

# Rehearsal & Performance Suggestions for the Sax Etude #1 - Medium Swing

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## I. Articulation

- a. Medium swing tunes are generally legato, and tonguing is used more economically than in Rock or Latin styles. When you do tongue, it is characteristic to use legato tonguing (“doo” rather than “too”). In situations where you want to accent a particular note or 2, regular tonguing (“too”) is appropriate. An example would be the highest note in a string of eighth notes.
- b. It is common to tongue the beginning of a group of notes, especially triplets or 16ths. Etude examples: the 1<sup>st</sup> note of the etude, triplets in meas. 4, 16ths in m. 17 & 21, etc.
- c. It is NOT characteristic to tongue every note in a lick or passage, especially a string of 8ths, triplets or 16ths. Etude ex: meas. 1, triplets in m. 4, 16ths in m. 21, etc.
- d. It is characteristic to place an occasional emphasis on the upbeat of consecutive 8<sup>th</sup> notes, while “ghosting” (placing less emphasis on) occasional downbeats. This technique helps to give the music a laid back swing feel.

**Bottom Line: Keep it smooth...economic tonguing...sporadic accents/ghosting.  
Listen to jazz recordings to “catch” the medium swing jazz style.**

## II. Technique

- a. Practice with a metronome to focus on staying in the pocket (the accepted time feel). It is common for students to rush in the swing style, but it is important to keep it “laid back”. Try counting off with the metronome clicking on 2 & 4 to emphasize, in essence, the hi hat pulse.
- b. Much of this etude utilizes arpeggios and scale passages. Practice arpeggios ascending/descending from the root, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>.....not just “root- up” & “root-down”.

- c. If your sax does not have a high F# key, finger the forked F (left hand middle finger and pointer on very top key) and add the right hand side Bb key. This may require a slightly firmer embouchure. If it doesn't sound after several attempts, use the F as a grace note into the F#.

**Bottom Line: As with any style, slowly at 1<sup>st</sup>, repetition, isolate tough licks, etc.....also, metronome on 2 & 4**

### III. Stylistic Devices

- a. The scoop on beat 2, meas. 20: do a "lazy" E to F grace note (ie: slow grace for scoop effect)
- b. It is sometimes characteristic (but not mandatory) to play with a growl (tone distortion) effect. This is usually more common in Rock styles, but there are a few spots in this etude where it adds a nice flavor. To achieve this effect, hum and blow simultaneously ( it may take practice). This would be appropriate on beats 2 & 3 of meas. 19, and in meas. 25 & 27.

### IV. Miscellaneous

- a. Play with a full, confident sound...esp. in the high register.
- b. Although this etude is in the key of C concert, it temporarily moves around to several other keys.....hence a fair amount of chromaticism occurs. Pay attention to the chord changes written above each measure. They will provide some harmonic guidance.
- c. Note the ritard and the decrescendo in the final 2 measures.
- d. Again...**listen to jazz recordings** to catch the characteristics of jazz styles. A sonic picture is worth 1,000 words.

**Feel free to contact me with questions or concerns:**

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