

FLUTE

- ★ Angle those chairs!
- ★ The flute is a forward facing instrument
- ★ Bottom lip and lip plate are parallel
- ★ The bottom lip rests on the lip plate
- ★ The aperture is never wider than the tone hole
- ★ When starting beginners, use 'poo' - like shampoo! When first starting, breathe through the nose; start with the lips closed to prevent apertures that are too large and to help students keep their lips even
- ★ Air is blown across the wet part of the bottom lip
- ★ Corners are NEVER pulled back or 'smiley'
- ★ Bottom lip covers 1/3 of the tone hole; not covering enough = sharp; covering too much = flat; use your hand to feel air direction
- ★ Right Hand - makes a 'C' and should feel natural, thumb on the 'back' of the tubing of the body
- ★ Left Hand - cradles the flute, wrist is bent
- ★ Fingers touch the center of the keys on the pads of the fingers (not the finger tips)
- ★ The three balance points: left hand index finger, right hand thumb, chin
- ★ The flute is angled down and the player's head is tilted toward the right ear; the neck is long
- ★ Lift up the flute from the elbows; no shoulder tension
- ★ If something looks weird or awkward, then it is weird and awkward for the student playing the flute!



THE NON-NEGOTIABLES OF INSTRUMENT PEDAGOGY

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CLARINET

- ★ The reed is in excellent condition and is perfectly aligned (a hair's width of the mouthpiece can be seen above the reed)
- ★ The size of the reed fits the student and the mouthpiece. A stronger reed is only better when it improves sound and feels "easier" or "about the same" to play
- ★ The bottom lip sits in its natural position: mostly in front of and only slightly over the bottom teeth
- ★ The correct amount of mouthpiece is in the mouth; placement is slightly behind the point at which the instrument will "squeak"
- ★ There is a balanced amount of pressure on the reed
- ★ The back of the tongue is high against the molars, the middle dips down, and the tip is up toward the teeth (like saying the word "she")
- ★ The angle of the instrument is correct: with the head balanced, the instrument goes from the mouth to between the knees
- ★ The left hand points slightly downward, and the first finger is able to cover the first tone hole, touch the A key, and touch the G# key simultaneously
- ★ Fingers are only slightly curved
- ★ Fingers "hover" over tone holes they are not covering



SAXOPHONE

- ★ The reed is in excellent condition and is perfectly aligned (a hair's width of the mouthpiece can be seen above the reed)
- ★ The size of the reed fits the student and the mouthpiece; a stronger reed is only better when it improves sound and feels "easier" or "about the same" to play
- ★ The bottom lip rolls slightly over bottom teeth; some of the red part of the lip should still be visible
- ★ The correct amount of mouthpiece is in the mouth; placement is slightly behind the point at which the instrument will "squeak" or "honk"
- ★ There is a balanced amount of pressure on the reed
- ★ The corners of the lips hug into the mouthpiece
- ★ The mouthpiece and saxophone neck come out of the mouth at a slightly below horizontal angle; the right hand thumb must press forward on the instrument and the neck strap must be correctly adjusted
- ★ The mouthpiece and neck are properly turned so the head and upper body are centered
- ★ Fingers are curved
- ★ Fingers touch the pearls at all times

TRUMPET / HORN

- ★ The body is correctly balanced, natural and poised
- ★ The lips are together, smooth and even in front of the teeth
- ★ The muscles that surround the air should be properly developed
- ★ The placement of the head complies properly with the angle of the instrument
- ★ The instrument should be correctly balanced
 - ★ Trumpet: using the first finger on the left hand and the right thumb
 - ★ Horn: the right hand should be placed correctly
- ★ The tongue is forward and down
- ★ The breath is taken through the mouth and the air is unobstructed
- ★ The fingers operating the valves must be naturally curved
- ★ The articulation is a result of correct embouchure/ tone production
- ★ The instrument must be kept in excellent working order and clean



TROMBONE

- ★ In assembly, the angle of the bell section to the slide matters and greatly affects balance (slightly less than 90 degrees)
- ★ The slide is the most delicate part; never put the weight of the body onto the slide
- ★ A bad slide can cause students to play incorrectly - constantly monitor slide maintenance
- ★ Left hand: shaped like a water gun; "Meaty part on the bell lock nut"
- ★ Right hand: thumb and two fingers, does NOT "grip"!
- ★ The left hand holds the weight of the trombone; the right hand moves the slide; transfer as little weight as possible into the right hand when in lower positions
- ★ The trombone is stabilized by the neck, NOT the shoulder
- ★ Rest the trombone on the face; it is a very physical instrument that can lead to tension, causing students to press it against the face
- ★ Teach slow, natural, easy slide movement before teaching more rapid movement; make slide movement feel as natural as possible
- ★ Use glissando to get the air to continue to move freely while the slide is moving
- ★ Rest the trombone on the ground on "three points" - the bell, the mouthpiece/leadpipe, and tuning slide - NEVER the slide



EUPHONIUM / TUBA

- ★ Embouchure
 - ★ Natural face
 - ★ Teeth are relatively even and slightly apart
 - ★ Corners are natural
- ★ Posture - **posture must not be compromised when playing the instrument**
 - ★ Head is balanced
 - ★ Torso long and leaning forward slightly
 - ★ Elbows natural and relaxed
 - ★ Wrists are straight
 - ★ Left arm relaxed - not squeezing the instrument (euphonium)
 - ★ **Posture must be continually monitored as students grow throughout the year - what worked in September might not work in January**
- ★ Mouthpiece
 - ★ Angles down
 - ★ Anchors on the bottom lip and top lip touches lightly to create a seal
 - ★ Placement is 50%/50% or 60% top lip/40% bottom lip - depending on the student's natural face
- ★ Hand Position
 - ★ Fingers are curved and relaxed
 - ★ Play with the fingerprints
 - ★ Thumb should not be tucked under the 4th valve slide (euphonium)
- ★ Articulation
 - ★ "D" syllable - "Doo"
 - ★ Air must not stop between notes
- ★ Other things
 - ★ Students should not be allowed to set their instruments on the bell when not in use
 - ★ When walking with instruments, students should not let the instrument dangle from their arms. Instead, they should hold the instruments with the bells pointing upwards with the instrument close to their bodies.
 - ★ Manage the tuning slides for all of the valves

