

FLICKING

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Flicking is a technique that is unique to the bassoon that involves touching one of the left-thumb high note keys at the beginning of a note. Flicking is applied to several notes in the middle range to avoid a squeak or crack. A2, Bb3, B3 and C3 should be flicked every time they are played, except when slurring step-wise. D3 should be flicked when slurring up to it from F2 or below. Although these notes might sound fine *sometimes* when they are not flicked, they also might sound horrendous, and therefore, flicking should be used all the time to ensure clean playing. Although some bassoonists advocate using a half-hole on the first finger of the left hand instead of flicking, I feel that the tone loses focus when these notes are half-holed. If these notes continue to crack when you flick, experiment with the timing of the flick, your air support, and embouchure pressure. For rapidly repeated flicked notes, the flick key may be held down, as long as you make any necessary embouchure adjustments to maintain good pitch (the pitch might go sharp while holding down the flick key, so drop the teeth and round the lips).

Some upper middle range slurs crack too, especially slurring down to E3 or Eb3 from A3, G#3 or G3. Bb4 to F3 also squeaks frequently. These notes can be flicked with the C# key.

