

Saxophone Self Assessment Guide

January is the perfect moment to take a breath, look at where you are in your saxophone journey, and think calmly about the areas you would like to strengthen. A little reflection now can help you move forward with focus, enjoyment and a renewed sense of direction.

Core Foundations

Do my basic skills support where I want to be, or could they be strengthened?

Do I know my major scales confidently and from memory?

Which major scale is my strongest, and which is my weakest?

Am I fluent with Dorian minors, and do I understand how they relate to the major scales?

Improvisation Skills

Where am I with improvising at the moment?

How can I continue to develop my soloing skills in a structured and enjoyable way?

Could I transcribe a simple melody if I wanted to?

Do I have a small collection of licks I can rely on when improvising?

Playing with Others

How do I feel about playing in an open mic, jam session or band setting?

Would I like to work towards performing with others this year?

What are my thoughts about busking or gigging with backing tracks?

How confident do I feel playing in public and what would help me feel more at ease?

Reading and Musical Understanding

Where are my music reading skills right now and where would I like them to be?

Do I understand chord charts well enough to follow a simple tune?

Would improving my reading skills make my musical life easier?

Your Direction for the Year Ahead

What do I want my sax playing to feel like in six months?

What would I love to achieve by the end of the year?

Which one or two areas would make the biggest difference to my enjoyment if I improved them?

What small habits could I introduce that would help me progress steadily?

Remember that you are not on this journey alone. I am here to help you with any of these areas and to support you in becoming the saxophone player you want to be. As we begin a new year, I will be checking in with everyone to understand how I can best help you move forward with clarity and confidence. One thing that will make a huge difference to your entire playing experience is to memorise your major scales. When we meet, I will be able to assess where you are with them and guide you through the next steps to make your playing smoother, freer and more enjoyable. Think about your ambitions and enjoy the process.