

Getting Started on Oboe

Please read the information available at www.rachellanders.com. I made this site to help students, parents, and colleagues find the answers to all of their oboe questions. ☺

Beginner Materials Needed:

- **Oboe** – Yamaha is a great rental brand (It's the most in-tune and requires the least amount of repair). If buying an oboe, Fox is the best choice. If you have a Selmer, Jupiter, or different brand, don't worry. It will be fine for the first school year.
- **Reeds** – Order handmade reeds online. See below.
- **Reed Case** – Shipping tubes are not safe for reed storage...they will grow mold.
- **Swab** for oboe cleaning – The Hodge brand silk oboe swab on Amazon is good.
- **Water container** for band class – I will provide disposable water cups at lessons.
- **Metronome and Chromatic Tuner** – for home practice

Lesson Music: Beginners need to bring their band book to lessons (Standard of Excellence or Essential Elements are both fine). I will provide a lesson binder and any other books/music.

Get Handmade Reeds: Parents, handmade oboe reeds sound MUCH better than the machine-made ones at the music store. Oboe teachers either make reeds to sell to students or have them order from other reed-makers online (I do the latter because there are so many of you ☺).

Please have at least 3 working reeds at all times. Beginners will break reeds often so it is best to order extra, and always order when your child is down to 2 reeds because they can take a long time to arrive in the mail. Reeds should be ordered online from one of the places listed below (this list is always updated on my website). The reed is responsible for 90% of an oboist's tone, so if you want to sound great, get a great reed!

- **Reeds for beginners:**
 - Edmund Nielsen medium-hard "student" reeds (black or purple thread). These are the least expensive decent handmade reeds.
- **Reeds for special solos or auditions:**
 - Bjorkland Reeds – I have a monthly subscription for these.
 - James Sullivan Reeds – They take 2-3 weeks in the mail, but are great.
 - Wildflower Reeds – These are good for students who need harder or more open reeds.
 - Oxford Reeds – made in Georgia

How to Practice at Home:

- Setup a weekly practice schedule. Students who do this progress very quickly!
- Play slowly, thoughtfully, and correctly. Focus on playing the music cleanly.
- If you make a mistake in a section, play that section 10 times correctly.
- Be creative! Change the rhythm to clean up a fast section, play the ending first, take out the ties and put them back in, play with your eyes closed, etc.