

Erik Steighner

Progressive Warm-Ups for Saxophone

version 1.24

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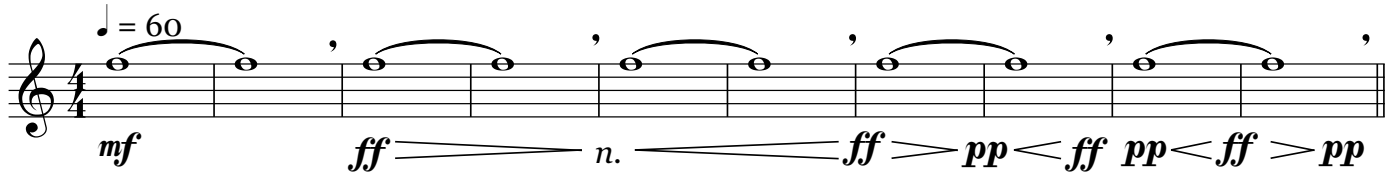
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Saxophone Warm-Up

Novice (15 min)

1. Neck and Mouthpiece

♩ = 60

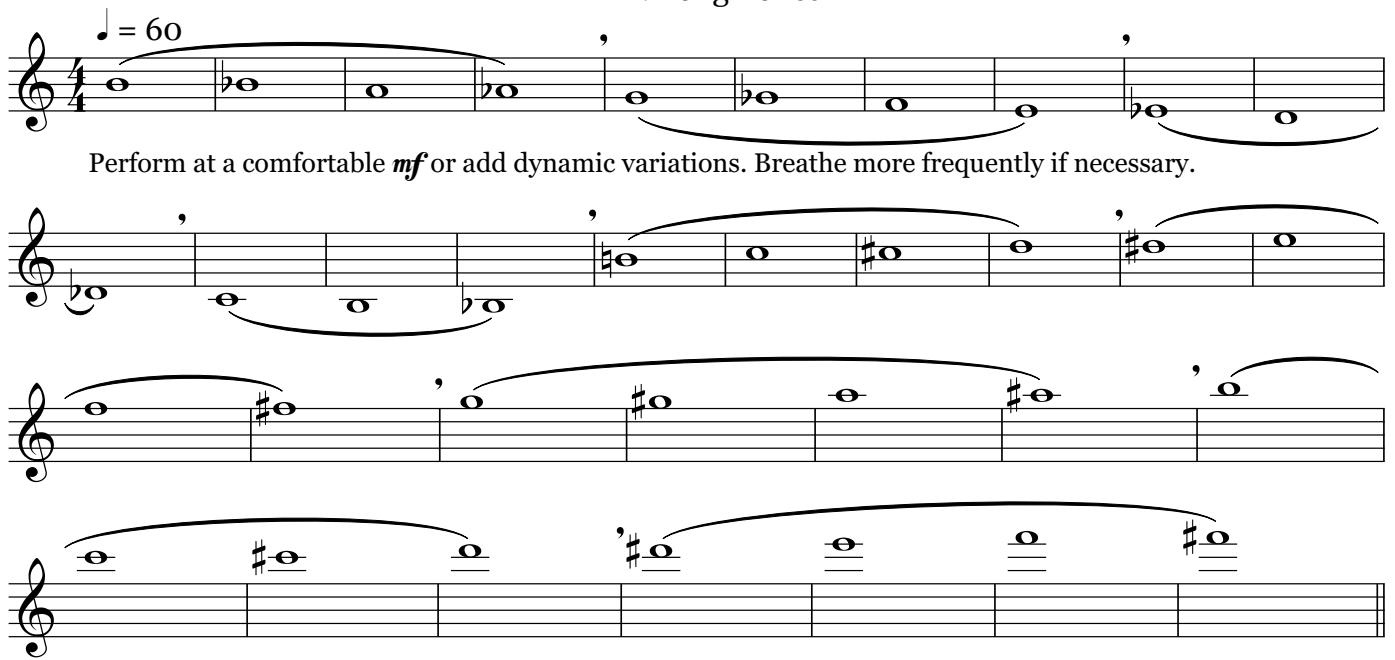


mf *ff* *n.* *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp*

This exercise is written on a single staff in 4/4 time. It consists of eight measures, each containing a half note. The notes are: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, and C5. The first measure is marked *mf*. The second measure is marked *ff*. The third measure is marked *n.* (normal). The fourth measure is marked *ff*. The fifth measure is marked *pp*. The sixth measure is marked *ff*. The seventh measure is marked *pp*. The eighth measure is marked *ff*. The notes are grouped by slurs, and there are breath marks (comma) after each note.

2. Long Tones

♩ = 60



Perform at a comfortable *mf* or add dynamic variations. Breathe more frequently if necessary.

This section contains four staves of musical notation for long tones. Each staff contains four measures, each with a half note. The notes are: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, and C5. The first staff has a slur over the first two measures and a breath mark after the second measure. The second staff has a slur over the first two measures and a breath mark after the second measure. The third staff has a slur over the first two measures and a breath mark after the second measure. The fourth staff has a slur over the first two measures and a breath mark after the second measure.

3. Articulation

♩ = variable

X notehead = tongue on reed, producing a muffled sound or subtone.
Diamond notehead = tongue on reed, allowing only air to sound.

4. Mouthpiece Exercises (Concert Pitch)

♩ = variable

Bend as low as possible.

f *p* *f* *p* *f* *p*

Maintain consistent pitch.

Vary dynamics once the exercise is easily achieved at *mf*.

Perform the above exercises on the appropriate pitch for your instrument's mouthpiece:

Soprano saxophone = concert C (written D)

Alto saxophone = concert A (written F#)

Tenor saxophone = concert F/F# (written G/G#)

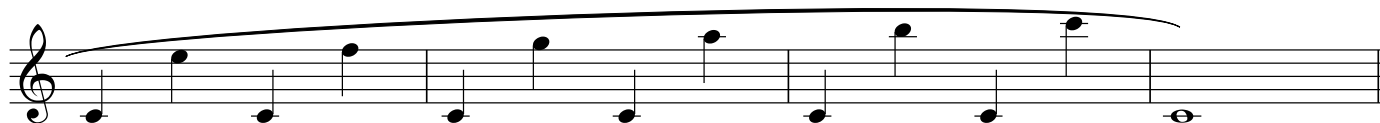
Baritone saxophone = concert D (written B)

5. Skips

♩ = variable



Breathe when necessary and repeat stubborn intervals. On some days, perform the entire exercise legato tongued, or take a breath and rearticulate each low note after slurring down to it.



6. Vibrato and/or Articulation Speed (Omit for Quick Warm-Up)

♩ = 40-44

♩ = 45-49



Each notated rhythm represents one complete vibrato pulse (ooo-wah-ooo). Vary pitches as desired. Cycle tempos each day from 40/45/50/etc. to 41/46/51/etc. and so forth. You may also remove the ties and use this as an articulation speed exercise; in this case, proceed past 89 bpm and/or make larger tempo jumps.

♩ = 50-54

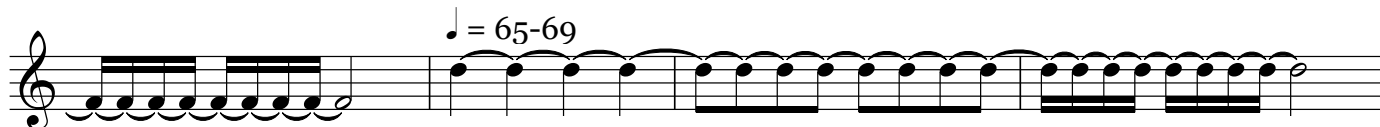


♩ = 55-59

♩ = 60-64

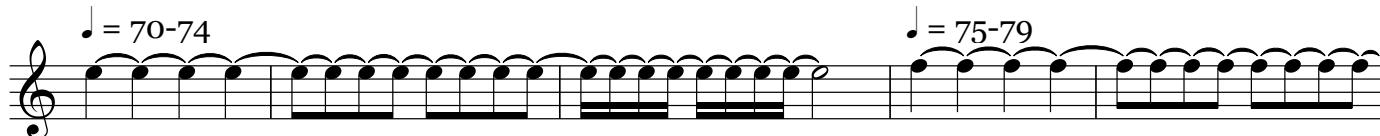


♩ = 65-69

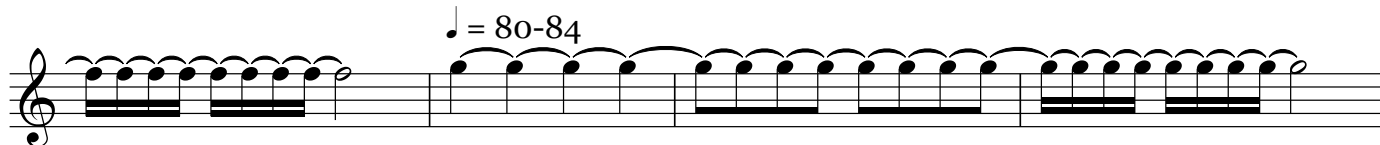


♩ = 70-74

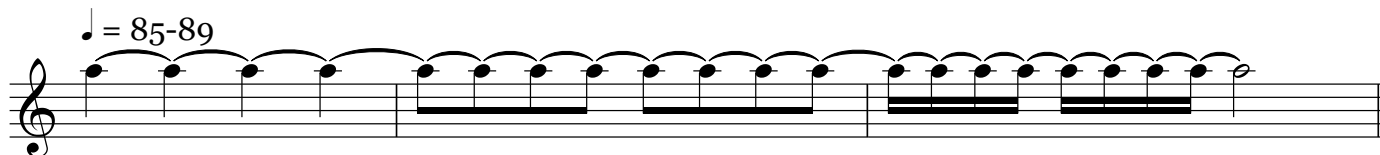
♩ = 75-79



♩ = 80-84



♩ = 85-89



7. Primary Scales/Intervals as Assigned

From Kynaston *Daily Studies*, Londeix *Les Gammes Conjointes et en Intervalles*, etc.

8. Scale/Interval Review (Omit for Quick Warm-Up)

Each person's scale review will look a little different, but here is an example progression over many weeks:

LEARNING CYCLE:

2 major scales per day, repeat each day for a week
 4 major scales per day, repeat each day for a week
 6 major scales per day, repeat each day for a week
 All major scales each day, repeat each day for a week

LEARNING CYCLE:

2 minor scales per day (includes both harmonic/melodic forms), repeat each day for a week
 4 minor scales per day, repeat each day for a week
 6 minor scales per day, repeat each day for a week
 All minor scales each day, repeat each day for a week

REVIEW CYCLE:

All major/minor scales over 4 days (3 keys per day)
 All major/minor scales over 3 days (4 keys per day)
 All major/minor scales over 2 days (6 keys per day)
 All major/minor scales each day

LEARNING CYCLE:

2 major thirds per day, repeat each day for a week
 4 major thirds per day, repeat each day for a week
 6 major thirds per day, repeat each day for a week
 All major thirds each day, repeat each day for a week

REVIEW CYCLE:

All major scales/thirds and minor scales over 4 days (3 keys per day)
 All major scales/thirds and minor scales over 3 days (4 keys per day)
 All major scales/thirds and minor scales over 2 days (6 keys per day)
 All major scales/thirds and minor scales each day

Continue pattern until you have learned all major and minor scales, thirds, and arpeggios.

Always choose tempos that you can execute with complete accuracy.

Note: Baritone saxophonists may adapt exercises to utilize low A, soprano saxophonists may abbreviate the altissimo range, etc.

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Saxophone Warm-Up

Intermediate (30 min)

1. Neck and Mouthpiece

♩ = 40

mf *ff* *n.* *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp*

2. Long Tones

♩ = 60

Perform at a comfortable *mf* or add your own dynamic variations.

Continue pattern into altissimo if desired.

3. Articulation

♩ = variable

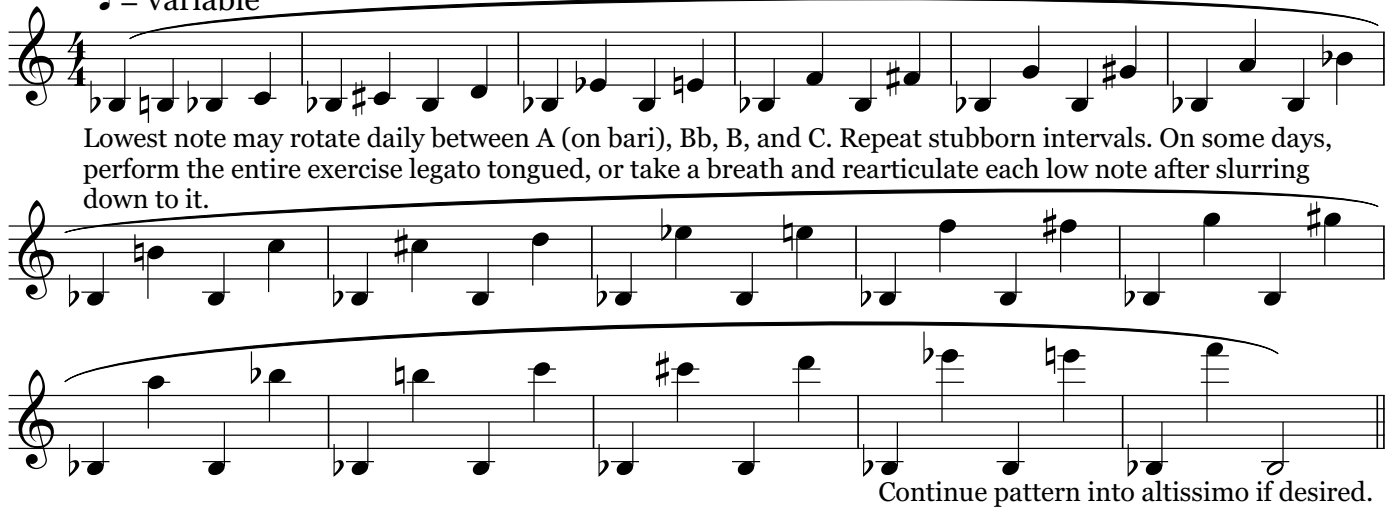
etc.

X notehead = tongue on reed, producing a muffled sound or subtone.

Diamond notehead = tongue on reed, allowing only air to sound.

4. Chromatic Skips

♩ = variable



Lowest note may rotate daily between A (on bari), Bb, B, and C. Repeat stubborn intervals. On some days, perform the entire exercise legato tongued, or take a breath and rearticulate each low note after slurring down to it.

Continue pattern into altissimo if desired.

5. Voicing and Overtone Matching

♩ = variable



X notehead = play note with octave key depressed.
Diamond notehead = finger bottom pitch, play upper pitch as harmonic/overtone.

(Thumb on C3 if needed)

(Fr F#)

6. Vibrato and Dynamics

Tempos and note durations may be adjusted for the larger saxophones or as needed; use 16th note vibrato throughout.

The musical score consists of four staves of music, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The staves are organized into four measures, each with a tempo marking above it: 40s, 50s, 60s, and 70s. The notes are primarily half notes and whole notes, with some eighth notes in the 60s measure. The dynamics markings are *ff* (fortissimo) and *n.* (normal). The 40s measure has four *ff* markings. The 50s measure has four *ff* markings. The 60s measure has four *ff* markings. The 70s measure has four *ff* markings. The 80s measure has four *ff* markings. The 90s measure has four *ff* markings.

Each day, increase your vibrato by 1 bpm (Day 1: 40-50-60-70-80-90; Day 2: 41-91, Day 3: 42-92, etc.) until you hit 49-99, followed by a reset to 40-90.; Regularly rotate the location of your starting note.

This exercise may also be performed with the octave key down in the lowest octave (this may be possible only at louder dynamics) and on overtones.

This is also a great exercise with the vibrato omitted; in this case, play all notes for five counts at 40-60 bpm.

7. Mouthpiece Exercises

Bend (as low as possible)

Scale (substitute other scales/modes as desired)

Thirds

Fourths

Fifths

Sixths

Sevenths

Chromatic

etc.

Chromatic Intervals

Perform the above exercises starting on the appropriate pitch for your instrument's mouthpiece:

Soprano saxophone = concert C (written D)

Alto saxophone = concert A (written F#)

Tenor saxophone = concert F/F# (written G/G#)

Baritone saxophone = concert D (written B)

8. Front F Bends

etc.

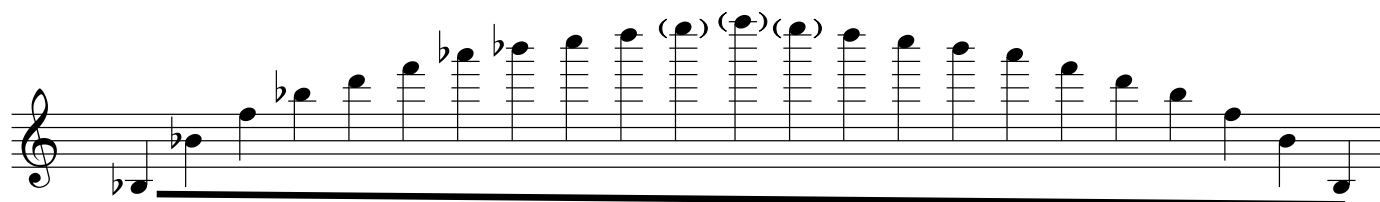
Slide without changing fingerings, or eliminate the portamentos and voice straight to the lower pitches.

9. Bends Throughout the Range

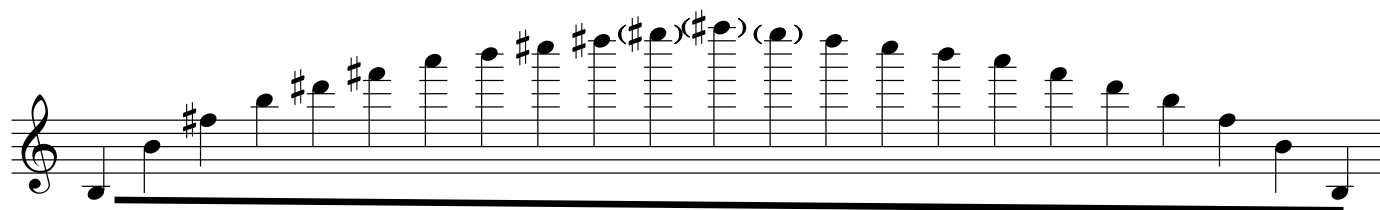


Bends become progressively smaller as needed until a half step is reached.

10. Overtone series



Finger lowest note and slur up and down the overtone series, using air attacks and flick/vent keys only when necessary. Vary the pattern each day (slurring up and down in sets of three or four, skipping every other partial, etc.).

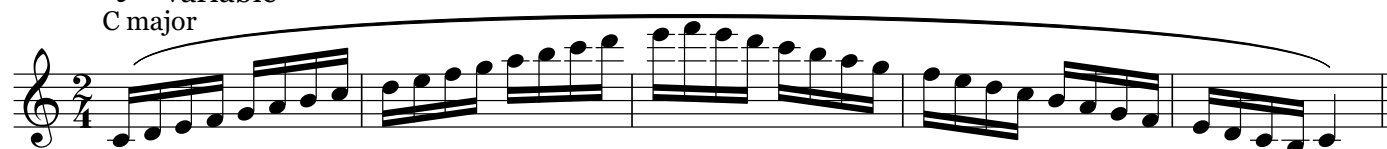



11. Primary Scales/Intervals as Assigned

From Kynaston *Daily Studies*, Londeix *Les Gammes Conjointes et en Intervalles*, etc.

12. General Scale/Interval Review

♩ = variable
C major



C melodic minor



C harmonic minor



Proceed through all 12 keys either chromatically or by the circle of fifths.

Add major and minor thirds and/or arpeggios to each key if desired.

Work to increase tempo over time using a simple linear progression (40 bpm, 44, 48, 52, 56, etc.) until you can no longer maintain accuracy and control, then reset to 40 bpm.

Inegrate cycles of whole tone, diminished, and chromatic scales/intervals as desired.

13. Finish with a few exercises from the Londeix *Exercices Mécaniques*.

Saxophone Warm-Up

Advanced (30-40 min)

♩ = 30

1. Neck and Mouthpiece

mf *ff* *n.* *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp*

♩ = 60

2. Long Tones

Perform at a comfortable *mf* or add your own dynamic variations.

Continue pattern into altissimo if desired.

♩ = variable

3. Articulation

X notehead = tongue on reed, producing a muffled sound or subtone.
Diamond notehead = tongue on reed, allowing only air to sound.

4. Chromatic Skips

♩ = variable

Lowest note may rotate daily between A (on bari), Bb, B, and C. Repeat stubborn intervals. On some days, perform the entire exercise legato tongued, or take a breath and rearticulate each low note after slurring down to it.

Continue pattern into altissimo if desired.

5. Voicing and Overtone Matching

♩ = variable

X notehead = play note with octave key depressed.
Diamond notehead = finger bottom pitch, play upper pitch as harmonic/overtone.

(Thumb on C3 if needed)

(Fr F#)

6. Vibrato and Dynamics

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Tempos and note durations may be adjusted for the larger saxophones or as needed; use 16th note vibrato throughout.

♩ = 40s

n. *ff* *n.* *ff* *n.* *sim.*

♩ = 50s

♩ = 60s

♩ = 70s

♩ = 80s

♩ = 90s

Each day, increase your vibrato by 1 bpm (Day 1: 40-50-60-70-80-90; Day 2: 41-91, Day 3: 42-92, etc.) until you hit 49-99, followed by a reset to 40-90.; Regularly rotate the location of your starting note.

Change the rate of vibrato progression to 2-3 measures at each speed if you wish to avoid vibrato in the altissimo register.

This exercise may also be performed with the octave key down in the lowest octave (this may be possible only at louder dynamics) and on overtones by fingering the lowest possible fundamental for each pitch.

This is also a great exercise with the vibrato omitted; in this case, keep the metronome at 60 bpm and don't change time signatures.

7. Mouthpiece Exercises

Bend (as low as possible)

Scale (substitute other scales/modes as desired)

Thirds

Fourths

Fifths

Sixths

Sevenths

Chromatic

etc.

Chromatic Intervals

Perform the above exercises starting on the appropriate pitch for your instrument's mouthpiece:

Soprano saxophone = concert C (written D)

Alto saxophone = concert A (written F#)

Tenor saxophone = concert F/F# (written G/G#)

Baritone saxophone = concert D (written B)

8. Front F Bends

etc.

Slide without changing fingerings, or eliminate the portamentos and voice straight to the lower pitches.

9. Bends Throughout the Range

Bends become progressively smaller as needed until a half step is reached.

10. "Lip Slurs"

Perform entire exercise on X-Ta fingering.

Use X-4-Ta fingering.

[illegible]

Use standard fingerings and continue pattern until fourths are no longer possible.

11. Overtone series

[illegible]

Finger lowest note and slur up and down the overtone series, using air attacks or flick/vent keys only when necessary. Vary pattern each day (slurring up and down in sets of three or four, skip every other partial, etc.).

12. Primary Scale/Interval Study

Day 1: C major scale and thirds

$\text{♩} = 50$

Use single, double, and/or slap tongue.

$\text{♩} = 60$

Use single, double, and/or slap tongue.

Continue alternating scale and thirds using the following bpm:

70: Scale tongued up, slurred down	80: Thirds tongued up, slurred down
90: Scale slurred up, tongued down	100: Thirds slurred up, tongued down
110: Scale tongued up, slurred down	120: Thirds tongued up, slurred down
130: Scale slurred up, tongued down	140: Thirds slurred up, tongued down
150: Scale double tongued up (no altissimo after this point)	170: Scale double tongued down
190: Thirds double tongued up	210: Thirds double tongued down
230: Scale double tongued up	250: Scale double tongued down

In the previous exercise, you may begin double tonguing earlier or later as needed and use patterns such as:

The rest of the routine proceeds using the same alternating pattern:

Day 2: C major fourths and fifths
 Day 3: C major sixths and sevenths
 Day 4: C major octaves and arpeggios

Day 5: C harmonic minor scale and thirds
 Day 6: C harmonic minor fourths and fifths
 Day 7: C harmonic minor sixths and sevenths
 Day 8: C harmonic minor octaves and arpeggios

Proceed through all twelve major and harmonic minor keys followed by cycles spent on chromatic, diminished, and whole tone scales.

♩ = see note below
C major



You may eliminate the last quarter note and proceed to the next scale/pattern, circular breathing if necessary.

C melodic minor



C harmonic minor



Proceed through all 12 keys either chromatically or by the circle of fifths.

Add major and minor thirds and/or arpeggios to each key if desired. Work to increase tempo over time, but never play faster than you can execute with complete accuracy.

Beyond a simple linear progression (60, 63, 66, 69, 72, etc.), one possible long-term progression might be:

Day 1: 60 bpm
Day 2: 120 bpm
Day 3: 62 bpm
Day 4: 126 bpm
etc.
Day 11: 75 bpm
Day 12: 150 bpm

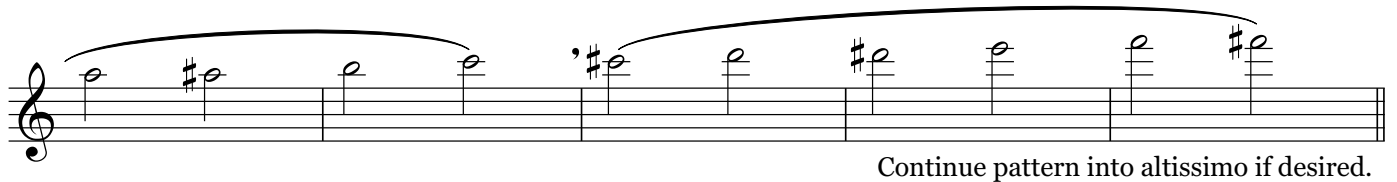
Next, reset to 60 bpm and try to carry your progression further using smaller jumps each day, and/or introduce slow/medium/fast days (such as 60-90-120, 62-93-124, 64-96-128, etc.).

The same principles can be applied to the review of whole tone, diminished, and chromatic scales/intervals.

14. Finish with a few exercises from the Londeix *Exercices Mécaniques*.

Intermediate/Advanced, Quick Version (5-10 min)

♩ = 60



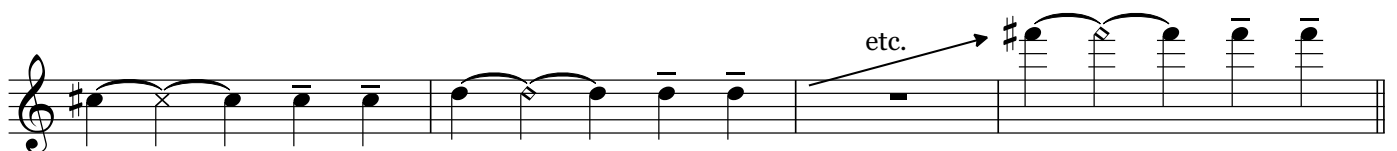
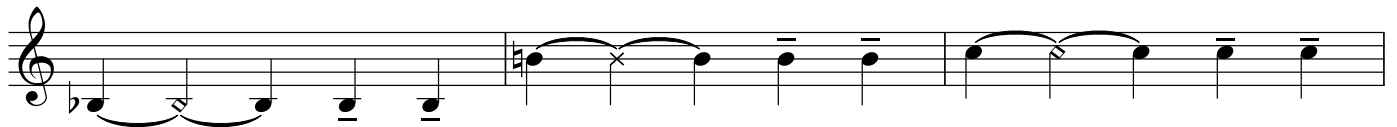
Continue pattern into altissimo if desired.

2. Articulation Warm-Up

♩ = variable

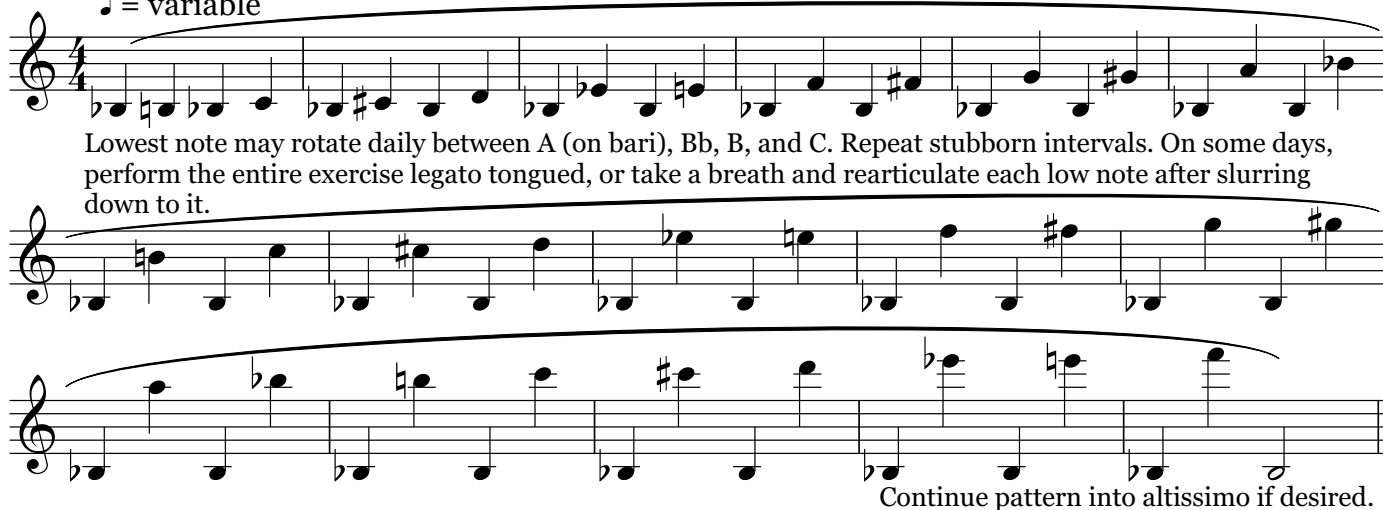
etc.

X notehead = tongue on reed, producing a muffled sound or subtone.
Diamond notehead = tongue on reed, allowing only air to sound.



3. Chromatic Skips

♩ = variable



Lowest note may rotate daily between A (on bari), Bb, B, and C. Repeat stubborn intervals. On some days, perform the entire exercise legato tongued, or take a breath and rearticulate each low note after slurring down to it.

Continue pattern into altissimo if desired.

4. Voicing and Overtone Matching

♩ = variable



X notehead = play note with octave key depressed.
Diamond notehead = finger bottom pitch, play upper pitch as harmonic/overtone.

(Thumb on C3 if needed)

(Fr F#)

5. Mouthpiece Exercises

Bend (as low as possible)

Scale (substitute other scales/modes as desired)

Thirds

Chromatic Intervals

Perform the above exercises starting on the appropriate pitch for your instrument's mouthpiece:

Soprano saxophone = concert C (written D)

Alto saxophone = concert A (written F#)

Tenor saxophone = concert F/F# (written G/G#)

Baritone saxophone = concert D (written B)

6. Front F Bends

etc.

Slide without changing fingerings, or eliminate the portamentos and voice straight to the lower pitches.

7. Overtone series

Finger lowest note and slur up and down the overtone series, using air attacks or flick/vent keys only when necessary. Vary pattern each day (slurring up and down in sets of three or four, skip every other partial, etc.).

8. Chromatic Scale (Optional)

22

♩ = 50

Use single, double, and/or slap tongue.

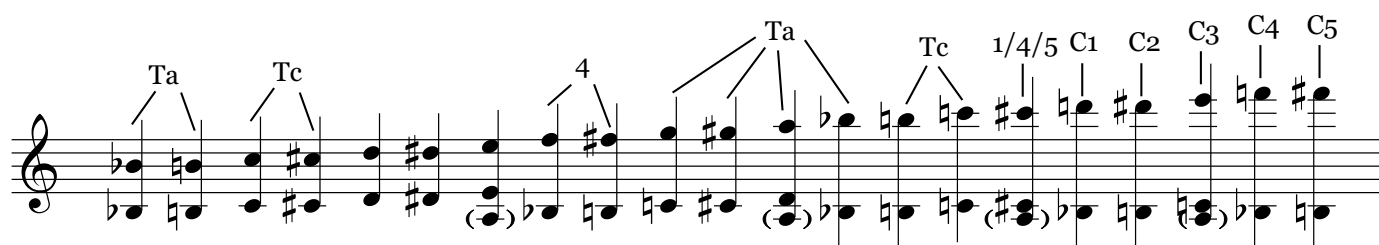
♩ = 70

Continue scale at the following tempos:
90 - slurred up, tongued down
110 - tongued up, slurred down
130 - slurred up, tongued down
150 - tongued up, slurred down
170, 190, 210, 230, 250 - optional, for double-tonguing

This method could also be used on a different scale, a scale and its intervals, etc.
Extend into altissimo register if desired.

Saxophone Overtones

Quick Reference with Optional Vent/Flick Keys



French key nomenclature:

Side Bb = Ta Side C = Tc Palm D = C1 Palm Eb = C2 Palm E = C3 Palm F = C4 High F# = C5

Scale/Interval Progress Chart

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MAJOR								
	Scale	3rds	4ths	5ths	6ths	7ths	Octaves	Arpeggio
C								
F								
Bb								
Eb								
Ab								
Db/C#								
Gb/F#								
B								
E								
A								
D								
G								

HARMONIC MINOR (Divide Cells in Half for Melodic Minor If Desired)								
	Scale	3rds	4ths	5ths	6ths	7ths	Octaves	Arpeggio
C								
F								
Bb								
Eb								
Ab								
Db/C#								
Gb/F#								
B								
E								
A								
D								
G								

WHOLE TONE								
	Scale	3rds	4ths	5ths		7ths	Octaves	Arpeggios
WT 1					(N/A)			
WT 2								

DIMINISHED								
	Scale	3rds	4ths	5ths	6ths	7ths (both)	Octaves	Arpeggio
Dim. 1						/		
Dim. 2						/		
Dim. 3						/		

CHROMATIC INTERVALS			
Scale		5ths	
2nds		Min. 6ths	
Min. 3rds		Maj. 6ths	
Maj. 3rds		Min. 7ths	
4ths		Maj. 7ths	
Tritones		Octaves	

BENCHMARKS	
40 bpm	120 bpm
60 bpm	140 bpm
80 bpm	160 bpm
100 bpm	180+ bpm