

## Articulation

Imagine the **tongue** is surfing the airstream... ~E. Pahud

**What is it?:** It is the **Art** of creating clarity of meaning in your musical expression. You do this with your imagination, heart, mind, **air**, **tongue** and whole body and spirit.

**Air vs. the Tongue:** Your **Air** creates, sustains and releases the sound. Your **Tongue** defines the sound and how it speaks at the beginning of the note. Let the **Air** produce the sound and the **tongue** define and refine it.

**Syllables:** There are many syllables that you can use for articulation. Make choices based on the music you are playing. Tu - Ku, Du - Gu, Dah - Gah, Thik - Ka... Experiment using different places behind the teeth, on the lip and where on your tongue itself.

### **Legato vs. Staccato:**

Staccato is not necessarily short it is Detached, Detache! "Composer writes a quarter note with a dot over it - he wants a quarter note but a bit shorter than a quarter, but not an eighth note...same with an eighth note with a dot not a sixteenth note but shorter than an eighth note... etc." Pahud

### **Release:**

How are you **relea-sing** each note? Learn to listen and create different kinds of **lengths and releases**. How you **release** the note is what creates the length of the note, this is a huge part of Articulation! It is about the **connection** you are making between one note to the next or to the silence.

### **Airstream in Different Registers:**

Think of the **Air** first. What kind of speed and pressure does it require? Make sure you have the **particular support** for your **air stream** that you need for **each note**, in **each register**. Air stream must **flow freely** through all that you are articulating. Find the **style of syllable** that you need for the music and the register. Doing this you will create the kind of **ring** and **resonance** unique for each articulation and register.

### **Resonance:**

Articulation is about the resonance that you are creating. You do this inside your body and oral cavity. (the cathedral in your body) I like to say **Ring, Ribs and Resonance**. This is done by creating a flexible, open chest and ribs and a balanced body and supported **air** stream which your **tongue** moves through with ease and clarity. See Appoggio.

### **Tongue Muscle:**

The **Tongue** is a muscle and it is huge! Being aware of your tongue and learning to release excess tension is very important to creating beautiful articulation. Notice the width and arch of your tongue. How does this effect your sound and articulation? Also, the placement of your tongue? Where is it? Forward in the mouth, back, to the side? Experiment!

**More Ideas:** See Quantz, [On Playing the Flute](#). Go see Keith Underwood for more innovative articulation ideas.

**Look:** [articulation & embouchure -Galway](#) & [Keith Underwood](#)

## 5 Art-iculations

The purpose of our life is to give birth to the best that is within us. ~ Marianne Williamson

Be **Artful** with the way you **Annunciate and Articulate** your music. Each articulated note is just a part of your tone. Make each part exquisite and interesting! There are many more ways to play a single note than you may know. **Be curious** about the **incredible variety** of sounds that you can make. **Learn of more by listening to music and then making the sound you hear on your instrument.** [Watch string players](#), ask about their bowing. Have them show you what it looks and sounds like for each. **Breath = Bow.** How clear, colorful, consistent and creative is your articulation? **Here are a few important ones:**

1. **Legato** - (*long, smooth, connected notes*) *Think of your breath in a circular, flowing movement with the fingers and tongue moving through the breath. Sostenuito is an extreme version of legato.*

2. **Staccato** - means separated notes not always super short! It depends on the style of music. It may be very short- staccatissimo or lightly played more delicately with a lot of space between the notes.

3. **Portato** - also called ( *loure or parlando*) Carried or lifted, talking bow. Played with a slight break between the notes. There is a limit to how short these notes are played, as they are legato in the length, yet lifted. The shape of each lifted note is very important, a bit of a lift and dim. on each note. Usually written dots under a slur.

4. **Detache** - (detached) Successive notes played as seamlessly as possible, with some space between them, more legato than *staccato*. How much space is determined by the musical period, the piece and composer.

5. **Marcato** - (a type of accented articulation) Often indicated with a wedge mark, above the note. It means **marked**, in a **stressed or noticeable** with enough space between them to make each note seem stressed or set apart. They are usually longer than *staccato* but shorter than *legato*. It is the beginning of the note that creates an accented note. **Marcato** has a **weighted** start to it. Remember it is about how you use your Air! The tongue only defines the beginning of the sound.

**More Ideas:** Listen and watch string players to get a visual of how each note looks. Expand your expression of art-ticulations.

**Listen:** [Jean-Pierre Rampal](#) **CP:** [Fantasies - Telemann](#) **Look:** [at great string players bows and bowing...](#)