
THE WHOLE HORN

Curricula and Syllabi

The Saxophone Program · The Jazz Program · Afro-Cuban Music and Percussion · The Study of Saxophone, from the Preparatory Year to Year 9 · The First Year · The Jazz Year · The First 30 Days

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ONLINE

Every syllabus, with its practice links and films, is at thewholehorn.com/curriculum. Each link opens the exercise in The Whole Horn app, on the student's own instrument.

The Saxophone Program From Conservatory to Career

Reverse Engineering Success for the Modern Saxophonist · the Preparatory Year to the Ninth-Year
Maîtrise.

Thomas Hornig · Professor of Saxophone 1994 to 2024 · Henri Selmer Paris Artist · The Whole Horn

Reverse engineering success

The philosophy

The philosophy guiding this proposal is simple yet profound: to succeed as musicians, our students must be at the center of the musical experience. They must be classically trained and jazz-trained, receptive to all musical styles, and, above all, they must possess a work ethic that is second to none. Leadership in music is defined by hard work and dedication, and it is this ethos that we seek to instill in our students.

The blueprint

It is not merely a curriculum revision; it is a blueprint for cultivating the next generation of musicians who are not only technically proficient but are also versatile, innovative, and resilient in the face of an uncertain future.

This forward-thinking approach is designed to equip our students with the skills they need to navigate and thrive in a world where traditional boundaries are constantly being redrawn. By reverse-engineering success, we ensure that our students are not merely surviving in this changing landscape but are leading the way forward.

The ethos

“Leadership in music is defined by hard work and dedication, and it is this ethos that we seek to instill in our students.”

They must be classically trained and jazz-trained, receptive to all musical styles, and, above all, they must possess a work ethic that is second to none.

The first twelve weeks

Watch the video · 26 s

PHASES 1–2 · WEEKS 1–4

Phase 1: Foundational Setup and Embouchure (Weeks 1–2)

Instrument Assembly and Familiarization · Posture and Hand Position · Embouchure Development

Phase 2: Sound Production and Relaxation (Weeks 2–4)

Initial Sound Production · Relaxation Techniques

Long tones

Open in the app

Long tones · soft to full and back (messa di voce)

Open in the app

PHASES 3–4 · WEEKS 3–12

Phase 3: Articulation and Scale Introduction (Weeks 3–5)

Articulation Fundamentals · Introduction to Major Scales

Phase 4: Mastery of the 12 Major Scales (Weeks 5–12)

Achieve fluidity in all 12 major scales across the full range of the instrument.

The first twelve weeks

C major, one octave, staccato then tenuto; G, F and B ♭ major, one octave

[Open in the app](#)

Major scales, all 12 keys · full range (written low B ♭ to high F) · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

Begin the journey towards mastering all 12 major scales, which are the foundation of improvisation and technical fluency. As students gain confidence in their scales and technical skills, introduce them to ensemble playing.

Structured Saxophone Program: Early Development Phases

Every year, in The Whole Horn

Each link opens the year's scales in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone (all 12 keys; the app starts at two octaves, ♩ =60).

Preparatory Year

Major scales · all 12 keys

Open

First Year

Major scales and arpeggios

Open

Second Year

Major and harmonic minor scales

Open

Third Year

Major, harmonic minor, arpeggios

Open

Fourth Year

Major, harmonic minor, arpeggios

Open

Fifth Year

Diminished scales

Open

Every year, in The Whole Horn

Each link opens the year's scales in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone (all 12 keys; the app starts at two octaves, ♩ =60).

Sixth Year

Diminished scales · arpeggiated 7ths

Open

Seventh & Eighth Years

Daily routine · scales and arpeggios

Open

Preparatory Year

Building the Foundation Through Engagement and Performance

Watch the video · 20 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/saxophone-program/

Watch the video

Curriculum focus

Embouchure and Sound Production: Focus on creating a stable, flexible embouchure and producing a clear, consistent tone.

Hand Position and Fingerings: Introduce basic fingerings starting with G, A, B, C, and progressing to other notes as the student gains confidence.

Note Recognition: Use exercises to help students identify notes on the staff and connect them with the correct fingerings.

Rhythm Reading: Begin with simple rhythms in 4/4 time, using whole notes, half notes, and quarter notes.

Scale Practice: Start with the C major scale, focusing on even tone and finger transitions.

Articulation Exercises: Introduce simple articulation patterns within the scale practice to develop clear tonguing and breath control.

Simple Repertoire: Introduce easy, melodic pieces that are both enjoyable and educational.

Long tones

Open in the app

The Milestone: every note, from G up to the top and down to the bottom, tongued, very quietly

Open in the app

C major, one octave, in whole, half and quarter notes

Open in the app

Preparatory Year

Building the Foundation Through Engagement and Performance

Major scales, all 12 keys, one octave

Open in the app

C major, one octave, staccato then tenuto

Open in the app

The year

Each week: Individual Lessons (1-on-1 Sessions) · Ensemble Rehearsals · Masterclasses · Performance Opportunities.

Ongoing Evaluation: Regular check-ins during lessons to assess students' progress with note recognition, rhythm reading, and basic technical skills.

“Students in the preparatory year should be encouraged to learn all 12 scales. This is counterintuitive for most educators. The rationale is retention. Students are very concerned with their own success, and if they can be led to believe that learning 12 scales is an absolute necessity, on the other side of that they will see themselves as outliers. This is why the Milestone exercise in the app really is a milestone.”

Practice this year in The Whole Horn

Open in the app

First Year

Building on the Foundation with Increased Structure and Performance

Watch the video · 24 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/saxophone-program/

Watch the video

Curriculum focus

Scales and Arpeggios: Continue with the 12 major scales, now expanding to two octaves where possible.

Long Tones and Dynamics: Exercises to develop control over dynamics and tone quality.

Theory Basics: Introduction to intervals, simple key signatures, and basic chord structures.

Sight-Reading: Begin sight-reading simple pieces, focusing on accuracy in rhythm and pitch.

Articulation Exercises: Continued work on tonguing techniques, with exercises that introduce staccato, legato, and slurs.

Phrasing Concepts: Introduction to the idea of musical sentences, encouraging students to think about how phrases should be shaped and connected.

Simple Pieces: Start with simple melodies and gradually introduce pieces that incorporate basic articulation and phrasing techniques.

Etudes: Introduce very simple etudes that focus on specific technical aspects, such as articulation or rhythm.

Major scales and tonic & dominant arpeggios, all 12 keys, two octaves

Open in the app

Long tones · soft to full and back (messa di voce)

Open in the app

First Year

Building on the Foundation with Increased Structure and Performance

Intervals by ear (Name It, level 1); 3rds and triads in the major keys

[Open in the app](#)

Major scales, two octaves, staccato then tenuto

[Open in the app](#)

The year

Each week: Individual Lessons (1-on-1 Sessions) · Ensemble Rehearsals · Masterclasses · Performance Opportunities.

Daily Practice: Parents should ensure that their child practices for at least 30 minutes each day, gradually increasing the time as the child becomes more comfortable with their instrument.

Practice this year in The Whole Horn

[Open in the app](#)

Second Year

Building Technique and Introducing Expressive Playing

Watch the video · 17 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/saxophone-program/

Watch the video

Curriculum focus

Scales and Arpeggios: Focus on mastering major and natural minor scales, with an introduction to harmonic minor scales.

Long Tones and Dynamics: Exercises to improve dynamic control and tone quality, focusing on smooth transitions and a balanced sound across different dynamics.

Theory Development: Expand on rhythmic concepts such as dotted rhythms and syncopation.

Sight-Reading: Develop sight-reading skills using simple etudes and pieces that challenge the student's ability to quickly recognize notes, rhythms, and key changes.

Articulation Exercises: Continue working on clear, consistent tonguing and slurring, with an emphasis on developing control over different articulation patterns.

Phrasing Concepts: Explore phrasing more deeply, encouraging students to think about the emotional content of their music and how to express it through dynamics, articulation, and tempo.

Classical Repertoire: Introduce intermediate-level classical pieces that challenge the student's technical abilities while developing their musical expression.

Etudes: Begin working on simple etudes that focus on specific technical challenges, such as those by Langenus or small sections from Heller's Etudes.

Part 1 of 2: major scale, natural minor scale, chromatic scale, tonic & dominant arpeggios · two octaves

Open in the app

Part 2 of 2: harmonic minor scale · two octaves

Open in the app

Second Year

Building Technique and Introducing Expressive Playing

Long tones · soft to full and back (messa di voce)

[Open in the app](#)

Major and natural minor scales, two octaves, staccato then tenuto

[Open in the app](#)

The year

Each week: Individual Lessons (1-on-1 Sessions) · Ensemble Rehearsals · Masterclasses · Performance Opportunities.

Structured Practice: Parents should continue to ensure that their child practices regularly, aiming for 45 minutes to an hour a day.

Method books: Selected Studies for Saxophone — H. Voxman; Melodious and Progressive Studies for Saxophone, Book 1 — David Hite.

Practice this year in The Whole Horn

[Open in the app](#)

Third Year

Developing Technical Proficiency and Musical Independence

Watch the video · 19 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/saxophone-program/

Watch the video

Curriculum focus

Scales and Arpeggios: Students should master all major, natural minor, harmonic minor, and melodic minor scales, extending to three octaves where possible.

Altissimo and Extended Techniques: Begin introducing the basics of altissimo playing (higher register) and other extended techniques such as growling or multiphonics, as appropriate to the student's level and interest.

Advanced Theory Concepts: Students will explore more complex harmonic structures, including secondary dominants, modulations, and chromaticism.

Sight-Reading: Sight-reading exercises will now include pieces with more challenging rhythms, key changes, and less predictable melodic lines.

Complex Articulation Patterns: Exercises should now include more varied and complex articulation patterns within scales, etudes, and repertoire.

Advanced Phrasing: Students will work on shaping longer, more complex phrases, understanding how to use dynamics, rubato, and articulation to convey the emotional content of the music.

Classical Pieces: Introduction of intermediate to advanced classical repertoire, such as pieces by Jean-Baptiste Singelée, Heitor Villa-Lobos, or Eugene Bozza.

Etudes: Continue with more advanced etudes from composers like H. Klose or C. Rose.

Jazz Standards and Improvisation: Begin working on more complex jazz standards, focusing on both improvisation and interpretation.

Part 1 of 2: major scale, natural minor scale, chromatic scale, tonic & dominant arpeggios, diminished 7th arpeggios, augmented triads · full range (written low B $\flat$ to high F) · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

Third Year

Developing Technical Proficiency and Musical Independence

Part 2 of 2: harmonic minor scale, melodic minor scale · full range (written low B $\flat$ to high F) · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

The year

Each week: Individual Lessons (1-on-1 Sessions) · Ensemble Rehearsals · Masterclasses · Performance Opportunities.

Encouragement of Independence: Parents should continue to support their child's practice routine but also encourage greater independence.

Daily practice: an hour to an hour and a half a day.

Method books: Jazz Conception for Saxophone — Jim Snidero.

Practice this year in The Whole Horn

[Open in the app](#)

Fourth Year

Transitioning to Advanced Studies and Professional Preparation

Watch the video · 24 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/saxophone-program/

Watch the video

Curriculum focus

Advanced Scales and Arpeggios: Mastery of all scales (major, harmonic minor, melodic minor) and arpeggios across the full range of the instrument, including altissimo register.

Altissimo Register: Focused exercises on developing control and consistency in the altissimo register, with an emphasis on tone quality and intonation.

Extended Techniques: Introduction to extended techniques such as multiphonics, which are essential for contemporary repertoire.

Advanced Harmonic Analysis: Detailed study of harmonic structures, including modulations, secondary dominants, and complex chord progressions.

Counterpoint and Voice Leading: Introduction to the principles of counterpoint and voice leading, with practical applications in both classical and jazz contexts.

Complex Articulation Patterns: Exercises that incorporate varied articulation within complex passages, focusing on precision and clarity.

Advanced Phrasing: Students will refine their phrasing techniques, focusing on long, complex phrases and the use of rubato, dynamics, and articulation to shape the musical line.

Classical Repertoire: Introduction to advanced classical works by composers such as Glazunov, Ibert, and Debussy.

Etudes: Continue with advanced etudes from composers like Jean-Marie Londeix and Marcel Mule.

Jazz Standards and Contemporary Music: Exploration of more complex jazz standards and contemporary music, with an emphasis on improvisation, interpretation, and the integration of extended techniques.

Part 1 of 2: major scale, harmonic minor scale, tonic & dominant arpeggios, chromatic scale · full range (written low B $\flat$ to high F) · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

Fourth Year

Transitioning to Advanced Studies and Professional Preparation

Part 2 of 2: melodic minor scale · full range (written low B $\flat$ to high F) · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

The year

Each week: Individual Lessons (1-on-1 Sessions) · Ensemble Rehearsals · Masterclasses · Performance Opportunities.

Parental Involvement: While students at this level should be increasingly independent, parental support remains important.

Daily practice, from this year on: 3 to 6 hours a day; at least three hours on a bad day.

The expectation, for students and parents in the Fourth and Fifth Year: 4 to 5 hours a day.

That would be the year that really determines whether or not they're going to make it through to the seventh and eighth year.

Method books: Exercises Journaliers d'Entretien — Marcel Mule; 48 Famous Studies for Oboe or Saxophone — W. Ferling, edited by André J. Maquarre.

"When you prepare for performance, there are no half measures. It doesn't work that way."

"This is a serious course in a serious conservatory, and unless you're gonna seriously engage, the conservatory is really not very impressed, and ... the backing and support and the endorsement of that student on the part of the conservatory is contingent upon their reciprocal engagement, following the recommendations of their teachers."

Practice this year in The Whole Horn

[Open in the app](#)

Fifth Year

Advanced Level

Core objectives

Technical Mastery: Students will achieve a higher level of technical proficiency, focusing on extended techniques, advanced articulation, and control over a broader dynamic range.

Expressive Performance: Developing the ability to interpret and perform more emotionally and stylistically complex pieces with a focus on phrasing, tone color, and expression.

Expanded Repertoire: Introduction to more challenging repertoire, including contemporary works and transcriptions of pieces originally written for other instruments.

Musical Interpretation: Students will begin to make informed interpretative choices, drawing from historical and theoretical knowledge.

Ensemble Collaboration: Continued emphasis on ensemble playing, focusing on chamber music and smaller ensemble settings, as well as participation in wind orchestras and big bands.

Assessment

Technical Proficiency: Evaluated through technical exams, focusing on scales, arpeggios, and études.

Repertoire Performance: Assessment through solo performances, with an emphasis on interpretative choices and technical execution.

Ensemble Participation: Graded on collaboration, leadership within the ensemble, and overall contribution to the group's performance.

Music Theory and History: Written and oral exams testing understanding of the theoretical and historical context of studied pieces.

Improvisation: Graded on creativity, fluency, and integration of classical and jazz elements in performances.

Daily practice: 4 to 5 hours a day (from the Fourth Year on, 3 to 6 hours a day; at least three hours on a bad day).

Part 1 of 2: whole-tone scale, diminished (half-whole) scale · full range (written low B $\flat$ to high F) · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

Fifth Year

Advanced Level

Part 2 of 2: diminished (whole-half) scale · full range (written low B $\flat$ to high F) · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

Practice this year in The Whole Horn

[Open in the app](#)

Sixth Year

Mastery and Professional Preparation

Watch the video · 22 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/saxophone-program/

Watch the video

Curriculum focus

Advanced Altissimo and Extended Techniques: Focused development of the altissimo register, with exercises that aim for precision, consistency, and musicality.

Complex Scales and Arpeggios: Mastery of all scales, including whole-tone, diminished, and augmented scales, as well as complex arpeggios that cover the full range of the instrument.

Advanced Harmonic Analysis: In-depth study of advanced harmonic concepts, including chromaticism, polytonality, and complex modulations.

Form and Structure: Detailed analysis of the form and structure of complex pieces, with an emphasis on how these elements inform interpretation and performance.

Nuanced Articulation: Advanced exercises in articulation that focus on achieving clarity and precision in even the most challenging passages.

Expressive Phrasing: Continued development of expressive phrasing, with an emphasis on shaping long, complex phrases and creating a coherent musical narrative.

Classical Masterworks: Students will prepare and perform advanced classical repertoire, including concertos, sonatas, and other major works by composers such as Glazunov, Ibert, Denisov, and Creston.

Contemporary and New Music: Exploration of contemporary music, including works by living composers and pieces that incorporate extended techniques.

Jazz and Improvised Music: For students specializing in jazz or contemporary music, continued work on jazz standards, original compositions, and free improvisation.

Part 1 of 2: whole-tone scale, diminished (half-whole) scale, tonic & dominant arpeggios, 7th chords on the major scale, 9th chords on the major scale, diminished 7th arpeggios, augmented triads · full range (written low B $\flat$ to high F) · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

Sixth Year

Mastery and Professional Preparation

Part 2 of 2: diminished (whole-half) scale · full range (written low B $\flat$ to high F) · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

The year

Each week: Individual Lessons (1-on-1 Sessions) · Ensemble Rehearsals · Masterclasses · Performance Opportunities.

Career Planning and Development: Throughout the year, students should work on developing their professional portfolios, including recording demo tracks, building a resume, and creating an online presence.

Method books: Londeix Guide to the Saxophone Repertoire, 1844–2012 — Jean-Marie Londeix.

Daily practice: 4 to 5 hours a day (from the Fourth Year on, 3 to 6 hours a day; at least three hours on a bad day).

Practice this year in The Whole Horn

[Open in the app](#)

Seventh Year

Licence · Advanced Studies in Saxophone

Curriculum focus

Etudes and Exercises: Intensive work on advanced etudes (e.g., Marcel Mule, Jean-Marie Londeix, Sigurd Raschèr) and technical exercises designed to address specific challenges and enhance overall proficiency.

Scales and Arpeggios: Continued emphasis on scales, arpeggios, and other technical exercises, with a focus on speed, accuracy, and evenness across the instrument's range.

Solo Repertoire: Advanced works for solo saxophone, including concertos, sonatas, and contemporary pieces.

Chamber Music Repertoire: A selection of challenging chamber works, ranging from classical to modern, that require a high level of ensemble playing and interpretative collaboration.

Historical and Stylistic Interpretation: Detailed study of performance practice across different periods, focusing on historically informed interpretation and the adaptation of stylistic elements to the saxophone.

Contemporary Techniques: Exploration of extended techniques (e.g., multiphonics, altissimo register, circular breathing) and their application in contemporary repertoire.

Part 1 of 2: major scale, natural minor scale, whole-tone scale, diminished (half-whole) scale, chromatic scale, tonic & dominant arpeggios · full range (written low B $\flat$ to high F) · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

Part 2 of 2: harmonic minor scale, melodic minor scale, diminished (whole-half) scale · full range (written low B $\flat$ to high F) · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

Seventh Year

Licence · Advanced Studies in Saxophone

The year

Each week: Individual Lessons (1-on-1 Sessions) · Chamber Music and Ensemble Rehearsals · Masterclasses and Workshops · Performance Opportunities · Academic Studies · Electives.

Final Recital: The primary assessment for the seventh year, where students will present a program that showcases their technical and artistic achievements.

Daily practice: 4 to 5 hours a day (from the Fourth Year on, 3 to 6 hours a day; at least three hours on a bad day).

“4 to 5 hours a day is what the expectation would be for those degrees anywhere in the world, and that should be the standard, and ... it gets progressively more serious.”

Practice this year in The Whole Horn

Open in the app

Eighth Year

Advanced Preparation for Maîtrise

Curriculum focus

Daily Technical Routine: Students will follow a daily routine of scales, arpeggios, and technical exercises designed to maintain and enhance their technical skills.

Advanced Etudes: Continued study of etudes from composers like Marcel Mule, Jean-Marie Londeix, and others, chosen for their technical difficulty and ability to develop specific aspects of saxophone playing.

Solo Repertoire: A selection of challenging solo works, including major concertos, sonatas, and contemporary pieces.

Chamber Music Repertoire: Students will engage with complex chamber music works that require advanced ensemble skills and a deep understanding of musical interaction.

Interpretation Across Styles: Continued emphasis on the interpretation of different musical styles, with an exploration of performance practices from the Baroque period to contemporary music.

Contemporary Music Techniques: Exploration of contemporary saxophone techniques, including the use of electronics, improvisation, and non-traditional notation.

Part 1 of 2: major scale, natural minor scale, whole-tone scale, diminished (half-whole) scale, chromatic scale, tonic & dominant arpeggios, 3rds on the major scale, 7th chords on the major scale · full range (written low B $\flat$ to high F) · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

Part 2 of 2: harmonic minor scale, melodic minor scale · full range (written low B $\flat$ to high F) · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

Eighth Year

Advanced Preparation for Maîtrise

The year

Each week: Individual Lessons (1-on-1 Sessions) · Chamber Music and Ensemble Rehearsals · Masterclasses and Workshops · Performance Opportunities · Academic Studies · Electives.

Pre-Maîtrise Recitals: Multiple recitals throughout the year will serve as both assessments and preparation for the Maîtrise recital.

Daily practice: 4 to 5 hours a day (from the Fourth Year on, 3 to 6 hours a day; at least three hours on a bad day).

Practice this year in The Whole Horn

[Open in the app](#)

Ninth Year

For the ninth-year Maîtrise program, students should present a repertoire that not only challenges their technical prowess but also demands deep musical understanding and interpretative skill.

Maîtrise repertoire

Henri Tomasi – Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra
Edison Denisov – Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra
Pierre Max Dubois – Concerto for Alto Saxophone
Edison Denisov – Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Luciano Berio – Sequenza IXb for Alto Saxophone
William Albright – Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano

The Maîtrise

Performance Experience: By the ninth year, students should have extensive performance experience with a wide range of repertoire.

Well-Rounded Development: The goal is to ensure that students emerge from the Maîtrise program as versatile musicians, capable of tackling both the classical saxophone canon and the most demanding contemporary works.

Evaluation Criteria: In their final recital, students should be evaluated on their ability to interpret a diverse selection of works, demonstrating not only technical proficiency but also artistic maturity and a deep understanding of the stylistic nuances of each piece.

Daily practice: 4 to 5 hours a day (from the Fourth Year on, 3 to 6 hours a day; at least three hours on a bad day).

"4 to 5 hours a day is what the expectation would be for those degrees anywhere in the world, and that should be the standard, and ... it gets progressively more serious."

Practice the Seventh & Eighth Year routine

Open in the app

The three cycles

Watch the video · 24 s

Preparatory Cycle

Preparatory to Third Year (High School Equivalent, roughly the French lycée)

During these years, the primary goal is to establish a strong foundation in musical technique, literacy, and performance.

First Higher Cycle

Fourth to Seventh Year (College/University Equivalent, ending in the Licence)

The focus shifts towards specialization, with students expected to engage in more complex repertoire, develop a personal style, and prepare for professional-level performance.

Second Higher Cycle

Eighth and Ninth Year (Graduate Equivalent, ending in the Maîtrise)

Two years at master's level.

The three cycles

The Leap

Developing a Musical Identity

It is during the early years that students should begin to see themselves as musicians, with music as a central part of their identity.

The leap from the Preparatory Cycle to the First Higher Cycle is not just a technical or academic one—it is also psychological and emotional.

The whole course

Every year of The Study of Saxophone, with its method books, repertoire and exam requirements, is on thewholehorn.com.

The Saxophone Program and the Study of Saxophone

“There is no conflict. One is a program that lines up with what [conservatories] are likely to want to prescribe, in a world where beginner students still don’t know what they want ... The Study of Saxophone. That is my research, and it’s wide open, and it doesn’t really have to conform to any program that’s out there ... a library of resources available to students and teachers around the world.”

By reverse-engineering success, we ensure that our students are not merely surviving in this changing landscape but are leading the way forward.

thewholehorn.com/study-of-saxophone

thewholehorn.com/study-of-saxophone

Open the page

The Jazz Program Licence to Maîtrise

An innovative curriculum rooted in the traditions of jazz while integrating elements of Lebanon's rich musical heritage.

Thomas Hornig · Henri Selmer Paris Artist · The Whole Horn

Mission

Mission statement

Our mission is to cultivate a new generation of musicians who possess a deep understanding of jazz and its associated traditions, emphasizing the transformative power of ensemble performance. By fostering innovation alongside a solid foundation in the jazz language, students will be equipped to contribute to and evolve the art form in Lebanon and beyond.

Ensemble at the heart

At the Lebanese Higher National Conservatory of Music, ensemble experience is the cornerstone of both the learning and teaching philosophy. It is our belief that no student can truly acquire the skills necessary for professional success without regular, immersive participation in ensemble settings.

Collective performance

“The primary aspirational driving force for musicians at every level, and across the globe, lies in the incalculable joy and wonder of collective performance.”

Through ensemble participation, students learn to express the full gamut of human emotions.

Two higher cycles

Watch the video · 22 s

FIRST HIGHER CYCLE · LICENCE

Focus: Establishing foundational skills in jazz performance and theory.

Jazz Theory I & II

Ear Training I & II

Instrumental Proficiency (weekly private lessons)

Jazz Improvisation I

Ensemble Performance (small group)

History of Jazz

Introduction to Composition and Arranging

Introduction to Piano (non-pianists)

SECOND HIGHER CYCLE · MAÎTRISE

Focus: Advanced performance, composition, and professional readiness.

Advanced Jazz Theory and Harmony

Advanced Ear Training

Jazz Composition and Arranging

Improvisation Techniques II

Ensemble Performance (large ensemble and small group)

Contemporary Jazz Styles

Capstone Recital

Music Pedagogy and Professional Practices

Two higher cycles

What defines the cycles

“We have to define what those cycles are. I think they can be largely defined by the demonstration of advanced technique and the demonstration of the ability to learn and being [in] command on a stage with their peers ... playing whatever repertoire is being called, no matter what the repertoire is.”

“All students in the second cycle should be very, very capable of playing ... difficult repertoire, like Inner Urge or Countdown or Giant Steps or any of those difficult tunes, and they shouldn’t be seen as difficult but rather a job that has to be done. You work on these things very carefully, meticulously, with a ... greater amount of repetition, and you’re fine ... It’s really more about the work methodology and the work ethic when it comes to preparing for gigs. That would be a successful outcome as far as I’m concerned in any musical discipline in the conservatory.”

Certificate and diploma

“The [jazz] program is in its infancy at the National Conservatory, so [the] determination on exactly what [the] final syllabus will be ... will be the result of a lot of consultations, but my sense of things [is that a] certificate can be offered at the end of the first year, and [a] diploma for specialization [in] jazz can be offered at the end of the third year, but these are all very preliminary assessments. So I think that the degree in jazz is going to be a sort of qualifier to their degree in their principal instrument, and depending on the kind of expertise that is brought into the Conservatory to teach the different aspects of the jazz curriculum, students can benefit from more refined specializations.”

Length of each cycle

First Higher Cycle: 3 years. Second Higher Cycle: 2 years. These are the lengths of the jazz department of the Paris Conservatoire (CNSMD de Paris): a 3-year first cycle (180 ECTS) and a 2-year second cycle (120 ECTS) conferring the grade of master.

The academic year is divided into two semesters: Fall Semester: September to mid-February. Spring Semester: March to July. Orientation for new students: Early September. Examination periods: February and July. Recital evaluations: End of each semester.

Lebanese Higher National Conservatory of Music · Jazz Curriculum

Core areas of study

The program follows a European-style higher education structure with two primary cycles.

Watch the video · 25 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/jazz-program/

Watch the video

Instrumental Proficiency

Development of technical and expressive skills.

Open

Music Theory and Harmony

Comprehensive study of jazz harmony and advanced theoretical concepts.

Ear Training

Mastery of melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic recognition.

Ensemble Playing

Small group dynamics and performance practice.

Core areas of study

The program follows a European-style higher education structure with two primary cycles.

Improvisation

Exploration of improvisational techniques and strategies.

Arranging and Composition

Techniques for arranging and composing within jazz idioms.

Music History

Historical study of jazz and its cultural contexts.

Jazz Performance Syllabus

The class as taught today

[Open](#)

Practice Instrumental Proficiency in The Whole Horn

[Open in the app](#)

Jazz Theory I & II

Two semesters · LHNCM Jazz Theory 101

How it is taught

“[Jazz Theory] I and II, that’s going to be taught pretty much in class. [It] is gonna be one class ... opportunities to experiment and perform as jazz players, and a lot of emphasis will be put on scales and chords and [chord-scale] relationships. But a formal jazz theory class, I think that[’s] something that we have to wait [for] until [we have a] professor that can develop a very specific syllabus for that.”

The course

Theory of Jazz Music is divided into two credit courses to be taught in the span of two academic semesters: MUJ 342 and MUJ 352. This course provides in addition to the classical theory of music, the specific foundations of Jazz Theory and harmony. MUJ 342 begins with basic Jazz Theory, the Major Scale and the II–V–I Progression, Chord, Major Scale Harmony, Melodic Minor Scale Harmony, Diminished Scale Harmony, Whole Tone Scale Harmony, to how to practice Scales and Slash Chords.

Major scales · all 12 keys · quarters · ♩ =60 · two octaves

Open in the app

ii–V–I arpeggios (ii7–V7–Imaj7, the major-key progression) · every key · quarters · ♩ =60

Open in the app

Diatonic 7th chords of the major scale · all 12 keys · ABCD · quarters · ♩ =60

Open in the app

Jazz Theory I & II

Two semesters · LHNCM Jazz Theory 101

Diatonic 7th chords of melodic minor · all 12 keys · ABCD · quarters · ♩ =60

[Open in the app](#)

7th chords of the diminished scale (half-whole, then whole-half) · all 12 keys · quarters · ♩ =60

[Open in the app](#)

Triads of the whole-tone scale (augmented triads) · all 12 keys · quarters · ♩ =60

[Open in the app](#)

Outcomes and content

The primary goal of any aspiring jazz musician is to learn to improvise. To that end this course will look at the fundamental concepts of jazz harmony, chord/scale relationships, chord voicings and commonly used substitutions. Practical application of this material will be a main focus and students will be tested on their use of this knowledge in a live performance setting.

The students develop an ability to map out chord scale relationships in standard jazz repertoire. They will also be asked to study chord voicings, alternate chord progressions for common forms. Emphasis will be put on developing basic knowledge of jazz harmony and then immediately applying those skills in classroom performances of modern, standard jazz repertoire.

Texts: Modern Reading Text in 4/4 time – Louis Bellson/ Gil Breines; Essential Rhythms For Jazz Ensemble – Doug Beach & George Shutack; Improvisation The Jazz Language – Dan Haerle; Jazz/Rock voicings for the contemporary keyboard player – Dan Haerle.

Ear Training I & II

Jazz Sight Singing, Rhythmic Chanting and Ear Training

Watch the video · 20 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/jazz-program/

Watch the video

Course requirements

The student will sing and identify intervals, basic rhythms, melodies in major and minor keys, triads, chord progressions, and seventh chords. Emphasis will be put on learning how to transcribe melodic lines, jazz improvisation, and bass lines as a way to profoundly internalize jazz phrasing and rhythmic concepts.

Ear games: Echo level 1 (sing the interval back) + Name It level 1 (identify the interval) · 1 hour each

Open in the app

Ear game: Chord Colors level 2 (major, minor, diminished, augmented triads) · 1 hour

Open in the app

Ear game: Chord Colors level 5 (dominant 7, minor 7, major 7, half-diminished, diminished 7) · 1 hour

Open in the app

Keyboard and grading

The student will also demonstrate basic keyboard skills for intervals, scales and be able to play chord progressions of selected repertoire. The student's grade will be determined by short periodic exams in singing, aural recognition, easy transcription, memorization of selected Jazz standards and keyboard skills.

Improvisation

Jazz Improvisation I (First Higher Cycle) · Improvisation Techniques II (Second Higher Cycle)

Watch the video · 22 s

thewholehorn.com/curriculum/jazz-program/

Watch the video

Improvisation techniques

Using guide tones and chord tones as a basis for melodic lines.
Applying scale-based improvisation to navigate harmonic changes.
Developing rhythmic motifs and phrasing for expressive solos.
Practicing transcriptions of jazz solos to internalize vocabulary.

ii–V–I arpeggios: the chord tones of ii7–V7–Imaj7 · every key · quarters · ♩ =60 (guide-tone lines are not in the app)

Open in the app

Improvisation

Jazz Improvisation I (First Higher Cycle) · Improvisation Techniques II (Second Higher Cycle)

Chord-scale relationships and vocabulary

Understanding chord-scale relationships, such as using Dorian and Mixolydian modes for minor and dominant chords.

Building a vocabulary of licks and phrases through transcription and practice.

Exploring timing and pacing to create cohesive musical statements.

Practicing solo construction by writing and memorizing ideal solos over standard progressions.

Using tools like Miles Davis's recordings, especially 'Kind of Blue,' for practical examples of lyrical and accessible improvisation.

Dorian, then Mixolydian · all 12 keys · quarters · ♩ =60 · two octaves

[Open in the app](#)

Ensembles

Students at LHNCM participate in a wide range of ensembles, including small combos, big bands, and cross-cultural fusion groups.

Objectives

Perform a diverse repertoire with stylistic accuracy and expression.
Develop ensemble cohesion through active listening and communication.
Explore improvisation within ensemble contexts, applying theoretical principles.
Participate in regular performances, fostering stage presence and professionalism.

Performance opportunities

Weekly ensemble rehearsals and performances in small and large groups.
Regular student recitals showcasing solo and ensemble work.
Participation in jazz festivals, concerts, and community events throughout Lebanon.
Collaborative performances with other departments and external institutions.
Opportunities to perform original compositions in professional settings.

Composition and Arranging

Jazz Composition and Arranging

Course topics

Writing for small and large ensembles.

Techniques in melodic coupling, counterpoint, and reharmonization.

Exploring non-functional harmony and advanced voicing techniques.

Creating compositions that blend traditional jazz forms with modern innovations.

Composition techniques

Students will learn techniques such as melodic development, reharmonization, and the use of modal and chromatic language in original works. Compositions should integrate theoretical knowledge with creative expression.

History of Jazz

Understanding the historical development of jazz is essential to appreciating its cultural and artistic significance.

Watch the video · 26 s

thewholehorn.com/curriculum/jazz-program/

Watch the video

The eras

Origins of Jazz (1900–1914): Jazz emerged from a blend of African, European, and American musical traditions, with roots in blues, spirituals, and ragtime.

Swing Era (1929–1945): Characterized by large ensembles and highly danceable rhythms, the Swing Era made jazz America's popular music.

Bebop (1940s): A response to the commercialism of swing, bebop introduced complex harmonies, fast tempos, and virtuosic improvisation.

The eras (continued)

Cool Jazz and Hard Bop (1950s): Cool jazz emphasized smooth, lyrical lines, while hard bop incorporated elements of gospel and blues.

Free Jazz and Fusion (1960s–1970s): Free jazz broke traditional harmonic and rhythmic conventions, while fusion combined jazz with rock and world music influences.

Rhythm Studies

Rhythm Studies and Jazz Drumming · Afro-Cuban Music and Percussion (MUJ 345)

Watch the video · 17 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/jazz-program/

Watch the video

When it is offered

An elective, offered when a specialist teacher is available. The syllabus for Afro-Cuban Music and Percussion (MUJ 345) is ready to run.

Course outline

History and fundamentals of jazz drumming.

Triplet interpretations and cymbal line patterns.

Advanced coordination and reading jazz charts.

Afro-Cuban and Afro-Latin rhythm integration.

Courses for rhythm section instruments (piano, bass, drums) emphasize foundational responsibilities such as timekeeping, groove establishment, and harmonic support. Advanced studies include comping techniques, rhythmic independence, and interaction with soloists.

Rhythm Studies

Rhythm Studies and Jazz Drumming · Afro-Cuban Music and Percussion (MUJ 345)

Afro-Cuban Music and Percussion

The course explores from a historical perspective the various styles of Afro-Cuban Music and Percussion along its dual relationship to the Jazz language. The percussion instruments are all studied and explored in-group setting.

The syllabus · MUJ 345 · 15 weeks · 2 credits

Afro-Cuban religious ceremonial rhythms, in addition to drum set applications, are also covered. The course also focuses in depth upon the analysis and knowledge of the inner workings of clave and basic techniques on the major battery of Afro-Cuban percussion (congas, bongo, timbales) in addition to [the] minor battery (maracas, guiro, shakers, cowbells, etc.).

Weeks 1–8 · Brazil. The Brazilian percussion instruments (surdo, agogô, triangle, caixeta, ganzá, afoxé, reco-reco, tamborim, pandeiro, cuíca, repinique, berimbau...); bossa nova and samba bass lines and comping; the drummer's role. Students play the rhythms while singing the standards ("Corcovado", "Só Danço Samba") and rehearse four bossa novas and three sambas in a small group.

Weeks 9–13 · Cuba. Five clave rhythms, the cascara, traditional son clave styles, rumba clave styles, contemporary Cuban styles; a history of Afro-Cuban music and ten Afro-Cuban musicians, such as Paquito D'Rivera and Tito Puente.

Weeks 14–15. A public performance with a small jazz group.

Texts. Essential Rhythms for Jazz Ensemble (Kendor); The Essence of Brazilian Percussion and Drum Set and Cuba: Passport to a New World of Music (Alfred).

Recommended: Rebeca Mauleón's 101 Montunos and Salsa Guidebook; Aebersold volumes 31, 64, 69, 77 and 98.

Grading. Participation and practice 20%, class work and quizzes 20%, midterm 20%, final 40%.

Rhythm studies and Afro-Cuban studies

"... The likelihood that we would add in a rhythm studies or ... Afro-Cuban studies component to the jazz program ... depends on the human capital [that] comes in, and many of the courses that will be offered are gonna depend on the expertise that comes into the Conservatory."

Scales and harmony

Jazz harmony is built on chord progressions that create tension and resolution.

Watch the video · 22 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/jazz-program/

Watch the video

Scales and modes

Major Scale: The fundamental scale in Western music, consisting of seven notes arranged in whole and half-step intervals: W-W-H-W-W-W-H.

Modes of the Major Scale: Derived by starting the major scale on each successive note, these modes include: Ionian (Major), Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, Mixolydian, Aeolian (Natural Minor), and Locrian.

Pentatonic Scales: Five-note scales commonly used in blues and jazz improvisation.

Blues Scale: A six-note scale used extensively in blues and jazz, adding a b5 to the minor pentatonic scale: 1-b3-4-b5-5-b7.

Melodic Minor Scale: A scale with a minor third and raised sixth and seventh degrees ascending.

Harmonic Minor Scale: A minor scale with a raised seventh degree, creating a distinctive interval structure.

Major scales · all 12 keys · quarters · ♩ =60 · two octaves

Open in the app

The seven modes of C major, each from its own degree: C Ionian, D Dorian, E Phrygian, F Lydian, G Mixolydian, A Aeolian, B Locrian · written keys · quarters · ♩ =60 · two octaves

Open in the app

Major pentatonic, then minor pentatonic · all 12 keys · quarters · ♩ =60 · two octaves

Open in the app

Scales and harmony

Jazz harmony is built on chord progressions that create tension and resolution.

Melodic minor · all 12 keys · quarters · ♩ =60 · two octaves

Open in the app

Harmonic minor · all 12 keys · quarters · ♩ =60 · two octaves

Open in the app

Chord progressions

ii–V–I Progression: A cornerstone of jazz harmony, the ii–V–I resolves tension through a sequence of chords based on the second, fifth, and first degrees of the scale.

Minor ii–V–I: A variation used in minor keys, typically involving a half-diminished ii chord (e.g., Dm7b5), a dominant V chord (e.g., G7), and a minor I chord (e.g., Cm7).

Voice Leading: The smooth transition of notes between chords, emphasizing stepwise motion and minimizing leaps.

Extended Chords: Chords that include notes beyond the seventh, such as ninths, elevenths, and thirteenths, adding richness and complexity.

ii–V–I arpeggios (ii7–V7–Imaj7) · every key · quarters · ♩ =60

Open in the app

Diatonic 9th chords of the major scale · all 12 keys · quarters · ♩ =60 (the app stops at the ninth)

Open in the app

Performance

Performance is where theoretical knowledge and technical skills come to life.

Watch the video · 20 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/jazz-program/

Watch the video

Performance practices

Preparing for live performances through rigorous rehearsals.
Adhering to professional standards for attire, punctuality, and stage conduct.
Interpreting charts and lead sheets accurately and expressively.
Engaging with audiences through dynamic performances.

Program features

Masterclasses: Regular sessions with internationally recognized jazz artists.
Workshops: Practical training in studio recording and live sound engineering.
Collaborative Opportunities: Projects with other departments in the conservatory.
Electives: Courses in world music, jazz technology, and interdisciplinary studies.

Performance

Performance is where theoretical knowledge and technical skills come to life.

Open the Jazz Performance syllabus in The Whole Horn

Open the page

Jazz standards, every year

“They should learn at least 10 jazz standards every single year, if not many, many more. That would be the bare minimum, I think, of the first year ...”

Elsewhere: the Paris Conservatoire’s first cycle has a required course, “Repertoire and oral tradition” (20 ECTS), with no published tune count. At North Texas, each upper-division jazz saxophone jury draws on a list of about 20 tunes from one era, and students play three transcriptions a semester (2021 saxophone handbook).

Capstone Recital

Second Higher Cycle · Maîtrise

Watch the video · 19 s

thewholehorn.com/curriculum/jazz-program/

Watch the video

The recital

A culminating performance project that allows students to synthesize and showcase their technical, creative, and performance skills. Students present a curated program of jazz standards, original compositions, and stylistic explorations that reflect their journey through the program.

Student performances are evaluated on fluency, technical facility, and interpretive communication. These criteria are designed to provide specific feedback and foster continuous improvement.

Assessment criteria

Preparation and participation in ensemble rehearsals and performances.

Mastery of scales, improvisational techniques, and theoretical knowledge.

Original compositions and arrangements for diverse ensemble configurations.

Proficiency in rhythm studies and coordination exercises.

Major, harmonic minor, melodic minor, major and minor pentatonic · all 12 keys · quarters · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

Graduation

First Higher Cycle

Licence

Foundational studies in jazz performance, theory, and history.

Second Higher Cycle

Maîtrise

Advanced studies focusing on specialization, composition, and professional performance.

Beyond

After the Maîtrise

Upon completion of the Maîtrise, students may pursue further specialization in specific areas such as jazz composition, performance, or pedagogy.

The standard for graduation

“[As for] graduation, what the standard should be for graduation is, I think, ... from my perspective, ... gonna be more based on their work, their work ethic, their attitude, and the extent to which they are willing to make themselves available to be in [support] of others. Some young musicians crave the limelight. They really want to have their name on the billing, and that [circumstance trumps] ... any incentive, I think, to initiate discussions on the formation of various groups, to hopefully get together [and] rehearse material that maybe can be located ... through someone like me, or through websites where you can get some of this repertory, and/or write original compositions for these things.”

The whole program

The class as taught today is the Jazz Performance Syllabus.

Jazz is all about individual accountability.

thewholehorn.com/jazz-syllabus

Afro-Cuban Music and Percussion (MUJ 345)

Rhythm Studies and Jazz Drumming · Afro-Cuban Music and Percussion (MUJ 345)

Thomas Hornig · Henri Selmer Paris Artist · The Whole Horn

The syllabus • MUJ 345 • 15 weeks • 2 credits

Watch the video • 17 s

Afro-Cuban Music and Percussion

The course explores from a historical perspective the various styles of Afro-Cuban Music and Percussion along its dual relationship to the Jazz language. The percussion instruments are all studied and explored in-group setting.

Afro-Cuban religious ceremonial rhythms, in addition to drum set applications, are also covered. The course also focuses in depth upon the analysis and knowledge of the inner workings of clave and basic techniques on the major battery of Afro-Cuban percussion (congas, bongo, timbales) in addition to [the] minor battery (maracas, guiro, shakers, cowbells, etc.).

Weeks 1–8 • Brazil.

The Brazilian percussion instruments (surdo, agogô, triangle, caixeta, ganzá, afoxé, reco-reco, tamborim, pandeiro, cuíca, repinique, berimbau...); bossa nova and samba bass lines and comping; the drummer's role. Students play the rhythms while singing the standards ("Corcovado", "Só Danço Samba") and rehearse four bossa novas and three sambas in a small group.

Weeks 9–13 • Cuba.

Five clave rhythms, the cascara, traditional son clave styles, rumba clave styles, contemporary Cuban styles; a history of Afro-Cuban music and ten Afro-Cuban musicians, such as Paquito D'Rivera and Tito Puente.

The syllabus • MUJ 345 • 15 weeks • 2 credits

Weeks 14–15.

A public performance with a small jazz group.

Texts.

Essential Rhythms for Jazz Ensemble (Kendor); The Essence of Brazilian Percussion and Drum Set and Cuba: Passport to a New World of Music (Alfred).
Recommended: Rebeca Mauleón's 101 Montunos and Salsa Guidebook; Aebersold volumes 31, 64, 69, 77 and 98.

Grading.

Participation and practice 20%, class work and quizzes 20%, midterm 20%, final 40%.

Rhythm studies and Afro-Cuban studies

When it is offered: An elective, offered when a specialist teacher is available. The syllabus for Afro-Cuban Music and Percussion (MUJ 345) is ready to run.

“... The likelihood that we would add in a rhythm studies or ... Afro-Cuban studies component to the jazz program ... depends on the human capital [that] comes in, and many of the courses that will be offered are gonna depend on the expertise that comes into the Conservatory.”

thewholehorn.com/curriculum/jazz-program

The Study of Saxophone Preparatory Year

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3). A Nine-Year Course of Study for the Modern Saxophonist-Doubler — Saxophone, Flute & Clarinet.

What the Preparatory Year asks

EXAM REQUIREMENTS

1. Performance of all Major scales found in l'Alphabet du Saxophone
2. Performance of selected piece for Saxophone and Piano
3. Performance of Etudes from selected method: l'Alphabet du Saxophone

THE YEAR

October to July, in two semesters.
Mid-term exam: early March.
Final exam: early July.

Saxophone students are required to complete the listed methods and satisfactorily present the required scale and arpeggio materials during each school year. Ten compositions will be chosen from each repertoire list and developed to a performance level. Repertoire for the jury examination should be selected in consultation with the student's teacher. Pieces not listed may be studied and performed with the permission of the teacher. Extensive participation in a saxophone quartet and with other instruments in the performance of chamber music and large wind ensemble is requisite for students who have attained an acceptable performance level.

The Study of Saxophone · Desired Competencies

Scales in the app

1

Exam requirement 1 · Performance of all Major scales found in l'Alphabet du Saxophone
All 12 Major scales · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

“Students in the preparatory year should be encouraged to learn all 12 scales. This is counterintuitive for most educators. The rationale is retention. Students are very concerned with their own success, and if they can be led to believe that learning 12 scales is an absolute necessity, on the other side of that they will see themselves as outliers. This is why the Milestone exercise in the app really is a milestone.”

2

Practice this year in The Whole Horn

Open in the app

3

Watch the video · 20 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/study-of-saxophone/preparatory-year/

Watch the video

Methods

The Study of Saxophone · the Preparatory Year

Core Methods

Method, Prati, l'Alphabet du Saxophone

Method, Janzen, Themes Celebres pour Flute a Bec / Soprano Saxophone

Method, Vilio, Pieces Faciles pour Saxophone

Additional Methods

Mule, 24 Etudes Faciles Saxophone

Meriot, 25 Easy Etudes

Prati, 29 Études Progressives

Herfurth, A Tune a Day, Book 2

Klosé, Complete Method for Saxophone

Londeix, Exercices Mechaniques, Vol. 1

Rubank, Intermediate Method for Saxophone

Delangle, Methode de Saxophone Debutants, Vols. 1–2

Hal Leonard, Play Alto Sax Today! Level 1

O'Niel, The Jazz Play-a-long Method for Saxophone

Andrew Scott, The Art of Saxophone

Druet, L'École Française du Saxophone

Repertoire

The Study of Saxophone · the Preparatory Year

Core Repertoire

Desloges, Fabliau for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Boutine, Berceuse for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Aubine, Chansons dans la Rue for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Lacour, Tendre Melodie for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Lamaire, Mon Premier Recital for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Naulais, Coconotes for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Additional Repertoire

Bozza, Le Campanile for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Carlin, Menthe à l'Eau for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Cecconi, Ariette for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Easy Classical Saxophone Play-a-longs 1, 2
Gorisse, Jour de Fête Berceuse for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Gounod, Ave Maria for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Guicherd, Contrastes pour Sax Alto et Petites Percussions
Londeix, Beau Dion for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Londeix, Bachelette Tableaux Aquitains for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Martin, Berceuse for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Naulais, Pain d'épices for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Pascal, Planetarium for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Perrin, Complainte for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Purcell, Lilliburlero for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Saint-Saëns, Carnaval — Le Cygne for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Tchaikovsky, Op. 20a Intro for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Desired Competency

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3)

Acquisition of basic skills

air column / breathing
concept for sound / timbre
articulation
rhythmic, digital and timbral homogeneity
accuracy
flexibility
nuance
intonation
vibrato

And

Development of basic technique and knowledge of all Major and Minor scales.
Ability to hear and play dynamics, develop a sense of musical phrasing and a basic understanding of blend and balance.
Cultivation of the ability to memorize simple musical passages.
Development of basic sight-reading skills.
Ability to notate simple musical passages.
Understanding of chord-scale relationships; Jazz improvisation using basic facility.
Basic knowledge of the history of the saxophone and the Giants of Saxophone.
Experience in ensemble performance — piano accompaniment — ensemble of saxophones.
Public performance.

Desired Competency in the app

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3). Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

1

air column / breathing
Long tones: breathing and one steady note

[Open in the app](#)

2

concept for sound / timbre
Long tones

[Open in the app](#)

3

articulation
The Milestone (articulation) · ♩ =60

[Open in the app](#)

4

rhythmic, digital and timbral homogeneity
All 12 Major scales in quarters, eighths, triplets and 16ths · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

Desired Competency in the app

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3). Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

5

flexibility

Tonic triad arpeggios, all 12 Major keys · two octaves · ♩ =60

(Overtones & voicing: basic concepts only, for extremely advanced students)

Open in the app

6

nuance

Long tones: soft → full → soft (messa di voce)

Open in the app

7

intonation

Long tones, then Lock-On (tune two tones until the beating stops), level 1

Open in the app

8

vibrato

Vibrato

Open in the app

Desired Competency in the app

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3). Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

9

Development of basic technique and knowledge of all Major and Minor scales.
All 12 Major and Harmonic minor scales · $\text{♩} = 60$ · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

10

Development of basic technique and knowledge of all Major and Minor scales.
All 12 natural minor and melodic minor scales · $\text{♩} = 60$ · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

11

Ability to hear and play dynamics, develop a sense of musical phrasing and a basic understanding of blend and balance.
Dynamics: Long tones, soft → full → soft

[Open in the app](#)

12

Understanding of chord-scale relationships; Jazz improvisation using basic facility.
Chord-scale: the ii–V–I, then its scales: Dorian (ii), Mixolydian (V), Major (I), all 12 keys · $\text{♩} = 60$ · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app on the scales

[Open in the app](#)

The whole course

This is one year of The Study of Saxophone. The whole course, from the Preparatory Year to Year 9, is on thewholehorn.com.

This is a living framework. Use it as a foundation, adapt it to your context, and revise it as new resources emerge.

thewholehorn.com/study-of-saxophone

The Study of Saxophone Year 1

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3). A Nine-Year Course of Study for the Modern Saxophonist-Doubler — Saxophone, Flute & Clarinet.

What Year 1 asks

EXAM REQUIREMENTS

1. Performance of all Major scales in two octaves and arpeggios (tonic triad)
2. Performance of selected piece for Saxophone and Piano
3. Performance of Etudes from selected method: Lacour, Vol. 1

THE YEAR

October to July, in two semesters.
Mid-term exam: early March.
Final exam: early July.

Saxophone students are required to complete the listed methods and satisfactorily present the required scale and arpeggio materials during each school year. Ten compositions will be chosen from each repertoire list and developed to a performance level. Repertoire for the jury examination should be selected in consultation with the student's teacher. Pieces not listed may be studied and performed with the permission of the teacher. Extensive participation in a saxophone quartet and with other instruments in the performance of chamber music and large wind ensemble is requisite for students who have attained an acceptable performance level.

The Study of Saxophone · Desired Competencies

Scales in the app

Exam: Performance of all Major scales in two octaves and arpeggios (tonic triad). Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

1

Exam requirement 1 · Performance of all Major scales in two octaves and arpeggios (tonic triad)
All 12 Major scales and the tonic triad arpeggio · two octaves (as the syllabus asks) · ♩ =60

Open in the app

2

All Major scales, two octaves, with the tonic triad arpeggio
all 12 keys · two octaves · ♩ =60

Open in the app

3

Watch the video · 24 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/study-of-saxophone/year-1/

Watch the video

Methods

The Study of Saxophone · Year 1

Core Methods

Londeix, La Saxophone en Jouant (2ème Cahier)

Lacour, 50 Etudes Faciles, Vol. 1

Lacour, Précis sur les Etude des Gammes

Prati, 7 Etudes Faciles et Progressives

Londeix, La Découverte de la Musique du XVIIe and XVIIIe Siècles

Dupin, La Déchiffrage du Débutant (Sight-reading for Beginners)

Additional Methods

Mule, 24 Etudes Faciles for Saxophone

Meriot, 25 Etudes Faciles for Saxophone, Vol. 1

Lacour, 50 Etudes, Vol. 1

Bay, Basic Rhythmic Concepts for Jazz and Contemporary Phrasing

Auteurs variés, Canons (Simple etudes)

Klosé, Complete Method for Saxophone

Skornicka, Intermediate Method

Niehaus, Jazz Improvisation for Saxophone

Delangle, Méthode de Saxophone, Vol. 2

Mule, Pièces Célèbres for Bb Soprano Saxophone

Rizzo, Reading Jazz

Freeman, Studies and Improvisations for Saxophone

Teal, The Art of Saxophone Playing

Lindeman, The Henry Lindeman Method for Saxophone

de Ville, Universal Method for Saxophone

Methods and Repertoire for the Developing Saxophone Quartet

Repertoire

The Study of Saxophone · Year 1

Core Repertoire

Dubois, La Départ du Roi for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Alessandrini, Valse Lente for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Carles, Panteline for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Succari, Douleurs d'Automne for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Aubine, Petite Rêverie for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Berthelot, La Berçant, l'Ourson for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Additional Repertoire (1 of 2)

Absil, Cinq Pièces Faciles for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Ameller, Lirico for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Bachelette, Tableaux Aquitains for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Beaucamp, Chant Elégiaque for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Bozza, Gavotte des Demoiselles for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Bozza, Rêves d'Enfants for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Burgmüller, Sincerity for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Carlin, Hispanie for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Classens, Jerusalem for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Classens, Le Nouveau Saxophone Classique, Vol. B
Clérisse, À l'Ombre du Clocher for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Fauré, Après un Rêve for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Ferran, Baghira for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Fiche, Concerti Pour un Astronaute for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Fiche, Mirage IV for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Ghidoni, Mélodie en Miniature for Alto or Tenor Saxophone and Piano
Grémont, Larghetto en Ut Majeur for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Repertoire and Ensembles

The Study of Saxophone · Year 1

Additional Repertoire (2 of 2)

Gretchaninoff, Deux miniatures for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Indy, Choral Varié for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Jay, Andante for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Bozza, Le Campanile for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Londeix, Tableaux Aquitains for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Martini, Gavotte for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Faillenot, Danse Fantasque for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Mozart, K. 495 — 1st Mvt, for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Mozart, K. 495 — 2nd Mvt, for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Mozart, K. 495 — 3rd Mvt, for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Pachelbel, Canon in D and F for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Purcell, Trumpet Tune for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Rameau, Tambourin for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Saint-Saëns, Danse Macabre for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Smith, Star Spangled Banner for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Wedding Collection for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Duets and Ensembles (1 of 2)

Mozart, Saxophone Duets (Alto and Tenor)
Bartók, Mikrokosmos (Saxophone Duets)
Henderson, Duets for All Instruments
Voxman, Selected Saxophone Duets, Vol. 1
McKeown, Swing-Duet
Great Latin Favourites (Saxophone Duos, Trios)
Raff, Cavatina — Saxophone Quartet
Dervaux, Ciolina — Saxophone Quartet
Da Pacem Domine — Saxophone Quartet (SAATB)
Grieg, arr. Erickson, Folk Songs — Saxophone Quartet
Hey Jude — Saxophone Quartet (SAATB)
Moussorgsky, In the Village — Saxophone Quartet
Bizet, Intermezzo — Saxophone Quartet
Pierné, La Veillée de l'Ange Gardien — Saxophone Quartet
Debussy, Le Petit Nègre — Saxophone Quartet (SATB)
Margot — Saxophone Quartet (SATB)
My Funny Valentine — Saxophone Quartet

Ensembles

The Study of Saxophone · Year 1

Duets and Ensembles (2 of 2)

Erickson, Nocturne — Saxophone Quartet
Voxman, Repertoire for Saxophone Quartet
Handel, Sarabande et Menuet — Saxophone Quartet
Erickson, Scherzo — Saxophone Quartet
Erickson, Serenade — Saxophone Quartet
Veit, Stille Weis — Saxophone Quartet
Gershwin, Summertime — Saxophone Quartet (SATB)
Suo Gan — Saxophone Quartet
Grieg, The Last Spring — Saxophone Quartet
Gershwin, Un Américain à Paris — Saxophone Quartet
Brahms, Valse — Saxophone Quartet
An Intrada for Jazz Trio — Saxophone Quintet (SAATB)
The Bare Necessities — Saxophone Quintet (SAATB)
The Lincolnshire Poacher — Saxophone Sextet (SAATTB)
Le Donjon Dans La Brume — Saxophone Trio (AAA)
Harvey, Saxophone Quartets, Vol. 1 (SATB)

Desired Competency

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3)

Acquisition of basic skills

air column / breathing
concept for sound / timbre
articulation
rhythmic, digital and timbral homogeneity
accuracy
flexibility
nuance
intonation
vibrato

And

Development of basic technique and knowledge of all Major and Minor scales.
Ability to hear and play dynamics, develop a sense of musical phrasing and a basic understanding of blend and balance.
Cultivation of the ability to memorize simple musical passages.
Development of basic sight-reading skills.
Ability to notate simple musical passages.
Understanding of chord-scale relationships; Jazz improvisation using basic facility.
Basic knowledge of the history of the saxophone and the Giants of Saxophone.
Experience in ensemble performance — piano accompaniment — ensemble of saxophones.
Public performance.

Desired Competency in the app

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3). Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

1

air column / breathing
Long tones: breathing and one steady note

Open in the app

2

concept for sound / timbre
Long tones

Open in the app

3

articulation
The Milestone (articulation) · ♩ =60

Open in the app

4

rhythmic, digital and timbral homogeneity
All 12 Major scales in quarters, eighths, triplets and 16ths · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

Desired Competency in the app

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3). Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

5

flexibility

Tonic triad arpeggios, all 12 Major keys · two octaves · ♩ =60
(Overtones & voicing: basic concepts only, for extremely advanced students)

[Open in the app](#)

6

nuance

Long tones: soft → full → soft (messa di voce)

[Open in the app](#)

7

intonation

Long tones, then Lock-On (tune two tones until the beating stops), level 1

[Open in the app](#)

8

vibrato

Vibrato

[Open in the app](#)

Desired Competency in the app

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3). Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

9

Development of basic technique and knowledge of all Major and Minor scales.
All 12 Major and Harmonic minor scales · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

10

Development of basic technique and knowledge of all Major and Minor scales.
All 12 natural minor and melodic minor scales · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

11

Ability to hear and play dynamics, develop a sense of musical phrasing and a basic understanding of blend and balance.
Dynamics: Long tones, soft → full → soft

[Open in the app](#)

12

Understanding of chord-scale relationships; Jazz improvisation using basic facility.
Chord-scale: the ii–V–I, then its scales: Dorian (ii), Mixolydian (V), Major (I), all 12 keys · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app on the scales

[Open in the app](#)

Make it yours

Every link here is a starting point. To change one, open For Teachers in The Whole Horn, set the key, tempo or hours, add your own sentence, make the link, and paste it over ours. This is one year of The Study of Saxophone. The whole course, from the Preparatory Year to Year 9, is on thewholehorn.com.

This is a living framework. Use it as a foundation, adapt it to your context, and revise it as new resources emerge.

thewholehorn.com/study-of-saxophone

The Study of Saxophone Year 2

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3). A Nine-Year Course of Study for the Modern Saxophonist-Doubler — Saxophone, Flute & Clarinet.

What Year 2 asks

EXAM REQUIREMENTS

1. Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords
2. Performance of selected piece for Saxophone and Piano
3. Performance of Etudes from selected method: Lacour, Vol. 2

THE YEAR

October to July, in two semesters.
Mid-term exam: early March.
Final exam: early July.

Saxophone students are required to complete the listed methods and satisfactorily present the required scale and arpeggio materials during each school year. Ten compositions will be chosen from each repertoire list and developed to a performance level. Repertoire for the jury examination should be selected in consultation with the student's teacher. Pieces not listed may be studied and performed with the permission of the teacher. Extensive participation in a saxophone quartet and with other instruments in the performance of chamber music and large wind ensemble is requisite for students who have attained an acceptable performance level.

The Study of Saxophone · Desired Competencies

Scales in the app

Exam: Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

1

Exam requirement 1 · Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords

Scales: all 12 Major and Harmonic minor · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

2

Exam requirement 1 · Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords

Arpeggios in the Major keys: Tonic, then Dominant 7th · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

3

Exam requirement 1 · Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords

Arpeggios in the Harmonic minor keys: Tonic, then Dominant 7th · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

4

All Major and Harmonic minor scales, with Tonic and Dominant 7th arpeggios
all 12 keys · two octaves · ♩ =60 · arpeggios in the app: major keys (tonic and V7)

Open in the app

5

Watch the video · 17 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/study-of-saxophone/year-2/

Watch the video

Methods

The Study of Saxophone · Year 2

Core Methods

Londeix, Exercices Mécaniques, 1er Cahier

Lacour, 50 Etudes Faciles, Vol. 2

Naulais, 30 Etudes Récréatives

Lacour, 100 Déchiffrages (Sight-reading exercises), Vol. 1

Additional Methods

Klosé, 25 Daily Exercises for Saxophone

Bois, 28 Etudes et Transpositions

Sorok, Etudes pour Saxophone

Londeix, Exercices Mécaniques, Vol. 2

Salviani-Iasilli, Exercises in All Practical Keys

Niehaus, Jazz Conception for Saxophone — Basique

Londeix, Les Gammes Conjointes et en Intervalles

Londeix, Le Détaché

Hite, Melodious and Progressive Studies for Saxophone, Book 1

Mule, Pièces Célèbres for Bb Soprano Saxophone

Mule, Pièces Célèbres for Eb Alto Saxophone

Mule, Scales and Arpeggios

Coker, Patterns for Jazz

Bosch Jr., Studies for Saxophone

Cottrell, The Saxophone

Repertoire

The Study of Saxophone · Year 2

Core Repertoire

Meriot, Grisaille for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Truillard, Sérénade for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Damase, Vacances for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Pascal, Planetarium for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Petit, Saxopera for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Additional Repertoire

Albéniz, Tango for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Ameller, Suite d'Après Rameau for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Antonini, Divertissement Tzigane for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Brown, Au fil du vent for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Gossec, Tambourin for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Handel, Five Famous Handel Sonatas for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Kisza, 10 Movements for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Lancen, Légende Heureuse for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Lunde, Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Meriot, Evasion for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Rameau, Rigaudon for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Saxophone Duet — Mozart, Romance for Alto Saxophones
Saxophone Duet — Leclair, Sonate pour 2 Saxophones
Tcherepnin, Sonatine Sportive for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Teal, Program Solos, Alto Saxophone and Piano

Desired Competency

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3)

Acquisition of basic skills

air column / breathing
concept for sound / timbre
articulation
rhythmic, digital and timbral homogeneity
accuracy
flexibility
nuance
intonation
vibrato

And

Development of basic technique and knowledge of all Major and Minor scales.
Ability to hear and play dynamics, develop a sense of musical phrasing and a basic understanding of blend and balance.
Cultivation of the ability to memorize simple musical passages.
Development of basic sight-reading skills.
Ability to notate simple musical passages.
Understanding of chord-scale relationships; Jazz improvisation using basic facility.
Basic knowledge of the history of the saxophone and the Giants of Saxophone.
Experience in ensemble performance — piano accompaniment — ensemble of saxophones.
Public performance.

Desired Competency in the app

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3). Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

1

air column / breathing
Long tones: breathing and one steady note

[Open in the app](#)

2

concept for sound / timbre
Long tones

[Open in the app](#)

3

articulation
The Milestone (articulation) · ♩ =60

[Open in the app](#)

4

rhythmic, digital and timbral homogeneity
All 12 Major scales in quarters, eighths, triplets and 16ths · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

Desired Competency in the app

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3). Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

5

flexibility

Tonic triad arpeggios, all 12 Major keys · two octaves · ♩ =60
(Overtones & voicing: basic concepts only, for extremely advanced students)

Open in the app

6

nuance

Long tones: soft → full → soft (messa di voce)

Open in the app

7

intonation

Long tones, then Lock-On (tune two tones until the beating stops), level 1

Open in the app

8

vibrato

Vibrato

Open in the app

Desired Competency in the app

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3). Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

9

Development of basic technique and knowledge of all Major and Minor scales.
All 12 Major and Harmonic minor scales · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

10

Development of basic technique and knowledge of all Major and Minor scales.
All 12 natural minor and melodic minor scales · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

11

Ability to hear and play dynamics, develop a sense of musical phrasing and a basic understanding of blend and balance.
Dynamics: Long tones, soft → full → soft

[Open in the app](#)

12

Understanding of chord-scale relationships; Jazz improvisation using basic facility.
Chord-scale: the ii–V–I, then its scales: Dorian (ii), Mixolydian (V), Major (I), all 12 keys · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app on the scales

[Open in the app](#)

Make it yours

Every link here is a starting point. To change one, open For Teachers in The Whole Horn, set the key, tempo or hours, add your own sentence, make the link, and paste it over ours. This is one year of The Study of Saxophone. The whole course, from the Preparatory Year to Year 9, is on thewholehorn.com.

This is a living framework. Use it as a foundation, adapt it to your context, and revise it as new resources emerge.

thewholehorn.com/study-of-saxophone

The Study of Saxophone Year 3

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3). A Nine-Year Course of Study for the Modern Saxophonist-Doubler — Saxophone, Flute & Clarinet.

What Year 3 asks

EXAM REQUIREMENTS

1. Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include 3rds + arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords
2. Performance of selected piece for Saxophone and Piano
3. Performance of Etudes from selected method: Salviani-Iasilli

THE YEAR

October to July, in two semesters.
Mid-term exam: early March.
Final exam: early July.

Saxophone students are required to complete the listed methods and satisfactorily present the required scale and arpeggio materials during each school year. Ten compositions will be chosen from each repertoire list and developed to a performance level. Repertoire for the jury examination should be selected in consultation with the student's teacher. Pieces not listed may be studied and performed with the permission of the teacher. Extensive participation in a saxophone quartet and with other instruments in the performance of chamber music and large wind ensemble is requisite for students who have attained an acceptable performance level.

The Study of Saxophone · Desired Competencies

Scales in the app

Exam: Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include 3rds + arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

1

Exam requirement 1 · Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include 3rds + arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords
Scales: all 12 Major and Harmonic minor · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

2

Exam requirement 1 · Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include 3rds + arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords
Arpeggios in the Major keys: Tonic, then Dominant 7th · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

3

Exam requirement 1 · Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include 3rds + arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords
Arpeggios in the Harmonic minor keys: Tonic, then Dominant 7th · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

4

Exam requirement 1 · Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include 3rds + arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords
In 3rds: all 12 Major and Harmonic minor scales · ♩ =60

[Open in the app](#)

Scales in the app

Exam: Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include 3rds + arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

5

All Major and Harmonic minor scales, with Tonic and Dominant 7th arpeggios
all 12 keys · two octaves · ♩ =60 · arpeggios in the app: major keys (tonic and V7)

Open in the app

6

In 3rds: all Major and Harmonic minor scales
all 12 keys · two octaves · ♩ =60

Open in the app

7

Watch the video · 19 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/study-of-saxophone/year-3/

Watch the video

Methods

The Study of Saxophone · Year 3

Core Methods

Salviani-Iasilli, Exercises in All Practical Keys

Andersen, 24 Petites Etudes

Senon, Techni-Saxophone

Londeix, Exercices Mécaniques, 2ème Cahier

Additional Methods

Traits d'Orchestre pour Saxophone Alto

Mintzer, 14 Blues and Funk Studies

Mule, 18 Studies after Berbiguier

Tate, 250 Jazz Patterns

Ricker, Advanced Chord Etudes for Saxophone

Van Lenten, Creative Jazz Exercises, Vol. 2

Sorok, Etudes pour Saxophone

Klosé, Etudes pour Saxophone

Gerard, Improvising Sax Jazz

Niehaus, Jazz Conception for Saxophone Duets

Niehaus, Jazz Conception for Saxophone — Intermediate

Snidero, Jazz Conception (play-along)

Bay, Jazz Saxophone Concepts

Mule, Pièces Célèbres, Vols. 1, 2, 3

Ricker, Pentatonic Scales for Jazz Improvisation

Voxman, Selected Studies

Viola, Technique, Saxophone, Vol. 3 — Rhythm Studies

Marienthal, The Two-Hour Practice Session

Tompsett, Ultimate Funk Book for Bb instruments

Sinta, Voicing — An Approach to Third Range

Methods and Repertoire for the Developing Saxophone Quartet

Teal, The Art of Saxophone Playing

Klosé, 25 Daily Exercises for Saxophone

Repertoire

The Study of Saxophone · Year 3

Core Repertoire

Crépin, Mandarine for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Truillard, Sérénade for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Dautremer, Emotion for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Lacour, Belle Époque for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Planel, Suite Romantique for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Druet, Sérénade Impromptu for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Lesieur, Sarabande et Menuet for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Additional Repertoire (1 of 2)

Absil, Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Bach, Choral Jésus que ma joie demeure for Soprano Saxophone and Piano
Bach, Le Choral du Veilleur for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Bach, Prélude à la Cantate No. 156 for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Bazelaire, Concerto for Tenor Saxophone and Piano
Bizet, Agnus Dei for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Bizet, Intermezzo, L'Arlésienne for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Brown, Tango for SOLO Tenor Saxophone
Burgmüller, Op. 100 No. 2 Arabesque for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Hovhaness, The Flowering Peach for Alto Saxophone and Perc.
Chopin, Op. 10 No. 3 Etude for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Corelli, Gigue for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Debussy, La Fille aux Cheveux de Lin for Tenor or Soprano Saxophone and Piano
Demersseman, Premier Solo — Andante et Boléro for Tenor Saxophone and Piano
Desportes, Saxo Danses for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Fauré, Op. 33 No. 3 — Nocturne for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Fauré, Sicilienne for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Fiche, Concerti Pour un Astronaute for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Gershwin, 11 Songs arr. Strommen (play-along)

Repertoire and Ensembles

The Study of Saxophone · Year 3

Additional Repertoire (2 of 2)

Handel, Adagio for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Handel, Marche for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Handel, Sonate No. 1 for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Handel, Sonate No. 3 for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Haydn, 3rd Mvt. for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Classens, Jerusalem for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Hovhanness, Suite for Alto Saxophone and Guitar
Ibert, Aria for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Ibert, Histoires for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Ibert, Mélopée for Alto Saxophone or Tenor and Piano
Lancen, Légende Heureuse for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Martin, Ballade for SOLO Tenor Saxophone
Planel, Suite Romantique for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Schubert, Ave Maria for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Teal, Solos for the Alto Saxophone Player with Piano Accompaniment
Vivaldi, Op. 3 No. 6 — 1st Mvt. for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Weber, Saxetto for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Williams, Six Studies in English Folk Songs for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Zaninelli, Autumn Music for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Ensembles (1 of 2)

La Bamba — Saxophone Choir (SAAATTB)
Loeillet, Sonate for Two Saxophones — Saxophone Duet
West, Hip to the Blues — 22 Duets — Saxophone Duets
NUNCA TUVO NOVIO PROLIJO — Saxophone Quartet
Fauré, Pavane — Saxophone Quartet
Londeix, Practical Exercises for Saxophone Ensembles — Saxophone Quartet
Mozart, Serenade No. 11 — Saxophone Quartet
Senon, Vingt Flash Jazz — Saxophone Quartet
Concierto en la Luna — Saxophone Quartet (SATB)
Naranjo en Flor — Saxophone Quartet (SATB)
Gillespie, A Night in Tunisia — Saxophone Quartet (SATB)
Blue Trane — Saxophone Quartet
Raff, Cavatina — Saxophone Quartet
Martini, Célèbre Gavotte — Saxophone Quartet
Mozart, Così Fan Tutte — Saxophone Quartet
Grieg, arr. Erickson, Folk Songs — Saxophone Quartet
Clérisse, Introduction et Scherzo — Saxophone Quartet
Pierné, La Veillée de l'Ange Gardien — Saxophone Quartet

Ensembles

The Study of Saxophone · Year 3

Ensembles (2 of 2)

Mario Bros — Saxophone Quartet

Memphis Underground — Saxophone Quartet

Joplin, Peacherine Rag — Saxophone Quartet

Françaix, Petit Quatuor pour Saxophones — Saxophone Quartet

Handel, So Shall the Lute and Harp Awake — Saxophone Quartet

Ory, The Kid — Saxophone Quartet

Grieg, The Last Spring — Saxophone Quartet

Haley, While Strolling — Saxophone Quartet

Wiedoeft, Saxophobia — Saxophone Quartet

Prati, Nine Negro Spirituals — Saxophone Quartets

Voxman, Repertoire for Saxophone Quartet — Saxophone Quartets

Blues Pentatônico — Saxophone Sextet (SAATTB)

Ericho — Saxophone Sextet (SAATTB)

Diabelli, Six for Three — Saxophone Trio (3 Altos)

Piazzolla, Adiós Nonino — Saxophone Trio

Depelsenaire, Concertino for 3 Alto Saxophones and Piano — Saxophone Trio

Piège à Trois — Saxophone Trio (AAT)

The Doubler's Path

Start flute in Years 3–4. Start clarinet in Years 4–5. Both instruments are lifelong companions, not temporary hurdles.

Flute — Introduced Years 3–4

Method books:

Trevor Wye, Practice Books for the Flute, Vols. 1–5

Marcel Moyse, De la Sonorité

Taffanel & Gaubert, 17 Daily Exercises

Repertoire entry points:

Bach, Flute Sonatas BWV 1030–1035

Telemann, Fantasias for Solo Flute

Hindemith, Sonata for Flute and Piano

Fauré, Fantasia for Flute and Piano

The flute is where classical technique is refined and a second embouchure vocabulary is built. The crossover with saxophone breathing and support is significant. Do not treat flute as a shortcut — it is a separate discipline that demands separate daily practice.

Clarinet — Introduced Years 4–5

Method books:

Klosé, Celebrated Method for Clarinet

Baermann, Complete Method, Vol. 3

Rose, 32 Etudes and 40 Studies

Cavallini, Caprices

Repertoire entry points:

Weber, Concerto No. 1 and Concerto No. 2

Mozart, Clarinet Concerto K. 622

Brahms, Sonatas Op. 120

Stravinsky, Three Pieces for Clarinet Solo

Clarinet demands a fundamentally different embouchure, a single-reed response that is more exposed than saxophone, and a tone production philosophy that is its own. The saxophonist who plays clarinet with saxophone habits sounds like a saxophonist pretending. Study it right: from the ground up, with a clarinet teacher if possible, at least in the early stages.

Desired Competency

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3)

Acquisition of basic skills

air column / breathing
concept for sound / timbre
articulation
rhythmic, digital and timbral homogeneity
accuracy
flexibility
nuance
intonation
vibrato

And

Development of basic technique and knowledge of all Major and Minor scales.
Ability to hear and play dynamics, develop a sense of musical phrasing and a basic understanding of blend and balance.
Cultivation of the ability to memorize simple musical passages.
Development of basic sight-reading skills.
Ability to notate simple musical passages.
Understanding of chord-scale relationships; Jazz improvisation using basic facility.
Basic knowledge of the history of the saxophone and the Giants of Saxophone.
Experience in ensemble performance — piano accompaniment — ensemble of saxophones.
Public performance.

Desired Competency in the app

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3). Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

1

air column / breathing
Long tones: breathing and one steady note

Open in the app

2

concept for sound / timbre
Long tones

Open in the app

3

articulation
The Milestone (articulation) · ♩ =60

Open in the app

4

rhythmic, digital and timbral homogeneity
All 12 Major scales in quarters, eighths, triplets and 16ths · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

Desired Competency in the app

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3). Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

5

flexibility

Tonic triad arpeggios, all 12 Major keys · two octaves · ♩ =60
(Overtones & voicing: basic concepts only, for extremely advanced students)

[Open in the app](#)

6

nuance

Long tones: soft → full → soft (messa di voce)

[Open in the app](#)

7

intonation

Long tones, then Lock-On (tune two tones until the beating stops), level 1

[Open in the app](#)

8

vibrato

Vibrato

[Open in the app](#)

Desired Competency in the app

Preparatory Cycle (Preparatory Year to Year 3). Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

9

Development of basic technique and knowledge of all Major and Minor scales.
All 12 Major and Harmonic minor scales · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

10

Development of basic technique and knowledge of all Major and Minor scales.
All 12 natural minor and melodic minor scales · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

11

Ability to hear and play dynamics, develop a sense of musical phrasing and a basic understanding of blend and balance.
Dynamics: Long tones, soft → full → soft

[Open in the app](#)

12

Understanding of chord-scale relationships; Jazz improvisation using basic facility.
Chord-scale: the ii–V–I, then its scales: Dorian (ii), Mixolydian (V), Major (I), all 12 keys · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app on the scales

[Open in the app](#)

Make it yours

Every link here is a starting point. To change one, open For Teachers in The Whole Horn, set the key, tempo or hours, add your own sentence, make the link, and paste it over ours. This is one year of The Study of Saxophone. The whole course, from the Preparatory Year to Year 9, is on thewholehorn.com.

This is a living framework. Use it as a foundation, adapt it to your context, and revise it as new resources emerge.

thewholehorn.com/study-of-saxophone

The Study of Saxophone Year 4

First Higher Cycle (Years 4 to 7). A Nine-Year Course of Study for the Modern Saxophonist-Doubler —
Saxophone, Flute & Clarinet.

What Year 4 asks

EXAM REQUIREMENTS

1. Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords
2. Performance of selected piece for Saxophone and Piano
3. Performance of Etudes from selected method book(s)

THE YEAR

October to July, in two semesters.

Mid-term exam: early March.

Final exam: early July.

Daily practice: 4 to 5 hours a day (from the Fourth Year on, 3 to 6 hours a day; at least three hours on a bad day).

"This is a serious course in a serious conservatory, and unless you're gonna seriously engage, the conservatory is really not very impressed, and ... the backing and support and the endorsement of that student on the part of the conservatory is contingent upon their reciprocal engagement, following the recommendations of their teachers."

Saxophone students are required to complete the listed methods and satisfactorily present the required scale and arpeggio materials during each school year. Ten compositions will be chosen from each repertoire list and developed to a performance level. Repertoire for the jury examination should be selected in consultation with the student's teacher. Pieces not listed may be studied and performed with the permission of the teacher. Extensive participation in a saxophone quartet and with other instruments in the performance of chamber music and large wind ensemble is requisite for students who have attained an acceptable performance level.

The Study of Saxophone · Desired Competencies

Scales in the app

Exam: Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

1

Exam requirement 1 · Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords
Scales: all 12 Major and Harmonic minor · $\text{♩} = 60$ · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

2

Exam requirement 1 · Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords
Arpeggios in the Major keys: Tonic, then Dominant 7th · $\text{♩} = 60$ · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

3

Exam requirement 1 · Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords
Arpeggios in the Harmonic minor keys: Tonic, then Dominant 7th · $\text{♩} = 60$ · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

4

Exam requirement 1 · Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords
Diatonic 4ths: all 12 Major and Harmonic minor scales · $\text{♩} = 60$

Open in the app

Scales in the app

Exam: Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

5

Exam requirement 1 · Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords
Diatonic 5ths: all 12 Major and Harmonic minor scales · ♩ =60

Open in the app

6

All Major and Harmonic minor scales, with Tonic and Dominant 7th arpeggios
all 12 keys · two octaves · ♩ =60 · arpeggios in the app: major keys (tonic and V7)

Open in the app

7

Diatonic 4ths: all Major and Harmonic minor scales
all 12 keys · two octaves · ♩ =60

Open in the app

8

Diatonic 5ths: all Major and Harmonic minor scales
all 12 keys · two octaves · ♩ =60

Open in the app

9

Watch the video · 24 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/study-of-saxophone/year-4/

Watch the video

Methods

The Study of Saxophone · Year 4

Core Methods

Meriot, 12 Etudes Atonales
Berbiguier, 18 Etudes Mélodiques
Busser, 12 Etudes Mélodiques
Decouais, 35 Etudes Techniques
Salviani-Iasilli, Exercises in All Practical Keys
Charlie Parker Omnibook

Additional Methods

Mintzer, 15 Easy Jazz Blues and Funk Etudes (Bb)
Rossari, 53 Melodious Etudes for Saxophone or Oboe
Niehaus, Developing Jazz Concepts
Ferling, 48 Etudes
Niehaus, Intermediate Jazz Conception for Saxophone
Niehaus, Jazz Conception for Saxophone Duets
Hite, Melodious Progressive Studies for Saxophone
Niehaus, Basic Jazz Conception, Vol. 2
Voxman, Selected Advanced Studies for Saxophone
Voxman, Selected Studies for Saxophone
Teal, Solos for the Alto Saxophone Player
Haerle, The Jazz Language Method

Repertoire

The Study of Saxophone · Year 4

Core Repertoire

Koechlin, 15 Etudes for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Bach, Suite d'Orchestre en Ut for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Ibert, Histoires for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Jolivet, Fantasia Impromptu for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Lacour, Noctilienne for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Alessandrini, Piazzolino for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Additional Repertoire

Bitsch, Villageoise for SOLO Alto Saxophone

Bozza, Aria for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Debussy, Saxophone Album for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Debussy, Syrinx for SOLO Saxophone

Eccles, Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Françaix, Cinq Danses Exotiques — Baião for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Ibert, Aria for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Ibert, Histoires for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Ravel, Pièce en forme de Habanera for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Tomasi, Introduction et Danse for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Whitney, Rumba for Alto Saxophone and Piano

The Doubler's Path

Start flute in Years 3–4. Start clarinet in Years 4–5. Both instruments are lifelong companions, not temporary hurdles.

Flute — Introduced Years 3–4

Method books:

Trevor Wye, Practice Books for the Flute, Vols. 1–5

Marcel Moyse, De la Sonorité

Taffanel & Gaubert, 17 Daily Exercises

Repertoire entry points:

Bach, Flute Sonatas BWV 1030–1035

Telemann, Fantasias for Solo Flute

Hindemith, Sonata for Flute and Piano

Fauré, Fantasia for Flute and Piano

The flute is where classical technique is refined and a second embouchure vocabulary is built. The crossover with saxophone breathing and support is significant. Do not treat flute as a shortcut — it is a separate discipline that demands separate daily practice.

Clarinet — Introduced Years 4–5

Method books:

Klosé, Celebrated Method for Clarinet

Baermann, Complete Method, Vol. 3

Rose, 32 Etudes and 40 Studies

Cavallini, Caprices

Repertoire entry points:

Weber, Concerto No. 1 and Concerto No. 2

Mozart, Clarinet Concerto K. 622

Brahms, Sonatas Op. 120

Stravinsky, Three Pieces for Clarinet Solo

Clarinet demands a fundamentally different embouchure, a single-reed response that is more exposed than saxophone, and a tone production philosophy that is its own. The saxophonist who plays clarinet with saxophone habits sounds like a saxophonist pretending. Study it right: from the ground up, with a clarinet teacher if possible, at least in the early stages.

Desired Competency

Years 4 to 8

Deepening skills acquired in the Preparatory Cycle

air column / breathing
development of a personal, mature sound
articulation
rhythmic, digital and timbral homogeneity
accuracy
flexibility
nuance
intonation
vibrato

And

Fluidity of technique as well as knowledge of alternative fingerings.
Ability to play "extreme" nuance, to tune alone, to control and correct intonation.
Ability to memorize music.
Sight-reading at the level of "working musicians."
Knowledge, technical facility, and musical maturity in contemporary music.
Understanding and application of the wide variety of music notation in contemporary music.
Knowledge and practice of chord-scale relationships; Jazz improvisation.
Listening skills, Jazz phrasing, memorization of easy jazz standards, and the ability to transcribe solos.
The history of the saxophone, the different epochs and styles, and important figures.
Understanding and application of descriptive and analytical vocabulary.
Ensemble performance — piano accompaniment — chamber music — ensemble of saxophones — orchestra, Jazz combos and Jazz ensembles — knowing how to conduct a set and a rehearsal.
Perform in public as a soloist.
Participate on a stage.
Promote general musical culture by listening to and performing music of all kinds.

Desired Competency in the app

Years 4 to 8. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

1

air column / breathing
Long tones: breathing and one steady note

Open in the app

2

development of a personal, mature sound
Long tones, then Overtones & voicing

Open in the app

3

articulation
The Milestone (articulation) · ♩ =60

Open in the app

4

rhythmic, digital and timbral homogeneity
All 12 Major scales in quarters, eighths, triplets and 16ths · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

Desired Competency in the app

Years 4 to 8. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

5

flexibility
Overtones & voicing

Open in the app

6

nuance
Long tones: soft → full → soft (messa di voce)

Open in the app

7

intonation
Long tones, then Lock-On (tune two tones until the beating stops), level 1

Open in the app

8

vibrato
Vibrato

Open in the app

Desired Competency in the app

Years 4 to 8. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

9

Ability to play "extreme" nuance, to tune alone, to control and correct intonation.
Long tones (nuance), then Lock-On (tuning alone), level 1

[Open in the app](#)

10

Knowledge and practice of chord-scale relationships; Jazz improvisation.
Chord-scale: the ii-V-I, then its scales: Dorian (ii), Mixolydian (V), Major (I), all 12 keys · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app on the scales

[Open in the app](#)

11

Listening skills, Jazz phrasing, memorization of easy jazz standards, and the ability to transcribe solos.
Listening: Name It (hear two notes or a chord, name it), level 1

[Open in the app](#)

12

Listening skills, Jazz phrasing, memorization of easy jazz standards, and the ability to transcribe solos.
Listening: Chord Colors (hear a chord, name its color), level 1

[Open in the app](#)

Make it yours

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This is a living framework. Use it as a foundation, adapt it to your context, and revise it as new resources emerge.

thewholehorn.com/study-of-saxophone

The Study of Saxophone Year 5

First Higher Cycle (Years 4 to 7). A Nine-Year Course of Study for the Modern Saxophonist-Doubler —
Saxophone, Flute & Clarinet.

What Year 5 asks

EXAM REQUIREMENTS

1. Sight-Reading exam
2. Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords
3. Performance of selected piece for Saxophone and Piano
4. Performance of Etudes from selected method: Ferling Etudes (ALL)

THE YEAR

October to July, in two semesters.

Mid-term exam: early March.

Final exam: early July.

Daily practice: 4 to 5 hours a day (from the Fourth Year on, 3 to 6 hours a day; at least three hours on a bad day).

"This is a serious course in a serious conservatory, and unless you're gonna seriously engage, the conservatory is really not very impressed, and ... the backing and support and the endorsement of that student on the part of the conservatory is contingent upon their reciprocal engagement, following the recommendations of their teachers."

Saxophone students are required to complete the listed methods and satisfactorily present the required scale and arpeggio materials during each school year. Ten compositions will be chosen from each repertoire list and developed to a performance level. Repertoire for the jury examination should be selected in consultation with the student's teacher. Pieces not listed may be studied and performed with the permission of the teacher. Extensive participation in a saxophone quartet and with other instruments in the performance of chamber music and large wind ensemble is requisite for students who have attained an acceptable performance level.

The Study of Saxophone · Desired Competencies

Scales in the app

Exam: Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

1

Exam requirement 2 · Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords
Scales: all 12 Major and Harmonic minor · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

2

Exam requirement 2 · Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords
Arpeggios in the Major keys: Tonic, then Dominant 7th · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

3

Exam requirement 2 · Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords
Arpeggios in the Harmonic minor keys: Tonic, then Dominant 7th · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

4

Exam requirement 2 · Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords
Diatonic 4ths: all 12 Major and Harmonic minor scales · ♩ =60

Open in the app

Scales in the app

Exam: Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

5

Exam requirement 2 · Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords
Diatonic 5ths: all 12 Major and Harmonic minor scales · ♩ =60

[Open in the app](#)

6

Exam requirement 2 · Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords
Diatonic 6ths: all 12 Major and Harmonic minor scales · ♩ =60

[Open in the app](#)

7

All Major and Harmonic minor scales, with Tonic and Dominant 7th arpeggios
all 12 keys · two octaves · ♩ =60 · arpeggios in the app: major keys (tonic and V7)

[Open in the app](#)

Scales in the app

Exam: Performance of all Major and Harmonic minor scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated Tonic and Dominant 7th chords. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

8

Diatonic 4ths: all Major and Harmonic minor scales
all 12 keys · two octaves · ♩ =60

[Open in the app](#)

9

Diatonic 5ths: all Major and Harmonic minor scales
all 12 keys · two octaves · ♩ =60

[Open in the app](#)

10

Diatonic 6ths: all Major and Harmonic minor scales
all 12 keys · two octaves · ♩ =60

[Open in the app](#)

Methods

The Study of Saxophone · Year 5

Core Methods

Ferling, 48 Famous Studies
Senon, 16 Rhythmic and Technical Exercises
Londeix, Sur les Gammes Conjointes
Ricker, Advanced Chord Etudes
Debondue, 50 Sight-Reading Etudes
Salviani-Iasilli, Exercises in All Practical Keys
Charlie Parker Omnibook

Additional Methods

Rae, 12 Modern Etudes for Saxophone
Mule, 18 Studies after Berbiguier
Lacour, 24 Etudes Atonales Faciles
Mule, 53 Etudes, Vol. 1
Niehaus, Advanced Jazz Conception for Saxophone (Sophomore)
Aebersold, ii-V7-I
Cannonball Adderley Solo Transcriptions
Mule, Cinquante-Trois Etudes, Pt. 1
Lacour, Douze Esquisses dans le Style Contemporain for SOLO Saxophone
Mule, Exercices Journaliers
List of 50 Easy Jazz Solos (to be transcribed by students)
Coker, The Complete Method for Improvisation
Baker, The Jazz Style of John Coltrane

Repertoire

The Study of Saxophone · Year 5

Core Repertoire

Handel, Sonate en Sol mineur for Soprano Saxophone and Piano
Williams, Rhapsodie for Tenor Saxophone and Piano
Tcherepnin, Sonatine Sportive for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Calmel, Sonate d'Automne for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Dubois, Mazurka for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Sauguet, Bucolique for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Additional Repertoire

Bach, Cello Suite No. 1 — Prélude arranged for SOLO Alto Sax (Sophomore)
Bach, Cello Suite No. 2 in All Keys — Treble Clef
Bach, Partita for SOLO Saxophone BWV 1013
Bach, Sonata No. 6 for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Bonneau, Pièce Concertante for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Demersseman, Fantaisie for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Handel, Sonata Op. 1 No. 13 for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Handel, Sonata Op. 1 No. 15 for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Maslanka, Song Book for Alto Saxophone and Marimba
Telemann, 12 Flute Fantasias for SOLO Alto Saxophone

The Doubler's Path

Start flute in Years 3–4. Start clarinet in Years 4–5. Both instruments are lifelong companions, not temporary hurdles.

Flute — Introduced Years 3–4

Method books:

Trevor Wye, Practice Books for the Flute, Vols. 1–5

Marcel Moyse, De la Sonorité

Taffanel & Gaubert, 17 Daily Exercises

Repertoire entry points:

Bach, Flute Sonatas BWV 1030–1035

Telemann, Fantasias for Solo Flute

Hindemith, Sonata for Flute and Piano

Fauré, Fantasia for Flute and Piano

The flute is where classical technique is refined and a second embouchure vocabulary is built. The crossover with saxophone breathing and support is significant. Do not treat flute as a shortcut — it is a separate discipline that demands separate daily practice.

Clarinet — Introduced Years 4–5

Method books:

Klosé, Celebrated Method for Clarinet

Baermann, Complete Method, Vol. 3

Rose, 32 Etudes and 40 Studies

Cavallini, Caprices

Repertoire entry points:

Weber, Concerto No. 1 and Concerto No. 2

Mozart, Clarinet Concerto K. 622

Brahms, Sonatas Op. 120

Stravinsky, Three Pieces for Clarinet Solo

Clarinet demands a fundamentally different embouchure, a single-reed response that is more exposed than saxophone, and a tone production philosophy that is its own. The saxophonist who plays clarinet with saxophone habits sounds like a saxophonist pretending. Study it right: from the ground up, with a clarinet teacher if possible, at least in the early stages.

Desired Competency

Years 4 to 8

Deepening skills acquired in the Preparatory Cycle

air column / breathing
development of a personal, mature sound
articulation
rhythmic, digital and timbral homogeneity
accuracy
flexibility
nuance
intonation
vibrato

And

Fluidity of technique as well as knowledge of alternative fingerings.
Ability to play "extreme" nuance, to tune alone, to control and correct intonation.
Ability to memorize music.
Sight-reading at the level of "working musicians."
Knowledge, technical facility, and musical maturity in contemporary music.
Understanding and application of the wide variety of music notation in contemporary music.
Knowledge and practice of chord-scale relationships; Jazz improvisation.
Listening skills, Jazz phrasing, memorization of easy jazz standards, and the ability to transcribe solos.
The history of the saxophone, the different epochs and styles, and important figures.
Understanding and application of descriptive and analytical vocabulary.
Ensemble performance — piano accompaniment — chamber music — ensemble of saxophones — orchestra, Jazz combos and Jazz ensembles — knowing how to conduct a set and a rehearsal.
Perform in public as a soloist.
Participate on a stage.
Promote general musical culture by listening to and performing music of all kinds.

Desired Competency in the app

Years 4 to 8. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

1

air column / breathing
Long tones: breathing and one steady note

[Open in the app](#)

2

development of a personal, mature sound
Long tones, then Overtones & voicing

[Open in the app](#)

3

articulation
The Milestone (articulation) · ♩ =60

[Open in the app](#)

4

rhythmic, digital and timbral homogeneity
All 12 Major scales in quarters, eighths, triplets and 16ths · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

Desired Competency in the app

Years 4 to 8. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

5

flexibility
Overtones & voicing

Open in the app

6

nuance
Long tones: soft → full → soft (messa di voce)

Open in the app

7

intonation
Long tones, then Lock-On (tune two tones until the beating stops), level 1

Open in the app

8

vibrato
Vibrato

Open in the app

Desired Competency in the app

Years 4 to 8. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

9

Ability to play "extreme" nuance, to tune alone, to control and correct intonation.
Long tones (nuance), then Lock-On (tuning alone), level 1

[Open in the app](#)

10

Knowledge and practice of chord-scale relationships; Jazz improvisation.
Chord-scale: the ii-V-I, then its scales: Dorian (ii), Mixolydian (V), Major (I), all 12 keys · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app on the scales

[Open in the app](#)

11

Listening skills, Jazz phrasing, memorization of easy jazz standards, and the ability to transcribe solos.
Listening: Name It (hear two notes or a chord, name it), level 1

[Open in the app](#)

12

Listening skills, Jazz phrasing, memorization of easy jazz standards, and the ability to transcribe solos.
Listening: Chord Colors (hear a chord, name its color), level 1

[Open in the app](#)

Make it yours

Every link here is a starting point. To change one, open For Teachers in The Whole Horn, set the key, tempo or hours, add your own sentence, make the link, and paste it over ours. This is one year of The Study of Saxophone. The whole course, from the Preparatory Year to Year 9, is on thewholehorn.com.

This is a living framework. Use it as a foundation, adapt it to your context, and revise it as new resources emerge.

thewholehorn.com/study-of-saxophone

The Study of Saxophone Year 6

First Higher Cycle (Years 4 to 7). A Nine-Year Course of Study for the Modern Saxophonist-Doubler —
Saxophone, Flute & Clarinet.

What Year 6 asks

EXAM REQUIREMENTS

1. Sight-Reading exam
2. Performance of all diminished and augmented scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated triads and 7th chords
3. Performance of selected piece for Saxophone and Piano or Solo Saxophone
4. Performance of Etudes from selected method: Ferling Etudes (ALL)

THE YEAR

October to July, in two semesters.

Mid-term exam: early March.

Final exam: early July.

Daily practice: 4 to 5 hours a day (from the Fourth Year on, 3 to 6 hours a day; at least three hours on a bad day).

Saxophone students are required to complete the listed methods and satisfactorily present the required scale and arpeggio materials during each school year. Ten compositions will be chosen from each repertoire list and developed to a performance level. Repertoire for the jury examination should be selected in consultation with the student's teacher. Pieces not listed may be studied and performed with the permission of the teacher. Extensive participation in a saxophone quartet and with other instruments in the performance of chamber music and large wind ensemble is requisite for students who have attained an acceptable performance level.

The Study of Saxophone · Desired Competencies

Scales in the app

Exam: Performance of all diminished and augmented scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated triads and 7th chords. The app has no augmented scale: practice those from the page.

1 Exam requirement 2 · Performance of all diminished and augmented scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated triads and 7th chords
All 12 diminished scales, half–whole and whole–half · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

2 Exam requirement 2 · Performance of all diminished and augmented scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated triads and 7th chords
Diminished scales (half–whole and whole–half) in 4ths · ♩ =60

Open in the app

3 Exam requirement 2 · Performance of all diminished and augmented scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated triads and 7th chords
Diminished scales (half–whole and whole–half) in 5ths · ♩ =60

Open in the app

4 Exam requirement 2 · Performance of all diminished and augmented scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated triads and 7th chords
Diminished scales (half–whole and whole–half) in 6ths · ♩ =60

Open in the app

5 Exam requirement 2 · Performance of all diminished and augmented scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated triads and 7th chords
Diminished scales (half–whole and whole–half): arpeggiated triads · ♩ =60

Open in the app

Scales in the app

Exam: Performance of all diminished and augmented scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated triads and 7th chords. The app has no augmented scale: practice those from the page.

6

Exam requirement 2 · Performance of all diminished and augmented scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated triads and 7th chords
Diminished scales (half–whole and whole–half): arpeggiated 7th chords · ♩ =60

Open in the app

7

All diminished scales, half–whole and whole–half
all 12 keys · two octaves · ♩ =60

Open in the app

8

Diminished scales in 4ths
all 12 keys · two octaves · ♩ =60

Open in the app

9

Diminished scales in 5ths
all 12 keys · two octaves · ♩ =60

Open in the app

10

Watch the video · 22 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/study-of-saxophone/year-6/

Watch the video

Scales in the app

Exam: Performance of all diminished and augmented scales to include diatonic 4ths, 5ths, 6ths and arpeggiated triads and 7th chords. The app has no augmented scale: practice those from the page.

11

Diminished scales in 6ths
all 12 keys · two octaves · ♩ =60

Open in the app

12

Diminished scales: arpeggiated triads
all 12 keys · two octaves · ♩ =60

Open in the app

13

Diminished scales: arpeggiated 7th chords
all 12 keys · two octaves · ♩ =60

Open in the app

Methods

The Study of Saxophone · Year 6

Core Methods

Andersen, 24 Etudes Instructives
Montbrun, 6 Pièces Musicales
Londeix, Sur les Gammes Conjointes
Gilles, 32 Etudes Mélodiques et Techniques
Debondue, 50 Sight-Reading Etudes
Salviani-Iasilli, Exercises in All Practical Keys
Charlie Parker Omnibook

Additional Methods

Reeves, Creative Jazz Improvisation
Mule, Etudes Variées
Coker, Patterns for Jazz
Sinta, Voicing — An Approach to Third Range for Saxophone

Repertoire

The Study of Saxophone · Year 6

Core Repertoire

Bozza, Prélude et Divertissement for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Busser, Asturias for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Dautremet, Tango et Tarentelle for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Françaix, Cinq Danses Exotiques for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Montbrun, Six Pièces Musicales et d'Etudes for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Additional Repertoire

Bach, Sonata in A minor for Solo Flute (BWV 1013)
Bozza, Pièce Brève for SOLO Saxophone
Creston, Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Duclos, Pièce Brève for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Jolivet, Fantaisie Impromptu
Koechlin, 15 Etudes for Saxophone
Piazzolla, Tango Etudes for SOLO Saxophone
Teal, Program Solos, Alto Saxophone and Piano
Teal, Solos for the Alto Saxophone Player with Piano Accompaniment

Desired Competency

Years 4 to 8

Deepening skills acquired in the Preparatory Cycle

air column / breathing
development of a personal, mature sound
articulation
rhythmic, digital and timbral homogeneity
accuracy
flexibility
nuance
intonation
vibrato

And

Fluidity of technique as well as knowledge of alternative fingerings.
Ability to play "extreme" nuance, to tune alone, to control and correct intonation.
Ability to memorize music.
Sight-reading at the level of "working musicians."
Knowledge, technical facility, and musical maturity in contemporary music.
Understanding and application of the wide variety of music notation in contemporary music.
Knowledge and practice of chord-scale relationships; Jazz improvisation.
Listening skills, Jazz phrasing, memorization of easy jazz standards, and the ability to transcribe solos.
The history of the saxophone, the different epochs and styles, and important figures.
Understanding and application of descriptive and analytical vocabulary.
Ensemble performance — piano accompaniment — chamber music — ensemble of saxophones — orchestra, Jazz combos and Jazz ensembles — knowing how to conduct a set and a rehearsal.
Perform in public as a soloist.
Participate on a stage.
Promote general musical culture by listening to and performing music of all kinds.

Desired Competency in the app

Years 4 to 8. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

1

air column / breathing
Long tones: breathing and one steady note

Open in the app

2

development of a personal, mature sound
Long tones, then Overtones & voicing

Open in the app

3

articulation
The Milestone (articulation) · ♩ =60

Open in the app

4

rhythmic, digital and timbral homogeneity
All 12 Major scales in quarters, eighths, triplets and 16ths · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

Desired Competency in the app

Years 4 to 8. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

5

flexibility
Overtones & voicing

Open in the app

6

nuance
Long tones: soft → full → soft (messa di voce)

Open in the app

7

intonation
Long tones, then Lock-On (tune two tones until the beating stops), level 1

Open in the app

8

vibrato
Vibrato

Open in the app

Desired Competency in the app

Years 4 to 8. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

9

Ability to play "extreme" nuance, to tune alone, to control and correct intonation.
Long tones (nuance), then Lock-On (tuning alone), level 1

[Open in the app](#)

10

Knowledge and practice of chord-scale relationships; Jazz improvisation.
Chord-scale: the ii-V-I, then its scales: Dorian (ii), Mixolydian (V), Major (I), all 12 keys · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app on the scales

[Open in the app](#)

11

Listening skills, Jazz phrasing, memorization of easy jazz standards, and the ability to transcribe solos.
Listening: Name It (hear two notes or a chord, name it), level 1

[Open in the app](#)

12

Listening skills, Jazz phrasing, memorization of easy jazz standards, and the ability to transcribe solos.
Listening: Chord Colors (hear a chord, name its color), level 1

[Open in the app](#)

Make it yours

Every link here is a starting point. To change one, open For Teachers in The Whole Horn, set the key, tempo or hours, add your own sentence, make the link, and paste it over ours. This is one year of The Study of Saxophone. The whole course, from the Preparatory Year to Year 9, is on thewholehorn.com.

This is a living framework. Use it as a foundation, adapt it to your context, and revise it as new resources emerge.

thewholehorn.com/study-of-saxophone

The Study of Saxophone Year 7

Bachelor's Degree ("Licence") · First Higher Cycle (Years 4 to 7). A Nine-Year Course of Study for the Modern Saxophonist-Doubler — Saxophone, Flute & Clarinet.

What Year 7 asks

EXAM REQUIREMENTS

1. Sight-Reading exam
2. Performance of selected piece for Saxophone and Piano or Solo Saxophone
3. Performance of a piece chosen by the saxophonist (Year 7 and above)

THE YEAR

October to July, in two semesters.

Mid-term exam: early March.

Final exam: early July.

Daily practice: 4 to 5 hours a day (from the Fourth Year on, 3 to 6 hours a day; at least three hours on a bad day).

"4 to 5 hours a day is what the expectation would be for those degrees anywhere in the world, and that should be the standard, and ... it gets progressively more serious."

Saxophone students are required to complete the listed methods and satisfactorily present the required scale and arpeggio materials during each school year. Ten compositions will be chosen from each repertoire list and developed to a performance level. Repertoire for the jury examination should be selected in consultation with the student's teacher. Pieces not listed may be studied and performed with the permission of the teacher. Extensive participation in a saxophone quartet and with other instruments in the performance of chamber music and large wind ensemble is requisite for students who have attained an acceptable performance level.

The Study of Saxophone · Desired Competencies

Scales in the app

1

Practice this year in The Whole Horn

Open in the app

Methods

The Study of Saxophone · Year 7

Core Methods

Porret, 24 Déchiffrages (B)
Sousman, 30 Grands Exercices en 2 Cahiers
Piazzolla, Tango Etudes
Rousseau, High Tones for Saxophone
Seffer, Improvisations et Modes — Etudes sur des Modes Grecs

Additional Methods

Bozza/Mule, 12 Etudes Caprices
28 Etudes on Modes with Limited Transpositions (after Messiaen)
Reeves, Creative Jazz Improvisation
Londeix, Hello Mr. Sax
Londeix, Les Gammes Conjointes et en Intervalles
Coker, Patterns for Jazz

Methods in the app

The Study of Saxophone · Year 7

1

Seffer, Improvisations et Modes — Etudes sur des Modes Grecs

Greek modes: Ionian and Dorian, all 12 keys · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app (the etudes are in the book)

Open in the app

2

Seffer, Improvisations et Modes — Etudes sur des Modes Grecs

Greek modes: Phrygian and Lydian, all 12 keys · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app (the etudes are in the book)

Open in the app

3

Seffer, Improvisations et Modes — Etudes sur des Modes Grecs

Greek modes: Mixolydian and Aeolian, all 12 keys · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app (the etudes are in the book)

Open in the app

4

Seffer, Improvisations et Modes — Etudes sur des Modes Grecs

Greek modes: Locrian, all 12 keys · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app (the etudes are in the book)

Open in the app

5

28 Etudes on Modes with Limited Transpositions (after Messiaen)

Messiaen's modes 1 and 2: whole-tone and diminished (half-whole) · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

Repertoire

The Study of Saxophone · Year 7

Core Repertoire

Milhaud, Scaramouche for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Glazounov, Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Naules, Frissons for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Tomasi, Ballade for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Bach, 5ème Sonate No. 52 for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Faillenot, Rhapsodie Occitane for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Additional Repertoire (1 of 2)

Absil, Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Anderson, Sonata for Baritone Saxophone and Piano
Bach, Sonata in A minor for Solo Flute
Badings, Malinconia for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Bonneau, Caprice en Forme de Valse for SOLO Saxophone
Boutry, Divertimento for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Bozza, Concertino for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Bozza, Improvisation et Caprice for SOLO Saxophone
Cowell, Air and Scherzo for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Creston, Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Daneels, Suite for SOLO Saxophone
Debussy, Rapsodie for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Dubois, Circus Parade for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Dubois, Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Dubois, Pièces Caractéristiques en Forme de Suite for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Dubois, Sonate for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Eychenne, Sextet including Alto Saxophone (Chamber Ensemble)
Gotkovsky, Brilliance for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Grundman, Concertante for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Heiden, Diversion for Alto Saxophone and Band
Husa, Elégie et Rondeau for Alto Saxophone
Ibert, Concertino da Camera for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Karg-Elert, 25 Capricen und Sonate for SOLO Saxophone
Koechlin, Sonatine, Op. 194/2, for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Repertoire

The Study of Saxophone · Year 7

Additional Repertoire (2 of 2)

Marcello, Oboe Concerto for SOLO Soprano Saxophone
Martin, Ballade for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Maslanka, Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Maurice, Tableaux de Provence for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Morosco, Blue Caprice for SOLO Alto Saxophone (Classical and Jazz)
Muczynski, Sonata, Op. 29, for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Pascal, Sonatine for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Planel, Suite Romantique for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Robert, Cadenza for SOLO Alto Saxophone
Rueff, Chanson et Passepied for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Rueff, Sonata (Leduc) for SOLO Alto Saxophone
Ryo Noda, Improvisations for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Ryo Noda, Mai for SOLO Saxophone
Scelsi, Tre Pezzi for SOLO Saxophone
Schmitt, Légende for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Schulhoff, Hot Sonate for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Singelée, Fantasia, Op. 89, for Soprano Saxophone and Piano
Smith, Fantasia for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Tcherepnin, Sonatine Sportive for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Tomasì, Ballade for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Veidhuis, Grab It for SOLO Tenor Saxophone
Villa-Lobos, Fantasia for Saxophone and Small Orchestra
Williams, Escapades for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Yuyama, Divertimento for Marimba and Alto Saxophone

The Year 7 Diploma (Licence)

The Study of Saxophone · Year 7

Dissertation

5,000-word dissertation on all things related to the instrument. The precise subject will be imposed by the instructor. (12 pages maximum.)

The recital program

A recital program (to be imposed by the instructor) must include:

Two pieces written for Saxophone and Piano

One work for Solo Saxophone

One work for Musique de Chambre (Chamber Music)

A Contemporary Work for Saxophone incorporating modern techniques: multiphonics, harmonics, contemporary techniques, and written instructions for unusual sounds and effects specific to the saxophone

A Technical, Atonal Etude

The Year 7 Diploma (Licence) in the app

The Study of Saxophone · Year 7

1

A Contemporary Work for Saxophone incorporating modern techniques: multiphonics, harmonics, contemporary techniques, and written instructions for unusual sounds and effects specific to the saxophone
Harmonics: Overtones & voicing (the harmonics half of this line; the work itself is repertoire)

Open in the app

Desired Competency

Years 4 to 8

Deepening skills acquired in the Preparatory Cycle

air column / breathing
development of a personal, mature sound
articulation
rhythmic, digital and timbral homogeneity
accuracy
flexibility
nuance
intonation
vibrato

And

Fluidity of technique as well as knowledge of alternative fingerings.
Ability to play "extreme" nuance, to tune alone, to control and correct intonation.
Ability to memorize music.
Sight-reading at the level of "working musicians."
Knowledge, technical facility, and musical maturity in contemporary music.
Understanding and application of the wide variety of music notation in contemporary music.
Knowledge and practice of chord-scale relationships; Jazz improvisation.
Listening skills, Jazz phrasing, memorization of easy jazz standards, and the ability to transcribe solos.
The history of the saxophone, the different epochs and styles, and important figures.
Understanding and application of descriptive and analytical vocabulary.
Ensemble performance — piano accompaniment — chamber music — ensemble of saxophones — orchestra, Jazz combos and Jazz ensembles — knowing how to conduct a set and a rehearsal.
Perform in public as a soloist.
Participate on a stage.
Promote general musical culture by listening to and performing music of all kinds.

Desired Competency in the app

Years 4 to 8. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

1

air column / breathing
Long tones: breathing and one steady note

[Open in the app](#)

2

development of a personal, mature sound
Long tones, then Overtones & voicing

[Open in the app](#)

3

articulation
The Milestone (articulation) · ♩ =60

[Open in the app](#)

4

rhythmic, digital and timbral homogeneity
All 12 Major scales in quarters, eighths, triplets and 16ths · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

Desired Competency in the app

Years 4 to 8. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

5

flexibility
Overtones & voicing

Open in the app

6

nuance
Long tones: soft → full → soft (messa di voce)

Open in the app

7

intonation
Long tones, then Lock-On (tune two tones until the beating stops), level 1

Open in the app

8

vibrato
Vibrato

Open in the app

Desired Competency in the app

Years 4 to 8. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

9

Ability to play "extreme" nuance, to tune alone, to control and correct intonation.
Long tones (nuance), then Lock-On (tuning alone), level 1

[Open in the app](#)

10

Knowledge and practice of chord-scale relationships; Jazz improvisation.
Chord-scale: the ii-V-I, then its scales: Dorian (ii), Mixolydian (V), Major (I), all 12 keys · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app on the scales

[Open in the app](#)

11

Listening skills, Jazz phrasing, memorization of easy jazz standards, and the ability to transcribe solos.
Listening: Name It (hear two notes or a chord, name it), level 1

[Open in the app](#)

12

Listening skills, Jazz phrasing, memorization of easy jazz standards, and the ability to transcribe solos.
Listening: Chord Colors (hear a chord, name its color), level 1

[Open in the app](#)

The whole course

This is one year of The Study of Saxophone. The whole course, from the Preparatory Year to Year 9, is on thewholehorn.com.

This is a living framework. Use it as a foundation, adapt it to your context, and revise it as new resources emerge.

thewholehorn.com/study-of-saxophone

The Study of Saxophone Year 8

Jazz Studies & Ensemble Leadership · Second Higher Cycle (Years 8 and 9). A Nine-Year Course of Study for the Modern Saxophonist-Doubler — Saxophone, Flute & Clarinet.

What Year 8 asks

EXAM REQUIREMENTS

1. Sight-Reading exam
2. Performance of a Chamber Music composition directed by the saxophonist
3. Performance of selected piece for Saxophone and Piano
4. Performance of Etudes from selected method: Boehm

THE YEAR

October to July, in two semesters.

Mid-term exam: early March.

Final exam: early July.

Daily practice: 4 to 5 hours a day (from the Fourth Year on, 3 to 6 hours a day; at least three hours on a bad day).

Saxophone students are required to complete the listed methods and satisfactorily present the required scale and arpeggio materials during each school year. Ten compositions will be chosen from each repertoire list and developed to a performance level. Repertoire for the jury examination should be selected in consultation with the student's teacher. Pieces not listed may be studied and performed with the permission of the teacher. Extensive participation in a saxophone quartet and with other instruments in the performance of chamber music and large wind ensemble is requisite for students who have attained an acceptable performance level.

The Study of Saxophone · Desired Competencies

Scales in the app

1

Practice this year in The Whole Horn

Open in the app

Methods

The Study of Saxophone · Year 8

Core Methods

Fürstenau/Mule, 53 Etudes d'Après Boehm (en 3 Cahiers)

Lacour, 28 Etudes sur les Modes à Transposition

Françoise, 22 Déchiffrages

Additional Methods

Bozza, 12 Etudes Caprices for Saxophone

Caravan, Preliminary Exercises and Etudes in Contemporary Techniques for Saxophone

Methods in the app

The Study of Saxophone · Year 8

1

Lacour, 28 Etudes sur les Modes à Transposition

Messiaen's modes 1 and 2: whole-tone and diminished (half–whole) · $\text{♩} = 60$ · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

Repertoire

The Study of Saxophone · Year 8

Core Repertoire

Maurice, Tableaux de Provence for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Sancan, Lamento et Rondo for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Tomasi, Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Dubois, Divertissement for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Desenclos, Prélude, Cadence et Final for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Ibert, Prélude for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Additional Repertoire (1 of 2)

Ackermans, Petite Fantaisie Italienne for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Albright, Sonata for Saxophone and Piano
Berio, Sequenza IXb for SOLO Alto Saxophone
Bolcom, Lilith for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Bonneau, Suite for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Bozza, Aria for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Charpentier, Gavambodi 2 for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Decruck, Sonata Ut for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Demersseman, Carnaval de Venise for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Denisov, Concerto Piccolo for 4 Saxophones Successive and Percussion
Denisov, Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Desenclos, Prélude, Cadence et Finale for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Dubois, Saxophone Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Feld, Elégie for Soprano Saxophone and Piano

Repertoire

The Study of Saxophone · Year 8

Additional Repertoire (2 of 2)

Grovlez, Sarabande et Allegro for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Hindemith, Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Ibert, Concertino da Camera for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Koch, Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Larsson, Konsert for Alto Saxophone and String Orchestra

Laube, Steady Study on the Boogie for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Mackey, Concerto for Soprano Saxophone and Wind Orchestra

Martin, Ballade for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Maslanka, Concerto for Saxophone Quartet — Saxophone Quartet

Stockhausen, In Freundschaft for SOLO Saxophone

Tomasi, Evocations for SOLO Alto Saxophone

Woods, Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Yoshimatsu, Fuzzy Bird Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Desired Competency

Years 4 to 8

Deepening skills acquired in the Preparatory Cycle

air column / breathing
development of a personal, mature sound
articulation
rhythmic, digital and timbral homogeneity
accuracy
flexibility
nuance
intonation
vibrato

And

Fluidity of technique as well as knowledge of alternative fingerings.
Ability to play "extreme" nuance, to tune alone, to control and correct intonation.
Ability to memorize music.
Sight-reading at the level of "working musicians."
Knowledge, technical facility, and musical maturity in contemporary music.
Understanding and application of the wide variety of music notation in contemporary music.
Knowledge and practice of chord-scale relationships; Jazz improvisation.
Listening skills, Jazz phrasing, memorization of easy jazz standards, and the ability to transcribe solos.
The history of the saxophone, the different epochs and styles, and important figures.
Understanding and application of descriptive and analytical vocabulary.
Ensemble performance — piano accompaniment — chamber music — ensemble of saxophones — orchestra, Jazz combos and Jazz ensembles — knowing how to conduct a set and a rehearsal.
Perform in public as a soloist.
Participate on a stage.
Promote general musical culture by listening to and performing music of all kinds.

Desired Competency in the app

Years 4 to 8. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

1

air column / breathing
Long tones: breathing and one steady note

Open in the app

2

development of a personal, mature sound
Long tones, then Overtones & voicing

Open in the app

3

articulation
The Milestone (articulation) · ♩ =60

Open in the app

4

rhythmic, digital and timbral homogeneity
All 12 Major scales in quarters, eighths, triplets and 16ths · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

Open in the app

Desired Competency in the app

Years 4 to 8. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

5

flexibility
Overtones & voicing

Open in the app

6

nuance
Long tones: soft → full → soft (messa di voce)

Open in the app

7

intonation
Long tones, then Lock-On (tune two tones until the beating stops), level 1

Open in the app

8

vibrato
Vibrato

Open in the app

Desired Competency in the app

Years 4 to 8. Each link opens in The Whole Horn, written for the student's own saxophone.

9

Ability to play "extreme" nuance, to tune alone, to control and correct intonation.
Long tones (nuance), then Lock-On (tuning alone), level 1

[Open in the app](#)

10

Knowledge and practice of chord-scale relationships; Jazz improvisation.
Chord-scale: the ii-V-I, then its scales: Dorian (ii), Mixolydian (V), Major (I), all 12 keys · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app on the scales

[Open in the app](#)

11

Listening skills, Jazz phrasing, memorization of easy jazz standards, and the ability to transcribe solos.
Listening: Name It (hear two notes or a chord, name it), level 1

[Open in the app](#)

12

Listening skills, Jazz phrasing, memorization of easy jazz standards, and the ability to transcribe solos.
Listening: Chord Colors (hear a chord, name its color), level 1

[Open in the app](#)

The whole course

This is one year of The Study of Saxophone. The whole course, from the Preparatory Year to Year 9, is on thewholehorn.com.

This is a living framework. Use it as a foundation, adapt it to your context, and revise it as new resources emerge.

thewholehorn.com/study-of-saxophone

The Study of Saxophone Year 9

Master's Degree ("Maîtrise") · Second Higher Cycle (Years 8 and 9). Year 9 is the culmination of the program. The student at this level is expected to function at a professional performance standard, to have a defined artistic voice, and to be capable of leading ensembles, presenting solo recitals, and contributing to the field. A Nine-Year Course of Study for the Modern Saxophonist-Doubler — Saxophone, Flute & Clarinet.

What Year 9 asks

EXAM REQUIREMENTS

1. Performance of a Chamber Music composition directed by the saxophonist
2. Performance of selected piece for Saxophone and Piano or Solo Saxophone
3. Performance of Orchestra Extracts for Saxophone

THE YEAR

October to July, in two semesters.

Mid-term exam: early March.

Final exam: early July.

Daily practice: 4 to 5 hours a day (from the Fourth Year on, 3 to 6 hours a day; at least three hours on a bad day).

"4 to 5 hours a day is what the expectation would be for those degrees anywhere in the world, and that should be the standard, and ... it gets progressively more serious."

Saxophone students are required to complete the listed methods and satisfactorily present the required scale and arpeggio materials during each school year. Ten compositions will be chosen from each repertoire list and developed to a performance level. Repertoire for the jury examination should be selected in consultation with the student's teacher. Pieces not listed may be studied and performed with the permission of the teacher. Extensive participation in a saxophone quartet and with other instruments in the performance of chamber music and large wind ensemble is requisite for students who have attained an acceptable performance level.

The Study of Saxophone · Desired Competencies

Scales in the app

1

Practice the Seventh & Eighth Year routine

Open in the app

Methods and Repertoire

Core Methods

Loyon, 32 Etudes
Paganini, 24 Caprices
Londeix, Gammes et Modes
Debondue, 48 Etudes for Sight-reading
Ricker, 12 Virtuoso Jazz Etudes

Core Repertoire

Desenclos, Prélude, Cadence et Final for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Gostkowski, Variations Pathétiques for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Beugniot, Sonate for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Repertoire

The Study of Saxophone · Year 9

Additional Repertoire

Albright, Sonata for Saxophone and Piano
Bozza, Pièce Brève for SOLO Saxophone
Debussy, Rapsodie for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Denisov, Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Denisov, The Influence of Jazz Elements on Edison Denisov's Sonata (analytical study)
Dressel, Partita for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Glazunov, Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Martin, Ballade for Alto Saxophone
Maslanka, Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Maslanka, Guide to Maslanka Saxophone Sonata (analytical study)
Milhaud, Scaramouche for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Schmitt, Légende for Alto Saxophone and Piano
Tomasi, Concerto — Saxophone Choir

The whole course

This is one year of The Study of Saxophone. The whole course, from the Preparatory Year to Year 9, is on thewholehorn.com.

This is a living framework. Use it as a foundation, adapt it to your context, and revise it as new resources emerge.

thewholehorn.com/study-of-saxophone

Week by Week

THE FIRST YEAR

From the first note in October to the final exam in July. One link a week, written for every wind and brass player.

One link a week. Every student, their own key.

The problem: in one room, a flute reads C, a trumpet reads D, an alto sax reads A, a horn reads G — for the same note.

Watch the video · 21 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/first-year/

Watch the video

The solution: each week in this plan is one link. Paste it into Google Classroom, WhatsApp or email; every student opens the week written for their own instrument. Anything you assign opens free for your students — up to two octaves; the full range is the Full Studio. No student accounts.

STUDIO

each player in their own written key, the full plan.

BAND

concert pitch, so the whole band sounds together, in a beginner range with lighter hours.

The year at a glance

OCTOBER

the first four weeks

NOVEMBER–FEBRUARY

two hours on each key — each major with its relative harmonic minor and arpeggios; students are encouraged to get through all 12 as quickly as possible.

MIDTERM

early March · the scale requirement is the same at the midterm and the final.

APRIL–JUNE

the four rhythms, then ♩ =60 to 70.

The year at a glance

FINAL

early July

Week 6 · F major + D harmonic minor + F arpeggios
Studio · one octave
Band · concert pitch · first notes (arpeggios one octave)

Studio

Band

Week 7 · C major + A harmonic minor + C arpeggios
Studio · one octave
Band · concert pitch · first notes (arpeggios one octave)

Studio

Band

Week 8 · G major + E harmonic minor + G arpeggios
Studio · one octave
Band · concert pitch · first notes (arpeggios one octave)

Studio

Band

The year at a glance

Week 9 · B ♭ major + G harmonic minor + B ♭ arpeggios
Studio · one octave
Band · concert pitch · first notes (arpeggios one octave)

Studio

Band

Week 10 · D major + B harmonic minor + D arpeggios
Studio · one octave
Band · concert pitch · first notes (arpeggios one octave)

Studio

Band

Week 11 · E ♭ major + C harmonic minor + E ♭ arpeggios
Studio · one octave
Band · concert pitch · first notes (arpeggios one octave)

Studio

Band

Week 12 · A major + F # harmonic minor + A arpeggios
Studio · one octave
Band · concert pitch · first notes (arpeggios one octave)

Studio

Band

The year at a glance

Week 13 · A ♭ major + F harmonic minor + A ♭ arpeggios
Studio · one octave
Band · concert pitch · first notes (arpeggios one octave)

Studio

Band

Week 14 · E major + C # (the app spells it D ♭) harmonic minor + E arpeggios
Studio · one octave
Band · concert pitch · first notes (arpeggios one octave)

Studio

Band

Week 15 · D ♭ major + B ♭ harmonic minor + D ♭ arpeggios
Studio · one octave
Band · concert pitch · first notes (arpeggios one octave)

Studio

Band

The year at a glance

Week 16 · B major + G # (the app spells it A ♭) harmonic minor + B arpeggios

Studio · one octave

Band · concert pitch · first notes (arpeggios one octave)

Studio

Band

Week 17 · F # major + D # (the app spells it E ♭) harmonic minor + F # arpeggios

Studio · one octave

Band · concert pitch · first notes (arpeggios one octave)

Studio

Band

SUMMER · the Lifetime Workout

Weeks, not dates — if your year starts in August, Week 1 is your first week.

Practice time and parents

For parents and teachers.

How long each day

First week · 20 to 30 minutes a day

First year · 30 minutes a day

Second year · 45 minutes to an hour a day

Third year · an hour to an hour and a half a day

Fourth year on (college level) · 3 to 6 hours a day; at least three hours on a bad day

The expectation, fourth and fifth year on · 4 to 5 hours a day

These times are total engagement: études, ensemble pieces and the two hours on each of the 12 major scales all sit inside them. Parents should be told that there is a longer-term plan, with more focus on the instrument as the years advance.

The pace

‘I don't really want the students to practice one scale for weeks. I would much rather that they are encouraged to get through the 12 major [scales] as quickly as possible.’

Parents

‘Understood that very young students have a shorter attention span, but again my own experience tells me that it is critical that the young students as well as the older students develop quickly, certainly in areas of the world, and in situations where they will not have opportunities to play with others, so my [preference is] that there is parental assistance and guidance, and that be explained to be an existential element of the success of a young child, given that the parents are often monitoring the time management of their children.’

Practice time and parents

For parents and teachers.

The first several months

‘Unless there is ... growth in the commitment of the student, they won't be able to grow musically, but this has to be organic. At some point the student has to want to practice, otherwise it's not gonna work. Hence, the dire necessity for a very, very steep learning curve in the first several months ... and that can be achieved by parental guidance and some strong advice with respect to being able to play their major [scales] the entire range of the instrument. I'm talking about all 12 major [scales], and I am talking about students as young as nine.’

In the free app the major scales stop at two octaves; the full range is in the Full Studio.

A light experience

‘There are many students that will not be able to sustain this approach, and that is fine if there is an opportunity to play in ensemble in the very beginning stages and there are enough teachers to handle students whose parents are looking for a very light experience in music, which is incredibly valuable for [a] young mind, and that should be celebrated.’

Encouragement and ensemble

‘It is important to say that in a household [where] students are not encouraged by their parents to practice on a regular basis and where there is no regular ensemble performance, there literally is no possibility for the development of musical talent. That being said, many students find that spark somewhat by accident and [are] suddenly engaged in practice ... so for those students that are not practicing, it is important to keep encouraging them.’

Practice time and parents

For parents and teachers.

The choke point

'The point being that the parents are the choke point. [Unless] the parents decide that practicing is a priority and it is as important as academics, or at least an incredibly positive part of their academic success, students will end up practicing once a week and be frustrated.'

A good instrument

'It is also important that every effort be made to ensure that saxophone students have really good instruments.'

Recommendations: Recommended Gear & Instruments

Recommended Gear & Instruments

[Open the page](#)

October • The first four weeks

The first four weeks follow Tom's Teacher's Guide to Four Weekly Lesson Plans. Daily practice (see Practice time and parents, above): 20 to 30 minutes a day in the first week, then 30 minutes a day.

Watch the video · 22 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/first-year/

Watch the video

1

Building the foundation: posture, air, and tone
Week 1 is non-negotiable. Posture, embouchure and diaphragmatic breathing; silent airflow; then first long tones on middle G, A or B at a very low volume. One good note is the only goal.

Studio

Band

2

Mapping the instrument: registers and intonation
Week 2 is where the instrument becomes one voice. Do your own research: five new fingerings a day. Slow, low-volume chromatic scales up and down the full range; slurs between registers.

Studio

Band

October • The first four weeks

The first four weeks follow Tom's Teacher's Guide to Four Weekly Lesson Plans. Daily practice (see Practice time and parents, above): 20 to 30 minutes a day in the first week, then 30 minutes a day.

3

Giving notes a voice: articulation

Articulation is a release, not an attack. The 16-8-4-2-1 drill on every note of the instrument; then the F major scale, one octave, each note tongued cleanly and evenly.

Studio

Band

4

Achieving fluency: scales and application

All 12 major scales from memory, in the 12-key rotation. Learn the melody of one standard: "So What," "Autumn Leaves" or "All Blues." The Movie Method: scales up and down at a very low volume.

Studio

Band

November • Two hours a key

Weeks 6 to 17 lay out one key a week; students are encouraged to get through all 12 major scales as quickly as possible, two hours on each. Those two hours are part of the daily practice time, along with études, ensemble pieces, etc.

Watch the video · 24 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/first-year/

Watch the video

5

All 12 major scales, one octave · first method book
one octave · ♩ = 60 · tenuto · 2 h this week

Studio

Band

November • Two hours a key

6

F major, one octave · the single exercise, two hours
one octave · ♩ =60 · tenuto · 2 h on this key

Studio

Band

7

C major, one octave · the single exercise, two hours
one octave · ♩ =60 · tenuto · 2 h on this key

Studio

Band

8

G major, one octave · the single exercise, two hours
one octave · ♩ =60 · tenuto · 2 h on this key

Studio

Band

December · Two hours a key

Watch the video · 24 s

9	B ♭ major, one octave · the single exercise, two hours one octave · ♩ =60 · tenuto · 2 h on this key	Studio	Band
10	D major, one octave · the single exercise, two hours one octave · ♩ =60 · tenuto · 2 h on this key	Studio	Band
11	E ♭ major, one octave · the single exercise, two hours one octave · ♩ =60 · tenuto · 2 h on this key	Studio	Band
H	Holiday · The Lifetime Workout, 15–20 minutes a day all 12 majors + arpeggios · two octaves · ♩ =60 · 2 h this week	Studio	Band

January · Two hours a key

Watch the video · 22 s

12

A major, one octave · the single exercise, two hours
one octave · ♩ =60 · tenuto · 2 h on this key

Studio

Band

13

A $\flat$ major, one octave · the single exercise, two hours
one octave · ♩ =60 · tenuto · 2 h on this key

Studio

Band

14

E major, one octave · the single exercise, two hours
one octave · ♩ =60 · tenuto · 2 h on this key

Studio

Band

15

D $\flat$ major, one octave · the single exercise, two hours
one octave · ♩ =60 · tenuto · 2 h on this key

Studio

Band

February · The midterm requirement

Watch the video · 25 s

16

B major, one octave · the single exercise, two hours
one octave · ♩ =60 · tenuto · 2 h on this key

Studio

Band

17

F # major, one octave · the single exercise, two hours
one octave · ♩ =60 · tenuto · 2 h on this key

Studio

Band

18

Every key, major and minor
two octaves · ♩ =60 · tenuto · 5 h this week

Studio

Band

19

The whole requirement, quarters and eighths
two octaves · ♩ =60 · tenuto · 5 h this week

Studio

Band

March • Midterm

20

The whole scale requirement
two octaves · ♩ =60 · tenuto · 5 h this week

Studio

Band

21

Triplets join
two octaves · ♩ =60 · tenuto · 5 h this week

Studio

Band

Midterm • early March

The scale requirement is the same at the midterm and the final.

Études: the first half of the book.

Be ready to play 5–6 études at random — one slow (musicianship), one fast (technique).

Midterm · the scale requirement: all 12 major scales, harmonic minors and arpeggios · quarters and eighths · ♩ =60 · tenuto · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app — Studio

Open in the app

April • The four rhythms

Watch the video • 28 s

22

Sixteenths join
two octaves • ♩ =60 • tenuto • 5 h this week

Studio

Band

23

All four rhythms
two octaves • ♩ =60 • tenuto • 5 h this week

Studio

Band

24

All four rhythms, staccato
two octaves • ♩ =60 • staccato • 5 h this week

Studio

Band

25

All four rhythms, ♩ =63
two octaves • ♩ =63 • tenuto • 5 h this week

Studio

Band

May • The second half of the book

Watch the video • 20 s

26

Staccato, ♩ =63
two octaves · ♩ =63 · staccato · 5 h this week

Studio

Band

27

♩ =66
two octaves · ♩ =66 · tenuto · 5 h this week

Studio

Band

28

Staccato, ♩ =66
two octaves · ♩ =66 · staccato · 5 h this week

Studio

Band

29

Chromatic scale joins
two octaves · ♩ =66 · tenuto · 7 h this week

Studio

Band

June • Final preparation

Watch the video • 24 s

30

♪ =68
two octaves • ♪ =68 • tenuto • 5 h this week

Studio

Band

31

Staccato, ♪ =68
two octaves • ♪ =68 • staccato • 5 h this week

Studio

Band

32

The final requirement, ♪ =70
two octaves • ♪ =70 • tenuto • 5 h this week

Studio

Band

33

Dress rehearsal
two octaves • ♪ =70 • staccato • 5 h this week

Studio

Band

July • Final

Watch the video · 29 s

34

The whole scale requirement, ♩ =70
two octaves · ♩ =70 · tenuto · 5 h this week

Studio

Band

Final • early July

- 1 · Scales & arpeggios — major scales and their harmonic minors, across the entire range of the instrument, ♩ =60–70.
- 2 · The studies from your method book — any study, chosen at random.
- 3 · The piece — last, but finish strong.

Final · scales & arpeggios: all 12 majors, harmonic minors and arpeggios · all four rhythms · ♩ =60–70 · tenuto · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app — Studio

Open in the app

The exam

‘Most students make the mistake of thinking the exam is about the imposed piece. Nothing could be further from the truth.’

Four articulations

Every note tongued / detached (détaché) · Articulate every other note · Slurred two by two · Three slurred, one tongued.

The four articulations, played over all 12 majors and harmonic minors · the app plays tenuto · quarters · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app — Studio

[Open in the app](#)

The four articulations, played over all 12 majors and harmonic minors · the app plays staccato · quarters · ♩ =60 · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app — Studio

[Open in the app](#)

The app plays each scale staccato or tenuto; the four articulations are played over it.

Summer • The Lifetime Workout

'It is possible to write down on a single page the work that can take a lifetime to master. That page would contain: All 12 major scales. All 12 major arpeggios. Various patterns and shapes derived from them.'

Summer • all 12 major scales + all 12 major arpeggios • two octaves (as the Holiday week) • ♩ =60 • tenuto • 2 h a week — Studio

[Open in the app](#)

15–20 minutes a day.

Make it yours

Every week here is a starting point. To change one, open For Teachers in The Whole Horn, set the key, tempo, range or hours, add your own sentence, make the link, and paste it over ours.

What this plan leaves to you: percussion, rhythm reading, your method book and your concert music.

KEY

TEMPO

RANGE

HOURS

thewholehorn.com

The Jazz Year, Week by Week

October to July. The language of jazz, one step a week. Every link in concert pitch, so the whole band plays the same sounding scale.

Thomas Hornig · Henri Selmer Paris Artist · The Whole Horn

One link a week. The whole band, one sound.

Watch the video · 21 s

The problem

In a jazz class every horn reads in a different key. 'Play the C blues' means A blues on alto, D blues on tenor and trumpet, and C blues on trombone.

The solution

Each week below is one link in concert pitch. Paste it into Google Classroom, WhatsApp or email; every student opens it written for their own instrument, and the band sounds as one. Anything you assign opens free for your students — up to two octaves; the full range is the Full Studio. No student accounts.

The year at a glance

FALL • 16 WEEKS

Weeks 1–4 introduction to jazz standards and foundational improvisation · 5–8 technical development: scales, arpeggios, piano voicings · 9–12 ensemble collaboration across jazz and crossover genres · 13–16 mid-term assessments. MID-TERM early March.

SPRING • 16 WEEKS

1–4 advanced improvisation and transcription · 5–8 composition and arranging · 9–12 collaborative rehearsals and performance preparation · 13–16 final assessments. FINAL early July.

Running through the year, one step a week, in Tom's order of importance: the 12 major scales straight up and down (one octave, then the full range), diatonic 3rds, the chromatic scale and chromatic minor 3rds, pentatonics straight and broken, the blues and rhythm changes, diatonic triads and 7th chords in all 12 major keys, whole-tone and diminished scales, then more chromatic shapes. Transcription through the spring.

1a · the 12 major scales, all 12 keys · one octave · eighths · ♩ =80 · swing · concert pitch

[Open in the app](#)

1b · the 12 major scales, all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =80 · swing · concert pitch · full range · Full Studio; two octaves on the free app

[Open in the app](#)

The year at a glance

2 · diatonic 3rds, all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =80 · swing · concert pitch

Open in the app

3 · the chromatic scale (♩ =88) and chromatic minor 3rds (♩ =80) · eighths · swing · concert pitch

Open in the app

4a · major and minor pentatonics, straight, all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =88 · swing · concert pitch

Open in the app

4b · major and minor pentatonics, broken, all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =88 · swing · concert pitch

Open in the app

5 · the blues bass line in F (♩ =92) and rhythm changes in B ♭: B ♭ major + the arpeggios of B ♭, G, C, F (♩ =80) · swing · concert pitch

Open in the app

The year at a glance

6 · diatonic triads and 7th chords, all 12 major keys · eighths · ♩ =88 · swing · concert pitch

[Open in the app](#)

7a · whole-tone scales, all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =96 · swing · concert pitch

[Open in the app](#)

7b · diminished scales, half-whole and whole-half, all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =96 · swing · concert pitch

[Open in the app](#)

Weeks, not dates.

October

Weeks 1–4 · Fall · Introduction to jazz standards; foundational improvisation exercises.

The first weeks

“In the beginning, ... starting [in] October, it’s gonna be an assessment of what [the] students’ abilities are, [how] they’re playing, and an attempt to try to organize sessions [where] we have a [bass] player, and we have horns, we have a ... drummer, and we have a pianist, and then we can start to have small ... classes. We can teach various concepts, and we can also bring in arrangements that I have, and [ask] the students to write their own arrangements [and] compositions for that ensemble.”

Watch the video · 19 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/jazz-year/

Watch the video

1

Major scales straight up and down: F and B $\flat$, one octave
eighths · every note tongued · $\text{♩} = 80$ · swing
+ Standard: Autumn Leaves, E minor (Real Book, 6th ed.) · Listen & discover: find out what YOU love, and find a mentor, a great artist whose sound you want to emulate

Open in the app

October

Weeks 1–4 · Fall · Introduction to jazz standards; foundational improvisation exercises.

2

Major scales straight up and down: E $\flat$ and A $\flat$, one octave
eighths · every note tongued · $\text{♩} = 80$ · swing
+ Standard: Blue Bossa, C minor · D $\flat$ major bridge

Open in the app

3

Major scales straight up and down: D $\flat$ and F $\sharp$, one octave
eighths · every note tongued · $\text{♩} = 80$ · swing
+ Standard: C–Jam Blues, C blues · Blues bass line in F, from memory

Open in the app

4

Major scales straight up and down: B and E, one octave
eighths · every note tongued · $\text{♩} = 80$ · swing
+ Standard: Summertime, A minor · Blues bass line in F, from memory

Open in the app

November

Weeks 5–8 · Fall · Technical development: scales, arpeggios, and piano voicings.

November

“So the first step is a lot of rudiments, and then we go into effectively a kind of performance class situation in November.”

5

Major scales straight up and down: A and D, one octave
eighths · every note tongued · ♩ =80 · swing
+ Shell voicings — ii–V–I in all 12 keys. 3rd & 7th in one hand, root in the other · Blues bass line in F, from memory

Open in the app

6

Major scales straight up and down: G and C, one octave
eighths · every note tongued · ♩ =80 · swing
+ Shell voicings — ii–V–I in all 12 keys. 3rd & 7th in one hand, root in the other · Blues bass line in F, from memory

Open in the app

7

Major scales straight up and down, all 12 keys · the full range
all 12 keys · eighths · the free app plays up to two octaves · every note tongued · ♩ =80 · swing
+ Play the 12-bar blues form. One hand and/or both hands · Blues bass line in F, from memory

Open in the app

8

Diatonic 3rds, all 12 keys · ABCD method
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =80 · swing
+ 12-bar blues — root (LH) + minor pentatonic · Blues bass line in F, from memory

Open in the app

December

Weeks 9–11 · Fall · Ensemble collaboration across jazz and crossover genres.

Watch the video · 17 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/jazz-year/

Watch the video

9

Diatonic 3rds, all 12 keys · ABCD method
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =88 · swing
+ Standard: Take the A Train, C major · D7 #11 · Blues bass line in F, from memory

Open in the app

10

The chromatic scale
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =88 · swing
+ Standard: All of Me, C major · E7, A7, D7 · Blues bass line in F, from memory

Open in the app

11

Chromatic minor 3rds · ABCD method
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =80 · swing
+ Standard: Satin Doll, C major · ii–V chains · Blues bass line in F, from memory

Open in the app

January

Weeks 12–14 · Fall · Ensemble collaboration across jazz and crossover genres → Mid-term assessments: individual and ensemble recordings.

Watch the video · 21 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/jazz-year/

Watch the video

12

Chromatic minor 3rds · ABCD method
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =88 · swing
+ Standard: Fly Me to the Moon, A minor / C major · Blues bass line in F, from memory

Open in the app

13

Pentatonics straight up and down, major and minor
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =88 · swing
+ Record: melody plus one improvised chorus of a standard, with the play-along (video) · Blues bass line in F, from memory

Open in the app

14

Broken-scale pentatonics, major and minor
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =88 · swing
+ Record: melody plus one improvised chorus of a standard, with the play-along (video) · Blues bass line in F, from memory

Open in the app

February

Weeks 15–16 · Fall · Mid-term assessments: individual and ensemble recordings.

Watch the video · 25 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/jazz-year/

Watch the video

15

The 12-bar blues in F: the blues bass line from memory
F, 12 bars · ♩ =92 · swing
+ Ensemble recording for the mid-term: your part, with the play-along

Open in the app

16

Rhythm changes: I Got Rhythm, in B ♭
B ♭ · eighths · ♩ =80 · swing
+ Standard: I Got Rhythm, B ♭ major · rhythm changes · Ensemble recording for the mid-term: your part, with the play-along

Open in the app

March

Weeks 17–18 · Spring · Advanced improvisation techniques; transcription projects.

17

Diatonic triads, all 12 major keys · ABCD method
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =88 · swing · Echo ear training, level 1
+ Transcribe a 12-bar blues: two or three choruses from your favorite artist

Open in the app

18

Diatonic triads, all 12 major keys · ABCD method
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =96 · swing · Echo ear training, level 2
+ Transcribe rhythm changes: two or three choruses from your favorite artist

Open in the app

Mid-term · early March

Mid-term assessments: individual and ensemble recordings.
Live or video-taped performance featuring the entire class. Short solos for all participants.

Ear training this month — Listen, Sing, Play.

March · Echo ear training, levels 1 and 2

Open in the app

April

Weeks 19–22 · Spring · Advanced improvisation techniques; transcription projects → Composition and arranging workshops for ensembles.

Watch the video · 17 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/jazz-year/

Watch the video

19

Diatonic 7th chords, all 12 major keys · ABCD method
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =88 · swing · Echo ear training, level 3
+ Transcribe excerpts from a really important album, like Miles Davis, Kind of Blue

Open in the app

20

Diatonic 7th chords, all 12 major keys · ABCD method
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =96 · swing · Echo ear training, level 4
+ Find recordings of jazz standards and transcribe bits and pieces you like

Open in the app

21

Whole-tone scales
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =96 · swing · Echo ear training, level 5
+ Standard: Impressions, D Dorian · E ♭ Dorian bridge · Arrange a standard for the class: a lead sheet (melody + chords) in MuseScore

Open in the app

April

Weeks 19–22 · Spring · Advanced improvisation techniques; transcription projects → Composition and arranging workshops for ensembles.

22

Diminished scales · half–whole
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =96 · swing · Echo ear training, level 6
+ Standard: So What, D Dorian · E ♭ Dorian bridge · Arrange a standard for the class: a lead sheet (melody + chords) in
MuseScore

Open in the app

Ear training this month — Listen, Sing, Play.

April · Echo ear training, levels 3 to 6

Open in the app

May

Weeks 23–26 · Spring · Composition and arranging workshops for ensembles → Collaborative rehearsals and performance preparation.

May

“... In May there should be hopefully [a] performance where the students will get up and play ... standards, and hopefully arrangement[s] we may have written, and composition[s] ...”

23

Diminished scales · whole–half
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =96 · swing
+ Standard: Straight, No Chaser, F blues · Arrange a standard for the class: a lead sheet (melody + chords) in MuseScore

[Open in the app](#)

24

Chromatic major 3rds · ABCD method
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =96 · swing
+ Standard: Watermelon Man, F · Arrange a standard for the class: a lead sheet (melody + chords) in MuseScore

[Open in the app](#)

25

Chromatic perfect 4ths and double 4ths · ABCD method
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =96 · swing
+ Standard: Perdido, B ♭ major

[Open in the app](#)

26

Chromatic major and minor triads · ABCD method
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =96 · swing
+ Standard: Billie's Bounce, F blues

[Open in the app](#)

June

Weeks 27–30 · Spring · Collaborative rehearsals and performance preparation → Final assessments: collaborative performances and project submissions.

Watch the video · 17 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/jazz-year/

Watch the video

27

Chromatic diminished and augmented triads · ABCD method
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =96 · swing
+ Standard: Now's the Time, F blues

Open in the app

28

Chromatic major 7th and dominant 7th chords · ABCD method
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =96 · swing
+ Standard: Tenor Madness, B ♭ blues

Open in the app

29

Chromatic minor 7th chords · ABCD method
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =96 · swing
+ Final: perform 2–3 jazz standards — melody, chords, improvisation. Recorded submissions (video/audio)

Open in the app

30

Final review: the 12 major scales, the full range
all 12 keys · eighths · the free app plays up to two octaves · every note tongued · ♩ =100 · swing
+ Final: perform 2–3 jazz standards — melody, chords, improvisation. Recorded submissions (video/audio)

Open in the app

July

Weeks 31–32 · Spring · Final assessments: collaborative performances and project submissions.

Watch the video · 20 s
thewholehorn.com/curriculum/jazz-year/

Watch the video

31

Final review: diatonic 3rds, all 12 keys · ABCD method
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =100 · swing
+ Final: perform 2–3 jazz standards — melody, chords, improvisation. Recorded submissions (video/audio)

Open in the app

32

Final review: chromatic minor 3rds · ABCD method
all 12 keys · eighths · ♩ =100 · swing
+ Final: perform 2–3 jazz standards — melody, chords, improvisation. Recorded submissions (video/audio)

Open in the app

Final · early July

Final assessments: collaborative performances and project submissions.
Live or video-taped performance featuring the entire class. Short solos for all participants.

The standards • 1 of 2

Tom's beginner list, in his order. Pick from it through the year — at least ten standards; two or three for each exam. Each link carries the scales that fit the tune, in concert pitch.

Autumn Leaves

E minor (Real Book, 6th ed.) · concert pitch

[Open](#)

Blue Bossa

C minor · D $\flat$ major bridge · concert pitch

[Open](#)

C-Jam Blues

C blues · concert pitch

[Open](#)

Summertime

A minor · concert pitch

[Open](#)

Take the A Train

C major · D7 $\sharp$ 11 · concert pitch

[Open](#)

All of Me

C major · E7, A7, D7 · concert pitch

[Open](#)

The standards • 1 of 2

Tom's beginner list, in his order. Pick from it through the year — at least ten standards; two or three for each exam. Each link carries the scales that fit the tune, in concert pitch.

Satin Doll

C major • ii–V chains • concert pitch

[Open](#)

Fly Me to the Moon

A minor / C major • concert pitch

[Open](#)

The standards • 2 of 2

Tom's beginner list, in his order. Pick from it through the year — at least ten standards; two or three for each exam. Each link carries the scales that fit the tune, in concert pitch.

Impressions

D Dorian · E ♭ Dorian bridge · concert pitch

[Open](#)

So What

D Dorian · E ♭ Dorian bridge · concert pitch

[Open](#)

Straight, No Chaser

F blues · concert pitch

[Open](#)

Watermelon Man

F · concert pitch

[Open](#)

Perdido

B ♭ major · concert pitch

[Open](#)

Billie's Bounce

F blues · concert pitch

[Open](#)

The standards • 2 of 2

Tom's beginner list, in his order. Pick from it through the year — at least ten standards; two or three for each exam. Each link carries the scales that fit the tune, in concert pitch.

Now's the Time

F blues · concert pitch

[Open](#)

Tenor Madness

B $\flat$ blues · concert pitch

[Open](#)

Grading

Watch the video · 18 s

40 points

Video Submissions of Jazz Standards

present at least ten jazz standards as individual performances; accompaniment: metronome or Aebersold Play-Along recordings; format: melody plus one improvised chorus minimum.

30 points

Arrangements and Compositions

video submission of ensemble performances organized and produced in collaboration with classmates.

30 points

Mid-Term and Final Exams

live or video-taped performance featuring the entire class; short solos for all participants.

Part of the grade will also be based on regular attendance and engagement; and if there are opportunities for group performance, in class or in public, that will be part of the grade as well.

Listen, Sing, Play

'Listen, Sing, Play. This is the mantra. Listen to the small chunk of music over and over again until it is burned into your memory. Sing the phrase back. If you can't sing it, you haven't really heard it. Play the phrase on your [instrument]. Hunt for the notes until you find them.'

Echo ear training, level 1 · hear the notes, sing them back — Listen, Sing, Play

[Open in the app](#)

'Choose a Simple Melody. Do not start with a complex John Coltrane solo. Start with something simple and slow.'

Make it yours

Every week here is a starting point. To change one, open For Teachers in The Whole Horn, set the key, tempo, groove or hours, add your own sentence, make the link, and paste it over ours.

Jazz is all about individual accountability.

thewholehorn.com

The First 30 Days

For the beginning band student: the first four weeks, one week at a time.

Before day 1

The whole plan

Why this pace

That's a conservatory program, and then that might be ... [an] entire year for students to learn their 12 major [scales], and while that is somewhat reasonable, my rationale for moving faster, simple: we don't have a lot of opportunities for kids to play in ensembles, and in order to retain them, they need to see themselves as young musicians as quickly as possible, and I contend, at the minute they have the ability to play their major [scales] the entire range of their instrument, that's when they will be able to see, metaphorically, the horizon and see themselves as musicians.

The goal is the whole horn

The name of the app is The Whole Horn, so it implies being able to have, eventually, wizardry in execution, freedom of movement throughout the entire range of the instrument. To suggest that the goal is to have freedom of movement within only a partial range of the instrument is not in fact the definition of freedom of movement ...

The steps

... So this has to happen in ... parts and in steps. You first [establish] position and muscle memory for a position, with a massive focus on [embouchure], then you get all of the notes to speak, ideally by the end of the third week, if you're [a] saxophonist and you're my student, all 32 notes, and then immediately you learn the [scales, one octave], all 12 major scales, and you extend that as soon as possible to the full range of the instrument, articulating each note. All of this can be done in a couple of months if you are extremely focused, extremely well organized with your time ...

Before day 1

The whole plan

Every instrument

That's for beginner saxophone, but I would argue that that basic plan should carry over to most instruments, frankly.

All instruments are gonna be treated pretty much the same way ... If you're talking about beginner [flute] players learning basic technique, ... I would say yes, the full range of the flute and the full range of the clarinet. I would also say, in terms of preparing to go deeper into the jazz curriculum, that would be the first order of business: ... making sure that students can get every note to speak on the flute and a clarinet, and can play all their major [scales] fairly fluidly throughout the entire range of the instrument.

When the student gets tired

When the student gets tired, they should revert to just blowing air into the instrument while fingering the note that they are ... focusing on.

What the free app covers

In the free app, the Milestone plays every note across the whole range, and the major scales stop at two octaves. The major scales across the full range are in the Full Studio.

The free app is a primer. It will allow a beginner to get probably through the first year, unless they're [highly] motivated, in which case hopefully the parents or the child will be able to afford to access the rest of the app, and will desire to do so ... to further explore all the various ways that [professionals] like myself practice [scales] to reinforce basic technique, and to continue to work on developing a more homogeneous sound, a ... stronger ability to adapt to various [tempos], and [an] ever increasing range. [Saxophone] players often play a full [octave] above the [high F sharp], and many [aspire] to go higher. I think because it's so commonplace, it's not really [a] question about playing high, although that creates a lot of excitement; it's more about just having more options. ... If you can play somewhat fluently in that third [octave], it really does open up infinite possibilities for [further] expanded musical expression.

Practice time and parents

For parents and teachers

How long each day

First week · 20 to 30 minutes a day

First year · 30 minutes a day

Second year · 45 minutes to an hour a day

Third year · an hour to an hour and a half a day

Fourth year on (college level) · 3 to 6 hours a day; at least three hours on a bad day

The expectation, fourth and fifth year on · 4 to 5 hours a day

These times are total engagement: études, ensemble pieces and the two hours on each of the 12 major scales all sit inside them. Parents should be told that there is a longer-term plan, with more focus on the instrument as the years advance.

The pace

I don't really want the students to practice one scale for weeks. I would much rather that they are encouraged to get through the 12 major [scales] as quickly as possible.

Parents

Understood that very young students have a shorter attention span, but again my own experience tells me that it is critical that the young students as well as the older students develop quickly, certainly in areas of the world, and in situations where they will not have opportunities to play with others, so my [preference is] that there is parental assistance and guidance, and that be explained to be an existential element of the success of a young child, given that the parents are often monitoring the time management of their children.

Practice time and parents

For parents and teachers

The first several months

Unless there is ... growth in the commitment of the student, they won't be able to grow musically, but this has to be organic. At some point the student has to want to practice, otherwise it's not gonna work. Hence, the dire necessity for a very, very steep learning curve in the first several months ... and that can be achieved by parental guidance and some strong advice with respect to being able to play their major [scales] the entire range of the instrument. I'm talking about all 12 major [scales], and I am talking about students as young as nine.

In the free app the major scales stop at two octaves; the full range is in the Full Studio.

A light experience

There are many students that will not be able to sustain this approach, and that is fine if there is an opportunity to play in ensemble in the very beginning stages and there are enough teachers to handle students whose parents are looking for a very light experience in music, which is incredibly valuable for [a] young mind, and that should be celebrated.

Encouragement and ensemble

It is important to say that in a household [where] students are not encouraged by their parents to practice on a regular basis and where there is no regular ensemble performance, there literally is no possibility for the development of musical talent. That being said, many students find that spark somewhat by accident and [are] suddenly engaged in practice ... so for those students that are not practicing, it is important to keep encouraging them.

Practice time and parents

For parents and teachers

The choke point

The point being that the parents are the choke point. [Unless] the parents decide that practicing is a priority and it is as important as academics, or at least an incredibly positive part of their academic success, students will end up practicing once a week and be frustrated.

A good instrument

It is also important that every effort be made to ensure that saxophone students have really good instruments.

Recommendations: Recommended Gear & Instruments

[Open the page](#)

Week 1 • Days 1–7

Position, posture, hands, embouchure

The first week is position, posture, hands, most importantly [embouchure], and they are asked to go home and to [form an embouchure], use a mirror, and just work on making sure that the muscle memory is developed primarily for the [embouchure], but also for posture and hand position, and they blow air into the instrument, and we have learned the fingerings for a few notes.

How long each day

20 to 30 minutes a day.

Ready for week 2 when

It's very simple. You have formed a good embouchure; a good hand position and good posture is icing on the cake, but the main goal is to form a good embouchure, with muscle memory that is maintaining that good embouchure ...

Week 2 • Days 8–14

More notes, both registers

Second week, they learned more notes and are encouraged to do their own research online ... for the [fingerings], but they're taught during the limited time. At this point [a] fair number of notes in both registers, ... and they [are] asked to play with sound, to produce sound until they get tired, which could be very quickly, and then go back to no sound.

How long each day

30 minutes a day.

By the end of week 2

The student should be encouraged to do their own research to try to learn the fingerings for all the notes on the instrument by the end of the week, and play long [tones on as] many of those notes as possible.

Practice link

Long tones
3.5 hours for the week

Open in the app

Week 3 • Days 15–21

The whole instrument: the Milestone

Third week, they're shown all the instrument ... at that point. The Milestone ... becomes incredibly appropriate, because they are asked to articulate every single note ... 16 times, then [eight], and four, [then] two, [then] one, and do it over and over again.

By the end of week 3, ideally

... then you get all of the notes to speak, ideally by the end of the third week, if you're [a] saxophonist and you're my student, all 32 notes ...
... The end of week three should be called a success, and this is the ideal ... when the student demonstrates an ability to articulate every single note on the instrument and easily get every note to speak.
By the end of the third week, ... the student should be able to play a chromatic scale throughout the entire range of [the] instrument.
The Milestone runs each instrument's own range: from G up to the top, back down through G to the bottom, and back up to G.

The Milestone: long notes, and the first note is a release

The note[s] should be long ..., with a slightly heavier articulation to start with, kind of like your hand is slapping the table, but not as aggressive.

Week 3 • Days 15–21

The whole instrument: the Milestone

On a reed instrument

The entire tip of the tongue should be covering the front part of the [reed] for the first note that sounds, and we're gonna call that a [release]. You take a breath and put your tongue on, [you finger] the note, and you release the tongue, and the air will then proceed into the instrument and start the vibration of the [reed]. The release of the tongue, along with the air pressure, should allow for an immediate ... resulting sound being heard, not a delay. This is something that needs practice, and in fact is a lifetime endeavor. Subsequent notes ... we do call an articulation ... The first note, however, is a release. We have our tongue already on the [reed], the entire front part of the [reed]; the tongue is released, and subsequent articulations happen when the tongue interrupts the vibration of the [reed] for a millisecond, and it should be quite [light]: the faster you tongue, ... the lighter the articulation, and the closer towards the tip of the tongue you are as you attempt to [interrupt] the vibration of the [reed].

How long each day

30 minutes a day.

Practice link

The Milestone
Tenuto · 3.5 hours for the week

Open in the app

Week 4 • Days 22–30

The twelve major scales, one at a time

Then the fourth week, they [are] asked to learn all 12 major scales one at a time, taking the first scale, learning the note[s], memorizing the note[s], [there] are only seven, and just going up [an octave], and playing that over and over again with very little sound, very little pressure, ... so [they] don't let themselves get tired, and make an attempt to get through all 12 [scales]. Realistically, they only get through a couple in that way, but that is the idealistic plan of events for each young student, and whether it's four weeks or four months, that's the way [it] will play out.

How long each day

30 minutes a day.

Week 4 • Days 22–30

The twelve major scales, one at a time

Practice link

Major scales, all twelve keys
One octave · 3.5 hours for the week

Open in the app

The Movie Method

Musicians that are ... really great at their instruments play all the time, and they play all the time because they love it ... Much of the ... prerequisite work that is done has just about everything to do with muscle memory ... These are very, very, very physical, non-intellectual endeavors, and so a student that [is] encouraged to play one major scale up and down for two hours could potentially keep doing that while watching a movie. The [argument] that would counter that would suggest, you know, if you're gonna practice you need to focus, but I would argue that students, especially young students, don't have the bandwidth to focus all their energy on practice when they have all kinds of other homework, and practicing needs to be their release valve. It needs to be their private time. It needs to be their meditation. They have to associate playing their horn with relaxing and enjoying their time, so I see no harm; in fact, I see great benefit in taking a major scale, learning it for a few minutes, and then turning on a movie and continuing to play through that scale at the same time that they're watching the movie. A whole long list of beautiful things happen, not [least] ... a student learns to relax and maintain a singular position, the singular [embouchure], in a relaxed position throughout the range of the instrument ... If they are able [to] relax when they practice, then practicing becomes their refuge, their yoga, [their] safe place, [their] quiet time ... If they practice while they watch a movie or watch a TV show, they can time themselves to a certain extent; they could say, I played F major for the entire movie, and ... this is probably the most important part, they will unconsciously associate playing their instrument with their downtime, their time to recharge their batteries and [relax], and they will decide that playing the saxophone, or ... playing the flute, or playing the double [bass], is exactly that: that's where they go when they're feeling tired and they need a boost ... and I think that is the [core] ingredient for success: someone that really wants to play ...

Week 4 • Days 22–30

The twelve major scales, one at a time

Days 29 and 30

Days 29 and 30, from my perspective, should be about review and record and ... personal accountability for what they have learned, but it should also be the moment where there's supposed to be an ability to use the achieved skills as a warm-up for whatever performance might come later.

Ready to go past day 30 when

[The] sign that the 30 days are done would be the ability to play all 12 major [scales], the entire range of the instrument, but I would acquiesce on that a little bit and be satisfied that the student can complete all 12 [scales] in a single octave.

After day 30

F major, two hours

The next step

In the week following that first ... 30 [days], the immediate concern is that the major scale[s] that the student has learned ... become ... the genesis of so many beautiful and amazing things to come, but the next step ... would be to be able to play those [scales] the entire range of the instrument, and then, gradually, with the help of this app, The Whole Horn, developing virtuosic technique within the context of each of those major scales, using all of the patterns and shapes and intervals ... And then they start developing technique and ability, basic technique, learning to play those major [scales], and as soon as I can ask him to take F major and play it up and down, one [octave], for two hours, that single exercise, and that effort will teach him stamina, will teach him ... time management, energy management ... If they can play all 12 scales each for two hours, that's the point where they will, as far as I'm concerned, play music for the rest of their lives, if they finish that. Two hours on each of the 12 major scales is part of the daily practice time, along with études, ensemble pieces, etc.

Then the whole range

... and then immediately you learn the [scales, one octave], all 12 major scales, and you extend that as soon as possible to the full range of the instrument, articulating each note ...

After day 30

F major, two hours

Practice link

F major
One octave · two hours

Open in the app

The first time a student opens a link, the app asks what they play; the exercise is waiting underneath.

Brass

The Milestone for brass players is a much more delicate issue, because brass players get tired very quickly, especially trumpet; euphonium is quite a bit easier. ... I would say the Milestone ... can be used for just a few minutes every day, and only until the [trumpet] player finds that they are having difficulty in proceeding. ... In order to strengthen the [embouchure] for [trumpet] players and brass players, it's a matter of consistency of practice every single day, so the Milestone ... can be used with that in [mind], and the extension of the range ... takes longer. ... Being able to play with an extended range on the trumpet is a real mark of maturity. ... When the trumpet player gets really tired, I ... myself recommend just blowing air and fingering the note [and] articulating the note that way. This exercise could potentially continue for the entire range if the student is focused and brave enough to play without sound, just blowing air into the instrument for a very long period of time. I personally think that could be very, very valuable, taking great care to make sure that the fingering is correct. ... Their progress may take a longer period of time, but the goals need to remain the same. ... The hard truth is that the development of the trumpet [embouchure] is something that has to be carefully done over a longer period of time, whereas a beginner saxophonist can engage without putting a lot of pressure [and] can actually hear the notes being played, and that's true for the [flute], that's true for the clarinet. ... I would still push the same [overarching] goal ... most importantly, the realization that young people who are not going to [play] in ensembles will likely quit if the learning curve isn't very steep, and if they find themselves a year later still [without] a fair amount of competency with their instrument. And playing melodies is probably not enough to keep them if they are playing on their own.

Practice link for brass

The Milestone, for brass
A few minutes every day · Tenuto

Open in the app

The First 30 Days: Jazz

The first month of the Jazz Year, one week at a time.

Before week 1

Scales first, then standards

For jazz students there's no prerequisite, because I would like to encourage everyone, but if they don't have an instrument, they've never played and they're young, I'll tell them they're too young. Otherwise I'll take them on as instrumentalists, and I'll have them work with great focus on their major scales, explaining the larger goals that will bring them to the point of being able to have freedom of movement within the context of the group of notes that they need to focus on when they're on stage, which is often a major or a minor scale or a pentatonic scale.

The foundational technique has got to be the most important part of it, because jazz ultimately is about freedom of movement, and the example I would give is always: let's take any major scale and I'll play something, because I've got a lot of technique, I can do what I want, pretty much. Let's see if you can respond with any kind of maturity to what I'm saying. And yes, there are ... articulation, phrasing issues, a lot of issues ... related to that, but it's primarily, you know, if I just play a broken scale, for example, they can't follow me, or just fluently moving up and down the scale, straight up and [down], they can't follow me, so that has gotta be the major hurdle ...

Then beyond that, when you get on stage, yes, there is structure that you have to learn: 12-bar blues, rhythm changes. You have to learn ... the jazz standards that everyone plays. That means you have to learn the melodies extremely well and learn the [chord] changes ... but then it becomes a question of: OK, you know the changes, you know the melody, can you move around your horn? So we're back to the same thing.

So the development of a program for beginners and advance[d], it's just the pursuit of ... those primary goals, and in the first instance, it's just being able to play your [scales] one [octave] up and down, and then the full range of [the instrument], straight up and [down], and then just developing technique: broken scales, thirds, [fourths], fifths, [pentatonics], chromatics. It's all the stuff that's in ... The Whole Horn, but alongside that you need to learn ... [the tunes] that are always going to be called on stage, and [the] musical structures that are always going to be repeated, like the blues and like rhythm changes.

... Without that basic core ability to move with great wizardry around the instrument in the context of those 12 major [scales], and ... all the [tributaries] that come from that, then all the extemporaneous knowledge is not gonna matter a lot, because if you can't get on stage and play what you feel, it doesn't matter what other [skill sets] you bring to that magical moment.

... If you want to play, play. So you gotta get yourself to [a] place where you are strong enough to participate ...

Before week 1

Scales first, then standards

A student who has never played

... Jazz is the result: jazz is what happens when you have control of your instrument. It's that simple: when you have freedom [of movement] ... If ... you want to learn jazz, then I would say, before you get into jazz, you have to learn to control your instrument, at least to a certain extent; then we can start talking about chords and [scales] and chord–[scale] relationships, but if you can't play your scale[s] straight up and down your instrument, all 12, then you're not ready. You can come to my class and I will encourage you to do that, but effectively you haven't graduated to the point where we can start talking about being able to communicate on stage with other jazz and session musicians ... and it requires a development of a work ethic that is stronger than most of the people that [he or she] will ever meet. ... Jazz students must be able to play all 12 keys before we can talk about anything related to jazz, so if they want to enter into the class, then they have a lot of catching up to [do] ... and it has to be done very, very quickly.

The First 30 Days
For a student who has never played

[Open the page](#)

The Milestone

For jazz players that are playing the Milestone ... exercise, it's not like I'm gonna take [rank] beginners into the jazz program, but if I were to recommend that, I would say tongue every [note].

Before week 1

Scales first, then standards

All 12, straight up and down

... First one is just being able to play your major scale straight up and down, very fluidly ...

That's why I recommend taking each major scale and playing it up and down, articulating every note, with no pressure, so you don't blow your lip ... Play along with the app, or play with the metronome, or tap your foot, and do that for two hours in each scale. It's 24 hours of work that will probably take, you know, 'cause you need to stop and start, a couple weeks, maybe a couple months ...

... To suggest that the goal is to have freedom of movement within only a partial range of the instrument is not in fact the definition of freedom of movement ...

In the free app, the major scales stop at two octaves; the full range is in the Full Studio.

... In terms of preparing to go deeper into the jazz curriculum, that would be the first order of business: ... making sure that students can get every note to speak on the flute and a clarinet, and can play all their major [scales] fairly fluidly throughout the entire range of the instrument.

The first month

... A [jazz student] should spend at least 30% of their time in the first month, if not closer to 80% of their time, ... making sure they do focus heavily on very quickly achieving that ability to move around their horn when they're on stage with other musicians. If they get on stage with veteran [blues] musicians, then what's going to save the day is technique [and pentatonics], and if they have none, then they need to start working on a lot of the things that are in this app, [or] at least be introduced to them. That's what should happen in the first month, but ... a lot of discussion as well about what the steps are going forward. If they don't play piano, they should learn to play [scales] on piano, and they should start investigating what are [shell voicings], and what is the relationship between dominant [chords] and the tonic, and what are some of the basic substitutions, and what ... kind of [scale] do you play over these various chords, and I will simplify that for them, but those are all things that can and should happen in the first 30 days. ... If they have minimal ability to read music, I would very quickly try to get some of the students together to [play in] ensembles, even if they have minimal ability.

For the first 30 days for a beginner jazz player, I think one standard is good [and] a lot of technique, but ... this is really about meeting the students [where they are], because they're coming from very different ... backgrounds, and they all possess very different levels of ability, etc., etc., so that can change, but that sounds reasonable.

Before week 1

Scales first, then standards

How long each day

... Like I said, you're not really playing jazz until you [can] move around your horn anyway, so if [they're] serious about jazz, it should be at least a couple hours a day.

The daily check

For the jazz class, ... the daily check should be on the part of the students, ... on a daily basis and weekly basis, and they [should] make ... every effort to ensure that their own personal goals, as well as the goals of the class, are [maintained]. They can also send records of their practice via WhatsApp, using the internal recordkeeping that's in the app.

Transcription

Jazz musicians are very much going to develop their skill set through a lot of repetition. Transcription is really about repetitive listening, and that's the only way that you can start to hear all the delicate subtleties that are coming out of a jazz performance, or any musical performance for that matter: rhythmic [phrasing] subtleties, articulation subtleties ... and nuance with relation to bending pitches and tone, and all that projection, the actual shape of the tone. All of this can be transferred ... only through repetitive [listening], whether it's playing along with the album and ... trying to decipher a phrase or two ... and making that your own, or, even better, ... by writing things down. That process, regardless, ... usually [takes] a lot of time and effort, blood, sweat and tears, for a simple phrase; even if it's an easy one, it's going to take a fair amount of time ... of repetitive listening in order to start to hear a lot of the detail that simply cannot be written down. So that is a great benefit of transcription: ... a deeper listening, repetitive [listening]. This translates into being able to hear and respond to things that are happening on the bandstand that a young musician would never be able [to] connect with, because [they're] stuck in their own horns and in their own universe on stage, because there's just too many ... metaphorical balls to juggle. Transcription will help them get past that.

Week 1 • Days 1–7

A musical mentorship

... The first week should be trying to find a musical mentorship. There's so many great artists online. I would ask [them] to go find at least 25 artists from the past or the present that they admire and that they would like to emulate, and give me some kind of an essay, hopefully fairly wordy, ... on what they've discovered and what they like and what they don't like. That could take a week.

Week 2 • Days 8–14

Basic technique based on scales

... Then we would probably spend another week working on a basic technique based on scales, so, depending on where they're at, I probably would ask [them] to start working on broken scales and diatonic [chords] and diatonic thirds in all 12 major keys, and then we would expand beyond that.

Practice link

Broken scales and 3rds
All twelve keys

Open in the app

The first time a student opens a link, the app asks what they play; the week is waiting underneath.

Week 3 • Days 15–21

Choosing the repertoire • the blues bass line

The third week I would talk probably about choosing repertoire that they're going to learn this year, and asking them to take a melody from that list and just drill the melody ... over and over and over and over again, hundreds of times.

The blues bass line

I would say possibly in that third week or fourth week, depending on what else is happening, ... they should attempt to learn the [blues bass line] in all 12 keys. I think that's gonna be incredibly helpful going forward, and will greatly [boost] confidence in their ability to play [chord] changes and play jazz. ... You probably start early on working on being able to play from memory, and repeat often, ... the blues [bass line] that I'm prescribing, or something similar ...

Practice link

The blues bass line
The 12-bar line, in all 12 keys

[Open the page](#)

When to start the bass line, and how often

The [blues bass line] should be played once they've gotten through some rudimentary [scale] work and [are] fluid around the 12 major [scales]. Then the [bass line] should be something they work on every day. You can go through all 12 ... quite quickly. It ends up being a skeletal framework they can ... always start from and return to in their improvising over a 12-bar blues, anywhere they go, in any key.

Week 4 • Days 22–30

The standards: the melody, then the chords

... In the fourth week, I would ask [them] to make a list of [jazz standards they] would like to learn, and explain how they should go about doing that. Number one is learning the melody; the melody is king. Number two is learning to [arpeggiate] the chords in the harmonic structure that is associated with that melody, so they should work through playing those chords on their instrument of choice, [arpeggiating] the chords over and over and over again, so the melody is recognizable and playable, but so is [the] harmony.

Days 29 and 30

Days 29 and 30, from my perspective, should be about review and record and ... personal accountability for what they have learned, but it should also be the moment where there's supposed to be an ability to use the achieved skills as a warm-up for whatever performance might come later.

After day 30

Scales first, then standards. Standards are learned by learning the melody extremely well, and then learning the harmony after the fact by [arpeggiating] the chords ... and, if they want, they can go into the extended notes. Doing that, that's gonna help enormously, because once they have developed muscle memory for those arpeggios, they can bounce around those arpeggios and sound like a [virtuoso] playing that standard.

The year

I would consider the whole endeavor ... a success if students will have learned 10 jazz standards by heart and prepared performances, maybe inside the class (we could call it a performance class), and demonstrate their knowledge and ability and achieved skills ... The number that I would give is 10 jazz standards for the entire year, which is a very small number indeed.

The Jazz Year
The year continues week by week

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