

Posture and Position in Flute Pedagogy

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Finding your Best Dynamic Posture

Experiment with what works for your body to experience the most variety and range in:

- sound quality and volume
- breathing capacity, expression and freedom
- coordination and physical functioning in general
- cognitive and emotional functioning
- physical comfort
- expressive movement that does not interfere with the music

General:

Approach posture as a dynamic whole body function; awareness and inclusion of the whole body allows for more freedom in technique, tone and breathing, distributes work throughout the whole body and reduces stress on hands and arms.

Cultivate awareness of micro-movements to reduce stiffness and to enhance musical expression.

Develop a reliable internal sense of balance; use video or mirror to help you refine it.

Adapt the flute to your body, not vice versa.

Feet and legs:

Start with even weight distribution and balance through ankles and arches.

Then experiment with different foot placements as you feel comfortable. Notice how they affect the rest of your body.

Torso:

Experiment with movement and balance through the hip joints: movement at the waist reduces support from the legs and breathing capacity.

Martial arts and athletic-type movements can help you find support for the torso from the hip joints.

Arms:

Experiment with your natural arm use. Understand the location of, function of and support for arm joints and their relationship to the spine as a foundation for free movement.

Use a flute-sized dowel or pool noodle to experiment with lifting arms and moving in playing. Be aware of back and leg support for arms.

Be very aware of your natural hand position and adapt the flute to your hands.

Head:

Experiment with head balance at the top of the spine – learn and understand the location and function of that top joint. Getting support for the head from the spine will help to prevent pushing the head forward or backward.

Cultivate awareness of how you use your head and neck while playing - any stiffness of neck or jaw will interfere with breathing and arm movement.

Standing vs. Sitting

Use of torso can be the same, with arms comfortably riding over the rib and movement from the hip joints, not at the waist. In sitting the torso is supported by the sit bones; in standing it is supported by the legs. Sitting on a ball can help you find comfortable balance and breathing. Move back and forth between sitting and standing to find the same comfortable use of the torso and arms.