

Five Simple Steps to Improve Your Clarinet Section

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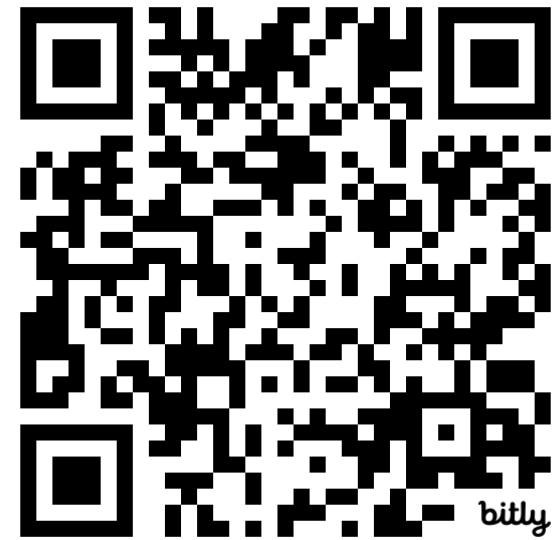
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John Kurokawa

- Lecturer of Music at Wright State University
- Principal Clarinet, Dayton Philharmonic
- Principal Clarinet, Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra
- Principal Clarinet Springfield Symphony Orchestra
- Guest Principal with Cincinnati Symphony and St. Louis Symphony Orchestras
- Yamaha Performing Artist



YouTube!

1.75K Subscribers- Videos and Shorts
Clarinet Tips and Pedagogy



Step 1:

Fix Your Posture!

Posture

- Practice standing!
- When sitting, use the back of the chair.
- Relaxed waist and shoulders
- Angle of clarinet to the body



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Hand Position

- Curved fingers
- Finger pressure
- Move from the palm
- Finger contact- wood vs. rings



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Step 2:

Fix Your Embouchure!

Embouchure

Embouchure = doorway for the air.



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Embouchure

- Basic Formation
 - Natural distance between teeth
 - Lower lip- gentle smile
 - Upper lip- slight frown
 - Overbite and VOOM!

Embouchure

- Insert mouthpiece to fill the natural space between your teeth
- Teeth on top
- Lower lip seated firmly against lower teeth
- Lips and corners
- Seal lips AND...

Embouchure

- Troubleshooting
 - Lower lip contact point
 - Chin bunching up
 - Collapsing corners/puffing cheeks
 - Too much lower lip over the bottom teeth

Embouchure

- Troubleshooting
 - Mouthpiece moving in mouth/thumbs up!
 - Loss of overbite
 - Aperture/shape and size of airstream
 - Amount of mouthpiece

Step 3:

Breathe and Voice Properly!

Breathing

- Support
 - Intake- stomach vs. diaphragm
 - Blowing- laser vs. warm/dark

Voicing

- Oral cavity vs. airstream and airstream shape
- Tongue position and air speed
- Angry kitty!
- Tip of tongue

Step 4:

Get a Good Setup!

Mouthpiece Recommendations

- Student mouthpieces (plastic)
 - Plastic and inexpensive
 - Durability?
 - For beginners through middle school
 - Marching Band!

Mouthpiece Recommendations



Fobes Debut = \$33

Reed Recommendations

My recommendation:

Vandoren Juno

2.5-3.5

Rico 'Orange Box'

2.5-3.5

Mouthpiece Recommendations

- Stock Mouthpieces
 - Hard Rubber
 - More expensive
 - Middle school through professional

Mouthpiece Recommendations

- Stock Mouthpieces
 - Machine made
 - Inconsistent quality
 - Confusing number of models

Mouthpiece Recommendations

My recommendation:

Medium close to close tip opening

Medium to medium long facing

Fit with a medium strength- 3.5-4 reed

Mouthpiece Recommendations



Vandoren M13 Lyre or M15



D'addario X0

Mouthpiece Recommendations

- Handcrafted Mouthpieces
 - Higher quality material
 - Even more expensive
 - Advanced and professional

Mouthpiece Recommendations

- Handcrafted Mouthpieces
 - Maintenance over time
 - Customization
 - Higher quality

Mouthpiece Recommendations

- Ramón Wodkowski
- ramonwodkowski.com



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Reed Recommendations

My recommendation:

Vandoren V12 or Rue Lepic

3.5, 3.5+, or 4

D'addario Reserve or Reserve Classic

3.5, 3.5+, or 4

Reed Recommendations

My personal choice:

Rigotti

3.5 or 4

Woodstone

3.5, 3.5+

Instrument Recommendations

Student (plastic)

Yamaha YCL-255- \$1198

Vito

Instrument Recommendations

Advanced/Professional

My recommendation:

Yamaha CSVR- \$3685.99

Yamaha YCL-650 II- \$2,293.99

Instrument Recommendations

Advanced/Professional

Other options:

Buffet R13 (nickel plated keys)- \$4216.00

Buffet R13 (silver plated keys)- \$4768.00

Step 5:

Exercise your tongue like any
other muscle.

Tonguing

- Importance of the tongue...
- Tongue Action
 - Tip to tip- snake tongue!
 - 'Two tastebuds'
 - Syllables- TA vs. DA

Tonguing

All other considerations regarding embouchure and air speed and voicing must remain constant!

Tonguing

A sixteenth note is a

SHORT

LONG NOTE

Tonguing

- Speed
- Limitations- genetic and realistic!
- Exercise:
 - Opperman- Modern Daily Studies
 - Langenus- Clarinet Method, p. 22

Tonguing



VS.



Tonguing

All other considerations regarding embouchure and air speed and voicing must remain constant!

Tonguing

- Clock yourself daily with a metronome
- Limit to 5-10 minutes daily.

Questions?



Thank you!



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