

## HAND POSITION FOR INTERMEDIATE PLAYERS: A REVIEW, RESONANCE FINGERINGS, AND GOING INTO THE ALTISSIMO

**REVIEW:** Most intermediate players come from using Essential Elements or any number of band books with fingering charts. The following may be a review for some of you. If so, scroll down to the next section on Resonance Fingerings.

### IMPORTANT SYMBOLS:

- **Ψ**-the fork: Occurs on low B-natural or F# at the top of the staff. To be played by the right hand ring finger during chromatic passages
- L-Left: Left hand fingering
- R-Right: Right hand fingering
- S-side: Use side key
- K-Cross Key: The key under the low D played with the left hand ring finger. Also known as the "banana key"

**ALTERNATING PINKIES:** Avoid sliding your pinkies to get from one key to another. There are special cases where this is necessary. See the example below from #31 of the Rose 32 Etudes.

- Examples

B $\flat$  Cl. <sup>8</sup>

R L R L                      R-L                      R      L                      R-L R      L-R L

- Exceptions

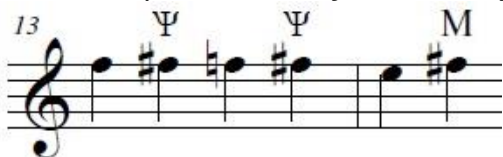
31. *Adagio*

*con espressione*

*In measure 3: beat 3, you play the Eb with the right hand, Db with the left, then you have to slide the left finger from the Left Db to the Left C because you can only play the next Eb with the right.*

## FORK KEY: DON'T FLIP

- Examples: See symbol key at the top of the page



- Exceptions



## CROSS KEY Eb/Bb vs. SIDE KEY Bb

- Cross Key
  - Keeps everything in the same hand. Adds fluidity.
  - CAN MAINLY BE USED in chromatic or scale passages
  - Warning: It is sharp.
- Bottom Side Key
  - Can be used in leaps or chromatic passages
  - It is better in tune than the cross key



## RESONANCE FINGERINGS

- Resonance Fingerings deal specifically with the throat tones G, G#, A, and B-flat
- When you play these notes they are typically very sharp on most instruments
- Resonance fingerings are good for:
  - Darkening the tone quality
  - Bringing down the pitch
  - Making it easier for the student to prepare for a note in the clarion register

For A:

(A-key) 23/ 123 (Low F key)

(A-key) 23/ 23

(A-key) 23/ 23 (Low F key)

(A-key) 3/ 1 3 (Low F key)

(A-key) 3/ 3 (Low F key)

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For Bb:

(A-key and Register) 3/ 3 (Low F key)

(A-key and Register) 23/ 23 (could add Low F key)

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For G#:

(G-sharp key) 3/ 1 (Low F# key)

*Similar to A resonance fingerings*

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For G:

(Open)/ 123

(Open)/ 1 3

(Open)/ 1 3 (Low F key)

3/ 1 3 (could add Low F)

## "SMEARING" OR HALF HOLE



- This is used whenever the clarinetist goes into the altissimo.
  - When you slur into the altissimo from Low A to Clarion E for example: smear the left index finger downward to cover just half of the tone hole. This will help produce a clean slur.
    - If you just lift the index finger, this will result in a slight popping noise.

## FINGER EXERCISES FOR LIGHTNESS

When the student is only using a few of the fingers to cover the tone holes needed, the other fingers should "hover" over the tone holes that they are each assigned to. Keeping fingers closer does not exert as much energy. If the fingers are far away they have to move faster to get to the tone holes.

- LIFT AND DROP
  - Using the F major scale, start on Thumb F and drop the index finger for E.
    - *Imagine little sand bags attached to each finger. As you drop each finger there is NO SQUEEZING. Just lift the finger and drop.*
    - *Keep adding each finger all the way down to low F*

- GENTLE PRESS

- With this exercise you will start with Thumb F again.
  - *As you add the left index finger for E, move the finger SO SLOWLY to the tone hole that you hear the pitch bend until you finally hear a STABLE pitch*
  - *Keep adding each finger all the way down to low F*

- DOUBLE JOINTEDNESS

- The Gentle Press exercise will help with this issue.
  - *I have found that the bending back of fingers usually occurs when clarinetists are squeezing really hard and many times it is coupled with the fingers not correctly covering the tone holes, leaving gaps thus causing squeaks.*

- FINGER INTONATION

- *Pitch can be varied with the fingers' closeness to the tone holes.*
  - *Decrescendos cause notes to go sharp.*
    - *If the clarinetist starts to bring in the fingers to almost cover extra tone holes this will help keep the pitch down.*

- BOOKS WITH FINGER EXERCISES!!!

- *Jeanjean Vade-Mecum*
- *Rubank Advanced Clarinet Method Vol. I and II*
- *Langenus Clarinet Method Part III*
- *Klose Complete Method*