Tune: The Instrument

Tune with both octaves.

Intonation Discrepancies - Bad Notes - Natural Tendencies

Causes and Remedies for Bad Notes

Reeds - Hard reeds may cause overall sharpness.
- Soft reeds may cause overall flatness.
- Soft reeds may tend to emphasize natural tendencies.

Embouchure - Too little mouthpiece in mouth may emphasize flatness of high register.
- Too much mouthpiece in mouth may cause overall flatness.
- Holding the horn too far forward may cause flatness.
- Holding the horn too close to the body may cause overall sharpness.

Mouthpiece - Mouthpieces with a closer lay tend to be sharper than those with a more open lay.
- A close lay may restrict the amount of possible embouchure compensation.
- Internal dimensions of the mouthpiece must match the instrument.

Dynamics - Crescendos may blow flat. To correct: Drop the lower jaw slightly, slightly increase lip pressure around the mouthpiece.
- Diminuendos may blow sharp. To correct: Maintain breath support, slightly decrease velocity of air stream, relax embouchure pressure slightly.

Alternate Fingerings - Alternate fingerings are definitely an excellent way to alter the "bad notes" on many saxophones.
SAXOPHONE
Possible Adjustments for Selected Pitch Tendencies

Flat - Finger with the left hand low C# key open to raise the pitch.

Flat - Open the right hand Eb key to raise the pitch.

Flat - Finger with the 3rd finger of the right hand instead of the usual 2nd finger (If necessary add the right hand Eb key)

Flat - Open the chromatic F# key in the right hand to raise these notes. (To avoid playing an F# don't use this fingering simultaneously with the finger of the right hand.)

Flat - Adjust fingering by opening the left hand G# key to raise this pitch.

Flat - Adjust fingering by opening the bottom right hand side key to raise this pitch.

Flat - Raise this pitch by (1) fingering the note with Octave key and 3rd finger of the left hand (2) using the regular fingering plus the middle side key of the right hand (3) fingering the low C# fingering plus the octave key.

Sharp - Lower this pitch by adding the low B key to the normal fingering.

Sharp - Keys fingered by the right hand may be added to the fingering to lower the pitch.
SAXOPHONE... (Continued)

Possible Adjustments for Selected Pitch Tendencies

Usually sharp. Play with an open throat and flat tongue to humor the pitches down in pitch.

For Eb, E and F remove the palm key.
Tune The Instrument

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**Pitch Tendencies & Adjustments**

**Alto Saxophone**

*Note: Finger Adjustments will tend to cause timbre changes* (Notes not addressed are generally acceptable)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pitch Tendency</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>VF</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>VF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjustment</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Add LP2</td>
<td>Add LP2</td>
<td>Add LP3 or LP4</td>
<td>Add F# key</td>
<td>Add RS2 or OK and 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>VS</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Add LP3</td>
<td>Add LP3</td>
<td>Add LP4</td>
<td>Add RP2</td>
<td>Add RP2</td>
<td>Add 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>VVS</th>
<th>VS</th>
<th>VS</th>
<th>VVS</th>
<th>VS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Add 4, 5, 6</td>
<td>Use 4 &amp; 6</td>
<td>Add 4, 5, 6</td>
<td>Close LS2</td>
<td>Close LS2 or Use RP1</td>
<td>Close LS1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Pitch Tendencies & Adjustments**

**Tenor Saxophone**

F = Flat  
S = Sharp  
V= Very

*Note: Finger Adjustments will tend to cause timbre changes (Notes not addressed are generally acceptable)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pitch Tendency</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>VS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjustment</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Add RP1</td>
<td>Use LP1</td>
<td>Use 4, 5, 6</td>
<td>Use 4, 5, 6</td>
<td>Use LP4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>VS</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>VVS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use RP2</td>
<td>Use RP2</td>
<td>Use RP2</td>
<td>Use 6</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Use 4, 5, 6 and LP4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VVS</th>
<th>VS</th>
<th>VS</th>
<th>VVS</th>
<th>VS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use 4 &amp; 6</td>
<td>Use 4, 5, 6</td>
<td>Close LS2</td>
<td>Close LS2 or Use RP1</td>
<td>Close LS1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SAXOPHONE TUNING GUIDE

Procedures for Tuning the Instrument
1. Warm up thoroughly before tuning.
2. Tune at a mezzo-forte dynamic level and do not use vibrato.
3. Tune to a reliable frequency (electronic tuner, etc.) using the recommended tuning note(s) below.
4. Do not humor the tuning note; play it straight. Adjust the mouthpiece if the pitch is sharp or flat.

**BASIC TUNING NOTE(S)**

Tuning pitches are indicated with half notes; quarter note pitches are used to help “groove”
the tuning note by approaching it from below.

\[ mf \quad \text{Written G or F\#} \]

*Tuning Mechanism: Mouthpiece. Pull out the mouthpiece on the cork of the neck if the pitch is sharp; push it
in if the pitch is flat. After the mouthpiece has been properly adjusted, mark the cork with a pen for future reference.

*The concert tuning pitches for alto and baritone saxophones are B flat or A; the concert tuning pitches for soprano and
tenor saxophone are F or E.*

Techniques for Adjusting Pitches While Playing
1. Embouchure Adjustment–Lipping
2. Alternate Fingerings
3. Combinations of the Above

**INHERENT INTONATION FLAWS**

\[ a) \quad b) \quad c) \quad d) \quad e) \]

- a) If the low D is flat, add the low C sharp key.
- b) If this C sharp is flat, add the bottom side keys B flat and C.
- c) If this D is sharp, add the low B key.
- d) If this A is sharp, add the F sharp key.
- e) Saxophones tend to be sharp in the low and extreme high register. Lip these notes in tune by relaxing
   the embouchure and pulling back the lower jaw.

*Arrows pointing up indicate that the notes tend to be sharp; arrows pointing down indicate that the notes tend to be flat.*
SAXOPHONE INTONATION CHART

Name ___________________________ Date __________________
Instrument Make and Model ___________________________
Mouthpiece and Reed Used ___________________________

Carefully follow the procedures outlined in the Tuning Guide for your instrument before beginning to chart your intonation with a friend. Your teacher should provide an Intonation Charting Guidesheet with instructions on how to use an electronic tuner. Mark intonation discrepancies for lower octave scales below the staff.

Tuning Notes

Saxophone

\[mf\]

Written G or F# Check Octaves

Chromatic Scale

Major Scales

Harmonic Minor Scales

Pitch Tendencies of Dynamics

\[mf \quad pp \quad ff \quad pp \quad ff \quad pp \quad ff\]