

## Clarinet Warm-Up

### Robert S. Spring

The most important part of any day's practice time is the warm up period. I have a comprehensive warm-up that I use daily in my teaching and playing. I feel that each aspect of the warm-up should lead to the next, and that the objective should be a warm up of all muscle groups from large to small. The warm up should emphasize relaxation and comfort with the instrument and should cover all of the fundamental aspects of clarinet performance. These should include breathing, sound production, intonation, finger motion, (both adjacent and non-adjacent), articulation, (both single and multiple), registral sound unity, range extension, consistency, and combinations of the above.

Begin with long tones. This, as well as the rest of my warm up, is done with a metronome. Keeping things the same tempo everyday seems to help with overall consistency in performance. Play a chromatic scale in long tones. Set the metronome at 60 and play each note for four counts breathing every four notes for four counts. This means that one is forced to exhale for 16 seconds without a breath, Make certain to breathe only in the rests, and try to maintain a solid *mf* sound throughout the range. Do this to make certain that every note on the clarinet is performed in a long tone fashion every day. I used fifths and twelfths for many years, but found this to be superior as I was forced to listen to each note daily. Notes that had inferior sound quality or were not in tune with the rest of the clarinet were quickly fixed. Use a tuner to check the intonation on each note.

Next play the entire Klosé scale pattern, (page 123 in most Klosé books) in either the melodic, harmonic or natural form, (vary these by day) at a tempo of quarter note = 60. Play the pattern slurred and expand each of these scales to three octaves. This is followed by page 14 from the Langenus Book three, the major and minor arpeggios. These are also played at 60 and are all slurred.

I begin now to increase the tempo of the finger motion. I play the Klosé thirds at quarter note at 120, again all slurred. I do not want to introduce the tongue until the fingers are relaxed and accurate. I increase the tempo again to 176 and play the Klosé scales in all three forms at 176, and the Klosé thirds and Langenus arpeggios at 160.

I now begin warm up work on the tongue. I use page 22 from the Langenus book three, for my single tongue warm up. Dr. John Mohler, (my teacher now retired from the University of Michigan) stressed this exercise as being the single most important for developing speed with the single tongue. I think that the aspect of tension and release, tension on the two fast notes, and release on the longer note, is the same idea as tension and release that weight lifters and body builders use. I have found that during the 25 years that I have been working on this exercise my tongue speed and accuracy have gone beyond my wildest dreams. I begin at 120 and play the exercise four more times. 144, 176, 208 and 224. This is all single tongued.

I then introduce the single tongue with finger motion, again using the Klosé scales. I play them all tongued at 132 and two slurred and two tongued at 176. I again vary the minor form daily.

I warm up my double and triple tongue next. I play major scales using the pattern



I play them at 120, 144, 176, 208, 240, and 288. I follow this with scales triple tongued in the following pattern - two octaves and one note in range.



This is played at 160, 192, 224, 264, and 320. Last I do some circular breathing studies using again the Klosé scales pattern.

The entire warm up takes about 45 minutes to one hour if I do not have any reed work to do. I usually practice music on which I am working for another 30-45 minutes following. As I said, I think that everything in the warm up leads one to the next, and that every part of the clarinetist is warmed up. I also feel that it prevents some of the problems that many performers have with muscles, tendons and other performer related physical problems. I know that this is pretty extensive, but I find that I am not at a loss for technique when it's necessary. The long tones and slow playing help in sound stabilization, control, and endurance.

I do not vary the warm up on performance days, I do not warm up differently for different types of performances, nor do I use a special warm up for contemporary music. I feel that if the performer is approaching contemporary music in a different manner than "traditional" music, the clarinetist is probably playing the clarinet in the wrong fashion. The length of the warm up stays pretty much the same. If I do have less time I might leave out the circular breathing for a day. This very rarely occurs.

I hope this routine proves to be helpful to others. I have been teaching this type of warm up for about ten years. I really believe that we need to be teaching the comprehensive clarinetist and making our students aware that the physical aspects of performing the clarinet are every bit as demanding as those of the brass player.

As you can see, I feel very strongly about this aspect of clarinet performance. If I teach this to students, I find that they are "teaching themselves" so much more than if I do not insist on a comprehensive warm up. After all, they are their own teachers most of the time.

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# Clarinet Warm-Ups: Long Tones

$\text{♩} = 60$

11

21

31

41

51

**DAILY PRACTICE OF DIATONIC SCALES (MAJOR AND MINOR) AND EXERCISES  
ON TRIADS, DOMINANT SEVENTHS, DIMINISHED SEVENTHS, Etc.**

1.

C Major A Minor  
F Major D Minor Bb Major  
G Minor Eb Major  
C Minor Ab Major  
F Minor Db Major  
Bb Min. Gb Major  
Eb Min. B Major  
G# Min. E Major  
C# Min. A Major  
F# Minor D Major  
B Minor G Major  
E Minor C Major

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Langenus Arpeggios p. 14

The image displays a musical score for 'Langenus Arpeggios p. 14'. It consists of 12 staves of music, each containing a series of arpeggiated patterns. The first staff begins with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano) and a *simile* instruction. The patterns are organized into four groups of three staves each, with each group representing a different key signature. The first group (staves 1-3) is in C major. The second group (staves 4-6) is in B-flat major. The third group (staves 7-9) is in A major. The fourth group (staves 10-12) is in G major. Each staff contains a sequence of arpeggiated chords, with some staves including slurs and accents to indicate phrasing and articulation.

Considerable time should be devoted to this exercise; the author considers it to be one of the most important studies.

3

C Major

A Minor

F Major

D Min.

Bb Major

G Minor

Eb Maj.

C Minor

Ab Major

F Minor

Db Major

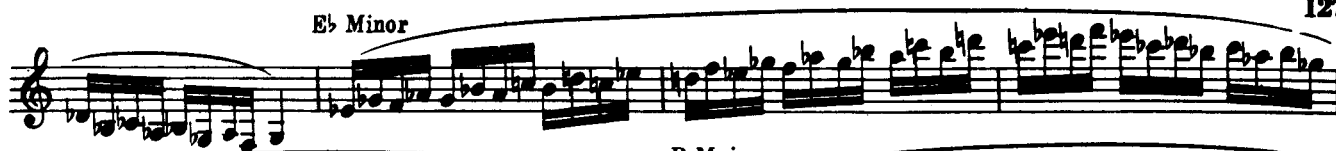
Bb Minor

Gb Major

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E $\flat$  Minor



B Major



G $\sharp$  Minor



E Major



C $\sharp$  Minor



A Major



F $\sharp$  Minor



D Major



B Minor



G Major



E Minor



C Major



3 Studies for acquiring a light Staccato

G. LANGENUS

Allegretto  $\text{♩} = 144$

The musical score consists of 11 staves of music in treble clef, 2/4 time, and one sharp (F#) key signature. The piece is titled "Allegretto" with a tempo of 144 beats per minute. The first staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, often with staccato articulation. Dynamics range from piano (*p*) to fortissimo (*ff*). The score includes several slurs, accents, and dynamic markings such as *p cresc.*, *f*, and *mf*. The piece concludes with a final note on the eleventh staff.



# **MULTIPLE ARTICULATION FOR CLARINET A METHOD**

**by  
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Multiple articulation on single reed instruments, although done by virtuoso performers for many years, has only lately been considered a necessity of advanced clarinet performance. The concept is easily learned, and aside from obvious articulation benefits, leads to good basic concepts such as throat relaxation and tongue placement on the reed and in the mouth. I've used this method with students as young as 9<sup>th</sup> grade up to my undergraduate and graduate students. It actually helps the single tongue a great deal!

Tongue placement is extremely important for successful multiple articulation. If the tip of the tongue is not touching the tip of the reed, multiple articulation is nearly impossible. To maintain the rocking motion required of the tongue, the front of the tongue must be in the front of the mouth touching the tip of the reed. "Anchor tonguing" (placing the tip of the tongue against the bottom front teeth and touching the reed in an area substantially behind the tip of the tongue), requires too much tongue motion for multiple articulation, especially in the upper register.

The double-tongue is produced by a "TEE-KEE" tongue motion; virtually the same motion used to produce multiple articulation on other woodwind instruments such as flute or instruments of the brass family. The "TEE" sound, produced by touching the tip of the tongue to the roof of the mouth, is modified by touching the tip of the tongue to the tip of the reed. The "K" sound is produced in the normal fashion, although the tongue must be higher and closer to the front of the mouth to produce the sound "KEE". The tongue should normally be placed in the "EEE" position to create the characteristic tone quality and tonal focus needed on the clarinet. The clarinet requires a large amount of "throat" control and proper "voicing" to produce sound in the proper register. If the "KEE" syllable is allowed to relax to "KAH", the upper register will be nearly impossible to produce while double-tonguing.

The study of multiple articulation should begin by working without the instrument, simply pronouncing the syllables recommended above. Since multiple articulation is normally used at a faster tempo than single articulation, it is recommended that the performer not attempt to produce the multiple tongue at a slow tempo. The sounds should be produced no slower than one can single-tongue. A tempo of at least 120 per quarter note

is recommended as most advanced players articulate sixteenths at at least 112 per quarter note. A metronome is recommended for use during all multiple tongue work. *Actual sounds are not produced since the vocal cords are not used. The air is directed in the mouth by the tongue as if these sounds were being produced.*

Daily practice should be done on the above work without the mouthpiece until the "syllables" can be produced consistently in strict rhythm with the metronome. Rhythms such as those found in Examples 1 and 2 are helpful. The lips should be relaxed and the air used sufficient to blow the lips "out." There is a tendency to use far less air on "KEE" than "TEE," creating a weak or "lopsided" sounding articulation. By blowing the lips "out" by the force of the air, the air will be sufficient enough to make the sound production with the mouthpiece inserted in the mouth. Only after this can be consistently achieved should the mouthpiece-barrel combination be used.

With the mouthpiece-barrel combination inserted in the mouth the "TEE-KEE" sound production should continue. **No** attempt should yet be made to form the embouchure firmly around the mouthpiece. *The elimination of certain factors during the learning process allows concentration on one factor of the double-tongue at a time.* Make certain the tip of the tongue now moves to touch the tip of the reed, not the roof of the mouth. The same exercises used above (see Examples 1 and 2) should be repeated at this point. Again, there should be no attempt to produce sound, simply maintain the air speed used before the mouthpiece was placed in the mouth.

A problem associated with multiple tonguing is the production of the "KEE" sound with the mouthpiece in the mouth. Many pedagogical methods recommend the practice of rhythmic patterns using only the "KEE" sound with a metronome. While this does relax the tongue in the back of the mouth and train its motion, it can be overdone with the end result the placement of the tongue in the "KAH" position. As stated above, the tongue **must** remain in the "KEE" position for the upper registers of the clarinet to sound. Some rhythmic patterns to train the "K" syllable can be helpful. Rhythmic patterns suggested in Examples 1 and 2 are effective.

When the exercises mentioned above can be "*played*" accurately and securely with the mouthpiece in the mouth, lips should gradually tighten around the mouthpiece. With sufficient air pressure, multiple articulation will be produced.

It is important to keep the tempo of the multiple articulation fast enough to justify its use. As was stated earlier, multiple articulation should be used at a tempo too rapid for the single

tongue. A tempo of at least that at which one can no longer single tongue should be used, at least sixteenth notes at a quarter note = 120.

When the sound using the mouthpiece-barrel combination is rhythmically accurate and clean, the remainder of the instrument should be added. Begin with open "G." The following rhythms, (see Examples 1 and 2) should be used, adding more sixteenths as security is felt. **KEEP THE PITCH STEADY. NO JAW MOTION.** This pattern should continue from low "E" to throat tone "B flat," (see Example 3), not moving into the clarion register until much later. The clarion register requires a feeling of much less tongue motion and should not be attempted until notes in the chalumeau register can be articulated with accuracy, speed and ease.

The patterns shown in Examples 1-3 should be used to increase speed, flexibility and accuracy. As mentioned before, the use of a metronome for all of these studies is extremely important to maintain rhythmic accuracy.

It is crucial to leave the "one note mentality" as the double tongue becomes comfortable and clean. The most difficult aspect of multiple tonguing is the coordination of the tongue and fingers. The patterns in Examples 4-9 have proven to be successful. They increase the size of the interval and include scalar studies. Diatonic scales prove to be most beneficial as they are patterns of familiarity. Concentration should be on the cleanliness of the double-tongue and the coordination of fingers and the tongue.

As stated earlier, multiple tonguing in the upper registers of the clarinet requires great control in the mouth and throat and should only be attempted after much success with the lower register. First attempts should be made as in Example 10. As ease is gained in this study, advance should be made to Example 11. Examples 12 and 13 should follow when possible.

The highest "practical" range of the multiple tongue is the highest pitch of the clarion register, the first C above the staff. Although the range is technically unlimited, multiple articulation in the altissimo register is extremely difficult and should not be expected by any but the most advanced performers.

Triple-tonguing is most successful by using a double-tongue with a displaced accent, (**TEE-KEE-TEE-KEE-TEE-KEE-TEE-KEE-TEE-KEE-TEE-KEE**). Although difficult to feel at first, Exercise 14 has proven successful. It should be noted however that the triple tongue should not be attempted until the double tongue is firmly established (see Examples 14 and 15).

Examples 16 and 17 offer other suggested supplemental studies. The clarinetist is encouraged to compose others that help to achieve success in multiple articulation. The end result should be a command of the multiple tongue from low E to 2<sup>nd</sup> ledger line C.

### Example 1

Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee

### Example 2

Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

### Example 3

Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

### Example 4

Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee Continue until.... Tee-Kee-Tee

### Example 5

Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee Continue until.... Tee-Kee-Tee

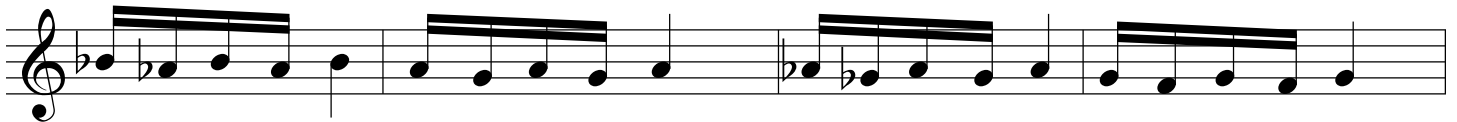
**Example 6**



Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

Continue until.....

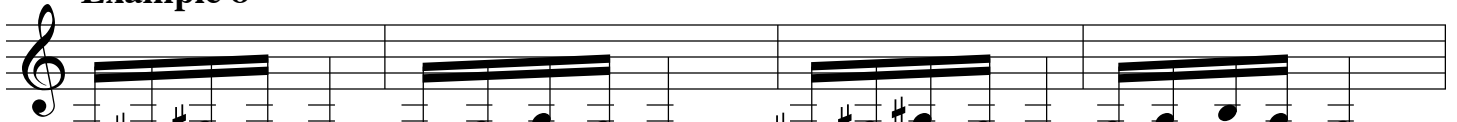
**Example 7**



Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

Continue until.....

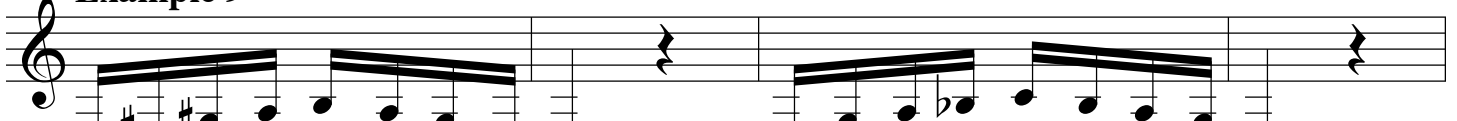
**Example 8**



Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

Continue until.....

**Example 9**



Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee



Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

**Example 10**



Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

**Example 11**



Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee

Continue until

### Example 12

Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

Continue until.... Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

### Example 13

Tee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Tee-Kee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

Tee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Tee-Kee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

Tee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Tee-Kee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

Tee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Tee-Kee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

Continue until....

Tee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Tee-Kee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

### Example 14

Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

Continue until....

### Example 15

Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee

Continue until....

### Example 16

Tee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee Tee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee

Tee Tee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee Tee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee

Continue until.... Tee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee

Tee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee Tee



**Example 16 cont.**

Musical notation for Example 16 cont. The first staff contains two measures of music with the lyrics "Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee" written below. The second staff begins with the text "Continue until...." followed by a measure of music and the lyrics "Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee" below it.

**Example 17**

Musical notation for Example 17. The first staff shows a sequence of notes with the lyrics "Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-etc ....." below. The second staff continues the sequence. The third staff shows a different melodic line with the lyrics "Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee-Kee-Tee, etc...." below. The fourth staff continues this second melodic line.

**Circular Breathing**  
**a Method**  
*by*  
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Circular breathing is a technique that allows the wind instrumentalist to maintain sound for long periods of time by inhaling through the nose while maintaining air flow through the instrument, using the cheeks as "bellows". The procedure involves four distinct stages:

1. As the performer runs low on air, the cheeks are puffed.
2. Air from the cheeks is pushed with the cheek muscles and tongue through the instrument and used to maintain the sound while the performer inhales through the nose.
3. As the air decreases in the cheeks and sufficient air is brought into the lungs through the nose, the performer "switches" back to air in the lungs.
4. The cheeks are brought back to their normal embouchure position.

The process of "switching" from air in the lungs to air in the cheeks and back again is circular breathing. There are many methods to teach this "feeling". The following is one method used to learn this technique as well as several exercises that I feel particularly helpful. As in any new technique, circular breathing must be practiced on a **daily basis** for success. In addition, it is very important to begin work with the instrument in the mouth as soon as possible during study. Exercises are important, but are not helpful if the student cannot achieve the desired result with the instrument.

Preliminary study is done in 8 steps:

1. Puff the cheeks and breath normally with the cheeks extended. This will help get the "feel" of breathing with the cheeks extended.
2. Puff the cheeks and create a small aperture in the lips and let air escape through the lips while inhaling and exhaling normally through the nose. By controlling the muscles in the cheeks, try to maintain an air stream for three to five seconds.
3. Place a straw in a glass of water and repeat step two with the straw in the water. Sufficient air and air pressure should be used to force air from the straw to create bubbles in the water. This step should be repeated many times until the process feels somewhat natural.
4. While the air is being forced from the cheeks, inhale quickly and deeply through the nose. While the cheeks are still slightly puffed, begin to

## Circular Breathing, 2

exhale through the mouth and empty the lungs. Try to keep the air stream and bubbles as constant and even as possible. Repeat several times.

5. Repeat step four but do not empty the lungs. As the lungs begin to empty again puff the cheeks. While the air is being forced from the cheeks, inhale quickly and deeply through the nose. After a small amount of air has been inhaled, "switch back" to air used from the lungs. Repeat several times. This is the process that is used while circular breathing.
6. Place only the mouthpiece and barrel into the mouth. Practice holding a pitch as steady as possible by alternating a normal embouchure with an embouchure with the cheeks puffed. One will notice the firmness necessary in the corners of the mouth and support needed from the upper lip area.
7. Repeat steps **four** and **five** with the mouthpiece and barrel **only** inserted in the mouth. The student is likely to squeak quite a bit during these first few attempts. The student will also probably notice a "bump" in the sound while changing from the sound produced by the air in the cheeks to the sound produced by the air in the lungs. This is natural. Exercises later will be used to try to eliminate or smooth this bump as much as possible for each individual.
8. The remainder instrument should now be added. It is important to begin using the entire clarinet as soon as possible. The result will not be as smooth a sound as might be expected, but it is important to "become accustomed" to the resistance offered by the clarinet as soon as possible. The student should not be as concerned with getting a great sound as long as one that is usable is attained.

The following exercises prove very useful in beginning circular breathing study. It is important to remember that this technique **does** take time to develop. Most performers take several months of study prior to any public performance attempt.

The most workable register is the upper chalumeau. It is also easier to mask the bump in the sound if you breath during passages of moving notes. See examples 1-3. The student is encouraged to compose other similar exercises.

The upper clarion register is the most difficult for circular breathing. Motion of the soft tissue in the mouth and throat that is involved during inhalation through the nose causes a scoop in the pitch that is very difficult to control. During the early stages of study, **G** on the top of the staff is the upper limit for successful circular breathing. Articulation is also difficult while circular breathing and should not be attempted until the student is very comfortable slurring.

# Music Examples

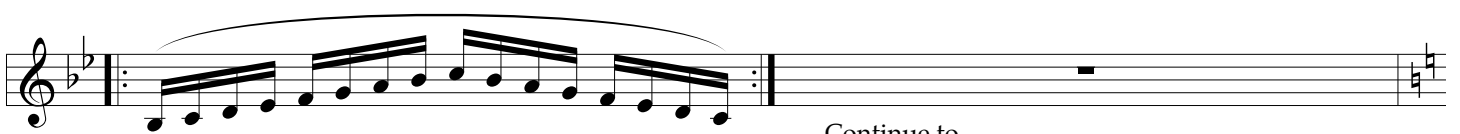
Example 1



Example 2



Example 3



Continue to.....

