

Prominent Schools of Clarinet Sound (National Styles)

German School (Oehler system, up to 27 keys)

Description: dark, compact, well in tune but difficult to play very softly

Players: Karl Leister, Sabine Meyer

French School (Boehm system, 16 or 17 keys)

Description: clear, bright/too bright, large dynamic range

Players: Anthony Gigliotti, Phillippe Cuper

Italian School (Boehm system)

Description: voice-like quality

Opera tradition

Players: Ernesto Cavallini, Alessandro Carbonare

American School (Boehm system)

Description: Strong French influence but more open and wide, more air and flexibility

Connections to jazz and film music

Players: Larry Combs, Richard Stolzman, Charles Neidich, Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw

The Most-used Types of Clarinets

Band

E♭ Clarinet
B♭ Clarinet*****
E♭ Alto Clarinet
B♭ Bass Clarinet
E♭ Contra Alto Clarinet
B♭ Contra Bass Clarinet

Orchestra

E♭ Clarinet
C Clarinet
B♭ Clarinet
A Clarinet
B♭ Bass Clarinet

Worth Mentioning

Basset Horn (in F)
Basset Clarinet (in A)

When an instrument plays its C and that sound/pitch is the same as the piano's C, we say the instrument is "in C"

When an instrument plays its C and that sound/pitch is the same as the piano's B♭, we say the instrument is "in B♭"

When an instrument plays its C and that sound/pitch is the same as the piano's E♭, we say the instrument is "in E♭"

And so on.

Equipment

Clarinets

Rubber/plastic/ebonite, wood, carbon composites

- Buffet
- Selmer
- LeBlanc
- Yamaha
- Bundy

Mouthpieces

Rubber, glass (metal)

- Vandoren
- Selmer
- Yamaha
- LeBlanc

Reeds

Cane or synthetic

- Vandoren
- Rico
- Alexander
- Gonzalez

Ligatures and mouthpiece caps

- Vandoren
- Bonade (inverted)
- LeBlanc
- Rovner
- Unnamed

Tips

- I purchase new instruments and used instruments. Used can be an excellent value especially for wood instruments.
- **Never** spend money if there is no reasonable return policy. It doesn't matter how good a deal is if you hate what you're stuck with.
- Purchase only new mouthpieces, ligatures, and reeds. Don't buy these used.
- If you play outdoors a lot, have a "picnic" instrument to play (rubber/plastic)
- I try new mouthpieces 3 at a time because they really do vary widely.
- If someone asks to play your instrument the answer is NO. (Think of it like your toothbrush...)
- Some mouthpieces work better with some reeds than others. This is completely normal.
- Boxes of reeds are deliberately filled to be the strength you bought, a few that feel stiffer, and a few that feel softer. The manufacturers do this on purpose.

Common Errors

***Not enough air**

***Puffy cheeks**

***Chin not flat**

Mouth corners are “smiley” instead of back.

Hand position is tense instead of relaxed.

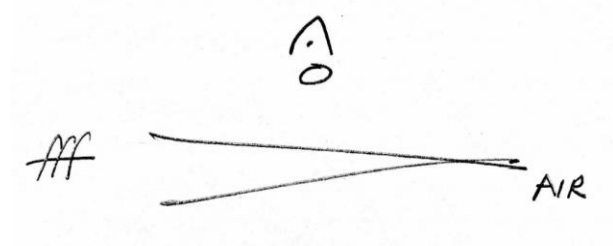
A good way to check your chin and mouth corners: play just the mouthpiece, reed, and barrel (concert F#)

Reminder: Players who have a good sound tend to play in tune

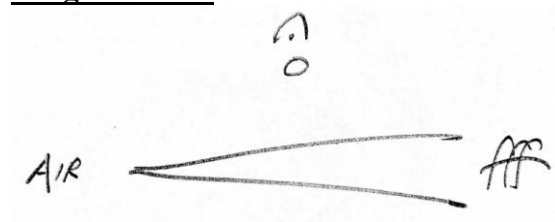
Important Daily Exercises

Hold each note as long as you can

Long Tones #1



Long Tones #2



Long Tones #3



Interval Studies

Slurred, very slowly

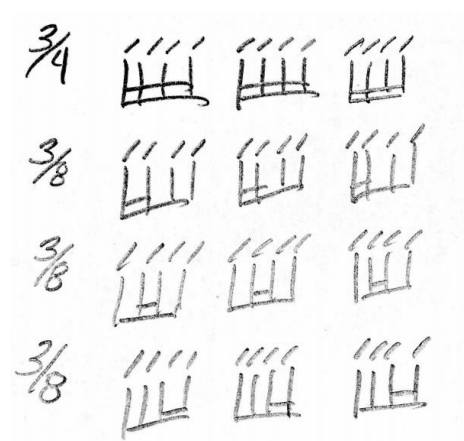
Low C-B-C-Bb-C-A-C-Ab-C-G-C-Gb-C-F-C-E

Open G-F#-G-F-G-E-G-D#-G-D-G-C#-G-C

Things I Wish Somebody Would Have Told Me

When you practice music **slowly**, you forget it **slowly**.
When you practice music **fast**, you forget it **fast**.

Changing rhythms is a fantastic way to learn 16th note passages.
Always end by playing the original again.



Protect your good mood.