

MSASB AUDITION TIPS

Flute:

- Make sure students are using the proper fingerings for the 3rd octave notes (high D/E/F) instead of just overblowing the 2nd octave fingerings
 - Left hand 1st finger on 2nd octave D, E natural, E flat: UP for D/E flat; DOWN for E natural.
- Large leaps can be made easier by shifting air stream direction! Think “toe” for the lower, and “too” for the upper. A way to practice or demonstrate this is to hold your hand out in front of your face, palm facing you, and without moving the head, blow to your elbow, and then blow to your fingertips. That same jaw motion should be noticeable when executing large leaps!

Double Reeds:

- Make sure you are always playing on a reed that is well broken in and soaked. By putting the reed in water for a few minutes it saturates the reed and help it to be more responsive.
- Your embouchure should be very round yet firm. Lips should be tucked in and form a nice drawstring around the reed no matter the size. Bassoons often need to drop their chin as a part of the embouchure formation.
- Use a tuner and see how where your pitches fall, especially in the extended registers. You sometimes have to adjust your embouchure to raise or lower the pitch and a tuner will help you figure that out. Use arrows above or below notes to help remind yourself when you need to make these adjustments.
- Oboes, there is occasionally a d-flat/e-flat combination in the your material. Be sure you are learning the alternate fingering for the e-flat. This is something you will have to you all through your journey as an oboe player. It’s difficult but necessary.
- Bassoons, you have so many fingering options that it is often overwhelming. Spend the time to figure out which thumb or pinky works best in each passage that is fast and/or difficult. This is a skill that you will need as long as you play your instrument.

Sax:

- Isolate the top and bottom of the chromatic scale and practice those segments a ton! Those areas are the least familiar and therefore need more time to perfect. Most errors in the chromatic scale happen at the top and bottom.
- Practice with the metronome consistently! Tempo control and rhythmic accuracy are problems that frequently occur in the scales and etudes. It’s not necessarily fun to use the metronome, but it is one of the most valuable tools we have at our disposal.
- The majority of auditions have correct notes and rhythms. The ones that really stand out have paid attention to phrasing, proper breath placement, obvious dynamic shaping, etc.

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Horn:

- Find a way to hear the complete etude. Finale file, MIDI recording? Director example? Piano plunking? I believe that if you can hear this, you can sing it; and if you can sing it, you can play it!
- IF you have access to a double horn, PLEASE use the B-flat side (WITH thumb) fingerings as much as possible, particularly for the higher ranges. The tubing is much shorter and it's generally easier to get those high notes to pop on the B-flat side.
- It's smarter to play slower and ACCURATE, than playing super-fast with a bunch of missed notes, articulations, etc. Always play with as beautiful of a sound as you can.
- LISTEN to the recording before you submit it. Make sure you feel good about what you hear.

Trombone:

- On the Db Major and Bb Minor scales, F in 6th position is your friend - your technique will be smoother. Take the time to work on what is probably the most important alternate position on the trombone. Work for a smooth style on the chromatic scale.
- On the 6/8 etude, most (but not all) of the Ds above the staff would be better played in 4th position. Work to get these in tune as well.
- On the 4/4 etude, play the first and last lines boldly (but with good tone and articulation), but make the second line more playful sounding.

Euphonium:

- On the scales, work to stay open in the lower register.
- On the 6/8 etude, I would like to hear you do the changes in the dynamics, with warm tone.
- On the 4/4 etude, play the first and last lines boldly (but with good tone and articulation), but make the second line more playful sounding.