

Oboe Basics

Woodwind Methods 2012

Guidelines for Choosing a Young Student for the Oboe:

- There is something to say about letting a student select an instrument at the beginning level, and allowing enthusiasm to be the motivating force. However, there are many special considerations for double reed players, in particular oboe.

Select students who:

- Have great ears!
- Are smart!
- Are go-getters
- Problem solvers, and
- Very, very patient.
- Physical-long fingers, upper lip is able to tuck under upper teeth, and good lung capacity.
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The Instrument:

- The body of the oboe is assembled exactly as that of the clarinet.
- Joining the upper to lower joints is connected by TWO bridge keys. Same precautions should be taken as with the clarinet
- Because all aspects of the oboe mechanism, i.e. keys, rods, and posts are small and relatively delicate, TAKE EXTRAORDINARY PRECAUTIONS handling the instrument.
- Professional model: Full-Conservatory System, Wood (granadilla)
-Precautions-cracking
- Student model: Similar to above, plateau key system, however a number of “auxiliary” keys are not included. Resonite body.
- Manufacturers:
 - Laureé
 - Fox/Renard
 - Buffet
 - Yamaha
- The First Year of Student:

There is always debate on whether or not to start a young player on oboe. Many professionals believe that a year of understanding of breathing, note reading, and maturity are of benefit. Flute and Clarinet are traditional transfer instruments, and there are benefits and drawbacks of both.

Maintenance and Care:

- General Care is the same as any other woodwind instrument. However, there are two basic rules:
 - Be nice to your oboe! Say good morning to it everyday. Don't mishandle it and do not leave it around extensively warm or cold environments.
 - SWABBING-Use a silk swab and Do NOT pull through.
 - Dust and small leaks.

Posture & Finger Position:

- Oboe is position at a 30 to 45 degree angle. Out away from the body.
- Wrists straight – elbows near body.
- Watch to make sure forearms are not resting on the leg.
- Watch the angle-transfers from flute and clarinet tend to have difficulties in this area.

Embouchure:

- Oboe is a wind instrument and NOT an embouchure instrument!
- Form an 'O' with the lips so the teeth are far from contact with the reed.
- Place the reed so the tip rests on the middle of the lower lip.
- Close the lips around the reed. (The lips should be relaxed, but the muscles around the lips should be taut.
- Drop the jaw.
- Think a "drawstring."

Breathe Control:

- Oboists are the only wind players that experience being out of breath when the lungs are quite full.
- Stale air
- Why? The diameter of the reed / instrument are VERY small.

Breathing:

- Diaphragmatic

Range:

(A) Elementary-early years of study (B) High School+-the more advance player(C) Professional



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Fingerings:

- Very similar to flute, and saxophone.
- Four important concepts to understand
 - a)Half-hole
 - b)'F' vs. 'F#'
 - c)Register Keys
 - d)Pivoting

Articulation:

- Tongue-the top of the tongue at the tip should make contact with the bottom blade of the reed.
- Do not tongue from the underside of the tongue.

The Reed:

Terms You Should Know:

Blank-Raw piece of cane

Cane-the same as the clarinet, saxophone, and bassoon. "Arundo Donax"

Crow-A critically important rich, multiple (octaves) sound used to test the reed's responsiveness and pitch supporting capabilities. The crow is produced by blowing with the reed fully inserted into the mouth, lips close to the thread.

Gouge-the scooped out portion of the reed.

Rails-the edges or sides of the reed.

Staple-the corked tube onto which the reed is attached.

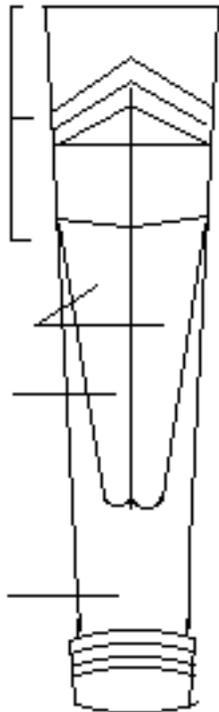
Tip Opening-the opening at the tip of the reed (dah!) Too closed the sound will be thin; too open the sound will be wild and unmanageable.

Equipment that one needs to work on reeds:

- Knife
- Mandrel
- Plaque
- Cutting bock
- Shaper
- Gouger
- Easel.

Methodology:

- Barret, *Method for Oboe*
- Gekeler, *Method for Oboe, Books I/II*
- Andrud, *Vade-Macum of the Oboist*
- Ferling, *48 Studies* (very difficult)



Repertoire:

The repertoire for the oboe includes a vast number of compositions. You should know the major repertoire by the following composers:

Albononi, Bozza, D'Indy, Goossens, Handel, Ibert, Krommer, Marcello, Martinu, Milhaud, Mozart, Stamitz, Strauss, Telemann, and of course Vivaldi.

Excellent Resource: **Robert Stanton's *The Oboe Player's Encyclopedia***