



Warm-Ups

Christine Davis

Flute

Warm-Ups are very individual: each player must tailor a warm-up to best meet his or her individual needs, as well as fit into his or her available time.

Christine's Warm-Up

-I focus on sound production and finger technique for 45-60 minutes.

-Do long tones each day you practice, then spend your remaining time going through your other exercises, rotating them if necessary.

-I do my long tones in chromatic groups of 4 notes at a time.

I start on the B above the staff, play down to low B, and then go back to where I started and go up to high C.

I do my long tones with measured vibrato, in groups of 6 beats of vibrato per beat.

Other players feel strongly against using vibrato in long tones. It's up to you!

-Practice each aspect of your *tone* and *technique* separately so that it can get your full concentration.

This is the best way to make progress!

-Do NOT try to warm-up with all aspects of playing that spreads your concentration: aiming for the most beautiful tone and vibrato, perfectly coordinated fingers, all in one breath, etc. is too much to think about!

You may as well go onto your repertoire, where your concentration is just as divided!

-I recommend students spend half of their practice time working on their *tone* and *technique*.

Depending on time and circumstances, this can look very different for different players.

-Long tones are an everyday must to practice, and to me, scales are the next item on the list.

-I notice a big difference in students who start using high note fingerings sooner rather than later.

Band directors and private teachers: integrate higher notes into your students' scales as soon as you see that they are ready.

-I require any serious students to learn their major and minor scales up to high B or C, depending on the key signature. College students—get yourselves up to high D or C#!

-Learning how to manage your practice time can be very difficult, especially if you are a busy high school or middle school student, a college student who loves flute but is not majoring in it, or an adult who is trying to balance work, life, and music.

I have coached many individuals in all of these positions, and my advice is variations on the following:

-Figure out how much time you have, take the things you want or need to get through, and go from there.

-Maybe divide your tone and technique exercises up and rotate through them daily, weekly, or otherwise.

-Maybe plan a few days of longer practice sessions and a few shorter. Maybe on the longer days, you go through your entire warm-up routine, and then the shorter days, you play long tones and then get to your repertoire.

-Being flexible with yourself will yield the best results.

-Plan, execute, evaluate, tweak, and repeat!

Recommended Books

-[Marcel Moyse: On Sonority: Art and Technique](#)

All about tone: page 11 works on playing low notes loudly

-[Marcel Moyse: 20 Exercises and Studies](#)

Includes big slurs, chromatic exercises, diminuendos on high notes, and octave exercises

-[Dan Haerle: Scales for Jazz Improvisation](#)

Uses both clefs, goes through all modes of scales, and helps with fingerings

Recommended after being comfortable with all major and minor scales

College students: Practice up to at least a high D

Middle school: 3 Octave C and B scales

-Other exercises: Try creating exercises that incorporate the following:

Changing registers

Different dynamics

Different finger exercises

[Julius Baker: Daily Exercises for the Flute](#) (out of print, but check a library)

-Middle School or High School: Practice long tones and scales, as high as possible

Do not play every scale to the highest note every day

Pace yourself as needed with time to get to everything

-A Good Warm-Up is very important to becoming the best flute player!

-Be flexible to find the best individual exercises for you!

ChristineDavisFlute.com

-Check out my website for more information and other media!

-Also, be sure to check out my book with exercise lists:

[The No-Nonsense Guide to Becoming a Professional Flutist](#), available on Amazon.com