



**Texas Bandmasters Association
Convention/Clinic July 21-23, 2022**

**Beginner Saxophone: Lightly Row to
Lincolnshire Posy**

CLINICIANS:

**Sammy Aguilar, Kara Kazyaka Pritchett,
Kelsey Lien**



HENRY B. GONZALEZ CONVENTION CENTER - SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

Assembly

Instrument case should start on the floor with the correct side up. Put the neck strap on first (if you are assembling the full instrument). Practice manipulating the neck strap with one hand (so the other hand is free to hold the saxophone later).

Wet the reed on the thin part **AND** on the thick part so the reed will vibrate freely. Make sure students never touch the thin part of the reed.

Put cork grease on the cork of the neck regularly at the beginning stages. Re-apply when the mouthpiece is having trouble going in when needed. Leave about 1/3rd of the cork showing when assembling the mouthpiece and neck. Mouthpiece hole and neck hole should both be facing down and should face you when you are putting the reed on.

Practice manipulating the ligature with only the thumb and index finger of one hand (so the other hand will be free to manipulate the reed) on the mouthpiece + neck before introducing the reed. The ligature screw will always go on the right side of the mouthpiece when you are looking at the reed.

“Flat to flat”- slide the reed between the ligature and mouthpiece so the flat part of the reed matches the flat part of the mouthpiece. (Come with the reed from above the ligature not below to avoid damage to the tip).

Have a reed checklist for points to check to be sure the reed is set up correctly on the mouthpiece. Even on sides/bottom, sliver of black at the top, ligature below the mp line, “duck eyes” on top of the mouthpiece (if you use the Rovner ligature). Tighten the ligature until it catches, but be careful not to overtighten. Check student reeds every day until they are consistently doing it correctly! Be picky when checking student’s reeds so they are picky about reed placement.

Grab the instrument from the bell when taking it out of the case. Bring to your lap and clip on your neck strap. Don’t rely on just the neck strap to hold the body of the saxophone.

Do not “over twist” the neck onto the body of the saxophone. Slightly twist left to right. Line up the octave key mechanism between the neck and instrument.

Clean the open end of the neck from time to time and the inside tube of the saxophone to make it easier for the neck to go in by cleaning with a small piece of paper or wipe down with a cloth.

Saxophone mouthpiece should come to the student **NOT** the student to the saxophone. Check the neck strap, mp angle, neck angle, and bell on leg and adjust for every student individually.

When putting the saxophone down, have palm keys facing up. These are delicate keys and can be bent easily. Other side of the saxophone has several guards that will protect the other side.

Set down gently to avoid damage to reeds. Make sure to put a mouthpiece cap on and turn the neck slightly to the left to protect the reed.

Teach them how to swab their instrument and dry their reeds before they put it back in the reed guard at the end of class. Watch them as they set up for class and pack up at the end of class to ensure they are establishing good habits!

Reeds should be rotated so they are not playing on the same reed every day. They can number their reed guard slots in Sharpie #1-4 and use a different reed each practice/class session. They can also write on the back of the reed in pencil the date they opened the reed, so they can track how old their reeds are. Reeds typically last 4-6 weeks and students should never keep molded, chipped, or old reeds.

Embouchure

- Top teeth on mouthpiece (Mouthpiece Cushion may be used)- mouthpiece should push up into top teeth in a lifting motion.
- Lower lip rolled in. Should still be able to see some of the “pink” of your lower lip.
- Relaxed Chin. Watch for chin bunch up or “biting”.
- Bring Corners In towards the mouthpiece. No smiling.
- No puffing cheeks.
- Think “o” shape for mouth on mouthpiece. Focus of the embouchure is towards the mouthpiece-should look like a circle.
- Amount of mouthpiece in the mouth- where the mouthpiece and reed come together. Insert a piece of paper gently (don't force in) and draw a pencil line on the reed where the paper catches. Leave a thumb on the line and put the mouthpiece in your mouth up to your thumb. Use this method until you are comfortable with how much mouthpiece to put in their mouth.
- Breathing- top lip/teeth must stay set on the mouthpiece. Breathe through the corners of the mouth. For the first week or so, breathe through the nose so the embouchure stays set then actively “graduate” them to breathing through the corners of the mouth.

*Mouthpiece Pitch on Alto: Concert A

*Mouthpiece Pitch on Tenor: Concert G

*Mouthpiece Pitch on Bari: Concert Eb (or D)

*Mouthpiece & Neck Pitch on Alto: Concert Ab

*Mouthpiece & Neck Pitch on Tenor: Concert E

*Mouthpiece & Neck Pitch on Bari Concert Eb(or E)

They must be able to demonstrate pitch matching and flexibility on the small instrument (mp or mp + neck) to be successful! Mouthpiece only will be very loud-check this individually with a drone later in the year (November/December) and revisit as needed.

Practice with a mirror **DAILY**. Especially in the beginning stages and when review needs to be done.

Spread Tone?

Embouchure might be too loose and not firm enough. Do the “wiggle check”- wiggle mp/neck. If it pops out of their mouth instantly, they are not using any corner muscles.

Too Much Mouthpiece

Fuzzy Tone?

Embouchure might be too tight,

Not enough mouthpiece.

Airy Tone?

Check Reed Quality

Reed Strength may be too hard.

Hand Placements

“Double Meat Hamburger” Hands. Opens up the fingers since keys are spaced out on the saxophone.

“Letter C” hand position on both hands. There should be no accidental contact with the side keys or palm keys.

No Flat Fingers. Curved Fingers. “Prints to Pearls”.

Left Thumb needs to be able to be on Left Thumb Rest and should “rock” or “roll” to the octave key quickly. Make sure the left thumb is not too low on thumb rest.

Left Pinky rests on the G# Key.

Right thumb should not be too far out on the right hand thumb rest or will create tension and bad hand position.

Right Pinky rests on the Eb Key.

Number the LH pinky keys. Move from roller to roller. You may have to pivot to low Bb depending on the model of instrument you play on.

Playing Positions:

Side vs. Middle ??

Side: Smaller framed children. Benefit of starting all beginners on the side is they have done adjustments of the mp/neck/neck strap for bari and tenor playing. It is very easy to switch them to the middle as they get taller.

*Adjust the mouthpiece for the student so they are not tilting their head.

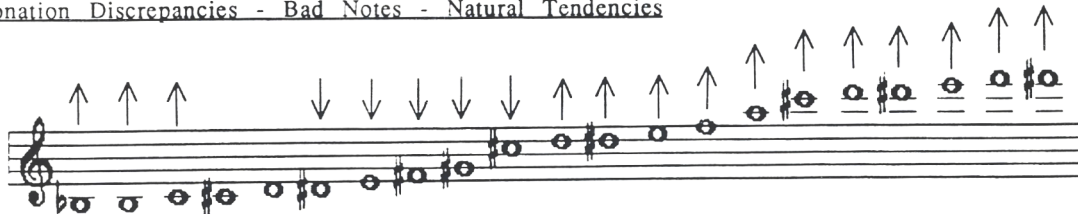
Middle: Make sure legs are in a “V” position and right hand is not resting on the leg creating tension in the right hand creating bad hand position. The saxophone should never touch the seat of the chair.

Tonguing

- TAH (low notes), TEE (middle), TIH (upper register) It depends on voicing.
- I start with mp + neck and use TEE for our first articulation. Class says TEE without the saxophone first and notice where their tongue naturally goes in the mouth. Then do TEE with just air without the saxophone. Next TEE with air with the saxophone inside their mouth and I listen to the air only sound before we play.
- I draw on board the perfect articulation- looks like a brick wall with a small line of articulation separating the blocks of sound. I will draw their sounds on the board as they attempt their articulation to show them if they are stopping their sound or not touching in the right spot or right firmness.
- I show them using my right hand and my left hand finger where the tongue should touch the tip of the reed. This is the thinnest part of the reed with the most flexibility. Think like a diving board- it is the most springy at the very edge, we wouldn't jump off from the firm part of the diving board!
- We take a “field trip” to the water fountain or sink in the band hall. Turn on the water and show them quickly flicking the water with your finger. Notice the water (your air) does not turn off, but is lightly separated by the finger (your tongue) as the water keeps flowing!

Intonation Tendencies

Intonation Discrepancies - Bad Notes - Natural Tendencies



Tuning the Band and Raising Pitch Consciousness (Dr. James Jurrens)

Alternate Fingerings

Sharpness on 4th Line “D”- Work to bring down with the jaw. Adding the low B key changes the tone.

C#- have student check with tuner to see what gets them most in tune

- 3rd finger + octave key
- RH down

Side C- Good in Chromatic passages, use for trills

Side Bb and Bis Bb

- Must use Side Bb in Chromatic scale passages, can also be a good fingering for tuning in the upper octave
- Bis- use for playing in flat keys

Front E & Front F- more advanced fingering, usually used for approaching altissimo register
Fork F#- must be used in the Chromatic scale, they need to reach back with finger 6 (ring finger) to depress the key- watch their fingers!

Palm Key Notes- can let go of D palm key to bring pitch down

To raise pitch, find a key to open.

To lower pitch, find a key to close.

Technique Exercises

Even Exercise (John Benzer)“I Must Do This Exercise” It gets them moving their fingers separately in time and gets them down the instrument quickly after you have introduced hand position and embouchure. Watch that their “prints” stay on the pearls on the saxophone and don’t “fly” away.

Say/Play Chromatic Scale chunks every day- play speed games to keep exciting! Gradually expand their range until you have achieved full range.

Major Scales- They can start in half notes and quarter notes and slow increase tempo until you switch into quarter and eighth notes.

Vibrato

- Use the syllable “Yah, Yah, Yah”. Remind them that the jaw goes straight down and back, never up into the reed. (Pitch will only lower and return to its original pitch, not bend higher.)
- Vibrato is an expected part of the tone, but is not a substitute for great sound. (**Tone > Vibrato**)
- I usually introduce this in February when we have returned from the holiday break and re-established embouchures.
- Everyone must demonstrate the ability to pitch bend on mp + neck before we move to full instrument.
- I set the metronome to 60 and have them demonstrate quarter notes, eighth notes, triplets, and sixteenth notes for vibrato. I layer these rhythms on as they demonstrate mastery. Vibrato is required for scale/objective pass-offs 3-4 weeks after I introduce it.
- Typically I use wider vibrato for lower notes and narrower vibrato for higher notes. Goal is by the end of the year they can do triplet vibrato at 80 and they use it on all white notes in their music.

Reeds

Vandoren Traditional Reeds
Vandoren Juno Reeds
Vandoren V12 Reeds
D'Addario Woodwinds Reserve Reeds
Rico
Legere Signature Series

Mouthpieces

Vandoren Optimum AL3
Selmer C*
Selmer Paris S90
Yamaha 4C

Ligatures

Rovner
Vandoren M/O Series
Bonade
Vandoren Optimum

*Make sure the ligature is on correctly as there are some inverted ligatures. Screws will always go on the right side of the mouthpiece when you are looking at the reed.

Saxophone Brands/Models

Yamaha YAS-26
P. Mauriat PMSA-57GC
P.Mauriat Le Bravo
Yamaha YAS-480
Yamaha YAS-62III
Selmer Paris Series II-Model 52
Selmer Paris SeleS Axos Series

Saxophone Accessories

Mouthpiece Cushions
Rubber Thumb Rest
Palm Key Risers
Side Key Risers
Neck Straps
Swab
Saxholder (great harness option for bari players, but is versatile for all saxes)
ReedGeek (Classic)- Reed adjustment/flattening tool

Saxophone Exercises

Link to SaxBook: [SaxBook 2nd Edition.pdf](#)

Saxophone

Finger Wiggles

Kelsey J. Lien

The musical score for 'Finger Wiggles' is written in 4/4 time and consists of six staves of music. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The music is primarily composed of eighth and quarter notes, often grouped with slurs. The second staff starts at measure 5. The third staff starts at measure 11 and ends with a double bar line and a 4/4 time signature. The fourth staff starts at measure 15. The fifth staff starts at measure 20. The sixth staff starts at measure 26 and ends with a double bar line. The exercise focuses on finger dexterity through various rhythmic patterns and slurs.

SAXOPHONE

Interval Studies

Novice

Kelsey J. Lien

1

5

11

2

23

29

SAXOPHONE

OCTAVE WIGGLES

Using The Register Key

Kelsey J. Lien

4

7

10

13

16

19

SAXOPHONE

Long Tones

Novice

Kelsey J. Lien

A ♩ = 60

9

17

B

25

33

41

49

Chromatic Scale

NOVICE

Kelsey J. Lien

1 2 1 1 2 3 2 1 1 2 3 4 3 2 1

6
1 2 3 4 5 4 3 2 1 1 2 3 4 5 6 5 4 3 2 1

12
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

16
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

20
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

25
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

30
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

36
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

42
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Vibrato Exercises

SAXOPHONE

Kelsey J. Lien

1 Quarter Note Vibrato

TOO TOO TOO TOO TOO TOO VA VA VA TOO

5 Eighth Note Vibrato

TOO TOO TOO TOO TOO TOO TOO TOO TOO VA VA VA VA VA VA VA TOO

9 Eighth Note Triplet Vibrato

TOO TOO ³TOO TOO ³TOO TOO ³TOO TOO ³TOO TOO

11

TOO ³VA VA ³VA VA ³VA VA ³VA VA ³VA VA TOO

13 Sixteenth Note Vibrato

TOO TOO TOO TOO TOO TOO TOO TOO TOO TOO TOO TOO TOO TOO TOO

15

TOO VA VA VA VA VA VA VA VA VA VA VA VA VA VA VA VA TOO

17 Vibrato Exercise #1

25 Vibrato Exercise #2

©2015 SaxMusic San Antonio

SAXOPHONE

The "OTHER" Keys

Pinky Keys, Palm Keys, Side Keys

Kelsey J. Lien

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11 Use Chromatic F# Key

12 Use Side A# (Bb) Key

13 Use Side C Key

14

15 Use Front F Fingering

16 Use Front E Fingering

The musical score consists of 16 numbered exercises, each on a single staff in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. Exercises 1-10 are melodic lines with various rhythmic patterns and accidentals. Exercises 11-16 include specific fingering instructions: 'Use Chromatic F# Key', 'Use Side A# (Bb) Key', 'Use Side C Key', 'Use Front F Fingering', and 'Use Front E Fingering'. Each exercise is marked with a circled number and ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.