

Flute Hygiene

A Guide for Developing and Maintaining the
Habits that Lead to Better Flute Playing

Stephanie Rea

Flute Hygiene

A Guide for Developing and Maintaining the
Habits that Lead to Better Flute Playing

Copyright © 2023 by Stephanie Rea

Some rights reserved. Any part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without any prior written permission. Please don't use my material and call it your own. If you find it useful and care to pay me for my work, pay what you wish on Venmo @Stephanie-Rea-12

For my current, former, and future students at Murray State University
And anyone else it might benefit

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Part One: Fundamentals	
Chapter One - The Basics of Playing	7
What You Need: Your Body, Your Flute, Your Mindset	7
Hand Position and the Healthy Flutist	10
Posture and the Healthy Flutist	15
Efficient and Healthy Finger Technique	17
Efficient and Healthy Breathing	19
Basics of Articulation	20
Tone Production: Getting a Sound	23
Tone Production: Register and Dynamic	24
Tone Production: Tone Colors	28
Chapter Two - Thoughts on Practicing	29
Benefits of a Healthy Mindset	29
The Pomodoro Technique	32
Setting Goals	34
Benefits of Practicing with a Metronome	36
Benefits of Memorization	37
Learning a New Piece	38
Learning the <i>Whole</i> Piece	39
Getting Things Done in the Practice Room	41
Chapter Three - The Choosing of and Caring for a Flute	43
Choosing a Flute	43
Flute Maintenance	48

Part Two: Exercises

Chapter Four - Flute Hygiene: Tone, Memorized Melodies, and Scales	53
Tone	54
Memorized Melodies	60
Scales and Thirds	60
Chapter Five - Thoughts on Additional Technique, Etudes, and Repertoire	69
Additional Technique	69
Etudes	72
Suggested Repertoire	73

Part Three: Performing and the Musical Mind

Chapter Six - Performance as Work and Play	81
Preparing for Successful Performances	81
Creating Opportunities	84
Branding and Marketing Yourself	85
Contracts and Negotiations	86
Stage Presence	87
Performance Anxiety	89
Chapter Seven - Developing Your Musical Mind	93
Working Through Disappointment	93
Creativity	95
Musical Expression	96

Part Four: Beyond the Flute

Chapter Eight - Nourishing Your Emotional and Spiritual Self	101
Mental Health, Adulting, and Adjusting to College Life	101
Music as Vocation	102
Religion and Worldview	103
Building Relationships	103
Social Media and Professionalism	104
Posture and Body Awareness	
Chapter Nine - Taking Care of Your Body	107

Nutrition	107
Exercise and Movement	108
Posture and Body Awareness	110
Afterword	111
Appendices	113
Standard and Alternate Fingerings	115
C# Trill Uses	124
Sample Practice Chart	125
Blank Practice Chart	126
Glossary	127
Flute Hygiene: Daily Tone and Technique (two-page version)	130
Suggested Books	132
An Incomplete List of Flutists to Hear	135
Recommended Flute Repair Specialists	136
About the Author	137

Acknowledgements

This book would not exist without the sabbatical it took to write it, so thank you to the administrators at Murray State University who made it possible beginning with my ever-supportive Department Chair, Dr. Lucia Unrau, without whose support no other necessary signature of approval would have been obtained, Dean David Balthrop, the fearless leader of the College of Humanities and Fine Arts whose unwavering support for all faculty in our college makes the world a better place, and Provost Tim Todd and President Bob Jackson for their dedication to the university at large and to the individuals like myself who operate within it.

Many thanks to Jenny Davis for teaching the flute students and Kristen Swisher for teaching my portion of Woodwind Methods at Murray State University to my colleagues who might have been negatively impacted in any way by my absence.

Thank you to Lauren Carr for selflessly offering feedback on Chapter Three, and to Deanna Little and Joy Sears, two of my go-to flute people when I have questions.

To John Barcellona and Molly Barth for their gracious permission to use their exercises.

Thank you to my husband, Kurt Gorman, for setting my musical examples into Finale, acting as photographer, and encouraging any and every project I ever take on.

I also thank all of my students, current, former, and future, from whom I learn ever-surprising things and who spur me on to be a better teacher and person.

To anyone I may have forgotten.

Introduction

No one learns to play flute by reading a book, but a book can certainly help. We largely learn by doing, and to become very good, it takes a lot of doing. This book is intended to guide you through the stages of learning flute, starting with fundamentals. I will also give some ideas and advice to consider as you move forward in your flute playing whether your aim is to be an amateur or professional.

So, how much do you practice? How much do you think you should practice? You may have come across the now-popular [suggested minimum of ten thousand hours](#) that it takes to reach a high level at any pursuit, a number of hours that most musicians will have accumulated between beginning their instrument and earning an undergraduate music degree. If a beginning band student played their instrument an average of two hours per day every day of the year from sixth grade until entering college, they would amass a little more than five thousand hours, getting them a little over half way there. Mastery requires near-daily dedication, and if you spend this much time in pursuit of something, it will be helpful pay close attention to how you are investing that time.

The advice of attaining ten thousand hours of practice is both specific and vague. Many questions come to mind in considering your path to ten thousand hours: How soon do you want to reach this mark? Does it help to cram the hours in to a shorter number of years or will you fare better spreading them out? How much downtime or recovery time is needed? Is there a point at which too much off-time negates a certain percentage of hours already accumulated? The answers will not be the same for everyone, but we do know that those who become high level musicians are not people who take much time off in their training. For some, the amount of time spent practicing is a source of pride, with practice time logged becoming a badge of honor, a source of identity, even an obsession. For others, finding the ability to commit to the dedication that it takes to become a skilled musician is a difficult undertaking. No matter where on the practice spectrum musicians might fall, the question of how much to practice and the feeling of not practicing enough are thoughts that hover over most musicians for much of their lives.

On one hand, I am not interested in simply logging practice hours or having students log theirs. On the other hand, there is great musical merit in having the flute on your face every day, and much can be gained by keeping a practice log. The habit of practice is key. I've always loved the sage advice of late music educator Dr. Shinichi Suzuki: *Practice only on the days that you eat.*

Dr. Suzuki was a man of great discipline who created a system of music education that would enable any child to reach a high level of personal potential in music, and he was a strong musical influence in my own musical development through his Suzuki Method, taught to me by Rebecca Paluzzi, a Suzuki Flute Teacher Trainer and Professor of Music with whom I studied flute for about eight years. While the Suzuki Method was not my first experience in my musical education, its impact and influence on me is strong. However, this book, like my teaching, is in no way affiliated with that particular method. I never pursued the Suzuki teacher training myself.

Like Dr. Suzuki, I am more concerned with helping to develop the whole person into a better human being than in creating musical geniuses. Through his method, he ended up doing both. His advice regarding practicing only on the days that you eat is both philosophical and whimsical, and while he imbued his teaching with this kind of admirable lightheartedness, his dedication was as serious as any world class musician's. The quote is at once metaphor, suggestion, and ideal. It really refers to the power of regularity, the power of a daily practice routine. It's a cheekier way to say "practice daily, make it a habit." Or, in drier language: aim for ten thousand hours.

Though I admire and am inspired by Dr. Suzuki's tenacity, parts of my approach to teaching are a bit more relaxed and pragmatic. I recommend no less than an hour a day, six days a week to my students. Aim for seven, but six will do the job if you are working with a plan. Don't sweat it if you take a day off now and then. Other parts of my approach are very similar to Dr. Suzuki's. I spend very little time concerned with natural aptitude. Most, though not all, students who want to study music at a place like Murray State University are accepted into the program. Like Dr. Suzuki, I operate from a philosophy that everyone can elevate their music making, and I sometimes accept students with very limited skills into our program. In more than twenty years, none of them have failed if they have put forth the requisite effort.

What qualifies me to write this guide?

A little bit on my own musical upbringing: my music education was first in piano lessons then in the traditional public school music program beginning in fourth grade band in Pennsylvania, I moved to Tennessee and continued with band and piano lessons and later added Suzuki flute lessons (weekly individual and group lessons), handbell choir, youth orchestra, and marching band. On two summer trips to Japan, I studied at the Talent Education Institute in Matsumoto, Japan, studying with Toshio Takahashi, founder of the Suzuki Flute Method, and observing Dr. Suzuki's classes. I had also had instruction from Mr. Takahashi on multiple occasions at the East Tennessee Suzuki Flute Institute. The training I undertook in Japan and places like the Brevard Music Center and the Sunflower Music Festival's Summer Institute was a great complement to my four music degrees (B.M. flute performance from East Tennessee State University; M.M. flute performance, M.M. music theory, D.M. flute performance from The Florida State University), and during my college years, I devoted significant amounts of time to studying areas outside of flute playing like singing, piano, music theory, music education, and college teaching. During my undergraduate years, I performed as second flutist to my flute teacher in the Johnson City Symphony Orchestra. I continued performed in master classes and music festivals near and far and in solo performances, chamber music, orchestras, and as a freelancer throughout my education.

Outside of my formal training, I have learned great amounts from teachers I have never studied with, from my professors of subjects other than flute, from mistakes I've made, from books, life in general, my students, and so many other people and experiences. Everything I present here is a synthesis of what I have learned over my years as a musician and a professor, and the perspective from which I teach it. My aim is to give you much of the information and some of the materials necessary for bettering your flute playing and for learning it well enough to teach others. This book brings all of those influences into my own perspective on flute and flute teaching.

So, what is Flute Hygiene?

Hygiene simply refers to a set of habits that promote health. A habit is not a conscious choice, though we can consciously choose to develop habits. We do not choose to brush our teeth every day, and most people generally do not decide whether or not to take a shower or wear deodorant. I first heard the late author Ray Bradbury refer to a suggested hygiene for writers that included reading a short story, an essay, and a poem every day and to work on writing a short story every week. I instantly related this to advice and have often thought of my own flute practicing and teaching as a daily "hygiene." Over the years, I have collected and created exercises that when done regularly, form a sort of minimum hygiene of flute playing.

The grit and determination we need to hone our craft both cultivates habit and is also a by-product of habit. Discipline and habit are inextricably linked in a symbiotic relationship, and the regularity of your practice is one of its most crucial elements. Please do not underestimate the power of regularity in establishing a flute practice routine.

It is especially challenging to develop or maintain healthy flute playing if your mental, spiritual, emotional, or physical health is not in order. To that end, this book, like my teaching, will offer some life advice in those directions. [The human brain](#) is still growing and developing during the college years, all the way until age twenty-five, and these years are a time of self-discovery, formation of adult values, and development of personality as the brain finishes its physical growth. Students benefit from guidance along these lines, and this book will give some general guidelines that I hope are helpful for a more grounded existence, musical or otherwise. If it is something I have seen get in the way of my students' success, I have included it.

Who is this book for and what is it about?

I have written this book for myself and my students, and I'm happy to share it with anyone else whom it might benefit. It is for me to use as a resource in my own flute teaching, for my own serious high school and college level students to help them in their musical endeavors, and for anyone else interested in improving their playing or their teaching. It is also intended as a resource for both new and experienced band directors and anyone teaching flute. I've tried to keep the tone pretty conversational. Sometimes I repeat myself. When I do, it is because I think the topic genuinely bears repeating. Think of it as a transcript of my thoughts, a letter from me to you, on many of the topics related to flute playing. It is intended as a musical reference and best

digested one section or one chapter at a time and for those sections and chapters to be revisited as you grow as a musician and thinker. I wouldn't suggest reading it in one sitting. Bo-ring!

What this book is not.

It is not 100% original thought. Or is it? As creative thinkers, we go through a musical life constantly taking in ideas and making them our own. Those ideas become part of who we are, and they are repackaged along with our own original content and voila, something new is created. I have lived with some of the ideas and exercises in this book for so long that sometimes it is hard to remember where they originated. I aim to give credit where credit is due. If you think I haven't, please let me know, and I'll fix that.

This book is not intended as an exhaustive resource, but it should provide any high school or college flutist with useful information, helpful exercises, and some food for thought to take to a flute teacher. It is also not intended as a primer or a complete manual on learning the flute from scratch. While it does contain the same fundamentals of flute playing that I would teach a beginner, it is not ordered or always worded in a manner that would be easily digested by someone new to the instrument. Particular sections, however, could be useful at any stage. Music educators could benefit from using this book as a reference, but again, it is not a method book.

Reaching a high level of flute playing almost never happens without direct and regular contact with a teacher, and this book is certainly not a substitute for a teacher. Music is both an oral and aural tradition and learning classical music has been largely based on the apprenticeship system of learning. Apprentices learn actively from people who are professionally engaged in the creation of something. This book is meant to be a supplemental guide to and not a replacement of that process.

I hope to bring you relevant information in a thoughtful and organized approach. Let's get started.

PART ONE
Flute Fundamentals

Chapter One

The Basics of Playing

What You Need: Your Body, Your Flute, Your Mindset

Those who are serious about becoming better at flute playing will need to play nearly daily, and stick with it for many years in order to attain mastery. And if you love playing flute, you're in luck because it is a pursuit that you can enjoy for a lifetime. You can almost never reach your limits if you are working consistently as a musician. As in many pursuits, the more you advance toward your perceived limits, the more those limits move. This exciting growth is really fun to watch happen in students, and you can have a lot of fun observing it in yourself. Let's take a look at the three most basic necessities in learning to play flute.

Your Body

In order to play flute for very long without creating pain or injury, it is necessary to follow some important postural guidelines. The term "overuse" is often applied to musicians and athletes who develop injuries from *improper* use. If a posture is creating an issue such as tendonitis, it is not a healthy or correct posture, regardless of whether it might visually match an ideal from a textbook, a teacher, or any other professional flutist. The only postures I recommend are ones that do not create tension or pain, and all postures should be adapted if any physical problems occur. If it is creating pain, it should be changed.

Students and teachers sometimes wonder about the perfect mouth/lip/teeth/facial structure for particular instruments, and some public-school teachers recommend a specific instrument based on those physical attributes. This is often due to ease of tone production in the initial minutes of trying a new instrument. If you are trying to teach many beginners at one time, this makes sense to choose instruments for students that enable them to get a basic sound quickly, but **there is no perfect set of teeth, lips, or facial structure required for someone to learn flute**. I have taught advanced flutists and performed with professional flutists who have long arms, short arms, small hands, big hands, thin lips, thick lips, overbites, underbites, facial hair, teardrop embouchures, you name it. None of these things impedes one's ability to be a great flutist. *How* you use your body will determine far more about your flute playing than anything else. This is good news!

And though flute players the world over have great diversity in anatomy, there are some basic posture and hand position guidelines tend to work well for almost everyone.

Many students will inaccurately blame their small hands, short pinkies, thin lips, teardrop top lip, and many other physical attributes for their difficulties in flute playing, but in my decades of experience, I almost never see that these are the actual problems. It is helpful for us to reexamine the stories we tell ourselves. It's pretty easy to write off a difficult part of flute playing as the result of your own unique anatomy, but it's rarely ever the true obstacle. The obstacle more often is firstly the story you are telling yourself, and secondly, some issue related to hand position, posture, or embouchure.

Before you read any further, you must agree that your body is already perfect for flute playing. Yeah, that sounds a little woo-woo, I know, but it's true. If you're convinced that your body in some way is the problem in your flute playing, I recommend two things: 1) discuss the matter with your teacher who will likely reassure you that your anatomy is fine, then 2) start reciting the mantra "My body is perfect for flute playing" or some other equally true, positive reinforcement for yourself to help undo the negative identity you have created in thinking that your body is the problem. Since there is no one perfect flute body, there is always some work-around for whatever perceived shortcoming you think you have. If you approach flute playing with the preconceived incorrect belief that your body is the problem, you're doomed and should stop reading right now.

Your Flute

For beginners, any flute that will play all the notes with ease is a great choice. So many beginners do not play longer than a year or two. Your flute needs to be in good working order. This means it should have no air leaking from keys when they are gently pressed down, and keys should move smoothly with no stiffness. All springs should work well, and the headjoint cork should seal completely. If your flute meets these conditions, you're likely in good shape. This really is all that most flute students need in the first year or two. A student model of almost any brand whether new or used will fit the bill for the first couple of years, and in many cases, all the way through high school if the student is not looking to pursue music as a career. Even for higher quality instruments, for a student to play their best, the instrument must be in good shape. Take it to a trusted repair person to make sure the instrument is problem free. Additional information on choosing a higher quality instrument for those who are more serious about music can be found in Chapter Three.

Your Mindset

It might sound like an empty platitude, but if you are going to learn to play the flute well, you have to *want* to learn to play the flute well. Your level of dedication to the instrument is your super power. It is the biggest determining factor of success that I have seen in my students over and over throughout the years, and is the single best place to put your mental energy when interested in pursuing your musical goals.

I always say that learning music is a metaphor for life. So many of the personal challenges we face in learning our instruments are ones that we also face in other areas of life, and the skills we

gain through music are transferrable. Three of the biggest are self-efficacy, trust in your flute teacher, and honesty with both yourself and your teacher.

Why would you practice flute if you didn't think it would help you improve? You wouldn't. So, for as trite as it might sound, in order to improve, you must *believe that you can*. You must believe that your hard work will be worth it. Do something challenging that takes a bit of effort. Do this enough, and you gain a real confidence in yourself that your hard work will get you closer to your goals. You gain the belief in yourself that you can do difficult things. This is self-efficacy, and it is a necessary ingredient to becoming great at anything.

In addition to believing in yourself enough to do the work, it is just as important to trust in the expertise of the person teaching you. You have to believe in the expertise of your teacher in order to put that advice into practice. It is pretty difficult to spend hours every week doing things that someone suggests if you don't trust that the suggestions will work. And this is also where honesty comes in. If you don't trust that a particular exercise has value, ask your flute teacher, "So, how does this exercise help me in becoming a better flutist and musician?" When you understand how and why an exercise or piece of music can help you grow, you will be much more motivated to work diligently. Take an active role here. If you don't understand how or why, ask questions.

Honesty is also important in communicating with your teacher. If a student tells me that they worked for a certain period of time on a particular piece or section but they really haven't, then my advice to them in how to practice going forward will be based on incorrect information and likely not be as helpful as if they had been straight with me. If a teacher doesn't know what is truly hard for you, it will be impossible for them to give you a well-tailored practice plan for improvement. The best flute students are almost always the ones who are very open about their practicing, about what is and is not working for them in the practice room, and they come with questions to the lesson about those things. It is never helpful to lie about the amount of practice time spent. It only misguides the teacher who then cannot serve your interests as effectively.

A few books come to mind when I think about dedication and creating the right mindset for serious music study. If you are stuck in a creative rut, curious about developing more motivation, or already excited to achieve more progress, these books might serve as a springboard. I also list books in the Appendices, but I think these are also worth listing here.

***Write it Down, Make It Happen* by Henriette Klauser**

Very light reading. Some parts of this book might be considered a little "out there", but I think so much of the spirit and attitude Klauser encourages have a meaningful basis. There really is something almost magical about writing something down. It primes our consciousness for whatever it is that we have written about. There is something visceral about putting pen to paper, something that helps the idea become more real and less abstract or hypothetical. I love that her anecdotes show that how much you write about something is not as important as simply writing it down at all. The sheer act of writing helps you slow your brain down, places it in the to-do list of our consciousness. Lists, letters, journaling, emails, doesn't matter. Just write it down. If you're stuck and interested in learning how to get something done, read this book.

***Grit* by Angela Duckworth**

Duckworth is a professor at the Ivy League University of Pennsylvania, often referred to as “Penn”, not to be confused with the large, famous state university in the same commonwealth, Penn State. A scholar of the highest order, Duckworth gave a [TED talk](#) on this topic that is worth watching. One prerequisite to accomplishing any goal is self-efficacy, the belief in yourself that it is possible for you, and the tenacity to just do the work, to stick with the work. In this book, Duckworth explores some of the research on these important attributes.

***Willpower* by Roy Baumeister**

Social psychologist and professor Roy Baumeister sheds light on many aspects of willpower through his research on the topic. Willpower is somewhat like a muscle, and the more you use it, the more it grows. One caveat: it also needs some rest and can wear out. If you are having trouble establishing a dedicated practice routine, this book might be of interest.

***Mindset* by Carol Dweck**

Stanford psychologist Carol Dweck conceived the now-quite-popular growth mindset, a positive state of curious inquiry when faced with a challenge, as opposed to the fixed mindset that sees current limitations as unchangeable. Her research demonstrates the importance about our beliefs in our own capabilities and creates profound optimism for those in the teaching profession.

If you have accepted your body as perfect, have a flute in good working order, and the you have considered the importance of having the right mindset, you are ready to improve your flute playing. Let’s move on to posture.

Hand Position and the Healthy Flutist

If you play or teach flute, study these photos, and refer back to them when needed. Not everyone’s hands will look exactly the same, but these photos show healthy, relaxed hand position that allows for great control and facility.



Notice the direction of the head compared to the feet. More on this in the section on posture.



Holding the Flute: Where to Place Fingers

I use this system of numbering and naming fingers. Because the right-hand thumb does not press any keys, it is only referred to in addressing posture and finger placement, and never listed on fingering charts. “Thumb” or “Th” refers to the left-hand thumb in fingering.

L1 Left Hand Index Finger	R1 Right Hand Index Finger
L2 Left Hand Middle Finger	R2 Right Hand Middle Finger
L3 Left Hand Ring Finger	R3 Right Hand Ring Finger
L4 Left Hand Pinky	R4 Right Hand Pinky

When holding and playing the flute, all fingers will be hovering ever so slightly above the key that each finger presses, if not resting on the keys themselves.

Left Hand	
LH Thumb	Regular position is over the B key, but flutists are ready learn to switch between thumb and thumb Bb by the second year or so. The ability to switch effortlessly back and forth is important for even intermediate level flutists, because using thumb Bb aids in playing quickly in flat keys which all flutists will benefit from by the high school level. Best to learn this in the second year or so when music is still quite easy, and then develop the ability to switch back and forth as general ability progresses.
L1	Only plays the C key. Note that this is the only key that is not covering a hole. It connects to a key that covers a hole. This makes no difference in our playing, but it’s interesting to note.
L2	Only plays the A key.
L3	Only plays the G key.
L4	Only plays the Ab key

Right Hand

RH thumb	This is the only finger that never presses a key. Place it in the bottom of the flute almost directly under R1. More on this in the next section on balancing the flute.
R1	Regular position is over the F key, though it will also control the first trill key and the Bb lever key. The Bb lever key is almost never used! It is truly one of the most useless keys on any instrument. It allows for smoother connection between any left hand note and Bb while also allowing the flutist to more easily move directly to a B natural afterward. I only use it a few times a year.
R2	Regular position is over the E key and is the almost the only key it ever plays, particularly in the first couple of years. R2 will also play the 2 nd trill key. Rarely, R2 will also press the 1 st trill key to facilitate some advanced playing in the high octave and on flutes that have a C# trill when both the C# trill key and 1 st trill keys are used simultaneously.
R3	Regular position is over the D key. This finger will sometimes press the 2 nd trill key, depending on what notes are played before or after, just to facilitate easy connection of notes.
R4	This finger will mostly play the low D# key, but it will also play low C#, low C and for those who have the B footjoint, low B

Balancing the Flute: Three Balance Points

There are three points of balance to consider when holding and playing the flute.

Left hand

I cannot overemphasize the importance of hand position, which is the single biggest obstacle I see in college level students' finger technique. It is especially important that the left hand come slightly under the flute and that the weight of the flute rests on the left hand rather than the idea of the left hand having to work to hold the flute. **The pad of the underside of the first finger between the 2nd and 3rd joints** will be placed right between the two C keys on the flute, that is, the C key that your finger presses and the key that it connects to that covers the C# hole. To some extent, it is also the 3rd knuckle that does some of this support, with the hand coming slightly underneath the flute. The first finger of the left hand supports the flute slightly so that the thumb and first finger are both free enough to move at ease and eventually, with great speed. **Again, we do not hold the flute with the left-hand thumb or L1.** We must learn to hold it without gripping the B and C keys so that all fingers, but particularly Th and L1, are free to move independently and without moving the hand or changing the placement of it. The hand itself should not move when changing notes, only the muscles that move each finger should be engaged. To reiterate, it is the pad of the 2nd and 3rd joint of that first finger that supports the flute on the left hand. Refer back to the photos on pp. 10 and 11.

Left Hand Position

Exercise #1

With all fingers on all keys, hold the flute upright with the footjoint end placed on your thigh, headjoint pointing to the sky. This is very much like what your left hand should feel like when you bring it up to your chin. Slowly turn the flute to its normal, transverse hold. Most of your hand will stay close to the flute. The main point of contact between the left hand and the flute is the pad of the finger between the 2nd and 3rd joints.

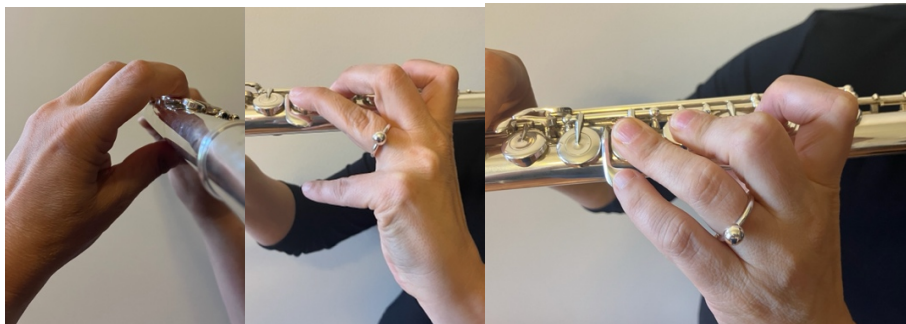
Left Hand Position

Exercise #2

A good test for the left-hand position: can you move the first finger and thumb up and down together without losing the balance of holding the flute? **The ability to balance in this way will not happen in the first weeks of playing, but this is where all flutists should be headed.** It might take a few weeks or even months for beginning flutists, but this is an important part of the development of flute technique. These are the fingerings for B and C#, and our aim in good hand position is that we can play B to C# without moving the hand or changing the balance point. Only those two fingers should move up and down. No other fingers should move and the hand itself should not move. If you cannot do this, your technical skill will be limited. Balancing the flute and not moving the hand while playing will be a big challenge in the initial months of flute playing and much longer for those students for whom incorrect balance and hold are habit.

Control in all of the finer points of posture and hand position develop gradually. We can't teach everything at once, but even in the early weeks of playing flute, beginners can be steered toward this ideal. Don't allow a beginner to balance the flute by gripping keys without reminding them to loosen their grip, and be prepared to do a lot of reminding. **We do not hold the flute by the keys.** This will help set them up for future success.

Here are three common problematic hand positions for the left hand to watch out for.



No

No

No

Left: Make sure that the left hand first finger is touching the body of the flute. This contact point is between the 2nd and 3rd knuckle.

Middle: Make sure the left-hand pinky is on the Ab key and not dangling below.

Right: Rather than hyperextend the knuckles, keep them relaxed and curved. Fingers should be in a slight state of flexion, curled slightly in the direction the muscles move the joints to close the hand. Fingers should never hyperextend which will only reduce control.

Right hand

The flute rests on our right thumb, and because our thumbs are opposable, a portion of the side of the right thumb is involved in the balancing/holding of the flute. My flute actually balances more on the inner side of my right thumb than on the pad of my thumb. The thumb should be placed approximately under the first finger, much like it would be placed when holding a cup.

Right Hand Position

Exercise #1

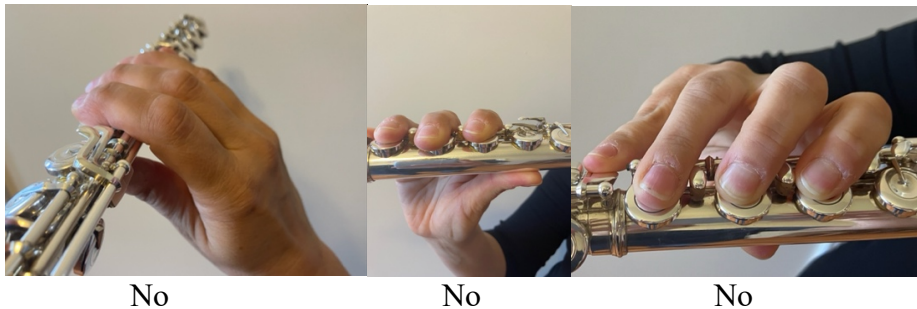
Pick up a drinking cup. Notice the position of your thumb compared to the fingers. This is not so far from what our hand will look and feel like when holding the flute.

Exercise #2

Stand up with your arms and hands fully relaxed at your sides. Notice your hand positions. This is a very similar position to how you will want to hold the flute. Emulate this level of relaxation as you pick up the flute and put it into playing position.

When playing flute, we want to use as relaxed posture as possible. This takes much practice, but it is achievable and worth the work it takes. After years of learning a new instrument, musicians develop bad habits that use excess tension and unnecessary muscles. To improve, we need to unlearn any unhelpful habits we have acquired along the way.

Here are three problematic right-hand positions.



Left: In this photo, the right-hand fingers are touching the rods. Always avoid touching the rods.

Middle: In this photo, the right-hand thumb is not curved in a natural state and it way too far to the left. It should be placed approximately under the right-hand index finger.

Right: In this photo, the right hand is internally rotated too far making it impossible for the pinky to do its job in reaching the keys in the footjoint. The right hand should rotate more externally, outward away from the body, in order to reach the footjoint. Notice the straining straight pinky. This position makes it impossible to reach the footjoint keys and leads students to complain that

their hands are too small or pinky is too short. If they will rotate their hand outward, this will solve the issue. Also, this position usually causes the right hand to touch the rod.

Bringing the Flute to Your Chin

When you play flute, bring the flute to the chin, do not bring the chin or head to the flute. Maintain upright, relaxed posture and bring the flute to you to avoid sticking your head out too far out of a natural spinal alignment. This is awkward for beginners and can set bad habits into motion when those new to the instrument reach their heads out to meet the flute. Flutists and teachers can watch for this in themselves and in their students.

The embouchure plate of the flute sets nicely in the curve underneath our lower lip, and this little nook also serves as one of the three balance points. It will be important later in creating a beautiful flute sound that the player not press the flute into the chin, rather let the flute gently rest in place. This simple resting really does serve us in the balance that is created between our right hand supporting the flute and lightly pushing the footjoint end of the flute outward away from the player, as the left hand supports the flute and lightly pushes the headjoint end of our flute into our chin. The chin is the stopping point in this fulcrum-like balance.

I estimate that the bottom lip covers 20% - 30% of the embouchure hole on the instrument, and I recognize that this is a rather wide and scientifically unreliable estimate. I don't know of any flutists who think about playing in these terms, and in asking several professional flutists this question, the answers I heard confirmed my initial estimate. In teaching a beginner, it's a nice place to start to have them cover something like 25% of the embouchure hole. Lip size and shape, teeth, bite, braces, jaw structure, and all sorts of factors related to the manufacturing of the embouchure hole and lip plate will influence how much the bottom lip will cover the hole. If you cover too much, your sound will suffer. If you cover too little, your sound will suffer. But just what is too much or too little? It's an art, not a science. Experiment, use your ears, and work on this with a teacher.

Flute Tip: I find that even most college students cover too much of the embouchure hole and/or they angle the flute too far rolled in and/or they angle the head too far down creating a covered effect. It is rare that students uncover too much. I think this is because it requires more embouchure strength to control the sound when we uncover though it also creates a better sound with a larger dynamic range. Uncovering is generally something that advanced students are continually working toward, particularly in the upper register.

Posture and the Healthy Flutist

Sitting or Standing

Flutists often practice standing up, but whether standing or sitting, there are common considerations. Because we hold the flute across our bodies, there is an inherent off-center kilter to our stance. **Other than marching band, the flute is not held parallel to the body, nor parallel to the ground.** Most flutists are slightly looking in the direction of our left shoulder with our torso about 45 degrees to the right. That's right, we do not sit or stand with our torso parallel to the music stand in front of us, rather we turn our bodies slightly to the right, at about a

45-degree angle to the stand (or audience, conductor, camera) in front of us. Rather than have our heads look in the direction that our body is facing, our head will indeed face the music stand.



Notice the direction of the head compared to the feet.
Flute is not parallel to torso. Body is at 45-degree angle to head and flute that face forward.



Front view



Back view

Marching band students will find this to be a bit different from their instruction on holding the instrument which is typically aimed toward a particular visual aesthetic and not concerned with the long-term effects of holding an instrument in such an unnatural position or with the mechanics of high-level flute playing. It is ok to hold your flute slanting toward the floor slightly, but perhaps not on the marching field. This is much easier with piccolo because of its small size.

In this photo of Gary Schocker, notice the strong slant downward. While not all flutists will angle their flute to such an extent, seeing this posture on one of the world's prominent professional flutists shows how possible it is. Notice that in both of these photos, the head is looking toward the left shoulder, not straight out from the body.



Gary Schocker



marching band posture

Efficient and Healthy Finger Technique

Along with using a natural posture, flutists will benefit from using as little extraneous muscle movement as possible. The aim is efficiency.

All fingers should remain slightly curved, similar to holding your hand at your side in a relaxed manner. Pressing too hard creates excess tension that can lead to things like tendonitis, and it prevents the flutist from moving fingers in a facile and fluid fashion. Ideally, fingers are very loose, relaxed, and use only the amount of energy needed to press the key down completely, which is not very much!

Finger Technique

Exercise #1

With your flute in your right hand, let your left hand hang by your side. Next, pick up the flute and very slowly place your left hand on the flute in its normal position. Do this incredibly *slowly*. Move the left hand as little as absolutely possible to bring it into the flute playing position, aiming to retain as much of the relaxed and natural position as you are able. You want your hand to come as close as you are able to get it to the relaxed standing position that you started from.

All fingers should “live” directly on top of the key that they play. We do not want our finger to have to travel very far to push a key down. This would be a waste of time and energy. Instead, we want our fingers to all be in place all the time, which can be difficult for a beginner to see the value in. In most music for beginners, there might be many seconds before a particular finger is called to use, so what’s the harm in letting that finger fly up high above the key, or wag down below the flute hanging out and waiting for its turn? An experienced flutist knows that this will alter the hand position and cause excess tension in the hand which will impede control. It also just takes more time to get our fingers into position, time we do not have once music becomes more advanced. Milliseconds matter in the world of fast finger technique. If we allow students to continue to let fingers fly up and hang down off the keys, it ends up being a habit that does not serve them, requiring some unlearning of that habit later in their education. This takes time to undo a bad habit. Always best to prevent the habit from forming in the first place.

Finger Technique

Exercise #2

Play an F major scale two octaves in half notes at quarter = 60. This will feel really slow. If it doesn't, play even slower. As you play each note, see if every finger that is not involved in playing that note can simply set on the key it normally plays, but not press it down. We want no air between any key and its corresponding finger. All fingers should remain touching all keys they normally play. Do this the entire way through the two-octave scale. This will give you the shortest possible distance for each finger to travel, increasing your efficiency, speed, and control.

Will you really play this way? No, never. But practicing this exercise will help you gain control over these small muscles in the fingers. The exercise serves as a great reminder of how inefficient our fingers sometimes can be when fly high off of the keys, and it serves as a means to work toward an ideal.

All fingers should press the keys as lightly as possible. In order for fingers to move smoothly, with control, and at the great speed often required, flutists need to press keys very lightly. As long as the flute is in good working order, this requires very little pressure. Think of it this way: if a finger that is pressed down needs to let the key up, before that happens, it has to stop pressing down, which is an added and unnecessary step. Any extra energy pressing down on keys is simply wasted energy. It barely takes more than the weight of a finger to press the key down on a flute.

Finger Technique

Exercise #3

I credit Keith Underwood for this fantastic exercise. ([13:00 – 15:00](#))

Play a B4 with the lightest finger pressure possible. As you play this note, have a partner press your L2 finger quickly and repeatedly, trilling your finger for you which will create the A4 – B4 trill. You should not be pressing L2, and you should not be lifting the finger at all. Your L2 finger should be so loose that when someone else presses it, it should ricochet with no effort whatsoever from you other than playing the B.

You can also try this exercise by yourself if you have been playing for a year or so. Balancing the flute with only the left hand while playing B4, take your right hand away from the flute and till L2 with R1. If your fingers are relaxed enough, this works easily.

This is the kind of relaxed hand position that will serve flutists well in playing the very fast notes often required of us.

Efficient and Healthy Breathing

Effective breathing requires a relaxed body. Are you noticing a theme? I never address the diaphragm because it is an involuntary muscle. If you're breathing, you're using it. It is important, however, not to hold tension in our throat, neck, abdomen, back, or chest so that when we inhale, we are able to inhale fully, allowing our lungs to expand in all directions. Many people will hold tension in the abdomen, limiting the expansion and not allowing for a full breath. This type of shallow "chest breathing" can even be anxiety-producing, definitely something to avoid not only in flute playing, but in life in general. Others hold tension in the chest with the same result: a shallow breath but this time with a tight chest. To build awareness of our tension and to get a sense of the mechanics of breathing, here are three exercises.

Breathing Exercises

Exercise #1 – Belly breathing, lying

Lying on your back with your knees bent and feet on the floor, place one hand on your chest and one on your stomach. Inhale slowly and allow your stomach to rise while your chest remains relatively still. This will ensure that you are not holding tension in the abdomen. Let the air out slowly. Notice that as you release air, at first you are *letting it out*. Eventually, you have to use abdominal muscles to *push* air out in order to more fully exhale. We negotiate this balance of letting air out and pushing air out in flute playing all the time, and it generally takes no special training or thought. When we are full of air, we let the air out in a controlled fashion until we are not so full, then we push air out with the muscles in our torso.

Exercise #2 – Full breathing, lying

This is similar to Exercise #1. Begin the same way, but after you have inhaled slowly and allowed your stomach to rise, continue to inhale and fill up the area of the chest as full as you can. Then let the air out slowly in order to bring relaxation and a sense of calm. You can use the unvocalized "phew" as a means of extending the exhale rather than letting all of the air out at once. This type of breathing where the exhales are longer than the inhales has been shown to reduce stress and anxiety, a great way to begin a practice session, or to ground and calm yourself if you feel nervous or anxious.

Exercise #3 – Full breathing, standing

Standing in front of a mirror in a relaxed posture, inhale through a toilet paper roll by placing your entire mouth widely around the entire opening of the roll. This helps us take in big relaxed breaths and eliminates tension in the neck and throat. Notice your shoulders. Are they rising? There should barely be a rise in the shoulders as you inhale fully. Notice your entire torso. Is it expanding in all directions? We will never use an aperture anywhere near this large, but this exercise does create relaxation in the body for most people as they inhale a large volume of air, a style of breathing that we want to create as a habit. To the best of my knowledge, this toilet paper roll idea comes from renowned brass pedagogue, Arnold Jacobs.

Other than the amount we inhale and the rate at which we exhale, there should be little difference in our everyday breathing and our flute playing: little to no rise in the shoulders, relaxed posture.

The lungs expand naturally in all directions, and so should the torso. To do this, we must remain relaxed. Practice the above exercises in order to create awareness of tension so you can learn to eliminate it. The more you practice breathing with no tension, the more automatic it will become. Just like all areas of flute playing, we are just creating good habits and breaking old habits that no longer serve us.

Basics of Articulation

There are two main ways people articulate on the flute: the traditional method and French tonguing. In the traditional method of articulation, each note is begun with the tongue behind the teeth, like saying “tah”. In the French tonguing method, the tongue is placed just behind and slightly between the back of the lips, as one might do if spitting a seed off of the tongue. I estimate that 80% of American flutists generally rely on the traditional method as their primary articulation. I was taught this way in my own public school band program before switching to the French tonguing method when I began private lessons, the method used in the Suzuki Flute Method.

Regardless of which method you use, the mechanics of articulation are much the same. To get flute students to get a feel for how to begin the air stream with the tongue, and to help them form a basic flute embouchure without almost any added verbiage, there is no better exercise I have found than to have students spit a grain of rice off of tip of their tongue. I advise teaching this before a beginning flute student ever touches their flute. The better a student is at these articulation exercises the easier starting flute can be.

Articulation Exercise #1

Preparatory Exercise: Rice Spitting (also French Articulation Exercise)

1. Inhale.
2. As you exhale, place the tip of tongue between lips to block the air, holding the air in, as if you are about to spit something off your tongue.
3. As you push air out, hold the tongue in place just between the lips to block the air. Add a grain of raw rice to the tip of the tongue. Air pressure should be fairly strong as you keep the tongue in place and do not yet let the air out.
4. Release tongue, pulling it back and downward to create as large and open a cavity inside your mouth as possible, sending the grain of rice soaring as the air behind it continues to push steadily for 4 counts. Lips should gently squeeze the air stream.

This exercise is effective at improving articulation even for college students. It helps anyone to better understand the fundamentals of all aspects of articulation including airstream, tongue, and embouchure.

Traditional Tonguing (Behind the Teeth)

The most common articulation on wind instruments, including flute, is to begin notes by using “ta” to start each note clearly. Remember, in playing a wind instrument, it is the *air* and not the tongue that creates the sound. The tongue simply gives a clean start to the note. It is the tongue pulling back out of the air’s way that allows the sound to happen. It is not the movement of the tongue going forward that makes the sound, it is the tongue pulling back. This knowledge and the visualization of what is actually happening inside the mouth when articulating notes can make articulation a bit easier, cleaner, and more controlled.

Articulation Exercise #2

Traditional Articulation Exercise

1. Inhale, place tip of tongue behind teeth
2. Holding the air in with the tongue in place, start to exhale by letting air pressure build up but do not let the air out. Keep tongue in place to block the air.
3. Without vocalizing, say “ta”, releasing tongue back and down into the mouth to create as much space in the mouth cavity as you can, sending the air outward just as in the Rice Spitting Exercise.
4. Now add the flute. Covering about 25% of the embouchure hole, experiment with the angle of the air, aiming it at the outer edge of the flute. For beginning students, especially in the first weeks, even if no flute tone is being made, this is still a helpful exercise.

French Tonguing (Behind/Between the Lips)

This is the articulation that I primarily use myself. Again, I estimate that about 20% of professional American flutists use this as their primary articulation. While I do not require my students to switch to it, I do encourage students to try it. If there is no problem with a student’s general articulation, there’s no need to switch, but if they find they prefer this method, it is certainly fine to switch or to simply add it to one’s musical toolkit. I find that in extremely fast double tonguing, I usually prefer traditional tonguing. All college level flutists will benefit from learning multiple types of articulations in order to add more creative capabilities in expressive attacks of notes, so do experiment with this method if you never have. One mark of a great musician is their adaptability. We are like chameleons of musical styles and sounds, so learning this method is worth it for someone working toward a more advanced level of music making.

Intermediate Articulations: Da

When aiming for a less marcato, less percussive attack, flutists can use more of a “da” articulation to soften the beginning of the note. This can be introduced in the second or third year or playing for many, and almost all high school flute students can produce this variation of articulation. It is often the first variation of the standard articulation that students learn because it is especially useful in more gentle melodies that flute often plays even in beginning level ensemble settings. Technically, the only difference between a “d” and a “t” is the use of or

absence of the voice, but somehow, telling any flutist to use more of a “da” than a “ta” sound will instantly change the nature of the attack, softening it.

Advanced Articulations: Ha and pa

Most professional flutists are adept at using many types of articulations that are shunned or maligned in the early years of flute playing, namely “ha” and “pa”. These are generally not used until a flutist is quite advanced, and I would never advocate any typical high school student to use these, but for those high school students who are curious, hardworking flute students who are practicing well, listening carefully to the sounds they are creating, and interested in more artistic interpretation and expression, I recommend experimenting with them.

Ha and pa are used in very specific instances, to create the nuances and subtleties of artistry, but they are almost never used in larger band settings in public schools because they are difficult to control and often produce a type of sound not used in larger ensembles. They would be more useful for a solo in a band or orchestra setting than in section playing. For *very* gentle entrances in soft pieces of music, particularly those with a hazier color like the infamous opening solo of *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*, either “ha” or “pa” can work beautifully. They are both a bit more challenging to control the precision of the timing than when using the tongue, but they can provide a lovely aesthetic when executed with control. Give them a try.

Advanced Articulations: Double Tonguing

Double tonguing on flute is much like that on brass instruments. The basic mechanics of double tonguing are to alternate “ta” and “ka”, somewhat like imitating the sound of a helicopter or saying the word “tiki” or “taco”. TKTKTKTKTK. Practicing this TKTKTK pattern without the tongue is helpful, and so is practicing K articulations on flute without double tonguing. Just getting better at “ka”. A few pointers to try and items to consider:

- 1) Imitating a helicopter is often the best advice for many students. Many will just be able to do the imitation with no further explanation. If that’s, the case: time saved! If that doesn’t work, read on.
- 2) Remember that it is the *air*, not the tongue, that makes the sound. The tongue only breaks the airstream in double tonguing, but the air does not stop. Think of running your finger back and forth through a steady stream of water from a faucet in the bathroom sink. (I have yet to meet anyone who has not done this at some point in their lives). The water remains constant as your finger breaks the stream of water. You don’t turn the water off and on. This is just like double tonguing where your air remains constant and your tongue breaks the air stream. Just like in single tonguing, the *air* makes the sound, not the tongue.
- 3) Let the tongue move lightly, as if ricocheting between the T and K. Yes, the tongue does have to stop in order to change directions, but that direction change should be facile and light. If you try too hard, you end up stopping the air too long with each T and K and it sounds very choppy, and difficult to control or execute quickly. The motion of the tongue should feel very effortless.

4) Experiment with moving the K a bit more forward in the mouth, particularly if you need to play very fast. You can experiment with having different parts of the tongue hitting in different places on the palette.

Advanced Articulations: Triple Tonguing

Triple tonguing is much like double tonguing, but in groups of three, like the groupings we find in triplet patterns and compound meters: TKT TKT TKT. This pattern requires two T's in a row, and is therefore not particularly efficient. For this reason, I nearly always use TKT KTK TKT KTK for any fast tongued triplet figures. Charles DeLaney liked thinking of this in words, "take it to kitty cat." This is simply a double tongue pattern with emphasis changing on every third articulation so that the groupings are in threes. Much more efficient! The tongue moves less in this pattern than it does in the repeated TKT TKT groups.

Tone Production: Getting a Sound

We will begin with a basic exercise for beginners or for any advanced player looking to rethink their tone production. I use the rice spitting exercise to teach embouchure and air control.

Tone Production

Exercise #1

Basic Good Tone at *mezzo forte*

1. Do the rice spitting exercise, aiming air six to eight inches away to form a relaxed embouchure.
2. Let air strike the back of the lips, the wet part in your mouth. You'll want to **feel the friction of the air on the lips as it passes between them.** Direct this concentrated, noisy air that creates friction between the air and the lips. This can sound somewhat like the pressurized air being released out of the valve of a tire.
3. Place TH, L1, R4 down to play B in the staff.
4. Covering 25% or so of the embouchure hole, aim this slightly pressurized, concentrated, "noisy" air at the outer edge of the embouchure hole. If you get the higher register, blow more gently.
5. Experiment with this several times, listening carefully. If you like what you hear, try to replicate it. Notice what works.
6. Notice the inside of your mouth. Let your teeth be very close together. Notice the effect on the sound (not good!). Now let your teeth come further and further apart. Notice the sound (improved). There will be a point of diminishing returns. Experiment to find it.

This will serve most beginners as a guide for the amount of air pressure and the type of concentrated air that will produce a good sound in the middle and lower registers. Almost all flutists start with this register on the flute because it requires less embouchure strength than the higher octaves. We are looking to create resistance with our lips. That is a big part of the role of our embouchure. Our lips help to resist the air the we are blowing out, in order to better direct and shape that air, leading to various dynamics, colors, and changes in our sound.

Tone Production

Exercise #2 Improving Tone Further

1. Using a paper towel or toilet paper roll and everything you learned from prior breathing exercises, inhale through the tube, staying relaxed and tension-free.
2. Check for tension. Is there any excess tension in throat, jaw, neck, shoulders, chest, abdomen or elsewhere?
3. Breathe again through the paper towel roll using as little tension in the body as possible, and repeat this several times to help your body remember how it feels.
3. Now play Exercise #1 again, this time use the same relaxed tension-free energy that you developed using the paper towel roll.

The main point of this exercise is to help you learn what it feels like to use less tension and to repeat it enough to help it enter your muscle memory.

Establishing control in low register *mezzo-forte* flute playing is a great foundation for all other registers, dynamics, and colors on the instrument. What does that sound like? Listening to great musicians will guide your ear and give you a concept for your own sound. Beginners will usually benefit by staying in the lower and middle registers at this dynamic for several months. And advanced players will continue to use tone exercises in this range for life. Working on tone quality, color and control really is a lifelong pursuit.

There are several fabulous, time-tested resources on tone, and I refer you to the great work of Marcel Moyse in his *de la Sonorite* and Trevor Wye in his *Practice Books* for explanation and exercises on improving one's flute tone. **The sheer love of sound drives the pursuit of bettering one's flute playing and experimentation is important.** If you listen to incredible musicians at the top of their field and find yourself drawn to the colors and shapes they are making with their sound, this is the impetus for better musical performance. High level performance does not occur by accident. It requires a passionate, directed drive toward specific goals. We will cover tone exercises in depth in Chapter Four.

Tone Production: Register and Dynamic

As students are ready to move into other registers and dynamics, it helps to understand the how the different registers and dynamics are produced. In a nutshell,

Speed of air controls register.
Amount of air controls the dynamic.

This sounds simple, but if you ask many flute players *how* they play in the upper register versus lower register, you get answers like “more air”, “tighter lips”, “cover more”, “use the diaphragm more”, “blow harder” or any number of things are either only partly true or sometimes even

incorrect in terms of good flute playing. Those methods are effective at producing a sound in the high register, it is not the way to produce the best tone quality. **Being able to understand and articulate the process is important for all college level flutists and for anyone teaching flute.**

So, again, the speed of the air controls the register. The amount of air controls the dynamic. An easy way to remember:

$$\textit{amount of air} = \textit{amount of sound}$$

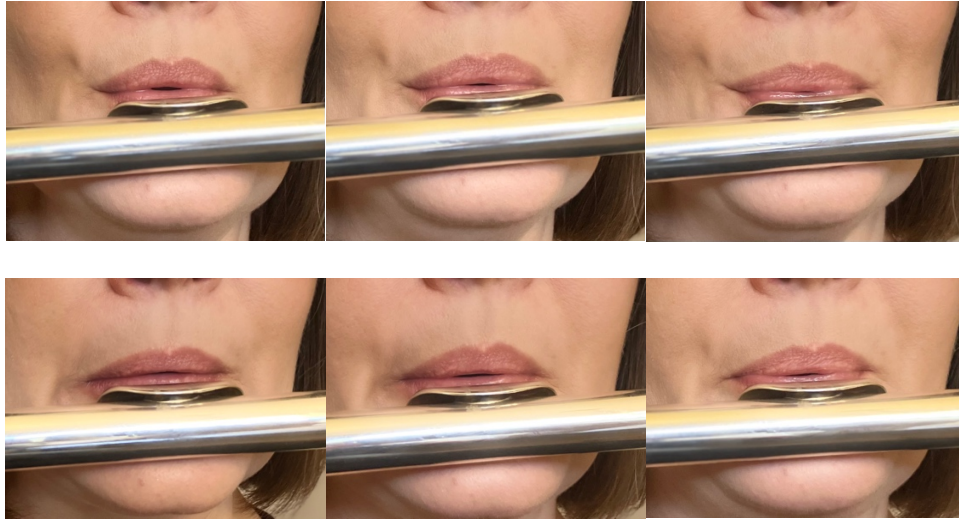
Seems easy enough! Yet when I ask many students with many years of experience, they are often unable to clearly articulate the information in the chart I present below, even after they have seen it many times. To get our bearings on register and dynamic, spend at least five minutes digesting the information in this chart. If you already play flute, get your flute and try playing each register and dynamic as you read it.

AMOUNT OF AIR

		Soft Playing Smaller aperture needed	Loud Playing Larger aperture needed
S P E E D O F A I R	High Register	Little air Fast air	Lots of air Fast air
	Low Register	Little air Slow air	Lots of air Slow air

Flute tip: **Soft** playing in the **high register** is the hardest and not typically mastered by high school students unless they are taking private lessons. **Loud** playing in the **lowest register** is also quite challenging and not typically mastered by high school students unless they are taking private lessons.

These six photos show loud and soft dynamic embouchures in each of the three registers. Not much difference!



Top left: low register loud. Top middle: middle register loud. Top right: high register loud.
Lower left: low register soft. Lower center: middle register soft. Lower right: high register soft.

[Warning: The rest of this section is complicated and only intended for high school level students and above who are very curious and interested in thinking critically. If you have played less than a year, consider skipping on to Chapter Two. If you are using this guide as a band teacher, expect some confusion unless you are practicing regularly on flute.]

What controls the air speed on flute? We control air speed in two ways: 1) by how hard we work to keep the air in when very full of air, and 2) how much we push our air out when we are less full. We covered this in the breathing section, but it bears repeating here. When you are completely full of air, you don't really have to work very hard for the air to come out. In fact, you have to work somewhat hard *not* to let it all out when you are very full of air. As you become less full of air, the effort needed to push the air through the flute increases. We have to work much harder when our lung capacity is either almost full or almost empty. This gets very complicated and most flute players will naturally control this airflow without ever thinking about it quite in this way, but this information is helpful for the advanced player to understand.

Another very important consideration is that the *size of your aperture influences air speed*. Two images help in understanding this relationship.

First image: Think of a babbling brook with water rippling down a wide stream. If the brook narrows, that same amount of water is now moving faster. Just as when the brook narrows, when we make our aperture smaller, there is an increase in the speed of our air. This is why students so often without trying or without instruction figure out that if they just squeeze their lips tighter, the high register will pop out, though not with the greatest tone quality.

Second image: Think of a garden hose with no nozzle, water gently gurgling out. This is like *mezzo-forte* in the low register. There is a large aperture, and a fair amount of water coming

through. Now imagine placing your thumb over half of the opening of the hose. Now the same amount of water now can shoot ten feet away. That's just like a *piano* dynamic in the higher register. It requires very little air, but the air must be moving quite fast. Beginners will not have the control of the many facial muscles to make this tiny aperture, which is why they will not be able to play softly in the high register in the early years of playing.

What controls the amount or air on flute? Mainly, it is size of the aperture. A big opening lets more air out, producing more volume. A tiny aperture lets less air out, producing less volume, *but* a large aperture that doesn't have enough air passing through it will produce an airy, "unsupported" sound.

[Author's note: I don't like the word "unsupported" because it implies that students aren't pushing enough air when they actually might be pushing plenty of air but also have too large of an aperture due to lack of embouchure control which leads to this type of airy sound. It also tends to conjure up pedagogical jargon and/or incorrect information about the diaphragm and other anatomy that is inappropriate for most beginners, and not helpful for many others. Confident youngsters often push plenty of air, but if they do not have the muscle coordination or control at the fine motor level to form a flute embouchure that produces a small enough aperture, a poor sound will result. This is ok! It just takes *time* for the embouchure to become stronger. More instruction is not always the answer in this case. There are no shortcuts to the time requirement in developing the muscles of the embouchure].

Conversely, a small aperture that isn't small enough for the high octave will also produce the same airy quality and/or the note will drop down to the lower octave due to the lack of air pressure. [Again, you'll hear some people refer to "support". It's just a term I don't like to use]. The balance needed in flute playing is to send the exact amount of air needed for a particular dynamic, at the exact pressure needed for a particular octave, through an aperture size that allows for both of these things to happen. Change the aperture, change the speed. We don't have measurements or numbers of these things, but this is the relationship to be aware of. This is where the experimentation of practicing is needed, and where teaching comes in. As a teacher, you will hear and see a combination of errors in the student's playing, but trying to memorize an exact formula for every scenario is not particularly effective.

A common pitfall in trying to play loud in the low register: Sometimes students try to push a large volume of air through too small of an opening. In this case, air is actually moving fast, resulting in notes that are overblown into the high register. Playing loud in the lower register will require a larger aperture so that lots of air can come out all at once and not be very fast.

In summary, I have used this chart to explain basic tone production for many years. Addressing of embouchure is related to how we squeeze the air to create the size aperture we are looking for, and I use rice spitting exercises even with college students. **Generally, students use too much tightness in the muscles in the high register to make up for using too little air.** Much of the work for high school and college flute players is to unlearn some of the less effective methods of sound production like this one and replace them with better usage of air that require more of the torso to be involved, and less of the face.

Almost no flutist can name exact muscles in the face, and the control we develop over years of practice, really does take years to develop. Most people are much better at imitating, experimenting, and replicating sounds and feelings such as blowing through a toilet paper tube, imitating a helicopter, blowing hot air versus cold air, blowing faster air versus slower air, blowing more air versus less air, making more room inside the mouth, relaxing the throat and neck, aiming the air differently, so these are the kinds of methods I favor and encourage over a more approaches that directly involve specific muscles of the face and lips.

Tone Production: Tone Colors

Again, I will refer the reader to the stellar work of Trevor Wye in his *Practice Books* where he addressed tone colors, flexibility, intonation control, vibrato and so much more. This is higher level musicianship and something worthy of dedicated practice. Trevor Wye's ideas on the focused and vibrant "purple" tone color and the hazier, hollow-sounding "yellow" are a very nice entry point into the world of tone colors, complete with exercise from repertoire.

Associating tone colors with human emotions or characters of a story can help musicians create a wide array of sounds and connect meaningfully with music and audiences. The world's greatest musicians are at once storytellers, actors, and performance artists, and the most captivating performances are often driven by the precise execution and control of tone color gradient at a granular level. The love of sound and the communication of that sound to others leads to valid musical performance. Even though most flutists are not telling a concrete story, the manner in which abstract expression is relayed matters greatly. Consider the amount of time you dedicate to this aspect of your flute practice and how you put those colors into play. This is an area of one's flute playing for those interested in becoming serious artists to heavily invest in. We will over this more thoroughly in later chapters.

Chapter Two

Thoughts on Practicing

Benefits of a Healthy Mindset

Distractions and modern life

For many, our tuner, metronome, practice journal, assignments and recording device are all found on our phone and/or other electronic devices. While convenient, this is also a Pandora's box of potential electronic distractions. In this attention economy, some of our highest paid members of society work tirelessly to devise ever-sneakier ways to pull our attention away from whatever it is that we are doing and toward whatever it is that they are promoting. At the surface level, companies might try to sell you things by sending ads, "Look at these shoes that you looked at yesterday online", but the most insidious are actually selling *you*. They're selling your attention and your data to advertisers. They let advertisers know that they can deliver X number of 20-year-old eyeballs to an ad for whatever amount of money that the advertiser and the buying company agree upon. How do they do this? With social media, it can simply happen through a notification that your friend tagged you in a photo. Or that your cousin posted a photo from her vacation. You get the idea. This gets you on the platform, where an ad aimed specifically to your demographic awaits. Two hundred of your "friends" may have posted something interesting that day. You'll be notified about the one that algorithms have determined will be the most likely to get you to log on which is then where they place an ad, almost personally made for you. Turn. Off. Your. Notifications. Educate yourself about these things.

Distractions exist in many other forms, but electronic notifications are probably the most invasive. Even texts from friends, well-meaning emails from professors, and updates on recently posted Canvas assignments, can all serve to pull out attention away from our current focus. Be a critical thinker. Many notifications have purpose and importance, but I caution you to be very careful in how you let this digital intrusion steer your life and attention. Turn off most notifications, and instead, use a schedule and a routine so you can allot designated amounts of time to checking your Canvas assignments, checking social media, etc. Don't cede control of your life to algorithms, chatbots, and tech bros.

Organizing Your Practice Space

For college students, the practice room in the music building is the musician's laboratory. It's where we run our own experiments on our own playing on a regular basis, trying out methods that are new to us, making discoveries, inventing and creating our interpretations, rethinking our hypotheses, testing the validity of our results to see if they can be reproduced, and so much more. It is important that when we are in this space, that we have all of the tools to run our experiments. You will almost always need the following:

Music	Pencil	Assignments
Metronome	Ear Plugs	Recording Device
Tuner	Music stand	Practice Journal

Having all of these necessities in one place, like a flute bag, will make you more effective in the practice room. It can be very helpful to have a flute bag that is separate from any backpack or having your flute, music, and materials all as a stack of things. It's best not to waste time collecting all of these flute-related practice materials each time we practice, rather have them all in one separate bag.

It is also important to treat the practice room as a space in which to get down to business. Don't worry about who might hear you or how fast someone else is playing their scales. This is your sacred time to work at your own pace on your own musicianship. The better you get at blocking out others, the more of your brain energy you can spend on your own musical goals while practicing. This is a great life skill outside of flute playing as well.

Judgement-free, Objective, Curious Analysis

One challenge that any musician faces in the wild adventure toward becoming more artistic is that we generally are not satisfied with the way we sound for a very long time. This is a good thing. This dissatisfaction is what drives us to become better. No one becomes better at their artistic pursuits without disappointment. Because of this, it is important to also notice what you *do* like about the way you sound.

In order to improve your flute playing, you should be listening to yourself carefully and analyzing what you hear. This may sound obvious, but much of our practicing occupies vast amounts of our attention, so much that there is little brain power left over to analyze what you are producing. The processing that it takes to read intricate music from a page and turn that into music is nothing short of amazing. Take a second to let that sink in. Your brain is doing amazing things by processing what you see and turning it into the physical actions that make music. With repetition, you need less of your processing power in order to do this task because you have turned it into a more automatic process through familiarity. You don't have to really "think" anymore.

At this point, you are ready to pay attention in a different way and think very critically about the music that you hear yourself make. You can do this in real time, and you can do this by recording snippets of yourself or even full practice sessions/lessons. Each method has value. Being curious rather than judgmental about your playing and your progress will be most helpful to your growth. Here are the types of questions that can help:

What do I like about the way I sound on this phrase? What do I not like?
How can I get this to sound more expressive?
Is my accuracy consistent?
Am I using vibrato in a manner that is consistent with the musical idea I want to express?
When I hear a recording of myself play this section, what is the thing I like the best? The least?
Which sections need more repetitions for control?
How precise is my rhythm when I put the subdivision on the metronome?
Am I playing technical sections cleanly, with attention to detail?
Have I overlooked any articulations?
Are there articulations and dynamics that I can bring out to create a more powerful effect?

Mood

Our mood effects our practice, and our practice effects our mood. Ever not practice because you were not in the mood? Yeah, me too. Anyone who has pursued anything for very long knows that some days, you just don't feel like doing it. That's ok. Do it anyway. This has so many benefits. Firstly, your mood will likely change over the course of your practicing. Moods are not permanent. Nothing in life actually is. So, if you are not in the mood to practice at the beginning of your practice session, that is perfectly fine, but you might very well be in the mood well before your session ends. The important thing is that you do it each day.

Listening to yourself sound bad, can really be daunting as a daily event in the relentless pursuit of artistry. We have to develop the resilience to handle these daily disappointments and remain objective and curious about moving forward. Remind yourself that this is normal to not like how you sound. Everyone who plays better than you play once played at the level you are now. Revel in the universality of the musical trek you are undertaking. It's a time-honored, well-worn path travelled by so many before, and there's plenty of company along the way with whom you can commiserate about its challenges.

Practice hacks

There are a few practice hacks that have helped me along the way. One is practicing a piece in sections starting in different sections of the piece, and practicing from the end and go backwards in sections. We listen to pieces of music from the beginning, and most of us start learning them from the beginning both of which help us to know the beginning much better than other sections. When we start in different sections, we give our freshest practice brain to those areas.

Another tactic I have used with success is to practice difficult sections so much, even memorizing them, that I will know them so well that I approach them while playing the piece, I can think, "Oh here comes the part I know really well" rather than "Oh no, here comes the part I have trouble with." This has been a great way to turn a musical foe into a friend and increase my confidence in performance.

Stay curious and observant, be creative in the practice room, and see what techniques work well for you in creating your own practice hacks. We spend a lot of time practicing. You will want to develop some methods that help you to rise above some of the common difficulties we musicians face.

The Pomodoro Technique

I believe in practicing as long as you like according to your goals. For university-level music students, a minimum of an hour per day is industry standard and when done with good planning, organization, and efficiency, it can allow for great progress. For those musicians interested in performing career after college, two or three hours per day is a more common minimum. If you have healthy posture, playing flute for six to eight hours a day is possible because flutists do not fatigue physically in the way that vocalists and brass players do. This amount sounds like a lot, but when you factor in rehearsal time in large and small ensembles plus individual practice time, it's actually pretty easy to reach the six-hour mark.

Undergraduates at conservatories are often able to practice many hours a day, but students at many liberal arts colleges and universities have a larger general core curriculum and are usually limited to one to two hours a day of personal practice time. Whatever the number of hours you practice, do so with a plan, and consider using a timer and trying the Pomodoro Technique.

The Pomodoro Technique is a time management method that can enhance creativity and productivity. I have found that it also helps students with focus, efficiency, organization, and much-needed practice breaks. I have long advocated that students practice in a way that makes use of this effective method because it increases our practice longevity which allows us to accomplish more. The method is based on what we know about attention spans (they are not hours long) and the need for breaks (we need them more frequently than we realize).

The Basic Pomodoro Technique

1. Set a timer for twenty-five minutes (use airplane mode to decrease distractions).
2. Do any task until the timer beeps. Your time is sacred. You will never be able to create time, so use it wisely. Do not check texts in between your etude and your scales. Do not allow your electronic notifications to distract you. Do not read emails. Just work. Honor your work for twenty-five minutes, and do not stop. Some days, you might be surprised at how long it seems that twenty-five minutes lasts. Other days, you will be surprised at how fast the time goes, but the clock, like the metronome, does not lie. The point of the timer is to keep you focused and honest about the amount of time you are giving your practice.
3. When the timer beeps, set a timer for five minutes and do anything for a break. Even if you are on a roll, stop anyway. Forcing yourself to take a break for five minutes will give you the needed energy to repeat and do another twenty-five -minute work/five-minute break session.
4. Go back to Number 1. Repeat as many times as you like.

Adjusted Pomodoro Technique

You are free to play with the timing on this. If you have seventy minutes before you need to leave the practice room, three twenty-minute pomodoros with a five-minute break between each gives you a great practice session for the day. If you have eighty-five minutes, maybe four pomodoros with a two and a half minute breaks. As you use the method, you will get a feel for

what works well for you, but I recommend sticking with the 25:5 ratio for a few weeks before you make changes. A big part of what makes this technique work well is that you commit to the solid twenty-five-minute block.

Do not be afraid to break up your practice into separate sessions. Do one “pomodoro” in the morning before classes start. Do another in between two classes. Do a third after your last class. It’s actually quite easy to rack up serious time in the practice room using this approach. And it is especially great on weekends and days where you have blocks of uninterrupted hours.

Sample schedule

You can also alternate pomodoros of flute time with other tasks and responsibilities. Take a look at this weekend morning schedule. Many days, a “break” for me just means changing activities. A new task or a new location is refreshing for me, so a five-minute break might be answering emails, grading, making photocopies, or any other small item on a to-do list. For a student, it might look like this:

9:00 a.m.	
25 minutes	Practice Flute Hygiene
5-minute break	Browse for pieces for a listening assignment
25 minutes	Do a listening assignment, start reading Humanities assignment
5-minute break	Make coffee

10:00 a.m.	
25 minutes	Practice etude and repertoire
5-minute break	Check social media
25 minutes	finish reading Humanities assignment
5-minute break	stand up, stretch

11:00 a.m.	
25 minutes	Start music theory assignment
5-minute break	Email professor questions about the assignment
25 minutes	Practice Keyboarding
5-minute break	Message friends

12:00 p.m.	
25 minutes	lunch
5-minute break	take a walk
25 minutes	Practice Repertoire
5-minute break	meditate

1:00 p.m.	
25 minutes	Practice Repertoire
5-minute break	walk around the building
25 minutes	do Aural Skills homework
5-minute break	go back to dorm

That's some real efficiency! On days you have blocks of time like this, is it wise not to get sucked into social media or binge watching anything until after you have practiced. If you can get started on some work and accomplish this much in three hours, you will likely feel great about your progress and be spurred on to get more done in the rest of the weekend and in your time that is otherwise not spoken for.

Imagine how great you will feel after a Saturday morning where you accomplish so much. This can be the life of a college student with time leftover for lots of social time, part-time job, club activities and more. It almost completely eliminates Sunday evening blues. When you have gotten this much done at the beginning of the weekend, the end of the weekend tends to feel great.

Setting Goals

Setting goals is an important part of making good use of your time. When doing a regular activity like practicing flute, you will gain more if you have goals to work toward and a system of accountability. That accountability is often built into the lesson grade for college students. For some, simply having another person to be accountable to is more than enough to motivate the student. It is often helpful for students to be a part of that goal setting. Take an active role in your progress. You can help determine what tempo you are working toward, or how large a section of a piece to tackle.

Business professional George T. Doran is credited with having invented the SMART Goal. A goal is more effective if it has the attributes of being specific, measurable, achievable, realistic/relevant, and time-sensitive. "I want to improve my flute playing" is noble, but "I want to perform all major scales with ease, from memory, with no mistakes at quarter note = 80 by November 1" is much more specific. It is also measurable. If you cannot measure your progress, it is hard to know whether or not you achieved your goal. Breaking things down into achievable chunks keeps motivation higher. If the goal is not realistic or relevant, you might give up on it. And if it is not time-sensitive, you could be working on it for months longer than it necessarily takes.

Examples of Short-term Flute Goals

Memorize A, E, and B major Moyses scales at quarter note = 60 by my next lesson.

Memorize the first four measures of Moyses melody #1 today.

Perform Syrinx on Recital Assembly before Thanksgiving. Step one: fill out form this week.

Increase the speed of double tonguing on TW p. 108 by four beats per minute within two weeks.

Improve the tops of all Moyses scales this week. Record all tops of scales.

Examples of Long-term Flute Goals

Perform twenty-five minutes of music on my senior recital.

Perform a piece one or two levels above my current ability before I graduate.

Be able to use a wider range of vibrato in performing pieces of different styles.

Be able to play my major scales at quarter note = 140 by before I leave college.

For many students, specific, measurable, and time-sensitive are the easier aspects of goal setting. How do you set a goal that is achievable and realistic? This is where guidance from your flute teacher will be helpful. Sometimes it is hard to gauge just how hard a certain piece of music is and how much work it will take to learn. And not every piece that sounds challenging is equally challenging for every flutist. Go with your instincts and with your teacher's recommendation and see where it goes. If you commit whole-heartedly to a goal and don't achieve it, ***it is not a failure***. It is simply information with which to move forward with a plan and a new goal that might be broken down into smaller steps. Progress is almost always made simply in the *pursuit* of a SMART goal. Even if you don't achieve the goal, you're moving in the right direction, so keep going.

The more specific you can be with daily goals, the more you will achieve in each practice session, and as the saying goes, if you take care of the days, the years take care of themselves. Students who make great progress are not necessarily simply more talented. Sometimes it's that they work harder and/or smarter. The more you practice with a plan, the better you get at it. It's another beautiful symbiotic relationship that yields increasingly higher levels of progress and can serve as a real inspiration. You can get better at getting better at flute playing. Read that again. You can get better at getting better. The work you put in, if thoughtful, will result in progress.

Competition and Competitions

Musicians, especially those in training, are often compared to each other in performance and in auditions, and it is wise to put chair placements, rankings, and competitions into perspective. One facet of competition that should not be overlooked is that we have no control over anyone else. We can only work on our own playing. Do your best not to worry about the progress of others because there is absolutely nothing you can do about anyone else's progress or ability. Your energy is better spent focusing on your own development. Beyond that, let the chips fall where they may.

There are many competitions you can enter as a flutist, and it's important to decide if the financial, time, and emotional cost involved is beneficial for you. Entering competitions can be exciting and motivating for many. Some people thrive on it, and if this is you, spend some time deciding which competitions you would like to enter and why. Participating in these events can serve as a motivator, and it can be exciting to have something deemed prominent to work toward. Some winners receive benefits like a performance with an orchestra, a sponsored recital, management, scholarships, and of course, money. I encourage students to work as hard as they can to polish competition repertoire to their utmost ability, then let go of the outcome - not always easy to do, but letting go of outcomes is a certainly a skill that will serve you well in life.

One of the most important elements of competitions can be the feedback that you receive. Judges' comments can give insight into your playing, insight into the priorities of another musician listening to you, and hopefully give some thoughtful advice for what kinds of changes you can make in your playing to improve your performance. When I judge competitions, my favorite part is writing comments. My least favorite part is choosing winners. Some competitions will let you know in advance if comments will be given. I encourage you to seek those out. Particularly if you are paying to enter a competition, the least you should receive from it should be the adjudicator feedback.

Benefits of Practicing with a Metronome

I love the metronome. I really do. If you love music, you have to love rhythm, and if you love rhythm, how could you not love the metronome? I purchased a Dr. Beat DB-66 in 1996. When it died, I bought the newer version, the Dr. Beat DB-90 which has some fabulous options. Because I never used most of them, having come of age with the DB-66 as my partner, I quickly found a used DB-66 preferring its lower tech simplicity, and donated the new one to our percussion studio. I will reference the Dr. Beat a good bit here, but any subdividing metronome is better than any non-subdividing metronome.

Subdivision

Because the Dr. Beat has levers, it allows musicians to very quickly switch between a subdivision of two, three, or four. This has been a god-send for me in my own musical development. How else can you hear a perfect change of subdivision within a given measure of music? I would “play” the Dr. Beat as I looked at flute music to hear a perfect change from a division of the beat into threes then to fours and back again, essentially programming myself and my ability to execute with greater rhythmic precision. Singing in unison along with the playing helped too. The more modern Dr. Beat DB-90 is programmable, so if you have the patience and interest, it’s a great investment. I can’t be bothered.

The best way to ensure precision, is to work with a subdivision. This will increase your internal ability to divide a beat with accuracy. I often refer to this ability to measure time as the musician’s sixth sense. [Full disclosure, I also refer to other musical and nonmusical abilities as sixth senses]. The importance of a musician’s ability to measure time is not to be underestimated.

Hierarchy of Beats (a.k.a. Meter)

Meter is meaningful. Honoring this hierarchical structure gives so many pieces of music their grounding and basis for so many other aspects of sound to fit into, and I love that with a Dr. Beat, a musician can place different emphasis on different beats in the measure with a different sounding click. Playing along to *Click*, click, click, *Click*, click, click (3/4 meter) is very, very different from hearing click, click, click, click, click, click (what the heck meter is that?) or *Click*, click, click, click, *Click*, click, click, click (4/4 meter). This change of emphasis is what defines the meter. As musicians, we must pay attention to emphasis and weight within any given meter and how the larger phrases are set within that architecture. The Dr. Beat models that have levers also allow you to control the volume of each individual subdivision and the volume of the first beat in each measure. If I were going to invent a metronome, it would have looked pretty much like the Dr. Beat, but thanks to the good folks at BOSS, I don’t have to.

Lest you think this is an advertisement for this product, let me say that the most important thing is that you find a metronome or app that subdivides, **and that you use the subdivision and the meter functions nearly daily in your training years.** As flutists, we play a lot of notes, and we play really fast. It’s just one of the things that the flute can do. Singers cannot move their voice as quickly as we play. No brass instrument can do what a flute can do in terms of easy of change of octave or playing scalar passages with the speed and ease that we do. These idiomatic capabilities make it imperative that we to control our fingers with incredible precision, and a

subdividing metronome is an absolute necessity. The sooner you get one, the better. I've heard of some research that says we should wean ourselves off of this subdivision so we learn to create it ourselves. For those who already have fairly strong sense of rhythm, in my own experience as a musician and teacher, I have seen that work with a subdividing metronome can only enhance accuracy in proportion to the amount of time one uses it. As with almost anything, there will be a point of diminishing returns, and I see it as the job of a musician to find our own unique, personal set point. If you rely on others to figure out what is best for you, you're going to miss out on a lot. Do the work here then ask questions of experts like your teacher.

Measuring Progress

The metronome is the best tool for measuring technical progress. Without a metronome, if you take time off of practicing double tonguing, scales, technique exercises, you *might* not notice that when you come back to practicing them that you have lost speed. But if you practice with a metronome, you will notice *instantly* that you cannot play at the same tempo as cleanly or with as much ease or control as you did days or weeks before. Without the metronome, scales might *feel* clean, and they might feel like they are just as fast as a week ago, but our perceptions are not accurate. **Use the metronome to avoid delusion and to chart your progress.**

Slow vs. Fast

It is actually harder to play rhythms precisely at slower tempos than at fast ones. Huh? Technique-wise, yes, faster can be more challenging for fingers, but to divide a very slow beat into four perfectly equal parts is much harder at a slow tempo because the time-distance between the notes is greater. There is just more room for error. Many students do not bother with a metronome at a slow tempo, but this is a missed opportunity to develop your rhythmic precision. Take advantage of this opportunity. Don't forget to use the subdividing metronome in slow pieces.

Benefits of Memorization

For many years, I have required some amount of memorization of my flute students. This is because when you have something truly memorized, you just know it differently, and you know it better. This is the purpose of memorization for me in my own playing and in my teaching. My goals for requiring students to memorize are not to see if the student can remember all the notes. Of course, anyone can eventually do this given enough time and repetition. My goals are that students know a melody so well that they are free from the mental processing that playing requires so that they can move toward a deeper level of musical thinking and music making. You simply cannot move toward a deep level of musical thinking when you are bogged down by the mental processing of reading and doing music.

Knowing something "by heart", knowing it so well that you cannot miss a note or articulation, is a wonderful starting point for working on tone and phrasing, so I use Marcel Moyse's *24 Little Melodic Studies* as my Memorized Melodies each month, but you can use any melody you love. In the past I have also used melodies like *Simple Gifts*, "Largo" from Dvorak's *New World Symphony*, *Danny Boy*, "The Swan" from *Carnival of the Animals*, "Meditation" from *Thaïs*, and many more like the melodies in Marcel Moyse's *Tone Development Through Interpretation* that

include many opera arias. There are some really nice exercises in the back of the book as well. The important thing is that you immerse yourself completely in a melodic piece of music on a regular basis.

Memorizing difficult passages of music is a practice I recommend to students and use myself. When you come across really challenging technical passages, try this. When you learn something so well that you have it memorized, you will be much closer to owning it. You have to think about the passage more deeply, and it won't completely fix all technical challenges, but in the process of memorizing hard music or hard sections of music, you will reap many benefits.

Learning a New Piece

Bringing music to life requires that we do much more than what is on the page, but correctly executing everything on the page is a very good starting point. Some musicians are so excited about the deeper meaning that they want to bring to the music that they will place too little value on learning everything that is on the page correctly. In the early years of flute lessons, I advocate that students focus on learning a piece of music by following this order:

Correct Notes/Fingers and Rhythms

This is the lowest level of music making. Getting the right notes and the right rhythms into our fingers and into the muscle memory takes repetition and we need to take faster pieces well under tempo and break them into many small, manageable sections. Make sure you are playing *as fast as you can*. Not *faster* than you can. As fast as you can simply means as fast, or as slow, as you are able to play cleanly and accurately. Repetitions will do the rest.

Articulations and Dynamics

Many diligent flutists will incorporate correct articulations and dynamics as they are learning notes and rhythms, but many will overlook correct articulations, particularly when they are not convenient like slurring large leaps which are so much easier to cleanly being that note with a tongue, slurring to any note that easily cracks like high E, high F#, etc., or playing a legato section that requires the occasional legato tonguing that is so much easier for many flutists to just slur. Take time to double check all articulations, and think about how these articulations underscore the phrasing. Composers do not just randomly add in articulations for variety. Articulations have real musical purpose. See how much personality you can give each different articulation.

Dynamic changes are another deeper level of musical expression and control, again often overlooked by younger or less experienced students though sometimes incorporated along with learning the notes and rhythms. There's a reason that nearly every music teacher on earth says, "More dynamics!" We almost never give enough dynamic contrast in the earlier years of music making, and unfortunately, musicians hear this "More dynamics!" directive so frequently, we know it to be so true, that ironically, we don't take it seriously. The flute does not have a very large dynamic range to begin with, so it is the flutist's particular challenge to make your dynamic changes reach the audience.

I ask my college music students to consider what it would be like to do a dynamic dictation. Like in an aural skills course where students in college practice melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic dictations by listening to an excerpt and writing it down, we can perform music as if someone were doing a dictation of our dynamics and other expressive elements. We already know what dynamic we are playing, so when we make a slight difference, we ourselves know that we are making it and it often seems like enough. But is it coming across to an audience? Just like an actor, we have to exaggerate the emotional qualities to bring them to life on a stage. Because none of us lives our life on a stage, we tend to be far more reserved in our expressive communication, but communication in the form of music performance requires us to be larger than life. Take risks! I often tell students, “Play it so that you think I will tell you ‘That’s too much contrast here.’” They usually laugh. Somehow, everyone already knows that they almost never do enough contrast, and somehow almost everyone goes about their musical business continuing not to do it.

Vibrato, Tone Colors, and Phrasing

At the highest level of music making, we constantly create nuanced gestures and phrase shapes. We do this with articulation and what I like to call “macro-level dynamics”, but we also do this with the subtler side of varying our vibrato and smaller micro-dynamic changes. My students know that I call this micro-dynamic “phrase dynamics”. This is the subtle growth that we might give from one note leading upward to another, the reprieve that we give at the end of a phrase where long notes fade, the subtle growth of repeated notes that lead forward, the change of dynamic on notes that we shape like bell tones or accented notes, these are all changes in volume, what we call “dynamics” yet there are no musical dynamic markings on the score for these ever-important parts of music making. Effective musical performance is saturated with this type and level of nuance.

At this higher level of performance, the constant changes and interrelated nature of tone color, dynamics, and vibrato and the nuances that they create are sometimes difficult to single out. At this stage, students are really their own musician, and a teacher is giving valuable feedback, but musical choices belong to the individual. For my own playing, I find value in practicing tone colors and as separate exercises, and I appreciate combining them in my practice of Memorized Melody aside from any other practicing or preparation for performances, but at the professional level, much of this sort of thinking is combined with all other elements of music learning.

Advanced musicians explore musical options when faced with dissatisfaction in their interpretations, but these interpretations are often growing alongside the learning of notes and rhythms. The getting-to-know-you phase of music learning is generally a fairly holistic process for musicians. As a student, this is where you’re headed, but in the meantime, breaking things down into discreet and manageable components can have great benefit.

Learning the *Whole* Piece

Marking Your Music

Though I do not practice or perform using a tablet or other electronic device, many of my students use some combination of practicing with a device and with printed sheet music.

Whichever you choose, it is very important that you have the ability to write meaningfully on the score every day that you practice. If this proves to be too cumbersome to do with a tablet, then I don't recommend using one.

We benefit when we add our own individual markings to the flute music we read and play from, personalizing this road map to music making. The music we read is nothing but symbols that stand for something, and what we add to it can highlight aspects that we either forget, overlook, or have trouble executing without these extra markings. Develop a consistent and effective system of markings. Sometimes, I erase my own markings once they no longer serve me so that I can keep my focus on the markings that I do benefit from.

There are some fairly standard markings musicians use, but what matters most is to have consistency in markings and use them wisely. Arrows, circles, lines, squiggles, brackets, abbreviations, these all can be used with intention. Generally, the fewer words, the better. Draw an actual crescendo symbol over the abbreviation "cresc." Draw a backwards arrow over rit. Draw a straight, vertical line right after a note that you want to have a chopped or clipped release or between two very different ideas that have no rest in between them. Use vertical lines over beats, triangles for triple subdivisions, and any other succinct symbols, words, or pictographs. Using symbols creatively and in a manner that underscores the musical ideas you are trying to create is to me, a fun and efficacious part of the process.

Score Study

If you are playing anything other than music for solo flute, remember to schedule time for studying the score. In the earlier years of doing this, it can feel like a lot of music to process, particularly if you've never played piano and have little experience in reading scores. The more you do it, the easier it gets. To some extent, when we look at scores, we are scanning for the most important events: rhythmic interplay, entrances of certain instruments or melodic lines, places we will need to cue a pianist or other instrumentalists in chamber music, and other larger scale musical events. In order to perform well, we need to know everyone's individual parts in order to better understand how our part fits in to the larger whole. Do not just learn your own part.

I always recommend score study alongside listening to the piece of music, and doing this many times helps you learn so much. In a piece written for flute and piano, for example, it takes a lot of listening to learn the piano part as well as you know the flute part that you are practicing regularly. Use the score to aid you in this process, and make sure to write in rhythms from the piano part into your flute score if it helps cue you or understand how your parts line up together. To know a work well enough to perform it, you need to know the piano part through and through. Don't skip on this. Listen to the piece and sing along in unison with the piano rather than with the flute. Then listen and hum or sing along in unison with the flute. Immerse yourself in the music. Get inside of it.

The same is true in chamber and larger ensemble music. Learn the whole piece, not just your own part. In chamber music, it is especially important to learn other people's parts, because of the intimate nature of that type of music and because there is no conductor helping you keep track of where the beat is or where an entrance might be. This is part of the challenge, the

enjoyment, and the excitement of chamber music. If you skip score study, you really miss out on a big part of the chamber music experience. And in larger ensembles, it is hard to know just how to play your part if you don't know how that part fits into the larger whole.

Listening to Others

I have already mentioned listening as combined with score study. In our modern lives, there is no shortage of access to world-class performances, and listening to those with a score is certainly a great way to learn a great deal. Get lost as often as you have time for in listening to great audio and video recordings. Listening to these without a score is such an important part of our musical inspiration, and finding great live performances is even better. Watching and hearing professional musicians is a feast for the soul and a necessary part of the serious musician's diet. Seek out the highest-level performances you can find. Go to events that you think you might not enjoy. Hear styles and instruments that you've never heard before. It is imperative that creative spirits fill their buckets with quality artistic experiences so they have more to draw from in their own creative expression, so have fun seeking out the best performances you can find.

I have assigned weekly listening assignment since I was a Teaching Assistant in graduate school. Generally, students are allowed to pick any flute piece performed by any professional flutist (or even stellar nonprofessionals). Occasionally, I will assign a particular piece for listening because I want to make sure students hear a particularly excellent performance or a new work. This listening assignment should be the tip of the iceberg of music listening in the flute student's week. My intention is that it will broaden people's worlds and send them down listening rabbit holes that lead them to discover many other wonderful pieces of music. I cannot emphasize listening enough. We must have aural models and aural inspirations for what is possible in order to spark our own expressive output.

Listening to Ourselves

Deeply listening to yourself play on a regular basis is another essential element in our path toward mastery, an element that I return to often in my teaching and throughout this handbook. Listening well to what we play challenging in real time, though musicians get better at this skill as they move through their musical lives. Listening to ourselves on a recording is another crucial means to our musical goals. This is valuable not only after giving a performance, but also in small snippets in the practice room.

Getting Things Done in the Practice Room

PLACER

This is a method I have used and taught for decades without ever really talking about an acronym, but because so many people find mnemonic acronyms helpful, I came up with one.

Play it.

Play the section you are working on.

Listen.

Really listen. This might also involve recording a small section and listening to the recording.

Analyze with curiosity.

What do you think? What are you hearing? What do you like? What do you not like? How can you change that? Be specific and don't choose too many things to work on at once. When you're satisfied with those, move on to another. Or, if you cannot figure out how to change something, bring that to your teacher as a question.

Examples:

I like the tone quality, but it sounds boring. What's missing? Would changes in vibrato help? My rhythm isn't clean, and I'm still overlooking some articulations.

The climactic section works well, but my fingers aren't clean in the faster moving notes.

Most of it works well, but the double tonguing isn't clean.

Change something.

Choose something to change. It can be anything, and this need not be overthought. Effort toward change usually yeilds progress.

Experiment.

Don't be afraid to try something different. In learning how to create sounds, we must experiment. Try the opposite of what you tried previously. Try something you hear in someone else's playing. Try something you think won't even work. This will all be helpful information with which to move forward. Sometimes, the farther you get from what you want, the more you realize what it is that you're after. So even moving in the opposite direction of your desired effect can help you figure out a better path toward your goal. If you're struggling with a "bad sound", try to make it worse. How did you do that? Listening to yourself and learning about how any of the sounds we make are created can help us gain control and understanding of our sound production and its quality, color and shape. Some of this certainly happens without trying, but in the experimentation trials and errors, we can really broaden our worlds. **There are no failures, there is only information gained with which to move forward.**

Rinse and Repeat.

This is the life of a musician. Or any truth seeker. Do something, think about it, make changes, do it again, think about it more, make more changes, ad infinitum. As cliched as it might sound, if you don't enjoy the process, it's pretty pointless and joyless. Most of life is process. Have fun!

Chapter Three

Choosing and Caring for a Flute

Choosing a Flute

Choosing a flute can be a time-consuming, costly, exciting, and inspiring process. It is an investment in your musical development and and for some, their career, and one worth careful attention and research. I recommend owning the best instrument that you can afford, but with so many flutes out there, including used flutes that have changed in quality at different times of production, how does one go about selecting? Ask your teacher. Please, please, *please*, ask your teacher. Some of my greatest disappointments in teaching have been when a student proudly brings a brand new, expensive cheaply made flute into their lesson. It is always a sad occasion for me because I know I could have helped them get a better flute for less money.

I will give some general guidelines and information here, but there is so much to consider and so many wild cards, it is a real necessity to consult a flute teacher when buying a new or used flute. Once you find your price range and a few instruments you like, narrowing it down to a great flute for you at the time of your purchase will require a great musician to listen to you and give you feedback on how you sound on those instruments, combined with the advice of what they know about the brands.

It will be very important for you to work hard on your flute playing and work to find a flute that allows for a range of sounds and fluid technique. I find that it is less important to embark on the endless quest of finding the perfect flute. There is no perfect flute, but there are many great flutes out there, and you will certainly sound different on them. Keep in mind, how you sound the first time you pick up a flute and how you sound on that flute one month later will be different. Also, you'll want a flute that does not limit your growth. Again, this is where your flute teacher will play an important role. You will not be able to test all of the limits of a particular flute as well as a professional flutist will. It is possible to like a flute better than your flute teacher likes it; however, if your flute teacher cannot find a wide range of responsiveness in an instrument or headjoint, that should serve as a red flag for you. There are bad headjoints and bad flutes out there, and excited students falling in love with the idea of a gorgeous, shiny, aspirational brand

of flute are rarely the best judges of them. Let an unbiased expert give you advice, and listen carefully to that when weighing your decision.

First Year

As mentioned in Chapter One, I think any used instrument that is in good working order will do just fine for the first year or longer. I'm partial to Yamaha because they are high quality and seem reasonably priced, but there are lots of decent brands of beginner flutes including Jupiter and Trevor James.

Beyond the First Year

A beginner level flute like the ones Yamaha makes can be fine all through high school for many players. Listen to a professional flutist play a flute like this, then listen to an average high school student play the same flute, and you will notice that the high school student is not coming anywhere near the limits of that beginning level flute. A new instrument, while usually very exciting and inspiring, is not a quick fix for almost any playing issues.

If a student has musical aptitude and/or a desire to take private lessons and really put some work into becoming a better musician, a better flute will help them. While I am not a salesperson, I do not own a Yamaha, and I am not paid by Yamaha in any way, I think buying the best Yamaha you can afford makes it difficult to go wrong. Keeping that flute in great shape by having a clean, oil, and adjust every year. will put you in the top 5% in terms of the quality of flute owned by high school students.

I hear band directors pushing students towards "step up" flutes, but I see no reason for these instruments unless the student is very, very interested in playing, can afford a new instrument, practicing nearly daily at home, and has a teacher. In that case, it comes down to what can a student afford and what the student's goals are. There is no one-size-fits-all advice here, so work with a flute teacher to help figure out what kind of flute is best for you.

The first question to answer before you start trying flutes is how much to spend. I will list several price categories and outline some things for your consideration in each of them.

Price \$10,000+

If you are aiming for a high-level performing career and/or if money is no object for you, you can begin trying any number of handmade instruments made by any of the many brand names or microfluterics (like a microbrewery but with flutes....one person lovingly, handcrafting their version of the perfect flute). There is no age requirement. If you're lucky enough to easily afford it, go for it in middle or high school. Some people certainly do! In no way is an instrument like this required in order to make All-State or to even pursue a career in music, though the very highest echelon of high school flutists often own instruments like these. (I estimate only a handful or so of high school students in the state where I live own this level of flute). And almost certainly any professional flutist in an orchestra or teaching at the college level plays on something in this price range. If you are pursuing a performance degree and career this is the type of instrument most any professional flutist would recommend that you have as soon as you are able.

These flutes are generally around \$12,000 - \$20,000 for a solid silver instrument, depending on which bells and whistles you prefer. This in itself is a huge price range for many people. Silver is the gold standard, pardon the pun, of flute playing. It's the starting point for almost everyone. The type of metal will make a difference whether it is the entire flute, the headjoint, the lip plate, or only the riser. Most flutists today play on silver, probably largely because of the higher cost of gold and platinum. Flutemakers continue to experiment with alloys, and you will find many combinations of alloys and purity of silver (.925, .958, .998, etc.) and gold (9k, 14k, 18k, 24 k) as well as gold and platinum clad or plating. This is not only for the tubing of the instrument but also the keys. Trademarked, proprietary names of alloys (aurumite, Britannia silver, etc.) add to further confusion, so do your research and ask questions. Flute World has a great page on alloys you can read [here](#).

Don't let this concern you! You will not go wrong with any level of purity of silver, and most flutists cannot afford too much beyond solid silver for their first professional flute. For many, many years, sterling silver was the only purity level used by flutemakers. You might prefer a higher level of purity, and if you can afford the price difference, enjoy. It is very hard for direct comparisons of flutes because finding the exact same flute in three different levels of purity that you can test out with the same headjoint is very rare, so sometimes you think it is a certain level of metal purity that you love, but in actuality, it is the headjoint, or a different brand of flute, or some other variable that you actually prefer.

The experience that gave me the most confidence in not worrying about risers and purity levels of silver was hearing Robert Dick perform in a masterclass and recital on a flute that was made of, wait for it, stainless steel. Yes, you read that right. He was able to get the most amazing range of sounds out of a flute made of stainless steel. This made me really think twice about platinum headjoints, gold risers, alloys, and the like. If you have a great flute with a great headjoint cut that works for you, practice is far more important than anything else.

Affording an instrument like this is no small feat for many musicians, and I find that apart from those focused on a performance career, it is not necessary for music students at the undergraduate level. I strongly recommend buying the best instrument that you can afford, but I recommend choosing very carefully if you decide to take a loan for an instrument. No one can tell you what you can afford. If you have parents or relatives helping you make the purchase, that is incredibly helpful. Be sure to keep the bigger financial picture in mind.

Brands to consider: Altus, Arista, Brannen, Burkart, Emmanuel, Haynes, Nagahara, Powell, Sanyko, Williams, and so many more.

Price \$5,000 - \$10,000

This can be a tricky price range where there is a lot of room to go wrong with some flutes in this range being handmade and others not. Simply owning a \$5000 flute does not give the same near-guarantee of quality that owning a \$10,000+ flute does, and there are no 100% guarantees, of course. You could purchase a \$3,000 basic instrument and add various enhancements that put it upwards of \$5000 - \$6000, and it is really easy to do if you start experimenting with risers and headjoints. I compare this to buying a low-quality car with heated, leather seats, and satellite navigation. They add to the expense and somewhat to the enjoyment, but they do not add to the

performance quality. It might wear out faster, not stay in adjustment as well, or be otherwise problematic long term. I really generally do not like this price range other than what you might find in my four favorite brands: Muramatsu, Altus, Miyazawa, and Yamaha. I find that these brands are generally high quality and consistent.

Price \$3,000 – \$5,000

Again, a tricky price range. Flutes in the \$3000 - \$5000 range can be fabulous instruments. And some are incredibly overpriced, cheaply made flutes masquerading as their legitimate, higher quality counterparts. Some even have glamorous endorsements by high-level performers. Be Careful.

In this price range, again, I particularly like Muramatsu, Altus, Miyazawa, and Yamaha. You might notice that they are all Japanese which might bring to mind their high-quality, fair-priced cars like Honda, Toyota, and Nissan. I have no particular bias towards Japan, though okay, yes, I did spend some time there studying at the Suzuki school. If Consumer Reports published an issue on flutes, I'm certain that it would find these flutes at the top in terms of reliability, customer satisfaction, and true cost of ownership. Full disclosure: I traded my first Muramatsu for my current Muramatsu, and they are the only two professional-level flutes I have owned. (I also traded my first Nissan for my first Honda and my first Honda for my current Honda).

Price Under \$3,000

Over the years, I have had quite a number of students in this price range. If you are looking to buy a new flute in this range, I like buying the best Yamaha that you can afford. This advice generally works well up until the \$5000 range where things really start to expand in terms of the number of high-quality brands. I have seen other good flutes in this price range, but there are just so, so many flutes out there, it's hard for even a flute professor to keep up. I have never owned a Yamaha, but I repeatedly see that they stay in adjustment better, and have lovely, responsive headjoints even on the beginner student models. If you are in this price range and have time to try many, please do, but make sure that at least one of them is a Yamaha.

In this price category, there are a number of professional-level flute brands that carry a sort of step-up line under an alternate brand name that uses a hand-cut, high-quality headjoint on a silver-plated body made in China. These brands often have names like Fancy Flute by Reputable Flute Maker. As a rule, I don't trust these flutes. On first playing, many of them sound great because of their hand cut, professional, solid silver headjoint, but the mechanisms vary in quality. Some might be ok, but I've played some that have such incredibly clunky or sluggish mechanisms or are practically falling apart after a few years. Buyer beware.

Where to Buy

Generally, your money will go much farther at places like Flute World, Flute Center of New York, Carolyn Nussbaum Music Company, J.L. Smith, Flute Authority, Flutistry Boston, or any places that specializes in flutes. Almost all will do a free home trial for you, often easier to do through your flute teacher. While local music stores do serve a great purpose, I don't often recommend buying from them because of the high markup on most brands. I like to support those businesses in other ways, and if you can find a similarly priced instrument through them and you love that instrument, go for it, but do your homework, shop around, and don't make a

hasty decision. Keep in mind that your “local” music store might be one that specializes in flutes. If you’re not sure, ask a flute teacher.

Bells and Whistles

So, which bells and whistles are worth the money? This is a matter of opinion, of course, but I find the following:

Risers: Can be worth it. I don’t have one. Risers can change the timbre dramatically.

D# roller: Not worth it. If your D# and C# are in perfect alignment, it’s totally unnecessary. If your D# and C# are not in perfect alignment, the roller doesn’t help. I have one because it came standard on my flute. I think this makes it harder for people to believe my advice here. I noticed absolutely no difference when I switched from not having one to having one. It doesn’t get in the way, but I would never choose to have this feature. And I would never recommend paying for it.

Spit E: The jury’s out. I love the idea of the split E because it is a more acoustically perfect version of the high E than the fingering allows on a flute without it, but it is also one more connection to come out of adjustment, and therefore to me, riskier than it is useful. If the Split E leaks, you can’t play until it’s fixed. I do not have one.

High E Facilitator: Sometimes called a G disc or G donut, it is a less expensive option that can later be removed. Offers some of the same benefits as the Split E. Some flutists find that it negatively affects left-hand intonation.

Offset G: Worth it. Generally, no additional cost, and if you love a flute that does not have it, it might be worth it to keep looking until you find one that has it. It allows for a more natural hand position. Up until around the 1990s most professional flutes were made with inline G. This made having an inline G seem like a better thing, like an aspirational feature, after all, that’s what all the professionals had. This made offset G seem like something for novices. Flutists and flutemakers today all know that offset G is a more ergonomic option and allows for a healthier hand position and promotes longevity. My first Muramatsu had an inline G. My current one has an offset. I can’t imagine I’d ever switch back to inline.

C trill: Worth it. Easily worth double the cost. It makes several trills enormously easier and provides additional alternate fingerings. I love using C# trill in place of regular C# fingering in slow passages that allow for it. I also love practicing C# trill comparing it to our regular C# to help me improve the quality on that precarious fingering. Because the C# trill fingering is a more acoustically ideal fingering than our regular C# fingering, playing C# with the C# trill key gives us an aural ideal for which to aim when playing our regular fingering C#. Our normal C# fingering is a compromise that uses a smaller hole that Boehm chose when creating his fully chromatic, mechanized system. After all these years of

flute playing, I am still in awe of both Boehm and the flute he created. His C# is not perfect, but given the parameters he had to work with (10 fingers, 36+ notes, the overtone series, and so many more), his flute nearly is. I love that the C# trill key allows for me to play a “perfect” C#, even if only part of the time.

Gem Crowns: Not worth it. Gem stone crowns and the like have never appealed to me, but they certainly don't hurt anything. Same for all other new-fangled gadgets and attachments that I lump into one big questionable, useless, or dubious category. At my best I am a critical thinker and extremely analytical. At my worst, I'm a skeptic and a cynic. Some people swear by these types of add-ons. Plenty of the world's greatest never use them. This alone should speak to their efficacy. Personally, I have no interest in paying for something (and being encumbered by using it) that changes my flute sound in such an infinitesimal way when I can already change my sound in myriad ways all by myself. For me, that's a big part of the point of music making in the first place. I'm not looking for one perfect sound. I'm looking for an instrument that allows me to make many sounds. There are enough amazing flutes in the world, I'm of the opinion that we shouldn't have to add something extra on to an already fabulous instrument. And I don't think that adding these gadgets on to marginal instruments makes up for their inferiority. My perspective on this matter is also partly related to my low-maintenance philosophy of life, but again, it doesn't hurt anything. If you like these things, have fun playing around with them.

Flute Maintenance

My recommendations on maintaining your flute are very, very simple and based on my own experience. I am notoriously bad at diagnosing flute issues apart from leaks or small particles slowing the movement of keys. I look at my pads and think they look awful, and the flute repair person tells me, “No, they're perfectly fine!” Flute repair is an artistic specialty unto itself.

When my flute is not in perfect working order, it's such a pain, and I hate being without it for a week. My practical, do-it-yourself attitude led me to take a weekend-long course learning how to do a COA. In doing so, I learned how to take a flute apart and put it back together in perfect working order, theoretically. I gained an even deeper appreciation for anyone who works on my flute, and learned that I have no interest or patience in this very painstaking process. There is a real art to this craft of flute repair and adjustment. To work at a level that I would want for my flute, I would have to do it regularly, but I have no interest, so I send my flute off once a year. I pay for very few services in this world, but my taxes, car repair, and flute repair are happily outsourced with great appreciation.

These bits of simple advice work have always worked for me:

Daily Care

Wipe your flute out before you put it away. You don't want moisture closed up in the case. I hear it's bad for the pads, so I listen, and I wipe my flute out. I wipe my flute out every time I put

it in the case using a handkerchief and my cleaning rod. My flute stays very shiny despite nearly never ever wiping the outside it with anything. This is all I ever do apart from sending my flute to a repair person about once a year.

Don't eat gunky junk and play your flute without brushing your teeth and/or rinsing out your mouth. Don't drink anything but water during your practice. Those of you who know me well instantly see my hypocrisy here because I seem to drink tea all day every day while teaching and practicing. Fine. You got me. And since you asked, I've never had any issues with this. I've owned my current flute for about twenty years, and it had one overhaul that was done about fourteen years in.

Polishing

If you love a shiny flute, buy a flute-specific polishing cloth and/or anti-tarnish paper strips for your case. Never use anything else on your flute unless approved by a flute repair person. If you have the body chemistry that reacts with silver (quite rare, but every professional flutist seems to know at least someone who's dealt with this), there isn't a whole lot you can do about it other than wipe it down every day or buy a flute made of a different material.

Annual Care

Ah, the COA. Clean, oil, and adjust. This is what your flute needs every six months to a year, depending on how much you play and who you ask. Don't skip it. It is truly necessary. I am pretty good about doing this every year. I can't say enough about how rock solid my Muramatsu is. I can tweak a thing here or there, but largely, I never touch it. I know if the need arises for me to adjust anything, it just needs a clean, oil, and adjust at the hands of a professional. This annual maintenance should always be done by a flute repair specialist, not a generalist who does all instrument repair. Finding a great repair person is a must.

Overhaul

This is needed every eight to ten years. It's really expensive, but it is a necessary investment for handmade flutes. No reputable repair person will every try to sell you one if you don't really need it, so make sure you're dealing with reputable repair people by asking around and get an overhaul when they say it's time.

PART TWO
Flute Exercises

Chapter Four

Flute Hygiene: Tone, Memorized Melodies, and Scales

This collection of exercises is designed to address tone quality, color, and dynamics in all registers, as well as intonation, articulation, flexibility, vibrato, expression, attention to note endings, and finger control. Musicians who are training for mastery will benefit from practicing these things separately, outside of repertoire, on a regular basis to improve all aspects of flute playing.

The categories are ordered so they can be practiced alternating odd numbers one day, even numbers the next day, and still cover most aspects of flute playing most days. For more serious students looking to become the best flutist they can be, covering all twelve every day makes sense. For students who are focused in areas other than flute performance, alternating odds and evens might be necessary due to other time commitments in those degree programs.

Several of these are quite standard and used by many flutists. If I have adapted the exercise from a particular flutist, you'll see their name in parentheses.

In the interest of efficiency, many exercises double dip, addressing two or more aspects of playing in one exercise. Exercise #2 is a great example of this. Finger technique plus high register soft playing. You will get the most from these exercises by using the metronome *and* the tuner on each one, however, there is no exact science, no one-size-fits-all prescription. I have a general disregard for dogma and doctrine and am careful not to dictate strictures. Some people can use both the tuner and the metronome at the same time on some of these exercises, but a less experienced flutist might be overwhelmed at the attempt. Use common sense, ask questions, and have a flexible approach. The beautiful thing about them is that you can change them as you progress. Make them your own.

Several of these are quite standard and used by many flutists. If I have adapted the exercise from a particular flutist, you'll see their name in parentheses.

Tone

Dynamic and Tone Quality

1. [Descending Chromatic Pattern](#). (Marcel Moyse and Trevor Wye)

Low Register *mf*, then other dynamics.

Considerations: Play as much like the rice spitting exercise in Chapter One as you can. For low register, aim for the air to shoot six to twelve inches away. Work toward a rich, vibrant flute sound with no vibrato by energizing the air between your lips in a concentrated manner that produces a somewhat noisy airstream without the flute. Aim air at the outer edge of the embouchure hole. Consider how much of the lip plate you are covering with your bottom lip. Check the angle of the flute to your face. Are you rolled in considerably? Experiment with rolling out slightly. Most flutists roll in too far in the earlier years of development because it's easier to control and takes less embouchure strength to play, but it limits both the color and dynamic range. Experiment with uncovering more of the embouchure hole.



When you have good control down to low B, further progress can be made by

- 1) adding vibrato
- 2) adding a crescendo in each group
- 3) adding a decrescendo in each group
- 4) adding a crescendo on the first playing and a decrescendo on repeat
- 5) doing of numbers 2 - 4 without vibrato

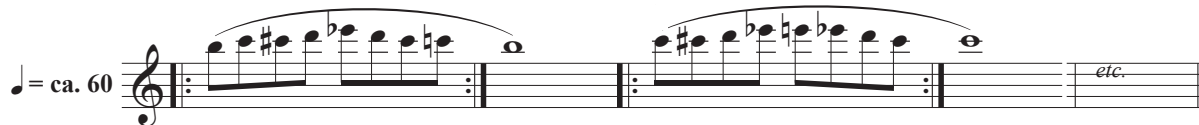
Middle Register *mf*, then other dynamics

When your lower register becomes stable, add the middle register. The middle register will require a faster air stream. Think of spitting rice twelve to eighteen inches away. The embouchure will need a bit more strength here to resist the faster air as it passes through our aperture. Keep the inside of the mouth nice and open. Experiment with how much space between your teeth you want to use.



High Register *mf*, then other dynamics.

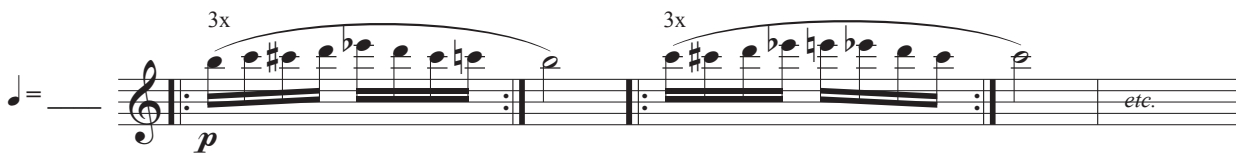
When your middle register becomes stable, add the high register. The high register will require an even faster air stream. Think of spitting rice eighteen to twenty-four inches away. The embouchure will need quite a lot of strength here to resist the faster air as it passes through our aperture. Maintain a relaxed throat and neck. Try increasing the space between your top and bottom teeth.



2. [Third Octave *piano*. Chromatic Finger Exercise.](#) (Stephanie Rea)

Moving fingers fast, fine motor control

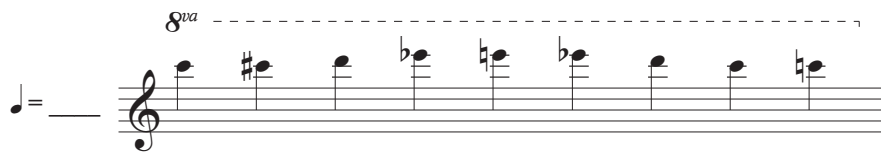
Considerations: This is an advanced exercise, so feel free to begin this exercise at a louder dynamic level and work your way toward *p* and *pp* over many months. Even after years of practicing *pp* dynamic, your soft playing will continue to get softer as your control develops. For softer dynamic levels, we want to have very little air coming out, but it must be moving quite fast to sustain the high octave. I like to think of slurping spaghetti, but in reverse. If I could send our air out of an aperture that is about the size of a strand of spaghetti, that's what playing in the high register at *pianissimo* feels like to me. I developed this exercise after doing long tones in the higher register to develop my softer dynamics. I initially hated the tone quality I was getting and could barely stand hearing it. It was more interesting to me to move my fingers - more to listen to, more to distract me from the terrible tone quality that almost every has when they first learn to play softly in the high register. This allowed me to practice in this register longer and more regularly without hating myself, and it gave me the added benefit of developing a more facile third octave finger technique. Win, win. I encourage you to find and create these types of double-dipping practice exercises whenever possible.



Embouchure Strength and Lip Placement

3. [Fourth Octave. C7 – E7](#). (Charles DeLaney)

Considerations: Mr. DeLaney would say that this exercise improves the low register. Perhaps this is because it is impossible to play these fourth octave notes by covering too much, and by uncovering, we improve the strength of the embouchure which improves control in all of your flute playing. Flutists are asked to play above D6 from time to time, and this exercise brings confidence there. By playing this exercise regularly, all notes of the upper third octave feel incredibly easy. Make sure you uncover the embouchure hole. Cover less than you think you should and see what happens.



Flexibility

4. [Register Flexibility. One and Two Octave Slurs](#). (Stephanie Rea)

Considerations: There is irony in the execution of this exercise. If you want to create a smooth connection, you might think it requires a gradual change of air, as not to cause an abrupt change; however, an instantaneous change of air pressure is actually what we need to smoothly go from one octave to another without any extraneous, extramusical sounds. We can change our air very abruptly as if someone punched you in the stomach while you were playing flute: your muscles instantly contract to slur up to the next octave. Practicing this technique with a metronome will give you the control you need for the large, slurred leaps that are common in flute playing.



5. [Register Flexibility. Bugle Calls and Hunting Horn Melodies Using Harmonics.](#) (Trevor Wye)

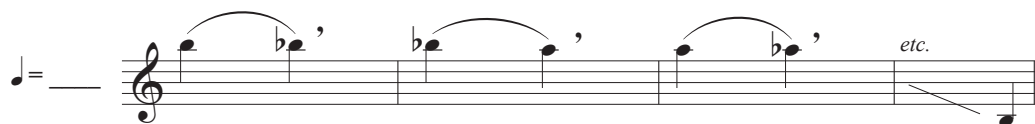
Considerations: Playing the harmonics takes a slightly finer level of control. In this way, practicing something harder than what we might normally do helps make what we normally do much easier. But playing harmonics is also something we do in modern music that incorporates this as an extended technique. It is quite common in flute playing and makes a nice preparatory exercise for some of the multiphonic and other extended techniques where color and control are paramount. Trevor Wye has a few fun bugle calls in his *Practice Books*, but why stop there? Here's my version. Have fun and write some of your own. As long as you're practicing harmonics regularly, you'll reap the benefits.



Intonation

6. [Intonation and Flexibility. Descending Two-Octave “Glissando.”](#) (John Barcellona)

Considerations: I am an advocate of heuristic teaching methods that lead to learning through discovery. What we discover and learn through experience for ourselves is less easily forgotten, so I find value in every student experimenting with how to bend a pitch before going into detail with instructions on this one. After experimenting, my advice (and John Barcellona's advice too) is not to roll the flute in and out to change the pitch, rather practice changing this angle with as little movement as is necessary with muscles in the face and jaw. John Barcellona showed me this exercise many years ago when he was a guest on campus. I was astounded my own lack of control when I first tried it! He sure made it sound and look easy. Practice it regularly, and it will become easy for you too.



7. [Intonation and Color. C# Color Matching Exercise.](#) (Toshio Takahashi)

Considerations: C# is a notoriously sharp note if the airstream is not blown at the correct angle. Luckily, where the note is most in tune is also where it has a color that is consistent with the notes around it. I always say that C# lives in a very small house. You can aim the airstream for notes above and below C# in a much larger area and still have those notes sound pretty good, but C# is different and requires extra care. When you find the place where C# lives, the notes around it will also work well with that placement. This exercise helps you with matching the color and finding good intonation on this precarious pitch.



Optional Preparatory Exercise.

If you have a C# trill key, as a preparatory exercise, play C# with the trill fingering and alternate back and forth between regular C# and trill fingering C#, aiming to match our regular fingering to the strong, resonant C# trill fingering.

Expression

8. [Vibrato. Measured Pulses with Metronome.](#) (Charles DeLaney)

Considerations: Like pushups and weight training for athletes, this exercise is not one you will ever do in performance, but it prepares you for the elements you need in playing flute. It is designed to give you control over your vibrato so that you can do with it whatever you like in service of your musical goals. To that end, be disciplined in your approach. Use a metronome and play very rhythmically, pulsing from your core. I don't belabor the debate of what muscles I'm using. I aim to pulse to create the sounds I want while using as minimal effort as possible.



9. [Expression, Color, Connection with Interval Slurs.](#) (Molly Barth)

I took this exercise from a class Molly Barth presented to students at Murray State University. I found the creative challenge of coming up with moods, emotions, ideas, characters, and other elements through varying combinations of color, vibrato, and dynamic and executing them in various slurred patterns to be an endlessly interesting challenge. It is another win/win/win exercise where we can practice many rudiments of music making in one terse package.



Articulation

10. [Low Register Attack.](#) (Marcel Moyse and Toshio Takahashi)

Considerations: This exercise will help all articulation, but in particular, it helps to control of the attack in the lowest notes of the flute. Be sure to build up air pressure prior to releasing the tongue. It is almost exactly the same mechanics as spitting rice. Flutists have to be careful not to increase the air speed and air flow after releasing a note. Many flutists, wary of overblowing the low register, will start the low notes tentatively and a millisecond later, increase the air volume once they're sure the note doesn't overblow. This is the *opposite* of how to make a clean attack happen. For a clean attack, we must have all of the necessary pressure, and not one bit more, at the ready as soon as the tongue pulls back and lets the air through the aperture. And yes, if the pressure or volume or air is too great, the note will overblow.

Preparatory Exercise

To help find the exact amount of air speed needed, try this preparatory exercise: Play any note as a whole note to get a sense of how the note feels before repeating the note as a short note. Make sure that the quality of the short note is the same as the quality in the whole note. You can do this on any of the notes in the exercise as a separate exercise unto itself. As you work your way down the flute, again, work to match the quality of the initial note with the next lower note down the chromatic scale. If the quality doesn't match, don't play any lower. Work to match the quality of the whole note and your short note before proceeding to the next note in the exercise.



The art of the challenge in this exercise is finding the sweet spot of the exact amount of air pressure and balancing that with a large amount of air to create a louder dynamic without overblowing. It's fairly easy on B, but increasingly more difficult as you descend. Keep returning to the Preparatory Exercise above when the tone or attack fails you. Try to keep your lips stationary and in place even as you are not playing. Having to reset the lips for each separate note decreases our accuracy in articulating each time.

11. [Double and Triple Tonguing.](#) (Trevor Wye and Charles DeLaney)

Make sure that your air is doing the work. The tongue merely starts the notes. Once you have great control in the middle octave, move on to the double-tonguing section in the Trevor Wye *Practice Books* or any other exercises you like.

Preparatory Exercise.



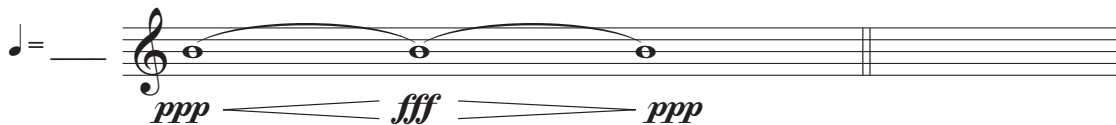
Double Tonguing Exercise.



Dynamic Flexibility, Intonation, Tone Quality, Articulation, Releases

12. [Long Tones with Metronome and Tuner](#). (John Mack)

Considerations: Thinking numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 as the dynamic levels helps most flutists produce a more even crescendo and decrescendo. Keep in mind that the incrementally even dynamic change is certainly not only kind. This type of practice will help build control, but there are infinite numbers of types of crescendo and decrescendo that flare wider at different rates for different musical affect. This gradient change will develop the control you need to later execute your artistic decisions. Begin in the low register on B and work downward. When you have good low register control, add the middle register. When you have good middle register control, it's time to add the high register. The time commitment prohibits doing this exercise on every note in any given day or even week, but visiting this exercise regularly on a few notes of the flute over all three octaves will yield laudable results.



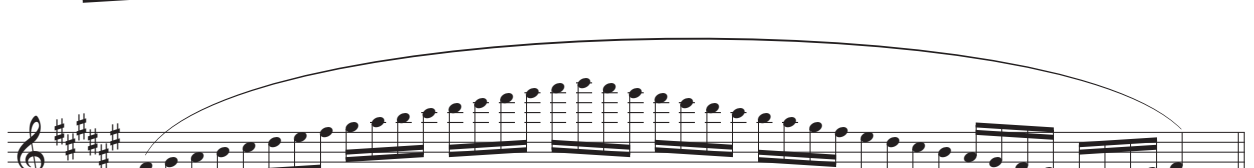
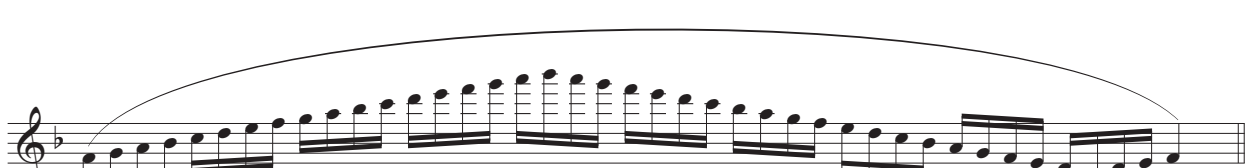
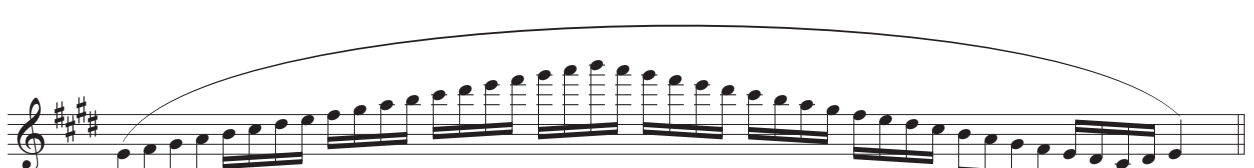
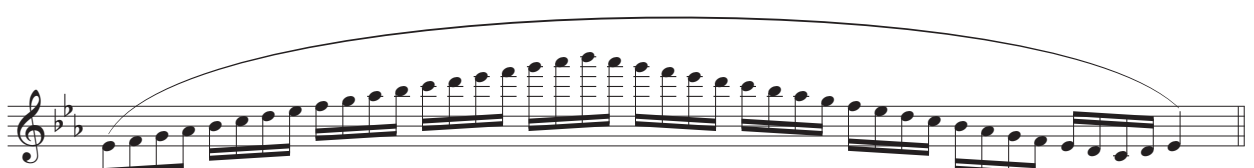
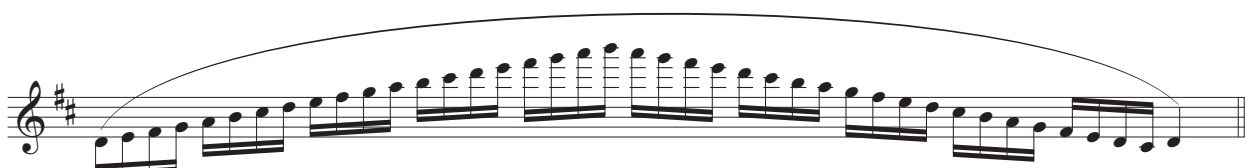
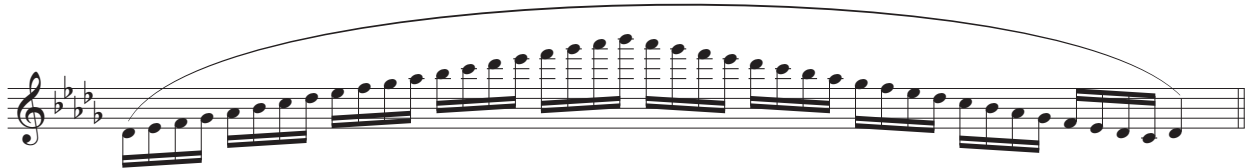
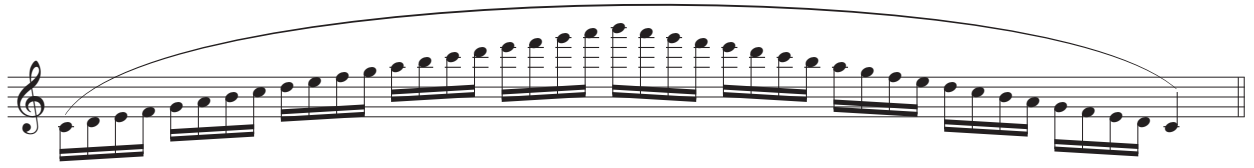
Memorized Melodies

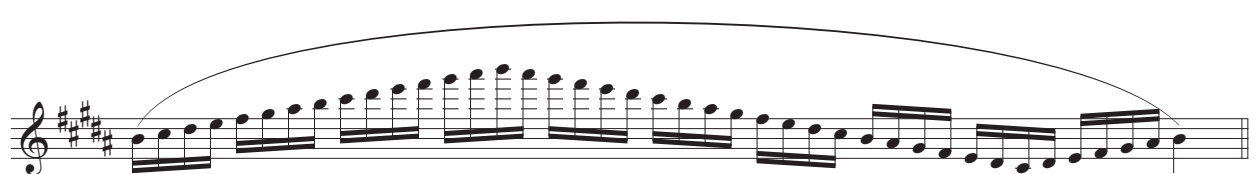
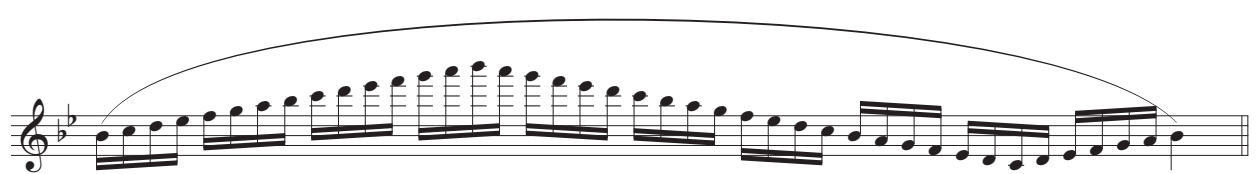
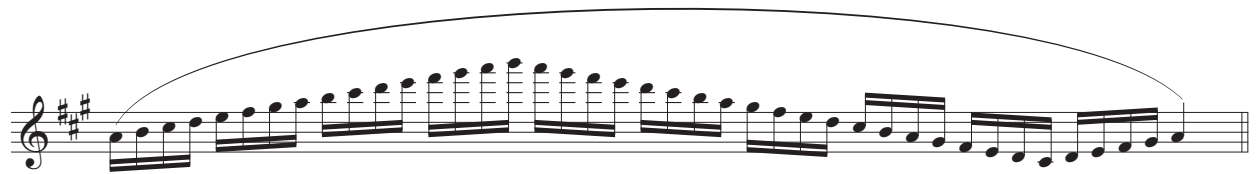
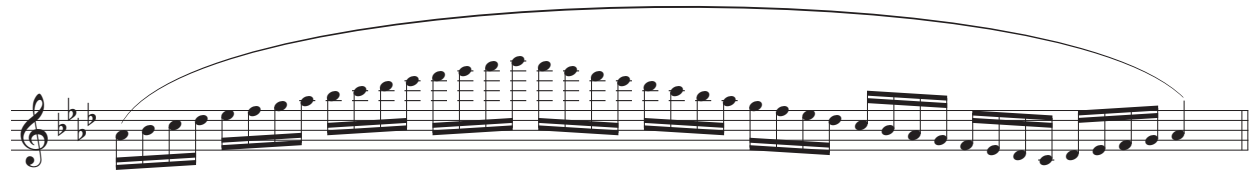
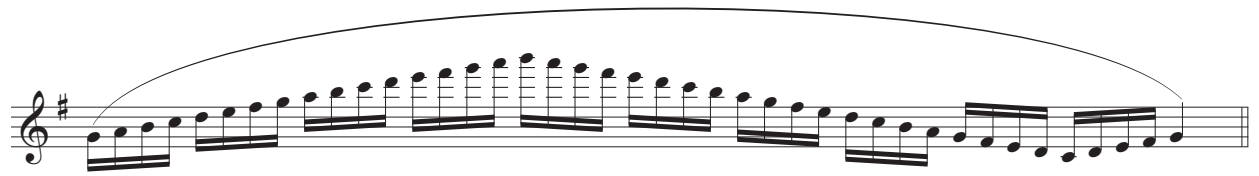
I have been using melodies in my teaching for many years. More recently I have been taking them from Marcel Moyse's *24 Little Melodic Studies* and advocate this book, but I also recommend using any melody that you genuinely love. If a student came in with a different melody than I assigned and had practiced it diligently all week, memorized it, and played it for me, I would be very excited for them! I encourage this. As long as you practice a melody for a month, steeping yourself in it, memorizing it completely so that you can find the exquisite nuance that it deserves and practice it so that you are physically capable of bringing that expression to life, you have succeeded. Again, the important thing is that you immerse yourself completely in a melodic piece of music on a regular basis.

Scales and Thirds

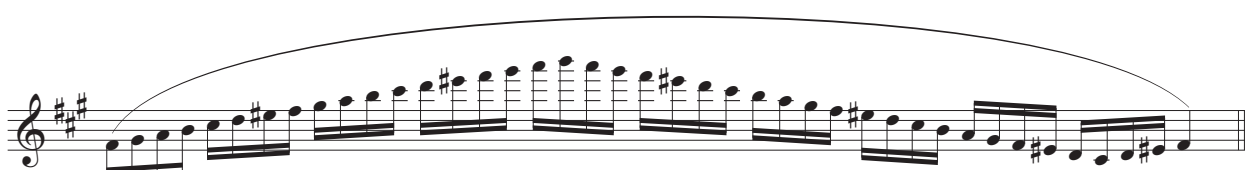
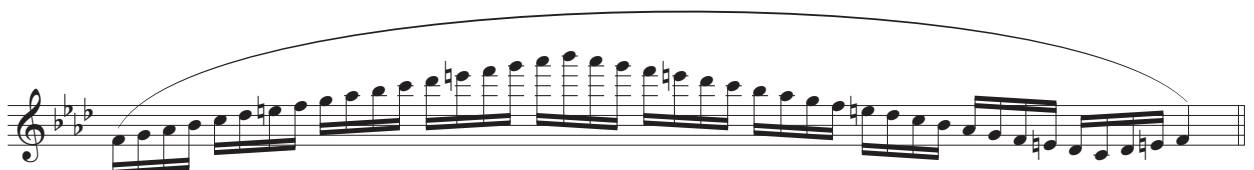
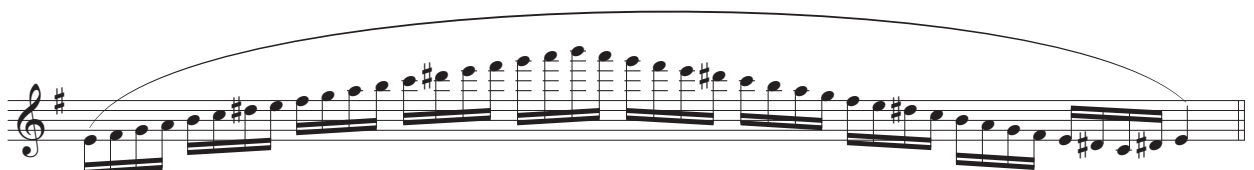
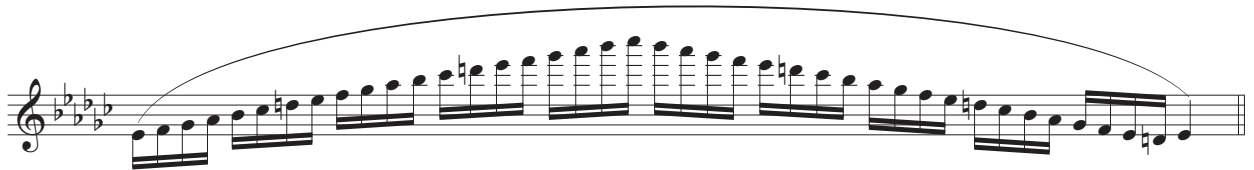
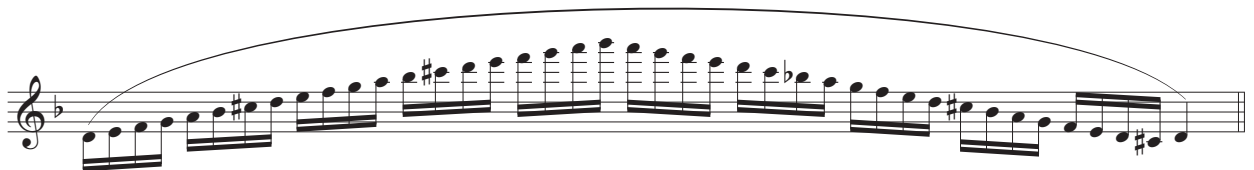
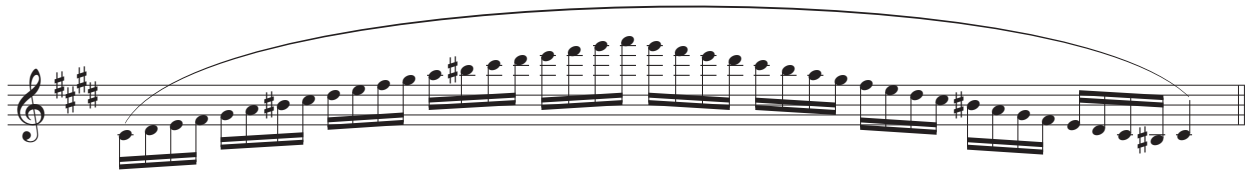
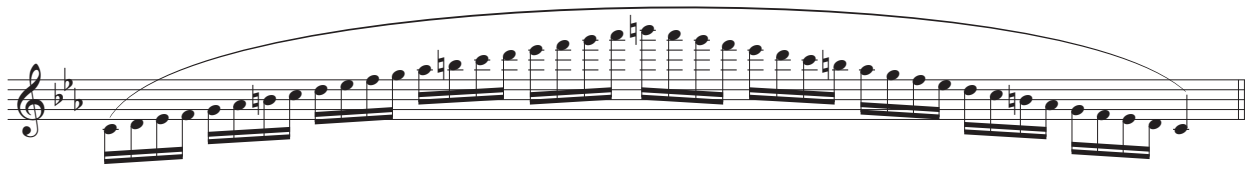
These are the minimum scale requirements for graduation in a music degree that I have used for many years. We cover many other technical exercises in lessons, but these are the standard jury requirements at Murray State University. I take them from Marcel Moyse's pattern, a standard pattern in the world of flute playing. Trevor Wye's thirds are slightly different, arguably no better. If a student asked me if they could use Geoffrey Gilbert, Trevor Wye, or some other equally suitable pattern instead of these, I'd say yes. As long as you are practicing the full range of the flute regularly, the benefits will come.

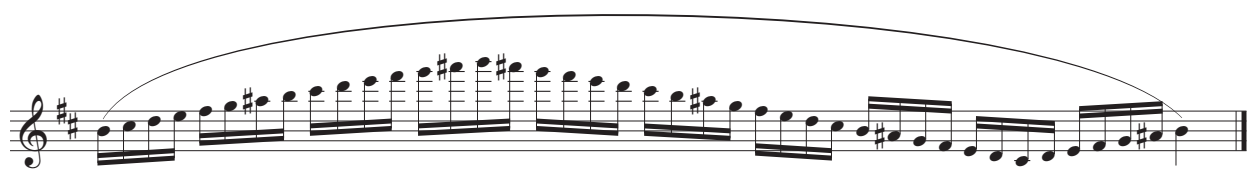
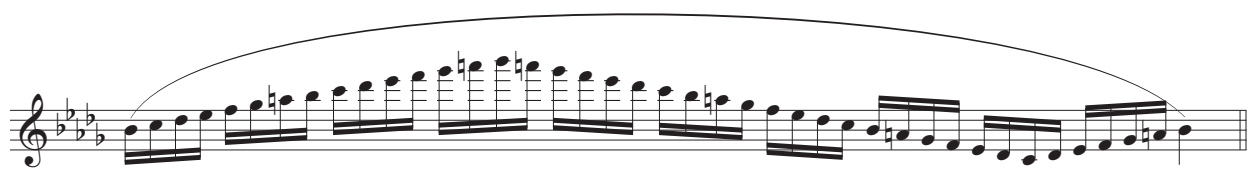
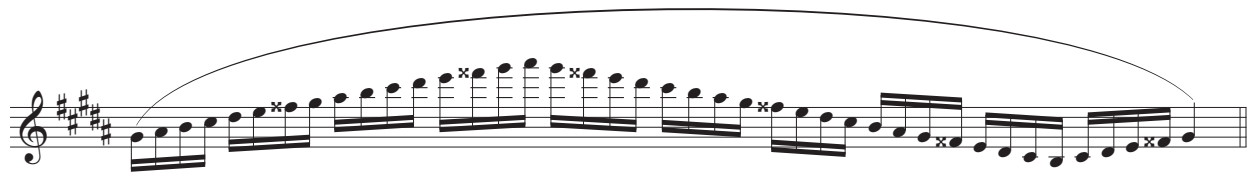
Major Scales



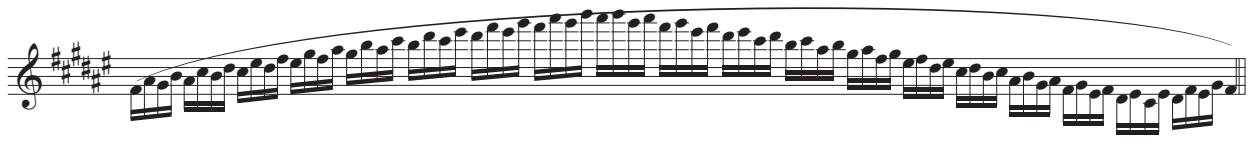
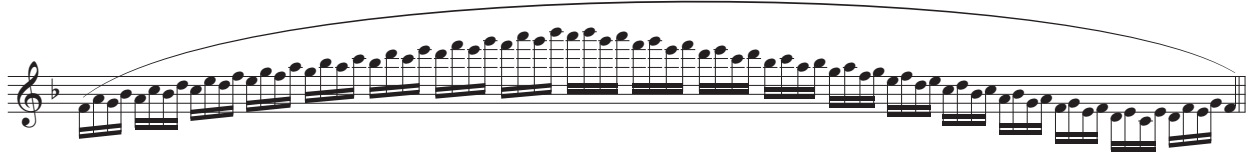
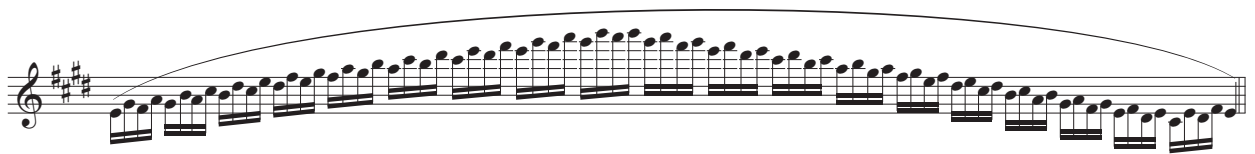
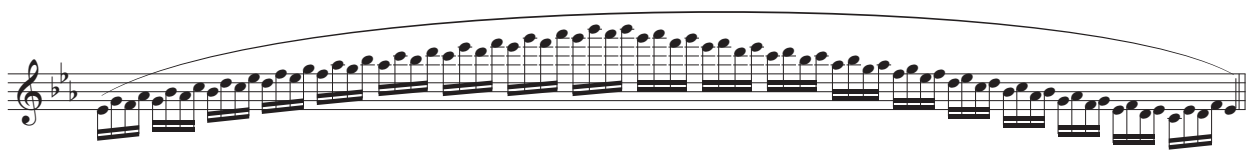
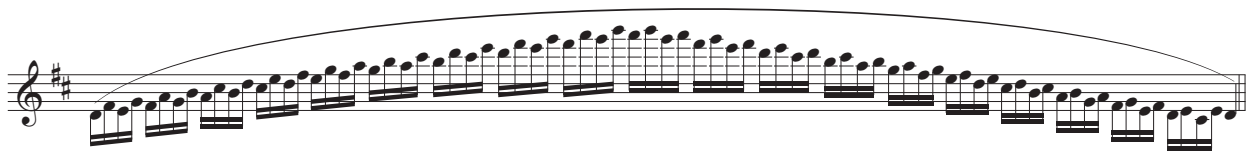
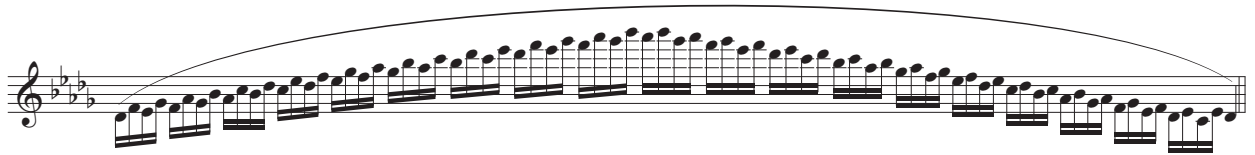
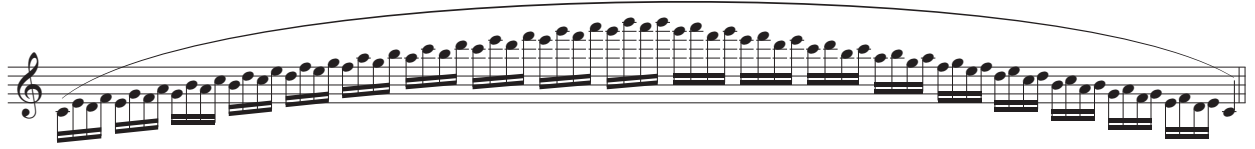


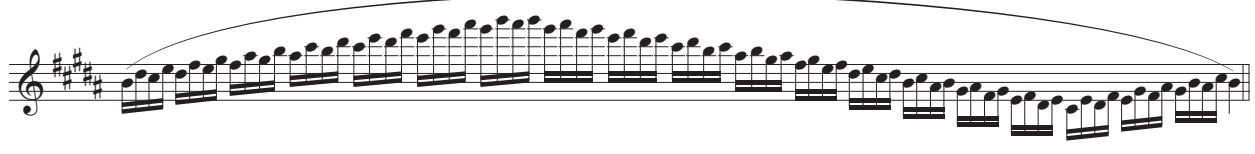
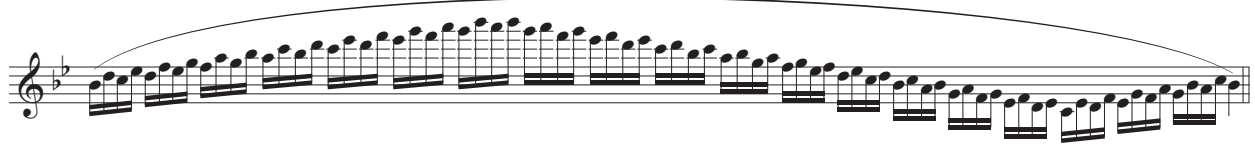
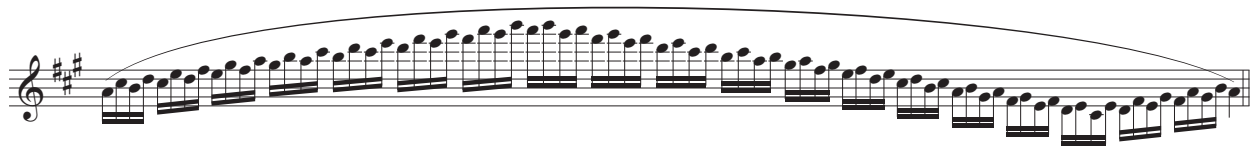
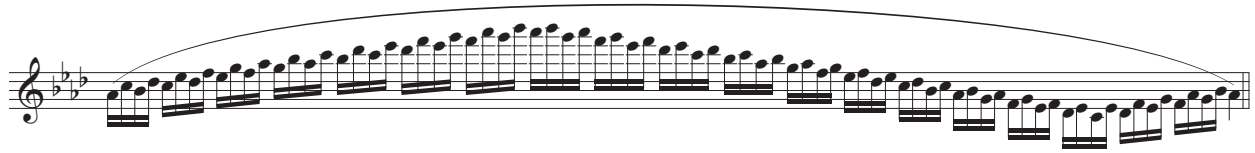
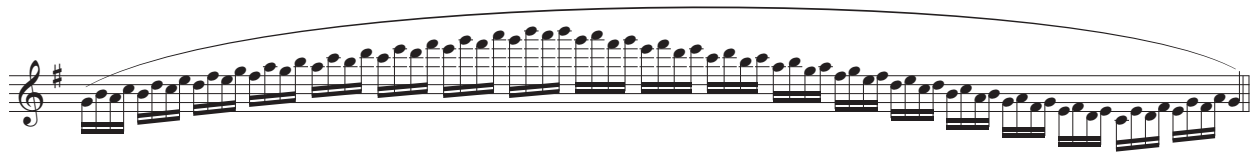
Minor Scales



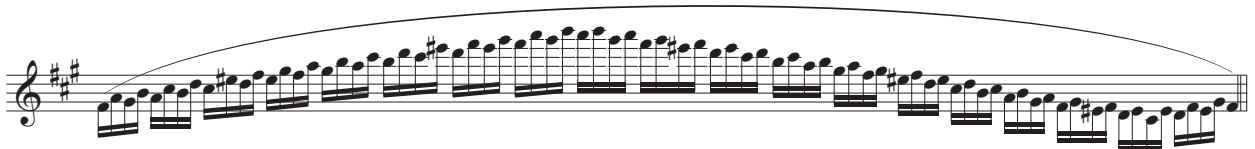
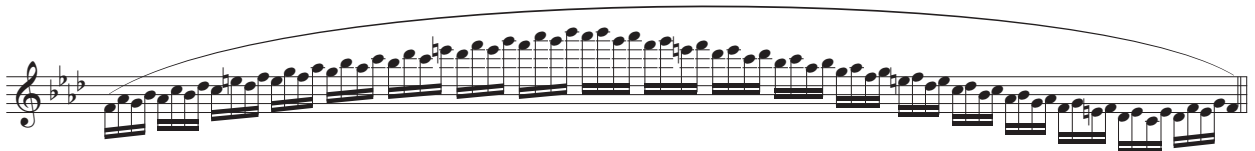
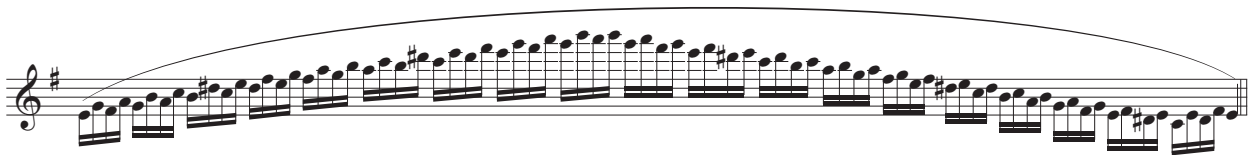
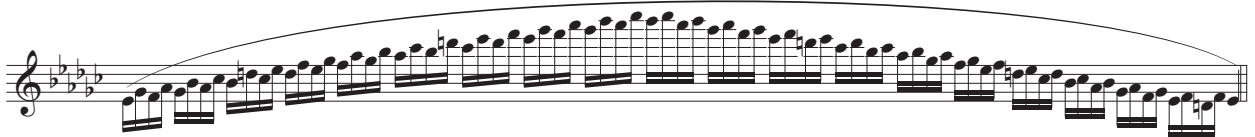
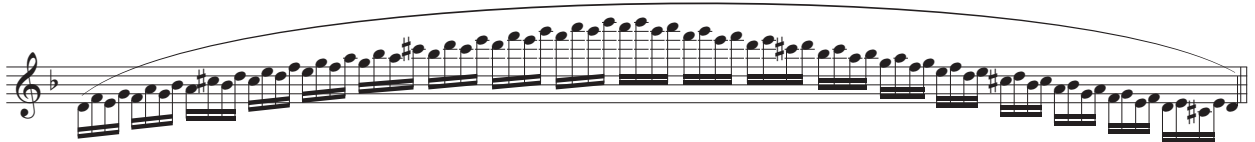
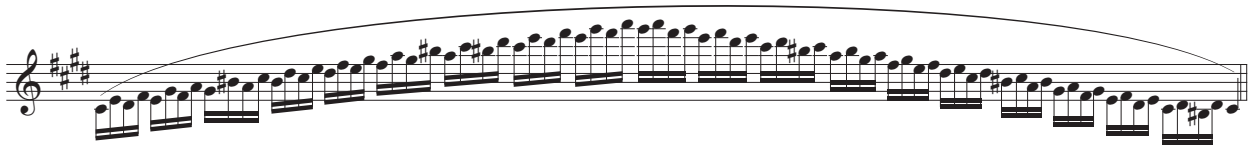
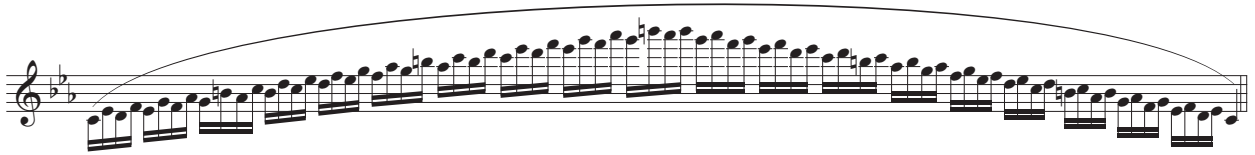


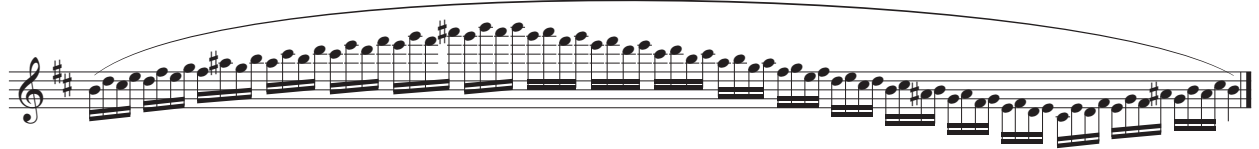
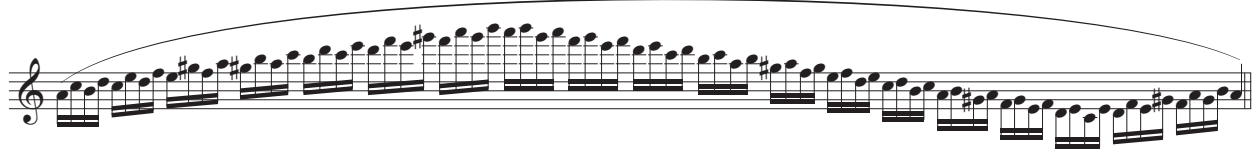
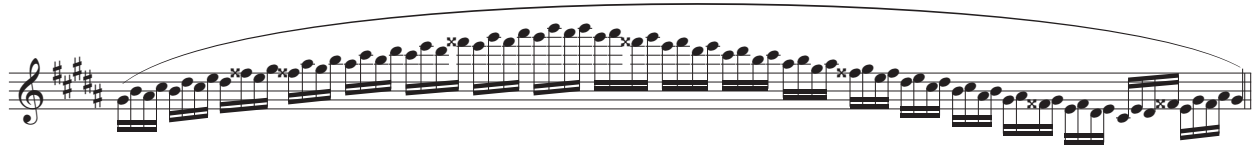
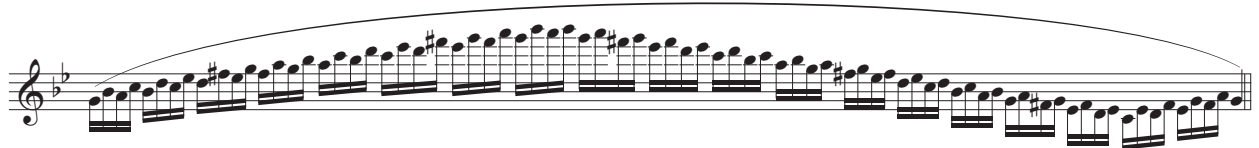
Major Scales in Thirds





Minor Scales in Thirds





Chapter Five

Thoughts on Additional Technique, Etudes, and Repertoire

Additional Technique

The scale technique I have included in *Flute Hygiene* can serve any flutist as they develop their skills prior to, during, after, or apart from a music degree. It also forms a solid basis for further development for those flutists who are focused on high level performance. From this foundation, there are so many great books of technical exercises to choose from, and a serious flutist will work out of many of them over the course of their training and flute playing. I assign weekly technique exercises from books like the ones I list in this chapter alongside my *Flute Hygiene*.

Covering all scales, arpeggios, and other tonal patterns is essential, and there is great benefit to be reaped by sticking with any particular book or regimen for a time, making progress, and then moving on to greater challenges before the routine becomes too stale. This might mean three to six months or more dedicated to any particular book, depending on length, difficulty, and other factors. While in school, it might make sense to focus on a particular technique book for a semester or a school year, with a different focus in summers. A regular rotation can be motivating and keep your interest.

In those months of working on a particular technique book, many different approaches can be used to improve flute playing. Some examples include

- Slow work for better hand position or embouchure control
- Increasing tempo to gain technical facility
- Changing the articulations, rhythms, and dynamics for added challenges
- Memorization
- Mental endurance

Here is a brief description of a few of the many worthy technique books that you can use for any focus you want to undertake. Most these books provide a lifetime of challenge.

Filas, Thomas. *Leger Domain: 52 Top Register Studies for Flute.*

This book contains fifty-two eight-measure studies that venture into the third register. All are in common time, and all are composed entirely of sixteenth notes until the very last note. I love these because anyone can manage eight measures. If you do one of these per week, it's an average of little more than one measure per day. That sounds easy, and can really be motivating for students who are newer to the high register, relearning correct fingerings or better hand position, or just trying to improve already solid technical control. They are easy enough that even middle school students can play them at a slow tempo, but at a fast tempo, I still find them challenging.

Filas, Thomas. *Top Register Studies for Flute: 90 Melodious Studies.*

Like Leger Domain, this book covers all major and minor keys in eight-measure exercises, like a mini etude. This book is all in 12/8 meter and each study features constant groups of three eighth notes before ending on a longer note value.

Gilbert, Geoffrey. *Sequences for Flute.*

While Marcel Moyse scales and arpeggios go up to B6, Gilbert takes his sequences to D7. This presents an enormous challenge particularly in the arpeggiated passages, as flutists are less used to approaching those notes outside of scalar playing. I think these sequences are far more fun than most. I just love them.

Moyse, Marcel. *Exercices Journaliers (Daily Exercises).*

This book covers many scales and arpeggios and eight of its forty-nine pages serve as the basis for my Flute Hygiene for students at Murray State (major and minor scales and scales in thirds). There is a humbling suggested practice routine that cycles the entire book in a month, covering some parts of the book many times, other parts only a few. If you have never practiced things like scales in fourths, fifths, sixths, or sevenths, or all five of the most common seventh chords in a broken pattern that jumps one or two octaves every sixteenth note, you quickly realize how much of a challenge playing the flute can present, even just within tonal music.

Moyse, Marcel. *De la Sonorite: Art et Technique (On Sonority: Art and Technique).*

The technique involved in our embouchure is often overlooked in favor of the pyrotechnic prowess of the fingers. This volume addresses tone quality, attack, release, dynamic, flexibility, and to a lesser extent, color. A few excerpts of music are given at the end of the book where one can apply the control of tone that has been developed. It's only twenty-seven pages long, but so much is packed into this slim publication.

Moyse, Marcel. *Tone Development Through Interpretation.*

Though not marketed as such, I see this book as an extension of *De La Sonorite*. It contains ninety melodies arranged for flute alone, largely taken from opera arias and other familiar favorites for orchestra or solo instruments (“The Swan” from *Carnival of the Animals*, “Meditation” from *Thaïs*, etc.). It also includes a piano accompaniment for nine of these works. The last twelve of its seventy-nine pages are tone exercises, largely geared for dynamic and register flexibility under slurs. This book is fabulous for training creative expression and serves as the inspiration for my Memorized Melodies.

Moyse, Marcel. *24 Petites Études Melodiques (24 Little Melodic Studies).*

This book contains twenty-four simple melodies with variations to challenge and develop the embouchure technique needed to play the many subtle shapes that musically worthy melodic playing requires. The variations, as I see them, are often preparatory exercises for playing the melodies. Other times, they serve as a more complex version requiring additional embouchure control than the original melody. I love these because they are almost all sixteen measures long, making them easier to memorize, and a lovely pithy package in which to practice the many techniques of beautifully controlled melodic playing. I use the first eight as Memorized Melodies, one per month of the school year. Students are welcome to advance through the book through their years at Murray State or revisit the same eight each year of their degree.

Reichert, M.A. *Seven Daily Exercises, Op. 5*

These seven exercises are scale and/or arpeggio patterns that cycle through all major and minor keys, and I find most of them to be pretty fun. It’s a slim sixteen-page volume that I like to revisit and often have students work out of in their senior year.

Taffanel, Paul and Gaubert, Phillippe. *Grands Exercices Journaliers de Mécanisme.*

Seventeen scale or arpeggio exercises each with twenty-four iterations for every major and minor key. These are much longer exercises than Reichert, and feel more manageable than many of the advanced-level Moyse exercises.

Wye, Trevor. *Practice Books, Volume 1 – 6. (Published as one volume).*

It is a question of time, patience, and intelligent work. – Trevor Wye

Trevor Wye is a master and his *Practice Books* are indispensable. I have used these since my early days of flute playing, and I still find value in practicing from this book. I love that even in *Volume 6 Advanced Practice*, Wye includes information on the fundamentals of posture, hand position, and tone production right along with some very advanced technical exercises. Fundamental problems, not particularly advanced ones, are almost always the root of the limits of technique.

Etudes

Etudes are like mini pieces. The value in them is that they often concentrate one particular challenge throughout the etude, but in a much more musically valid setting than in a pure exercise. Some etudes are written for the concert stage, and some are less worthy of performance, but there is no shortage of flute etudes. A good rule of thumb of one per week is quite standard in many courses of flute study. Here are the etude books we use regularly at Murray State University. Any student may choose a different set with my approval.

50 Études mélodiques, Op. 4 by Jules Demersseman (first year at university)

I selected this set of etudes to give first-year students pieces that challenge their musical expression without overwhelming them with technical challenges. For players who have not had much flute instruction prior to college, these are great.

26 Little Caprices, Op. 37 by Joachim Andersen (second year at university)

Andersen's etudes are used by so many flutists, and there are many sets to choose from. I like these for many of my second-year students due to their length and difficulty level. They look deceptively easy, but if you push the tempo and aim for accuracy with no mistakes, they can be quite a challenge. This also allows students to consider things like intonation, tone quality, and all other details that are so necessary in playing well.

OR

Romantischen Etuden, Op. 66 by Ernesto Köhler (second year at university)

I have a real penchant for late nineteenth century flute music, and these etudes are such fun. Many have programmatic titles and paint a real picture. Others are just expressive and lovely. On the whole, I think they are a little more challenging than the Andersen, and I seem to enjoy them more in some ways.

30 Caprices, Op. 107 by Siegfried Karg-Elert (third year at university)

These etudes are pithy little wonders. Most are fairly short compared to many etudes out there, but they pack a big punch. These use an expanded harmonic language and are more challenging not only to the ear but to our fingers because they contain patterns that are not so well ingrained into our fingers like the more familiar arpeggios and tertian-based etudes that I have students cover in their first two years.

Douze Etudes by Jacques Castérède (fourth year)

I love the deeper musical and technical challenges in these etudes including odd and mixed meters, full range of the flute, and expressive demands of cadenza-like elements. Some of them are just ridiculously fun to me.

OR

20 Etudes by Anne McGinty (fourth year)

Like the Castèrède and Karg-Elert, these are written in a somewhat more modern harmonic language, and they are so fun and interesting. I highly recommend these to anyone after they've covered a few books of etudes based in a more common practice harmony tradition.

Suggested Repertoire

Everything we practice on flute is in service to the repertoire we will perform. Why else are we practicing our tone quality, our finger control, articulations? It is to be able to execute those things with control in order to play music.

The flute repertoire is expanding every day, and choosing repertoire should be fun and interesting. For those studying for a degree in music, it is valuable to play in all musical style periods of the Western tradition including jazz and more modern works that might include things like beatboxing, performance art, dance, or any number of other less traditional kinds of styles for our Classical silver flute. There is also great value to expanding into other world traditions as you progress on the instrument. Every culture has a flute, and there is an increasing array of music written by modern composers that imitate those other world traditions like panpipes, quena, di'zi, shakuhachi, and many others. Check my YouTube channel for Playlists of Flute Repertoire performed by many flutists. Scour places like the Flute World catalog, Spotify, YouTube, and social media profiles of flutists to find great pieces.

I will list some standards here along with some newer favorites, but this is only a very general guide to get you going. I've included a grading scale to provide some indication of technical difficulty (similar to Flute World, though I assigned these numbers myself). Higher levels not necessarily more worthy, they are just more technically difficult. Some pieces in grade three are truly wonderful, artistic, even profound pieces. Undergraduates studying for a music degree may never play a level five and many will struggle with level four. That's ok. If all you play is level three, you would never run out of amazing music, and you can still be proud of the music degree you earn. Those aiming to earn a degree in music performance can certainly set their sights on level five, but performing works at this level should not be your singular focus.

My grading scale

- 1 Middle school level difficulty but worthy musically
- 2 High school level players should be able to learn this for solo and ensemble, great for freshmen at Murray State while honing fundamental skills or as a secondary piece on a senior recital as a complement to harder pieces
- 3 High school players who are taking regular lessons and working hard can play this level well. Most of your work at Murray State should be of this level or above.
- 4 Quite challenging for most college-level flutists
- 5 Out of all undergraduate flute students in the U.S., maybe the top 5 - 10% can play these

Flute and Piano

Alwyn	Three Easy Pieces	1
Amirov	Six Pieces	3
Andersen	Scherino, Op. 55, No. 6	2
Andersen	Trois Morceaux, Op. 57	2-3
Andersen	Au Bord de la Mer, Op. 9	2
Aubert	Madrigal	2
CPE Bach	Sonatas	3
JS Bach	Suite in B Minor	3
JS Bach	Sonatas (easier: C, g, Eb, A)	3
JS Bach	Sonatas (harder: E, B, e)	4
Beach	Sonata in A Minor, Op. 34	3
Beethoven	Serenade	3
Benda	Sonata in G Major, Op. 3, No. 1	3
Barber	Canzone	2
Bennett	Summer Music	3
Blavet	Sonata	2-3
Boehm	Grand Polonaise, Op. 16	4
Boehm	Nel cor piu, Op. 4	4
Bolling	Suite for Flute and Jazz Piano Trio	3
Borne	Carmen Fantasie	4
Boulanger	D'un Matin de Printemps	2-3
Bozza	Aria	1-2
Burton	Sonatina	4
Caplet	Reverie et Petite Valse	3
Casella	Sicilienne et Burlesque	3.5
Chaminade	Concertino	4
Ciach	Kentucky Folk Pieces	3
Clarke	Hypnosis	4
Clarke	Orange Dawn	4
Clarke	Deep Blue	3
Clarke	Hatching Aliens	4.5
Copland	Duo	3
Cortese	Introduction e Allegro, Op. 40	3.5
Dohnanyi	Aria	3
Donizetti	Sonate	3
Doppler	Hungarian Pastorale Fantasie	4
Dutilleux	Sonatine	4.5
Dvorak	Sonata	3
Enesco	Cantabile et Presto	3.5
Faure	Fantasie	3.5
Faure	Sicilienne	1
Faure	Sonata	3.5

Faure	Pavane	1
Foote	Three Pieces	2
Foote	A Night Piece	3
Franck	Sonata	3.5
Gaubert	Nocturne et Allergo Scherzando	3.5
Gaubert	Madrigal	1
Gaubert	Sonatas	3
Gaubert	Sonatine	3.5
Gaubert	Fantasie	3.5
Geraedts	Sonatine	3.5
Giesecking	Sonata	3
Godard	Suite of Three Pieces, Op. 116	3
Griffes	Poem	4
Grovlez	Romance et Scherzo	3
Handel	Sonatas	2-3
Hanson	Serenade	3.5
Higdon	Autumn Reflections	3.5
Hindemith	Sonata	3.5
Hue	Fantasie	4
Ibert	Aria	2
Ibert	Jeux	2.5
Ibert	Concerto	4
Jadassohn	Notturmo	2
Jadassohn	Serenade	2.5
Jolivet	Chant de Linos	5
Kennan	Night Soliloquy	4
Kuhlau	Six Divertissements	3.5
Liebermann	Sonata	3.5
Marcello	Sonata in F Major	2
Martinu	Sonata	4
Martin	Ballade	4
McGowan	Cleveland Times	4
Milhaud	Sonatine	3
Messiaen	La Merle Noir	4
Mouquet	La Flute de Pan	3.5
Mower	Sonata Latino	4
Mozart	Andante in C	2
Mozart	Concerto in G	3
FX Mozart	Rondo in E Minor	3
Muczynski	Moments	3
Muczynski	Sonata	4
Nielsen	Concerto	3
Pessard	Reverie	2
Piston	Sonata	3
Poulenc	Sonata	3
Prokofiev	Sonata	4

Quantz	Concerto	3
Reinecke	Sonata	4
Rochberg	Between Two Worlds (Ukiyo-e III)	4
Roussel	Joueurs de Flûte	3
Rutter	Suite Anitique	3
Sancan	Sonata	4
Saint-Saens	Romance	3
Saint-Saens	Air de Ballet	3
Schocker	Regrets and Resolutions	3
Schocker	Music Française	3
Schwantner	Black Anemones	3.5
Schubert	Six Leider arr. By Boehm	3
Schubert	Introduction and Variations, op. post 160	4
Schulhoff	Sonata	4
Taffanel	Grand Fantasia on Mignon	3.5
Taktakishvili	Sonata	3.5
Telemann	Suite in A Minor	2
Vine	Sonata	4
Vivaldi	Sonatas	3
Widor	Suite	3.5
Yi	Three Bagatelles from China West	4

Unaccompanied

Aitken	Icicle	3
Arnold	Fantasy for Flute	3
Alwyn	Divertimento	3.5
Larson	Aubade	3.5
CPE Bach	Sonata in A Minor	3
JS Bach	Sonata in A Minor	3
Berio	Sequenza	4
Bozza	Image	3.5
Brown	Trillium	2.5
Clarke	Zoom Tube	4
Clarke	Great Train Race	4
Colquhoun	Charanga	3
Debussy	Syrinx	2
DeLaneyand the strange unknown flowers.....	3.5
DeLaney	Hymn of Pan	2
DeLaney	Variations on an English Folk Song	3
Dick	Lookout	3.5
Dick	Fish Are Jumping	3.5
Donjon	Salon Etudes	3
Dorff	August Idyll	3
Ferroud	Three Pieces	3
Folio	Arca Sacra	3
Francaix	Suite	3

Fukushima	Mei	3.5
Grenfell	Four Pooh Stories	3
Hayden	A Tre	3.5
Higdon	Rapid Fire	4
Hindemith	Acht Stücke	3
Hoover	Kokopeli	3
Hoover	Winter Spirits	3
Hoover	Spirit Flight	3
Hoover	Reflections	3
Honegger	Danse de la Chevre	3
Hovhaness	Sonata	3
Ibert	Piece	3
La Montaine	Sonata	3
Larsen	Aubade	3
Karg-Elert	Sonata, Op. 104	3.5
Koechlin	Trois Sonatines	3.5
Liebermann	Eight Pieces	3.5
Maggio	Elysian Fields	4
Muczynski	Three Preludes	3
Nielsen	The Children Are Playing	1
Offermans	Honami	3
Piazzolla	Tango Etudes	3.5
Poulenc	Un Joueur de flute Berce les ruines	1
Rea	Solace	3
Rea	Rhythmania	3.5
Ran	East Wind	4
Rochberg	Caprice Variations	3
Schocker	Flute Forest	3.5
Schocker	Short Stories	3
Takemitsu	Air	4
Telemann	Fantasies	3
Varese	Density 21.5	3.5
Willner	Sonata	3.5

PART THREE
Performing and the Musical
Mind

Chapter Six

Performing as Work and Play

Musicians experience performance differently, and over a lifetime the same musician might view performance in many different ways: as a privilege, a chore, a joy, a dreaded experience, a basic human right, a necessity, and many other things. Sometimes we perform as work, sometimes for fun, and sometimes it's a bit of both. Whether you intend to perform as a professional flutist or to continue performing throughout life in a more amateur capacity, there are commonalities that we all will face. In this section, I will address some of the necessary elements behind the performance: the preplanning, logistics, and some practicalities of our work and play.

Preparing for Successful Performances

Musicians spend enormous amounts of their time, enormous amounts of their lives, in preparation for performance. For college students, learning how to plan for these is part of the process. You will work in consultation with your teacher in lessons in preparing the music, but you will also want to consider some mental preparation. If you aim to perform well, consider the following ideas.

Practice Performing

Mind games will come into play at some point as you work toward and look forward to your upcoming events, and practicing the actual performance by doing realistic run-throughs in the performance space can aid in this process. Long ago, I once heard what many of us call “practicing” referred to as “learning”, as if all the preparation we do in the practice room can be considered the learning stage. When you have learned a piece well and can play it with ease, only then does the practicing of the actual performance can begin. This not only means a dress rehearsal, but many repeated performance run-throughs leading up to the performance. These can be in front of people or not, but it is important to practice the performance many, many times. Recording run-throughs is of great value and reviewing those recordings is incredibly informative. Professionals perform so often that sometimes it feels less necessary to practice the performance because we are already in the habit of performing, and we are familiar with all of the many details, but we really never stop learning and benefitting from practicing the performance.

One of the most important facets of practicing the performance is learning to move on from a mistake without stopping and without letting mistakes become a distraction. Due to muscle memory, it is more difficult to get to a correct note from an incorrect note. After all, it's a note that you have not practiced before in that particular context. The same is true if there is a mistake that happens rhythmically or with an incorrect entrance that then has to be fixed. These mistakes are impossible to rehearse because there are limitless numbers of these potential errors, but what can be rehearsed is getting back in without stopping. This is a totally separate skill apart from our normal practicing where stopping is an integral part of the practicing process. To practice *not* stopping when you make a mistake, special attention needs to be devoted to exactly that. Run-throughs are where this practice can happen. And the more you do it, the better you get. Often when sightreading duets with students in lessons, I will make many mistakes, but the student never notices because I do not let it stop me. I do not let it affect the tone quality, intonation, musical interpretation or any other element of music making. It can sound effortless and artistic, but all the while, I am aware that I am playing something incorrectly. I just do it with the same musical fluidity as the rest of the notes. Perfection does not exist. We must learn to make music with the mistakes that will inevitably be made.

For more on this idea, I suggest the work of jazz pianist Kenny Werner and his philosophy that there are no wrong notes. This is heresy to most classical musicians, but I find enormous value in the adoption of this philosophy. To me, the relentless drive toward an ideal combined with the absolute acceptance of imperfection is the recipe for success in classical music, perhaps a recipe for success in anything. You'll find more on this in Kenny Werner's *Effortless Mastery*.

Attire

At some point in the practicing of a performance, we need to make sure that the clothes we plan to wear will work well. Even our shoes can make a difference in our performance, particularly if they are higher heeled. It makes sense to play your instrument in the attire you plan to wear, especially if you have never performed in it before. Particularly for students who do not perform often and will look forward to choosing performance attire with great excitement, it can be easy to be led astray by the look of a particular outfit without regard to how it physically and emotionally feels to perform in it. Are the shoulders too tight and restrictive of movement? Can you breathe well? Do you feel like yourself? Do you like the way you look in it? Are you embarrassed by the way you look or feel or does the attire in any way make you feel self-conscious? If you ever try to perform in a tight outfit that you can't adequately breathe or bow in, you quickly learn how important this is. Practice performing in whatever you plan to wear, and choose your attire with this in mind.

If you aren't certain about the appropriateness of what you are planning to wear, ask around. A culture is usually already in place for what to wear in particular types of performances on and off campus, or in particular ensembles, but this culture is not the same everywhere, and paradigms are shifting. Individual style can certainly be taken into account, but you will want to consider how this works and what you are comfortable with. Pay attention, ask around, and think carefully.

General advice about hemlines and necklines: think about where you are in relation to the audience. If you sit in a skirt that is short, people can see parts of you that you might not want

them to focus on. If necklines are too low, bowing can reveal more than intended. If you are on a stage up high and the audience is low, hemlines are something to consider. If you don't want people to be distracted by skin and particular body parts, cover them. I'm no prude about this myself, but I am conscious of it, and I will usually err on the side of comfort and conservative dress on stage. It's the music I'm interested in showcasing.

Healthy Performers

In weeks leading up to a performance, I tend to be extra vigilant about sleep, water intake, and avoiding alcohol. I think that being a performer has made me more health conscious in general because there is always a performance coming up. I have performed while sick, but I like to avoid it. Being well-hydrated and well-rested are two of the most basic elements of being at one's best. If your performance requires travel, these can be harder to control. Dry hotel rooms, air travel, jet lag, temperature, climate, altitude, eating healthily, these are often more challenging than at home. I don't follow any particularly special diet, but many times I pack my own food when I travel just to make sure I have some healthier and cheaper options with me. Anything you can do to be healthier in general will help you as a performer.

On occasion, musicians seek extra medical attention when sick in order to be ready for a performance. I know many singers who have had steroid shots when sick in order to vocally recover quickly enough to prevent cancelling or postponing a performance. When performing is your livelihood, this might be worth it. It's something to know about, but whether or not you use this option is between you and a medical professional.

Double check all music and needed items like secondary instruments.

Don't forget your music, piccolo, alto flute, bass flute, pencil, ear plugs, clothes pins or plexiglass for outdoor performances, water, stand lights, music stand, chair, or any other needed item that might not be a regular part of your flute playing. When I travel, even just driving to a local performance, I usually have a moment of panic where I stop the car and double check that I have all that I need. *Is my flute in my flute bag?* This double checking is a must.

Communication with Personnel

If you are performing with anyone else, make sure to send them follow-up communication and reminders. When I organize a performance, I generally add people on a Google calendar invitation, but I also follow up with them with reminders. "See you tomorrow at 2:00 p.m." Or, "Want to ride together tomorrow?" I might not even be in charge of the performance, but if my work requires the presence of others, I care and want to make sure nothing gets in the way. This sort of initiative can go a long way in freeing your mind of some of the worry that might come along with the logistics of a particular performance.

Publicity

Here is an endless task. I found this much easier in the olden days of sending a few press releases and creating some flyers. Today, with the explosion of social media, college and university newsletters, Department of Music and college and university social media, lists of former students, lists of people who I know, lists of classical music lovers in the Murray community....it really feels like a daunting task. As performers, we find ourselves becoming graphic artists, social media marketing managers, journalists, public speakers, branding specialists, and public

relations coordinators for ourselves. Since most of us are not managed professionally, this is just par for the course. The more you get the word out, the more people will come to your performances. Let this be an area that you plan for carefully and attend to with attention to detail and an emphasis on creativity.

Positive Performance Focus

It is so easy to become preoccupied with our mistakes (ask me about writing this book sometime). We know our music well, and mistakes are distracting and disappointing. We know we can do it better, so when they happen, they can derail our thoughts. I often will tell myself before a performance, “I am going to go out there and make some mistakes.” For me, this is not negative self-talk, rather it is about the acceptance of the inevitable. I know that there will always be a bit of a gap between the artistic ideal in my head and the reality of how that ideal materializes in performances. Mistakes will happen. It’s ok. I know I need to give myself permission for those mistakes to happen. And when they happen in performance, there is nothing to be done. I know I have to immediately let them go and not let them get in the way. This recovery is something we do better and better with experience. Mistakes generally become smaller and less significant with increased experience, and many of them will go unnoticed by others. Not letting those get in our way while we perform is a tall task, but one that we can work towards. As you perform, let go of anything you don’t like, and focus on all of the great sounds that you do like.

Play Like it Matters...

...because it does! It’s hard to communicate musically if you are ill-prepared, apologetic, unenthused, or uninspired. If music matters enough for you to be doing it, make sure you approach it that way in performance. You obviously love what you do, so aim to communicate your passion through the music. Enjoy yourself!

Creating Opportunities

Unless you hold a position in an orchestra, it is likely that you will need to create your own opportunities in order to perform as much as you want. Entrepreneurship is a necessary part of music making and there are endless means by which you can exercise your creativity in this part of a musical life. Even for orchestral players, creating individual opportunities for more satisfying expressive outlets is often inspiring and reinvigorating after performing so many programs decided by others.

For me, as a professor, there is a natural venue that exists at my university, as a guest artist at other universities, as an orchestral player in a regional symphony, in area churches that need a flutist from time to time, and in music festivals near and far, etc. For students, it can be much the same – so many performance opportunities abound in even smaller, regional music programs like the one I teach in. But what about after graduation? What happens then? It likely won’t happen without some effort, but so many flutists find themselves playing in a wide array of groups and venues. I have many friends and former students who have performed in the following:

community bands	community orchestras	community centers
regional orchestras	professional orchestras	touring productions
church choirs	coffee shops	bars
weddings	receptions	holiday parties
museums	book stores	libraries
flute choir	other small ensembles	jazz groups
recording work	folk music festivals	world music groups
shopping centers	local civic groups	parks
busking	jam sessions	open mics
theatres	dance performances	storytelling festivals
schools	art galleries	political events

The world is filled with possibilities and is waiting for you to put your creative force into action. It reminds me of the joke about the two shoe salespeople travelling to sell shoes in an indigenous culture. One reported back: *Situation hopeless. They don't wear shoes here.* The other: *Magnificent opportunity! They don't have shoes yet!* This should be encouraging. Keep a keen eye out for opportunities where it might not look like they even exist. Brainstorm on this. How might you create demand for what you want to do?

There are no rules

You get to create any performance opportunity you want, and there are no constraints that you have to follow. It will be helpful to understand the culture of the places you play, but you need not always conform to strictures. If there's no live music in a restaurant, that's an opportunity for music to exist there. An entrepreneurial spirit is a must, and doing some soul searching will help guide you toward finding and creating the opportunities that match your creative vision. Don't wait for anyone to offer you a performance opportunity. Get out there and make your own.

Questions to consider

How does the opportunity you are creating serve the audience?

How does it serve you musically?

Does it pay?

Can you get it to pay later by giving it away for free first?

Does monetizing an online platform make sense for you? Does it interest you?

What combination of music teaching or day job are you willing or interested in to help make your performances possible?

To what extent are you willing to work to create an audience for what you do?

Where are the opportunities for you to fit into the culture that already exists?

In what ways do you think you might influence the culture in which you live?

Branding and Marketing Yourself

In order to perform more, and especially to get paid for it, you will want to manage and maintain an online presence that is professional and that shows what you can do. My students know that I make little use of social media, only using LinkedIn at the time of this writing (more on this in Chapter Eight). If I were a freelancer, early in my career, or looking for work today, I might

change this approach. It may change at some point in the future, but for now, I largely steer clear of social media and barely manage any kind of web presence through a YouTube channel that aimed at my students and my very basic website intended as a means for recruiting students and serving as an online resume of sorts should anyone have the need or interest to know more about what I do professionally.

Linking a blog, newsletter, YouTube, social media accounts, and website together is easier to do than ever, generally requiring no specialization and very little cost. I am (more than) a bit of a Luddite, but even I have managed to do this completely on my own. As musicians, we really are managing our own brand. As much as I don't like this word, there is a lot to consider in terms of what you are trying to be as a performer and how you are going to get that out to people. For many performers, this area of branding and marketing is also an area of great creativity. It's content creation. It's a record of your successes. You are your own documentarian, manager, PR coordinator, and event promoter, and there is a great deal of creative expression involved in this level of our artistic pursuits.

Getting the word out through other means like flyers, posters, email marketing campaigns, public radio, schools, print publications, other people's newsletters or mailing lists or other means will be another important aspect for those looking to perform. There is no limit to how much you can do to market yourself, so be open to exploring the many avenues that you can take and which ones make the most sense in any given situation. These things will change over the course of your career. Stay attuned to the current trends in communication.

Contracts and Negotiations

If you are doing a lot of gigging, you will want to educate yourself about contracts and pricing. You are no longer only a performer if you earn money from gigs. You are entering the world of customer service, and you will want to become very clear on the expectations you have of the people paying you and the expectations that they have of you.

A quick web search should provide you with much of the necessary information for drawing up a basic contract for your services, and you will learn as you go. I have never had any legal issue in performing or receiving payment for services, but if performing is a mainstay of your income, it can happen. Clarity in writing can go a long way in preventing problems.

There is certainly an art to negotiating and getting paid what you feel like you are worth, and you will want to consider what the market will bear and how to find gigs that will pay you enough to make it worth your time. This is not the same number for everyone, regardless of their experience. In graduate school, I worked with a violinist on faculty at Florida State University who had spent time as concertmaster of the New York Philharmonic. He and I would play with a local cellist at wedding gigs many weekends, and he was more than happy to play easy, light classics arranged for flute, violin, and cello and earn the same \$100 that I was, and he was much happier than I seemed to be in doing so! He was not concerned in the least that he wasn't getting paid what he was worth or performing with people who were not at his level of artistry or experience. He just enjoyed having a side gig. This was a great influence on me, and even though

I did not enjoy freelancing, I was encouraged to see that he did. I loved being around such a positive presence and performing with such a highly-trained and inspiring performer.

Pricing and negotiations are totally open. You are worth what someone is willing to pay, and a gig is worth it to you if you have nothing better that pays more at that same time. There are so many practical considerations, but getting started and making things happen is the best way to move forward if you are working in any sort of freelance circles. No one can give you the magic formula. You just have to get started, pay attention, and continually chart your course based on the information you gather along the way.

Stage Presence

On the Concert Stage

There is a certain protocol for concert performances, but the paradigm is shifting all the time. Once the preserve of higher classes, concert-going is now enjoyed by a wider range of people, and the range of styles presented on what was once considered the “classical” music stage has expanded greatly to regularly include jazz and more popular styles, avant-garde and experimental music, with many other artistic accoutrements like film, slides, dance, poetry, comedy, readings, acting, visual art, and more. Your presence on a concert stage will be partly determined by the event itself, and how you carry yourself matters.

Walking onto stage with applause requires a sense of purpose. You cannot simply walk out as you walk down the street. There generally should be a quickness to your step and a smile on your face. And when there is applause, always acknowledge it. If you are not doing a full bow, make sure to at least slightly bow and/or nod to the audience. In ensembles, sometimes this can be done by the conductor or only one member of the ensemble, depending on the size of the group. With orchestras, it is almost only ever the concertmaster, soloists, and conductor who ever bow, but in every context, applause needs to be acknowledged.

In smaller spaces or events that are attended by fewer people, smaller bows and head nods can be more appropriate, but it still makes sense to have a more commanding presence about you than what you have in your daily life. And remember, if the applause stops before you get to your place, do not bow! It never feels good to bow to dwindling applause, and it just looks incredibly awkward and sad, so again, this is where a simple smile and head nod can work well. These are important things to practice. Mentally rehearsing this aspect of the performances can put you more at ease with this part of performance. You will get much better at it through actual experience, but until you accumulate that, practice in the performance space, visualize the audience, hear the applause in your head, and go through the motions as if it really happening. While people who perform frequently often become quite good at this skill, there is nothing particularly natural about stage presence, and as with all other aspects of performance, when done well, it will look very natural and effortless.

When your piece or pieces are over and it is time to leave the stage, do so with purpose. Do not hang around messing with your music or dawdle in any other way getting off the stage. Unless the applause is incredibly effusive, it will only look and feel awkward to take any extra time. In

the case that the audience is very enthusiastic, it is perfectly fine to bask in that for a few seconds. This is a hard thing to practice but will become more obvious with experience.

If there is excited applause after you have left the stage, it is perfectly fine, almost expected, that you will return for a curtain call. Do so quickly and graciously, and never apologetically. They loved what you did – go thank them! Take a nice big, full bow right from the center of stage. Sometimes the presence you create on stage inspires a bit of the applause. Commanding a room is something that can be learned through practice. Think about stage presence when you are on the stage and when you are off. Mentally practice it. And while curtain calls are common, encores are generally reserved for world-class performers in rarest of occasions.

As Background Music

When playing receptions or other kinds of music in the background, there is sometimes applause. Always acknowledge this. It's not a concert stage, but a smile and/or a nod, leaning slightly forward into an almost-bow can go a long way in connecting with the people who appreciate what you are doing. Look people in the eye. Say, "Thank you!" Again, be gracious, not apologetic. It's almost always perfectly fine to talk to people who compliment you and clap in these situations. It's usually quite casual and very friendly, and can lead to future bookings.

In Religious Services

Generally, in religious services there is less stage presence to think about but there is a certain decorum to consider. There is usually no applause, and we often are sitting in place for the full length of a service, even if we only play on one piece of music. I have sometimes had the opportunity to leave right after I play with a church choir or as some type of special music as offertory or other part of a religious service. I generally take this opportunity! As a mother and professor, the introvert in me does not usually get enough alone time. Hanging around and talking to random people I don't know after I have played flute in a church service is not my idea of fun, however, this is a valuable networking opportunity that should not be overlooked by those interesting in freelancing. It is also an interesting aspect of being a musician, where you get to pull the curtain back on many religions through their regular services or weddings, and be an outside observer in something that holds great meaning to the people you are playing for. For this reason, I have loved performing in religious contexts though I have generally shunned the freelance lifestyle preferring the security and regularity of the university professorship.

I see the musician's job in many religious services to be as obscure as possible, though there are certainly some more popular-style services where the musicians are featured, celebrated, and even serve as almost entertainment, sometimes with audience in full participation in sing-along style services (Gospel, modern Southern Baptists, and the rise of the contemporary non-denomination Christian movement come to mind). Regardless of whether your role as a musician is in the forefront or background, dress accordingly. Is it a time to stand out or blend in? All aspects of professionalism apply, and you will want to channel your inner chameleon in both demeanor and decorum through as gregarious or unobtrusive a presence as is warranted in the particular time and place.

Speaking to Audiences

Communicating my thoughts and feelings in speaking to audiences has become one of my favorite parts of performing. I love setting up a context for people to better understand or enjoy the pieces I will perform for them. To do this, it helps to really know your audience. They are often a mix of musicians and lovers of music who are not trained. It takes a special approach to be able to blend enough interesting things together to give the musicians something they might not know without going over the heads of the non-specialists who just love music, but it can be done. If you use any technical terms, use them sparingly, and acknowledge that not everyone will understand. “For those of you with music backgrounds, you might love knowing that this is the first polytonal piece written by this composer. For you non-musicians, polytonal means a piece that essentially is composed in two or more keys at the same time and can sound really, really dissonant. Trust me, we’re not playing wrong notes. Well, we might play a wrong note, but hopefully, we don’t play any wrong notes, and you’ll hear some very clashing kinds of sounds.” This kind of communication takes only a few seconds but can really enhance both the understanding and the enjoyment of the music. If there is anything in the piece that you think a layperson would find strange or unexpected, point that out to them. They will be relieved when they get to those thoughts as they listen.

Performance Anxiety

If this topic is of interest, please take a look at the suggested books on this topic in the Appendices. I want to only briefly address anxiety here as it relates to performance. Firstly, if you have a pulse, you will likely experience some amount of performance anxiety. Being nervous means you care, which is great! It’s important to learn to channel those nervous feelings into a positive outlet and not let them get the best of you. Use them to your advantage.

Nervousness vs. Excitement and Other Emotional Responses

Both nervousness and excitement arouse the nervous system in similar ways. They *feel* similar in our bodies and minds. Are you sure you’re totally nervous? Can you convince yourself that part of what you are feeling is excitement? It probably is a mixture of both, and not to downplay nervousness, but if we focus more on the excitement, we sometimes find that we are really looking forward to this big, fun, meaningful event we are about to be a part of. Performing is a unique experience and can be simultaneously thrilling, fulfilling, and slightly terrifying.

Humans experience both primary and secondary emotions. When you first think about giving a successful performance, what comes up first for you? The love of the music? The desire for approval? The excitement that you imagine that will come from a job well done? The personal satisfaction of working towards a goal and completing it? And what comes up as a feeling for you after the first thought? Are you afraid that you can’t live up to your own expectation? Do you have unrealistic expectations? Are you happy that you have the opportunity to share music? Are you thankful that you have a body that can play the flute and offer music for others’ enjoyment? Worried about what people might think?

Getting to know your own thoughts and finding healthy ways to reprogram yourself can give you a new lease on performing whether your intended career is based on performing or not. Your

emotional state is going to be challenged in performing, and there are larger life lessons that one can take from performing and applied to our lives at large. Music and performance are life enhancing experiences and so many aspects of the joys and struggles of music making mirror the joys and struggles of life. Music learning acts as a metaphor for our larger life's work.

Meditation and Visualization

There is reliable data that meditating regularly can give you more control over your nervous system. We know from fMRI experiments that look at brain activity, that people who meditate have a quicker recovery to their baseline after their nervous systems have been excited. We know it works. I recommend [maitri](#), also known as metta, meditation in this regard. It's a Buddhist form a meditation but with no particular religious dogma. Works on Christians, Jews, Hindus, Muslims, and atheists alike! Returning to our calmer nature more quickly is a valuable life skill, not just for musicians.

Visualization is related to meditation and can really help you, no pun intended, set the stage. Imagining yourself in performance, enjoying yourself, performing successfully, taking a bow to thunderous applause, walking off stage with confidence and satisfaction, these things all help prime our consciousness for the many positive things that we can experience as part of our performance. When we look for the good in life, we more easily find it. Visualization is a practice that helps us get better at doing just that. It can really counter many of the fears and negative ideas that pop into our head from worries that stem from our brain's well-intended function of self-preservation. Our brain is designed to keep us safe, so it is always scanning for danger. It just isn't always so great at parsing out true danger from perceived danger in our modern world. Train it with some meditation and visualization.

Breath Work

There is also data to support that using the breath can excite or calm the nervous system. When the sympathetic nervous system reacts strongly in a hostile takeover, we can consciously engage our bodies in ways that help soothe our systems. Inhaling deeply and exhaling slowly will impart a greater sense of calm. Short, shallow breaths in rapid succession will elevate an already aroused nervous system. Use this information to your favor. There are many kinds of breathing techniques found in yoga or in more generalized mediation videos and apps easily accessed online. Explore this area. It has much to offer you in and out of the world of flute playing. Trying the breathing exercises in Chapter One can also be a nice place to start.

Exposure Therapy

Performing smaller pieces or in lower pressure situations will often will give you the opportunities to hone the skills of stage presence and mastering any negative self-talk that surfaces and will help you as you prepare for longer works and longer programs like full recitals, or longer programs of ensemble music. But for performers who struggle with anxiety, the slower building up of confidence does not override the strong fight-or-flight response they experience when facing a performance. For those people, the concept of [flooding](#) might be helpful. This is where instead of acclimating to a fear in small doses, you expose yourself on a larger scale until you realize that you are not in actual danger. The mind and body adapt to the stimulus. In the realm of performance anxiety, this might be accomplished through performing many nights in a row, or remaining on stage long enough in one sitting to realize that no actual harm is happening.

If you struggle with performance anxiety to an extent that it impedes your ability to perform or makes you unhappy, it will be beneficial to work with a therapist on a plan to help manage it. Just because you have a struggle with something today does not mean that you always will. The more you learn about the challenges you face, the more options you have in moving forward. Don't be hesitant to seek help from professionals.

Performance Enhancing Drugs

Beta blockers have long been used by musicians, actors, comedians, public speakers, and other performers as well as patients with heart problems or high blood pressure. Musicians usually are prescribed to take a certain dosage an hour before a performance. Beta blockers are not a tranquilizers like Xanax or Valium, and they are not a class of drugs that are prescribed to manage anxiety, per se, but they do block the physical effects of anxiety like sweating, racing heart, "butterflies", shortness of breath, etc. They work by blocking the effects of adrenaline.

I never tried beta blockers until I was auditioning for orchestras and realized that my nerves could actually prevent me from getting a job. I wanted to be at my absolute best with no physical effects of nervousness, so I tried them. Since then, I've used them sparingly but happily. Being a mother of two, I was very careful during my years of pregnancy and breast feeding not to take any medicine that was not 100% necessary, and I never wanted to become dependent on the use of any drug, so I would avoid them for most performances. I think beta blockers have a place in the lives of performing artists who have tried everything else and feel like they can benefit from them. If you think this might be you, talk to a doctor.

Chapter Seven

The Musical Mind

Working Through Disappointment

Artistry transcends flute playing, and as loaded as the word might sound, if you're working toward a high level of any creative endeavor, you are an artist. It's a passion, a vocation, and a lifestyle that can be fraught with challenges in its pursuit, and we often face great frustration in not living up to our own expectations. There is an inherent struggle in the process of wanting to be great at something, but not yet being great. Even worse, we are kind of *bad* at it for a long time. It takes many years to get to a point where you are happy with most of what you can do on flute. This frustration can kill motivation, make us question our life choices, and derail students and professionals alike, but it is a completely normal part of the process. This is something that all artistic and creative people face. In order to persevere, you'll need to develop the resiliency to handle the disappointments.

It is inspiring and heartening to know that even the great masters like painter, sculptor, architect and poet Michelangelo had similar feelings about their work. In a poem written in 1509, "To Giovanni Da Pistoia When the Author Was Painting the Vault of the Sistine Chapel", he speaks of his work on the Sistine Chapel as "torture" and being "dead".

I've already grown a goiter from this torture,
hunched up here like a cat in Lombardy
(or anywhere else where the stagnant water's poison).
My stomach's squashed under my chin, my beard's
pointing at heaven, my brain's crushed in a casket,
my breast twists like a harpy's. My brush,
above me all the time, dribbles paint
so my face makes a fine floor for droppings!

My haunches are grinding into my guts,
my poor ass strains to work as a counterweight,
every gesture I make is blind and aimless.

My skin hangs loose below me, my spine's
all knotted from folding over itself.
I'm bent taut as a Syrian bow.

Because I'm stuck like this, my thoughts
are crazy, perfidious tripe:
anyone shoots badly through a crooked blowpipe.

My painting is dead.
Defend it for me, Giovanni, protect my honor.
I am not in the right place—I am not a painter.

The next time you don't feel good enough, or are disappointed with a performance you've given, remember that even Michelangelo felt devastated at times about his work. We are all our own worst critics. There may be some truth in our critique, but it is a natural part of the process of honing a craft or skill, and a natural part of making art.

For a more modern example, here's creator and host of radio show and podcast *This American Life* Ira Glass, talking about this very issue:

[Nobody tells people who are beginners](#) — and I really wish somebody had told this to me — is that all of us who do creative work ... we get into it because we have good taste. But it's like there's a gap, that for the first couple years that you're making stuff, what you're making isn't so good, OK? It's not that great. It's really not that great. It's *trying* to be good, it has ambition to be good, but it's not quite that good. But your *taste* — the thing that got you into the game — your taste is still killer, and your taste is good enough that you can tell that what you're making is kind of a disappointment to you, you know what I mean?

A lot of people never get past that phase. A lot of people at that point, they quit. And the thing I would just like say to you with all my heart is that most everybody I know who does interesting creative work, they went through a phase of *years* where they had really good taste and they could tell what they were making wasn't as good as they wanted it to be — they knew it fell short, it didn't have the special thing that we wanted it to have.

And the thing I would say to you is *everybody goes through that*. And for you to go through it, if you're going through it right now, if you're just getting out of that phase — you gotta know it's totally normal.

And the most important possible thing you can do is do a lot of work — do a huge volume of work. Put yourself on a deadline so that every week, or every month, you know you're going to finish one story. Because it's only by actually going through a volume of work that you are actually going to catch up and close that gap. And the work you're making will be as good as your ambitions. It takes a while, it's gonna take *you* a while — it's normal to take a while. And you just have to *fight your way through that*, okay?

I love that Glass advocates doing a large volume of work in order to bridge that gap between our concept of what we want and developing the ability to make it happen. We learn by doing. It's back to Dr. Suzuki's idea of practicing on the days you eat. Aim for ten thousand hours. Perform as often as you can. Take on any and every performance available to you, and create your own opportunities if the ones you want aren't offered. As a student, find a friend or peer in the next practice room, "Hey, I'm working on this hard section of this piece, would you mind listening to it and telling me what you think?" This kind of collaborative atmosphere is one you can fairly easily create if it does not already exist in your music school, and anyone can do this online with social media, privately through texting or email, or more formally through YouTube or other platforms. Set out to record and perform large volumes, even the same piece over and over. Record your memorized melody every week. Record your etude. Even if it is just for yourself, there is something magical about simply pressing record, and something even more magical about performing for another person. It just *feels* different. We take things up a notch when we record or perform. And for added value, listen to it. Here are a few ideas on creativity to help you along on your artistic journey when you face a challenge in this area.

Creativity

Creativity is born out of limitations. The most creative works of art are also ones where limits have been placed. Not every color is used in the painting, not every note on the piano is used in the composition. All of the instruments in the orchestra are not playing at the same time for the entire length of the symphony. You can't write a piece of music that is tonal, atonal, and polytonal. You have to pick some confines or constraints for your work to operate within. Form and structure create a framework that contains a balance between fulfilling expectation and offering an element of surprise. If there is no structure, it will feel random, but if it follows convention too closely, we become bored, and the music comes across as unsophisticated, trite, and uninteresting.

So, how do we find our own creative interpretation within this framework? As non-improvising performers, a large part of the limitation is built into the musical score. For modern works, the scores are usually meticulously written with great care placed on every dynamic, rhythm and articulation, and our first aim is to bring everything on the page into being with as much accuracy as possible. The more interesting second aim is found in the creative work of highlighting and balancing the elements of fulfilling expectations while also creating surprise, what is sometimes called doing "more than what is on the page." How do we do that? What sparks are you adding with the musical nuances that you are learning to create? Play the piece or section over and over and over. Record yourself. Listen to it. How are you going to bring to life the musical ideas that you find in a piece of music? Spend time thinking about this. I will cover this topic more in the next section on Musical Expression.

Creativity is born out of boredom. One of our calls as musicians is to establish and keep aural interest alive, though this should not be done through arbitrary means. Random articulations added in Baroque music or a crescendo placed with no particular reason are not artistic choices. Our best musical choices are when they serve to bring out a musical message of a phrase or

section. If you are bored with how something sounds, that's a real clue. Don't ignore that - it is missing something! We have the power as musicians to change that with critical thinking and attention to musical details. Sometimes we might be performing music that we don't realize is coming across as boring because we are so involved in the processing that it takes to play it, that we have fun and enjoy ourselves even while creating a lackluster rendering. This is why it is so important to listen to yourself on a recording - tape doesn't lie. And listen to others. Where are the places that musical ideas sound boring? What can be changed in those spots? This boredom with a particular passage is often the catalyst to ignite the creative fire needed to bring more life to that particular area of the piece. *Revel* in the boredom and use it to trigger better and more sensitive performances.

Creativity is born out of your intellect and life experience. The more you know, the more connections you can make. This is a really powerful driver for creativity. The musical connections we create between elements that are not so readily obvious are a big part of the fun of creative expression. Finding these also helps bring about awareness of other patterns and ideas that might not have otherwise been so easily noticed. Bringing some sense of relatability through music where it was previously not seen, heard, or experienced offers something unique for the listener. And combining interesting ideas is more fun when you have more raw material from which to draw. Your intellect and life experience can serve as that raw material. Study hard, read books, watch films, travel, learn a language, go to museums, listen to NPR, hang out with smart people, take a course in photography, go dancing, challenge yourself, *carpe diem!*

Creativity is born out of the psychological freedom that allows you the permission to be creative. Insecurity and shame are the enemies of creativity and happiness. When you do the hard work it takes to develop your musical skills, you will develop a grounded confidence that will grow through repeat performances. Performing is an affirming experience for the performer when it matches current ability levels. When you see someone performing and it looks easy, you're probably right! All musicians should practice what they will perform to a point that it becomes effortless. For students still developing, performing progressively more challenging works will help create a record of successful performances. This is a huge topic that I covered in Chapter Six in the section on Performance Anxiety, but it relates so closely to our creativity, it helps to think about it a bit more in this context as well.

There is something innately freeing about recognizing the inherent worth of our ideas and feeling that we have the right to bring those forth in performance. Realizing this is sometimes hard when students in the learning stages and are so focused on the many finer points of the craft. At some point, we have to let go of all of the things we wish we could do better, and enjoy where we are in the moment and go out and create. Otherwise, what's the point?

Musical Expression

Where does our musical expression come from? How do we develop our musical ideas? What determines if something sounds "musical"? These are not easy questions. Performing instrumental music often means expressing abstract ideas. Sometimes the name of the piece gives an idea of what the piece is about (*Kokopeli* by Katherine Hoover, *The White Peacock* by

Charles Griffes), and sometimes not (*Sonata in G* by anyone, *Concerto* by anyone). Even with a programmatic element, just *how* we might represent the story, picture, object or idea is not entirely clear.

Music is an ephemeral art, one that is filled with individual creative freedom. We sculpt sound into meaningful, connected musical moments in real time. How do we go about doing this? While a complete study on musical aesthetics is beyond the scope of this book, I can give a few guidelines that generally underpin meaningful music making.

Consider each of these:

- Varying the tone colors and their rate of change
- Varying the vibrato and its rate of change
- How tone color and vibrato serve the mood of the music
- The placement and execution of dynamics including widening the range
- Dynamic levels, crescendos, and decrescendos, and their rate of change
- Tempo, ritardando, and accelerando and their rate of change

Don't stop there. Make your own list. Entire books have been written on creativity. Read some! And dig within yourself to find ideas. Here are a few of mine.

1. Think about the mood or emotion or story you are creating within any given phrase. Is tension rising? If so, how might you indicate that in sound? Perhaps by an increase in vibrato, dynamic and in the richness of tone color. If calm is prevailing, how might that sound? Less vibrato? Maybe combined with a hazier tone color? For surprises, whether they are frightening or funny, big sudden contrasts often help create the effect. What types of attacks and releases are you going to use to help bring out the emotional aspects of the sound? Can you create a story that you are telling with a certain section or movement of a work? For many musicians, this is a go-to creative activity in the art of music making. When the musical well runs dry, try your hand at story. Can you create a dialogue within the flute line itself or between the flute and other instruments? Can you bring to life a character? Can you see similarities to spoken dialogue within the lines you are playing? Can you give your performance elements of oratory?

2. Imitate nature and the physical world. Many musical gestures call to mind our physical world. A gust of wind, a dropped coin circling on its edges until it comes to a stop, the pattern of a leaf gently fluttering and changing directions as it falls to the ground, a ball bouncing, a hummingbird hovering, a roller coaster ride, a bird of prey soaring. All of these have rhythm, dynamic, and even a type of melodic inflection. That might seem like a stretch, but gusts of wind really do have sound, and that sound changes in pitch and in speed. This increase and decrease in the amount of wind speed in weather, the ironic acceleration of the coin as it settles into stillness, the way a ball bounces as it reaches a point of weightlessness at the top of the bounce prior to changing direction and falling back to the ground. These kinds of motions are part of us and we find them over and over again in music of many styles. Think about the energy of a bouncing ball as it ricochets off the ground and loses momentum on the way up. How might you imitate that sound? Maybe with a strong attack and a bell-tone style decrescendo? Think of two people swinging a jump rope. There is a constant rhythm cycles the rope makes, but the speed of the

rope itself is not constant. And there is sound! Again, imitating any physical sound, in my mind, always brings about a musical rendering.

3. Imitate the inflection of language. Flutist William Bennett was a strong advocate of using the accent patterns of language as a model for the shapes of sound patterns we create in musical phrasing. BEAU- ti – ful, EL-e-phant. There is a flow of emphasis and nuance that we create in our everyday speech that we can borrow and place into our music making. Language has inherent rhythm and inflection. Mapping words onto music sometimes enhances our interpretation of it. Give this a try.

4. Consider consonance and dissonance. Even in the most abstract music with seemingly no extra-musical meaning behind it, the elements of consonance and dissonance are always at play. How do musicians bring out dissonances? Usually, we lean into them with increased dynamics and increased speed and/or width of vibrato. The interplay of tension and release that we are creating through consonance and dissonance is important in musical works well outside of the bounds of tonal or common practice harmony. The concept of dissonance is relative and well alive not only in tonal music, but in pre- and post-tonal as well. Do not underestimate the role of consonance and dissonance and your power to highlight these distinctions in your interpretations.

5. Consider rhythmic elements. Tempo, tempo changes, accurate rhythms, well-executed accelerandos and ritardandos. These are all important for creating any number of desired musical effects. Even with many other musical elements in place, poor rhythm or poor control of tempo, or even a poorly chosen tempo can negate any musical affect. Working on the pacing of tempo changes can bring incredibly different musical outcomes, and it is worth experimentation. Again, I rely on physical movement to guide me. If you practice conducting your desired tempo change, and it *feels* good when conducting, it generally stands as a solid and valid musical idea. Tempo changes can be gradual or they can be exponential/geometric in their pacing, and they offer such valuable opportunities to underscore one's musical ideas.

6. Consider dynamics. We almost never overdo our dynamics. Flutes do not have the largest dynamic range to begin with. Try to overdo this area. You probably won't!

PART FOUR
Beyond the Flute

Chapter Eight

Nourishing Your Emotional and Spiritual Self

Mental Health, Adulting, and Adjusting to College Life

College is an exciting time, and I enjoy watching students grow and navigate the years of young adulthood. In this chapter, I want to give some advice that is based on my experiences observing students make this transition because I have seen so many parts of life apart from musical and academic work impede students' progress and development. Incredible opportunities abound in higher education, and I encourage you to take advantage of them, but priority one is taking responsibility for yourself and your coursework. Do not cheat yourself here. Dedicate yourself fully to being a healthy, active participant in our society by engaging with everything you are responsible for.

When you are able to take responsibility for yourself, look around at all of the amazing events on your college campus. At Murray State University, we have the film series, Cinema International, held almost every weekend in the Curris Center, guest lectures in our own department but also in almost every other, poetry readings, concerts, plays, clubs and organizations, sporting events, Greek life, Residential College activities (I'm in Elizabeth College), and more. Do not disappear into the black hole of the cybersphere in your phone or other devices. Get out and about. There are so many rich and exciting experiences waiting to be had both on and off campus, and I hope that your years in college will be a time that you learn to take advantage of those.

If you struggle at all with organization, responsibility, or any general item on the list of basic life admin in adulthood (doing your laundry, paying your bills, getting up in the morning, being on time, managing your relationships, eating well, etc.), you will struggle in college. I have seen this play out in real time for so many students, and it is never a pleasant thing to observe. Part of my job as professor is to make recommendations when I see students struggling with an area of life that prevents successful and timely completion of their degree, so I ask my students to keep this in mind that if I bring an item to their attention that seems irrelevant to their coursework.

Becoming one's own fully functioning person is a major aspect of life in the years of young adulthood. I never meddle in my students' private lives, but I do want to point all of them toward the resources they need to become independent, highly functioning people. My larger aim is for my students to be creative and critical thinkers in charge of themselves so that when they graduate, they can prosper and thrive in the world both personally and professionally. This is one of the most gratifying parts of my job.

For high achievers, it is important to set realistic goals and not let yourself get too overwhelmed by your goals and life path. There are many aspects of being an achiever that might make someone a fabulous student, but if a person is not happy due to any difficulty channeling natural drive in healthy ways, so-called successes are a bit tainted. High achievers often deal with strong feelings of inadequacy in their younger years, and if not addressed, this does not tend to go away on its own. Many musicians are high achieving types, and I wish there were more guidance on this topic offered at flute festivals, summer camps, and music degrees.

If you have never seen a therapist, college is a great time to do this. It is usually free on college campuses, and it can help bring you a larger perspective on your life. I see a therapist from time to time, and I place high value on my mental health. You do not need to be "crazy" or have a diagnosed disorder to receive free mental health counseling on our campus, but counselors on campus can diagnose you and also work with any diagnosis that you might already have. Please do not have any shame about any mental health issue you might be experiencing, but do take action. Almost all humans will struggle with mental health at some point in their lives, and college is definitely a prime time of struggle for many. Know that you are in good company, and that you can always talk in confidence with any professor, and that they will help you get the help you deserve.

Many people joke about "retail therapy" and other such stand-ins for healthy coping. Be careful about how you use language and joke about these unhealthy though sometimes popular ideas. It is easy to fall into patterns when we see others normalize unhelpful coping mechanisms. The power of choice is one of your greatest freedoms, but if you remain unaware of helpful options, or fall prey to your own habituation, it is impossible to choose them. Seek out counseling when any aspect of your life is preventing you from thriving.

Music as Vocation

We know we are right for the work when we feel big enough to live with the particular difficulties it entails. – David Whyte, poet

I include this quote because a musical life certainly does entail particular difficulties. You quickly realize that as a music major, you are in classes for far more contact hours than almost any other major. The homework is endless – there is no limit to how much we could practice, other than sheer hours in the day. I want to be very clear that this major is not for everyone. I think it can be great for anyone who is willing and able to be responsible and dedicated, but for people who are not able to establish a disciplined approach to their coursework and practicing, it

can be a very difficult and sometimes very unsuccessful endeavor. Sometimes this inability to commit occurs in spite of a great love of music. That's ok! Don't let that make you feel bad. If you are not eventually able to find a way to commit to the work it takes, then music is likely not the right fit for you as a vocation. Do you feel big enough to live with music's challenges? We all have days that make us question our path, but if you feel big enough for the challenges you face most days while studying music, then you are likely right for the work.

Disclaimer: If you are experiencing depression, it might not be the time to change your major or make large life choices. Get some counseling and let mentors or a therapist give you some feedback before embarking on drastic changes.

Religion and Worldview

The college years are such a time of exploration, and it is a great time to consider the influences that have contributed to your current worldview. What is your overriding perspective on the world? On humanity? What is your greater purpose? For many, religion helps answer these questions and gives a star to steer by.

Most college students are following somewhat in the steps of their parents' religious leanings, which begs the question: is your religion really *yours*? Have you given it serious thought? What if your parents had been of a different faith or had no faith to speak of? What do you think your religion might be if your parents had always been a different religion? Being away from home gives you some opportunity to question, ponder, and make choices about these things. Attending religious services of another faith can bring your great perspective on your own. Sometimes it is affirming, and other times it brings more questions. I think there is enormous value in exploring this on your own in order to come to better terms with your own religious beliefs as well as develop a greater understanding and appreciation of other faiths. Our world feels extremely divided, and it could use more intelligent people who are empathetic, compassionate, and accepting of the wide array of faiths that our country ostensibly celebrates the freedom to hold. Be the change you wish to see in the world.

To live your truth, you're going to need to find it, and you might experience some existential crises along the way. Many of the world's greatest thinkers have wrestled with this topic, so if you are among them, consider yourself in great company! Examining other people's perspectives will help you sharpen your own. I think that looking for similarities in many religions and worldviews can help unite and connect us all, something that most musicians are keenly interested in. No matter where you stand, I hope you will examine your belief system and thoughtfully consider the ones of others.

Building Relationships

After leaving the university, some of your best memories from your college experience are likely to be performances or projects you have undertaken with your peers. Things like out-of-town performances, on-campus performances, visits to classrooms during your practicum, internships

in music business, teaching lessons to students, rehearsing without a professor, making preparations for junior and senior recitals, these kinds of endeavors leave an indelible mark in our memory, and they are the means through which powerful interpersonal connections are made. You and your peers will grow so much if your aim to make each other better in the time that you are pursuing your musical training, and in doing so you will create great memories and form lasting bonds. Inevitably, there will be people who are more difficult to work with than others. That's ok. Learning to navigate precarious relationships is a life skill that you will appreciate having as you move through the world. Learn to take the high road.

Networking is an essential part of most professions, and the professional side of that is important, and some professional relationships will reach over into your persona life. It's not totally possible to completely separate our personal and professional lives. Many of your professional acquaintances become lifelong friends, and this is a wonderful side of our multifaceted musical lives. We have these opportunities to work with many people in our communities through engaging as performers. We get to know many like-minded colleagues throughout the state, region, country, and world through our performances, professional training, conferences, and the like, and we develop long-term relationships through our work. This is life enhancing and inspiring. As professionals, we sometimes get to choose who we work with. When you get to choose, choose wisely. Work with great people when given the option.

Social Media and Professionalism

Social media is certainly a place that you can deepen relationships, stay in-the-know, and network in meaningful ways, though it also presents many pitfalls. It often feels like a necessary part of life for many. College is a good time to start thinking of social media through the lens of professionalism. There are no easy answers here to just how much the personal and professional elements of our lives bleed into each other through electronic communication. It can be very difficult to truly separate them, but it is worth considering: just how much of each do I share on any one platform? As you move into adulthood, more of your social life will revolve around professional events and the people you work with. And it is true that some of the people you work with will become good friends, but the nature of sharing things, or broadcasting them, will change. Posting in the same way that you might have done in high school won't continue to make sense as you move through college and career.

I wish I could give you a set of guidelines for this transition, but in the ever-changing electronic landscape that permeates all of our lives, any guidelines given are out of date almost as soon as they are written. I mostly just want you to *think* about it. A lot. And I want you to reevaluate how you use social media and any electronic device as you move through life. There are great uses for it in networking and promoting yourself, your causes and concerns, and your career. How can you use it as a force for good? How can you use it to enhance your own life?

I have already addressed the addictive and distracting nature of social media in Chapter Two, and as the ubiquity of AI continues to extend its reach into so many areas of our lives, there are more and more concerns. We almost all need our own personal action plan for social media and our own personal digital footprint in order to retain some amount of control of ourselves.

From 2007 to 2014, I used Facebook quite regularly. Looking back, it is hard to believe that I have been off of social media for so long. I did eventually sign up for LinkedIn because I was teaching MUS 392 Professional Engagement, and I knew I had to address the use of professional social media use in a class of students who were nearing graduation. I chose to assign students in that course to create a professional profile on LinkedIn, which meant that I would also need to have one and use it. I'll share a few of the reasons I got off other social media and some of the benefits I have found.

Firstly, I noticed that I was starting to have negative feelings about some of my actual friends while using Facebook. I didn't always like what they were posting. Sometimes it was TMI, or that I just flat out disagreed with them, or that I was startled by some of the things people would consider post-worthy. No doubt many had the same feelings about me. I started to realize that there are many kinds of friends and many levels of friendship, and that while I could have a great time with a parent of one of my kids' friends at a school event and maybe even enjoy having them over at my house, I didn't need to know all the things that came along with being Facebook friends with that person. It just didn't enhance the relationship for me, and it often contributed to certain aspects of the relationship moving at rates that were not in sync with other aspects of the relationship. It made for an artificial and/or difficult-to-manage collection of knowledge about a person.

I also noticed that with so many people having the option to direct message me or share/repost something directly to my page gave an unfettered access that felt a bit like open season. Ex-boyfriends, a crazy relative, former students who never liked me, religious fanatics, you name it. Thousands of people could directly access me anytime, day or night. I did not find this fun!

Of course, this was balanced and offset by seeing photos and happenings of loved ones, communicating with good friends who are otherwise bad about texting or calling, and reconnecting with lovely people I met at conferences and performances, and being connected professionally to hundreds of wonderful musicians. There was certainly a good side. At one point I thought I would try to separate the personal and professional, but I never found a way to make that work.

As my kids entered school, I really started to realize that if I did not stop posting things about them, that they would have their entire lives on Facebook, without ever having had a say in the matter. What would *that* be like? I was horrified at the thought. So, I deleted the account. It was not actually easy. My university uses Facebook for PR. My kids' activities were using it. My friends use it to communicate about parties or to promote events I want to attend. I had to put my foot down very strongly and quite often in order to remain off. And for me, it's been great. FOMO (fear of missing out) has existed long before social media, but social media certainly exacerbates it. Social media just makes it look like people are doing tons of amazing things because people don't generally post about the prosaic and predictable parts of the day. I *know* I am missing out on certain things, and that is ok. We are always missing out. We simply cannot do everything, and *every single thing* that we do carries opportunity cost. If you spend your time doing X, then you cannot at the same time be doing Y. This was always and will always be true, so keep this in mind the next time you feel like you are missing out.

I always tell students, if I were looking for a job, I would probably be on social media. Not because it helps me find the job so much, but because it helps me promote the events that I'm involved in. It helps create a record of ongoing PR. It doesn't hurt for an employer to look a person up on social media, find them, and find a long record of positive posts regarding their personal and professional lives. I encourage you to think about that as you make decisions about your own use of it.

No one can tell you exactly what to do here. Weigh your options and follow and model yourself after those you admire. Social media doesn't seem to be going anywhere, and ever-powerful algorithms are designed to keep you coming back. Give this some serious thought, and make it work for you.

Chapter Nine

Taking Care of Your Body

It is hard to play flute hours every day, week on week if your body is giving you trouble, so it is important to take care of it. Investing in your health can pay big dividends and prevent many health conditions from ever appearing. It can also increase your quality of life. I include this chapter in this flute handbook because I have seen health negatively impact students' success. We don't have complete control over our health, but we do have control over some parts of it. I want to encourage all of my students to take initiative in their own well-being.

Sometimes it is necessary to push through a headache, menstrual cramps, allergies, or a cold, but you cannot ignore ongoing health issues and expect them to go away. Health issues are your body's way of saying, "Hey, something is not quite right here. It's time to take notice and take care of me." The information I present in this chapter is general advice on wellbeing intended for almost anyone in almost any condition, but specific health advice based on any particular issue you are experiencing should always come from a medical professional.

Nutrition

I am not a nutritionist, but I have always taken my health and nutrition very seriously. I will not tell you how to eat, but I will suggest a few things that should help anyone looking to follow a healthy lifestyle. Your body is the only one you get, so treat it kindly. I'll try to keep my advice practical and simple.

If you have allergies or sensitivities, honor those and see your doctor about specific diet advice. Don't diagnose your own food allergies, but do be mindful about how you feel after eating particular foods. I follow no particular diet or way of eating, and I really like [Michael Pollan's advice on eating](#), which most simply stated is - eat food, not too much, mostly plants. I highly recommend reading his *Omnivore's Dilemma* or *Cooked*, or watching his limited series *Cooked* on Netflix.

Here are a few inexpensive, healthy foods that require little or no cooking and have a long shelf life making them especially convenient for college students or anyone else with a busy lifestyle. Consider making these foods staples in your diet that you eat most weeks.

Apples	Bell Peppers	Canned Tuna	Oatmeal
Oranges	Cherry Tomatoes	Nuts	Brown Rice
Carrots	Broccoli	Boiled Eggs	Quinoa
Celery	Snap peas	Peanut Butter	Beans

Make choosing water-rich foods as often as possible a habit. This basically means fruits and vegetables. Including as many fresh fruits and vegetables in your diet, in as many meals as possible, with as little added salt, fat, or sugar as possible is almost always an improvement upon other choices. College students find this challenging, but it can be easy even to stock a dorm room with fresh fruit and vegetables that require no cooking or utensils.

Avoid or limit anything that comes in a package. For the most part, the less processed the food, the better. I have seen students in my classes eating a packaged glazed Danish and a Mountain Dew. For breakfast. This will not sustain you! Think of food as fuel. Corporations whose mission is to sell food are not concerned with the effects of that food on your body, and they spend wildly on advertising to appeal to our most basic drives buried deep within our brain stem. If you eat food like this on a regular basis, you will acclimate to it and even crave it, but the same is true for healthier options. There are plenty of delicious and healthy options out there, and the more of them you eat, the more your body will adjust to them. Eventually, your taste buds will find much (though not all!) of the junkier food options to be unpalatable. Your future self will thank you for finding and acclimating to these healthier options sooner than later.

Plan your meals. This will save you time and money. Many college music majors have schedules that don't allow for meal breaks at every lunch and dinner, and find themselves grabbing a hamburger or a dessert-disguised-as-coffee-drink to consume while walking to the next class in order to tide them over. Bringing a meal like a sandwich, or a more outside-the-box option like an apple, two boiled eggs, and a handful of almonds, is a much cheaper and healthier option. Eating out with friends is a great way to socialize and enjoy college life, but if you can plan healthy meals as an option to avoid eating out simply because you don't have time to go back to your apartment or to the school cafeteria, you will likely be healthier in the long run. For the health- and budget-conscious person, it can be helpful to save eating out for those occasions when you really want to enjoy spending time with people over a meal and not as a matter of convenience.

Exercise and Movement

Maybe you have read about how bad sitting for hours a day can be for people's health. Turns out, moving our bodies is really, really important. Standing desks can actually improve back pain, muscle tone, balance, and flexibility. Moving our bodies is crucial to our long-term overall health. Again, I'm no specialist in this area, but I have always valued exercise and pursued it, if

somewhat irregularly. I always come back to it because it is just necessary. Just as food is medicine, exercise and movement are physical therapy.

If you are currently not doing any deliberate exercise, you still might be getting a lot of movement if you walk or bike to school. **Adding in an additional 150 minutes of exercise each week has many health benefits**, including improved mood. It doesn't have to be complicated. The best exercise is the one that you do. Don't worry about what type is best, just move your body purposefully several times per week. Find movement you enjoy.

As you become more fit, you can learn more about different types of fitness and modify and tweak your sessions accordingly. Weight training, running, yoga, walking, Pilates, kickboxing, dancing, biking and spin classes, swimming, martial arts, and so many more options are available for free on campus, on YouTube, in your local community library, church, or other community centers. Have fun and get moving on a regular basis.

Posture and Body Awareness

Posture

I bring up this topic again here in this section to allow you to rethink some of what we covered in Chapter One on posture and hand position. What accumulated habits are interfering with your flute playing? In what ways would a more natural hand position, sitting, or standing posture help you in your music making?

Problems like carpal tunnel syndrome and tendonitis are very common in the general population, and for musicians, they can be detrimental. If you are experiencing any regular pain, it will be helpful to examine your posture carefully, both with and without the flute. Even for the most dedicated flutists, we spend more time without the flute in our hands than we do with it.

Our daily use of electronic devices can wreak havoc on our posture. Phones and computers have become a necessary part of modern life, so consider their effect on your posture. Can you prop your computer up on something or use a separate monitor and keyboard with your lap top? If you do a lot of computer work, this is worth it. If you watch movies or TV on small screens like your phone, can you position the phone at eye level? Be vigilant about what you do daily. Small actions that you do regularly will add up to big impact whether they are helpful or harmful, so choose carefully.

Yoga

There are many types of yoga, a Sanskrit word meaning that has an English cognate of “yoke”, meaning to join together. According to yoga teacher and scholar [Michael Johnson](#), yoga in the context of its physical and mental practice means discipline. The definition of yoga in the Yoga Sutras is “the cessation of the afflicted activities of the mind”. In doing hatha, or physical yoga, we use conscious breathing to focus our attention and join our breath and our physical movements. I cannot recommend Michael Johnson enough if you have any interest in yoga. His [online courses](#) are based on an incredible wealth of knowledge of the history, ancient texts, and decades of practicing and teaching. Additionally, you can search for free yoga on YouTube or try

one of the free classes on campus. The goal of yoga is not merely to gain flexibility, as many who have never practiced it might think. There are no physical requirements for beginning yoga. It is for all humans, and I encourage you to give it a try. We spend so much time in our heads as students and musicians, getting into your body through yoga will have great benefits.

Alexander Technique

The Alexander Technique is a method of body awareness that was created originally to help actors overcome poor posture that can lead to health problems. It is considered to be alternative medicine. The aim of the Alexander Technique is to help the student get back to the healthier body alignment and usage that we almost all have as children.

Our posture in adulthood is often the result of a certain amount of posturing accrued throughout our lives. Standing with more weight on one foot, arms akimbo at our hips, heads slumped over from phone and computer usage, these all weigh heavily on our bodies natural skeletal function, and over decades can cause problems. Adding a flute on top of any poor posture will only add to the already stressed system.

I have had one individual Alexander Technique lesson and a few group sessions over the years, and I find real value in its focus on natural alignment. Because I did not come to it through any pain or injury, my perspective is limited, but I appreciate the preventative perspective and its emphasis on our natural body mechanics. As flutists, we do not necessarily learn much about our own anatomy, so it is helpful to do this whether through this technique or others. Further developing our kinesthetic sense serves musicians well. If you have any joint pain, be it neck, back, shoulders, elbows, wrists, looking into the tenets of this technique might give you a fresh perspective on your pain and even help alleviate it.

Other

There are other well-known body awareness and healing modalities that many musicians use and swear by. In my own life, I have benefitted from chiropractic treatments and acupuncture for various issues. I have used yoga and meditation extensively and lived a lifestyle that has been heavily influenced by its tenets for decades. I have also benefitted from preemptive use of Alexander Technique, but I am also lucky enough to have never suffered from any prolonged pain or overuse injury in over four decades of flute playing. I cannot recommend any of the other modalities since I have never directly used them, but I do recommend looking into them if you are curious. Approach them carefully with critical thought. There's a lot of snake oil out there.

Afterword

There is so much to write about in addressing all aspects of flute playing that it makes any book project on the subject feel incomplete, but I hope to have given you some helpful information with which to move forward and to have sparked your interest in learning more. If that is the case, you might start with some of the suggested books listed in the appendices where I list only a few to help you get started. In this lifetime of learning, I wish you all the best with the flute and everything else that sparks your interest. – S.R.









APPENDICES















Standard and Alternate Fingerings


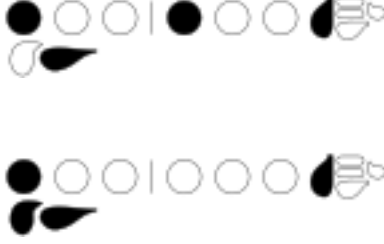









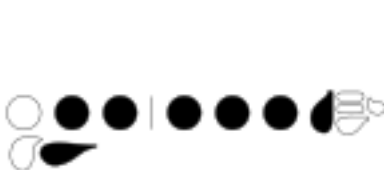
Nestor Herszbaum's *Alternative Fingerings for the Flute* is a fabulous, exhaustive resource and well worth the price.






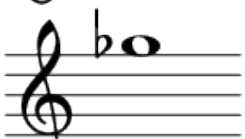



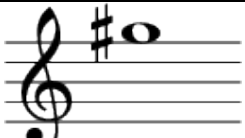




L1 Left Hand Index Finger
 L2 Left Hand Middle Finger
 L3 Left Hand Ring Finger
 L4 Left Hand Pinky


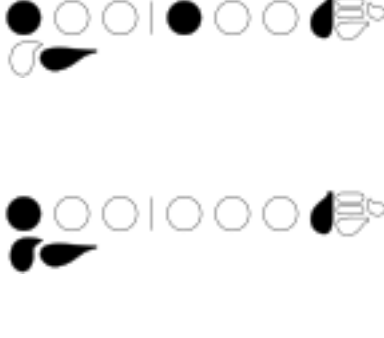





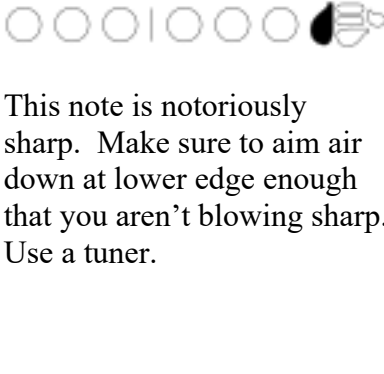
R1 Right Hand Index Finger
 R2 Right Hand Middle Finger
 R3 Right Hand Ring Finger
 R4 Right Hand Pinky






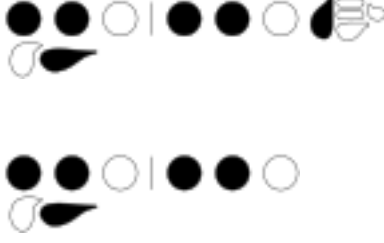

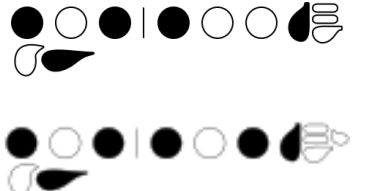
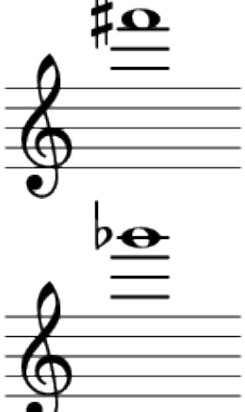
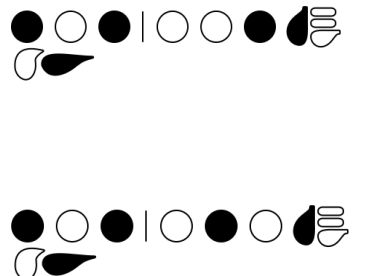
Note	Fingering	Info
THE	LOW	REGISTER
Remember to use slow/close air. Don't push the air too far or the note will overblow into the next octave.	Only use as much tension in the embouchure as you need to resist the air and to direct it toward the edge of the flute embouchure hole.	Use friction in your air stream to blow gently but with energy. If the aperture is too large, it will be airy.
		If your low C and C# are not in great adjustment, the C# key might leak. So, if this note is not speaking, check that. R4 will need to press only the low B and low C keys if all is working well.
		R4 should gently press the low C key. C# should completely seal without any pressure on that key.
		
		

		
		<p>Must have R4 down for proper tone quality and intonation.</p>
		
		<p>Do not use R2 in this octave.</p>
		
		<p>L4 should “live” essentially on top of this key at all times so that it is ready to press the key down when needed. It should not have to move into place in order to play this note.</p>
		



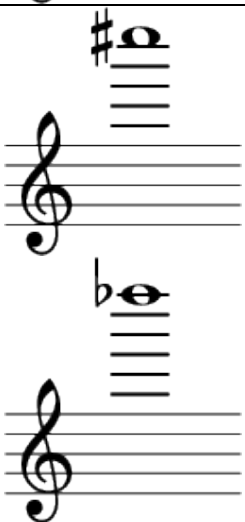



		<p>Standard fingering.</p> <p>Use thumb Bb key in most flat keys. Should use this by 3rd year of playing and learn to change between standard and thumb Bbs with ease.</p>
		
		<p>No changes of balance or hand position should happen when going from B to C. Don't hold the flute with left thumb.</p>
	 <p>This note is notoriously sharp. Make sure to aim air down at outer edge enough that you aren't blowing sharp. Use a tuner.</p>	<p>Balance of the flute between three points is key here. Flute must rest gently on right thumb, on left lowest knuckle on index finger and chin. If you balance with your pinky, you have to stop balancing there when you have to lift R4. Don't balance with R4.</p>
		<p>No R4. No L1. A large number of students will leave L1 down. Don't do this.</p>
		<p>No R4. No L1. A large number of students will leave L1 down. Don't do this.</p>

THE	MIDDLE	REGISTER
A.K.A		
THE	PRIME	CRACK ZONE
Beware, the prime crack zone!	The prime crack zone are all overblown octaves. If you cover too much or aim air down too much, these notes will crack.	When overblowing, the more of the tube that is closed off (like middle E), the more likely it is to crack.
		Make sure R4 is down.
		
 		Do not use R2.
		
 		
		

		<p>Standard fingering.</p> <p>Use thumb Bb key in most flat keys. Should use this by 3rd year of playing and learn to change between standard and thumb Bbs.</p>
		
		
	 <p>This note is notoriously sharp. Make sure to aim air down at lower edge enough that you aren't blowing sharp. Use a tuner.</p>	<p>Balance of the flute between three points is key here. Flute must rest gently on right thumb, on left lowest knuckle on index finger and chin. If you balance with your pinky, you have to stop balancing there when you have to lift R4. Don't balance with R4.</p>

THE	HIGH	REGISTER
		<p>Standard.</p> <p>Great advanced alternate fingering for soft playing. Brings pitch up.</p>
		
		<p>Standard fingerings.</p> <p>Because the standard fingering cracks so easily without a split E, most professionals use this better fingering most of the time. This also brings pitch down.</p>
		<p>Standard.</p> <p>Brings pitch down.</p>
		<p>Standard fingering.</p> <p>Many flutists find this fingering more stable and less prone to cracking. Brings pitch down. Do NOT use R2 in the lower octaves.</p>

		<p>Standard fingering.</p> <p>This fingering brings the pitch down considerably and is best for forte.</p>
		<p>Standard.</p> <p>Brings pitch up and makes response easier on <i>pp</i>.</p>
		<p>Standard.</p> <p>No L1. Many people learn this fingering incorrectly. Be aware that it is a little on the flat side of intonation.</p> <p>For <i>pp</i>, try this fingering. Brings pitch up.</p>
		<p>Many books list the D# key as down. I find it responds better without.</p>

THE	ALTISSIMO	REGISTER
<p>These notes will not speak if you are covering the embouchure hole too much. Blow air quite forcefully.</p>	<p>Good news: uncovering the embouchure hole improves sound in the rest of the flute!</p>	<p>There are many, many alternates for this register. Some work better than others for some players/flutes. I only list the primary fingering that I use. Consult other sources.</p>
		<p>If you have a low B, it must be down. If not, you can place R4 on low C or leave it up.</p>
		<p>Low B could stay down or be up.</p>
		<p>Easy to remember: thumb, 3, 1, 2, C.</p>

C# Trill Uses

C#5	Play C (or B) and press the C# trill lever. Clearer, better quality.
C#6	Play C (or B) and press the C# trill lever. Clearer, better quality.
B5 – C#5	Play B. Trill the C# trill lever.
B6 – C#6	Play B. Trill the C# trill lever.
C5 – C#5	Play C. Trill the C# trill lever.
C6 – C#6	Play C. Trill the C# trill lever.
F#6 – G#6	Play F#6. Trill the C# trill lever.
G6 – Ab6	Play G6. Trill the C# trill lever.
G6 – A6	Play G6. Simultaneously trill 1 st trill key and C# trill key.
Ab6 – Bb6	Play Ab6. Simultaneously trill 1 st , 2 nd , and C# trill keys.
Any left-hand note – C#	Play left hand note. Trill the C# lever. Works in both octaves.
Any left-hand note – D	Play left hand note. Trill the C# lever and 1 st trill key. Works in both octaves.

Sample Practice Chart

The more specific, the better. Try doing this for a month or two. Even if you never do it again, this will change your approach and help you be more organized, thoughtful, and productive.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thurs.	Friday	Saturday
Tone 1-12	8 min 1 – 12 odds. I hate # 3. Why can't I do it?	7 min 1-12 evens 2 is getting faster, 6 still hard.	1, 3, 5, 7	10 min 1- 12 odds. Still can't do #3.		5 min 1 - 12 evens	10 min 1 – 12 all
MM	Played twice w music	Played twice w music	Memorized first 4 measures. Played 3 times from memory.	Played first ½ from memory 4 times, tried to memorize 2 nd half.		Finished memorizing 2 nd half. Played all 4 times w music, 4 times without.	Played 3 times with music. Twice without.
Scales	10 min Majors at 60. Minors at 52	10 min Majors at 60, extra work on F# and B minors at 52	10 min Majors at 62. Extra on F# and B. Minors at 52, extra on Eb minor	10 min.			
LD	5 min	5 min	5 min on m. 4-7 only	5 min at 62		5 min at 68	5 min at 74
TW	pp. 104 at 86	pp. 104 at 86	pp. 104 at 90	pp. 104 at 92		pp. 104 at 96	pp. 104 at 96
Etude	10 min on first 4 lines	10 min on 2 nd half	Line 1+2 three times. Line 3+4 about three time. Spot work on circles.	10 min at quarter – 72 and spot work on circles		10 min on hard spots only	10 min on all at 76 plus more work on hard spots
Repertoire	Syrinx 10 min on first four lines	Syrinx 20 min on first 6 lines	Syrinx 20 min on page 2	Syrinx 20 min p. 2 mm 4 - 6		Syrinx 15 min on all	Syrinx 20 min on all plus some spot work

Blank Practice Chart

Be specific with your comments. Enter amount of time practiced, what you practiced, tempos, and comments in each box.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thurs.	Friday	Saturday
Tone 1-12							
MM							
Scales							
LD							
TW							
Etude							
Repertoire							

Glossary

Barrell: The tenon where the headjoint meets the body. Brand name is usually engraved here.

Body: Middle joint of the flute.

C# Trill Key: The large round key to the left of the B hole on the back of the flute will create a C# when B is played when also pressing the C# key lever. Most student and “step-up” flutes do not have one.

D# Roller Key: Roller key on the right edge of the D# key that facilitates easy movement of the right-hand pinky from D#4 to C#4.

Circular Breathing: Method of continuously playing by filling the cheeks with reserve air that is then pushed out with the cheek muscles while inhaling and quickly refilling the lungs. Only a very small percentage of professional flutists ever develop this ability. Feels more than a party trick than a useful technique.

Crown: The end of the headjoint that is covered is the crown that screws onto the end of the flute. This can be used to adjust the headjoint cork when needed which should be rare. In my experience, the need to adjust the headjoint cork is inversely related to the age of the flutist, likely due to younger students consciously or unconsciously fiddling with the crown and/or using their flutes as marching instruments.

Embouchure hole: This refers to the hole in the lip plate where flutists blow the air to create sound.

Extended Techniques: The collection of techniques that uses sounds on the flute outside of the traditional flute tone. This can include key clicks, tongue rams, multiphonics, singing while playing, flutter tonguing, beatboxing, other “cha” and “ka” type syllables with air as the main aspect of the sound, whistle tones, and many other nontraditional sounds. Think: sound effects.

Finger saddle: This is an ergonomic aid to help left hand position. I used on for many years as a graduate student and into my early professional life and found it improved my left-hand comfort by giving me a little more to grab onto. They will eventually break, and they can shift every so slightly. I stopped using them because I prefer not to be reliant on added paraphernalia.

Flutter tonguing: A sound produced by rolling the tongue as in rolling the letter “r” while also producing normal flute tone.

French key: Also called “open hole.” These five keys are covered by fingers. Having these holes allows for certain extended techniques and alternate fingerings for controlling intonation.

French pointed arms: The “arm” attaches the key to the rod. Some arms attach with a Y-shaped cup arms. The name is a bit ironic in that on professional flutes, Y-shaped cup arms are used on

French keys (open hole), while French pointed arms are usually standard on plateau keys. On student flutes, the Y-shaped cup arm is usually standard on all keys.

Footjoint: The end joint of the instrument furthest from your face when you play.

Gizmo key: An added key to help control the low B key. This helps when the low B is needed without the low C or C# like when we play C7.

Harmonics: When we overblow a note on flute and a higher note sounds. [Read about the harmonic series](#) to understand this more deeply.

Headjoint: The part of the flute we blow air into.

Headjoint cork: The cork inside the closed end of the headjoint is necessary to seal off any air from escaping. It is always set in a precise spot for proper intonation which can be measured by using the notch on the end of most cleaning rods. If air leaks from the cork, it must be replaced.

High E Facilitator: Small disc inserted into the G hole that changes the intonation and response on E5. Sometimes referred to as a “donut”.

Jet Whistle: Extended technique produced by covering embouchure hole with both lips and quickly blowing a forceful airstream into the flute that creates a wind-like sound effect.

Key clicks: Extended technique produced by slapping keys without traditional flute tone. Often enhanced by articulating deliberately across the tone hole while slapping the key.

Lefreque: Metal sound bridges placed at the tenons to enhance the sound. Read more on their [website](#). I’m not a fan.

Lip plate: This is the metal piece where that attaches to the headjoint where we place our lips.

Multiphonics: Two notes at the same time.

Pad: The part of the flute under each key that helps seal off any air from escaping. There are several types, including traditional, Straubinger, and Lotus.

Pin: These attach keys to the rods.

Plateau keys: Keys of the flute that have no holes.

Ribs: The rods are attached to this very thin, flat layer of metal attached to the body.

Riser: The part of the flute that attaches the lip plate to the headjoint. Sometimes called the chimney.

Rod: Long metal tube attached to the flute that holds the keys on it.

Split E Mechanism: Added rod and lever that help split the G and G# holes so that the G# hole can be covered while fingering E6 creating a better response on this precarious note. This mechanism will automatically engage with no special effort from the flutist.

Spring: Straight piece of thin metal that is constructed to place tension on a flute key to pull them back open after they have been pressed down.

Tenon: These are the joints where the parts of the flute attach to each other.

Thumb port: Brand of ergonomic aid for right hand thumb placement. This can be helpful for some people who experience difficulty attaining proper hand position or who have significant right hand or arm pain.

Thumb guide: This is an ergonomic aid to help right hand thumb placement. Its design does not allow for it to be placed on the flute in the exact spot a thumb needs to be. Due to the size and shape of the thumb guide, part of it hits the rib. For this reason, I do not recommend this accessory.

Wing lip: A special design on the lip plate created by a flattening where the embouchure hole is placed. This and other specialized designs of lip plates (Goosman, Drelinger, Tsubasa, etc.) have been favored by some flutists over the years, all of which have generally fallen from favor.

Tone holes: This refers to the holes on the body and foot joint of the flute where air comes out to create each note. These holes on the round flute body must be built up like a wall to create a level surface on which our flat flute key will close in order to seal off the air from that tone hole. This built-up wall of the tone hole can be either drawn or soldered. Drawn means that in the manufacturing, the metal is drawn out of the tubing. On soldered flutes, extra metal is soldered onto the tone hole. Soldered tone holes are more expensive, and some people prefer them. Drawn tone holes are less expensive and some people prefer them.

Tongue rams: Extended technique produced by placing both lips over the embouchure hole, blowing air directly into the flute, then quickly cut off this air by shifting the tongue in place to block the entire embouchure hole on the lip plate. Doing this with different fingerings will produce different pitches.

Whistle tones: Distinct whistle-like sound produced by overtone series by blowing very gently into the instrument. This is useful to practice for increasing embouchure control.

Flute Hygiene: Daily Tone and Technique

by Stephanie Rea

This collection of twelve exercises is designed to address tone quality, color, and dynamics in all registers, as well as intonation, articulation, flexibility, vibrato, expression, attention to note endings, and finger control. The categories are ordered so they can be practiced alternating odd numbers one day, even numbers the next day, and still cover most aspects of flute playing most days. For more serious students looking to become the best flutist they can be, covering all twelve every day makes sense. If I have adapted the exercise from a particular flutist, you'll see their name in parentheses. Creative endeavors and musical pursuits require a distraction-free environment¹, fervent dedication, endless repetitions, and critical thinking. Practice should be an engaging enterprise of which you are in complete artistic command.

Dynamic and Tone Quality

1. [Descending Chromatic Pattern](#). (Marcel Moyse and Trevor Wye)

Low Register rich *mf-f*. When low register is stable, add 8va.

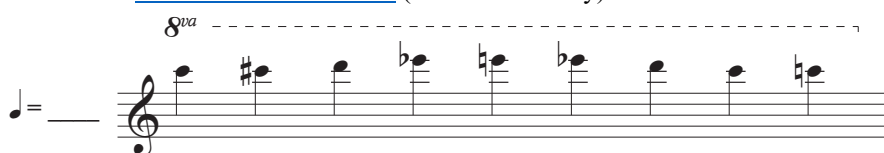


2. [Third Octave piano. Chromatic Finger Exercise](#). (Stephanie Rea)



Embouchure Strength and Lip Placement

3. [Fourth Octave. C7 – E7](#). (Charles DeLaney)

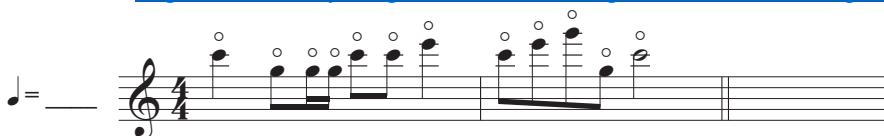


Flexibility

4. [Register Flexibility. One and Two Octave Slurs](#). (Stephanie Rea)



5. [Register Flexibility. Bugle Calls and Hunting Horn Melodies Using Harmonics](#). (Trevor Wye)



¹ If using a metronome or tuner app, turn on airplane mode so that notification do not disrupt your concentration. If your mind is elsewhere (e.g. Instagram, text messaging), you aren't really practicing.

Intonation

6. [Intonation and Flexibility. Descending Two-Octave “Glissando.”](#) (John Barcellona)

Bend first pitch a quarter-tone flat. In the next measure, match it by playing the same fingering a quarter tone sharp.



7. [Intonation and Color. C# Color Matching Exercise.](#) (Toshio Takahashi)



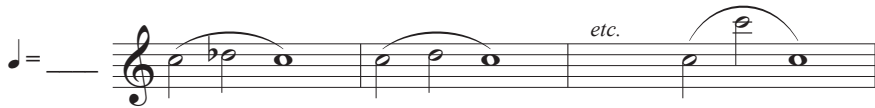
Expression

8. [Vibrato. Measured Pulses with Metronome.](#) (Charles DeLaney)



9. [Expression, Color, Connection with Interval Slurs.](#) (Molly Barth)

Vary vibrato, color and/or dynamic on each interval.



Articulation

10. [Low Register Attack.](#) (Marcel Moyse and Toshio Takahashi)

Build up air pressure before you release the tongue then play each note VERY short.



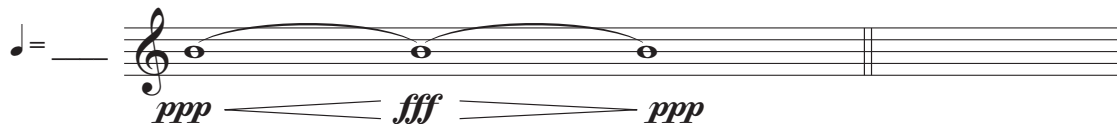
11. [Double and Triple Tonguing.](#) (Trevor Wye and Charles DeLaney)



Dynamic Flexibility, Intonation, Tone Quality, Articulation, Releases

12. [Long Tones with Metronome and Tuner.](#) (John Mack)

Choose three notes per day. For *ppp* – *fff* – *ppp*, try thinking 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1



Memorized Melody

One per month from Marcel Moyse’s *24 Little Melodic Studies*.

Scales

This refers to the scales you currently know. They should be done daily, mastering majors first then harmonic minors. Scales in major thirds and minor thirds come next. From there, add arpeggios and other scales like pentatonic, octatonic, and whole tone.

Suggested Books

The Flute

The Flute and Flute Playing by Theobald Boehm

The ultimate guide to how the flute was constructed by the genius who redesigned the flute in the 19th century. Some of this gets very technical, but it is a fascinating exploration of the mind of the man who was a flutist, composer, metalsmith, acoustician, and so much more. A humbling read!

The Other Flute: A Performance Manual of Contemporary Techniques by Robert Dick

A true master and innovator of the flute and flute music, Dick is almost a primary source on all things modern in flute playing. All of his books are straightforward and worthy of your attention.

The French Flute School, 1860 – 1950 by Claude Dorgeuille

This book has some wonderful photos, memorabilia, and information on this prolific period of flute music. The fathers of modern flute playing hail from this time and place, and it's a great resource on some of the background of those pieces and people.

The Flute by Richard Meylan

Meylan traces the development of the flute from ancient history through its modern use in classical music. It is a short and easy read and gives a perspective not found in other books listed here.

The Complete Guide to the Flute and Piccolo by James Phelan

This guide focuses on repair, maintenance, construction, and acoustics. A must for anyone interested in repair or flutemaking.

The Flute Book by Nancy Toff

Covers much of what this flute handbook covers, but in more detail and from a different perspective. Toff also covers a brief history of the flute, plus a fair amount of standard repertoire and its places it in a historical context with some great information about the flutists, composers, and the music of the time periods in which they existed.

Development of the Modern Flute by Nancy Toff

This book is a wonderfully written account of the history of the modern flute from the middle ages to the present. It is enormously helpful in understanding the construction on flutes, but also in understanding more about the music that was written for the flute at various times in history and how the state of the instrument in each of its incarnations influenced the music that was written and vice versa.

Performance Anxiety and Head Games

The Inner Game of Music by Barry Green with Timothy Gallwey

A staple for musicians, modeled after Timothy Gallwey's *The Inner Game of Tennis*. It is a helpful guide to address the self-talk that interferes with our practice and performance. Practical advice for handling nerves and creating a better outlook from which to operate.

A Soprano on Her Head by Eloise Ristad

Somewhat in the same vein as *The Inner Game of Music*, Ristad addresses various mind blocks that interfere with creative success.

Effortless Mastery by Kenny Werner

Werner is a jazz pianist and offers a wonderfully positive approach in this book that includes guided meditations to help combat the inner-stuff that most musicians confront at some point.

Adulthood, Personal Character, and Emotional Health

Willpower by Roy Baumeister and John Tierney

Evidenced-based social science combined with practical ideas on self-control. This book presents a wealth of helpful ideas on avoiding temptations that do not serve us and creating habits that do.

Atlas of the Heart by Brené Brown

Emotions are such an integral part of who we are, yet we receive so little education about them. This book has a companion television series on HBO. Brown is a social work professor whose research is similar to many trained in psychology. Understanding one's own emotions is a key part of a fulfilling existence, whether or not that includes flute playing.

Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance by Angela Duckworth

First-rate researcher Duckworth presents the importance of resilience over talent or innate intelligence in this inspiring look at high achievers and peak performers.

Your Turn: How to Be An Adult by Julie Lycott-Haims

I cannot recommend the work of Lycott-Haims highly enough to any college student or any parent. Her *How Raise an Adult* has greatly influenced my own parenting. One of the biggest obstacles to success that I see in my current students is the lack of self-efficacy that this book is geared toward developing.

The Four Agreements by Don Miguel Ruiz

Be impeccable with your word. Don't take anything personally. Don't make assumptions. Always do your best. Going against any of these four creates problems for you and others. This book expounds on each of these four ideas in an easily digested read.

Creativity

The Artist's Way by Julia Cameron

A little “out there”, Cameron offers some helpful exercises and advice on getting in touch with your inner artistic self: taking yourself on an artist date, writing stream of conscious morning pages, answering various questions. For those experiencing a creative dry spell, there may be something here for you.

Creativity: A Short and Cheerful Guide by John Cleese

I love reading about creativity and various creative people's processes improv. This short, humorous account is sure to please.

The Creative Habit: Learn It and Use It for Life by Twyla Tharp

Again, I just enjoy reading about other people's creative process. Writers, dancers, composers, these people fascinate me. The discipline and determination are not unlike that of a performer, so I always feel like I gain by learning from their experiences. Tharp is no exception.

An Incomplete List of Flutists to Hear

This is by no means a complete list. It's just a little something to get you started. There are so many wonderful musicians in this world. Start with some of these and you will start to have an idea of great flute playing so that you can branch out from there and create your own list.

John Barcellona	Molly Barth	Jeanne Baxtresser
Julien Beaudiment	William Bennett	Emily Beynon
Denis Bouriakov	Virginia Broffitt	Claire Chase
Jasmine Choi	Valerie Coleman	Paul Edmond-Davies
Cobus du Toit	Bart Feller	James Galway
Marianne Gedigian	Jennifer Grim	Deanna Little
Christina Jennings	Sooyun Kim	Robert Langevin
Damarre McGill	Lorna McGhee	Emmanuel Pahud
Marina Piccinini	Amy Porter	Emma Resmini
Paula Robison	Jeanne Pierre-Rampal	Elizabeth Rowe
Gary Schocker	Alexa Still	Carol Wincenc

Recommended Flute Repair Specialists

Google to find contact info or ask me.

Lauren Carr at Flute Authority
Robert Johnson at Flute Specialists
Flutistry Boston
Flute Center of New York
Jonathan Landell
Joy Sears Flute Repair
Paul Rabinov

About the Author

Stephanie Rea has taught at Murray State University since 2000 and performs as a soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral player. She is particularly skilled in the areas of hoop jumping and wild goose chasing which have enabled her to earn awards, competitions, degrees, and certifications, swiftly rise through the academic ranks of tenure and promotion, and be awarded two sabbaticals. She spent her first sabbatical as a Fulbright Scholar teaching in Frankfurt, Germany and her second one writing this book and her one-woman musical storytelling comedy *The Next Best Thing: A Flute Professor's Tragicomic Origin Story*. A total introvert who bores easily, she enjoys spending time with her family and friends until she's had enough, then retreats into her own head in search of solitude, truth, and meaning. She and her husband Kurt Gorman are raising two world citizens in rural Western Kentucky.