



Get Ready for Arrowbear Jazz Camp

Hello, Summer 2024 Arrowbear camper! We're happy to hear you'll be coming up to camp this year, and we're looking forward to working with you on improvising, learning about jazz, and getting you ready to go back to your school band next year full of new ideas and things to try when you're soloing. Whatever it is you're hoping to learn about with regard to this great musical art form, we're excited to help you out with it.

We know everyone will be coming up to camp with different levels of musical experience. To that end, we wanted to give a list of a few things you can do over the rest of the school year to help you get ready for this summer. Ideally, we'd like everyone to come up to camp with at least some experience with the 3 skills listed below. If you need help with any of the things we lay out in this letter, ask your band director if they have any advice. Or, feel free to email with questions: dougc85@gmail.com.

****If you already have extensively worked on all 3 items listed below, that's fine too. Keep doing what you're doing! We'll have plenty of new things for you to work on this summer.**

1. Major Scales

Learn them! Memorize them! Learn as many as you can by this summer (and really try to know all 12 from memory). Pick one or two at a time, and work on them for a week each. You'll get them down faster than you think you can! If you need help, **ask your band director**. Trust us, they will be thrilled that you want to get better at playing your scales. Also useful is just googling "Learn all 12 major scales".

2. Listening



If you don't listen to jazz much yet, now's a great time to start!

1. Bird and Diz - Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie
2. Best of Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong
3. Moanin - Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers
4. Kind of Blue - Miles Davis
5. Boss Guitar - Wes Montgomery
6. All For You - Diana Krall
7. Earfood - Roy Hargrove

One of the most important ways we learn to play music, and especially jazz, is by spending a lot of time listening. First and foremost, it's important to find some jazz music that speaks to **you** and that you love to listen to. Check out these records and pick the one that you enjoy the most, and then listen to that album over and over before camp starts (try to listen to it 20 times all the way through!). Yes, there are educational things that you could pay attention to, but, more than anything, we need you to have just spent enough time with the music to let it seep into your pores and get its hooks in you. Try to find some jazz that you really enjoy, and spend a lot of time with it! ***Note: When you're listening, just listen! Stay away from screens or any other distractions.**

3. Using your ear

Finally, if you haven't done it before, we want you to try learning some things by ear. Start really simply: Just take a nursery rhyme (Mary had a little Lamb, Twinkle Twinkle, Happy Birthday, etc) and try to pick out the notes on your instrument. Sing the song first, and then try to match the notes you play to the notes you're singing. When you feel comfortable with that, try learning some of your favorite songs (any genre!) on your instrument. Play along with the recordings. The more you feel comfortable using your ear, the easier it'll be to improvise and take solos.

Good luck! We're looking forward to seeing you all in June!

-Doug, Jacob, and Jimmy (your conductors)