REEDS!

A necessary evil.

But it could be worse – we could be oboes or bassoons...
What are reeds?

- Cane – *Arundo donax*
How are reeds made?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FOsSSFeosNs
Selecting Reeds - Brands

- **Beginner**: Rico, La Voz
- **Intermediate**: Mitchell Lurie, Rico Royal
- **Advanced/Professional**: Vandoren (blue box or V12), Gonzalez (FOF cut – quarter sizes)
  - *Other options*: d’Addario, Rico Reserve, Vandoren Rue Lepic, Olivieri, Zonda (quarter sizes)
- **Synthetic**: Legere (better), Fibracell (cheaper)
Selecting Reeds - Strength

- Harder is not better!
- Needed strength varies based on setup & mouth shape.
- Professionals average a 3½ strength

### Clarinet Reed Comparison Index

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Breaking In Your Reeds

• Why?
• How many?
• My method (one of many):
  • Dampen the reed
  • Play during warm-up routine (later on other repertoire)
  • Adjust as needed (next week’s discussion)
  • STOP when your reed feels soft
  • Label it
  • Place on glass or a good reed holder
  • Repeat over several days until the reed plays 20-30 minutes
  • Put the reed into your regular rotation
Caring For Your Reeds

- Storage
  - Why? Prevents warpage & chipping and extends the life
  - Examples of good cases
  - Problems with “cases” provided by manufacturer
  - Moisture control
Caring For Your Reeds

- Rotating
  - How many?
  - How long will they last?
- Wall Test
Reed Position

- Vertical placement
  - Move higher = feels harder
  - Move lower = feels softer
- Horizontal placement