

Articulation

The back and middle portion of the tongue should not move when single tonguing. If this does take place, articulation is slower, heavier, and the tongue movement can easily interfere with the air stream and voicing. Moving the back of the tongue is easy to spot. It causes external movement in the throat just above and around the adams apple (larynx).

Single tonguing can be done using one of two methods. A point just in back of the tip of the tongue should contact either:

1) the tip of the reed

or

2) the bottom of the reed

Method #1 may be employed over the full range of the instrument. This method *must* be used to obtain good results in the extreme upper register and altissimo.

Method #2 is suitable for all but the highest palm key notes. It is also employed for coloristic effects and jazz articulation.

Regardless of the method used, think of the following syllables to achieve different articulative styles or colors:

“Te” – for staccato & accents

“Ta” – for normal articulation

“Da” – for tenuto & legato (also jazz)

Tongue Position

Proper tongue position is achieved by keeping the back of the tongue high, resting against the top teeth in the back of the oral cavity (the molars). The tongue should be generally relaxed, with the tip of the tongue suspended in the middle of the oral cavity, just behind the mouthpiece/reed. Only a small portion of the tongue's front area should move for articulation. The forward and middle areas of the tongue move to create changes in voicing or air direction. The back sides of the tongue should remain constantly in place however, resting gently against the top teeth in the rear of the oral cavity.

