

## Audition Preparation

A successful audition begins with your preparation—not just how you prepare your music, but also how you prepare your *audition taking skills*.

### Practicing Auditioning

- Playing an audition is a skill all by itself! Nerves can get the better of anyone, but by establishing an audition process and practicing it you can harness your nerves for energy instead of them taking over.
- Practice the state of mind you want to have during the audition—take deep cleansing breaths before each piece in the audition, and during practice.
- Play for as many people as you can—especially people that make you nervous
  - Practice sitting for a few minutes, then walking into a room with people to listen, sitting down, and playing your audition music without a full warmup.
- As you practice auditioning, learn how nerves affect you (recording is helpful here!) and try to compensate for it.
  - If you tend to rush, focus on your tempo before you start, and begin a little slower
  - If you tend to close down, remind yourself to stay open
- Nerves in performance or audition always tend to strip away a few layers of your preparation. Technical passages become less clean, musical shapes become less clear. Anticipating this, work technical passages until they're clean even under duress, and exaggerate your musical shapes.
  - Practice until you can't get it wrong, not until you get it right

### Practicing *before* the audition

Practice to learn new music should always begin very slowly—at whatever tempo it takes so that:

- You can't make a mistake—every time you play you're making habits. Don't let wrong notes or rhythms be the first habits you make on a new piece, it's much harder to unlearn bad habits than to learn good ones in the first place.
- You can focus your attention on your fundamentals: how you breathe, how you use your abdominals to support the sound, how your embouchure supports the reed.
- Try to spend as much time thinking about the music as you do playing, mark your part with your musical decisions, fingering choices, and common mistakes.
- Practice tricky technical passages with by turning straight rhythms into dotted rhythms, or by adding ties:

The image shows three musical staves in treble clef, illustrating practice techniques for technical passages. The first staff, labeled "Original Passage", shows a sequence of quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The second staff, labeled "Dotted Rhythms" and "Reverse Dotted Rhythms", shows the same sequence with dotted rhythms: C4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter). The third staff, labeled "Passing around the quarter note", shows the same sequence with eighth notes: C4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter).