

**Newsletter Items**[Daily Exercises](#)[Review Corner](#)**INFORMATION**<http://www.scooby-sax.com/>[Join Our Mailing List!](#)**Welcome**

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Scooby-Sax Newsletter. I intend to publish this newsletter quarterly and focus on saxophone and jazz improvisation topics of interest to visitors to my website. This issue highlights the importance of Daily Exercises and also reviews online jazz and saxophone resources.

Daily Exercises**The Importance of Daily Exercises**

The focus of this issue of the Scooby-Sax Newsletter is on the importance of daily exercises. Daily exercises have been a part of my practicing since my earliest days as a musician. I began my musical life as a classical flute player and was lucky to study with a teacher that was from the French School of flute playing. Early on, she introduced me to the tone exercises and daily studies of Marcel Moyse and the 17 Daily Exercises of Taffanel and Gaubert. I learned the value of spending at least of part of my daily practice time focused on tone, scales, arpeggios, intonation, and articulation.

While daily exercises have remained part of my daily practice, I was recently reminded of their importance by a YouTube video by clarinetist, Dr. Robert Spring. Professor Spring teaches at Arizona State University. You can view the video here:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G8Z1y7E7_04

Dr. Spring begins with long tones, moves to a Klosé scale exercise, an arpeggio exercise from Langenus, a Klosé scale exercise in thirds, and concludes with an articulation from Langenus. Throughout he demonstrates a variety of tempos and works on single, double, and triple tonguing.

You can contact Dr. Spring at rspring@asu.edu and ask him to send you "The Packet". It contains the music he's playing and also some introductory comments. One of the comments really struck me: "I have found that during the 25 years that I have been working on this exercise my tongue speed and accuracy have gone beyond my wildest dreams." Think about that for a minute. **25 YEARS** working on an exercise! How often do we (myself included) jump from one thing to another without taking the time to really dig into an exercise? Imagine the benefits to be gained from consistent daily practice of a small set of exercises.

Daily Exercise Books

In this section I will discuss some of the books I have used and recommend to my students. In many cases, they are daily exercises written for another instrument (usually flute). Once the idea behind an exercise is clear (e.g. major scales in thirds around the circle of fifths), the exercise can be adjusted for the saxophone's range.

1. *17 Daily Exercises for the Flute* by Paul Taffanel and Philippe Gaubert.

As I mentioned in the introduction, I was introduced to these studies at an early age and have stuck with them ever since (both on flute and sax). As is true with many Daily Exercises, it would be almost impossible to play all of the exercises every day with all of the suggested articulations, etc. Instead, I focus on a few that I play every day and then rotate among the others. Since this book has been used by so many teachers, several people have developed a schedule to rotate through the exercises. See <http://www.larrykrantz.com/taffanel.htm> for an example.

2. *Trevor Wye's Practice Books For The Flute* by Trevor Wye.

This is a series of 6 volumes dedicated to Tone, Technique, Articulation, Intonation & Vibrato, Breathing & Scales, and Advanced Practice. The first 5 volumes are available individually or collected together in an Omnibus Edition. This series collects the best idea of the French School and adapts exercises from Moyse, Taffanel and Gaubert, etc. Above and beyond the great exercises, the books contain some words of wisdom from Trevor wherein he states that "possession of these books is no guarantee that you will improve on the flute; there is no magic in the printed

paper.... It is simply a question of time, patience, and intelligent work."

3. *Complete Daily Exercises For The Flute* by Trevor Wye

Another book by Trevor in which he collects and adapts many of the classic daily exercise material for the flute. At 127 pages, it's unlikely you could play through the whole book every day. Trevor includes a practice card that sets a schedule to move through the exercises.

4. *Daily Studies For All Saxophones: Scales, Arpeggios And Tuning Etudes* by Trent Kynaston.

This has been my choice for daily exercises recently. Written expressly for saxophonists, these exercises cover all the bases from scales to arpeggios to articulation to tone and intonation. Depending on the player's level, the exercises can be extended to the altissimo.

5. *Around The Horn* by Walt Weiskopf.

A more jazz-influenced work, this volume will take you through all the modes of the major, melodic minor, and harmonic minor scales in a systematic fashion. It includes scale and arpeggio work.

6. *Daily 7th Chord Exercise* by Jeff Rzepiela

Available at http://scooby-sax.com/online_lessons.aspx, this is an exercise I created to cover many of 7th chord types encountered while improvising. It's a good exercise for building technique as well as a good ear-training exercise to hear different chord alterations.

Concluding thoughts

While the above list is by no means exhaustive, it provides a good selection of daily exercises. Choosing any of the methods and diligently practicing the exercises every day for ~30 minutes will yield results over the long haul. I recommend finding a collection you like and sticking with it (remember Robert Spring's comment about getting pretty good at an exercise after 25 years!).

Review Corner: Online Resources

In the Review Corner, I focus on reviewing books, recordings, websites, etc. that contain material related to learning jazz.

In this issue, I give a partial list of websites that I have found to be valuable:

1. Tim Price

Tim is a great player as well as a generous teacher. He has material available at his website (<http://www.timpricejazz.com/>) and at Sax On The Web (<http://www.saxontheweb.net/Price/>). For those in the NYC area, Tim teaches in person. For those farther away from New York, Tim teaches via Skype. He also writes a regular blog entry for Rico Reeds. Check his Facebook page for links to the blog entries (<http://www.facebook.com/people/Tim-Price/738199772>).

2. Charles McNeal

Charles used to be based in the Bay Area, but is now in Las Vegas. A very fine sax player, he also has one of the best collections of transcriptions available for free on the Internet. Check him out at (<http://www.charlesmcneal.com/>).

3. Sax On The Web Forum

If you have a sax-related question, you'll find plenty of answers here: <http://forum.saxontheweb.net/forum.php>

4. All About Jazz Forums

A wide-ranging forum site containing discussion about jazz (<http://forums.allaboutjazz.com/index.php>). The categories under the Play Jazz category focus on learning jazz, jazz theory and analysis, etc.

5. Casa Valdez Studios

David Valdez's blog (<http://davidvaldez.blogspot.com/>) covers all things jazz and sax related. He has interviews, links to lessons and masterclasses, reviews of books, websites, gear, etc. This site will keep you occupied for quite a while.

6. Matt Otto

I found out about Matt Otto (<http://mattotto.org/>) from David Valdez's blog. There are 30 or so free lessons available, free albums, etc.

7. Steve Neff

Steve's site (<http://www.neffmusic.com/>) has video lessons, books, and a great blog. The blog regularly features clips of Steve testing various mouthpieces on both alto and tenor.

8. EJMA Transcription page.

This page is connected to the Ecole de Jazz et de Musique Actuelle (EJMA) and regularly features updates of transcriptions available on the Internet (<http://chnani.perso.neuf.fr/ejma/ejrelev.html>). There's another page that is updated with recent items: <http://chnani.perso.neuf.fr/ejma/updates.html>. While the pages are mainly in French, it's pretty easy to navigate.

9. Randy Hunter

Randy has a couple of sites: <http://www.randyhunterjazz.com/> has some free lessons, etudes, reviews, and links to other sites. <http://www.beginningsax.com/> is similar but has an emphasis on beginning saxophonists and improvisors.

10. Doron Orenstein

This is a relatively new site (<http://www.bestsaxophonewebsiteever.com/>) but contains lessons, interviews, links to other educational sites, etc.

Again, this is not intended to be an exhaustive list and I'm sure I've

overlooked plenty of great sites. If you have a favorite that is not listed here, send me an email and I'll include it in a future newsletter.

I hope you enjoyed the first issue of the Scooby-Sax Newsletter and that you've got plenty of material to practice now! Your comments are always welcome. Send me an email at scooby@scooby-sax.com to let me know what you thought of this issue, suggestions for future issues, etc.

Sincerely,

Jeff Rzepiela
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