

CLARINET TONE PRODUCTION PROBLEMS/REMEDIES		
by M. Max McKee (ed. Bruce Pearson)		
SOUND PRODUCED	CAUSES OF PROBLEM	REMEDIES
no tone, rushing air	no pressure against the reed	increase lower lip pressure
	too much reed in mouth	less mouthpiece in mouth
	stiff reed	sand reed
squawk, flat pitch	insufficient pressure against reed	increase lower lip pressure
	too much reed in mouth	less mouthpiece in mouth
	insufficient intensity in air flow	faster air
	soft reed	clip reed
	embouchure too loose	shape mouth in "oo" position
squeaks, high squeal	insufficient pressure against reed	shape mouth in "oo" position, increase pressure
	too much reed in mouth	less mouthpiece in mouth
	clarinet angled too far away from body	bring clarinet closer
	soft reed	clip reed
stopped or intense air	too little reed in mouth	more mouthpiece in mouth
	too much lip pressure	less biting, check for bunched chin
	stopped air: soft reed	clip reed
	intense air: hard reed	sand reed, check symmetry
thin, sharp pitch	too little reed in mouth	more mouthpiece in mouth
	tight, closed throat	shape mouth in "oh" position
	hard reed	sand reed

TONE PRODUCTION REMEDIES

Producing a good tone is challenging for beginning instrumentalists. Help students solve tone production problems by referring to the charts below, originally published as part of the *Bandworld* "Embou-Sure" series.

FLUTE TONE PRODUCTION PROBLEMS/REMEDIES

by Phebe Kimball

SOUND PRODUCED	CAUSES OF PROBLEM	REMEDIES
no tone, rushing air	air is going across hole	blow more into hole
	lower lip not on hole	place more lip over hole
	corners of lip not pulled apart	more "whee"
some sound, mostly air	"splitting" the tone	drop chin, blow down
	too large of an opening in lips	more "oo" needed
"whoof" sound	no tongue being used	emphasize "too"
"thu" sound	tongue going between teeth and/or lips	more "too" (tongue on roof of mouth)
high-pitched "whistle" (overtone)	too much air	blow less hard
	head joint rolled in too far	roll head joint out
	hole covered too much	cover less hole
flat pitch	rolled in too far	roll out

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¹Phebe Kimball, "Flute Embou-Sure," *Bandworld*, May 1986, 14.

TRUMPET TONE PRODUCTION PROBLEMS/REMEDIES

by Larry Hudson (ed. Bruce Pearson)

SOUND PRODUCED	CAUSES OF PROBLEM	REMEDIES
no tone, rushing air	lips not together	re-form and maintain "em" position with lips
	too much pucker in lips	re-form and maintain "em" position with lips
	dry lips, dry mouthpiece	lick lips, inside of mouthpiece
	insufficient air to make lips vibrate	review breathing, use faster air
airy tone (some airy tone is common until the lip begins to vibrate naturally)	lips not together	re-form and maintain "em" position with lips
	too much pucker in lips	re-form and maintain "em" position with lips
tight, thin, pinched tone	tense, excessively pursed lip formation (biting)	relax, re-form "em" but de-emphasize lip pursing
	too much pucker in lips	re-form "em" but emphasize no pucker
	tight, closed throat	review breathing, suggest yawn with head up
stopped sound (restricted throat or buzz)	tense, excessively pursed lip formation (biting)	relax, re-form "em" but de-emphasize lip pursing
	too much mouthpiece pressure toward lips	relax left hand grip, no right hand little finger hook
	tight closed throat	review breathing, suggest yawn with head up

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TROMBONE/BARITONE/EUPHONIUM TONE PRODUCTION PROBLEMS/REMEDIES

by Bob Spevacek (ed. Bruce Pearson)

SOUND PRODUCE	CAUSES OF PROBLEM	REMEDIES
no tone, rushing air	embouchure not formed tightly enough	firm up embouchure
	air stream restricted, closed throat, high tongue	emphasize "oh" to open throat, keep tongue down
thin, pinched tone	embouchure formed too tightly, lips pinched	relax embouchure
	insufficient volume of air passing between lips	review breathing, use faster air
gargled tone	embouchure not formed tightly enough	firm up embouchure
	lips folding over teeth	re-form embouchure, use ring to check lip position
stopped or intense air	lips pinched completely together	relax embouchure
	insufficient volume of air passing between lips	review tongue position using "oh," increase air speed
sharpness in upper register	excess pressure in embouchure	use faster air speed, less pressure
flat, flabby sound in low register	slow air speed	use faster air
	flabby embouchure	firm up embouchure
difficulty in upper register	mouthpiece too low	move mouthpiece up
	insufficient air speed	increase air speed
difficulty in low register	mouthpiece too high	move mouthpiece down
	too much pressure	relax embouchure

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TUBA TONE PRODUCTION PROBLEMS/REMEDIES

by Stuart Turner (ed. Bruce Pearson)

SOUND PRODUCED	CAUSES OF PROBLEM	REMEDIES
no tone, rushing air	embouchure not formed tightly enough	re-form embouchure, firm up embouchure
	air stream restricted, closed throat, high tongue	emphasize "oh" to open throat, keep tongue down
thin, pinched tone	embouchure formed too tightly, lips pinched	relax embouchure
	insufficient volume of air passing between lips	review deep breath and fast expulsion of air
gargled tone	embouchure not formed tightly enough	firm up embouchure
	lips folding over teeth	re-form embouchure, use ring to check lip position
stopped or intense air	lips pinched completely together	relax embouchure
	insufficient volume of air passing between lips	review tongue position using "oh," increase air speed

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	air stream restricted, closed throat, high tongue	emphasize "oh" to open throat, keep tongue down
thin, pinched tone	embouchure formed too tightly, lips pinched	relax embouchure
	insufficient volume of air passing between lips	review breathing, use faster air
gargled tone	embouchure not formed tightly enough	firm up embouchure
	lips folding over teeth	re-form embouchure, use ring to check lip position
stopped or intense air	lips pinched completely together	relax embouchure
	insufficient volume of air passing between lips	review tongue position using "oh," increase air speed
sharpness in upper register	excess pressure in embouchure	use faster air speed, less pressure
flat, flabby sound in low register	slow air speed	use faster air
	flabby embouchure	firm up embouchure
difficulty in upper register	mouthpiece too low	move mouthpiece up
	insufficient air speed	increase air speed
difficulty in low register	mouthpiece too high	move mouthpiece down
	too much pressure	relax embouchure

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OBOE TONE PRODUCTION PROBLEMS/REMEDIES

by Barbara Cantlon

SOUND PRODUCED	CAUSES OF PROBLEM	REMEDIES
high pitch crow with too few sounds	embouchure is too tight, pinched	decrease pressure in embouchure, more relaxed
	reed is too stiff, closed off	check thickness of reed, balance in cane
low pitched crow	lack of support	more support, faster air
	horn angle too high	reduce angle of oboe
	reed too soft	change length and/or width of reed
rushing air	embouchure too loose	firmer lips, corners; roll lower lip in slightly
	lack of support	more support, faster air
stopped, no sound	pinching or biting reed	more "oh," separate teeth, less reed in mouth
	reed too soft	change length and/or width of reed

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BASSOON TONE PRODUCTION PROBLEMS/REMEDIES

by Richard Polonchak

SOUND PRODUCED	CAUSES OF PROBLEM	REMEDIES
high pitched crow with too few sounds	embouchure is too tight, pinched	decrease pressure in embouchure, more relaxed
	reed is too stiff, closed off	check thickness of reed, balance in cane
low pitched crow	lack of support	more support to dampen the reed
	reed too long and/or too wide	change length and/or width of reed
unsupported sound	lack of support from lower jaw	slightly increase lower jaw support
	lack of air column support from diaphragm	use faster air stream, more support from diaphragm

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FRENCH HORN TONE PRODUCTION PROBLEMS/REMEDIES

by Val Phillips

SOUND PRODUCED	CAUSES OF PROBLEM	REMEDIES
no tone, rushing air	lips not together	re-form and maintain "em" position with lips
	too much pucker in lips	re-form and maintain "em" position with lips
	dry lips, dry mouthpiece	lick lips, inside of mouthpiece
	insufficient air to make lips vibrate	review breathing, use faster air
airy tone (some airy tone is common until the lip begins to vibrate naturally)	lips not together	re-form and maintain "em" position with lips
	too much pucker in lips	re-form and maintain "em" position with lips
tight, thin, pinched tone	tense, excessively pursed lip formation (biting)	relax, re-form "em" but de-emphasize lip pursing
	too much pucker in lips	re-form "em" but emphasize no pucker
	tight, closed throat	review breathing, suggest yawn with head up
stopped sound (restricted throat or buzz)	tense, excessively pursed lip formation (biting)	relax, re-form "em" but de-emphasize lip pursing
	too much mouthpiece pressure toward lips	relax grip
	tight, closed throat	review breathing, suggest yawn with head up