


**Establishing the Proper Set-up
For the
Clarinet
&
Sax**

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**Music for All
Summer Symposium**
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Ball State University
Muncie, IN

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OVERVIEW

- ◆ Identify Students Most Likely to Succeed
- ◆ Mouthpiece selection
- ◆ Embouchure
- ◆ Making that First Sound
- ◆ Posture and Hand Position
- ◆ Articulation




**Identify Students
Most Likely to Succeed**


- ◆ Top edge of bottom teeth relatively straight.
- ◆ Bottom edge of top teeth relatively straight.
- ◆ Seem to easily form a proper embouchure when pretending to apply Chapstick. (Zagreb Sax Quartet example)



CLARINET




Sax



**Identify Students
Most Likely to Succeed**


Zagreb Sax Quartet Example



- Dragon Sremec- Soprano
- Matjaž Drevenšek- Alto
- Goran Merčep- Tenor
- Saša Nestorovic- Bari

Identify Students Most Likely to Succeed

**Saxophone:
Check hands!**



- * Can the student reach around the wide, lower section of the saxophone?
- * Does the student have enough space to manipulate the front keys while not bumping the upper and lower side keys with the inside area of the hand?

Mouthpiece Selection

Note: On most models, the ligature screw caps should always be on the student's right side when looking at the reed.

The various mouthpiece manufacturers use different numbering systems to indicate facing, tip opening, and chamber measurements.

In general:

- ❖ The larger the tip opening the softer the reed.
- ❖ The smaller the tip opening, the harder the reed.


Embouchure


- ❖ Teeth on top of mouthpiece
- ❖ Lower lip cushions the reed
- ❖ Chin should have a flat appearance
- ❖ Corners should prevent "wobble"
- ❖ Avoid excessive pressure on the reed from the lower lip.

Embouchure

The embouchure "grip" should be more like diagram B and NOT like diagram A.


Always avoid placing excessive pressure on the reed from the lower lip and jaw.



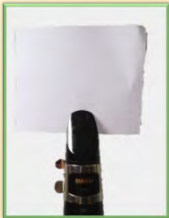



Making that First Sound

How far should the mouthpiece be placed inside the mouth?




**Paper
vs
Light**





Making that First Sound

- ✧ Clarinet: Think “Heee” for air direction
- ✧ Full resonant tone, fast air flow
- ✧ Teacher depresses the register key while student plays note in the lower register.
- ✧ If embouchure and finger position are correct, then the upper register note should sound immediately.
- ✧ Have students experiment with upper register early, during the first semester of instruction.




Making that First Sound

Alto Sax Mouthpiece Pitch

1. With neck attached: Concert A-Flat
2. Mouthpiece only: Concert A natural

Clarinet Mouthpiece Pitch


1. With barrel attached: Concert F-sharp
2. Mouthpiece only: Don't 😊



Making that First Sound


A Few Assembly Reminders

1. Press D ring on clarinet to raise the bridge key
2. Twist the sax neck left and right, not up and down. Don't bend the octave key.





Posture & Hand Position

- ❖ Feet flat on the floor
- ❖ Shoulders down and relaxed
- ❖ Spinal Stretch
- ❖ Breathe in through the mouth, and then exhale without hesitation




Posture & Hand Position

- ❖ **Hand Position**
Place fingers on tone holes first, then, swing thumb into place. Seat finger pads **BEFORE** placing thumb.
- ❖ Check to make sure the right index finger is not supporting the weight of the clarinet by using the side E-flat key.
- ❖ For Clarinet and Sax, don't place the thumb rest above the largest knuckle

Posture & Hand Position

- ❖ **SAX:**
The left thumb should remain on thumb rest, with the thumb tip in contact with the octave key mechanism.
- ❖ **CLARINET:**
The left thumb should remain on the back tone hole with the thumb tip in contact with the register key.
- ❖ For **BOTH** instruments, the left thumb approaches the octave or register key at an angle.





Posture & Hand Position


Saxophone:

Neck Strap Adjustment is critical for proper posture and tone quality.

- Mouthpiece must enter the mouth at the correct location and angle
- Student should not tilt head up or down in order to reach the mouthpiece for sax or clarinet.









Articulation

SAXOPHONE
The strike spot is lower in the mouth
For Saxophone due to the angle of the mouthpiece.



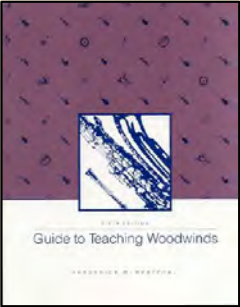
CLARINET
The strike spot is higher in the mouth
for Clarinet due to the angle of the mouthpiece.


**Simply touch the tip of the reed,
Don't totally close the tip opening.**



Resources

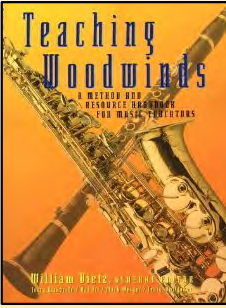
Guide to Teaching Woodwinds
By Frederick W. Westphal
Fifth Edition






Resources

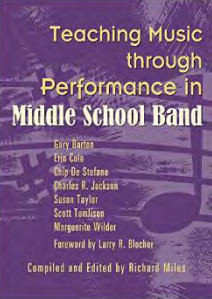
**Teaching Woodwinds:
A Method and Resource Handbook for Music Educators**
By William Dietz





Resources

Teaching Music Through Performance in Middle School Band
By Gary Barton, Erin Cole, Chip De Stefano, Charles R. Jackson, Susan Taylor, Scott Tomlison, Marguerite Wilder
Foreword by Larry R. Blocher
Compiled and Edited by Richard Miles




Chapter 4: Mastering Fundamentals

Resources

**The Band Director's
Book of Secrets**
By
Charles R. Jackson, D.M.A.

Available through:

Amazon Kindle	Ciando
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Barnes & Noble	Baker & Taylor
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