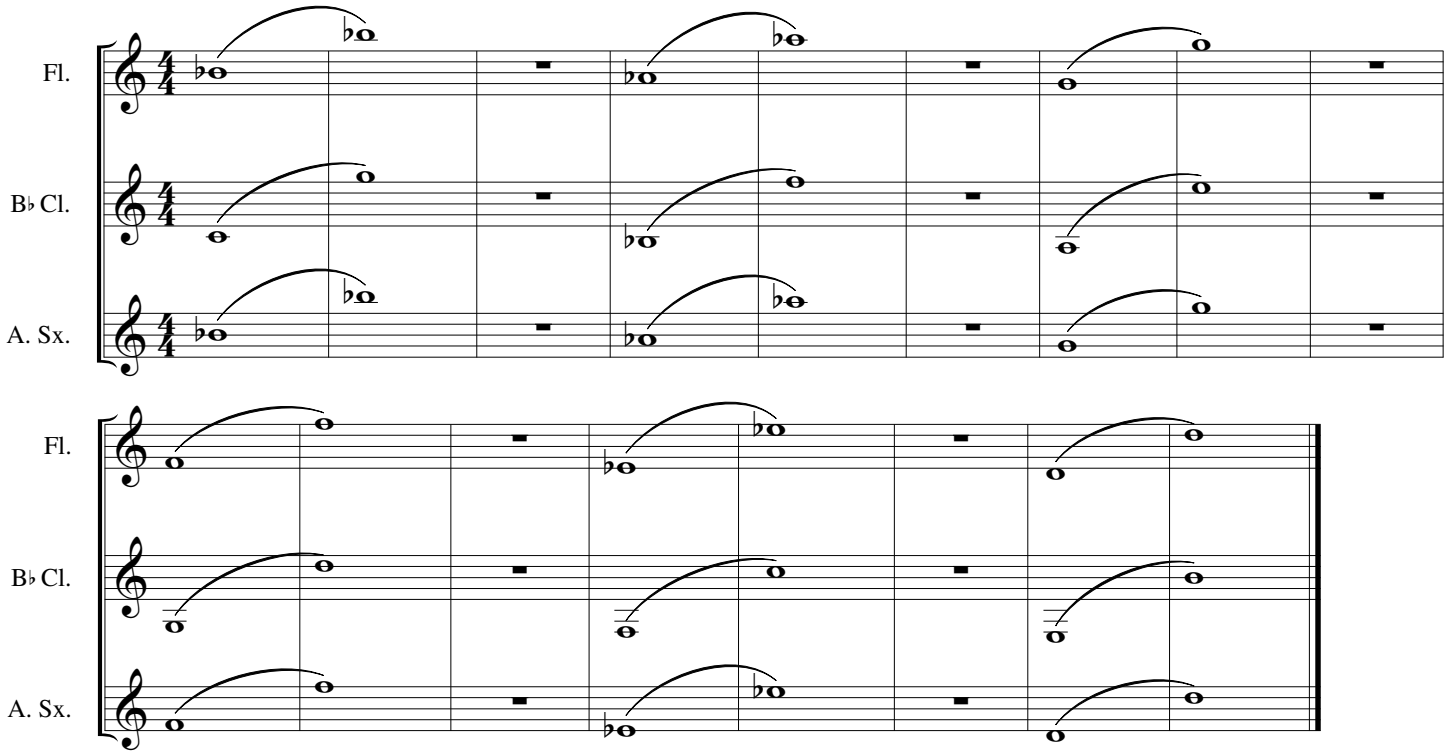
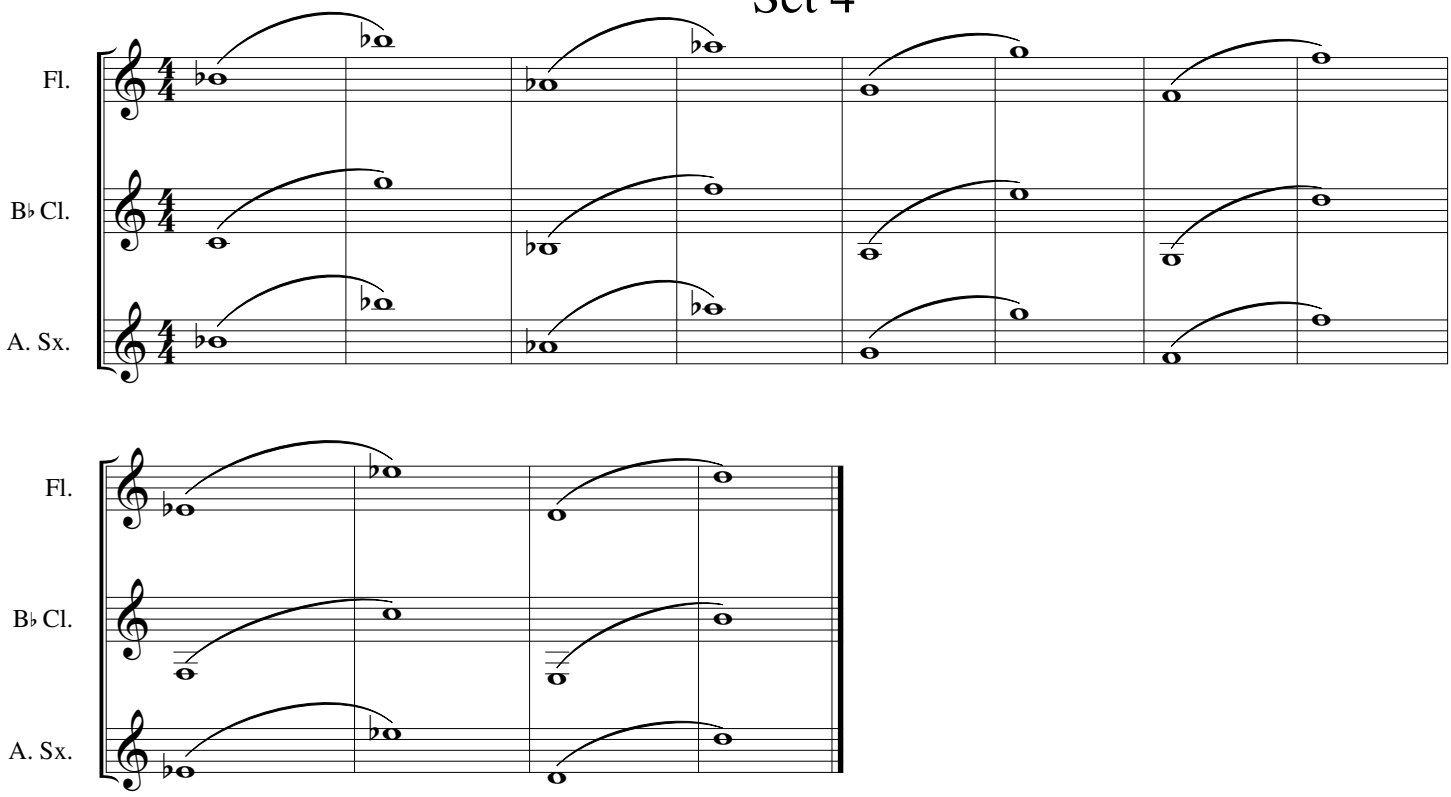


FLUTE, CLARINET, AND ALTO SAXOPHONE OCTAVE AND REGISTER EXERCISES

Set 3



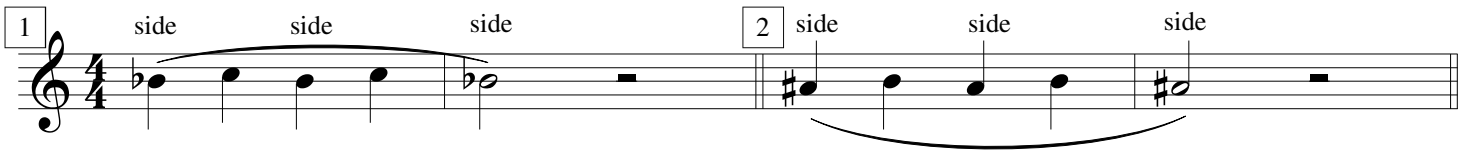
Set 4



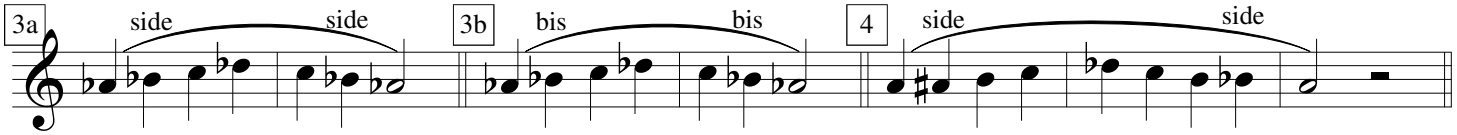
THE USES OF SIDE AND BIS B-FLAT ON SAXOPHONE

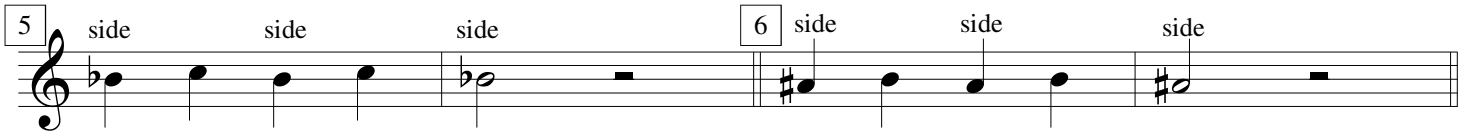
There are two standard fingerings for B-flat on the saxophone.
These fingerings are "Side B-Flat" and "Bis B-flat".

The side fingering is used when the Bb/A# is located beside a B-natural or C.

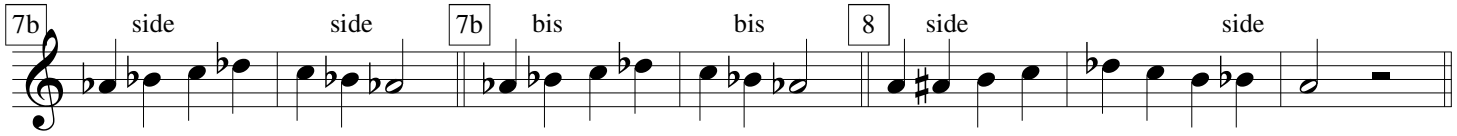


This is advanced

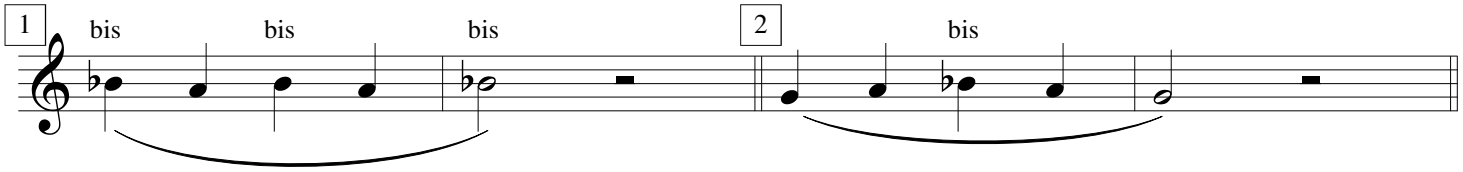


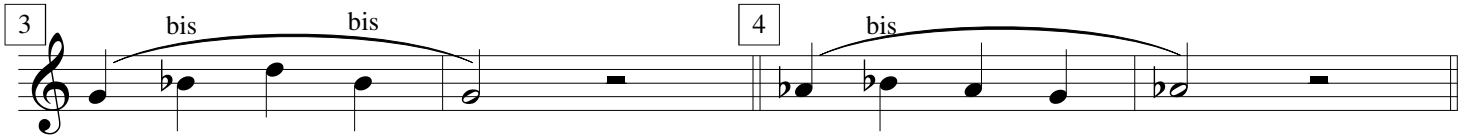


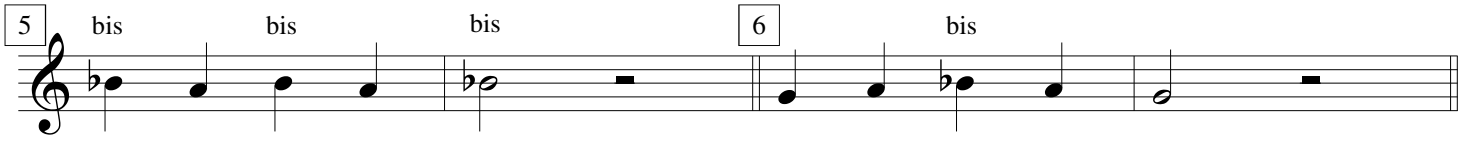
This is advanced

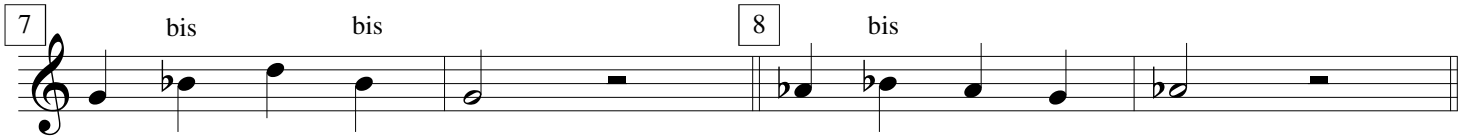


Bis B-flat is used when coming from or going to any note other than B or C.

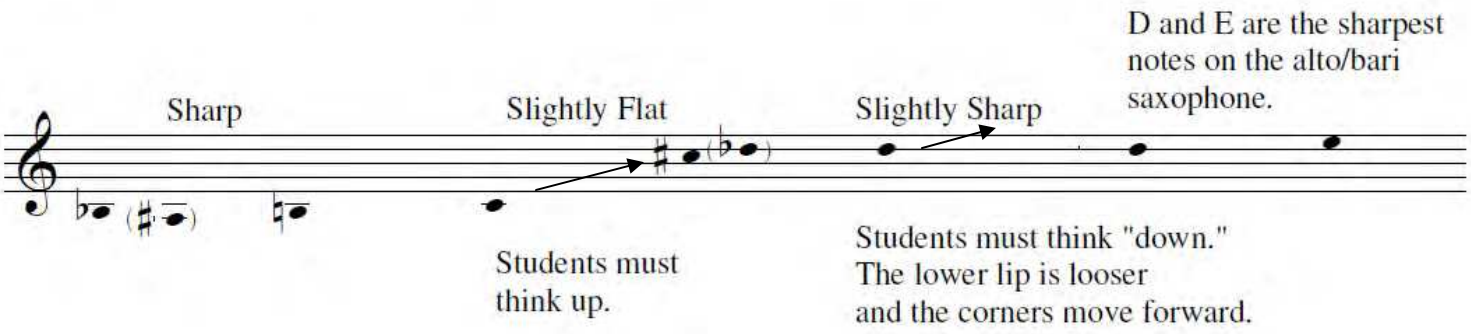








SAXOPHONE GENERAL TUNING TENDENCIES



If a student is sharp:

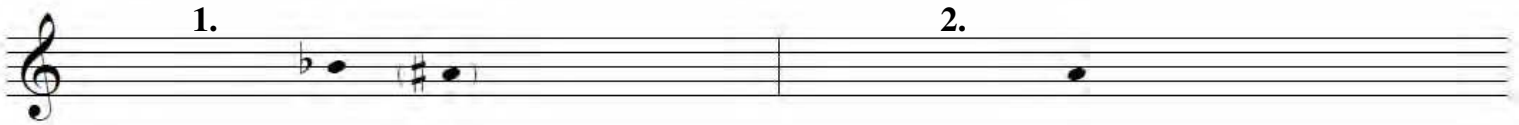
- Let the lips/embouchure relax.
- Relax the jaw.
- Push down a key that will not affect the note.

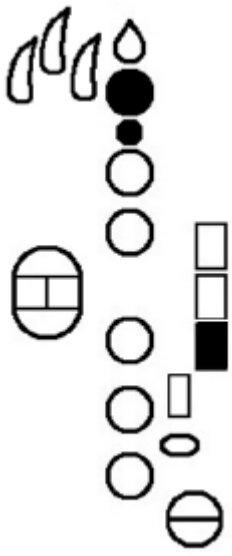
If a student is flat:

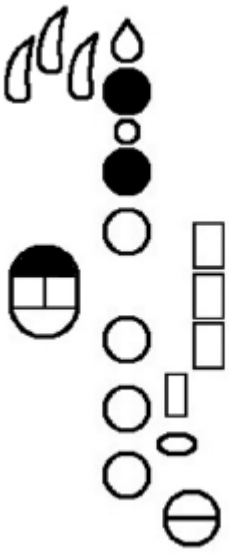
- Never pinch.
- Open a key that will not affect the note.

EXAMPLE: 1. Bis B-flat – add side B-flat (bottom side key)

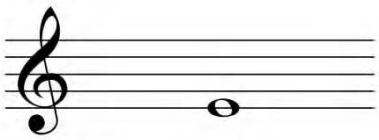
2. A – add G# key





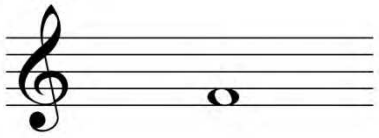


ALTO SAXOPHONE ALTERNATE FINGERINGS FOR PROBLEMATIC NOTES



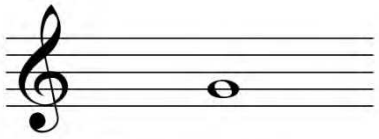
TENDENCY: Flat

SOLUTION: Add Low E-Flat Key



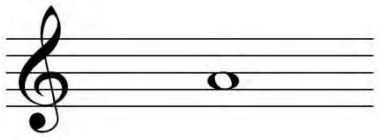
TENDENCY: Flat

SOLUTION: Add Low E-Flat Key



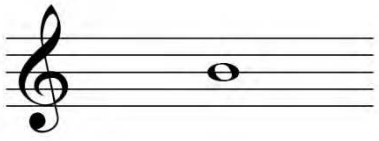
TENDENCY: Flat

SOLUTION: Add Chromatic F# Key



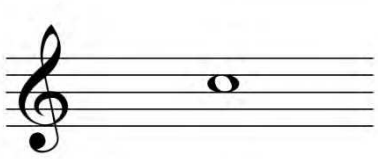
TENDENCY: Flat

SOLUTION: Add G# Key



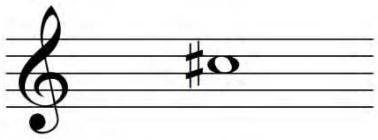
TENDENCY: Flat

SOLUTION: Add Side B-flat key



TENDENCY: Flat

SOLUTION: Add Side B-flat key



TENDENCY: Flat

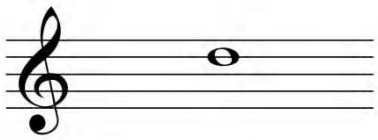
SOLUTION 1: Add LH 3 + Octave Key

Raise More: Add Side B-flat to above

Raise More: Add Side C to above

Raise More: Add Both Side Keys

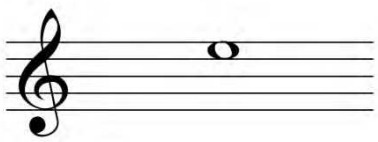
SOLUTION 2: LH 1 + D palm key



TENDENCY: Sharp

SOLUTION 1: 123 123 + D palm key

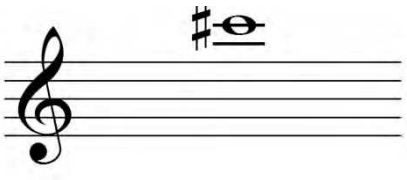
SOLUTION 2: Add low B key



TENDENCY: Sharp

SOLUTION 1: 123 12 + low B-flat

SOLUTION 2: 123 12 + low C



TENDENCY: Sharp

SOLUTION 1: Add RH 1

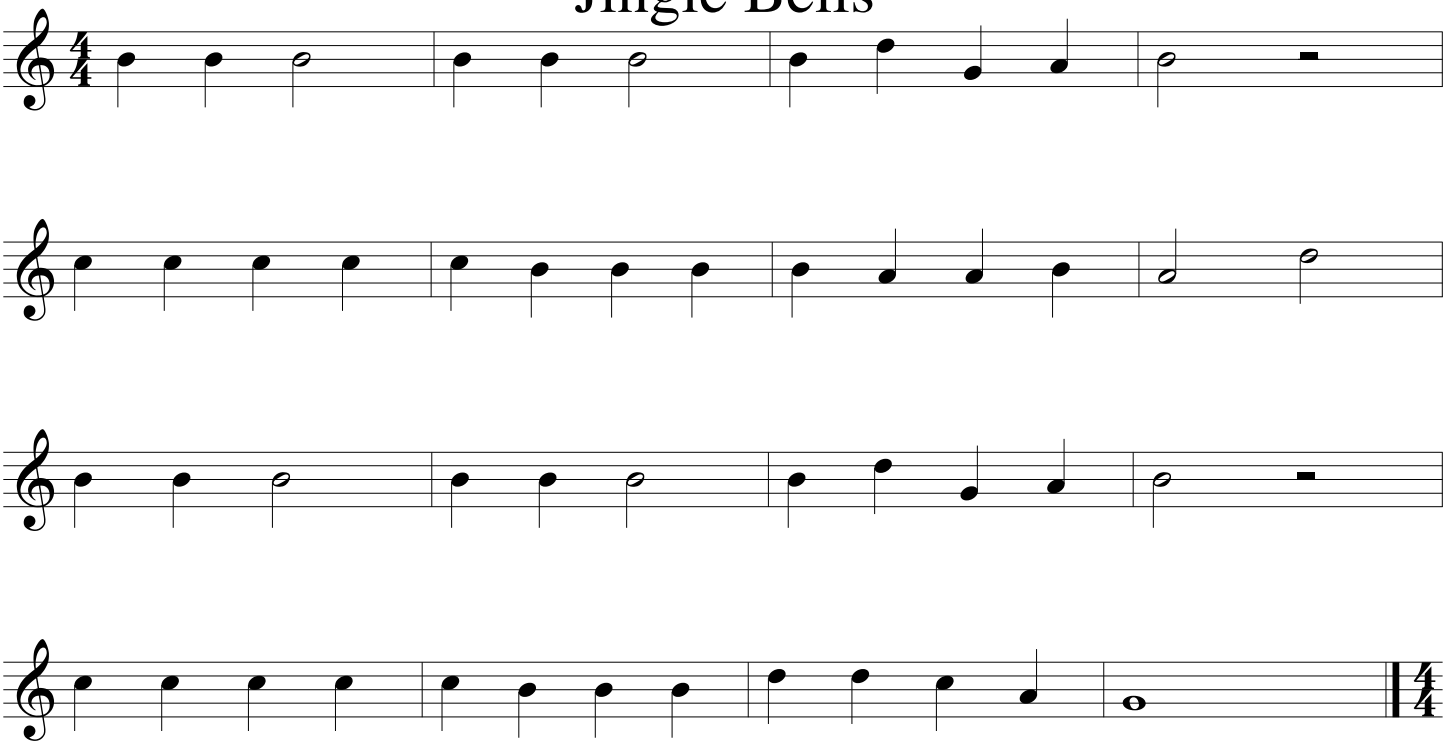
SOLUTION 2: Add RH 2

SAXOPHONE VIBRATO

- Do not introduce vibrato until students are producing consistent, resonant sounds on the saxophone.
- Vibrato should always be introduced on the neck and mouthpiece.
- Vibrato is usually introduced during the second semester. **Teaching vibrato in general should NOT be optional during the second semester of the beginning year.**
- The eight points of vibrato:
    1. Vibrato is solely a jaw movement. As students advance, it becomes a bottom lip and jaw movement.
    2. No pinching or biting of the reed can be done.
    3. The jaw moves down and then back up to its natural position.
    4. The syllable used for vibrato is "vuh".
    5. Vibrato will sound big/obnoxious at first.
    6. After introducing vibrato, do movements with triplet subdivisions on the metronome.
    7. Do not let the pulse get too fast, too slow or the sound too wide.
    8. Blow air through the vibrato.

SAXOPHONE CHRISTMAS TUNES

Jingle Bells



Good King Wenceslas