

## Establishing the Proper Set-up for the

Presented by  
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Kennesaw, GA (Cobb County)

# Flute

**Music For All Summer Symposium**  
Tuesday, June 25, 2019  
Ball State University  
Muncie, IN

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## Please Join my "Remind" group for the MFA Summer Symposium 2016

REMIND now  
allows one-to-one  
conversations with  
the new  
CHAT function.

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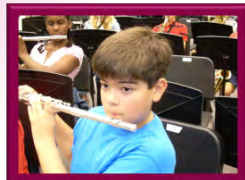
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TO:

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## Establishing the Proper Set-up for the Flute OVERVIEW

- ❖ Recruit for the flute section.
- ❖ Identify those most likely to succeed.
- ❖ Critical first months of instruction.
- ❖ Maintain interest and accelerate progress.
- ❖ Common Problems
  - Embouchure
  - Hand Position
  - Posture
  - Vibrato



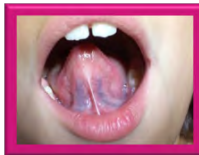
## Recruit for the Flute Section

- ❖ Emphasize that both boys and girls can play the flute
  - Avoid unintentional bias.
- ❖ Provide a quality live performance during the orientation period and recordings throughout the year.
- ❖ Be mindful of instrumentation concerns for your group and for the high school group.



## Identify those most likely to succeed.

- ❖ Can the student comfortably hold the instrument correctly?
- ❖ Can the student's fingers reach the keys while maintaining proper hand position?
- ❖ Are there any anomalies that might present problems with proper embouchure development and tone production?
- ❖ Does the student have ankyloglosia?



## Critical first months of instruction.

### Posture

- ❖ Impact of posture on tone quality and breath support
- ❖ Impact of posture on balance
- ❖ Impact of posture on tension



## Critical first months of instruction.

### Headjoint First!

- ❖ Discuss breathing (use a balloon).
- ❖ Check headjoint stopper with rod. Adjust crown.
- ❖ Help focus on embouchure.
- ❖ Eliminate concern about hand placement.
- ❖ Lower lip protrudes as when saying "pooh".
- ❖ Use online videos. Good example: James Galway.



## Critical first months of instruction.

### Tone Production



## Critical first months of instruction.

### Tone Production

- ❖ Use bassoon reed demonstration to show how easy high notes can be played without forcing the air.
- ❖ Tongue placement
- ❖ Mouthpiece angle
- ❖ Bottom lip placement in relation to embouchure hole.





**Flute Register Assistance  
Device:  
Bassoon Reed**

- visualize importance of lower lip placement
- avoid forcing air



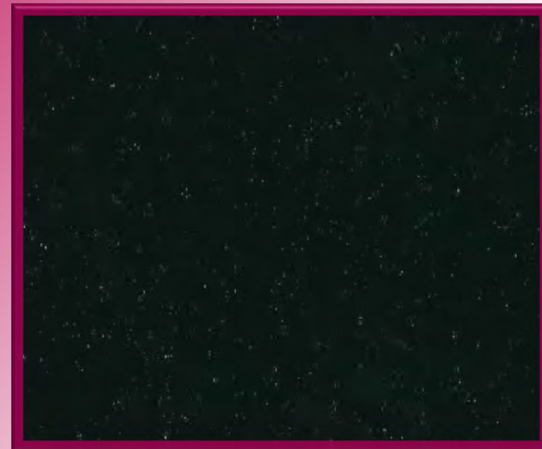

## Critical first months of instruction.

### Assembly

- ❖ Avoid rough handling near the rods and keys.
- ❖ Hold headjoint with left hand near the crown.
- ❖ Hold the flute near manufacturer's name. Avoid rods.
- ❖ Gently twist together.
- ❖ Line aperture hole with first key on the flute body.
- ❖ Hold footjoint at far right end.
- ❖ Align the leftmost rod with the middle of the rightmost key.



## Foot Joint Assembly



## Critical first months of instruction.

### Assembly

Curved headjoint option for smaller students. Similar to the headjoint of a bass or alto flute.



## Critical first months of instruction

### Assembly

Azumi Wave-Line flute for very young/small students. Lowest note is D. There are no trill keys.

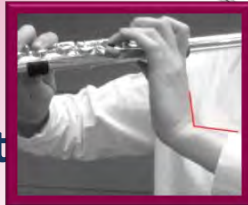


The Wave-Line flute is an option when starting beginners in the mid-elementary grades.

## Critical first months of instruction.

### Left Hand Placement

Holding the flute with the right hand, place the pinky of the left hand on the *Ab* key first. THEN, place other left hand fingers in place. This will help identify where the index finger will rest against the flute body.



## Critical first months of instruction.

### Right Hand Placement

- ❖ Place mouthpiece on left shoulder.
- ❖ Place right hand fingers on the keys first, then swing right thumb into position.
- ❖ Remember it is an OPPOSABLE thumb.
- ❖ Much like picking up a book.



## Critical first months of instruction. *Air Direction*

**Pneumo Pro:**  
<http://www.fluteworld.com>



## Critical first months of instruction. *Articulation*

The tongue should be much farther forward and lower in the mouth than some may think.

This location allows for full air and full tone at the very beginning of a pitch.

Almost as if tonguing on the backside of the lip.

Tip of the tongue should not extend outside of the mouth. However, this strategy can be used to help students who do not tongue.

## Maintain Interest and Accelerate Progress.

- ❖ Promote private instruction.
- ❖ Post list of instructors in the band room and on website.
- ❖ Bring in guest flute performers and clinicians.
- ❖ Distribute information for local flute camps.

## Maintain Interest and Accelerate Progress.

- ❖ Feature flute ensembles and soloists on concerts.
- ❖ Pavan by Luis Milan (1536-1561) arranged for Flute Choir



## Common Problems Embouchure

Only about 1/3 of the embouchure hole on the lip plate should be covered. Often students cover half or more resulting in a thin sound.

Have students keep head up and lips out. Use of a mirror can help avoid covering too much of the embouchure hole in the lip plate.



## Common Problems Embouchure

Student produces both low and high pitches simultaneously on certain notes .



A possible solution is to think of poking out the upper lip for the higher pitches.



## Common Problems Right Hand Position

Often the right thumb protrudes too far in front on the flute or is otherwise in the wrong position.

**Solution #1:**

This is often the result of simply grabbing and picking up the flute. Remind students to reset thumb after picking up the flute.



## Common Problems Right Hand Position

Often the right thumb protrudes too far in front on the flute or is otherwise in the wrong position.

**Solution #2:**

Raise right elbow slightly and it will help correctly set the right wrist and right thumb.



## Common Problems Right Hand Position

Often the right thumb protrudes too far in front on the flute or is otherwise in the wrong position.

### Solution #3:

Have student pick up a book. The thumb will automatically go to the most natural position which should then be transferred to the flute.



## Common Problems Right Hand Position

Often the right thumb protrudes too far in front on the flute or is otherwise in the wrong position.

### Solution #4:

As mentioned earlier, have student place right fingers on keys first, then swing thumb into position.



## Common Problems Left Hand Position

Left hand thumb is too tense.

This is often the result of the improper placement of the left index finger, resulting in the left thumb supporting the weight of the flute.

Consider setting up fingers starting with the index finger.



## Common Problems Posture

- ❖ Right elbow and arm are too far back.
- ❖ Flute has excessive downward tilt.
- ❖ Lip plate not parallel to the aperture.
- ❖ Too rigid.... "marching band" posture (as described by private flute instructors).
- ❖ Head tilted excessively downward.



## Common Problems

### Vibrato

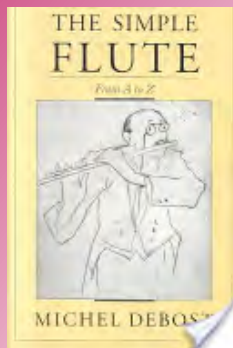
- ❖ Vibrato should generate from the diaphragm.
- ❖ The lip and jaw should not be involved. However, the lips will feel the impact of pulsing air stream.
- ❖ Practice with a rhythmic pattern and gradually increase speed (8<sup>th</sup> notes, triplets, 16<sup>th</sup> notes, etc.)
- ❖ In performance, the vibrato should not be a steady rhythmic pattern.

## General Maintenance Tips Common Minor Repair Issues-

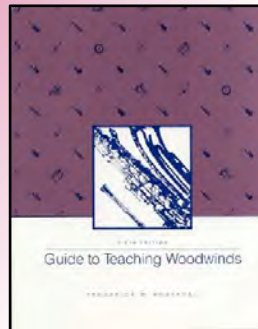
- ❖ Loose pads? Use a cigarette lighter.
- ❖ Loose screws? Use small jeweler's screwdrivers.
- ❖ Springs out of proper position? Use small crochet hook.
- ❖ Pads sticking shut? Use cigarette paper or a well-used dollar bill.

## Resources

The Simple Flute  
by Michele Debost

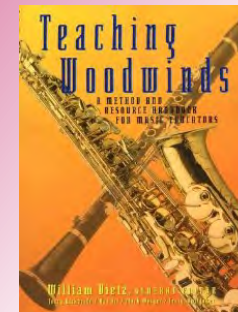


Guide to Teaching Woodwinds  
by Frederick Westphal



## Resources

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

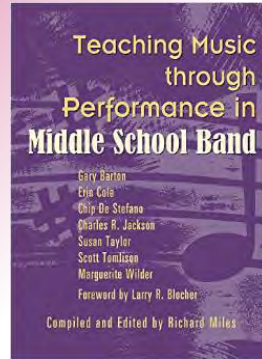




# Resources

## 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



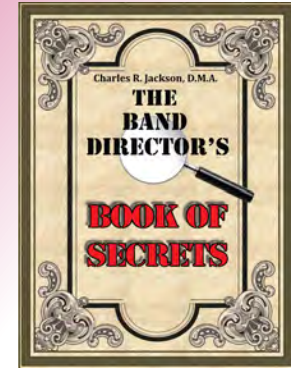
# Resources

## The Band Director's Book of Secrets

By  
Charles R. Jackson, D.M.A.

Available through:

- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| Amazon Kindle  | Ciando         |
| iBooks         | Gardners       |
| Barnes & Noble | Baker & Taylor |
| Kobo           | Vearsa         |
| eSentral       | Copia          |
| Scribd         |                |



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Special thanks to Ms. Alison Gillon, flute teacher and former student of Michele Debost, for her input regarding problems often seen by private flute teachers.