



Beginner's Toolkit: Clarinet

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:30 Good Breath #1

- Put one hand on your stomach and one your chest: relax and take a deep breath
- For a good breath, your abdomen needs to relax and expand
- Your back could also expand
- Your chest could also expand, but only after your abdomen

1:12 Good Breath #2

- Before falling asleep, notice your stomach moving up and down, but not your shoulders

1:49 Diaphragm stretching exercise: lungs must be exercised in order to work properly

Set metronome to ♩ = 60

Relax

Breath in for 5 beats

Hold the air and pack it down

Breath 2 more times and pack the air down again

Hold for 8 beats

Purse lips and let the air out for 8 counts

-Pursed lips help to feel the compression of air, similar to playing

- Try to see the results

Play an open G for as long as possible at ♩ = 60 : count how long it was

Complete the diaphragm stretching exercise

Try the open G again at ♩ = 60

Great—it works!

- Do the Diaphragm stretching exercise once or twice daily to ensure a your best breathing habit!

3:55 Mouthpiece Setup

- The Clarinet setup includes the *mouthpiece*, *reed*, *ligature*, and *barrel*
- Use a little cork grease to place the *mouthpiece* on the *barrel* smoothly
- Put your *reed* in your mouth: DO NOT suck or chew on it
- Put your *ligature* on first, then slide your reed to avoid chipping your *reed*
- Tighten the *ligature* to properly hold the *reed* in place: the *reed* should be slightly above the top of the *mouthpiece*
- In case you forgot your *ligature* or it is broken, you can temporarily use a rubber band to hold the reed onto the *mouthpiece*

6:53 Embouchure

- This is what the facial muscle form to make a good tone
- DO NOT swallow your lips inside of your mouth or make a round chin, but always push forward
- Put your pointer finger on your bottom lip and push against it: your muscles engage!

- Replace your finger with your set up
- Rest your top teeth on the mouthpiece, but also squeeze them with your top lip
- Blow!

Troubleshooting:

- Keep the bottom of the barrel open
- Push up against your bottom lip, as you did with your finger

9:23 Tonguing

- Begin the sound with the tongue
- Feel your tongue at the tip of the *reed*
- Put your tongue on the *reed* first, then blow and feel the pressure inside your face
- You need the air behind the tongue to produce the sound right away
- Move the tongue back slightly to create the sound

10:55 The Bridge Key

- Be careful when connecting the *top joint* to the *bottom joint*
- The *bridge key* can easily be bumped and corks torn off
- Align the *bridge key* carefully to ensure the *top ring keys* connect perfectly to each other (always check the 1+1 fingering for cup bounce)

12:44 Hand Placement

- Do NOT grab the Clarinet over the *long bottom rod*: it can bend quite easily
- You can safely grab the Clarinet wherever your fingers normally go when playing it
- Check that both of the *bottom right cups* open at the same height and the foot between the bottom levers is straight

13:00 Opening the Case

- When opening on your lap, make sure your knees are high enough to prevent the case from falling

13:43 Putting Together the Clarinet

- First, put the *bottom joint* together with the *bell*
 - The *bell* is strong and will take the pressure of pushing down against it when putting the Clarinet together
 - Do NOT hold the Clarinet over the *long rod*
- Next, put the *top* and *bottom joints* together
- Take care with the *bridge key* and align it correctly
- Next, put on the *barrel* and align the labels
- Finally, put on the *mouthpiece*
 - It is easier to put it on without the *ligature and cap*
 - Be very careful with the *mouthpiece*. Chips and cracks in the *mouthpiece* cannot be repaired
 - When not playing the Clarinet, keep the *ligature and cap* on to protect the *mouthpiece*
- While securely holding the Clarinet, close the latch and put the case on the ground

16:23 Putting Away the Clarinet

- First, loosen the *ligature* and push the *reed* up and out
 - Wipe away the condensation on the *reed* and put it away in a protective case
 - Take off the *ligature* and *mouthpiece* carefully
- Be sure the Clarinet is secured either with your legs or hands
- Wipe off the edges and as much of the inside of the *mouthpiece* as you can reach
- Do NOT run the swab through the *mouthpiece*
- Put the *ligature* back on the *mouthpiece* and replace the *mouthpiece cap*, then put it in the case

18:10 Swabbing the Clarinet

- Do NOT use the small fuzzy swabs
 - Silk, handkerchief, or microfiber swabs are best
 - Now that the *mouthpiece* is safely put away, keep the Clarinet together while swabbing
 - Hold the Clarinet with the *ring keys* facing downward (the vent tube will then be hanging from the top) and slide the weight and chord through the inside of the Clarinet either from the barrel or through the bell
 - Make sure the end of the swab is open and loose, not bunched up
 - Pull the swab through (once should be enough)
- Troubleshooting if the swab gets stuck:
- Take apart the *middle joint* and see if you can pull the swab back out
 - Do NOT stick anything in the Clarinet to force the swab through
 - Twist the top of the swab while rotating the Clarinet in the opposite direction and keep twisting until the swab twists free

21:32 Tips for a Stuck Barrel

- Leave the seized joints out of the case and give the wood time to dry out and unswell
- Do NOT use tools or excessive force to get the joints apart.
- If all else fails, try putting the Clarinet in the refrigerator for 15-20 minutes
- Once the joint comes apart, do not be tempted to sand down the joint to keep it from seizing in the future.
- While greasing your top joint cork you can also apply the cork grease to the top and inside area of the top joint tenon to prevent damage due to moisture
- Wipe out the tendon joints or flick out condensation to prevent excess moisture staying on the inside of the Clarinet