



Teaching Beginner Flute: The “Non-Negotiables”

**CLINICIAN:
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Texas Bandmasters Association 2014 Convention/Clinic



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**JULY 27-30, 2014
HENRY B. GONZALEZ CONVENTION CENTER
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS**

Teaching Beginner Flute:

The “Non-Negotiables”

primum non nocere (Latin) - “First, do no harm.”

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Preface

It is my objective in this clinic to give definite goals for the first year of teaching beginner flutes and also to offer tools and suggestions to help achieve these goals. Of course, what is accomplished is all relative depending on the school climate, administration, testing schedule, field trips, student leadership, etc., but a strong teacher in any setting should strive for these goals. It is essential to have high expectations and an organized approach. (Cindy Bulloch)

To be an effective teacher, you **must** play the instrument! This is non-negotiable. Get your flute out of the case and TRY!! You only need to stay one day ahead of your beginners!

Know what you know; know what you don't know; and don't be embarrassed to ask for help!

By the end of the first year, each student should understand and be able to demonstrate:

- Perfect posture
- Relaxed, flexible embouchure
- Perfect hand position
- Characteristic Tone
- Basic vibrato
- Double tongue
- 3-octave chromatic scale
- Eight major scales (minimum)
- Three fingerings for B-flat
- Foot pat (down-up) and basic rhythms in simple meter
- Foot pat (down-press-up) and basic rhythm in compound meter

BEFORE THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS

EQUIPMENT

Student Essentials

- A Working Flute
- Mirror (minimum 6"x6")
- Flute Cleaning Rod with handkerchief (not fuzzy "pad saver")
- **2 (two)** Runyon 6132S Black Non-Slip Flute Cushions (aka Clarinet/Sax Mouthpiece Patches/Cushions)
- (thick black, not thin clear)
- Method Book of director's choice
- Folding music stand
- Metronome, tuner, and pencil

Band Director Essentials

- A Working Flute
- Red nail polish
- Runyon 6132S Black Non-Slip Flute Cushions (aka Clarinet/Sax Mouthpiece Patches/Cushions) (if not supplied by students) (2/student)
- Pnuemo Pro if desired (optional)

Recommended Supplemental Materials:

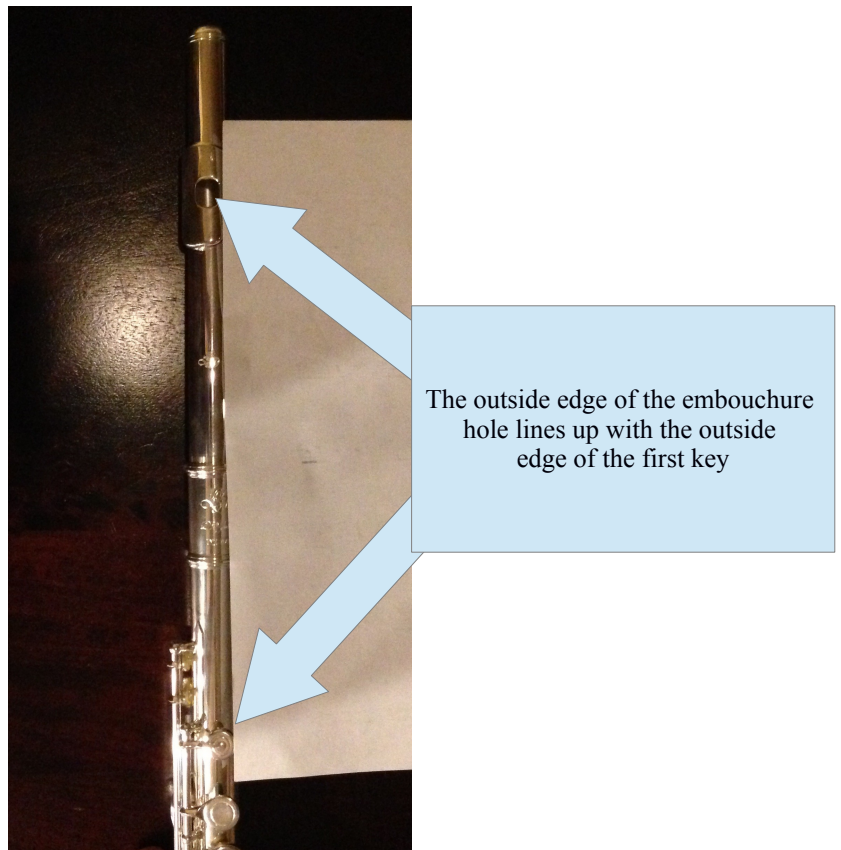
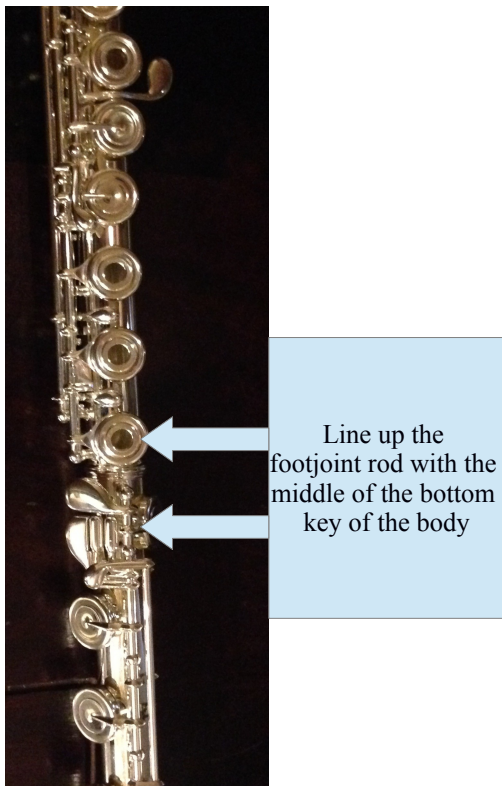
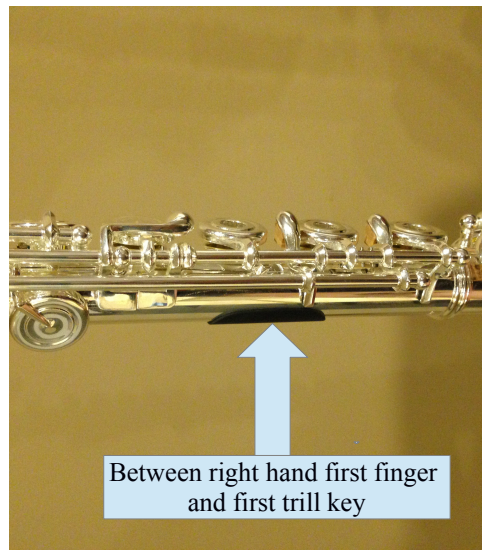
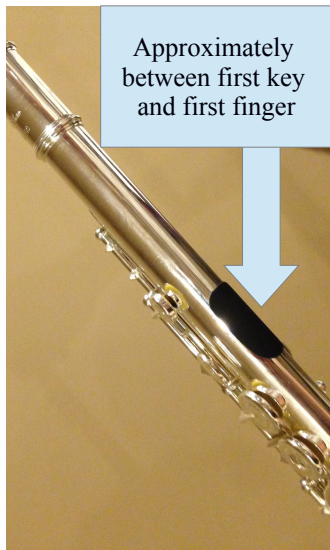
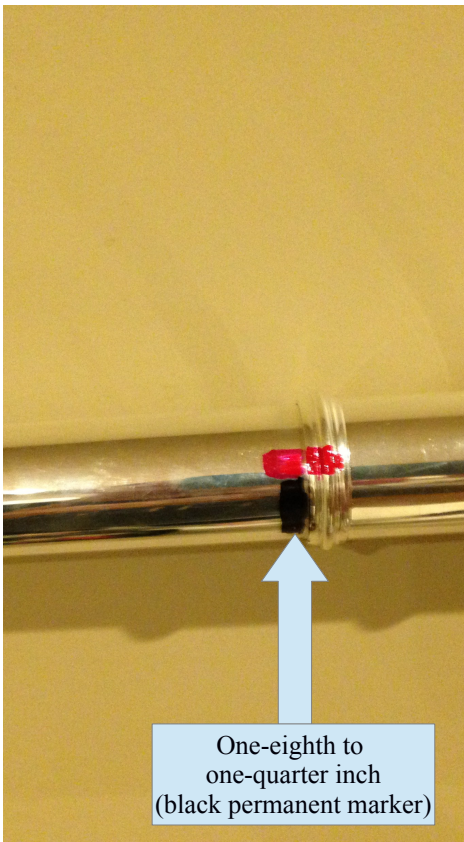
- **The Gilbert Legacy** (Angeleita Floyd) **BUY THIS BOOK! READ IT! APPLY IT!** (This is a **brilliant** book with tons of pictures of hand position, embouchure, posture, etc. and clear explanations of common problems and *solutions* to said problems.)
- **Flute 101- Mastering the Basics** (Louke/George) (great for supplementing band method book)
- **Blocki Flute Method** (Blocki/Hovan) (**Teacher's Manual and Student Book One**)
(great for supplementing band method book)
- **Flute Class** (Trevor Wye) (great for supplementing band method book)

FLUTE ASSEMBLY/ALIGNMENT

Band Directors:

Collect all flutes, mark alignment with nail polish, and apply Runyon Non-Slip Flute Cushions in the following manner:
(Take care not to grab keys when assembling/disassembling flute.)

1. Align the **outside edge of the embouchure hole** with the **outside edge of the first key on the body of the flute.**
2. Align the **rod of the foot joint** with the **middle of the last key on the body of the flute.**
3. Always pull the headjoint one-eighth to one-quarter inch.
4. Mark with FINGERNAIL POLISH!!!!
(I promise this won't hurt your flute – this is one of the best things you can do for development of good tone and hand position! **Consistency** is a beautiful thing!)
5. Apply Runyon Non-Slip Flute Cushions
RIGHT HAND: Place one directly under and slightly behind RH 1 and the first trill key (see photo)
LEFT HAND: Place between the first two keys on the side and slightly under (see photo)
(This will need to be adjusted based on hand size...smaller hands=further down the body)



INSIST ON PERFECT FLUTE ASSEMBLY EVERY DAY. THIS IS NON-NEGOTIABLE!

FIRST DAY OF CLASS

FLUTE-SPECIFIC POSTURE (SITTING without flute)

- Place music stand the length of the flute from the chair.
- Space chairs at least 18" apart. Students must have space or they will develop all sorts of postural and hand position problems.
- Angle chairs 45° to the right.
- Students sit on front left corner of chair.
- Feet flat on the floor.
- Long/tall neck and spine.

MOVING ON...

Until each student has an instrument, the first one-to-two weeks of instruction will consist of teaching foot pat (down-up), introduction of basic rhythms, counting system, note reading, taking large breaths, and blowing fast air with a basic embouchure (with finger in dent of chin and pouty bottom lip.)

Keep all flutes at school until **every** student has an instrument. In the meantime, continue music literacy and embouchure instruction without headjoint or flute.

Once everybody has an instrument, teach embouchure, proper flute assembly/alignment, and hand position (as follows).

SETTING UP THE EMOUCHURE

There is not one magic method of starting beginner flutists that works for 100% of students 100% of the time. You need to have a good grasp of what a good embouchure *looks* like and several different approaches to teaching embouchure. The BEST way to understand this is to do it yourself! You must get a flute and experiment on your own until you are comfortable demonstrating for your kiddos! **You must be able to model embouchure and fast airstream! This is non-negotiable.**

SPECIFICS TO LOOK FOR WHEN PLACING FLUTE IN CHIN:

GOOD:

- Pouty lower lip covers approx. 1/4-1/3 of embouchure hole.
- Embouchure plate nestled in dent of chin
- Corners relaxed (lips relaxed)
- Inside edge of embouchure hole where the pink part of lip meets the chin

BAD:

- Tight corners and lips ("smile" embouchure)
- Embouchure plate sitting on red part of lower lip (too high)
- Embouchure hole almost totally covered by lower lip (rolled in too far)
- Clenched teeth, tight jaw

Because of physical differences, not all flutists will look symmetrical or "right" in order to get their best sound (for example, a Cupid's bow almost always requires playing off to one side.) Look for the natural aperture and line up the embouchure hole with the opening in the lips.

Keep the embouchure hole at a 90-degree angle to the face. (Do not roll the headjoint in or up to try to find the airstream; have student experiment with jaw & lips to "bring the airstream to the flute.") Airstream must be fast/strong: "birthday candle air"! (*Kathryn Blocki)
Reinforce: Tone is 90% air and 10% embouchure. If the air is correct, the embouchure will follow.

SEVERAL APPROACHES TO TRY:

SUZUKI INFLUENCED METHOD:

I. Without the flute:

1. Spit an imaginary grain of rice (with tongue in lips—use a quarter note, half note rhythm: "hot dog"):
 - A. down onto plate (low register)
 - B. across table onto brother's plate (middle register)
 - C. over brother's head at mom...all the way across the kitchen (high register)

II. With headjoint:

1. Teacher moves headjoint in and out of position
2. Student helps
3. Student does by himself

III. Low, middle, and high on headjoint

OTHER METHODS OF TEACHING EMOUCHURE:

1. Place index finger in the dent of chin ("put the hot dog in the bun") (*Terri Sanchez)
2. Have student say "pure" or "pooh" and blow fast air on their finger.
3. Replace finger with headjoint.

Pnuemo-Pro Method

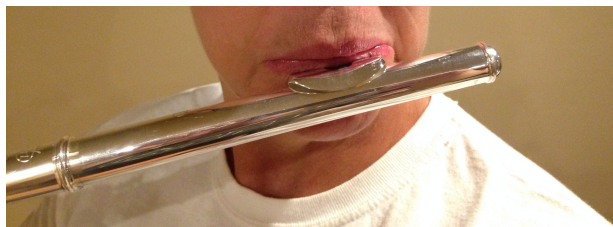
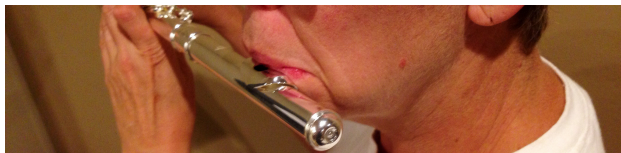
Pages 3-10 in Blocki Flute Method

Use suggested supplemental books (see Band Director Essentials above) for headjoint games, etc. Make up your own games!

Whatever method you choose, **teacher regular tongue (“tu-tu”) as soon as a consistent sound is made on the headjoint.** The tip of the tongue should touch the roof of mouth at the same spot as when enunciating “Tu” or “Du” when speaking naturally (scratch the tip of tongue to sensitize it.)

Continue to play on headjoint every day for 1-2 weeks during band period (see supplemental books for ideas) until all students are making a consistent tone and are tonguing to start each note. Play on the headjoint a lot in the beginning and less as time progresses.

What about the “KISS-N-ROLL” method? No, no, no, no, NO! “Kiss-n-roll” causes a thin, putrescent tone (big, rich tone is virtually impossible) AND it creates even worse intonation tendencies than usual! Please...DON'T EVER TEACH “Kiss-n-roll”



INSIST ON PERFECT EMOUCHURE EVERY DAY. THIS IS NON-NEGOTIABLE!

PERFECT HAND POSITION

You must be able to model perfect hand position! This is non-negotiable.

Left Hand:

1. Find the “fleshy” part of the first finger (between the base of the finger and the 1st knuckle...like a chair).
2. Draw a star or smily face using a sharpie on this spot. (Blocki)
3. Curve remaining fingers and keep them hovering just above their respective keys (pinky, too!)
4. Push the wrist (or palm) gently towards footjoint. (Left wrist should be bent...this will enable the ring finger to curve.)
5. Thumb is not bent or crooked, but held straight when playing the thumb keys. (Geoffrey Gilbert)



Right Hand:

1. Shake arm to relax, then let the hand relax naturally at side of body.
2. Raise hand so thumb and first finger form a natural “C” (as if holding a big orange.)
3. Place thumb under the first finger or the 1st trill key and slightly “behind” the flute (a bit closer to the rod-so thumb doesn't poke out).
4. Curve fingers up and over the rods (so they form 3 “T”s with the rods.)
5. Pads of fingers in center of keys.
6. Right wrist should be straight. (Straight line from knuckles to elbow.)



GOOD HAND POSITION = GOOD TECHNIQUE
(Therefore, bad hand position = bad technique and often bad tone/intonation!)

Instruct the students that the flute is **balanced** between the right hand thumb, left hand index finger and chin. (The flute is not “gripped” or “held”, it is *balanced*.)

WATCH OUT FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- Don't let fingers lop off over the edges of the keys.
- Don't let RH fingers rest on the rods.
- Keep fingers relaxed and curved. Watch out for hyper-extended/double-jointed fingers (aka “Bambi legs”).
- All fingers (including pinkies) must hover just above their keys (don't let pinkies stick up toward the ceiling.)

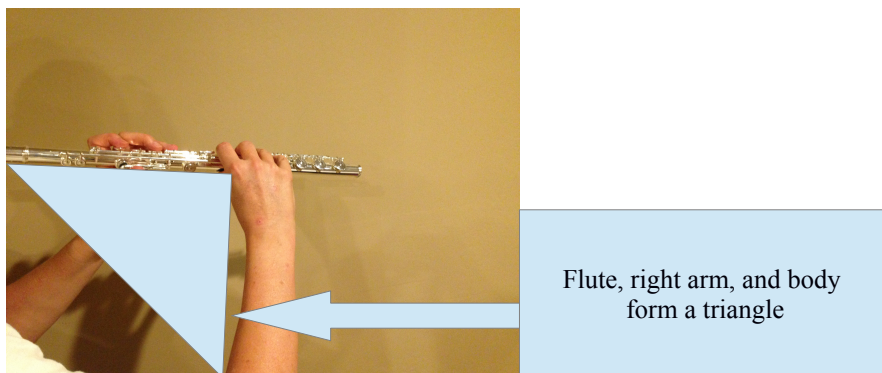
INSIST ON PERFECT HAND POSITION EVERY DAY. THIS IS NON-NEGOTIABLE!

PERFECT POSTURE

POSTURE POINTERS:

- Lift from ribcage (chest stays expanded on inhale and exhale.)
- Keep head balanced (balance a bean bag on top of head.)
- Turn head slightly to the left...point chin toward left elbow.
- Create some space between the body and the flute. Marching band position (with the flute parallel to the ground & right arm pulled back/left arm pulled across the body) is NOT a realistic flute playing position! The flute **should** be a slightly “forward” instrument and it's OK for the flute to droop a bit.
- When seated, “stand while seated.”
- Shoulders should be relaxed and down (watch out for “expressive” left shoulder)...shrug shoulders to the ears, then let them drop.
- Teach students to keep “one flute's length” away from music stand.
- Instruct students to keep the top of the music stand level with the top of their shoulders...no higher, no lower.

Easy Posture Exercise*: *Squat down, put elbows on knees, bring flute into position without moving elbows, then stand up and VOILA! Perfect flute position!* (*Dr. Kim Walter Clark)



INSIST ON PERFECT POSTURE EVERY MOMENT OF EVERY REHEARSAL. THIS IS NON-NEGOTIABLE!

PRODUCING A CHARACTERISTIC TONE

FIRST NOTES

B-natural is the BEST note to start on because it is the easiest note (least resistant) to produce and the flute is balanced. Band directors may need to supplement beginner band methods with pages from the above-mentioned books rather than start on a note other than b-natural. Teach the notes in the following order: B-A-G-F. (Pay attention to right-hand position as these fingers are not being utilized in the beginning.) Once these notes are achieved consistently with good hand-position, you can begin the “Ah-Ooh” octave exercise.

I strongly recommend playing with breath impulse and a “down-up” foot pat from the beginning.

BASICS:

TO PLAY LOWER:

- Keep teeth open, jaw relaxed
- Aim air more down into the hole (use upper lip “beak” to air)
- Think “Ah”

TO PLAY HIGHER:

- Push lips forward (corners move forward toward front teeth)
- Aim air more across embouchure hole
- Think “Ooh”

Ah-Ooh Octave Slurs

Start with lips in "neutral" position; lead with air, then slide lips FORWARD adapted from M. K. Clardy for upper octave.

In the beginning play only the half-note measures (exaggerate the forward motion of the lips)

- Think "Ah" for the low note (neutral); "Ooh" for the upper octave (slide corners forward towards canine teeth.)
- Lead with air...follow with the lips.
- In the beginning, it is not so important what it sounds like, but what it looks like. Emphasis should be on air and embouchure flexibility.
- Remember: Sound is 90% air (fast, "birthday candle air"), 10% embouchure.

2 BIGGEST EMOUCHURE NAUGHTY NO-NOS:

1. Never instruct students to pull corners of lips back (making embouchure tighter) to play higher. (This makes 3rd octave thin, shrill, and extremely sharp – sometimes even causes lips to buzz.) **Remember: push lips forward to play higher!**
2. Don't try to make young players play softly in the upper octave. (This causes embouchure to tighten, air support to sag, teeth to clench, pitch to go even higher, etc.) Encourage them to play very strongly in the beginning! (Control of softer dynamics will come later as embouchure control and flexibility develop.)

EMBOUCHURE TIPS:

- Drop jaw from hinge and glide forward and back to find the optimal position.
- Experiment with vowel shapes inside the mouth: "A, ah, E, eh, I, O, ooh, uh" to find optimal resonance.
- The wet part of the lip surrounds the air like 2 cushions (the lips cushion the air).
- Keep tongue relaxed ("AH") and "down" (tongue should lie on the floor of the mouth like a blanket or rug).
- Keep jaw relaxed.
- AIM the airstream with upper lip (think of it as a beak*. (*Sally Turk) Aim down for low notes; more across for high notes (slide jaw forward, too).
- No stiff upper lip! Keep it supple & flexible...release it away from the top teeth so there is a cushion of air between the upper lip and teeth.
- Clarinet=Concrete; Flute=Jello* (*Michelle Orman)

AIRSTREAM:

Although flute requires a great deal of air, don't **force** too much air through the flute. Like Goldilocks you need just the right amount... not too much or too fast, not too little or too slow. Allow the air to flow unrestricted by the throat, the tongue, or the lips. Just use the lips to gently guide the fast, but unforced airstream.

TONE:

Strive for freedom of tone. A beautiful, unrestricted, singing sound is the goal!

As with all wind instruments, you must hear the tone inside your head before you can produce it on your instrument. Listening to fine performers (not just flute...all other wind instruments, strings, vocal) is crucial! Attend live performances! Listen to great recordings!

A FEW RECOMMENDED FLUTISTS FOR LISTENING:

Emmanuel Pahud
Matthieu Dufour

Joshua Smith
Marina Piccinini
Amy Porter

Timothy Hutchins
Paula Robison

INSIST ON A RELAXED, FLEXIBLE EMOUCHURE WITH FAST AIR EVERY DAY. THIS IS NON-NEGOTIABLE!

VIBRATO

Vibrato comes very naturally to young flutists who have been using **breath impulse** (pulsing in eighth notes) from the very beginning. ALL beginner flutists can and should be using a measured vibrato by Christmas. Start the following exercises in October or November and build on them for several months.

Vibrato Exercises

(for gaining control of vibrato speed) Shamelessly borrowed from Division of Beat (I think)

In the early spring (Jan/Feb) introduce the following exercises to build control over vibrato speed and width (amplitude):

CHOO-CHOO TRAIN EXERCISE: slow pulse----->fast pulse----->slow pulse

Thinking in triplets or sixteenths, start with a super-slow “chugging” pulse; gradually speed up (*accelerando*) over 4-6 beats (but *never pulse faster than can be controlled*), then gradually slow down over 4-6 beats. (Demonstrate to the students that it should sound like a choo-choo train leaving and returning to the station.)

SHIMMER EXERCISE: narrow pulse----->wide pulse----->narrow pulse

With metronome set at quarter note=60-75 (slower for lower register, higher for upper register) pulse in sixteenth notes. Start as softly as possible (*ppp*), crescendo to as strong as possible (*fff*). The pulse should be a narrow “shimmer” at *ppp* level and gradually increase to a fat, wide pulse at *fff* level (without changing speed.)

At this point, introduce the following exercise and gradually speed up over the course of several weeks or months until it sounds like a natural vibrato. (*Edelweiss idea – Cindy Bulloch)

Edelweiss (Vibrato)

Pulse in eighth notes.

Rogers/Hammerstein

INSIST THAT ALL FLUTISTS USE A CONTROLLED VIBRATO. THIS IS NON-NEGOTIABLE!

DOUBLE TONGUE

ALL beginners can and should double tongue in the 1st year! It's FUN and **everything is easy** the first year!

Introduce the following exercise in late fall/early spring. Start slowly (quarter note = 60) and increase tempo by 2 bpm each day until the entire class is double tonguing at quarter note = 120.

Keys to getting a great sound while double tonguing:

- FAST AIR aimed DOWN into the flute.
- Jaw must be dropped so the mouth is open quite far. (Try cutting a wine cork into thirds, then halve each piece. You will have 6 half-moon shaped pieces of cork. Have students place them between their back molars to get a sense of how much space is needed inside the mouth.)* (*This idea originated with Dr. Gary Garner who used pencil erasers.)

Encourage students to practice double tongue away from flute.

Double Tongue Exercise

Quarter note = 60-120+

Dr. Gary T. Garner

Flute

Match the sound of the *T*'s & *K*'s. (Use Thumb B-flat throughout)

Repeat on each note of B-flat major scale

INSIST THAT ALL FLUTISTS DOUBLE TONGUE DURING THE FIRST YEAR. THIS IS NON-NEGOTIABLE!

MAJOR SCALES

Flutists are *expected* to have brilliant technique. It's a fact. And we all know the most direct route to technical fluency is scales and arpeggios. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that flutists learn **ALL 12 major scales (TWO octaves!)** as early as possible. (The longer you delay teaching high & low notes, and "challenging" keys, the more difficult they will be for your students. Remember, everything is fun & easy in the beginning if taught properly.)

In a mixed-instrument class the **minimum** goal for the 1st year is 8 scales (C, F, B-flat, E-flat, A-flat, D-flat, G, and D.)
In a "flutes-only" class strive to teach all 12 major scales the 1st year.

Start out with tetra-chord (4-note) patterns, then eventually put 2 tetra-chords together to form a major scale. (for example: the 1st 4 notes of the F tetra-chord (F, G, A, B-flat) plus the 1st 4 notes of the C tetra-chord (C, D, E, F) equal the F Major scale.) (You can make your own tetra-chord/scale sheets on Finale or use a scale sheet and have students circle the notes they are starting and stopping on.)

I find it easiest to teach in the circle of 5ths (or 4ths) by simply adding or subtracting one flat or sharp from the previous scale's key signature.

Teach students to use **THUMB B-FLAT** in **all flat keys (F Major through D-flat Major)**. (G-flat Major is the exception.)

Teach students to use **LEVER B-FLAT** for **A# (B-flats) in B Major & F# Major** (and the enharmonic G-flat Major) (should you get that far in year one.)

INSIST THAT ALL FLUTISTS ARE FLUENT IN A MINIMUM of 8 MAJOR SCALES BY THE END OF THE FIRST YEAR. THE SCALES MUST BE 2-OCTAVES! THIS IS NON-NEGOTIABLE!

CHROMATIC SCALE

The **single most important** thing you can teach your beginner flutes (well, *all* instrumentalists) is the **3-octave chromatic scale!** Once they have it mastered, they know ALL THE NOTES (and that's important!)

Start off with 4-note chunks, then hook 2 chunks together. I like to start on low F and gradually work up to a 2-octave F to F chromatic. Then gradually expand down to low C and up to high C. (*Cindy Bulloch) This is *very* achievable if you are organized and don't delay starting it! *The longer you delay it, the more difficult the extreme high and low registers will seem to be!!*

Do not have students read from a fingering chart. You run the risk that some students will become dependent on the "finger chart crutch" and will not learn the fingerings or read the ledger lines (especially in the 3rd octave.) Extend the "Ah-Ooh" exercise higher and lower and use the octave slurs to teach the correlation of fingerings of the same note names between low, middle & high octaves. (For example, middle D is just like low D, but with the 1st finger up; high D is just like middle D, but with RH 1,2,3 up & E-flat key on.)

Here are some examples of chromatic scales (1-octave, 2-octave, 3-octave.) Use these, write your own, or use a chromatic you have available (in their book?) and have students circle the notes they are starting and stopping on. (Remember, do NOT have them read from a fingering chart!) Insist that your students read SHARPS when ascending and FLATS when descending...then **all accidentals will be "equal"** in their minds.

Use LEVER for A#/B-flat in the lower 2-octaves of the chromatic scale.

1st-Octave Chromatic Scale (F-F)

practice in 4-note chunks at first

Fab Flautista

Musical notation for the 1st-Octave Chromatic Scale (F-F) for Flute. The score consists of three staves. The first staff is labeled 'Flute' and shows the scale from F4 to F5 with a 'use Lever' instruction. The second staff is labeled 'Fl.' and shows the scale from F3 to F4 with a 'use Lever' instruction. The third staff is labeled 'Fl.' and shows the scale from F2 to F3. The notes are connected by slurs, and there are bar lines at the end of each staff.

2nd-Octave Chromatic (F-F)

practice in 4-note chunks at first

Fab Flautista

Musical notation for the 2nd-Octave Chromatic (F-F) for Flute. The score consists of three staves. The first staff is labeled 'Flute' and shows the scale from F4 to F5 with a 'Lever' instruction. The second staff is labeled 'Fl.' and shows the scale from F3 to F4 with a 'Lever' instruction. The third staff is labeled 'Fl.' and shows the scale from F2 to F3. The notes are connected by slurs, and there are bar lines at the end of each staff.

3-octave Chromatic Scale

practice in 4-note chunks at first

Fab Flautista

Musical notation for the 3-octave Chromatic Scale for Flute. The score consists of six staves. The first staff is labeled 'Flute' and shows the scale from F4 to F5 with a 'Lever' instruction. The second staff is labeled 'Fl.' and shows the scale from F3 to F4 with a 'Lever' instruction. The third staff is labeled 'Fl.' and shows the scale from F2 to F3. The fourth staff is labeled 'Fl.' and shows the scale from F1 to F2. The fifth staff is labeled 'Fl.' and shows the scale from F0 to F1 with a 'Lever' instruction. The sixth staff is labeled 'Fl.' and shows the scale from F-1 to F0. The notes are connected by slurs, and there are bar lines at the end of each staff.

**INSIST THAT ALL FLUTISTS KNOW A 3-OCTAVE CHROMATIC SCALE BY THE END OF THE FIRST YEAR.
THIS IS NON-NEGOTIABLE!**

FINGERING FELONIES

- LH #1 **must** be up for middle D and E-flat and high B-flat.
- F# must be fingered with RH #3 (ring finger)...not #2 (middle finger)!
- RH pinky must be down for E natural in the low & middle registers.
- Teach the **real (correct) fingerings** first! (Do NOT teach “RH down” on middle C#, or “special” 3rd octave fingerings such as “pinky up” on high E-natural, “plus RH #3” on high F, etc. during the 1st year. It is **crucial** for optimal technical development that students learn the **standard** fingerings the first year.)

INSIST THAT YOUR STUDENTS USE ALL THE CORRECT FINGERINGS. THIS IS NON-NEGOTIABLE!

A big ol', giant THANK YOU!!!

*To the many brilliant, passionate, inspirational, hard-working, insightful teachers who I have been lucky enough to learn from, borrow from, adapt from, and sometimes even steal from...THANK YOU!! In some instances I've used your ideas for so long that I actually think they're **my** ideas!*

*The short list must include my 3 amazing flute teachers: Dr. Brad Garner, Sally Turk, and Walfrid Kujala. I am privileged to have studied with such different, yet equally **exceptional** musical mentors. From you I learned...well, everything!!*

The musical gods have smiled on me greatly by putting many master teacher/band directors in my path. Dr. Gary Garner, Cindy Bulloch, Don Lefevre, Fred J. Allen, Debra Haburay, Van Ragsdale, Donna O'Bryant, Jack King (my first band director), Nancy Chisum (my first pianist), Dr. Charles Trayler, and many others...Thank you all for leading by example, thank you all for the many long, passionate hours of discourse about teaching, and thank you all for showing me how you “put it all together” in your own unique ways.

*A special thank you to Debra Haburay for sharing your original idea of the “**Non-Negotiables**” with me and giving me permission to use it here. You are brilliant!*

To the many wonderful flutists in my life: Lance Sanford, Patti Mecklin, Ebonee Thomas, Phil Dikeman, Sarah Frisof, Lisa Van Winkle, Kim Walter Clark, Claire Johnson, Terri Sanchez, Michelle Miller, and a great many others...Thanks for the exchange of information and inspiration over the years.

To my students...my wonderful, hilarious, sometimes stubborn, always brilliant students...my very own “flute guinea pigs” in my little flute laboratory...thanks for being willing participants in my daily experiments! You are AWESOME! I'm excited to get up every day and go at it again!

And finally, a huge thank you to Chris Hawkins for your computer wizardry, humor, genius-ness, and patience! No telling what this would look like without your magic!

*~~~Postscript~~~ Buy these books: **The Talent Code** and **The Little Book of Talent** by Daniel Coyle. Read Them...We can talk about them later. Trust me, you'll love them!*

Helen Blackburn

Helen Blackburn is the Yvonne Franklin Artist Teacher of Flute at West Texas A&M University in Canyon, TX. Ms. Blackburn is also principal flutist with the Dallas Opera Orchestra and a core member of the nationally acclaimed modern chamber music ensemble “Voices of Change”. Helen has numerous credits with major performing arts organizations, both as a featured soloist and as a member, including the Breckenridge (CO) Music Festival (where she is currently principal flute), Aspen Music Festival, the South Bohemia Music Festival, the Dallas Chamber Orchestra, the Brevard Music Center, and the Chicago Civic Orchestra. She appears frequently in recital as a soloist and also with her husband, Drew Lang, in their flute/marimba duo.

*A former “1st-chair Texas all-stater”, Ms. Blackburn is a passionate teacher whose studio has produced hundreds of all-state flutists (many who have gone on to careers in music education and performance.) Helen received her BM (summa cum laude) from West Texas State University and her MM from Northwestern University and has previously served on the faculties of TCU, UNT, SFASU, and McMurry University. Ms. Blackburn is the founder and director of **The Big, Fat Flute Shindig**, an interactive workshop for flutists of all ages and levels: beginners through adult amateurs, **band directors (CPE credit)**, flute teachers and professionals. The workshop is held at WTAMU each June.*

www.wtamu.edu/fluteshindig or www.helenblackburn.com for more info.