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FOR CLARINET

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written by  
Dr. Kristen Denny-Chambers

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# FINGER FITNESS FOUNDATIONS

FOR CLARINET

Études Based on "68 Exercises in Mechanism" from the Celebrated Method for the Clarinet by H. Klosé

written by  
Dr. Kristen Denny-Chambers

Primary musical editor and consultant  
Paula Corley

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Additional bass clarinet contributions by  
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Primary musical editor and cover artist  
Michele Zukovsky

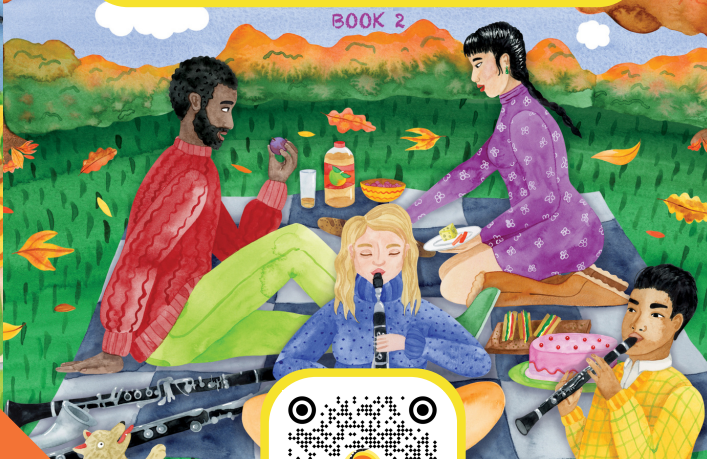
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# FINGER FITNESS FOUNDATIONS

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"Everyone's Invited!"

FUN AND ENGAGING MUSIC FOR  
STUDY AND PERFORMANCE FOR  
CLARINET AND AUXILIARY CLARINETS

written by

Dr. Kristen Denny-Chambers

primary editors include  
Paula Corley, Andrew Simon,  
Trevor Stewart, Michele Zukovsky

low clarinet assistance from  
Jason Alder, Michael Lowenstern, Anne Watson

## *Clarinet Playground Sample Catalog (2024)*

Publications featured in this sample catalog:

*Finger Fitness Foundations* was written during the spring and summer months of 2021.

*Finger Fitness Études*, Book 1 was written from January to August of 2020. Each étude is dedicated to current or former students.

*Finger Fitness Études*, Book 2 was written during the spring of 2021. Each étude is dedicated to current or former students, clarinet friends, colleagues, teachers, or heroes who have had a direct impact on me.

*Finger Fitness Études*, Book 3 was written during the fall/winter of 2022 and was published in the summer of 2023. Like Book 2, each étude has a dedication. Book 3 expands the upper range and includes a few extended techniques and “modern” ideas.

*Prep Steps Before You Kroepsch* was mostly written during the fall of 2015 and published in 2016. The newly expanded edition (2022) includes two additional studies for each key, increasing each page from the original 8 to now 10 studies.

*Writing and sharing pedagogical materials and studies with the clarinet community is incredibly important to me. My hope is that my materials help to spread joy and positivity while helping to refine clarinet fundamentals, all with a little dash of fun on the side.* —Dr. Kristen Denny-Chambers

Cover art for the “Finger Fitness” series

by Hélène Baum, Design & Illustration, [helene-baum.com](http://helene-baum.com)

Cover art for *Prep Steps Before You Kroepsch* (2022 expanded edition)

by Veen Redwood, Veen Redwood Illustrations, [veenredwood.com](http://veenredwood.com)

*Clarinet Playground Sample Catalog*

by Dr. Kristen Denny-Chambers

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This sample catalog includes many of the same sample pages found on the Clarinet Playground website - making it convenient to see all of those pages together in one document. Feel free to download, print, and share this catalog.

## Praise for Finger Fitness Foundations

"Dr. Denny-Chambers has incorporated the original Klose' mechanisms into engaging and melodious études in *Finger Fitness Foundations*. You'll wonder where your practice time went!

--Paula Corley: [clarinetcity.com](http://clarinetcity.com)

"*Finger Fitness Foundations* is a must-have companion for aspiring clarinetists who want to develop strong technical fundamentals. With a thoughtful and thorough approach, including practice tips and fingering suggestions, this book offers a daily dose of inspiration and fun!"

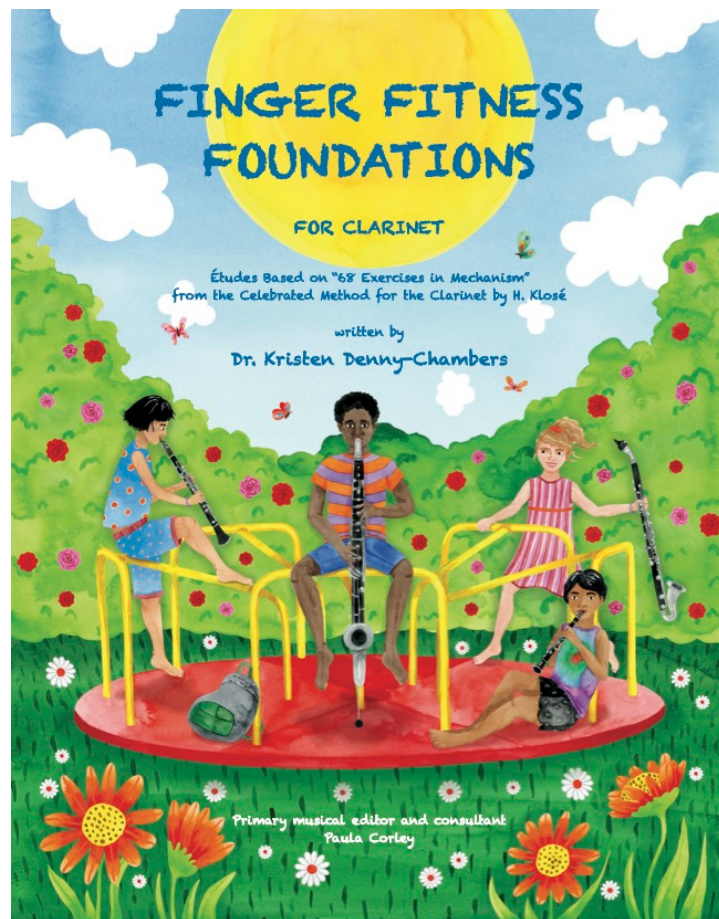
--Ixi Chen: Professor of Clarinet,  
Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music

"*Finger Fitness Foundations* covers the most common problems my students come to me with: alternate fingerings, navigating large leaps, side key usage, sliding when appropriate, double sharps, and voicing. This book has it all. What a terrific resource!"

--Mark J. Cramer: Professor of Clarinet,  
Tennessee Tech University

"Dr. Denny-Chambers' *Finger Fitness Foundations* is a superior addition to any clarinetist's daily practice routine! These engaging and addictive exercises will guide students of all levels to improve finger coordination, independence, strength, flexibility, dexterity, proper positioning, and control."

--Shannon Kiewitt: "The President's Own" United States Marine Band



## 68 PROGRESSIVE STUDIES BASED ON KLOSÉ

.....

### The Problem?

Motivation to practice finger drills!

### The Solution?

Fold the finger drills into fun and inspiring music!

Taken directly from the *Celebrated Method for the Clarinet* by H. Klosé, the "68 Exercises in Mechanism" are the featured finger drills that were used as a takeoff point to write the music. **The individual finger drills appear at the top of each étude and are featured within the corresponding études.** Practice the drill with great attention to all details, and then dive into the étude to reinforce the drill.

Well-suited for developing second year players and beyond, *Finger Fitness Foundations* is practical for all levels of clarinetists including pre-college students, university students, clarinet enthusiasts, as well as professional players. Simply allow your tempo choice to guide the difficulty level that suits you best. The goal of this book, as well as the other books in the "Finger Fitness" series, is to technically challenge and musically satisfy those who aspire to solidify finger fundamentals.

**\$16 USD - FINGER FITNESS FOUNDATIONS - DIGITAL & PRINT - [CLARINETPLAYGROUND.COM](http://CLARINETPLAYGROUND.COM)**

1. 



**Practice Tip:**  
Take a deep breath, filling the lungs all the way, then play with a full sound.

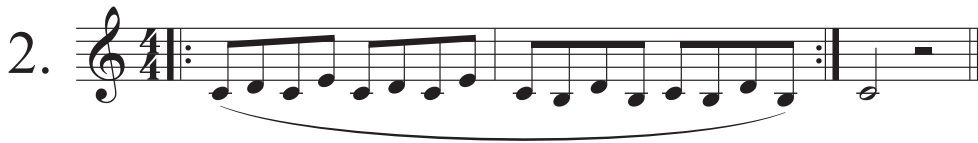
5 

10 

15 

20 

\* Optional breaths will appear in parentheses.

2. 



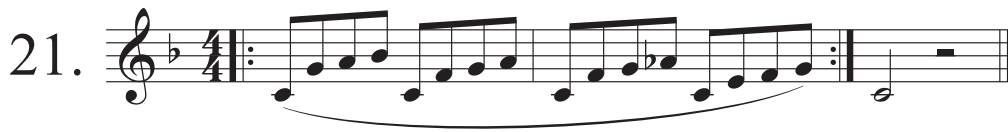
**Practice Tip:**  
Lift fingers from the "big" knuckle furthest from the finger tips.

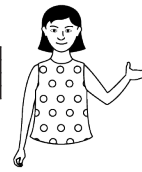
5 

10 

15 

20 

21. 



**Practice Tip:**  
Work on large leaps  
of the drill with  
emphasis on the  
descending leaps.\*

**A** 

5 

10 **\*\*L** 

15 **A'** 

20 

\*  **\*\*** 

Notice key change!

22. 



**Practice Tip:**  
Keep fingers fluid  
and relaxed. It can  
be tempting to tense  
up on large leaps or  
pinky combinations.

**A** 

5 

10 

15 **A'** 

20 

44. 



**Practice Tip:**  
Play m. 10 and 14 smoothly, and bring out moving notes.

**A** 

5 

9 **B** 

13 

17 **A'** 

21 

\* Play with a full sound on the low notes and float up gently to the high A. Think big on bottom or "BOB."

45. 



**Practice Tip:**  
The main focus is connecting registers. Anchor pinkies and hover (or use RHD).

**A** 

5 

9 **B** 



13 L

17 A'

21

46.



**Practice Tip:**  
Maintain finger curve in the drill where fingers may tend to collapse.

A

5

9 B

13

17 A'

21

63. Notice key change!



**Practice Tip:**  
 Omit clarion C's  
 in the drill, then  
 play as written with  
 C pinky as anchor.\*

4

7

10

13

16

19

22

\*

## Praise for Finger Fitness Études, Book 1

"Bravo to Kristen Denny-Chambers for writing such lovely études! They are good finger busters and, as a bonus, very musical and rewarding to play.

Many of these pieces are so good they should become new standards in the clarinet repertoire."

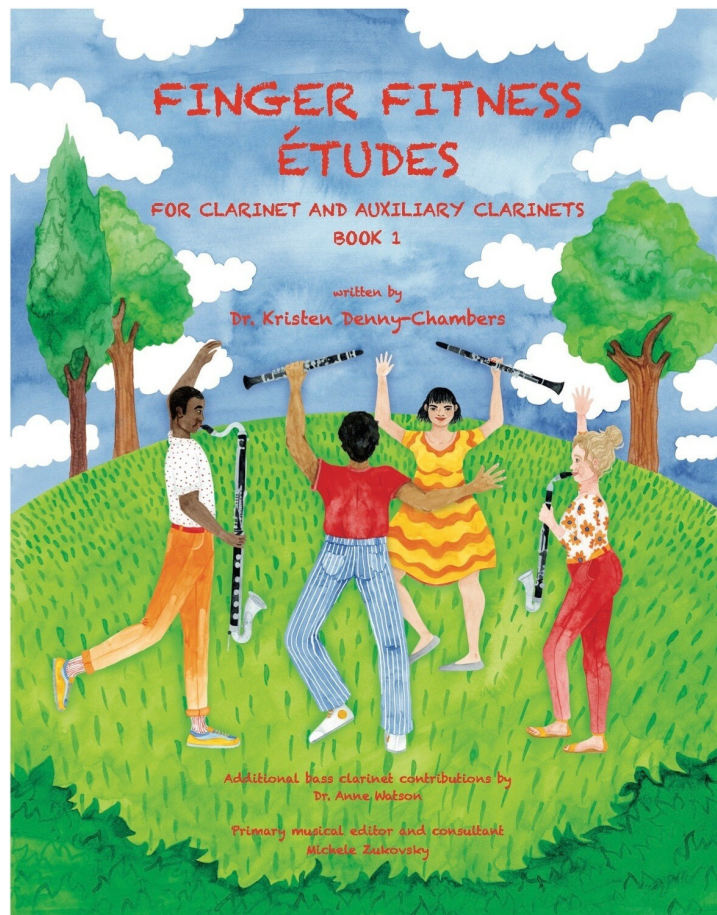
**--Michele Zukovsky: Retired Principal Clarinet LA Philharmonic Orchestra (54 years)**

"...a beautiful collection of original études that are fun and engaging. Each étude has been mindfully constructed to explore and refine clarinet fingering hurdles. Clarinetists of all ages will enjoy working through these études!"

**--Dr. Julianne Kirk Doyle: Professor of Clarinet Crane School of Music - SUNY Potsdam**

"I love the catchy titles and engaging material - it's like the musical equivalent of sneaking vegetables into other dishes!"

**--Dr. Jenny Maclay: Vandoren Artist-Clinician Clarinet Blogger: Jenny Clarinet**



**38 ÉTUDES + 10 FOR LOW C CLARINET**

"These études build a comprehensive technical foundation while allowing the player to develop their musical voice through fun and charming melodies. Every clarinetist and teacher should own this excellent resource!"

**--Trevor Stewart: Principal Clarinet  
Wichita Symphony Orchestra & Symphony of Northwest Arkansas**

---

### The Problem?

Motivation to practice finger drills!

### The Solution?

Fold the finger drills into fun and inspiring music!

**Finger drills appear at the top of each page and are featured within the corresponding études.**

The études were written without a key structure in mind, so the finger drills determined the key. Without exceeding altissimo C#, the book is meant to be accessible to the entire clarinet family. Part 1 features half step fingering combinations. Part 2 has expanded interval combinations and is generally more challenging. **Part 3 includes 10 revised études devoted specifically to low C clarinets.**

Well-suited for advancing pre-college students, undergraduate music students and devoted clarinet enthusiasts, *Finger Fitness Études* is sure to technically challenge and musically satisfy those who aspire to solidify finger fundamentals.

**\$18 USD - FINGER FITNESS ÉTUDES, BOOK 1 - DIGITAL & PRINT - CLARINETPLAYGROUND.COM**

# First Flight

To Jackson Bearer

Flying - with ease and momentum

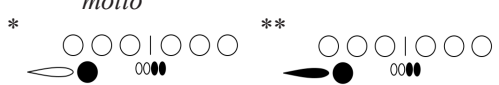
Focus on lifting fingers cleanly.

# Twirling

To Emily Arlan

Spinning quickly - one beat to the bar

Anticipate side key fingerings to play evenly and fluidly.



# Dungeon Hop

To Dylan Borchert

Allegretto - dark but humorous

7 *f*

13 *mp* *cresc. poco a poco*

19 *f*

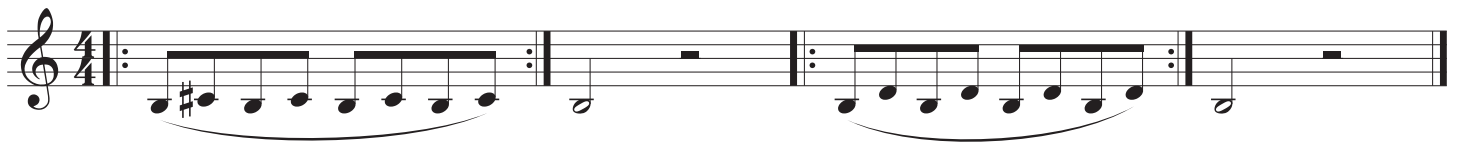
25 *mf*

31 *f*

37 *rit.* *mp* *Scurrying!*

43 *f*

Maintain the core of the tone, and be aware of pitch while playing low and strong.



# Daydreamer's Fantasy

To Trevor Stewart

Dreamily - in slow 2, with expressive rubato

*p* *pp sempre* *p*

*pp sempre* *mp* *poco rit.*

*mf*

*mp* *f with great emotion*

*mp* *a tempo* *p*

*rit.* *molto rit.* *al niente*

Practice rubato in multiple ways and play with a beautiful, singing sound.

**Ants on Strike**  
*Low Clarinet Version*

March - with great purpose

*\*agitated*

\* Play each accent willfully but allow air support to lead rather than the tongue.



## Praise for Finger Fitness Études, Book 2

"If you are looking for a thorough interval workout while basking in beautiful musical gems with a human touch and a supportive online community, look no further than the *Finger Fitness Études* series and the invaluable 'Clarinet Playground' experience by Kristen Denny-Chambers!"

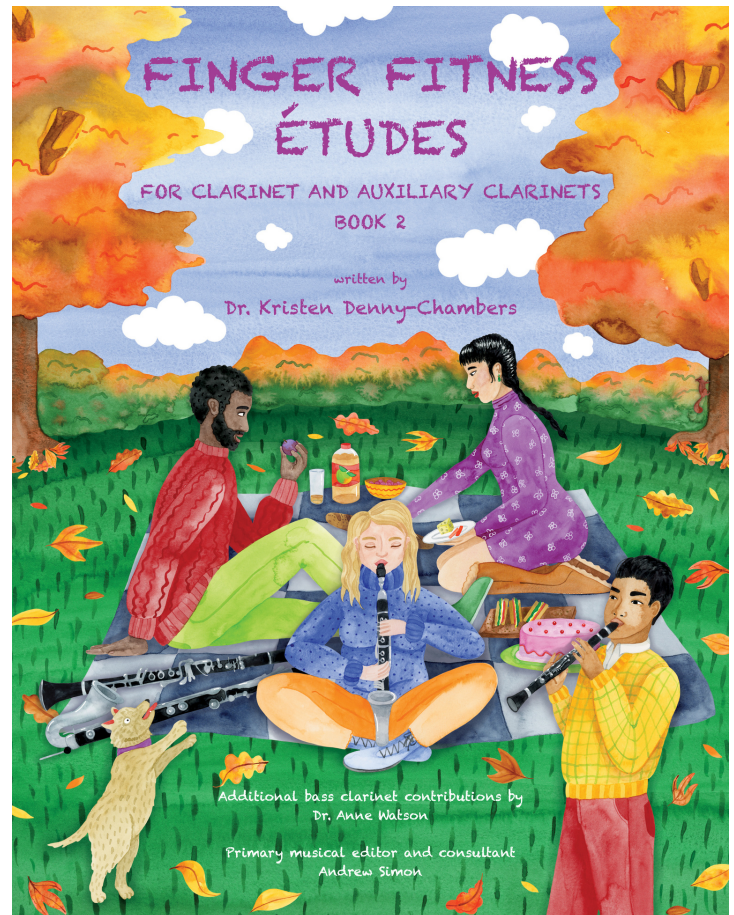
**--Andrew Simon: Principal Clarinet  
The Hong Kong Philharmonic**

"*Finger Fitness Études* are like a well-planned vacation. There's a lot to explore but don't hurry or you'll miss something! Each étude opens the door to a new discovery. You'll want to return again and again!"

**--Paula Corley: clarinetcity.com**

"The *Finger Fitness Études* series is a breath of fresh air in building and developing dexterity for all players! The real bonus is the playful themes that also enhance one's musical expression and interpretation skills."

**--Krystal Williams: Woodwind Adjunct  
University of Maryland, Baltimore County**



**40 ÉTUDES + 18 FOR LOW C CLARINET**

"These are cleverly written études that feel good to play on any clarinet, and they evoke effective and vivid imagery with the various compositional techniques used. Nicely done!"

**--Tyler Mazone: Composer and Clarinetist**

"As a time-pressed adult clarinet enthusiast, I ask a lot of the music on my stand: it must be entertaining enough to encourage joyous, regular practice, it has to build my technique, and it needs to inspire creativity. *Finger Fitness Études* consistently checks ALL the boxes!"

**--Katherine Carleton: C.M., Executive Director, Orchestras Canada**

---

### The Problem?

Motivation to practice finger drills!

### The Solution?

Fold the finger drills into fun and inspiring music!

**Finger drills appear at the top of each page and are featured within the corresponding études.**

Book 2 picks up where Book 1 leaves off and includes larger intervals, more complex rhythms and elevated musical expectations. Part 1 features mostly 3rds and 4ths, and Part 2 contains tri-tones, perfect 5ths and minor 6ths. **Part 3 includes 18 revised études devoted specifically to low C clarinets.**

Well-suited for advancing pre-college students, undergraduate and graduate level music students as well as devoted clarinet enthusiasts, this sequel is sure to technically challenge and musically satisfy those who aspire to solidify finger fundamentals.

**\$22 USD - FINGER FITNESS ÉTUDES, BOOK 2 - DIGITAL & PRINT - CLARINETPLAYGROUND.COM**

# June Bug

To Jaime Trevino Jr.

Ferociously - with vigor!

4 *f* 3 *mp*

7 *f* 3 *mf*

10 (9) *gracefully* *mp* 3

14 *p*

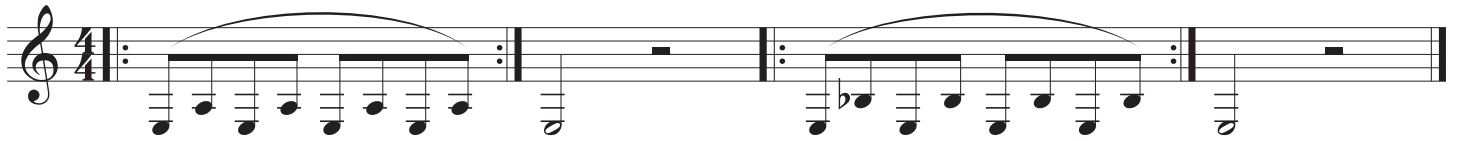
19 (9) *mf*

24 3 *pp* (9) *boldly* *molto* *f* 3

27 *mp* 3 *ff* *mp*

30 3 *mp*

Be mindful of intonation and tone quality on the low E's.



# Clowns on Parade

To Michael Lowenstern

See p. 55 for  
low C version!

Briskly - playfully, with humor

7 *f* *mf*

13 *mp* *stoutly*

19 *f* NB *lightly* *p*

25 *p*

31

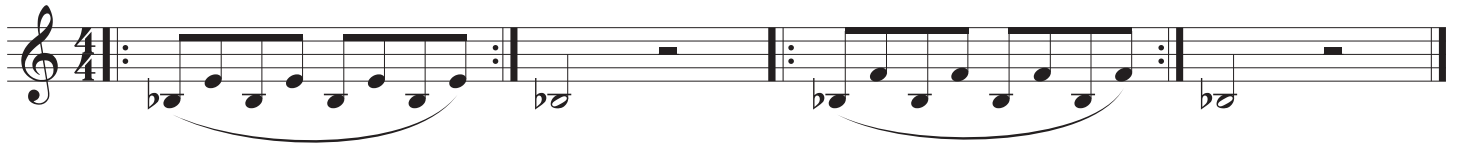
37

43 *boldly* *mf*

49 *cheeky* *f*

55 *molto rit.* *ff* *p sub.* *molto* *f* (no rit.)

Commit to the accents to make the music come to life, and be sure to notice the different articulation pattern in m. 29.



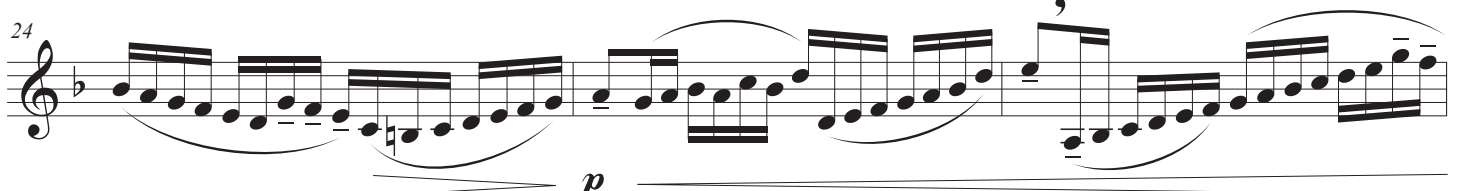
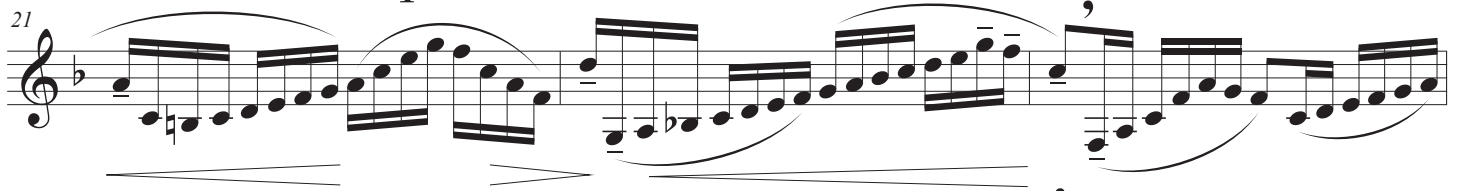
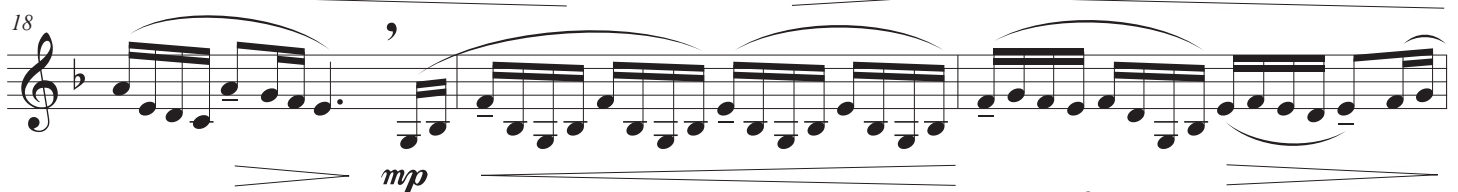
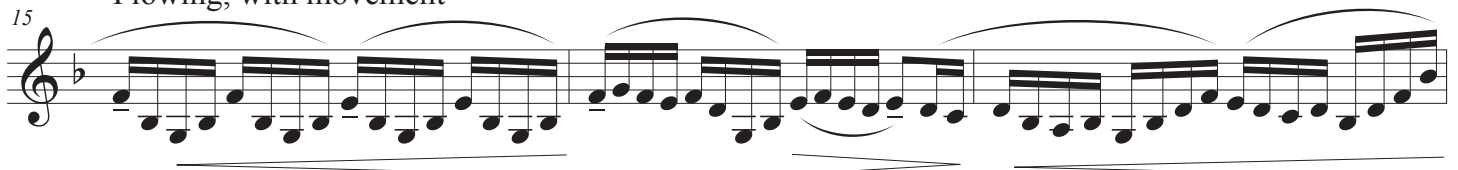
# Summer Dreams

To Michele Zukovsky

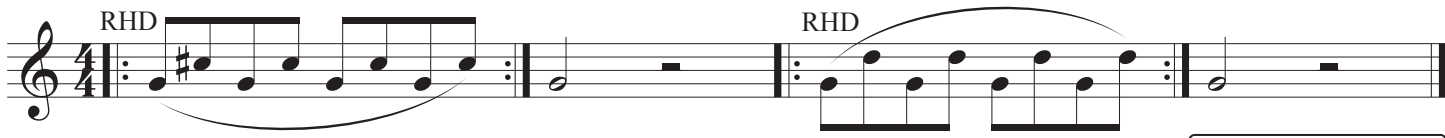
Adagio - dreamy, with rubato



Flowing, with movement



Use the tenutos as a guide to help plan the rubato pacing, but feel free to change them for your own interpretation.

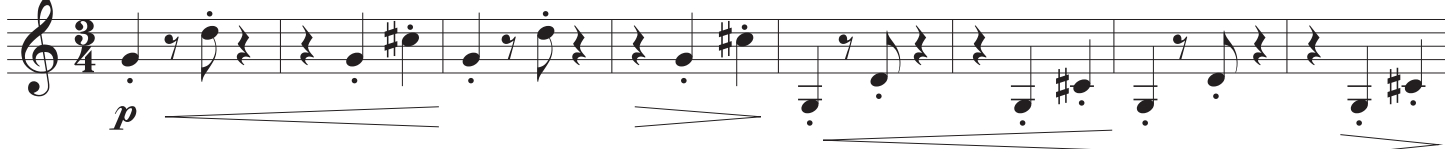
RHD 

# Drop Spin

To Brian Greenleaf

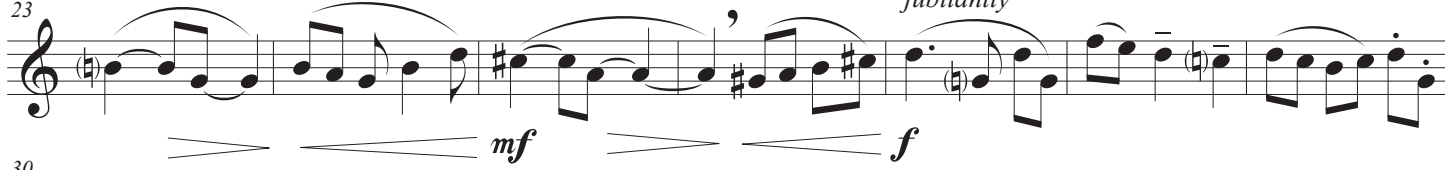
See p. 62 for low C version!

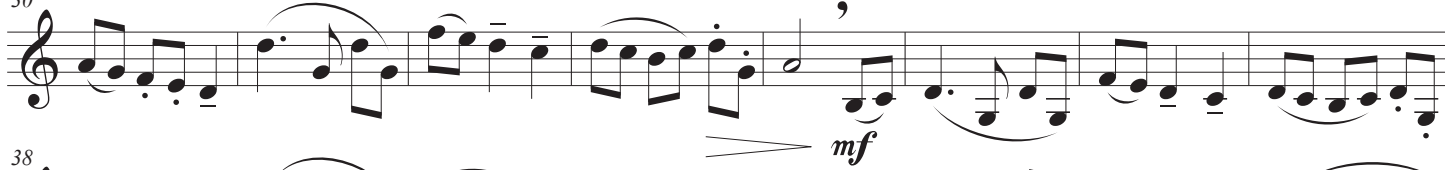
Spinning - with precision (in 1)

*p* 

9 *mf* 

16 *molto p sub.* 

23 *mf* *jubilantly* *f* 

30 *mf* 

38 *f* *p* 

46 *molto* *mf* 

53 *p* 

60 *rit.* *a tempo* *f* *p* 

67 *mp* *p* *pp* *poco rit.* 

Experiment with using an "open" staccato where the air stops to end the note rather than the tongue.

# Clowns on Parade

*Low C Version*

Briskly - playfully, with humor

Commit to the accents to make the music come to life.

Be sure to notice the different articulation pattern in m. 29.

## Praise for Finger Fitness Études, Book 3

"The Finger Fitness Études collection is a wonderful tool for technique building and the development of well-rounded musicians. This third installment continues to challenge and inspire, exposing the player to new compositional styles while making the journey just as enjoyable as ever. You'll never want to take this book off your stand!"

**--Chris Mothersole: EFX Clarinetist,  
Composer & Arranger**

"The third book of Kristen Denny-Chambers' Finger Fitness Études is a wonderfully constructed resource for any clarinetist. Fingering challenges are delightfully hidden within charming melodies with picturesque étude titles. The Clarinet Playground series is a fresh and welcome addition to our clarinet pedagogy. These musical gems honor and celebrate inclusivity in our modern world of professional clarinetists."

**--Mary Alice Druhan: Professor of Clarinet,  
Texas A&M University-Commerce**

"My favorite part about Book 3 is that it offers a wide range of musical ideas to study. I have performed études from previous Finger Fitness Études books for chamber concerts around the world, in online classes, and at conventions. Book 3 will be a part of my touring list for years to come because of how musically appealing it is."

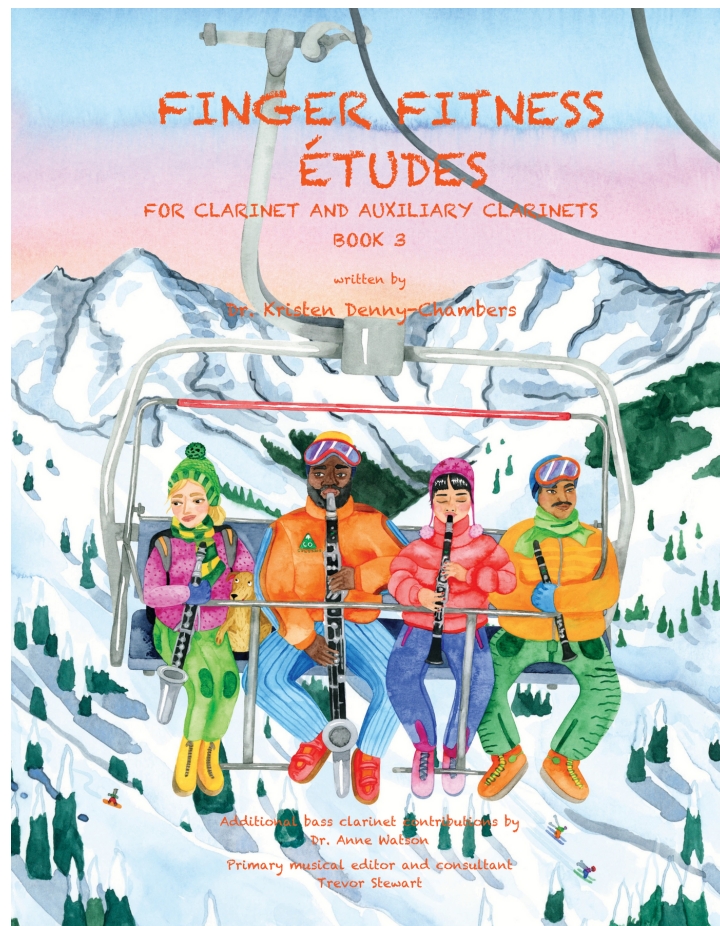
**--Marcus Moore: Clarinetist, MARFORPAC Band**

"Book 3 is my favorite set of Finger Fitness Études yet. Kristen Denny-Chambers has a remarkable ability to weave challenging technical patterns into playful, thoroughly musical works in a variety of styles. This book is a must-have for any clarinetist seeking musical growth and a fun learning experience."

**--Caitlin Beare: Asst. Professor of Clarinet, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi**

"These études are challenging for students AND professionals. To top it off, the melodies are interesting and pleasant to listen to and play. I highly recommend Finger Fitness Études for anyone looking for a collection that is new and refreshing. Brava!"

**--David Sapadin: Principal Clarinet, The New York Pops**



**45 ÉTUDES + 24 FOR LOW C CLARINET**

.....

### The Problem?

Motivation to practice finger drills!

### The Solution?

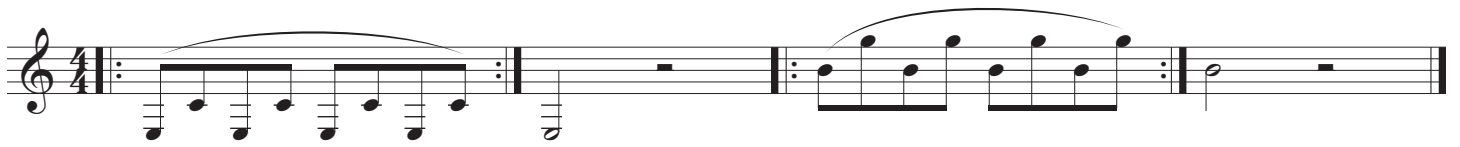
Fold the finger drills into fun and inspiring music!

**Finger drills appear at the top of each page and are featured within the corresponding études.**

Book 3 pushes the range to altissimo G# and includes larger intervals, a few mixed and odd meters, some modern techniques and ideas, and requires more expressive flexibility. Part 1 and Part 2 feature various intervals of 6ths and 7ths. **Part 3 includes 24 revised études devoted specifically to low C clarinets.**

Well-suited for advancing pre-college students, undergraduate and graduate level music students as well as devoted clarinet enthusiasts, this sequel is sure to technically challenge and musically satisfy those who aspire to solidify finger fundamentals.

**\$28 USD - FINGER FITNESS ÉTUDES, BOOK 3 - DIGITAL & PRINT - CLARINETPLAYGROUND.COM**



# Hermanas

To Naomi Ridout

Mournfully - with reflection and rubato\*

5 *p* *mp*

10 *p* *mp*

15 *molto rall.* *p* *mf* *with movement*

19 *with movement*

23 *poco rit.* *f* *with movement*

26 *mp*

29 *mf*

32.5 *rit.* *p* *poco accel.* *mf* *molto rall.* *p*

\* Use a flexible rubato to bring out the emotional nuances in the music. Vibrato is encouraged throughout, if you so dare.



# Snap and Pivot

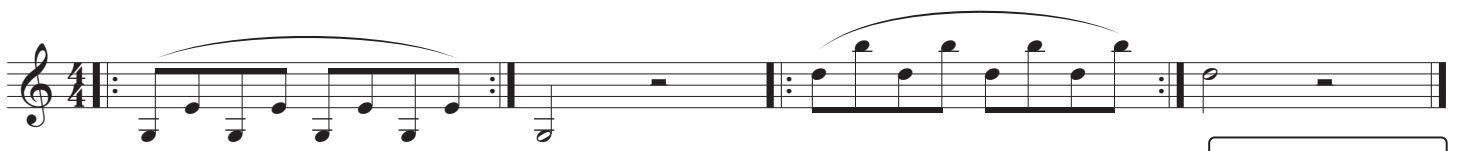
To Wendy Benford

See Appendix C for jazz tips and a "clean" copy (no slurs, etc).

Quick Swing - with a confident attitude  $\text{♩} = \text{♩}^3$

In the style and character of the original "Sing, Sing, Sing" by Louis Prima. Quick and light (à la Benny Goodman).





# Rockhoppers

To Mark J. Cramer

See p. 68 for  
low C version!

Waltz - with a quirky waddle (in 1)

8 *f* *p* *mf*

16 *f* *p* *mf*

23 *mp* *mf*

30 *f* *p*

37 *mf* *f* *p*

45 *mf* *p* smoothly

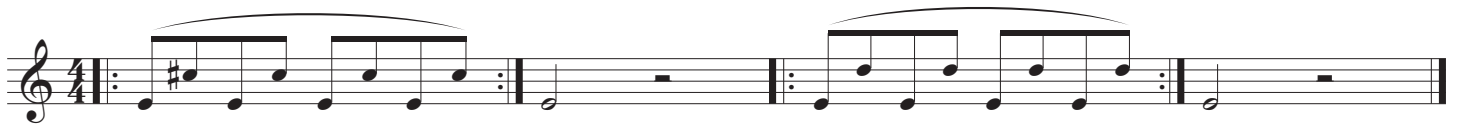
54 *mf* *p*

65 *f* *p* *f*

73 *mp* *f* *mp* *sfz* *mp*

Aim for clear dynamic contrasts and snappy grace notes.

Grace notes in the "smoothly" section are to be played gently.



# Thumbelina

To Mary Alice Druhan

See p. 83 for  
low C version!

Quickly dancing - with a sense of ease (♩ = approx 160)

5 *f* *dim. poco a poco* \* *p* *mf*

9 *p* *mf*

13 L-----L *mf*

16 *f* *mp*

20 *f*

24 *p*

29 *f*

35 *mp* *p*

39 *f* *mp* *f*

Show a clear difference between staccato and tenuto notes.  
This étude also trains your thumb to be alert and agile.

\* *Dim. poco a poco* gradually through all four measures.

# Rockhoppers

Low C Version

Waltz - with a quirky waddle (in 1)

The musical score for 'Rockhoppers' is written in 1/2 time and consists of ten staves of music. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The piece is characterized by a 'quirky waddle' feel. The dynamics and articulation are as follows:

- Staff 1: *f*, *p*, *mf*
- Staff 2: *f*, *p*, *mf*
- Staff 3: *mp*
- Staff 4: *mf*
- Staff 5: *f*, *p*
- Staff 6: *mf*, *f*, *p*
- Staff 7: *mf*, *p*
- Staff 8: *mf*, *p*
- Staff 9: *f*
- Staff 10: *mp*, *f*, *mp*, *sfz*

Articulation includes slurs, accents, and a 'smoothly' marking on the 45th measure. The score concludes with a final *mp* dynamic.

## Praise for Prep Steps

"Wonderful book - a much-needed addition to clarinet study repertoire."

**–Larry Guy: Noted Performer - Author - Educator**

"Musical and thoughtful patterns that can be used in so many ways. I am delighted to see it come to print and hope to use it with my students for a long time to come."

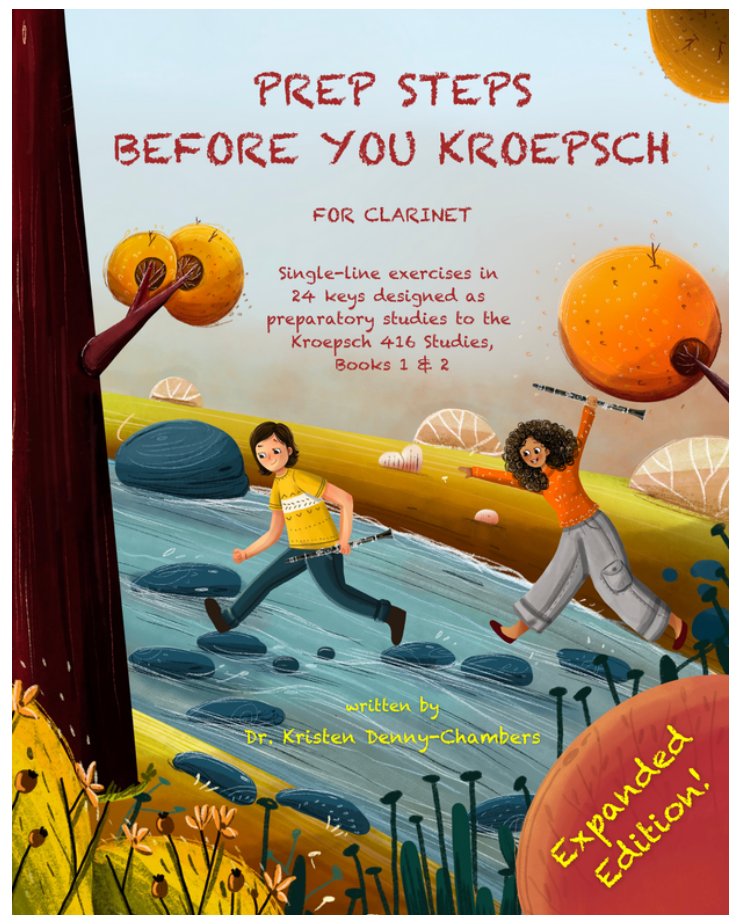
**–Daniel Silver: Professor of Clarinet, CU-Boulder**

"An invaluable opportunity for students not yet ready for Kroepsch to still benefit from the approach of short, melodic exercises that encourage practicing scales musically."

**–David Carter: Principal Clarinet, Tulsa Symphony  
Applied Assistant Professor of Music, University of Tulsa**

"What I love about these exercises is that they progress down each page from simple scales to evil brain - and finger - twisters. They are fun as prep studies, but they're also fun as musical puzzles in their own right. (Frankly, I like these better than the Kroepsch they're meant to prepare students for, but if you tell anyone I said that, I'll deny it)."

**–Michael Lowenstern: Bass Clarinet Specialist, Earspasm**



**240 STUDIES: 10 IN EACH MAJOR/MINOR KEY**

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### The Problem?

Kroepsch Studies can be overwhelming!

### The Solution?

Bite-sized Kroepsch-like studies!

**With *Prep Steps Before You Kroepsch*, each exercise is only ONE line long.** While there are still plenty of challenges in each line, developing players can celebrate progress and success while preventing the feeling of overwhelm one might experience with the longer studies of the original Kroepsch. After working through this book, players will be prepared to dive into the *Kroepsch 416 Studies* - Books 1 & 2.

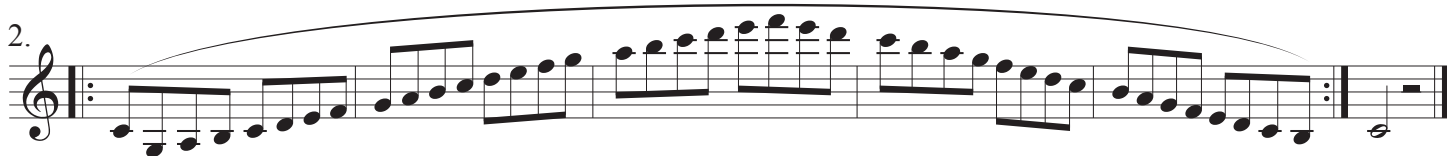
The newly expanded edition (2022) includes two additional studies for each key, increasing each page from the original 8 to now 10 studies. I am very thankful for the friends and colleagues who provided feedback from earlier editions which inspired this more comprehensive edition.

Well-suited for advancing pre-college students, progressing undergraduate students, and devoted clarinet enthusiasts, *Prep Steps Before You Kroepsch* is sure to technically challenge, musically satisfy, and fully prepare those who aspire to master the *Kroepsch 416 Studies*.

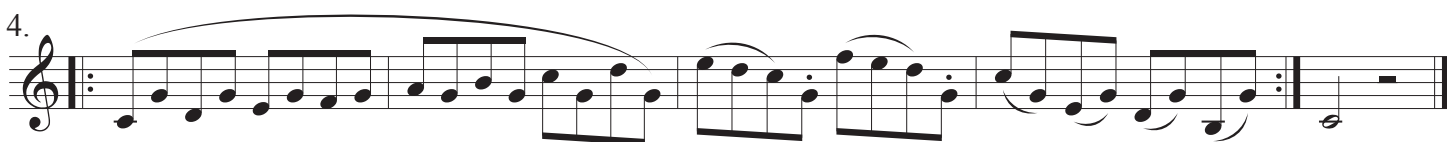
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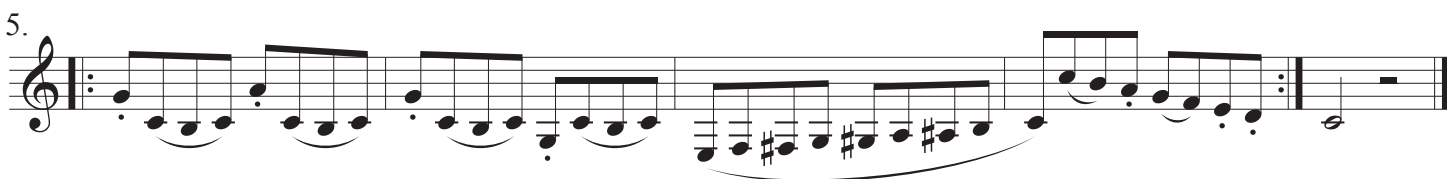
# C Major

1. 

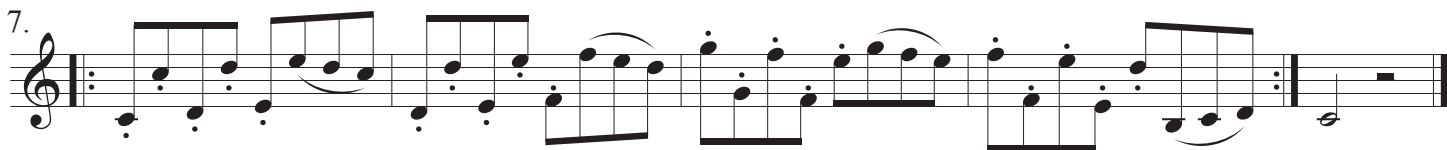
2. 

3. 

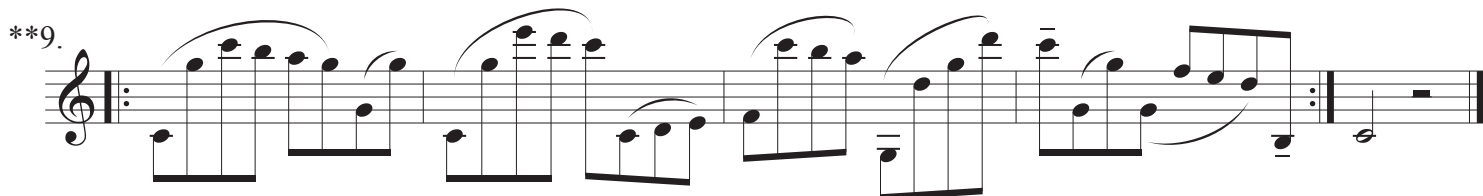
4. 

5. 

6. 

7. 

\*8. 


\*\*9. 


10. 


\* All number 8's are meant for speedy articulation work.  
Start slowly then push the tempo.

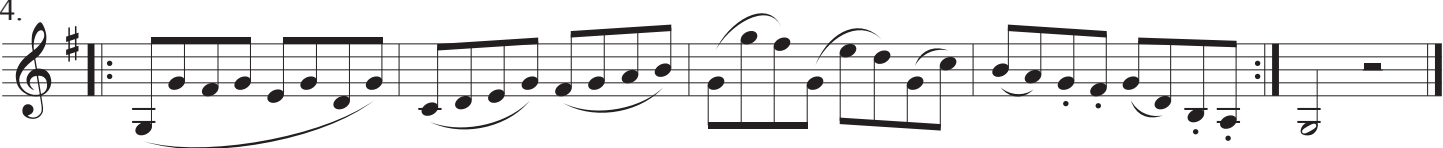
\*\* All number 9's are meant to be played slowly so  
you can focus on making beautiful connections.

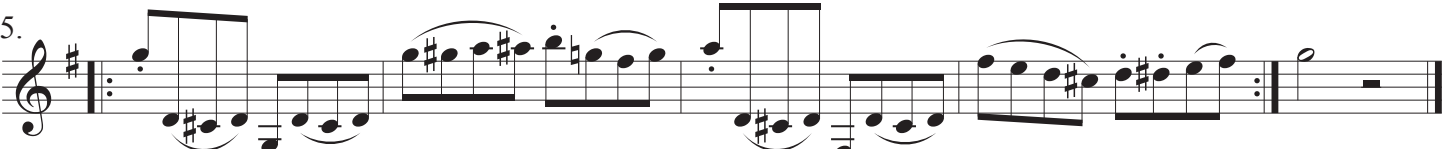
# G Major


1. 


2. 


3. 


4. 


5. 

6. 

7. 

8. 

9. 

10. 

## BOOK REVIEWS

### **FINGER FITNESS FOUNDATIONS, THE CLARINET, MARCH 2024: Vanessa Davis**

Composed by Dr. Kristen Denny-Chambers, Finger Fitness Foundations are based on the "68 Exercises in Mechanism" from the Klosé Celebrated Method, and can serve as a stepping stone to Finger Fitness Études, Books 1 and 2 (reviewed previously). Undoubtedly many of us are familiar with Klosé's "Mechanisms," as well as how difficult it can be to get our students of all ages to practice and to value the skills they develop. In writing these études, Denny-Chambers has provided us with a creative and fresh avenue to work on these skills with our students. The introductory material provides valuable information about the études, including a dedication to one of Denny-Chambers' own students, and acknowledgements of the many clarinetists that helped her edit the book (Primary editor: **Paula Corley**). In the introduction, Denny-Chambers clearly outlines the organization of the book. At the top of each étude, she has included the Klosé exercise that inspired it. She also gives a brief explanation in clear and concise language of the learning opportunities provided in the études and how best to take advantage of them. The études are organized into three sections, each addressing a third of the Klosé "Mechanisms." The études in this book are short, but by no means boring. There are clear melodies that allow students to explore style and phrasing while improving their technique. The gradually increasing difficulty of the mechanisms is mirrored in each étude, making it easy to spot the range of the étude and any possible technical issues (like new notes or fingerings) immediately. As the difficulty of the mechanisms increase, so does the difficulty of each étude. The depth and level of study can be adjusted based on the individual level of the student, making this a great resource for students of many levels, not just younger ones. Though this is the case with many well-known études, this volume is definitely appropriate for younger students. Various keys (only C Major and F Major) are used but these études could easily be used as a transposition exercise for more advanced students. Often études that younger students play are written in simple time. Denny-Chambers uses compound time in many of the études, providing an opportunity for students to ease into learning those time signatures while helping older and more experienced players practice subdividing evenly. The appendix of the études contains all the specific mechanisms collected in one location for ease of reference.

### **FINGER FITNESS ÉTUDES, BOOK 1, THE CLARINET, MARCH 2021: Gregory Barrett**

You probably already know Kristen Denny-Chambers' clever and pedagogically sound major and minor key-centric approach to developing technical ease, *Prep Steps Before You Kroepsch*. Her latest book, *Finger Fitness Études*, complements that mission with finesse. The inviting cover art reflects Denny-Chambers' passionate and fun teaching philosophy, also expressed through her "Clarinet Playground" website. With feedback from many students and professionals, including bass clarinet-specific ideas from **Anne Watson** and guiding musical suggestions from L.A. legend **Michele Zukovsky**, Denny-Chambers has composed études that are a unique contribution for developing clarinetists and bass clarinetists. Here's the recipe: take the dry one-bar mechanism studies from either Baermann or Klosé, pour a little cream from Jeanjean's *Vade-Mecum* over the top so as to progress tone by tone from low to high, and add a bit of zany comic-book-meets-*Fantasia* style to ensure you are satisfyingly full at the end of the meal. Each of the 48 pages of études is headed with the two-note combinations that are the focus of the étude on that page; the student repeats the intervals as many times as desired. Once the player has familiarity with the targeted intervals, off they launch into Denny-Chambers' étude. The player is cajoled by her engaging score indications: "Flying - with ease and momentum," "Moderato - with Latin flair," "Mysteriously - in slow 2, with a smooth and sultry character." You get the idea - this book is about all the dimensions of a life in music. The first 16 studies focus on half steps, moving only one finger at a time. The second 22 are harder, requiring perfection of the motion of two or more fingers. The third section (10 études) is for bass clarinet and reworks pieces from the first two sections but with changes to incorporate low Eb in the first two studies and then down to low C in the concluding eight. It's hard to assign a difficulty level to this collection. Everyone needs to refine their finger motion, right? The note range is modest and most of the movement is scalar or by small leaps, but the large number of cut time pieces and 3/4 pieces in one requires a player with at least a couple years of experience. Add syncopated rhythms, lots of markings in the score, and direct or oblique references to the standard literature (Copland *Concerto* for example) and you have an appetizing feast for even an undergraduate who would like to refine their finger work. (All 38 études recorded in MP3 format by **Kristen Denny-Chambers**).



### **FINGER FITNESS ÉTUDES, BOOK 2, THE CLARINET, MARCH 2022: Gregory Barrett**

If you have been loving Kristen Denny-Chambers' *Finger Fitness Études* Book 1 (reviewed in Vol. 48, No. 2, March 2021), you will be glad to know that her Book 2 is now available. Where Book 1 focused on small intervals of minor and major 2nds and a few minor 3rds, Book 2 lets the player have a fun and joyous experience with major 3rds, 4ths, 5ths and minor 6ths all wrapped up in catchy tunes and rhythms. These one-page études will challenge a player in their third to fifth year of study with rhythmic variety, modulation to a closely related key in the middle of each étude, and expressive use of chromatic variants. More experienced players will also grow from the focused practice of important fingering combinations. The beauty and craftsmanship of these lavish musical poems will perhaps be most appreciated by someone, such as this reviewer, in their 50th year of playing! As in Book 1, about half of the études (18) are given in a second version for bass clarinet, mostly for a low C instrument. **Anne Watson** made the modifications, and she is just one of the many in Denny-Chambers' growing community. **Andrew Simon** was the primary editor and consultant for Book 2, and **Trevor Stewart** has recorded all 40 études in MP3 format - see the [clarinetplayground.com](http://clarinetplayground.com) website. Book 2 has even more jazz-inspired études than Book 1, and thanks to Tom Puwalski's influence, there is a two-page klezmer piece. Jazz and klezmer tips are included in the appendices along with the "finger drill" combinations that are the organizing principle behind this 78-page triumph. Highly recommended.

### **FINGER FITNESS ÉTUDES, BOOK 3, THE CLARINET, MARCH 2024: Vanessa Davis**

As in *Finger Fitness Foundations*, Denny-Chambers provides useful information in the "First Things First" introductory section of the *Finger Fitness Études*, Book 3 as well. She clearly states that it is intended to be used in a flexible way; this is the spirit in which these wonderful études were composed. The book is organized in three parts; études from the first two parts can be played on any clarinet whereas all études in part three are specifically devoted to instruments with a range down to low C, making this inclusive for low clarinets. More interesting is that études in this section are reimagined versions for low clarinets of études from parts 1 and 2, rather than something entirely different, making this a useful classroom resource for a mixed group of soprano and low clarinets. At the beginning of each étude there are "drills" she suggests the player work on prior to approaching the étude, recalling the Klosé mechanisms that were used in *Finger Fitness Foundations*. The études have clear expressive terms and are significantly more advanced than *Finger Fitness Foundations*; they progressively follow *Finger Fitness Études*, Books 1 and 2. Not only does the technique require additional work, but the added length and musical elements make these études perfect to work on with more advanced high school students and even young college players. Rubato, cadenzas, and other more advanced musical concepts are addressed. Very exciting is the inclusion of études that can be played with electronics and extended techniques. The appendix contains the mechanism drills that inspired each étude, as well as suggestions for approaching the klezmer effects required in the étude dedicated to Michele Gingras. All of the *Finger Fitness* books are excellent resources that every clarinetist and clarinet teacher should consider adding to their musical library, and the *Foundations* and Book 3 are no exception. The variety of styles and melodies in Book 3, combined with the thoughtful inclusion of specific challenging techniques into performance-worthy music, make it a unique resource in our field that I cannot recommend more highly. (Primary editor: **Trevor Stewart**. Low Clarinet editor: **Anne Watson**. All 45 études recorded in MP3 format by **Chris Mothersole**).

### **PREP STEPS BEFORE YOU KROEPSCH, THE CLARINET, MARCH 2018: Gregory Barrett**

Denny-Chambers has composed four-measure exercises notated in eighth notes to bridge the gap between beginner method exercises and the difficult Kroepsch *Studies*. Each of the book's 24 pages is devoted to one key with eight exercises per page (*now 10 in the expanded edition*). The first is an extended range scale - though nothing in the book exceeds altissimo F (*range goes up to altissimo G in the expanded edition*) - and the last three focus respectively on articulation, large intervals, and rapid fluid playing. Combinations of scales, arpeggios, and common melodic and accompaniment patterns are used with great variety in the others. Highly recommended.