
XAPHOON
makes your fingers dance!
A handy instrument with an enormous sound.
Maui Xaphoon® C/B · Classic Xaphoon® C

A Patented Instrument

The Xaphoon is a patented instrument.

The original MAUI XAPHOON® is produced from bamboo in Hawaii in the United States by the inventor, Brian Wittman.

The CLASSIC XAPHOON®, the standardized version, was also developed by the inventor and is produced in Indiana in the United States.

Your local specialized retailer

(space for company stamp)

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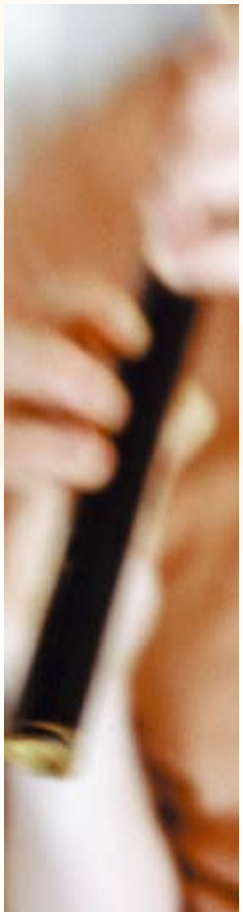


The special thing and the really new aspect of this instrument is the full and sonorous sound.

It is simply constructed, easy to hold and carry. For a reed instrument, it is small and handy. The Xaphoon is relatively easy to learn to play and so it is an instrument for professionals and for beginners as well.

The best part: It is new and therefore there are no rules for playing the instrument.

The Construction

The Original

The construction of each MAUI XAPHOON begins with a raw bamboo stock, which comes from the wet forests of East Maui in Hawaii. A four-meter long bamboo pole only has one piece with the correct length and the proper diameter for a good C instrument. This grows from the mature "Bambusa spinosa" about one-half meter above the ground in a very dense bamboo forest, which is formed from a single mother plant. It always regrows like giant grass and bamboo belongs to the grass family. Each of these bamboo canes is somewhat different with respect to size, its internal diameter and its texture, which makes mass production almost impossible.

In order to satisfy the large worldwide demand, the CLASSIC XAPHOON was developed. It is a very precise Xaphoon, which is produced in series from the material used for the clarinet and oboe mouthpieces.

Initially the piece of bamboo cane is dried for four months before it can be used to produce an instrument. The mouthpiece is made first so that the standard pitch can be heard. Of course, the wall thickness and the diameter have an influence on the sound quality of the instrument, but the quality of the mouthpiece is the primary factor affecting the playing qualities, sound and the pitch adjustment when playing. All bamboo parts are burned slowly over a flame, which gives them the dark color shade and also provides better durability. This guarantees that neither residual moisture nor bamboo-eating larvae remain in the walls.

The holes are burned into the bamboo with a red-hot iron punch. After fine tuning and the reworking of the mouthpiece, mineral oil is applied and the instrument is polished smooth with a cloth.

All MAUI XAPHOONS are tested for their playing qualities again before they are packaged and shipped.

Mouth Position

The Xaphoon is not difficult to learn to play. At the beginning it may be somewhat tiring, but you are quickly rewarded with a nice sound. At the beginning, it is recommended that you don't take the playing of the instrument too seriously.

The most important thing is to get a feeling for the mouthpiece and to get your fingers arranged, to get used to the powerful blowing needed and to the higher lip pressure on the reed for the higher sounds.

Just try to play the instrument and have some fun. It helps to put on some music that you like and play with the music – turn the music up so loud that you can't hear yourself so well.

The First Sound

To get a sound out of the Xaphoon, put it far enough into your mouth like a thick straw, about half of the mouthpiece. Now, only the lower lip should touch the reed. Your teeth can lie on the top of the instrument.

Blow forcefully into the instrument, as if you were blowing a candle out.

Without any fingers on the holes, you hear high F.

Now place the index finger and the thumb of the left hand on the upper holes. Blow into the instrument again. This is middle C. If you continue to cover the holes from the top to the bottom finger by finger, you will get one note lower each time until you reach low C. The low sounds can only be produced if all the holes above this note are well-covered.

First play only with the left hand, even if the lower sounds are naturally more impressive.

Later, when your fingers cover the holes well, you will notice that the lower octave or the lower one-and-a-half are the easiest to play.

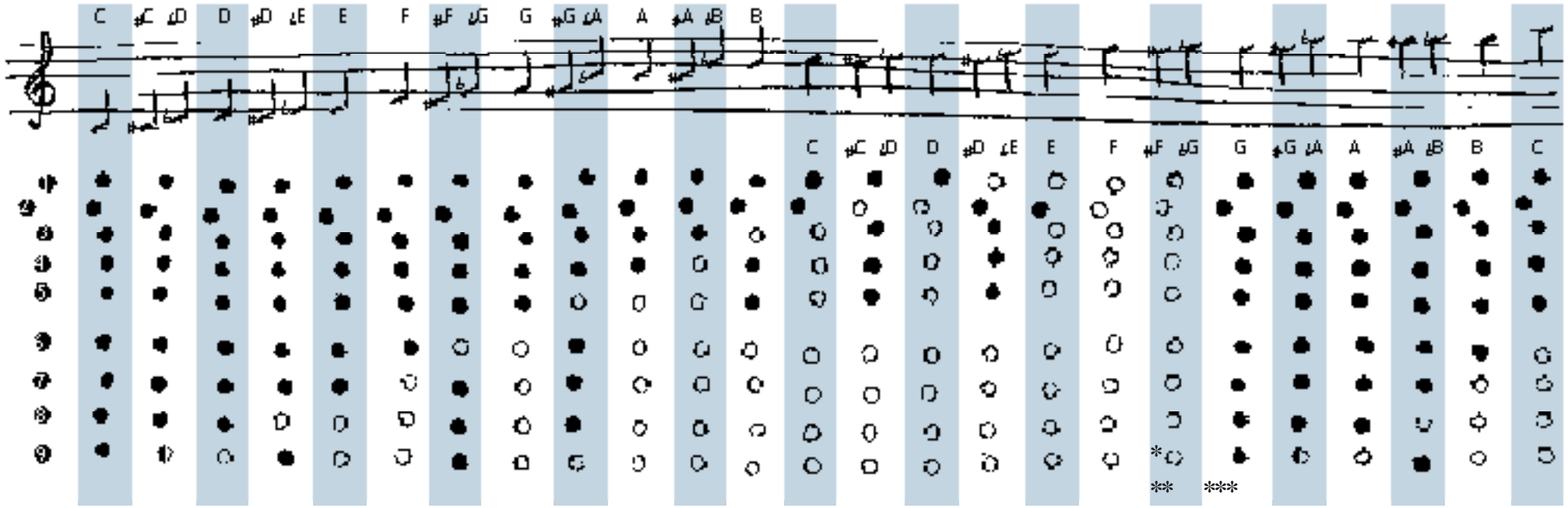
The left hand grips the instrument and covers the holes diagonally from above. The index finger and the middle finger of the left hand lie flat on the holes. The tips of the fingers extend somewhat beyond the holes so that about the middle of the front member of the finger is on the hole. This allows you to reduce the distance between both fingers.

Since the beginner must first develop blowing strength and mouth muscles to be able to play for longer periods of time, it is recommended that you play more often for shorter periods at the beginning.

Finger Position Table C

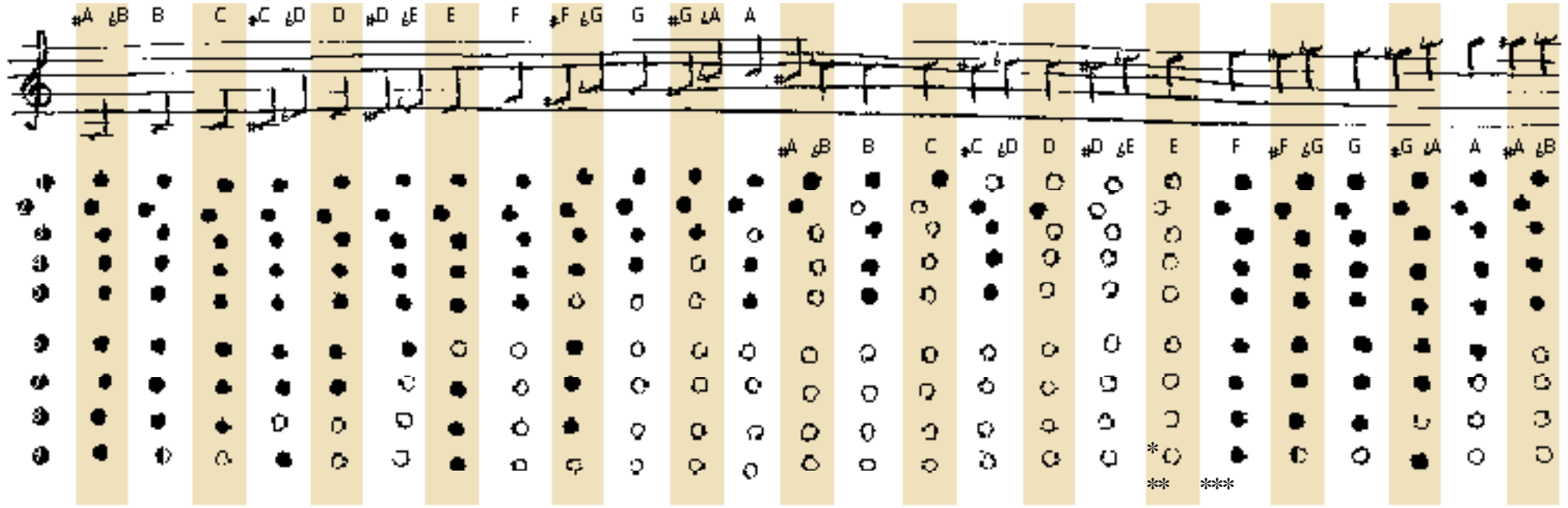
For the C-Xaphoon sound / Transposed for the B-Xaphoon

Open hole Half-covered hole Covered hole



Finger Position Table B

For the B-Xaphoon sound



* Use increased lip pressure. ** Easier with the Maui Xaphoon. Cover all holes, overblow and lower lip pressure. *** Overblow starting here.

Overblowing, Lip Pressure, Pitch Adjustment

The overblown sounds (the very high sounds, which are sometimes made unintentionally at the beginning) can be reached by placing the mouthpiece somewhat farther into the mouth and increasing the lip pressure. The instruments – if you want to try it – can be overblown twice.

Lip Pressure

The lip pressure allows you to correct the pitch and attain the drawing and gliding into the sounds, which are typical for the instruments. This forming of the individual notes and phrases gives the reed instruments their special charm. This is the source of the great art of allowing these instruments to "come alive".

These instruments are so constructed that the pressure of the lower lip on the tenor saxophone reed is higher, the higher the note played. This makes the transition to the overblown notes rounder.

For clarinet and saxophone players, it is important to press the reed significantly less than normal.

Pitch Adjustment

The pitch can be influenced by changing the lip pressure. The sounds can be made a half note higher or lower in this way. The stronger the pressure on the tenor saxophone reed, the higher the audible sound.

Since hitting the exact pitch requires a bit of feeling for the use of the mouthpiece, this should not play a big role at the beginning.

The tone quality can also be changed by vibrating the tongue or other variations.

The reeds

The reeds can be a science in themselves. Until you have some practice using the mouthpiece and the reeds, a simple commercially available tenor saxophone reed is sufficient. Only tenor saxophone reeds are used for the Xaphoon. The reeds influence, depending on the quality and the thickness, the tone quality and the playing qualities.

If a reed develops waves in it, when it becomes wet, or if it is broken or worn, then it is difficult to play the instrument and the tone quality can suffer considerably as well. In case of doubt, it is better to change the reed.

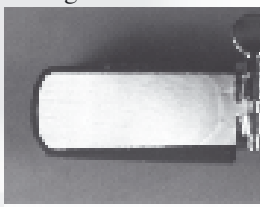
Reed Thicknesses and Mounting the Reed

Reed thicknesses vary from thin - #1 to thick - # 5. We equip the instruments with a medium-thick reed - # 2. Thin reeds sound lighter and require less blowing force. The thicker reeds produce a fuller, darker sound and the pitch is more stable, but this reed does require more blowing force.

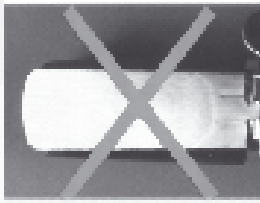
Later, it is worthwhile to pay attention to the quality of the reed. Playing is easier and the tone quality lives, especially for the CLASSIC XAPHOON, from the reed. Tenor saxophone reeds can be found commercially in every thickness and quality. A good reed often has a uniform grain. Normally, the reeds are made from the common reed plant.

If you like, you can work on the surface using dried equisetum stems or extra-fine fingernail polishing paper.

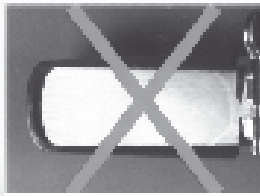
The tenor saxophone reed should completely cover the opening of the mouthpiece, but not more than this. See the diagram.



Exactly right



Hard to blow



Doesn't work

Care of the Maui Xaphoon

• The most important thing is that the instrument be allowed to dry after playing.

• A small weight with a thin string and a cloth handkerchief tied to the end is the normal cleaning aid.

• First remove the reed, put the weight into the pipe and pull the cloth through. This is the most conserving variation.

• The flute cleaning swabs work, but are not the most suitable because they can easily damage the mouthpiece.

• Occasionally, you can oil the instrument, especially on the inside, with sterile oil.

• The Maui Xaphoon can get wet. Playing in the rain does not damage it either. But it has to be allowed to dry out.

• It is recommended that you remove the reed after playing and dry it separately, so that the entire mouthpiece is exposed to the air.

• If the bamboo Xaphoon remains moist too long, a coating develops on the inside and the sound is impaired. In an emergency, this can be removed with strong vinegar.

Care of the Classic Xaphoons

• This is super simple: After playing, simply remove the reed and wipe out the instrument. You can even wash the instrument under running water.

The Origin of the Xaphoon

It was just a few years ago, that only a handful of people knew about the xaphoon. Today, the xaphoon has become a serious alternative to the recorder, a beginning instrument or an instrument played before changing to other reed instruments.

The idea for the reed instruments has its origin in the Arabian area. The chalumeau, which is the precursor of the clarinet and the xaphoon, had a bright sound due to its small mouthpiece. Initially, the chalumeau had no keys, but later one and then two keys until the clarinet developed from this and then the clarinet completely displaced this very simply constructed instrument. Still today, there are classical pieces, which were written for the chalumeau, from the Baroque.

The xaphoon is basically a further development of the chalumeau by the American Brian Wittman, who comes from California and now produces the instruments in Maui, Hawaii in his workshop. The mouthpiece was changed and its own finger-hole system was developed, which makes the sound more sonorous and the instrument can now be played chromatically over two octaves.

The xaphoon has allowed, for the first time in history, a greater number of people access to this type of instrument and this is even worldwide. In the meantime, an independent xaphoon culture has developed. The first recordings with the xaphoon have been published and the xaphoon is played at concerts and used in instruction.

The standardized XAPHOON, which has just been introduced into the market, now provides the xaphoon in its "high tech" variation.

The name was developed from
the bamboo (sax)ophone to
bamboo (sax)xophoon to
bamboo xaphoon
and finally to Maui xaphoon.

Looking for the Problem

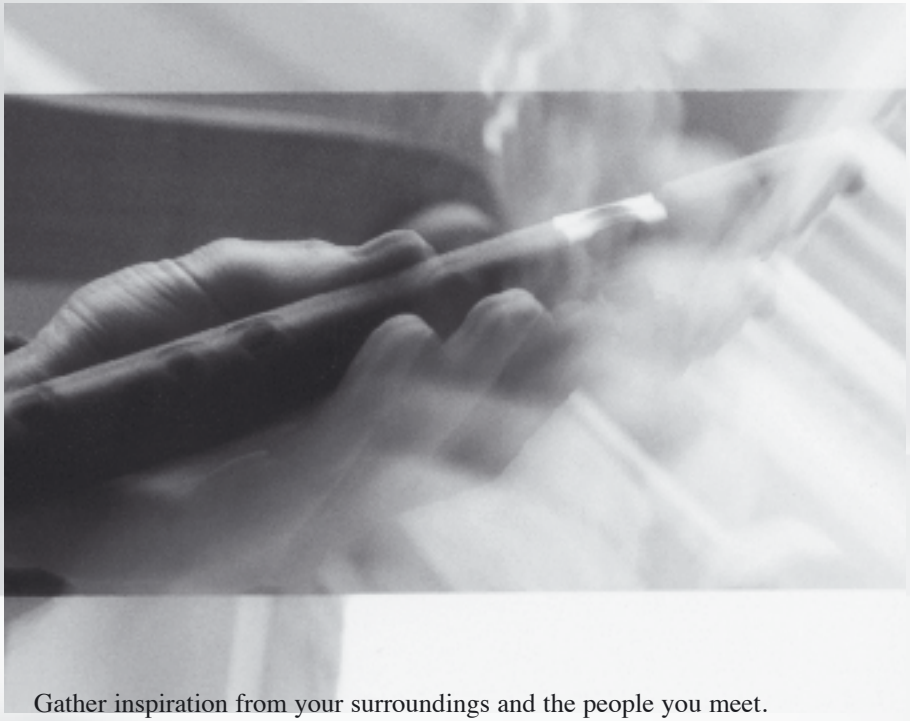
- No Sound
  - The mouthpiece is not far enough into the mouth.
  - The tenor saxophone reed is not completely covering the opening.
- Poor or Unclean Sound
  - One or more holes are not correctly covered.
  - The tenor saxophone reed should be replaced.
  - The mouthpiece is not far enough into the mouth.
  - Too much lip pressure. A typical mistake for someone who plays the clarinet.
- Lots of Screeching Sounds
  - Mouthpiece is too far into the mouth.
  - and/or too much lip pressure.
- Fluctuating Pitch
  - Lip pressure is not constant.
- The Instrument Sounds Too High
  - Too much lip pressure.
- The Instrument Sounds Too Low
  - Not enough lip pressure.
- The Instrument Only Produces Very High Sounds
  - The mouthpiece is too far into the mouth.
  - and/or there is too much lip pressure.
- The Reed Is Wavy, When It Is Wet
  - Wet the entire reed for a long time
  - or change the reed.
- The Reed Has Cracks or a Corner Is Missing
  - As long as it sounds accepdtable, you can continue to use it.
  - If the quality becomes poorer, change the tenor saxophone reed.
- The Cover Does Not Fit Correctly
  - The bamboo does not grow exactly round and therefore the cover may only fit correctly in a certain position.

Conclusion

Music is the bridge between people and culture.

The Xaphoon was developed as an instrument to carry along with you.

So play the Xaphoon wherever you are and greet those, who don't understand your language, with your Xaphoon music.



Gather inspiration from your surroundings and the people you meet.