

Objective: Blow a steady note with a good mouth position

It's important to know how to blow a steady note and how to get your mouth into the correct position for playing the saxophone. Here's how to get started:

1. First assemble the mouthpiece, neck, reed and ligature by following the points in the relevant worksheet.
2. Cover your lower teeth with your lower lip and run your finger along your lip checking that your lip does not move.
3. Holding the saxophone neck by the thick end and with the reed facing downwards, place the reed and mouthpiece on top of your bottom lip.
4. Put your top teeth on top of the mouthpiece and close your mouth, aiming for a round shape by pulling the corners of your mouth in around the mouthpiece. (If you have played clarinet before, aim for a rounder mouth shape.)
5. Take a deep breath from the bottom of your lungs and blow a steady stream of air through the mouthpiece to make a sound.
6. Practise this a few times, making sure you follow the steps above to produce a sound on the mouthpiece, neck, reed and ligature.
7. Then put on the mouthpiece cap and carefully attach the saxophone body following the instructions on the relevant worksheet.
8. Put the neck sling around your neck with the hook at the front, and attach that hook to the metal loop in the middle of the back of the saxophone.
9. Supporting the saxophone carefully by the bell, adjust the length of the neck sling by pulling the plastic piece in the middle so that the saxophone mouthpiece cap comes to your mouth. You should not be bending down to it or reaching up to it – this is very important!
10. Put your right-hand thumb under the plastic hook shaped piece on the lower back of the saxophone to steady the saxophone. Take off the mouthpiece cap.
11. Get your mouth into position by following the steps in points 3 and 4 above, and then blow a sound as described in point 5; practise lots of times.
12. To play your first note, put your left hand first finger on the highest pearl key on the front of the saxophone, and rest your left-hand thumb on the raised black or gold circular shape towards the top of the back of the saxophone.
13. Follow the steps in points 3, 4 and 5 above to play a note; this is called note B.
14. Practice many times, making sure you take a deep breath and blow the air through the saxophone in a controlled way, steadily and evenly.
15. Congratulations, you now know how to blow a steady note with a good mouth position. Tick the third point off your award card!