

CARMEN'S QUEST FOR 5-MINUTE WARMUPS!

With so many method books and warmups out there, it can feel overwhelming to know which exercises to start your practice session with. To help relieve some of the pressure when it comes to organizing your practice sessions, I've compiled a few exercises in a "Choose-your-own-adventure" format (I loved these books when I was young!).

Some exercises take 5 minutes or less to do, others will take you longer but stop at the 5-minute mark so you don't get stuck.

Keep adding exercises to your collection and your warmups will keep you on your toes!

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*The asterisk * indicates a "superfood" exercise, one that packs a punch!*

Start on page 2 with Physical Warmups.

PHYSICAL WARMUPS

Whether sitting or standing during practice, it's important to come to the flute with a body that can breathe easily.

1. Take a natural breath and feel ease in your neck.
2. Take a breath and feel ease in your shoulders. Let them move naturally.
3. Take a breath and feel ease in the upper back to the left and to the right of the spine.

You do not need to take the biggest breaths ever for these exercises.
However much air you take in is enough.

4. Open your mouth and notice that the air will come in without your help! Notice the lungs filling up slowly. (Note: this is a terrific flute breath)
5. If standing, breathe normally and shift your awareness down throughout the body. Are you holding excess tension in the lower back; in the butt or hips; upper legs; lower legs? If you are, try and release it.
6. If sitting, are you balanced between your sit bones? Do you favor one side?

The exhale is just as important as the inhale.

7. Take a normal breath in and exhale through the mouth, forming an embouchure. Imagine blowing from the sternum (not the abs!).
8. Again, take a normal breath and exhale through your embouchure, this time feeling like you are growing taller as you slowly release the air. Keep the chest "open," i.e. do not collapse in.
9. Again, take a normal breath and exhale through your embouchure, feeling the slight pressure of the sides of the ribcage on your exhale.

These ideas are heavily influenced by Alexander Technique and Body Mapping.
Please check out flutist Amy Likar's book, *The Breathing Book!*
It will explain all you never knew about the diaphragm!

To practice lip flexibility, go to Harmonic Hills on page 3 or skip to page 4 to practice using a consistent airstream.

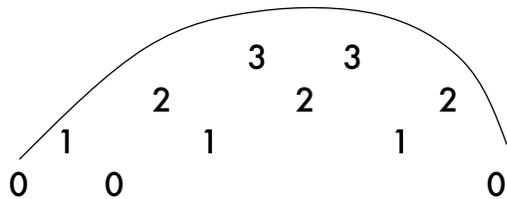
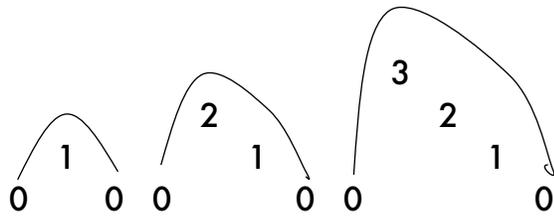
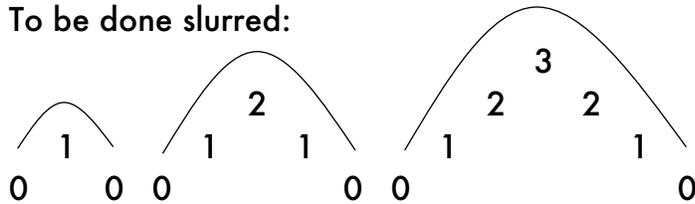
To focus on vibrato, turn to page 6.

For slow double-tonguing, turn to page 7.

HARMONIC HILLS

It's good to get our eyes away from the music and focus our ears on the sounds coming from our flutes. In this spirit, I'm using only numbers to represent the notes in the harmonic series: 0 = the fundamental, 1 = the note an octave above, etc. For warmups first thing in the day, I don't like to start on low C; instead, I prefer D or E \flat .

To be done slurred:



The patterns can be extended to the higher harmonics, as well. Continue up chromatically.

If you would like to practice using a consistent airstream, go to Vocalise on page 4.

If you're ready to extend your tone work into the upper register, turn to page 5.

If you want to work on vibrato, turn to page 6 (7 for advanced exercises).

VOCALISE

This is but one of many lyrical melodies that Marcel Moyse borrowed from the vocal repertoire for his book, *Tone Development through Interpretation* (a cornerstone of flute warmups!). Two other wonderful books that include vocalises are Phillippe Bernold's *Le souffle et le vent* and *La technique d'embouchure*.

What I love about Moyse's collection is that not only does he encourage us to explore the colors of the flute but also to transpose these melodies to different keys and registers.

Try this first without vibrato, like a clarinet. How does a clarinet create interest in a melodic line without vibrato? Does your air stay consistent or does it "poop out" or "dip" in the middle of a phrase even though you have plenty of air?

Plaisir d'amour

Martini

The musical score for 'Plaisir d'amour' is written in 6/8 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of three staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody is characterized by flowing eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. The second staff starts at measure 10 and includes a trill (tr) above a note. The third staff starts at measure 19 and concludes with a double bar line.

For lip flexibility, turn to page 3 to practice Harmonic Hills.

To extend your range upwards, go to page 5 for Intervals of Perfection.

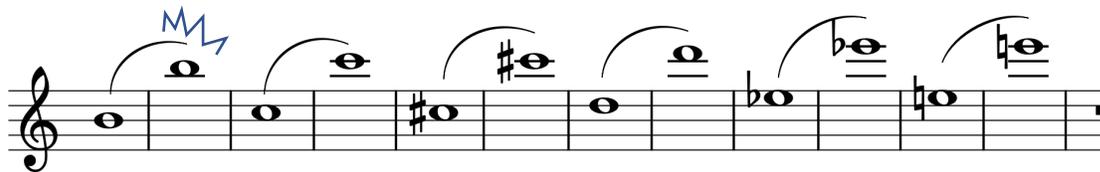
For Vibrato-o-o-o-o!, go to page 6.

INTERVALS OF PERFECTION

This is one of my favorite exercises because I think perfect intervals like the octave and the fifth are among the most difficult to play smoothly on the flute. They often cross registers, requiring a combination of smooth, consistent air and a different angle (i.e. moving the embouchure slightly). Practicing these will also require you to have a “free” airstream.

OCTAVES

The first time through, use no vibrato. Use the time between the notes to make a gradual change from the “ah” vowel on the lower note to an “oo” on the upper note. You can think of this also as changing your angle from down to across. Feel the sound shift from a chest resonance to a head resonance (as if the air is coming out of the top of your head!).



Ah—Oo

Continue on up!

PERFECT INTERVALS IN THE OCTAVE

Same idea here. Keep the air at a consistent speed while you make a gradual vowel or angle shift. Do with and without vibrato, continuing in to the third octave range.



For Vibrato-o-o-o-o!, go to page 6.

For work on double-tonguing, turn to page 8 (page 10 for advanced exercises).

For chromatic scales, turn to page 11.

VIBRATO-O-O-O-O!

Even now, I like to ease into my vibrato by starting with slow pulses.

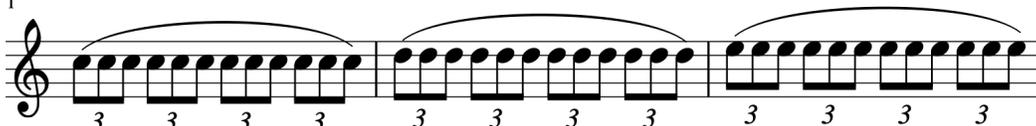
- On a C Major Scale in the middle octave, begin with eighth-note pulses at $\text{♩} = 60$. Breathe whenever needed.

$\text{♩} = 60$



Hoo oo oo oo

- Now, pulse in triplets:



- Pulse in sixteenths:



Is it more difficult to keep up with the faster pulses?

- As the pulses go faster, the mechanism for creating the vibrato moves into the vocal cords.
- To feel this, try whistling on one note.
- Or, whisper quickly on "Ha."

- On your C Major scale, try the sixteenths again, pulsing from the vocal cords:



- Try it in quintuplets! (Hint: think "u-ni-ver-si-ty" or "hip-po-po-ta-mus")



etc.

Secret: If you can do quintuplets, no one can tell you're counting it out!

The standard goal is to be able to pulse sextuplets at $\text{♩} = 60$.

VIBRATO – ADVANCED EXERCISES

At quarter note = 60. Try a purposely wide and a narrow vibrato.

4 No vib. Add vib. Continue vib. *p* *f*

7 *mf* Keep mf throughout ->

The above exercise comes from one of Tom Nyfenger's books (I'm not sure which!). Emily Beynon, principal flute of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, also has some good videos about vibrato on YouTube.

To extend your sound into the high register, turn to page 5.

To move on to double-tonguing, turn to page 8 (page 10 for advanced exercises).

To begin chromatic scales, turn to page 11.

DOUBLE-TONGUING

You may have already started to learn how to double-tongue but it's a skill that always needs some attention and work. Use it or lose it!

One of my favorite ways to practice double-tonguing is to use only the 'K' syllable.

Carmen's Double-Tonguing Tips

- Keep the chin/jaw loose. Think 'kuh' and 'tuh' vs. 'kih'/'tih'.
- Use the same air for double tonguing that you use for slurring: constant and with direction.
- Use only the tip of the tongue for the T's.
- Relax the back of the tongue.
- Practice without the flute!

Step 1 Put your metronome at quarter note = 60 (or a faster tempo if you are advanced). Start in the middle register on a C Major scale. Ascend through the scale, taking a breath when needed. Play one octave and descend, returning to the starting pitch.

Use solid, steady air.

Kuh - K - K - K - etc.

Step 2 When you feel comfortable with your K's in quarter notes, try eighth notes:

Kuh-K - K - K - - -

Step 3 When you are comfortable with Step 2, incorporate the 'T' but start the pattern on a 'K' still.

Kuh - Tuh - K - T - -

Step 4 Now, go on to eighth notes, using K-T.

5 Don't stop the air when you change notes. -->

Kuh-Tuh K - T - etc.

Step 5 Let's try 16th's now. Practice the pattern with just your air before trying it with the flute. Often, beginners will still separate the air between articulations. *The air must be sustained between articulations.*

KTKTetc.

Troubleshooting

If you have trouble moving to Step 5, try these preliminary exercises:

K-T K T

K T K K T K

When you feel you can double-tongue without fatigue in the tongue or jaw, practice your articulations at faster speeds.

If you are a beginner, keep practicing these exercises starting on K. When you can double-tongue the above exercises at quarter = 94, go back to Step 1 and begin with the T articulation.

If you are more advanced, you may start at a faster speed, but be hard on yourself- listen critically and notice any tension. If tension or unevenness exists, then you must slow the tempo down. It's better to do this work correctly the first time than to have to return later and undo bad habits. If it's been a while since I've practiced my double-tonguing, I always start slower than I feel is necessary and work up from there.

For advanced flutists, a good double-tonguing exercise is Nicolò Paganini's *Moto Perpetuo*, op. 11 for violin:

Below is an exercise (based on the Paganini but the pattern can be done on any passage) that I created that really helped me even my articulation out:

This piece goes on for four pages! It is in the public domain and is available on imslp.org.

To extend your range into the high register, turn to page 5.

For chromatic scale work, turn to page 11.

For major or minor scales, turn to page 12.

To practice arpeggios, turn to page 13.

CHROMATIC SCALES À LA ROGER STEVENS

In his excellent (though not published currently) book *The Artistic Flute*, Roger Stevens suggests this exercise for chromatic scales "as a corrective or developmental means."

The idea is to keep the tempo the same but ease more notes into the beats with each round. Stevens cautions to play without accents.

$\text{♩} = 60$

The image shows three staves of musical notation for chromatic scales. The first staff is labeled with a tempo of quarter note = 60. It contains two measures of music, each with a slur over a group of notes. The second staff is labeled with a '3' above it, indicating a triplet, and contains two measures of music with slurs. The third staff is labeled with a '5' above it, indicating a quintuplet, and contains two measures of music with slurs. The notes are chromatic, moving up and then down in each measure.

Continue moving further up the flute range. When this has been perfected, move to the following, keeping the pulse at 60:

The image shows a single staff of musical notation. It contains four measures of music, each with a slur over a group of notes and a '5' above it, indicating a quintuplet. The notes are chromatic, moving up and then down. The staff ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

Continue this pattern up chromatically. When these quintuplets have been perfected, do the following:

The image shows a single staff of musical notation. It contains four measures of music, each with a slur over a group of notes and a '6' above it, indicating a sextuplet. The notes are chromatic, moving up and then down. The staff ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

And so on, going through 7's, 8's, 9's, 10's, 11's, and 12's (one octave in one beat). Each round may take several days to master.

University libraries in Oklahoma that have this book: UCO, OCU, SWOSU, Northeastern State, and Cameron Univ.

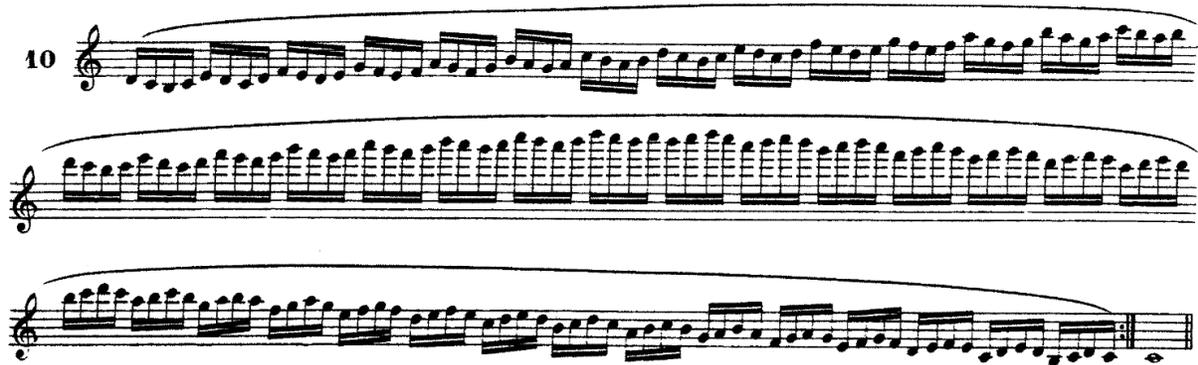
Turn to page 12 for major and minor scales.

TASSINARI SCALES

Arrigo Tassinari, the principal flutist for the La Scala opera house orchestra from 1910 - 1933, published a book of technical exercises in 1961. *Esercizi tecnici di perfezionamento per flauto* is a compilation of exercises that references Taffanel and Gaubert as well as presents scales in different patterns often not seen elsewhere.

His exercises also insist we play to the fourth-octave D. Below is a sample. Play these in all major and/or minor keys/chords.

10



58



To work on double-tonguing, turn to page 8 (page 10 for advanced work).

To work on arpeggios, turn to page 13.

To practice your intonation, turn to page 16.

ARPEGGIOS IN HARMONY

These broken arpeggios are inspired by another section in Roger Stevens's book *The Artistic Flute*. Before I knew how these chords functioned in harmony, I learned how to play them and, when it came time in theory class to learn about them, I was an ace at identifying and spelling them.

These are best done memorized and slurred. Start on the chord tone that is lowest in the flute range and ascend until you reach the highest chord tone in the flute range (you can choose whether to limit your range to C4, C#4, or D4). If the air is tense, these will not go well. Be careful not to press down on the chest in an attempt to "drive" the sound. Let the air glide easily through the passageway.

I - IV - ii - V⁷ - I

(continues on next page)

13 V7
If you do not have a B foot, begin on beat 2.

15

17 D.C. al Fine

The image shows three staves of musical notation for flute warmups. The first staff (measures 13-14) is a half-note scale starting on C4, with a 'V7' marking above the first measure and a note below it. A slur covers the entire staff, and a note below the first measure reads 'If you do not have a B foot, begin on beat 2.' The second staff (measures 15-16) features a series of eighth-note intervals, with a slur and a checkmark above the first measure. The third staff (measures 17-18) is a half-note scale descending from C5, with a slur and a fermata above the final measure. The piece concludes with 'D.C. al Fine'.

Start in C Major and take one to two weeks to master. Move on through the circle of 5ths.

To practice major and minor scales, turn to page 12.

To focus on playing smooth intervals, turn to page 15.

To practice diminuendos, turn to page 17.

SMOOTH INTERVALS

If we turn past the famous long tones in *Marcel Moyse's De la sonorité*, we find an exercise on page 16 that really puts us through the paces. This helps us develop lip flexibility but can also be used as an articulation exercise.



1x: play as written at a *mf* dynamic and as slowly as needed to maintain the smoothest, silkiest airstream between the notes.

Carmen's Tips!

1. Listen for good sound on the repeated F's; these are the springboards from which the higher notes draw.
2. Think about the vowel or embouchure shapes changing gradually between notes. Like I tell my students, "Get all the colors in between."

2x: Play with a tongueless articulation, as regular 8th notes on the beat.

3x: Play with a normal articulation, as regular 8th notes on the beat.

Once mastered, move on to starting on E, F#, or G.

To practice chromatic scales, turn to page 11.

To practice intonation, turn to page 16.

To practice diminuendos, turn to page 17.

If you have been practicing for 45 minutes, it is time for a break!
Well done!

INTONATION

This exercise is the very first one in Tassinari's book. When played with a drone, it becomes a "superfood" warmup: it's tone, rhythm, breath control, lip flexibility, fingers, and intonation all in one!

Set the drone on the first pitch.



Continue upwards chromatically for one octave. You can also begin in the other registers of the flute.

To practice playing smooth, velvety intervals, turn to page 15.

To practice diminuendos, turn to play 17.

To practice vibrato, turn to page 6 (page 7 for advanced work).

If you have been practicing for 45 minutes, it is time for a break!
Well done!

DIMINUENDOS

Even when I graduated with my master's degree, I didn't feel like I knew how to play a beautiful diminuendo. It was a bit of a quest then to figure it out on my own. I improved over time but when I got Philippe Bernold's *Le souffle, le son* and saw this:

Il faut veiller à octavier en pinçant les lèvres (ce qui fait diminuer le son) tout en gardant un souffle assez intense. Cela donne le schéma suivant :

Lèvres : $f \rightarrow p$
Souffle : $f \rightarrow$

Purse your lips to move to the upper octave (the sound gets softer) but keep the same blowing intensity. Thus:

Lips: $f \rightarrow p$
Airflow: $f \rightarrow$

I was FLABBERGASTED that it could be stated so simply and elegantly. Essentially, he's telling us that the lips do the diminuendo, not the air. He also reminds us to "keep minimal pressure in the air column." That is- don't squish and squeeze your poor airstream in your chest!

These are phenomenal exercises (as you can see, some of my favorites):

Harmonique n° 4

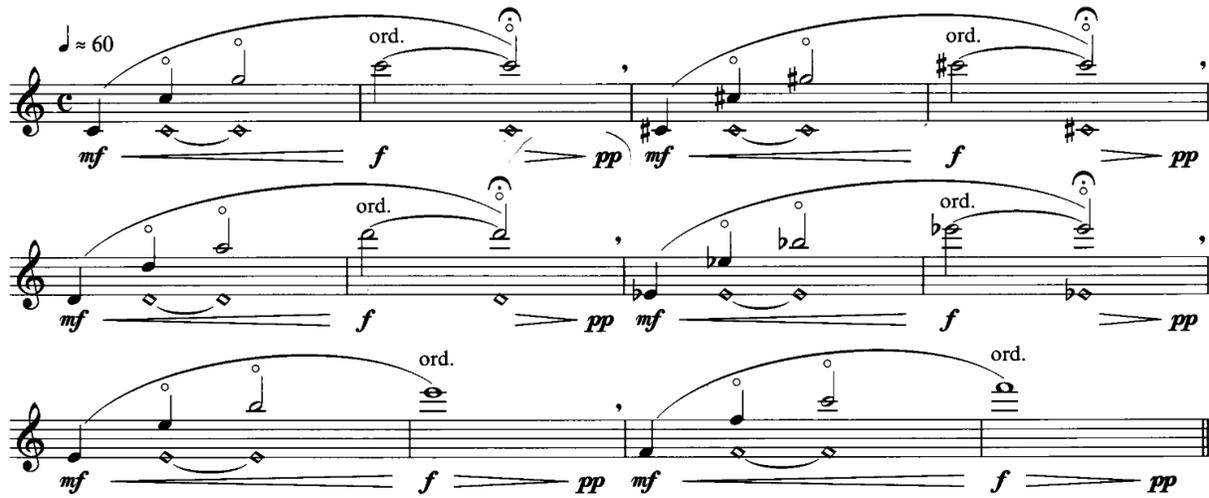
On augmente le souffle pour passer l'octave et, sans diminuer la quantité d'air, on pince les lèvres sur la note harmonique pour faire le diminuendo (son filé).

Blow harder to go up the octave and, without reducing the volume of air, purse your lips on the harmonic to play diminuendo (long tone - son filé)

keep chest open

The musical score consists of three staves of music in treble clef, 2/4 time, with a tempo marking of ♩ ≈ 92. Each staff contains three measures of music, each measure being a long tone exercise. The first measure of each staff starts with a dynamic of *p* and ends with *pp*, with a *f* dynamic marking in between. The notes are: Staff 1: G4, A4, Bb4; Staff 2: A4, B4, C5; Staff 3: B4, C5, D5. Above the notes, there are circles containing the letter 'C' with a colon, indicating breath control or articulation. Handwritten notes 'keep chest open' are written above the first measure of the first staff.

Harmonique n° 6 



The musical score consists of three staves of music in treble clef, 4/4 time. The tempo is marked as $\text{♩} \approx 60$. The first staff begins with a *mf* dynamic, followed by a *f* dynamic, then a *pp* dynamic, and ends with a *pp* dynamic. The second staff begins with a *mf* dynamic, followed by a *f* dynamic, then a *pp* dynamic, and ends with a *pp* dynamic. The third staff begins with a *mf* dynamic, followed by a *f* dynamic, then a *pp* dynamic, and ends with a *pp* dynamic. Each staff contains two measures of music, with a fermata over the final note of each measure. The notes are: Staff 1: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5; Staff 2: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5; Staff 3: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The dynamics are indicated by slurs and hairpins. The word "ord." is written above the notes in each measure.

To practice a vocalise, turn to page 4.

To practice Intervals of Perfection, turn to page 5.

To practice smooth intervals, turn to page 15.

If you have been practicing for 45 minutes, it is time for a break!
Well done!