Five-Note Segments

Break down major scales into groups of five notes. By practicing smaller groups with more repetition, you will develop accuracy and muscle memory.

1. **Slur** the first five notes of a major scale, up and down, repeated three times. Listen for even fingers, steady air and good tone.

2. These can be executed gradually over time, as you are learning your scales. Eventually, one should play the entire range of the instrument in this manner. Start on low Bb, and work your way up the instrument. Go chromatically by half-step. (Bb major, B major, C major, etc.)

3. Be sure you know the notes you want to play BEFORE you start the five-note segment (remind yourself of the key signature!). Never start any faster than you can think of the note names.

4. ALWAYS practice with a metronome! As you speed these up, keep track of your daily progress with a Technique Chart. Never start at your previous day’s fastest tempo. Always start at a relatively easy pace. You should be confident that you will not make a mistake.

5. If you cannot play with evenness any more, or are starting to play with tension, it is time to stop! Move on to something else and come back to this tomorrow. Your speed and accuracy will improve quickly.

**Note:** By playing just the first five notes of each scale, you will actually learn the muscle memory for the entire range of your scales. By playing a scale and its dominant (5th scale degree) scale, you will play the entire tonic scale. For example, by playing C major (C-D-E-F-G) and G major (G-A-B-C-D), your fingers are learning (C-D-E-F-G-A-B-C). After learning all five-note segments, your major scales will be easy!!

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