

# *“Bassooner the Better”*

A Guide to Starting Beginning Bassoonists



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# Agenda

- ❑ Identifying Bassoon Candidates
- ❑ The Bassoon
- ❑ The Reed
- ❑ Starting a Student
- ❑ Lessons
- ❑ Questions?

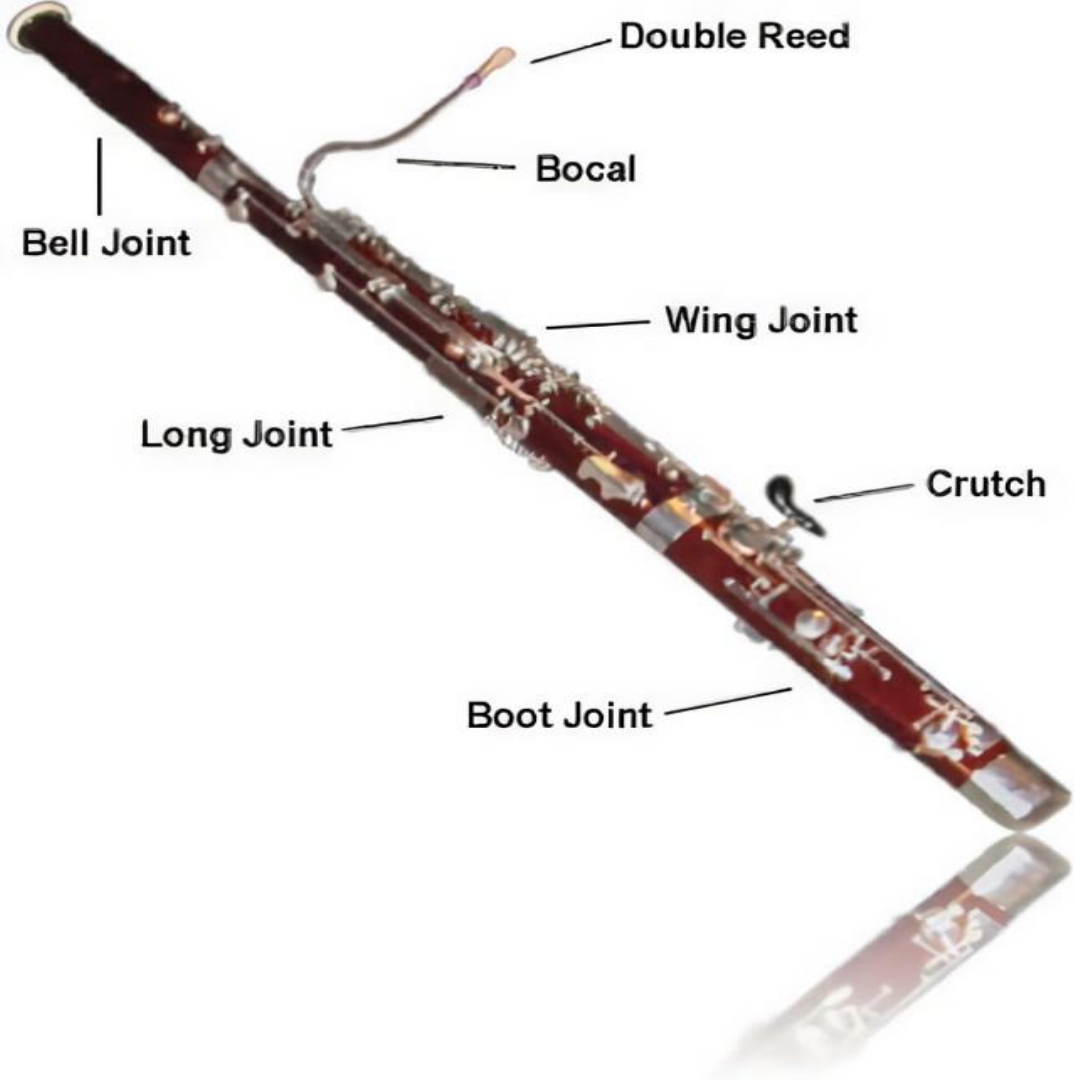
# Identifying Candidates

- When to Start on Bassoon (Ba“sooner” the Better...) - Kyle vs. Wes
- Facial Structure
  - Generally not too many specific issues
  - Watch for short upper lip (look for exposed teeth when mouth is open in “o” shape)
- Hand/Fingers
  - Pinky and thumb independence and length
  - Flexibility
- Characteristics
  - Independent Learner
  - Talk to teachers and elementary music teachers!
- Inform your parents
  - Investment, Reeds, Lessons, Maintenance, Equipment



# The Bassoon

- Proper Assembly Order
- Bocal Length
- Hand Crutch Usage
- Seat Strap vs. Neck Strap
- Instrument Transport



# The Reed

- Store Bought Options
  - [Miller Marketing-KJI](#)
  - [Midwest Musical Imports](#)
- Reed Care and Transport
  - Soaking - soak the whole reed and do not over soak!
  - Soak approximately one minute (longer if brand new)
  - [Reed Case](#)
- How Long Does a Reed last?
  - Depends on the student and how often they play
  - Just like single reeds - rotate
  - How does it sound & how does it look (too dark?)
- Basic Adjustments
  - Finger Squeeze or Pliers (sides at the first wire), if tone is too thin (nickel space opening)
  - Reed should fit well on bocal - if it doesn't, there is not much that can be done without specialty tools

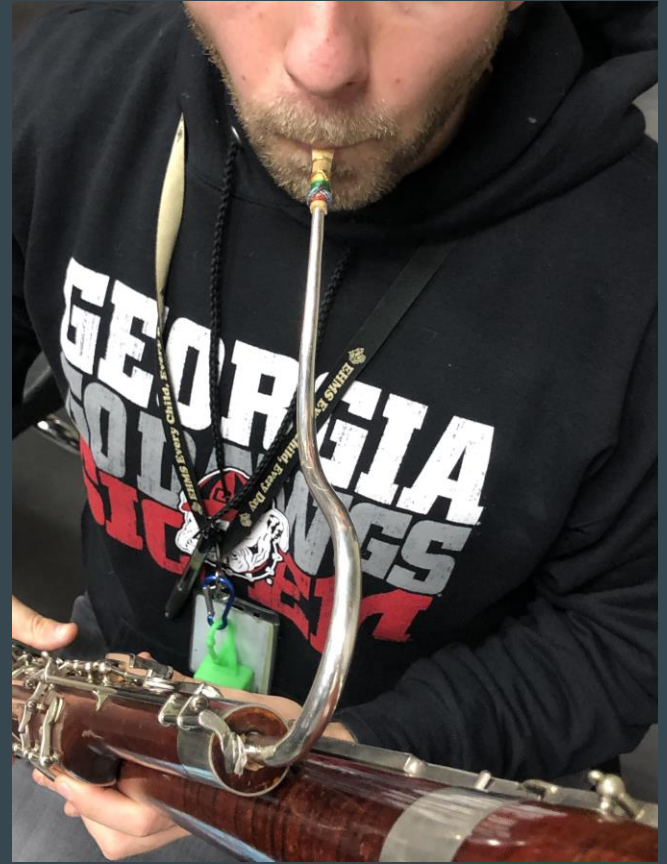


# Starting a New Bassoonist

- ❑ Embouchure
- ❑ Hand Placement
- ❑ Seat Position
- ❑ Flicking
- ❑ Half Hole

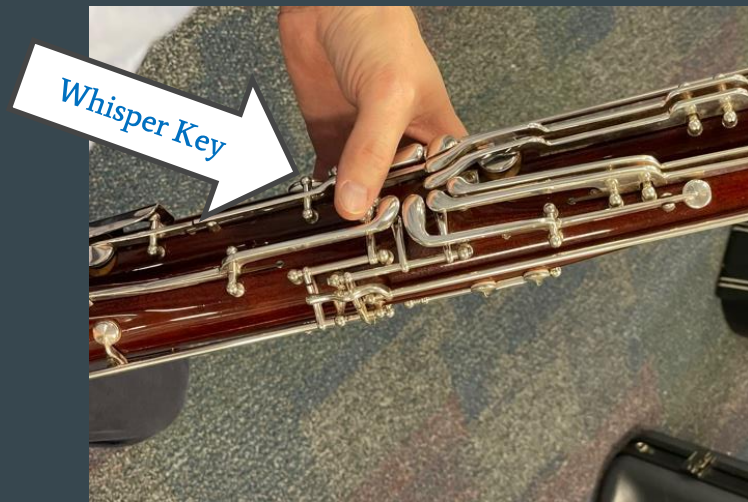
# Embouchure

- “Kissy Face” shape with large use of pink on lips
- Lips should stay halfway to 2/3 down the blade
- Lower Register = Further off the reed
- Upper Register = More pink/more support

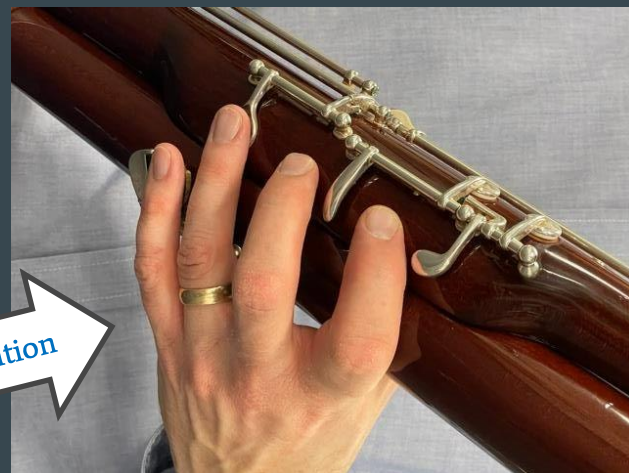


# First Notes – Left Hand

- Start with the Left Hand Only (F, E, D, C)
- Check Left Hand positioning often (curved shape) & balance point
- When doing mouthpiece exercises with the rest of your woodwinds, have bassoonists play on the reed and bocal
- Fingering Chart – Essential Elements



Correct Left Hand Position





# Seating Position & Right Hand

- Seat Strap
  - Diagonal towards right thigh
  - Cup or Hook style
  - Do not use a neck strap
- Right Hand Thumb Placement (hovering over pancake key)



Hand Crutch =  
Highly  
Recommended



Right Hand with  
Crutch



Right Thumb hovers  
over pancake key

# Flicking & Half Hole



A4 flick key

- Flicking
  - Part of the fingering! Teach from the start
  - Based on response and embouchure
- Half Hole
  - Needs to be more open than you think
  - Similar to Right Hand “throat tones” adding the right hand



Flick Key for  
Bb, B, C, D



Proper Half Hole for  
F# and G

# Equipment

- Tenons and Joints
  - Add/remove dental floss or plumber's tape to tighten/loosen joints
  - Apply wax over dental floss as needed
  - Only use cork grease if the joint has cork instead of floss/twine
- Swabs – silk with metal bead strings
- Bocal Brush
- Brands/models
  - Fox 240/220 (investment!)
  - Moosmann M20C, M22
  - Plastic vs. Wood (Fox hybrid, Yamaha composite)
  - Short Reach (third key - Left Hand)



PowerPoint Link



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Questions?

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Handout Link



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