

Back to Basics Boot Camp

By Jenny Clarinet

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This boot camp was originally created to help everyone go back to the basics and rebuild their practice schedules due to disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead of my normal 30-60 day boot camps, this one is 15 days to help everyone get back on track to their normal practice routines by strengthening embouchure, articulation, and technique.

Books required:

- Paul Jeanjean Vade-Mecum
- Carl Baermann Op. 63, Division III (scales)
- Cyrille Rose 32 Études for Clarinet

Here is a breakdown of what you'll be practicing in each book:

Long tones

Long tones are the most important fundamental you can practice during this boot camp. Long tones help you regain physical endurance of the embouchure, improve breathing and lung support, and help you develop a beautiful sound over time. Since there are an infinite number of long tone exercises, I have chosen not to include any specific ones in this boot camp to allow you to choose your favorites. If you don't know where to start, slow scales and arpeggios are long tone exercises which never go out of style.

Jeanjean Vade-Mecum

Trill studies (TS) – This is the first “special étude” in this book, and it contains twenty 2-line exercises to help develop finger motion throughout all chromatic pitches. I suggest numbering each two-line exercise to easily identify and practice these throughout the boot camp.

TS 1: trill studies 1-4 (the first 8 lines of music, ending on whole note chalumeau G)

TS 2: trill studies 5-8 (ends on whole note chalumeau B)

TS 3: trill studies 9-12 (ends on whole note chalumeau D#)

TS 4: trill studies 13-16 (ends on whole note open G)

TS 5: trill studies 17-20 (ends at the end of the bottom of the page)

Baermann scales

Each scale should be practiced daily in all the following patterns:

- Scale
- Interrupted scales
- Returning scales (major only)
- 3rds
- 6ths
- Broken chords 1
- Broken chords 2
- Chords of the 7th (major only)
- Diverse chords (minor only)

Articulation

To rebuild articulation abilities, practice several of the Baermann scale exercises both slurred and tongued. Try to match the quality of the slurred sound when you articulate. It is important to practice articulation in a variety of lengths – legato, staccato, marcato, and everything in between. Aim for symmetry, purity of sound, and steady air flow when you articulate. Only after you have achieved these should you worry about articulation speed.

Rose études

To add some musicality and rebuild endurance, you'll be working on a few of the lyrical études in this book. I have not included these until day 6 to give you some time to regain endurance and technique, but feel free to read through any of these études at your leisure throughout the boot camp. On days where an étude is included, your goal is to try to play through the entire étude without stopping. This will build both physical and mental resilience. Additionally, try to play with lyricism and expression – tell a story when you play!

Goals

This 15-day boot camp will help you get back on track and regain a sense of normalcy in the practice room. Each musician's specific goals will be different, so I suggest taking some time before beginning this boot camp to revisit your goals and what you hope to get out of this boot camp:

My goals for this boot camp are:

My weakest fundamentals are:

My strongest fundamentals are:

My ideal practice routine includes:

Why is it important for me to get back on track in the practice room?

What are some ways I can stay motivated both inside and outside the practice room?

Back to Basics Boot Camp Calendar

Abbreviations

- VM = Vade-Mecum
- TS = trill studies (from VM)
- Bae __ = Baermann / scale name (major scales indicated with uppercase letter, minors indicated with lowercase letter)

***All indicated tempi are only suggestions. Please adjust the tempo so you can play the entire exercise (not just isolated passages) with accuracy and precision.

Day 1

- 5-10 minutes of long tones
- VM TS 1 (♩ = 60)
- Bae C / a (♩ = 40-60)

Day 2

- 5-10 minutes of long tones
- VM TS 2 (♩ = 60)
- Bae G / e (♩ = 40-60)

Day 3

- 5-10 minutes of long tones
- VM TS 3 (♩ = 60)
- Bae F / d (♩ = 40-60)

Day 4

- 5-10 minutes of long tones
- VM TS 4 (♩ = 60)
- Bae D / b (♩ = 40-60)

Day 5

- 5-10 minutes of long tones
- VM TS 5 (♩ = 60)
- Bae Bb / g (♩ = 40-60)

Day 6

- 5-10 minutes of long tones
- VM TS 1 (♩ = 80)
- Bae A / f# (♩ = 40-60)
- Rose 1

Day 7

- 5-10 minutes of long tones
- VM TS 2 (♩ = 80)
- Bae Eb / c (♩ = 40-60)
- Rose 1

Day 8

- 5-10 minutes of long tones
- VM TS 3 (♩ = 80)
- Bae E / c# (♩ = 40-60)
- Rose 1

Day 9

- 5-10 minutes of long tones
- VM TS 4 (♩ = 60)
- Bae Ab / f (♩ = 40-60)
- Rose 3

Day 10

- 5-10 minutes of long tones
- VM TS 5 (♩ = 80)
- Bae B / g# (♩ = 40-60)
- Rose 5

Day 11

- 5-10 minutes of long tones
- VM TS 1-3 (♩ = 100)
- Bae Db / bb (♩ = 40-60)
- Rose 5

Day 12

- 5-10 minutes of long tones
- VM TS 3-5 (♩ = 100)
- Bae F#/Gb / d#/eb (♩ = 40-60)
- Rose 5

Day 13

- 5-10 minutes of long tones
- VM TS all (♩ = 100)
- Bae review any weaker key signatures and exercises
- Rose free choice

Day 14

- 5-10 minutes of long tones
- VM TS all (♩ = 110)
- Bae review with faster tempo
- Rose free choice

Day 15

- 5-10 minutes of long tones
- VM TS all (♩ = 120)
- Bae review
- Rose free choice

Practice notes: