

Daily Vitamin:

A Warm-Up

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“Practicing... is a case of time, patience, and intelligent work.”

Marcel Moyse, *De la Sonorité*

This packet is about practicing; how to maximize its effects, how to become more efficient at it, and how to reap its rewards. These exercises are daily building blocks to improve your saxophone playing and musicianship, which will in turn aid your repertoire and performance. The more time you spend developing these skills, the less time you will need to practice repertoire, allowing more time and energy to be spent on music making.

To quote Trevor Wye from his *Practice Books for the Flute: Omnibus Edition*:

“These points about practising in general, are important:

- (a) Practise the flute only because you want to; if you don't want to - don't! It is almost useless to spend your allocated practise time wishing that you weren't practising.
- (b) Having decided to practise, make it difficult. Like a pest inspector, examine every corner of your tone and technique for flaws and practise to remove them. Only by this method will you improve quickly. After glancing through these books, you will see that many of the exercises are simply a way of looking at the same problem from different angles. You will not find it difficult to invent new ways.
- (c) Try always to practise what you can't play. Don't indulge in too much self-flattery by playing through what you can already do well.
- (d) As many of the exercises are taxing, be sure your posture and hand positions are correct. It is important to consult a good teacher on these points.”

If you learn to practice well, you will learn to enjoy the work, as odd as that may initially seem. This paradigm shift will allow you to follow point (a) of Trevor Wye's quote, even if the thought of practicing at a certain moment is undesirable.

Additional Resources

While this packet will be a way of working on our fundamentals, we'll also work out of etude books, method books, jazz pedagogy books, repertoire, and standard tunes. In lessons, I'll recommend certain material for each individual student, but below are some starting points that we'll sequentially go through. I'm NOT asking you to go out and buy all these books right away; over time, these will be my first recommendations.

If I recommend a book but money is tight (which believe me, I get) and you are unable to purchase it, please let me know. I want to make music lessons affordable for everyone, which is why I've included so much material in this packet. If buying one of these books isn't in the budget, I have some used books from previous students who have generously donated them for any who need these materials.

Etude Books:

- *25 Daily Exercises for Saxophone* by H. Klose, ed. Timothy McAllister (Carl Fischer)
- *18 Exercises or Studies after Berbiguier* by Marcel Mule (Alphonse Leduc)
- *Selected Studies for Saxophone* by H. Voxman (Rubank)

Method Books:

- *Voicing: An Approach to the Saxophone's Third Register, Revised Edition* by Donald Sinta (Blaris)
- *Top Tones for the Saxophone: Four-Octave Range (Third Edition)* by Sigurd Rascher (Carl Fischer)
- *The Art of Saxophone Playing* by Larry Teal (Suzuki)

Jazz Books:

- *Conversation Starters* by Adam Larson (Self-Published; go through his website)
- *Charlie Parker Omnibook* by Charlie Parker (Hal Leonard)
- *The Jazz Theory Book* by Mark Levine (Sher Music)

Mouthpiece and Neck Warm-Ups

To warm our chops up, we start by playing first just the mouthpiece, then add the neck, and then we add the entire horn. Going piece by piece like this helps remind our embouchure where to be centered.

Mouthpiece:

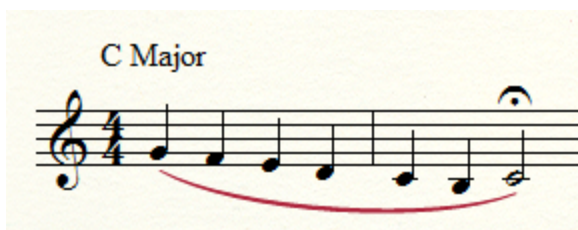
- If you're set up correctly, blowing the mouthpiece should hit a concert A on alto saxophone. Use a tuner or piano to check yourself.
- Soprano- concert C; Tenor- concert G; Baritone- concert E; jazz mouthpieces will tend to hit about a half step flat of all these
- Once you hit concert A consistently, start training yourself to bend the pitch and then return to concert A.
 - A-G#-A-G-A-F#-A-F... etc.
 - Final range should be from A4 (one octave below your starting pitch of A5) to around C5

Neck:

- If embouchure is centered on concert A, then the mouthpiece should be put on the neck where you comfortably hit concert Ab4. Practice hitting this pitch consistently with no scoops, both with and without tongue.
- After Ab is solid, try for second partial: Bb5. Practice until you can alternate between these first two partials with ease.
- Next, play the third partial: G6. This will be the exact same feeling as an altissimo G with the full horn. Practice alternating between the 3 partials with ease.
- Different partials will be hit NOT by changing embouchure, chin, or jaw placement but instead by manipulating your voicing (where your tongue is in your mouth and how that changes your oral cavity, air flow direction, and air speed).
- Now put the neck on the horn, and you'll be set up for success!

Low Note Warm-Up

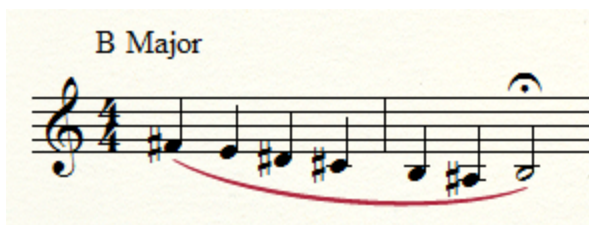
These exercises should be the first notes you make on the saxophone each time you practice. By taking a few minutes to listen to our sound each practice session, it will improve over time. Low notes are some of the hardest notes to play on the saxophone. If you can control low notes, you will control the saxophone!



Go at a slow, steady tempo. There's no rush!



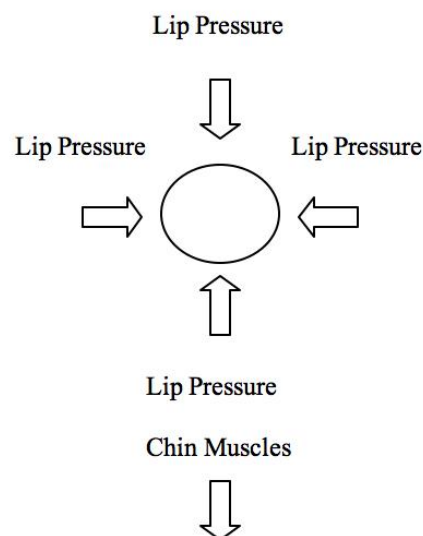
Try each exercise 2-3 times, and then move on.



Low A# is the same fingering as what other note?

Embouchure:

- Embouchure is how we form our mouth around the mouthpiece
- Most of us are too tight with our front teeth and not tall enough at our molars (think about being able to fit an M&M long side up in between your molars while holding your embouchure)
- A helpful visual for your embouchure is a bicycle wheel



Tone

Beginning our practice session with slow, sustained tones where we evaluate our sound is essential. Take this as a time to focus and center your mind and sound. Don't move on until your sound is as beautiful as you can make it; quality is valued over quantity. It is not necessary to practice many of these exercises if one exercise is practiced well. The following exercises should be extended to low Bb and practiced at quarter note = 60 BPM.

Slowly

The musical score consists of three systems of staves, each containing three staves. The first system is marked with a '2' and the second with a '3'. The notes are sustained (half notes) and include dynamic markings of *mf* and *f*. The exercises are designed to be practiced slowly, with a tempo of quarter note = 60 BPM.

System 1 (Exercise 2): The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (Bb), and a 2/4 time signature. It contains three measures of sustained notes with dynamic markings *mf* and *f*. The second and third staves continue the exercise with similar sustained notes and dynamics.

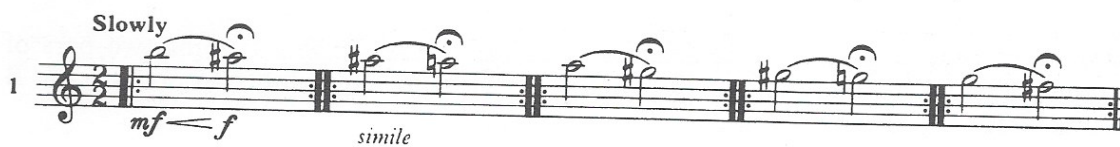
System 2 (Exercise 3): The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (Bb), and a 2/4 time signature. It contains three measures of sustained notes with dynamic markings *mf* and *f*. The second and third staves continue the exercise with similar sustained notes and dynamics.

System 3 (Exercise 4): The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (Bb), and a 2/4 time signature. It contains three measures of sustained notes with dynamic markings *mf* and *f*. The second and third staves continue the exercise with similar sustained notes and dynamics.

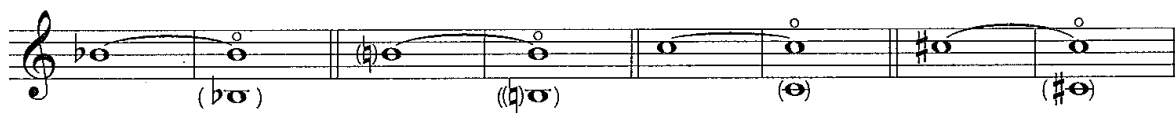


You are going to spread the sound of the B natural downwards into the low register. Therefore, before infecting the low notes, make quite certain that the B natural is a veritable Archangel Gabriel of a B natural before attempting to make the A sharp sound just as good.

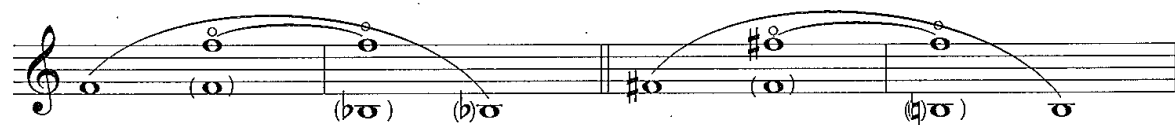
As in earlier exercises, play each pair of notes for nearly as long as your breath lasts. Only proceed if the previous pair of notes have been repeated many times to ensure *evenness of quality*. Endeavour also to make the second note even *better* than the first. If this happens at any point, reverse the exercise and work back to B natural which should be even better by this time.



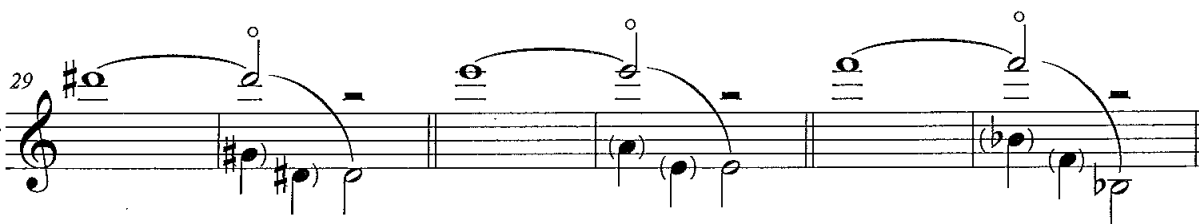
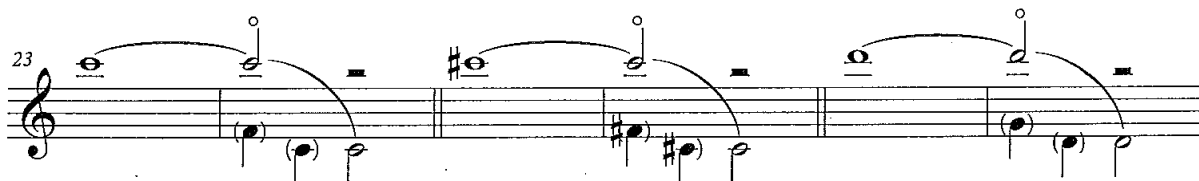
MATCHING TONES



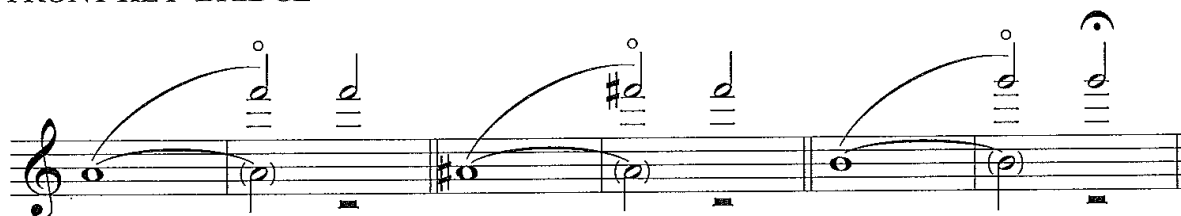
OVERTONE EXTRACTIONS



MATCHING TONES (SECOND OVERTONES)



'FRONT KEY' BRIDGE



Technique

Above all, practice with patience when practicing technique. The following exercises are useless if practiced too fast; the exercises are too fast if mistakes are made. Always practice these exercises with a metronome, and slowly increase the speed once you can play an exercise perfectly at a given tempo. Remember- curved fingers, fingertips on the pearls, fingers as close to the pearls as possible at all times.

There are enough scales and ways to practice scales for a lifetime. Devote a *great* amount of time to technique, but also be realistic in time management. It is better to pick 3 different technique exercises a day and make them outstanding than to superficially play through all of the exercises.

All scales can also be practiced with the following patterns:

Pattern A: 1-2-3-1, 2-3-4-2, 3-4-5-3, etc.

Pattern B: 1-3-2-1, 2-4-3-2, 3-5-4-3, etc.

Pattern C (in triplets): 1-2-3, 2-3-4, 3-4-5, etc.

Pattern D (in triplets): 1-3-5, 2-4-6, 3-5-7, etc.

Sixty Exercises of Mechanism.

The exercises of mechanism have for their object the formation of the fingering by habituating each finger to act separately or simultaneously.

By these exercises may be acquired that equality of fingering and that purity of tone which are the finest qualities of an Instrumentalist.

In the following exercises the student must accentuate the sound upon the first note of each division of the bar.

Each bar or each sketch should be played eight or ten times and as a finish play the note after the dotted double bar.

All the notes should be slurred, ascending passages played *crescenda*, descending passages *diminuendo*. (See exercises on Shading, pages 29 and 30).

Take breath after the first note in the bar.

The image displays the first fifteen exercises of a musical manuscript. Each exercise is written on a single staff in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The exercises are numbered 1 through 15. Exercises 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, and 15 are grouped in pairs on the same line, while exercises 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 14 are on the following lines. Each exercise consists of a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, often slurred together, with a dotted double bar line at the end of each exercise. The exercises are designed to be played repeatedly, with the first note of each division of the bar being accented. The manuscript includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and repeat signs.

16. 

17.  18.  19. 

20.  21. 

22.  23. 

24.  25. 

26.  27. 

28.  29. 

30.  31. 

32. 

33. *practice round / 34. Pop 15 97* 65

35. 36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41. 42.

43. Keep the G#-key open. Keep the D#-key open. 44.

45. G# Key open

46.

47. Keep the A#-key open. Keep the D#-key open.



Saxophone Major Scales

C major



F major



G major



Bb major



D major



Eb major



A major



Ab major



E major



Db major



B major



F# major



What are the enharmonic equivalents of the last 3 major scales listed above?

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1st time: Palm keys
2nd time: "Front" keys

- all slurred
- slur two, tongue two

MAJOR SCALES

C

F

B \flat

E \flat

A \flat

D \flat
(C \sharp)

F \sharp
(G \flat)

B
(C \flat)

E

A

D

G

HARMONIC MINOR SCALES

The image displays the first four measures of twelve harmonic minor scales, each on a single staff. The scales are arranged vertically and labeled on the left as follows:

- A
- D
- G
- C
- F
- B \flat (A \sharp)
- D \sharp (E \flat)
- G \sharp (A \flat)
- C \sharp
- F \sharp
- B
- E

Each scale is written in treble clef. The notation includes natural notes, sharps, and flats to represent the specific intervals of the harmonic minor scale. The scales are presented in a sequence that covers all twelve chromatic possibilities.

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MELODIC MINOR SCALES

This page displays twelve melodic minor scales, each written on a single staff in treble clef. The scales are arranged vertically and labeled on the left as follows:

- A
- D
- G
- C
- F
- B \flat (A \sharp)
- D \sharp (E \flat)
- G \sharp (A \flat)
- C \sharp
- F \sharp
- B
- E

Each scale is presented in its ascending form, starting with a half note followed by eighth notes, then quarter notes, and finally beamed sixteenth notes. The notation includes appropriate sharps and flats for each key signature. The scales are: A (no sharps or flats), D (F \sharp), G (F \sharp , C \sharp), C (F \sharp , C \sharp), F (B \flat , E \flat), B \flat (A \sharp) (B \flat , E \flat), D \sharp (E \flat) (D \sharp , G \sharp), G \sharp (A \flat) (G \sharp , C \sharp), C \sharp (F \sharp , C \sharp), F \sharp (C \sharp , F \sharp), B (F \sharp , C \sharp), and E (F \sharp , C \sharp).

Langenus p. 22

22

3 Studies for acquiring a light Staccato

G. LANGENUS

Allegretto ♩ = 144

The musical score is written for a single melodic line in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. It consists of 144 measures, indicated by the tempo marking 'Allegretto ♩ = 144'. The score is divided into three distinct staccato studies. The first study (measures 1-48) begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and features a series of eighth-note staccato patterns. The second study (measures 49-96) starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and includes accents and slurs. The third study (measures 97-144) begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and incorporates crescendos (*p cresc.*) and fortissimos (*ff*). The score concludes with a final whole note chord.

24SS0-116

Drone Practice

Choose a drone from *Cello Drones* on YouTube. Choose 1 key per week and really make it feel like home. Vary your selection so that you cycle through all 12 keys. Playing with drones develops our blend, tone, and intonation. Use it as an opportunity to develop your ear and pitch sensitivity. Tuning is a feeling.

1. Play the root with the cello. These are long tone exercises. Maintain a relaxed, forte volume for as long as comfortable. Do this several times. Alternate between hearing/feeling vibrations (out of tune) and hearing/feeling no vibrations (in tune). Blend your sound into the cello. If someone is walking by, make them think you're a cello!
2. Play the fifth. Perfect fifths need to be tuned 2 cents sharp. Trust your ear. Perfect fifths are often described as sounding "open" and "large".
3. Play the major third. In a major chord, the third needs to be lowered 14 cents. This is often more difficult to hear at first but will develop quickly.
4. Play the perfect fourth. Perfect fourths should be lowered 2 cents.
5. Play the major seventh. This will sound crunchy as it's only a half step from the root. It often helps to move back and forth slowly from the major seventh to the root. Try hearing "Somewhere Over the Rainbow", which uses a major seventh interval at the opening, in your head: "Some (do) - where (do 8va) o (ti) - ver (sol) the (la) rain (ti) - bow (do 8va)"
6. Now, at quarter note = 40 bpm play patterns with the above pitches over the drone. For example, 1-5-3-4-3-7-1. When interval intonation is perfect, move metronome up 4 clicks.
7. When above exercises are comfortable at a forte volume, try at different dynamics and with crescendos and decrescendos.
8. Supplement above steps with different types of chords (minor, diminished, augmented) and intervals, consulting an online just intonation chord adjustment chart for reference.

"Being kind of in tune is like being kind of pregnant; it's an either/or proposition." - Donald Sinta

Learning Tunes by Ear

For musicians of any kind, using your ears instead of your eyes is an essential skill. Learning tunes by ear from a recording or memory is a great way to develop this skill. Some seemingly have the ability to learn a tune by ear with relative ease and no identifiable process. For the rest of us, here's a helpful starting sequence to make it less overwhelming.

1. Choose a recording of a song you KNOW! Listen to it several times, then sing the melody/lyrics with it. If you really know a song, you can learn it by memory. Don't learn a tune by memory unless you can sing it by memory-- "Mary Had a Little Lamb", "Twinkle, Twinkle", etc.
2. Find the starting pitch on your horn.
3. Ask yourself:
 - a. What key is this? Major or minor?
 - b. What is the scale degree of the first pitch? Root, fifth, third?
 - c. How many measures is the tune? Does it break down into smaller sections so I can learn in smaller chunks?
4. Sing the first section of the tune, and THEN figure it out on your horn. If playing with a recording, stop/start as needed to ensure you're matching the pitches correctly.
5. Apply Step 4 to all sections of the tune, and then piece it all together.
6. Choose a different starting pitch and learn the tune again! You can either use the aural memory you've developed of the tune, or use some music theory to help you:
 - a. "If the first note of 'When the Saints Go Marching In' was a G and I ascended a major third to a B, then if I start on an A the next note will be..."
 - b. "The opening line of 'When the Saints' ascends from G to a D, the fifth of the key. So if I start on an A then I'll ascend to an..."

"If you can hear it, then you can sing it. If you can sing it, then you can play it."

Here is a list of nursery rhymes/popular songs which are great starting points:

Hot Cross Buns

London Bridge

A Tisket A Tasket

Frère Jacques

Jingle Bells

Itsy Bitsy Spider

The Wheels on the Bus

When The Saints Go Marching In

Old MacDonald Had A Farm

Row, Row, Row Your Boat

If You're Happy And You Know It

Yankee Doodle

Jeopardy Theme Song

Happy Birthday

Bingo

This Land Is Your Land

Brahms' Lullaby

America the Beautiful

Star Wars... any of them! Main Theme, Darth Vader March, Princess Leia Theme, Cantina Band

Amazing Grace

Down By The Riverside

National Anthem

My Heart Will Go On

Let It Go

Lean On Me

Hey Jude

Autumn Leaves

Sweet Caroline ... Or any other tunes you'd like to learn!

Equipment

Good, functioning equipment is necessary to play at your highest ability. Understanding the differences in equipment can help you find your preferred set up. The following are my general opinions regarding the main points of equipment.

***DISCLAIMER:** Equipment is a subjective experience. While there are definite differences in quality between certain brands and models, there is no clear cut guide as to which are “the best”. These are solely my subjective opinions.

Reeds:

Reeds can be the bane of any saxophonist’s existence, so it’s helpful to understand which reeds will play best and how to break them in properly. Regardless of what reeds you use, the break in process is key. When breaking in a new reed, **DO NOT** play it for more than 10 seconds on the first use. This is the first time it is experiencing moisture and vibration, which is shocking the cane. The key to reed development is this continued process of going from wet to dry, wet to dry. Think of a 24-hour period as a suitable recovery time before using a reed again. After this initial recovery time, add on a couple minutes of playing time to every subsequent use until a practice session on that reed has come to 40 minutes. At this point, think of the reed as broken in, and then you can feel free to make adjustments or shave the reed as you see fit. This break in process can seem tedious, but it’s much safer to coax a reed into prime playing shape than to begin playing it full time immediately. A full practice session on a new reed can kill it and never allow it to sound anything other than buzzy and too bright.

Vandoren is historically the golden standard of reeds. Blue box Vandorens, known as “Traditional”, are the most used Vandorens and some of my favorites. I also enjoy the grey box V12’s, which have a slightly thicker vamp (section in between the tip and butt of the reed). I have found the green, black, and to some degree the red box Vandorens to be softer reeds with less depth to the sound. D’Addario reeds have recently improved dramatically and are a very viable alternative to Vandorens. I do not believe there is such a thing as “jazz reeds”; there are good reeds and bad reeds. Some companies advertise “jazz reeds”, and I have found them to be soft and buzzy. I don’t know many legit jazz players who actually use them (although there are definitely some). Most players use at least strength 3 reeds. I personally trend towards harder reeds of 3.5 or 4, which require a longer break in process.

As with all equipment, reeds are a subjective experience and what works for me may not work for you. That being said, I would caution against using Rico, La Voz, or Hemke reeds. They tend to be too soft, have little depth, and die quickly.

Mouthpieces:

A mouthpiece can dramatically alter your playing experience. Before ever considering a different horn, I would advise making sure your mouthpiece is of high quality. As opposed to reeds, there are major differences between classical and jazz mouthpieces, so I will advise different brands and models on both. Also, do not think of any mouthpiece as a “lifetime” mouthpiece. Mouthpieces are often a journey through your musical and embouchure development. The mouthpiece you use this year may not be adequate in 2 years. Be curious and unafraid to experiment or change!

Classically, Selmer has been the golden standard of mouthpieces, and they are my personal favorite mouthpiece brand. My current setup is a S90 190, and I would encourage all my students to buy these mouthpieces (or S90 180) if they are able to afford the \$150. Beyond these, Selmer offers a wide array of other mouthpieces. The Selmer Concept and SD20 mouthpieces are popular and good quality. The previously manufactured Selmer C* is a classic mouthpiece used by many, and it is also a very good option. An alternative classical mouthpiece brand is Vandoren. Many players use these and have great success.

Jazz wise, there are many more brand options than the traditional Selmer-Vandoren split in the classical realm. For as many brands as I list here, there are a couple dozen others with which you might experience great success. Meyer is possibly the most used jazz mouthpiece brand. The Meyer 5M/6M/7M/etc. mouthpieces have been used by many great players. Otto Link, Berg Larsen, Jody Jazz, Vandoren, Theo Wanne, Dukoff, Beechler, and Lakey are all reputable brands used by good players. Within each of these brands, there are many models and specifications to choose from. Jazz mouthpieces contain much greater variation than classical mouthpieces, so I recommend comparing and contrasting different ones as much and as often as you can.

The marriage between reed and mouthpiece is essential. Different mouthpieces are designed for different strength reeds. Be willing to experiment to find the best reed choice for your mouthpiece.

Instruments:

The final and most important piece of the puzzle is the saxophone itself. With any horn of any make or model, it is imperative that the horn be in good working order. Consult a teacher if you are not sure whether your horn needs repair work. As with mouthpieces, there are different horns that are suited better to classical and jazz, so I will advise on both.

Classically, newer horns are far and away superior to vintage. Historically, Selmer has been the top dog company, owning the classical saxophone market. In the last 25 years, Yamaha and Yanagisawa have made significant strides that place them as competitors in quality that also have a lower price tag. Selmer’s Super Action 80 Series II and III remain the pinnacles of the market and my personal favorite, albeit at the highest price. Yamaha 875EX and 82Z are excellently crafted horns at a slightly lesser price, and Yanagisawa’s various models deliver the lowest price tag for this upper echelon of saxophone. A common complaint against Selmer is

their inconsistency, and I believe this to be a valid complaint. A well maintained Selmer is hard to beat, but I've also played on Selmers which are overpriced duds. This is the give and take with Selmer which necessitates choosing one with the advice of a seasoned player. Conversely, Yamaha and Yanagisawa are incredibly consistent from the factory, making it much easier to buy with complete confidence if you're unable to properly vet a Selmer.

Jazz wise, as with mouthpieces, there are many more options to consider. The first division is between modern and vintage horns. There are several good modern jazz horns on the market, my favorite being the Yamaha 82Z. Selmer Series II is a serviceable jazz horn, and Yanis definitely work, too. Most professional players play on some sort of vintage horn, of which there are a bevy of options. The Excalibur of vintage jazz horns is the Selmer Mark VI. Played by many of the jazz greats of the 50's and '60s, such as John Coltrane, Dexter Gordon, and Sonny Rollins, it is an excellent jazz horn with a powerful sound. Because of their mystique and since they're not made anymore, they often run as some of the most expensive horns on the market. As with modern Selmers, there are issues of consistency which necessitate an experienced player to test any particular horn out. Other good vintage jazz horns include Conn, Martin, and Buscher.

When looking for a new instrument, it is best to consult a teacher who can help guide the process. There are generally 3 different options in looking for a horn: local music stores, regional saxophone specific shops, and online. All have their pros and cons. Local music stores are close and convenient, not requiring much driving. They also do a good job of vetting their instruments and usually carry only new horns which are good quality and well serviced. These positives are reflected in a high price tag, though, and their inventory of saxophones is usually relatively limited. Regional saxophone specific shops, such as Tenor Madness in Waterloo, IA and Paul Maslin in Evanston, IL, have an enormous stock and variety of saxophones. If you can get to one of these shops, they're a great place to look. As with local music stores, their price tags will be higher. Online, there are always a wide assortment of instruments, but you must know how to sort through the junk. This is greatly helped by a teacher. Generally, for a seller to prove the value of their horn online to me, I expect to be given every bit of information: instrument ownership history, pictures of every part of the horn, a comprehensive guide of how it plays, etc. They have to prove it to me. Craigslist allows the positive of being able to try the horn before buying, but eBay does not. Be cautious with eBay: it can have lower prices, but generally only experienced buyers can find consistent success on eBay.

A Starting Place for Standard Jazz Tunes

1. Listen to the tune

While this might seem obvious, it's amazing how many players start learning a new tune without having listened to it all or with enough depth. Before learning a new tune, be able to name 3 different recordings by 3 different players and talk about the differences between the recordings. How do they play the head differently? Is there different instrumentation? Can I identify/follow the form? Etc.

Long story short -- listen... A LOT!

2. Learn the melody

Learn the head by ear from a recording. Find a recording you really like and listen to it until you can sing the head with it. Then, learn the melody in chunks from this recording. Transcribing it onto paper can be helpful in this process. Lead sheets should only be used as a final check!

3. Learn the chord changes

Just as important as knowing the melody is knowing the chords. Knowing the chords can mean different things to different people, but a good rule of thumb is being able to do the following without sheet music, from memory:

- Play the roots of the chord in time
- Play the thirds, fifths, sevenths of the chords in time (with a recording, backing track, or friend so you can hear harmonic context of the chord tones)
- Play the thirds and sevenths together; play both of them over each chord, half of the chord duration on each of them. These are especially important as the thirds and sevenths define the chord
- Arpeggiate the chords in time
- Walk a simple bass line using the above steps as starting points

Instrumentalists sometimes try to skip these steps. It will catch up to you sooner than later! As you do this more, you'll be able to learn/write down chords by listening to recordings. Until then, using lead sheets for learning the chords until they are in your head is completely fine. But remember, you haven't actually learned the tune until you don't need the lead sheet for chords!

****Over time, it will be possible to switch steps 2 and 3's order if desired. Learning the chords before the melody can be a helpful way to understand the melody's harmonic structure quicker.****

4. Road Map the tune

Make sure you know:

- How many bars is the form?
- How many sections are there and what are they? AABA? ABC? ABACA?
- Are there key centers? (ii-V-I's and circle of fourths will show you the way...)
- Is this related to a common form (blues, rhythm changes) and/or is it a contrafact?

5. Transcribe

Find recordings you like of the tune. Transcribe these favorite recordings and players. It will develop your ear, teach you style, and show you interesting harmonic ideas to implement into your improvisations.

6. Practice exercises on the chords that will aid improvisation

These exercises will make a lot more sense once you've looked over the changes and identified patterns in the road map in step 4. They'll also be a lot easier once you've put in the time to internalize the chord changes in step 3.

There are thousands of possible exercises to enhance harmonic knowledge. Here are a few favorites I've found particularly helpful.

Voice-Leading Scales (A.K.A. Bebop Scales)

AB

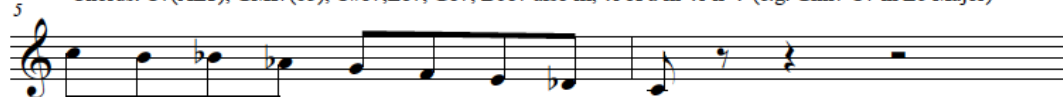
Chords: C7, Gmi7, EMI7(b5)



Chords: CMA (whatever)



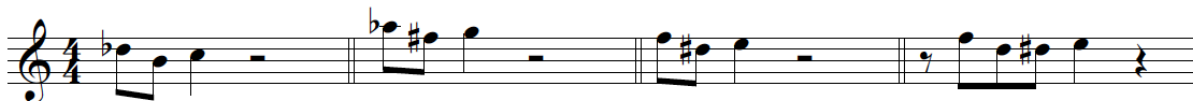
Chords: C7(ALT), Gmi7(b5), C#o7, Eo7, Go7, Bbo7 also iii, vi of a iii-vi-ii-V (e.g. Gmi7 C7 in Eb Major)



Come up with solutions for diatonic upper-extensions from the 9th, 11th, and 13th

Bebop Dominant Scale/Voice Leading Scales Terminology

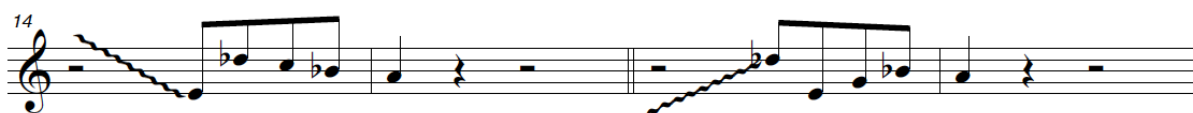
1. Enclosure or Surround (Root, 5th, 3rd)



2. Deflection (heads you back up).



3. Diminished Pivot (o7 built on the 3rd of the V7)



4. ii chord arp. to the 13th

(up arp, down scale)

(with passing tone anywhere)



5. v7 chord arp. to the 13th



BEBOP DOMINANT SCALES (IN C) FROM ALL 12 TONES

(GMI) (C7)
(E \flat MI7(45))
ROOT

5TH

7TH

9TH (2ND)

11TH (4TH) A

11TH (4TH) B

13TH (6TH)

9TH (CHROMATIC)

11TH (CHROMATIC A)

13TH (CHROMATIC)

11TH (CHROMATIC B)

11TH (CHROMATIC B)

13TH (CHROMATIC)

MAJOR 7TH

...OTHER IMPORTANT PERMUTATIONS

The image displays six staves of musical notation, each representing a different permutation of notes and rests. The notation is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The staves are numbered 57, 41, 45, 49, 54, and 58. Each staff contains four measures of music. The notes are primarily eighth and quarter notes, with some measures containing rests. The permutations show different ways to arrange the same set of notes and rests.

57

41

45

49

54

58

OTHERS???

BEBOP LANGUAGE SAMPLES

TWO BEAT/ONE BAR II Vs

SCALE DOWN FROM 3RD ROOT SURROUND...SCALE DOWN SCALE DOWN FROM 7TH 5TH SURROUND...SCALE DOWN ARP UP, SCALE DOWN

6 ARP INVERT...SCALE DOWN ARP W/ P.T...SCALE DOWN ARP W/ P.T...SURROUND...SCALE

TWO BEAT/ONE BAR II Vs w/ I

9 SCALE W/SURROUND SURROUND 3RD MA7 SCALE W/SURROUND SURROUND 5TH MA7

13 ARP UP...SCALE DOWN...RESOLVE ARP UP W/ P.T...SCALE DOWN, SURROUND

FOUR BEAT/TWO BAR II Vs

17 ARP UP...SCALE DOWN...SURROUND...SCALE ARP UP W/ P.T...SCALE DOWN W/ SURROUND

FOUR BEAT/TWO BAR II Vs w/ I

21 ARP TO 9TH SURROUND ON MA7 MAJOR BEBOP MAJOR ARP

25 ARP UP...SCALE DOWN W/ SURROUND SCALE DOWN FROM 13TH W/ CHROMATIC MA7/DIM PIVOT

29 ARP BOP SCALE DIM PIVOT MAJOR W/ SURROUND

33 ARP BOP SCALE V7 ARP DIM PIVOT MA7 ARP DIM PIVOT W/ SURROUND