

Flute Fundamentals



Educational Clinic Series



Intermediate Fundamentals: Long Tones and Breathing, Basic Articulation, Finger Dexterity and Technique

Long Tones and Breathing

1. Try this simple exercise to make your breathing more efficient.

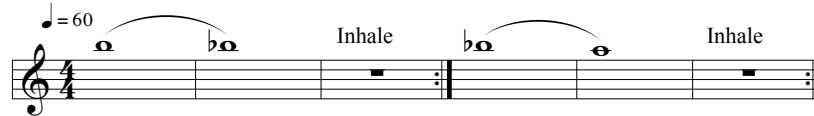
Set your metronome to 80 beats per minute. Inhale for eight beats, set your mouth in a flute embouchure, and exhale for eight beats. Next, inhale for seven beats and exhale for eight beats. Keep subtracting a beat from the inhalation until finally, you take in one big breath in one beat and exhale it over eight beats.

Pace your breath as evenly as possible over the eight beats. You're learning to conserve your air.

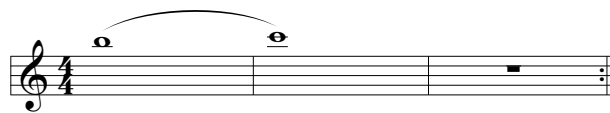
You can modify the exercise depending on skill level. For beginners, maybe start with a four-count exercise instead of eight. For advanced players looking for a reminder on efficient breathing or a good warm-up exercise, try doing it in twelve or more counts.

2. Try this exercise to increase your air capacity and stamina.

Start with your metronome set to 60 beats per minute. The goal is to use up all of your air, but not until the very end of the two-measure phrase. If you run out of air too soon, set your metronome faster. Inhale slowly and evenly for the duration of the four counts of rest. As your air capacity increases, set your metronome progressively slower. When you find a challenging metronome setting, continue all the way down chromatically.



If you need more of a challenge, try playing chromatically UP to the top of your range.



Also, try playing three whole notes together.

