

Beginning Saxophone Embouchure Resources



[Taimur Sullivan Video](#)





From Eugene Rousseau's *High Tones*

7

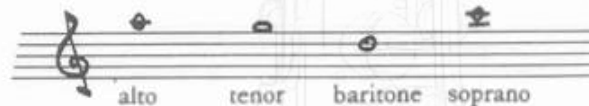
THE EMOUCHURE

The requisite for accomplishing harmonics or overtones on the saxophone is a good tone. In turn, the accomplishment of a good tone on the saxophone, as on all wind instruments, necessarily depends upon a proper embouchure.

While the scope of this book does not include those elements of playing normally associated with beginners, it is nonetheless essential that one have a thorough understanding of the fundamentals of the saxophone embouchure before attempting to achieve any high tones *above* the normal range of the instrument. These fundamentals are as follows:

- (1) Curl lower lip slightly over teeth.
- (2) Keep chin in a natural position.
- (3) Form an "oo" shape (as in saying coo) with the mouth and lips.
- (4) Form a circular shape with the mouth (the lower lip *should* appear somewhat bunched).
- (5) Place mouthpiece alone in the mouth, with top teeth resting solidly on the top of the mouthpiece.
- (6) The round, "oo" shape should now give solid support all around the mouthpiece.

To determine the proper amount of mouthpiece needed in the mouth, as well as the strength of the roundness and bite, the test is to blow on the mouthpiece alone to attain the *concert pitch* shown below. Always play this test at *fortissimo* level.



If the pitch produced on the mouthpiece alone is higher than indicated in the staff above, direct the air stream down, remembering always to keep the embouchure solid. If the pitch on the mouthpiece alone is too low, direct the air stream up. In either case, never loosen the embouchure, which should remain solid at all times, while the air does its job properly.



Do's

- raise the back of the tongue ("You" or "hee")
- make sure you can get a full sound on the mouthpiece alone
- use a mirror or phone recording to visually inspect (does it look like Sullivan's video?)
- posture yourself correctly so the mouthpiece comes to you

Do Not's

- bite down tightly
- raise the corners
- scrunch up the chin
- roll lip in too far

Long tones from Paul DeVille's *The Universal Method*

Crescendo - Diminuendo: (increase and decrease of tone.)

Handwritten notes: *Breath*, *10 sec.*, *10 sec.*, *5 sec.*

The score consists of three staves of music. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a common time signature. It contains a series of notes with dynamic markings *p* and *f* and slurs. The second and third staves continue the sequence with similar markings and slurs. There are also some handwritten annotations like 'Breath' and '5 sec.'