Section I:
First Things First
The 4 Basic Principles

Proper Setup of Playing Area

• Place your chair (if you will be sitting) and music stand in the proper position. The stand should be immediately in front of the chair so that you can sit facing directly forward.
• The chair and stand should be directly in line with the conductor. The only exception is for trombonists; their stands should be slightly to the right of center so there is room for the slide to move.
• The stand should be adjusted so that the conductor can easily be seen from the waist up just over the top of the stand while your head is in a natural, looking-straight-forward position.
• The base of the stand should look like a “Y” with one leg pointing directly at you.
• Be sure your instrument is properly assembled, set up, and in good working order before playing. You should never need to leave your seat during rehearsal to do routine tasks like oiling valves or replacing reeds.
• Check the board for the day’s agenda and make certain that all needed music, equipment, and supplies are available at your seat.
• The above setting up procedures should be done quickly, without distraction, and as quietly as possible.
• If you are setting up for your own personal practice, make sure you have a metronome and chromatic tuner nearby - or a computer with both apps on it.

Correct Posture

• Correct posture is the position in which the body can most efficiently and effectively breathe air in and out, carry the instrument, and allow for maximum player comfort.
• Stand tall with feet about a shoulder width apart, head held naturally, shoulders relaxed, and rib cage up.
• When you sit, start at the standing position and simply bend your knees to move to the chair.
• You should be able to return to the standing position simply by straightening your legs.
• Sit up straight on the front third of the chair.
• Make your body slightly soft and then push your belly button to your backbone.
• Your head should be in a natural position so that you can see both the ceiling and floor just in front of you by moving only your eyes up and down.
• Do not let your posture change as you bring your instrument into playing position. Make the instrument do what your posture says, not the other way around. That’s why you have fingers, wrists, elbows, and shoulders that move! 😊
• Keep your eyes aimed at either your music or the conductor. Move your gaze between them often.
Proper Breathing

- Breathe only through the mouth.
- Keep the body slightly soft with good posture so that you are balanced with the rib cage held high and the face relaxed.
- Breathe all the way to your toes.
- Make sure there is no shoulder movement. If your shoulders move, it means you are not using your diaphragm effectively.
- While there may be some special times to breathe during warm ups or exercises, the rule about when to take a breath to begin playing is on the beat before you start the sound. The conductor will almost always indicate this beat with a single movement in an upward motion.
- Breathe silently. While hissing or noisy breathing may be part of an occasional exercise, it should never be done when playing normally.
- Do not hold air in unless it’s part of an exercise. Air should come and go from the body in one smooth motion. It should feel like the air never stops moving in a steady in-and-out stream.
- Keep the airstream steady. Pretend that you have to keep a windmill turning or one of those airport windsocks constantly sticking out from the pole.
- When inhaling, the air should feel cool at the back of your throat. When exhaling, keep your throat in the same open and relaxed-but-firm position.

Straight Line Sound

- Unless you can produce a sound that holds still and steady, it will be impossible to tune, work on a true ensemble sound, or shape phrases.
- You make the sound happen, not the instrument. The instrument only amplifies your tone.
- When blowing, keep the air steady, smooth, and constant.
- Imagine that the sound is a laser beam and that it is aimed at a target that is far away. Pretend that your sound can actually lift your target into the air if you keep it strong and steady. Use visualizations like this a lot as you play and learn more about music.
# Table of Proper Instrument Setups

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<th>To tune, pull at the...</th>
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| **Flute**  | Headjoint (be sure cork is 17 mm from middle of emb. hole) | 1/8"               | The best headjoint you can afford for your make and model. | Gemeinhardt series 3 Emerson  
Make sure to get an open hole flute! |
| **Oboe**   | Nowhere! Push it together. (Remember - turbulence.) | ---                | The best medium or medium hard reed you can buy or make. Yes, you can make your own reeds. | Yamaha  
Loree  
Fox |
| **Bassoon**| Nowhere! Just exchange a different length bocal. | ---                | The best medium or medium hard reed you can buy or make. Yes, you too. | Fox Renard, esp 240  
Schreiber S13 or S16 |
| **Bb Clarinet** | Barrel (Never pull at the joints or bell - unless some clarinet teacher way better than Devos says to.) | 1/8"               | Medium or medium hard reed (3 - 4) on a B45 or 5RLyre mouthpiece. Also, get a good ligature, like Bonade. | Yamaha YCL250  
Noblet  
Selmer  
Buffet B-12, E-11, R-13 |
| **Saxophone** | Mouthpiece (Do not pull at the neck - causes the octave key to get all freaky.) | Start halfway on and then adjust | Medium or medium hard reed on an S-80 mouthpiece with a C* facing. With a good ligature. | Yamaha 52 or better  
Selmer  
Conn |
| **Trumpet** | Main tuning slide (don’t forget to adjust each valve slide, too – especially the third) | 1/4"               | 5C for beginners and intermediates; 3C for serious advanced students. | Bach Stradivarius  
Conn  
Yamaha |
| **Horn**   | Both main tuning slides on a double horn | 1/4"               | Farkas MC (medium cup) or MDC (medium deep cup). | Holton Farkas model |
| **Trombone** | Main tuning slide | 1/2"               | 6 1/2 AL | Yamaha  
King-Conn  
Holton |
| **Euphonium** | Main tuning slide (don’t forget to adjust each valve slide, too – especially the third) | 1/2"               | 6 1/2 AL | Yamaha  
Willson  
Conn-King |
| **Tuba**   | Main tuning slide (don’t forget to adjust each valve slide, too – especially the third) | 3/4"               | Conn-Helleburg | Yamaha  
Meinl-Westin  
Miraphone  
Conn-King |