

Daily Routine 2 – Note Starts

Now that we have begun producing the kind of sound we are satisfied with, we must apply that to the rest of our technique. The next step is starting notes – known generally as articulation. Your note starts should not change the way you produce a tone, and to make sure of that we play the first note in these exercises with a breath attack.

Keep in mind:

- ‘too’ is the syllable we use to approximate a proper note start. This will be a little different on every note, so don’t literally say ‘too’ the same way you speak the word, but listen and strive for the cleanest possible note start followed by the most beautiful possible tone.
- The tongue is just a valve – it releases the air but does not actually blow the air. Don’t let your note starts be explosive or stronger than the following tone.
- Lower notes need more air and space in the mouth to support their sound.
- Higher notes need air support too, but the air is more focused by creating less space in the mouth.
- ‘Articulations’ as you know them in music notation actually refer to the shape of notes usually, rather than how you start them. For example, an accent is a one-note dimenuendo, a staccato is a short note, a tenuto is a long note with a swell in it.
- This means if we can start notes in all ranges at all dynamics, we can play any articulation.

The Exercise:

$\text{♩} = 60$

The musical score consists of three staves of music in G major (two sharps) and common time. The tempo is indicated as $\text{♩} = 60$. The first staff shows a continuous series of eighth notes with a 'tu' underlay underneath each note. The second staff shows a similar pattern with a 'tu' underlay. The third staff begins with a dotted half note followed by a dotted quarter note, with a fermata over the dotted quarter note.

- Just as with the long tones, this can be extended however low and high you want – remember, your range is reflective of where you spend your time practicing.
- Try this at pianissimo, piano, mezzo-piano, mezzo-forte, forte, and fortissimo (maybe note all on the same day necessarily).
- Try this at faster speeds, and also with faster subdivisions (eighths, triplets, etc.). This eventually means double- and triple-tonguing.
- Substitute articulation markings – try staccato, marcato, tenuto, etc.
- Still always listen to your sound. Be critical and solve problems when they arise.