

# The First Principle of Saxophone: Do You Know Saxophone?

## to the Saxophone

The saxophone, a woodwind instrument invented by Adolphe Sax in the mid-19th century, has become a beloved instrument used in various musical genres, from classical to jazz and pop. It is renowned for its distinctive, warm, and versatile sound, and its popularity has grown exponentially since its invention. This article aims to provide a thorough understanding of the first principle of saxophone playing, guiding aspiring saxophonists through the fundamental aspects of playing this captivating instrument.



## 1st PRINCIPLE of SAXOPHONE: Do you know saxophone? by Charles A. Mills

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## **The History of the Saxophone**

Adolphe Sax, a Belgian instrument maker, invented the saxophone in 1846. He conceived it as an instrument that would combine the power and projection of brass instruments with the agility and expressiveness of woodwinds. The saxophone quickly gained popularity in military bands and orchestras and later found its way into jazz and popular music in the early 20th century.

- Invented by Adolphe Sax in 1846
- Designed to combine the power of brass with the agility of woodwinds
- Initially used in military bands and orchestras
- Gained popularity in jazz and popular music in the 20th century

## **The Construction of the Saxophone**

The saxophone is a single-reed woodwind instrument with a conical bore and a flared bell. It consists of several main parts:

1. **Mouthpiece:** The mouthpiece is where the player blows air into the instrument. It is made of hard rubber or metal and contains a reed that vibrates to produce sound.
2. **Neck:** The neck connects the mouthpiece to the body of the saxophone and houses the octave key.
3. **Body:** The body is the main part of the saxophone and contains the tone holes that the player covers with their fingers to produce different notes.
4. **Bow:** The bow is a curved section of the saxophone that connects the body to the bell.
5. **Bell:** The bell is the flared end of the saxophone that amplifies and projects the sound.



Diagram showing the main parts of a saxophone: mouthpiece, neck, body, bow, and bell.

### **Proper Breathing Techniques**

Proper breathing is essential for playing the saxophone. Inhale deeply through your diaphragm, expanding your abdomen, and exhale steadily while controlling the airflow through your embouchure (the way you shape your mouth around the mouthpiece).

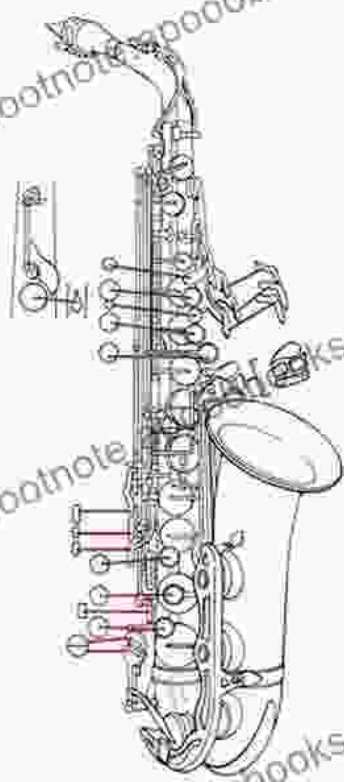
- Inhale deeply through your diaphragm
- Expand your abdomen
- Exhale steadily
- Control the airflow through your embouchure

## **Fingering**

The saxophone is played by covering and uncovering tone holes with your fingers. The left hand covers the holes on the top of the instrument, while the right hand covers the holes on the bottom. Each fingering combination produces a different note.

## E♭ ALTO SAXOPHONE TRILL FINGERING CHART

Move the red key rapidly to produce the trill.  
 □ = open  
 ● = pressed down



The chart provides fingering diagrams for 28 different trills, each shown on a musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B♭). The notes are indicated by a note head and a stem with a flag. The fingering diagrams use squares (□) for open keys and circles (●) for keys pressed down. The trills are arranged in four rows of seven, with the eighth trill in the fourth row.

Trill	Fingering Diagram
C♭ to D	□ 2 1 3 4 5
D♭ to E	□ 2 1 3 4 5
E♭ to F	□ 2 1 3 4 5
F to G♭	□ 2 1 3 4 5
G♭ to A	□ 2 1 3 4 5
A♭ to B♭	□ 2 1 3 4 5
A to B♭	□ 2 1 3 4 5
A♭ to B	□ 2 1 3 4 5
B♭ to C	□ 2 1 3 4 5
B to C	□ 2 1 3 4 5
C to D	□ 2 1 3 4 5
C♭ to D	□ 2 1 3 4 5
C♭ to D♭	□ 2 1 3 4 5
D♭ to E	□ 2 1 3 4 5
E♭ to F	□ 2 1 3 4 5
F to G♭	□ 2 1 3 4 5
F♯ to G♭	□ 2 1 3 4 5
A♭ to B♭	□ 2 1 3 4 5
A♭ to B	□ 2 1 3 4 5
B♭ to C	□ 2 1 3 4 5
B to C	□ 2 1 3 4 5
C to D	□ 2 1 3 4 5
C to D	□ 2 1 3 4 5
C♭ to D♭	□ 2 1 3 4 5
D to E	□ 2 1 3 4 5
E♭ to F	□ 2 1 3 4 5
E to F	□ 2 1 3 4 5

### Articulation

Articulation refers to the way you start and stop notes. There are three main types of articulation:

1. **Tonguing:** Tonguing is the most common way to articulate notes. It involves using your tongue to touch the reed and stop the airflow.

2. **Double-tonguing:** Double-tonguing is a technique used to play fast, repeated notes. It involves using both the tongue and the tip of the lower lip to stop the airflow.
3. **Slurring:** Slurring is a technique used to play notes smoothly and connectedly. It involves not stopping the airflow between notes.

Understanding the first principle of saxophone playing is a crucial foundation for aspiring saxophonists. This guide has provided a comprehensive overview of the saxophone's history, construction, proper breathing techniques, fingering, and articulation. By mastering these fundamentals, you will be well-equipped to embark on your saxophone playing journey and explore the boundless musical possibilities this captivating instrument offers.



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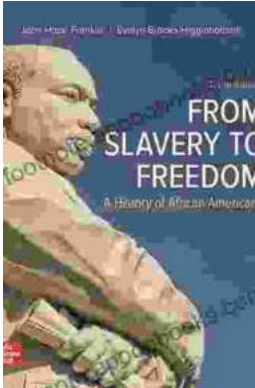
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