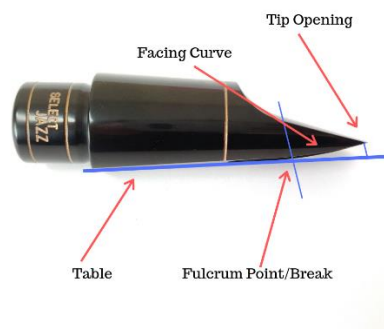


Saxophone Basics for High School Students

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Embouchure

- Pull the bottom lip over the teeth forming a firm cushion for the reed sit on
- Pull the corners of the mouth firm like a draw-string bag
- Rest the top teeth on the mouthpiece
- We want pressure from the bottom teeth but never bite
- Take in enough mouthpiece so that the bottom teeth are pressing on the fulcrum point (where the reed meets the mouthpiece)



When trying to determine how much pressure to put on the reed, try playing on just the mouthpiece. On alto you should play a concert A, tenor a concert G, baritone a concert E/F, and soprano a C. Voicing is also to be taken into consideration when playing on just the mouthpiece. Raising and lowering the tongue will move the pitch up and down, respectively. Find a balance of embouchure and voicing to produce the pitches listed above!

Air

Many of the problems we encounter on the saxophone can be caused by poor use of air. Are you having trouble playing loud? It is probably air. Having trouble playing soft? It is probably air. Intonation problematic? That very well could be air as well. Strong air is the basis of everything we do with the instrument.

Crooked reed is the perfect exercise to fix your air problems

- To begin, loosen their ligature and move reed off to the side so you can see inside the window of the mouthpiece.



- Play through a one-octave scale in whole notes at 100 BPM. This should be a struggle to get through! If you are not breathing after each note, move the reed more to the side
- You can play through short sections of music as well if they are not technical, we are working on air!
- Return reeds to normal position and repeat
- You should find that your air is moving much more intensity

Scales

Scales are absolutely critical to the development of saxophone players. Begin by mastering all twelve major scales in one octave. Once these feel comfortable, learn harmonic minor scales in one octave. From here, I usually skip two-octave scales and go straight into full-range scales. Full-range scales are when we start on the tonic, go up as high as we can in the natural range of the instrument, down to the lowest note on the instrument and return to tonic. For example if you are playing your F major scale, start on low F, go up the scale to high F, go down the scale to low Bb, and return low F.



How fast should you play your scales? As fast as you can CLEANLY!!! I do not recommend you start learning these scales in sixteenth notes. Slow it down to quarter notes and play them perfectly before going any faster! Once you master the major scales in full range, move on to harmonic minor. Think you are done??? It is time to learn majors in thirds, then minors in thirds, the majors in fourths, etc.

Recommended Etude Books

- *48 Famous Studies for Oboe or Saxophone* – W. Ferling
- *25 daily Exercises* – Klose
- *53 Etudes 3, d'après Boehm, Terschak et Fürstenau* – Marcel Mule
- *Twenty Seven Melodious And Rhythmical Exercises* – J.L Small

Recommended Technique Books

- *Les Gammes Conjointes Et En Intervalles* – Jean-Marie Londeix
- *Voicing: An Approach to the Saxophone's Third Register* – Donald Sinta



Recommended Solo Repertoire

- *Chanson et Passepied* – Jeanine Rueff
- *Sonata For Alto Saxophone* – Lawson Lunde
- *Three Romances* – Robert Schumann Arr. Fred Hemke
- *Aria* – Eugene Bozza
- *Sonata No. 3* – Handel Arr. Sigurd Rascher

Recommended Jazz Books

- *Jazz Conception* – Jim Snidero
- *The II-V7-I Progression* – Jamey Aebersold
- *Maiden Voyage* – Jamey Aebersold
- *Around the Horn* – Walt Weiskopf
- *Jazz Conception* – Lennie Niehaus

Recommended Classical Recordings

- *A la Française* – Claude Delangle
- *Classical Saxophone* – Arno Bornkamp
- *Fantasy* – Otis Murphy
- *Extravaganza for Saxophone & Orchestra* - Debra Richtmeyer
- *Lessons of the Sky* – Clifford Leaman

Recommended Jazz Recordings

- *Giant Steps* – John Coltrane
- *Visions* – Melissa Aldana
- *Pilgrimage* – Michael Brecker
- *Yardbird Suite* – Charlie Parker
- *Live at the Village Vanguard* – Joshua Redman



Reed Care

Taking care of your reeds is essential to success when playing! Proper reed care will make your reeds last longer and ensure that every day they are at the top of their game. Below are my tips to keep those reeds playing well!

- NEVER, EVER leave your reed on the mouthpiece when not playing!
- Store your reeds on a flat surface in a humidity-controlled case. I prefer the D'Addario Reed Case as it holds eight reeds, soprano to baritone, and seals them airtight. You will need to replace the humidity-pack from time to time!
- Rotate your reeds. You should never play a reed more than 45 minutes in a day. If I am playing a lot of music in the high range, I keep it to 30 minutes a day. Give your reeds time to rest!
- Break your reeds in slowly. For the first week, only play a reed about 2-3 minutes per day. For the second week, maybe 5 minutes per day. After that, they can enter normal rotation.
- Try both soaking your reeds in water and simply using saliva. Both are used by professionals and you will need to find what works for you!

Recommended Equipment

When purchasing equipment, I look for the gear that will make me sound like me with the least amount of work. The saxophone is hard! Don't let your equipment make it harder!

I am an endorsing artist and method clinician for D'Addario Woodwinds and highly recommend their products. The reeds are by far the most consistent you will find on the market. I have played on the products for over ten years, much longer than I have worked for or been sponsored by the company!

Saxophones

- Alto – Yamaha 875EXII
- Tenor – Yamaha 875 EXII or Yamaha Custom Z
- Baritone – Yamaha 62 or Yamaha 82
- Soprano – Yamaha 875EX HG

Classical Mouthpieces

- Alto – D'Addario Reserve 145/155
- Tenor – D'Addario Reserve D190
- Baritone – Chedeville RC4 or Vandoren Optimum BL3
- Soprano – Selmer Concept



Jazz Mouthpieces

- Alto – D’Addario Select Jazz 6/7
- Tenor – D’Addario Select Jazz 7
- Baritone – Yanagisawa Silver-Plated 7 or Myer Hard Rubber 5

Classical Reeds

- Alto – D’Addario Reserve 3/3+
- Tenor – D’Addario Reserve 3/3+/3.5
- Baritone - D’Addario Reserve 3+/3.5
- Soprano – D’Addario Reserve 3+/3.5

Jazz Reeds

- Alto – D’Addario Select Jazz 2H/3S or Rico 2.5
- Tenor - D’Addario Select Jazz 2H/3S or Rico 2.5
- Baritone - D’Addario Select Jazz 2H/3S or Rico 2.5