

Bass Clarinet

Basic Tuning Rules

1. *Make sure you have warmed up for at least 5 minutes before tuning.*
2. *Use your best embouchure and make sure you play with your best tone quality.*
3. *Play your tuning note at a mezzo forte dynamic level.*
4. *Do not try to fix the tuning note by adjusting with your air or embouchure. Adjust the correct joint listed below until it is in tune.*

Best Tuning Notes



Approach the G by walking up the scale to help center the pitch. Adjust the neck joint on the G.

Compare the low C and high G, then make small adjustments to the middle joint (if possible).

Make small adjustments to the bell by tuning the B over the break.

How to Tune the Clarinet

The bass clarinet is tuned mainly by adjusting the length of the barrel, with micro adjustments made afterwards at the middle joint (if possible) and bell. If you are sharp, pull it out more; if you are flat, push it in more.

** The embouchure and tongue position can make a big difference in the tuning of the bass clarinet. If they are formed correctly, a concert F# will be produced when playing on the mouthpiece only.*

How to Adjust for Other Notes

Unfortunately, after tuning your instrument, there will still be some notes that will need to be adjusted to be in tune. Use these guidelines to help you if you come across an out of tune note:

1. If you are sharp - relax the embouchure.
2. If you are flat - firm up the embouchure.
3. If you are playing loud - crescendos have a tendency to play flat.
4. If you are playing soft - decrescendos have a tendency to play sharp.
5. Reeds that are new or too hard tend to play sharp.
6. Reeds that are old or too soft tend to play flat.

Bass Clarinet Pitch Tendencies

Abbreviations

VF - Very Flat F - Flat S - Sharp VS - Very Sharp

The following table summarizes the pitch tendencies shown in the musical staves:

Staff	Notes (from left to right)	Pitch Tendency
1	B \sharp , B \flat , C \natural , C \flat , D \sharp , D \flat , E \natural , E \sharp , E \flat	VF, VF, VF, VF, F, F, S, S
2	F \sharp , F \flat , G \natural , G \flat , A \sharp , A \flat , B \natural , B \sharp , B \flat	S, S, S, S, S, S, S, S
3	C \sharp , C \flat , D \natural , D \flat , E \sharp , E \flat , F \natural , F \sharp , F \flat	S, S, S, S, S, S, S, S
4	G \sharp , G \flat , A \natural , A \flat , B \sharp , B \flat , C \natural , C \sharp , C \flat	S, S, S, S, S, S, S, S
5	D \sharp , D \flat , E \natural , E \flat , F \sharp , F \flat , G \natural , G \sharp , G \flat	S, S, S, VS, S, S, S, S
6	E \sharp , E \flat , F \natural , F \flat , G \sharp , G \flat , A \natural , A \sharp , A \flat	VF, VF, VF, VS



While these pitch tendencies are common for most bass clarinets, each individual instrument can vary. It is important to spend time with a tuner on your own instrument to learn its unique characteristics.

Bass Clarinet Warmups

Abbreviations

VF - Very Flat F - Flat S - Sharp VS - Very Sharp

Long Tone 1a



Long Tone 1b



Long Tone 1c



Long Tone 1d



Bass Clarinet Warmups

Abbreviations

VF - Very Flat F - Flat S - Sharp VS - Very Sharp

Long Tone 3a

The exercise consists of five staves of music, each containing a long tone exercise. The notes and their corresponding abbreviations are as follows:

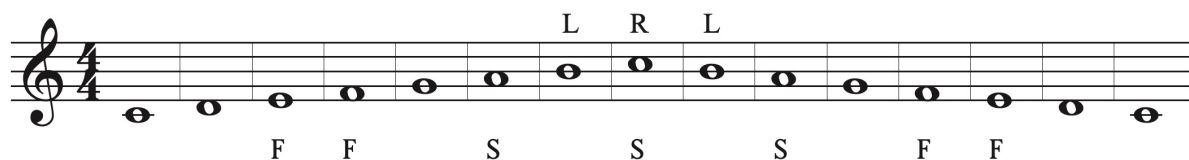
- Staff 1: G4 (S), A4 (VF), B4 (S), C5 (VF), D5 (S), E5 (VF), F5 (S).
- Staff 2: G4 (F), A4 (VF), B4 (VS), C5 (F), D5 (VS), E5 (F), F5 (VS).
- Staff 3: G4 (F), A4 (VF), B4 (S), C5 (F), D5 (S), E5 (F), F5 (S).
- Staff 4: G4 (S), A4 (VF), B4 (S), C5 (VF), D5 (S), E5 (VF), F5 (S).
- Staff 5: G4 (S), A4 (VF), B4 (S), C5 (VF), D5 (S), E5 (VF), F5 (S).

Bass Clarinet Major Scales

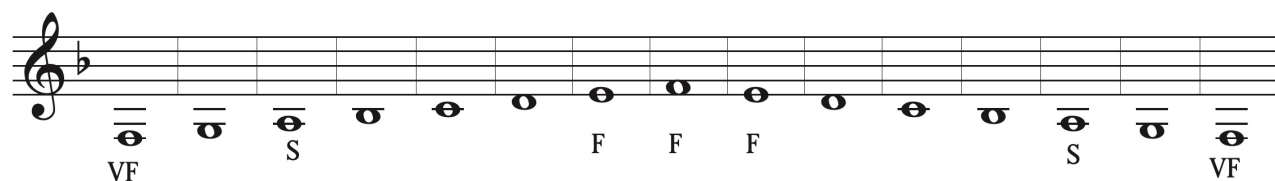
Abbreviations

L - Left Pinky R - Right Pinky
VF - Very Flat F - Flat S - Sharp VS - Very Sharp

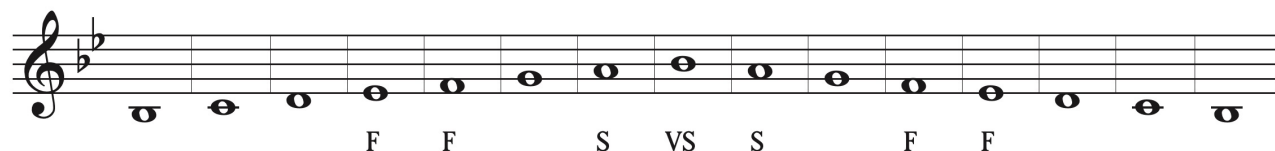
C Major Scale (Concert Bb)



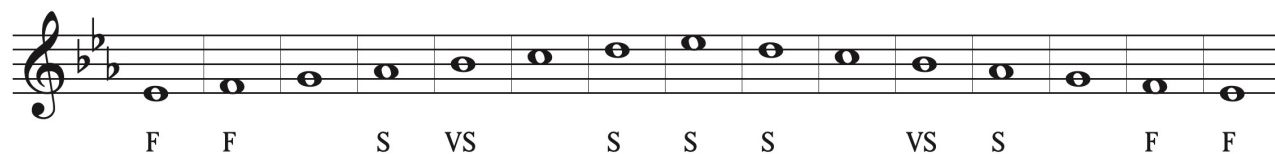
F Major Scale (Concert Eb)



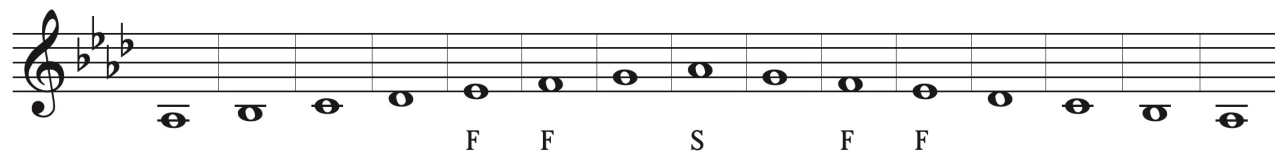
Bb Major Scale (Concert Ab)



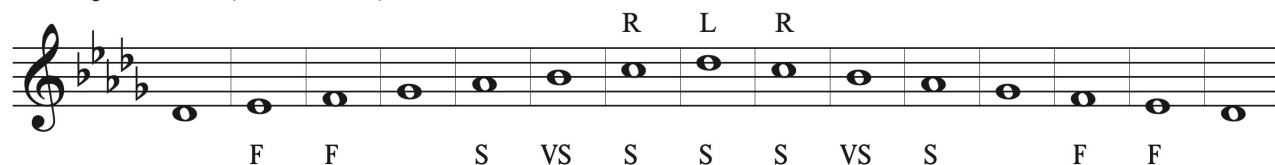
Eb Major Scale (Concert Db)



Ab Major Scale (Concert Gb)



Db Major Scale (Concert B)

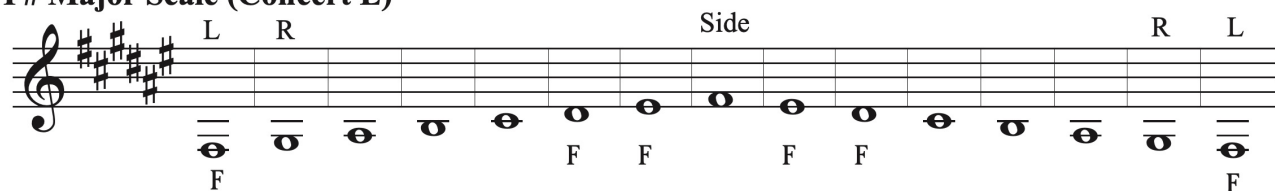


Bass Clarinet Major Scales

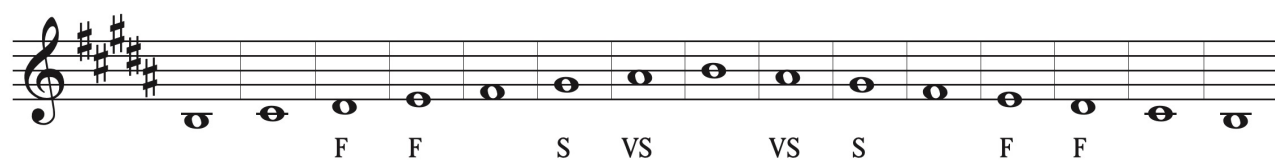
Abbreviations

L - Left Pinky *R* - Right Pinky
VF - Very Flat *F* - Flat *S* - Sharp *VS* - Very Sharp

F# Major Scale (Concert E)



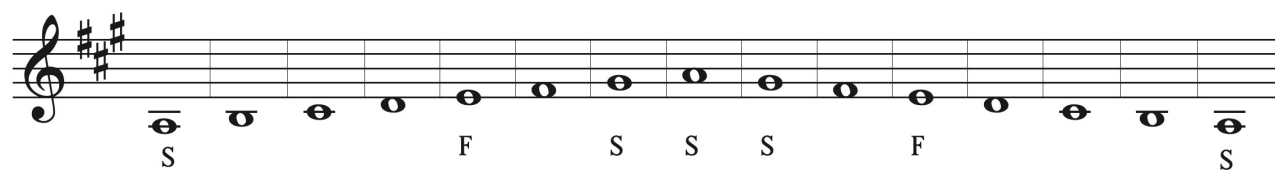
B Major Scale (Concert A)



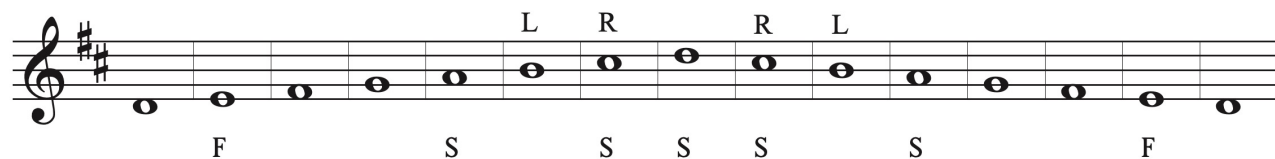
E Major Scale (Concert D)



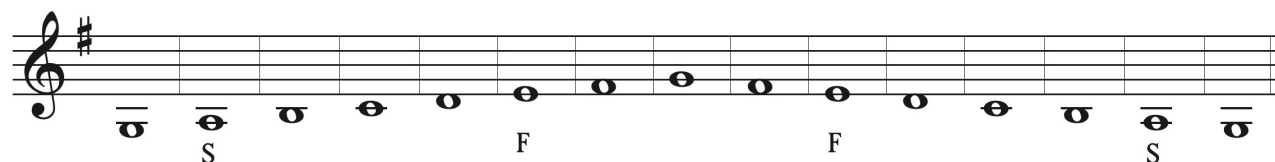
A Major Scale (Concert G)



D Major Scale (Concert C)



G Major Scale (Concert F)



Interval Tuning

Interval Tuning Explained

When multiple notes are played at a time, each note produces a unique sound wave based off the pitch being played. When the frequencies align, the beats or waves in the sound disappear and it sounds “in tune” to our ears. When more than one pitch is played, the notes above the fundamental pitch must be adjusted to make the frequencies align and create that “in tune” sound. We call this “just intonation.”

Adjustments Needed

The adjustments listed below are the number of cents that must be raised or lowered in order to produce an “in tune” sound when playing an interval above the tonic (first note) of a key. It is important to note that your tuner will say that you are not in tune when playing this way - this is why it is important to listen first before you look at your tuner!

Major Scale

Unison	Major 2nd	Major 3rd	Perfect 4th	Perfect 5th	Major 6th	Major 7th	Perfect 8th
0	+4	-14	-2	+2	-16	-12	0

Minor Scale

Unison	Major 2nd	minor 3rd	Perfect 4th	Perfect 5th	minor 6th	minor 7th	Perfect 8th
0	+4	+16	-2	+2	+14	+18	0

Listen Before You Look

When an interval is adjusted properly the beats or waves in the sound disappear. Because of this, it is important to train yourself to listen for the in tune sound as your primary tuning mechanism. The tuner should be used as a reference point after you have used your ears to adjust the pitch. Always listen before you look!

When Should You Use This?

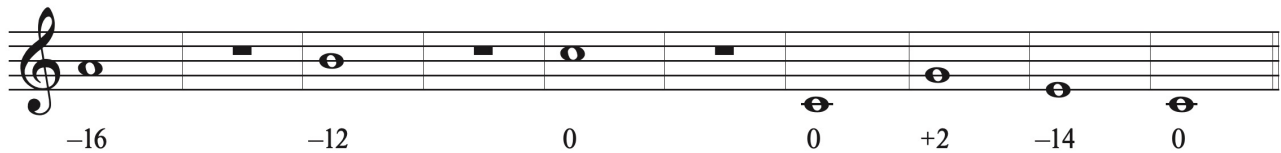
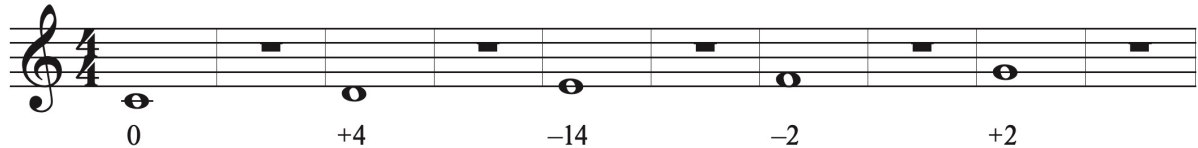
Just intonation or interval tuning is only necessary when playing chords or long and sustained sounds. When playing fast sections or melodic material, interval adjustments are not required.

Bass Clarinet Interval Tuning

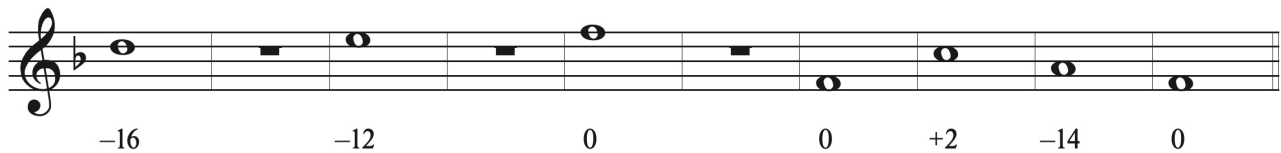
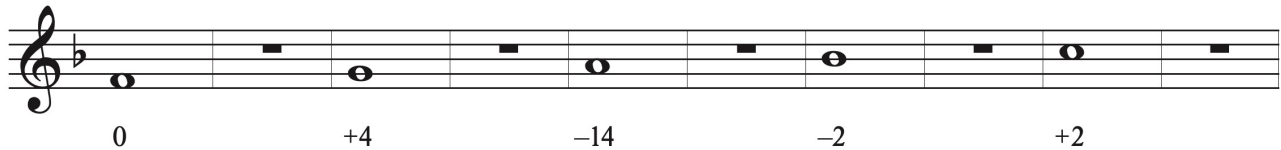
Make sure to listen to the drone during the rests and try to hear your next pitch before playing it!

- lower pitch by number of cents + raise pitch by number of cents

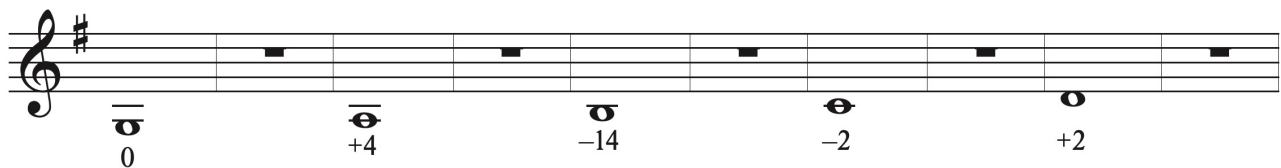
C Major (Concert Bb)



F Major (Concert Eb)



G Major (Concert F)

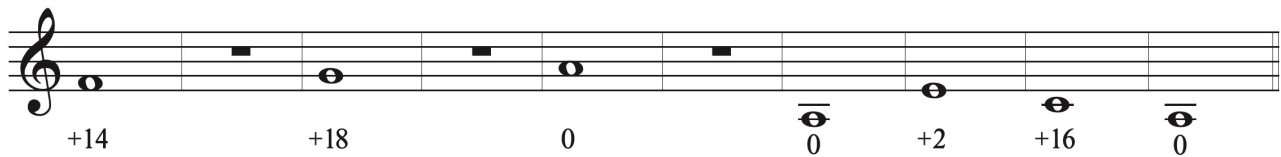
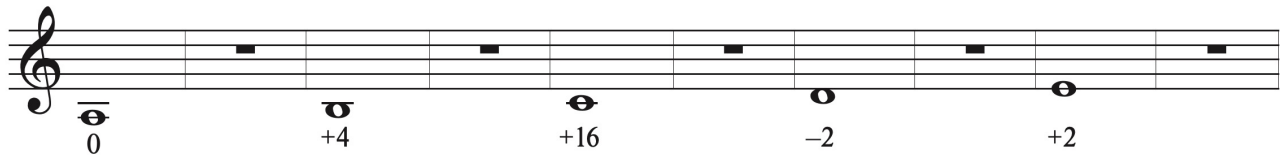


Bass Clarinet Interval Tuning

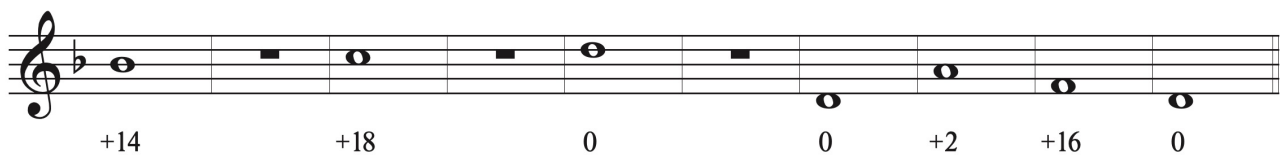
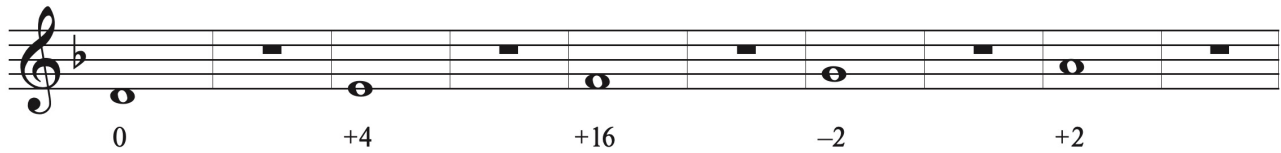
Make sure to listen to the drone during the rests and try to hear your next pitch before playing it!

- lower pitch by number of cents + raise pitch by number of cents

A minor (Concert G)



D minor (Concert C)



E minor (Concert D)

