

TONE 5 SAX AND CLARI – AVOIDING SQUEAKS

Or How to Make a Good Sound

There are two main things you must do to get a good sound and to avoid squeaks. They are:

Breathe out strongly at a constant rate

Don't be too tight on the reed – relax your jaw!

But just as important – you must do both of these **AT THE SAME TIME.**

A bit more info:

- Breathing must remain constant for the entire time you are playing (except when you breathe in!). This means from the very start of the first note, through to any tonguing or dynamics you do, to the very end of the last note. If you back away breathing when you tongue chances are you'll squeak.
- Not only must you relax your mouth/jaw off the reed but it must stay relaxed for the entire time you're playing. If you tongue or play higher or louder it must remain relaxed. If you bite hard as you tongue chances are you'll squeak. It is possible to be *too* relaxed which can also make it squeak. This doesn't often happen with students but ask me if you think you might be too relaxed.

What if you are 100% sure you are following the above but you still squeak?

- Be sure your fingers are completely closing all keys/holes on your instrument and that you're not touching any other keys.
- Try a harder reed.
- Experiment by simplifying what you do. Does it squeak only on certain notes? Does it squeak only when tonguing? Try to find out if there is particular time or cause to the squeaks.
- Ask me to check if your instrument is working properly.

The great thing about this is that if you get rid of squeaks by following the notes above it also gives you a really good sound!