

Backun Alternate Fingerings

Volume 2, Upper Register



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Introduction

The purpose of this booklet is to maintain our collective curiosity about the myriad of ways to be expressive with the clarinet. There have been many books on fingerings printed in the past. Hopefully, there will be many more in the future. However, if you are able to find even one of these fingerings useful, the mission of this booklet will be accomplished. More than anything, we would like to encourage you to use your imagination to further expand on the information given. There are several pages in the back of this booklet with blank fingering diagrams for you to record your own alternate fingerings, or to share with your colleagues. It should also be noted that some fingerings may vary in effectiveness, depending on the brand of instrument and mouthpiece played, and ultimately, on the ability and sensitivity of you, the artist.

How to Use This Booklet

The highlighted tone holes are those that need to be covered. Please keep in mind that, at times, alternate fingerings will call for semi-closed tone holes. The highlighted keys are the ones that need to be actuated.

It is very important to understand that while having alternate fingerings is useful, they are only as useful as one's level of musicianship and sensitivity enables them to be. This is a guide to encourage critical musical thinking and, as such, it should remind us to think of the clarinet as a tool of expression

About Upper Register Fingerings

Some of these fingerings might be familiar to you, but we invite you to rethink the musical context in which they are used. There are several examples where the intonation is accurate in different fingerings for the same note, however the tone color and technical facility to reach them will help determine which one will work best in your particular musical situation. Embouchure, voicing and equipment used will also help determine which fingerings will be the most accurate, reliable, and useful as you work toward perfecting your craft. Go confidently and take risks; it is the only way to know what you are truly capable of.

CG Carbon™

The future and beyond

The world's most technologically advanced clarinet, the CG Carbon features a body crafted from carbon fibre with an exotic wood core. Using a patent pending process, carbon fibre is fused to the precision machined core, resulting in a clarinet with the robust projection and unmatched intonation that Backun is known for. Years of material analysis and real-world testing have proven the fusion process can endure wide-ranging temperatures and humidity conditions without expansion or contraction of the clarinet body. Tonally, the playing characteristics stay true to that of a wooden clarinet with the new Backun Scale. This signature model, designed for Maestro Corrado Giuffredi, represents a giant leap into the future... and beyond.

Available in B♭ and A, unstained grenadilla or cocobolo body with gold or silver keywork.



Fingerings for High C

1. Dark in color and focused in quality, its resistance makes it quite stable for soft passages.

Example: Beethoven, *Symphony No. 4 in B♭ Major*, Op. 60, Second Mvt. - Solo up to Rehearsal F, m3

Mussorgsky, *Night on Bald Mountain*, Solo

Saint-Saëns, *Clarinet Sonata*, Op. 167, First Mvt. - Three measures before the end

Mozart, *Trio in E♭ Major*, K. 498, Second and Third Mvts.

Weber, *Clarinet Concerto No. 1 in F Minor*, Op. 73, First Mvt. - m52

2. While more resistant, this fingering offers nice tone and is excellent for the B♭/C trill.

3. Good in soft passages and very useful when slurring to the altissimo. Tends to lower the pitch, so it may not be as useful on modern instruments that have corrected the sharp A, B and C problem that is prevalent in older models.

Example: Brahms, *Clarinet Trio*, Op. 114, Second Mvt. - First note

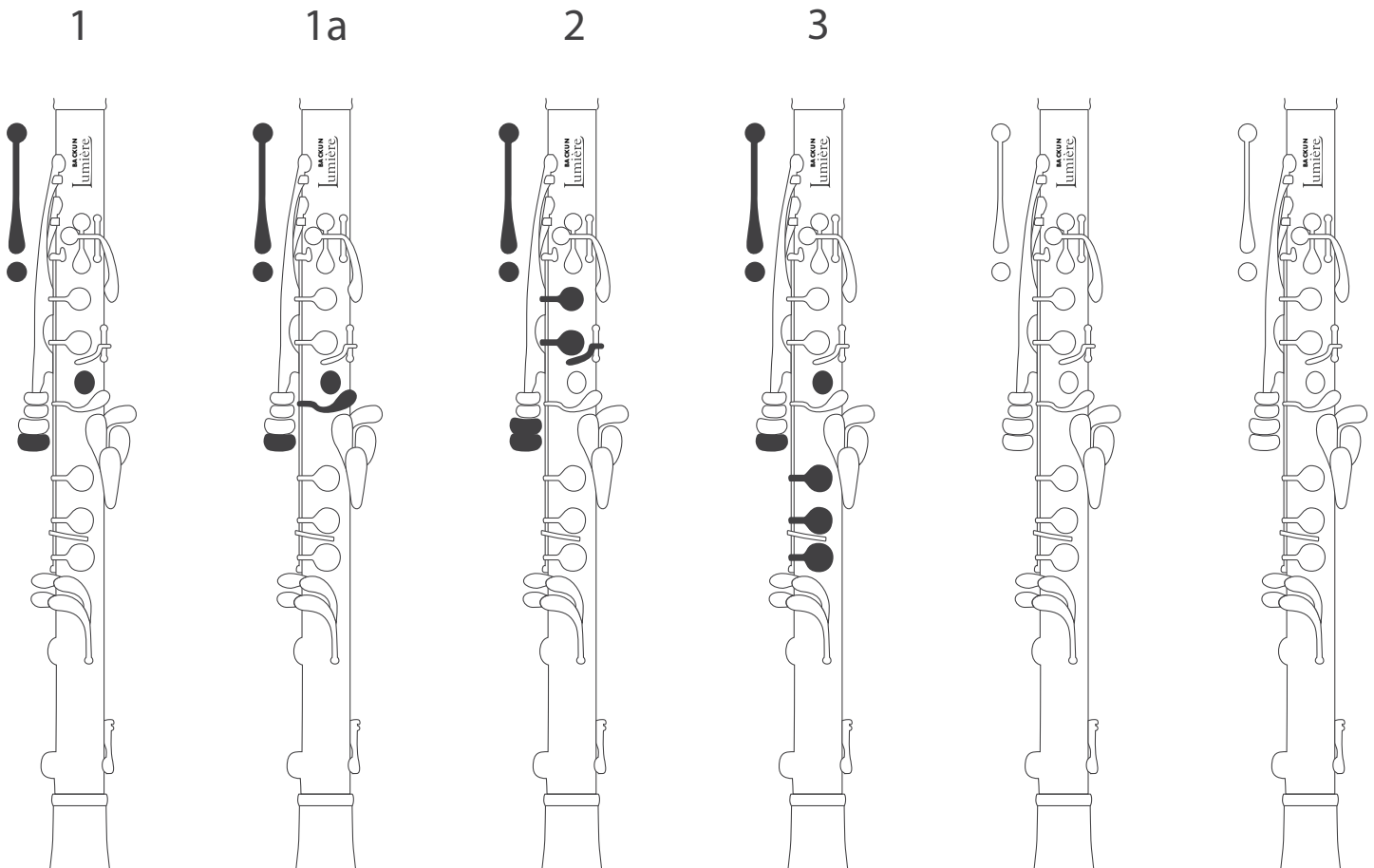
Brahms, *Symphony No. 3 in F Major*, Op. 90, First Mvt. -

Three measures after Rehearsal C

Weber, *Clarinet Quintet*, Op. 34, First Mvt. - First note

Debussy, *Première Rhapsodie* - m44

1a. Similar to Fingering 1, but with higher intonation.



Fingerings for High C#



1. Chromatic C# works well when slurring back to the clarion register, though it tends to be a bit sharp.
 - 1a. This fingering is darker and lower in pitch.
 - 1b. Its intonation lies between Fingering 1 and 1a. In general, the use of this fingering will depend on the player's voicing, reed softness and overall intonation of the instrument.

Example: Beethoven, *Symphony No. 4 in B♭ Major*, Op. 60, Second Mvt. - Two measures after Rehearsal F

Debussy, *Première Rhapsodie* - m44, five measures after Rehearsal 3

2. Often called the "Backless" series because it vents the thumb. This fingering is dark and stable in slurs and pitch.

Example: Brahms, *Symphony No. 1 in C Minor*, Op. 68, Second Mvt. - m86

Brahms, *Symphony No. 3 in F Major*, Op. 90, First Mvt. - One measure after Rehearsal C

3. Bright and a bit flat, it works mostly for fast passages with trills.

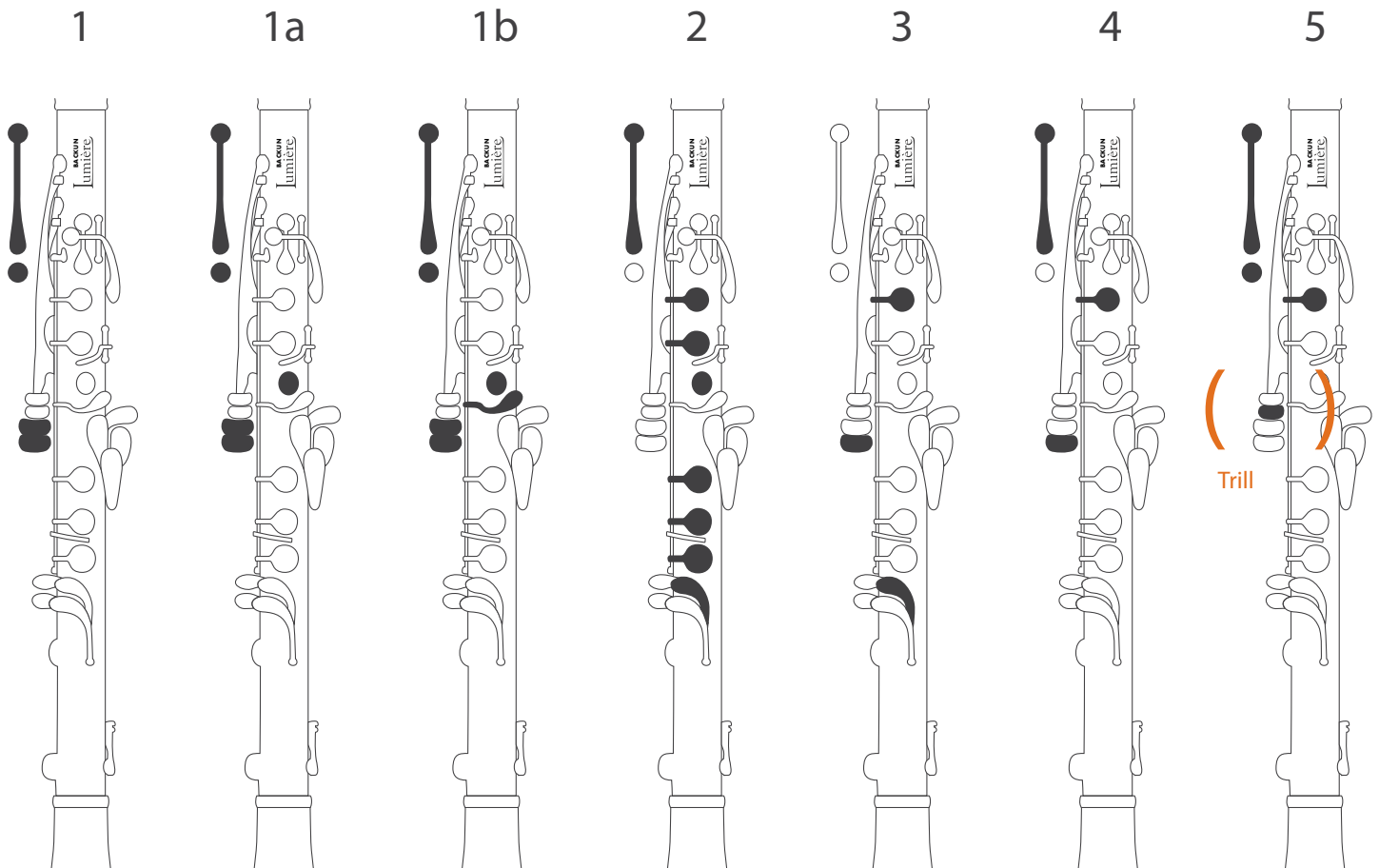
Example: Bartok, *The Miraculous Mandarin* - Rehearsal 24

4. Dark and well in-tune, this fingering is useful in slow, soft passages.

Example: Shostakovich, *Symphony No. 9 in E♭ Major*, Op. 70, Second Mvt. - m4 (if transposed to B♭ clarinet)

5. Used for fast trills, this is the standard B/C# trill fingering and is higher in pitch than the usual fingering.

Example: Stravinsky, *3 Pieces for Clarinet Solo*, Third Mvt. - m8





Lumière™

The evolution of Backun

The Lumière takes the clarinet to a level of breathtaking clarity and focus from the highest altissimo down through the low register. Less is more, as the Lumière flaunts European flair with uncompromising intonation and fluidity. Completely redesigned from the bell up, and the first clarinet to feature the new Backun Scale, this custom clarinet is a perfect match for those who desire the highest quality playing experience in a more traditional French-style instrument.

Available in B♭ and A, unstained grenadilla or cocobolo body with gold or silver keywork, or silver keys with gold posts.



Fingerings for High D

1. Standard D tends to be bright and sometimes sharp. It is better when half-holing the first tone hole.

1a. More stable and darker than Fingering 1. Its added resistance makes it much better for slurs from the clarion register.

Example: Beethoven, *Symphony No. 8 in F Major*, Op. 93 Second Mvt. - Trio
 Mozart, *Serenade No. 10 for Winds in B♭ Major*, K. 361/370a, "Gran Partita," Second Mvt. - Trio
 Mozart, *Clarinet Concerto in A Major*, K. 622 - Second Mvt.

2. Often called "Backless D," it is a much warmer, stable fingering than the standard and is very useful in slurs from the clarion register.

Example: Bassi, *Concert Fantasia on Motives from 'Rigoletto'*, Cadenza - m12

Continued from 2. in the previous column.

Example: Brahms, *Clarinet Quintet in B Minor*, Op. 115, First Mvt. - m10
 Brahms, *Symphony No. 3 in F Major*, Op. 90, First Mvt. - m45, one measure after Rehearsal C
 Weber, *Gran Duo Concertant*, Op. 48, Second Mvt. - m6

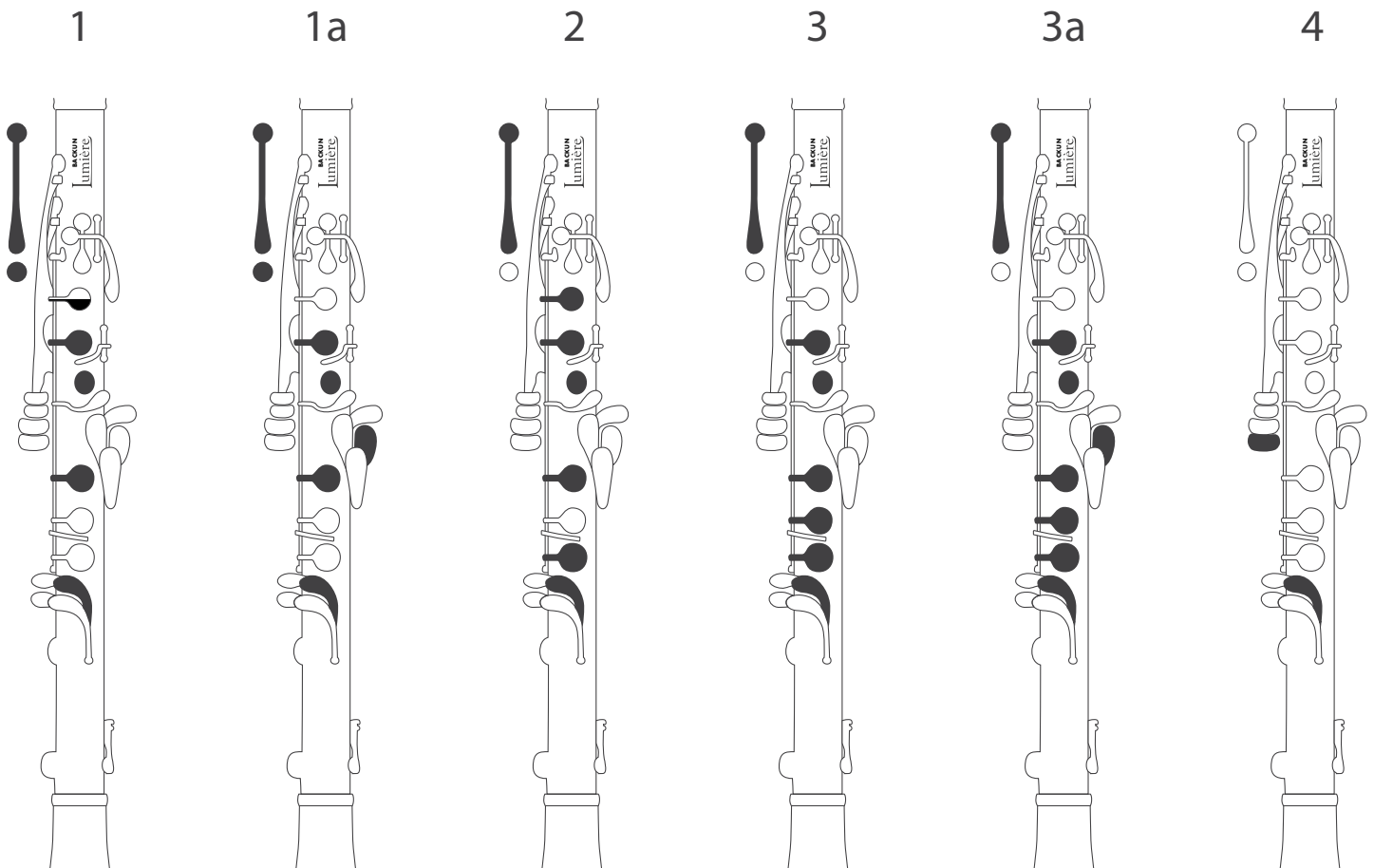
3. Similar to Fingering 2 in color, but a bit sharper.

3a. Brings the pitch down slightly.

Example: Copland, *Clarinet Concerto* - m12

4. The "Overblown D," useful mainly in fast passages where pitch is not critical. Tends to be flat and bright.

Example: Nielsen, *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra*, Op. 57 [D.F.129] - Seven measures after Rehearsal 2



Fingerings for High D (cont.)



5. Used mostly for trills, this fingering tends to be flat and dull.

5a. Can be used in soft scale work.

Example: Mozart, *Clarinet Concerto in A Major*, K. 622 - m183

6. The better in-tune trill for C-D.

7. A dark fingering, it works well in soft dynamics.

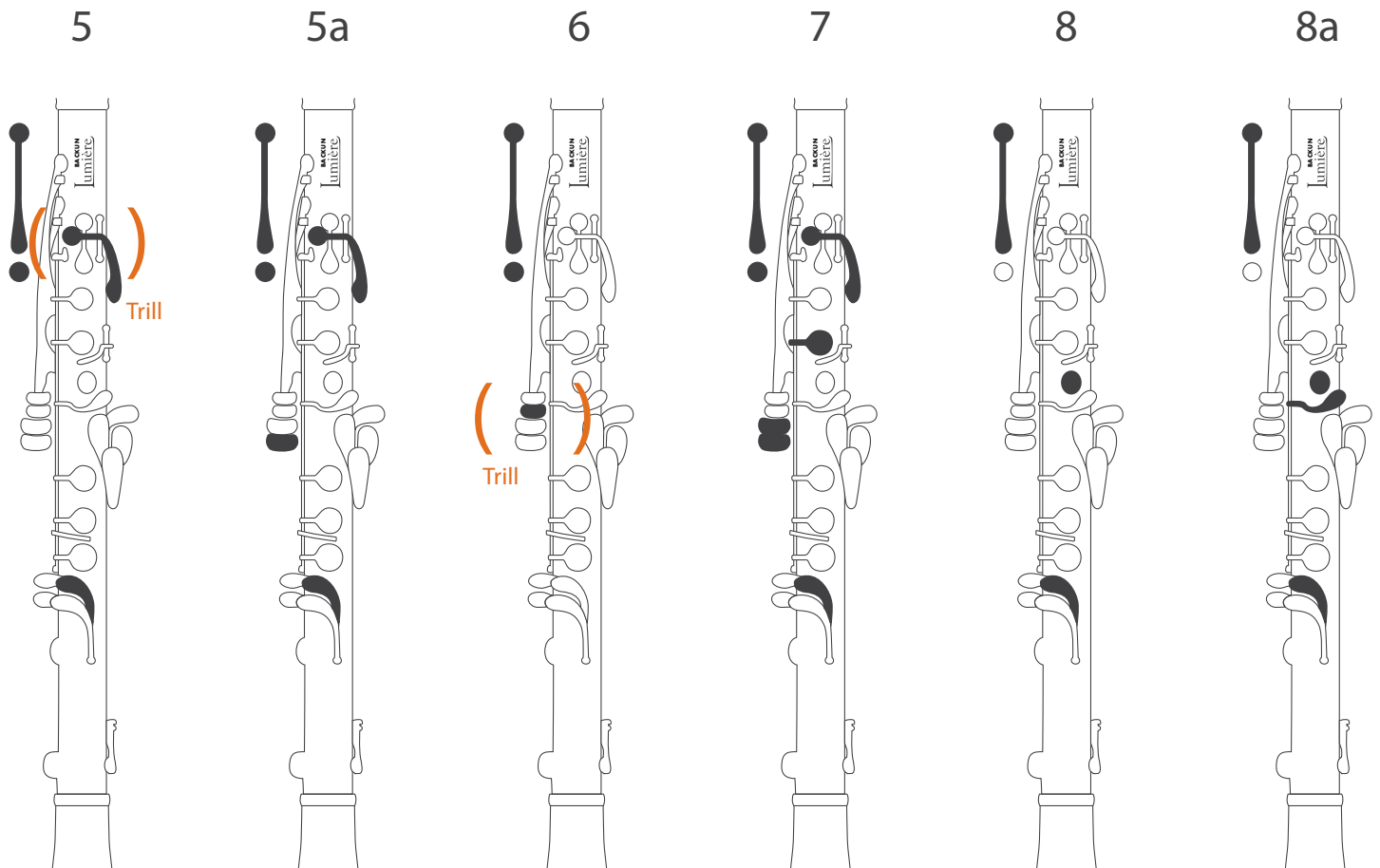
Example: Rachmaninoff, *Symphony No. 2 in E Minor*, Op. 27, Third Mvt. - Six measures after Rehearsal 46

8. Warm and responsive in softer dynamics.

Example: Mozart, *Serenade No. 10 for Winds in B \flat Major*, K. 361/370a, "Gran Partita," Second Mvt. - m17

Shostakovich, *Symphony No. 9 in E \flat Major*, Op. 70, Second Mvt. - m4

8a. This offers the same round, smooth fingering, but is a little higher in pitch. The examples above are still relevant, depending on your voicing.





Q Series™

Classic feel and playability

The Q Series clarinet offers those who prefer a more traditional French-style instrument the chance to experience the world of Backun. We combine modern manufacturing techniques and treatments, including a carbon fibre middle joint ring, with naturally unstained grenadilla wood and brilliant silver-plated keywork to produce an instrument with truly familiar feel and playability. An affordable masterpiece, the Q Series is the classic choice.

Available in B \flat and A, unstained grenadilla body, silver keywork.



Fingerings for High D#



1. The standard fingering, this is responsive but tends to be bright. Half-holing the first fingering rounds it somewhat and improves slurs from the clarion.

1a. Adding the F#/C# rounds the tone and adds a little bit of resistance that allows one to play with more abandon. It also helps when used in combination with other fingerings.

Example: Beethoven, *Symphony No. 8 in F Major*, Op. 93, Third Mvt., Trio - m62

Mozart, *Clarinet Concerto in A Major*, K. 622, Third Mvt. - m48

2. This fingering is used mainly as a tremolo between C/E \flat , especially without the side B \flat key. However, it is responsive in softer dynamics.

Example: Debussy, *Première Rhapsodie* - Two measures after Rehearsal 2

Brahms, *Symphony No. 3 in F Major*, Op. 90, First Mvt. - m26, four measures after B

3. My preferred “Backless E \flat .” It slurs well, has a focused yet dark quality, and is very in-tune.

Example: Brahms, *Clarinet Sonata No. 1*, Op. 120, No. 1, First Mvt. - m8

Copland, *Clarinet Concerto* - m104

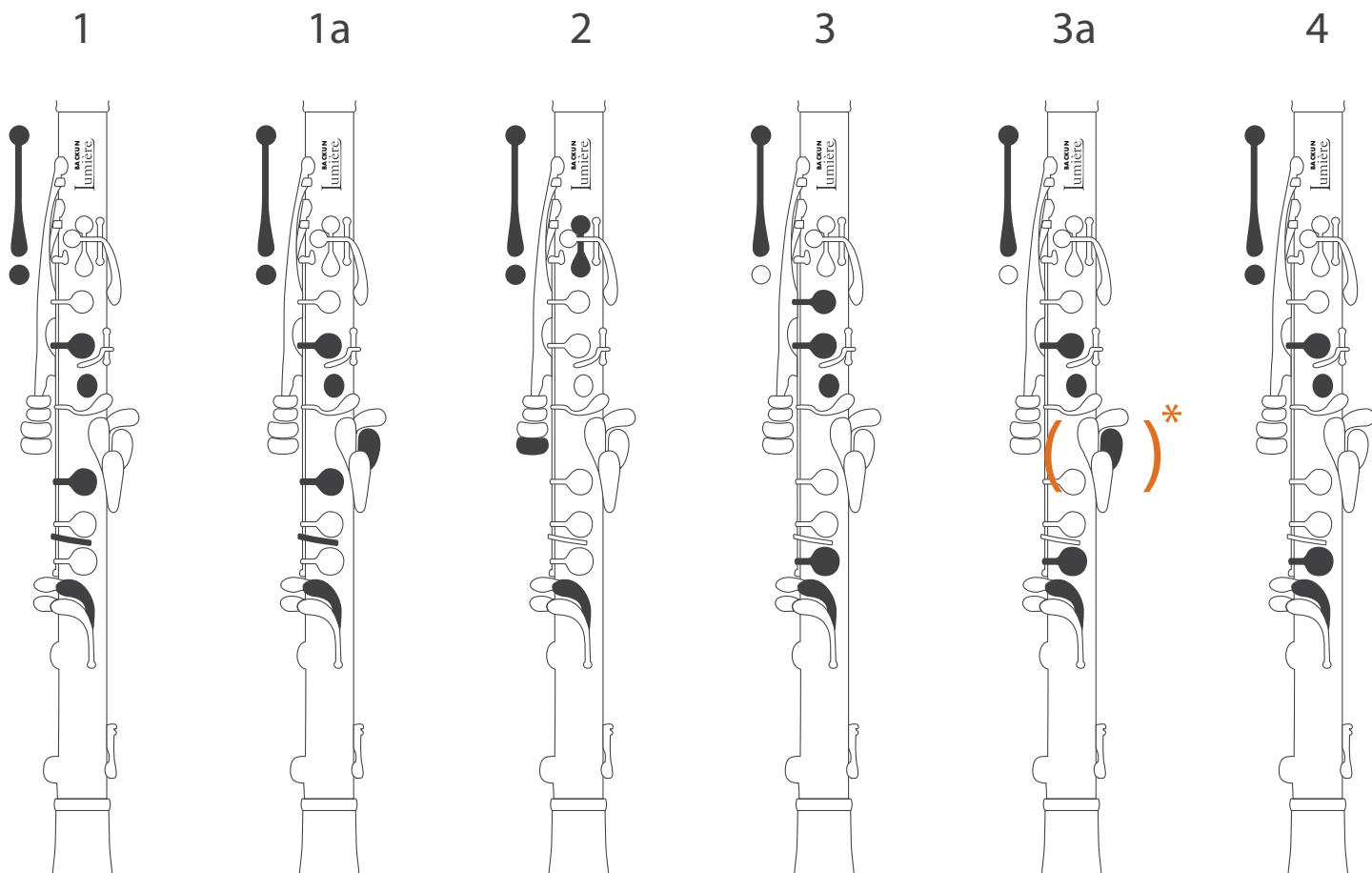
Debussy, *Première Rhapsodie* - m22 (two measures after Rehearsal 2), mm 41 (two measures after Rehearsal 3), m158

3a. A variation on Fingering 4, but higher in pitch while retaining the focus, warmth and ease for slurs. *Adding the left-hand F#/C# lowers the pitch.

Example: Debussy, *Première Rhapsodie* - m160, m204, 2nd E \flat in m204

4. Dark and full, but tends to be a little flat and resistant. It works well for leaps in passages, but not for sustained work.

Example: Brahms, *Symphony No. 3 in F Major*, Op. 90, First Mvt. - m26, four measures after B



Fingerings for High D# (cont.)



5. Very well in-tune and helpful for slurring down to the clarinet register in soft dynamics.

Example: Debussy, *Première Rhapsodie* - Two measures after Rehearsal 3

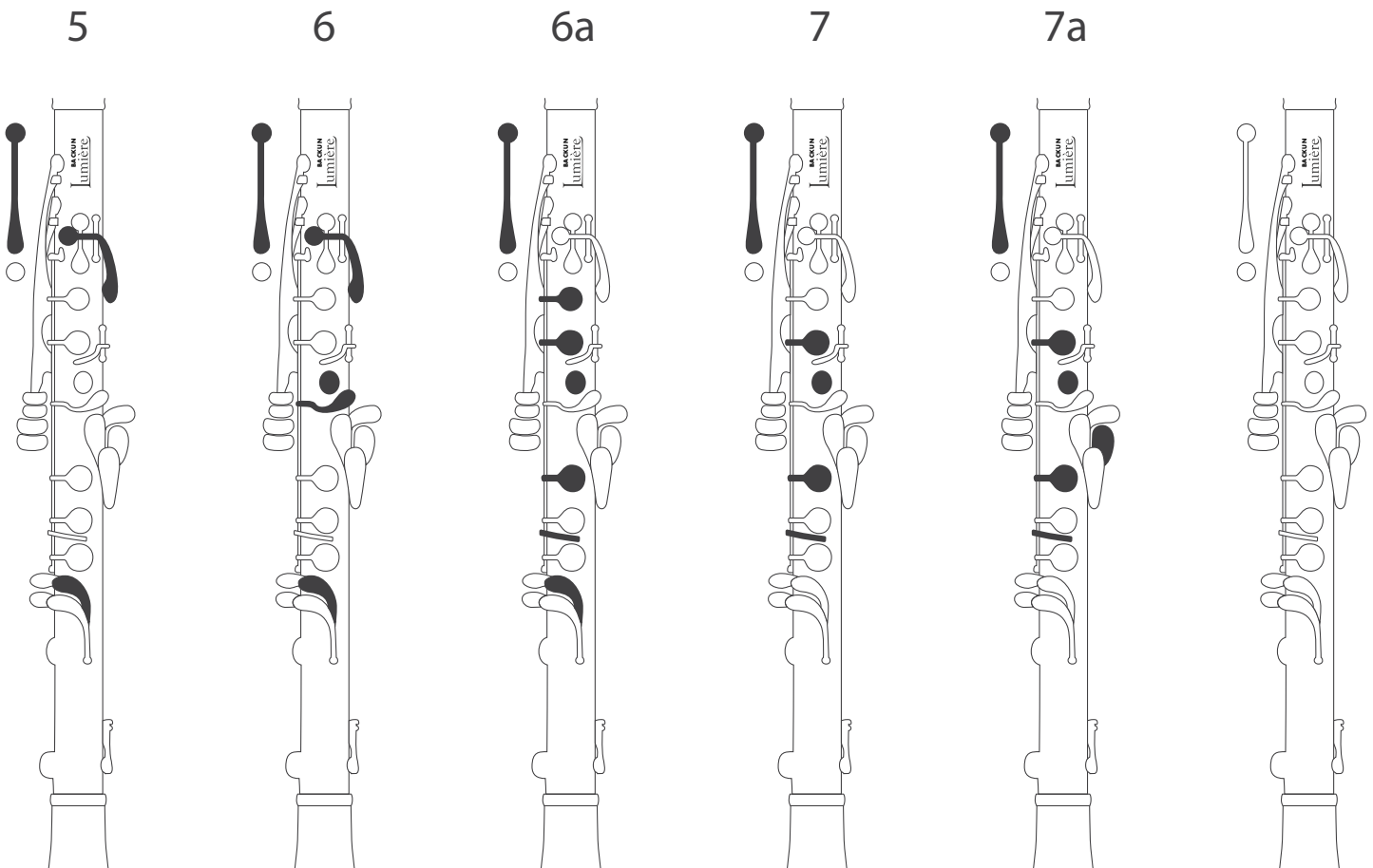
6. Depending on the opening of the Throat G# key, the register key and the player's voicing, the third finger and C# key may be added for pitch and color stability.

6a. This fingering and its application are similar to Fingering 4a, but with a slightly freer response and a more pointed, brighter tone.

7. This is higher in pitch than Fingering 6a and is better for louder dynamics where you can relax the embouchure.

Example: Debussy, *Première Rhapsodie* - Last note

7a. Slightly lower and darker in pitch than Fingering 7.





Alpha™

March to your own beat

The Alpha Clarinet is crafted from an ideal blend of synthetic materials for maximum resonance and durability. Designed to be the optimal indoor and outdoor student clarinet, it is at home in the classroom, on the concert stage, or on the marching field. Professionals and students alike count on the Alpha for performances where a wooden instrument might not be appropriate, thanks to its exceptionally light body, durable keywork and weather-resistant build that ensures years of lasting playability.

Available in B \flat , proprietary synthetic body, silver or nickel keywork.



Fingerings for High E



1. This is similar to the standard fingering, but is darker. When half-holed, it slurs better from the lower register and is more secure.
- 1a. This is a very slight variation on the standard fingering for E, but the F#/C# key addition makes a big difference in warming up the color and easing slurs from the clarion register. It also adds stability in louder dynamic uses of the E to avoid the upper partial A.

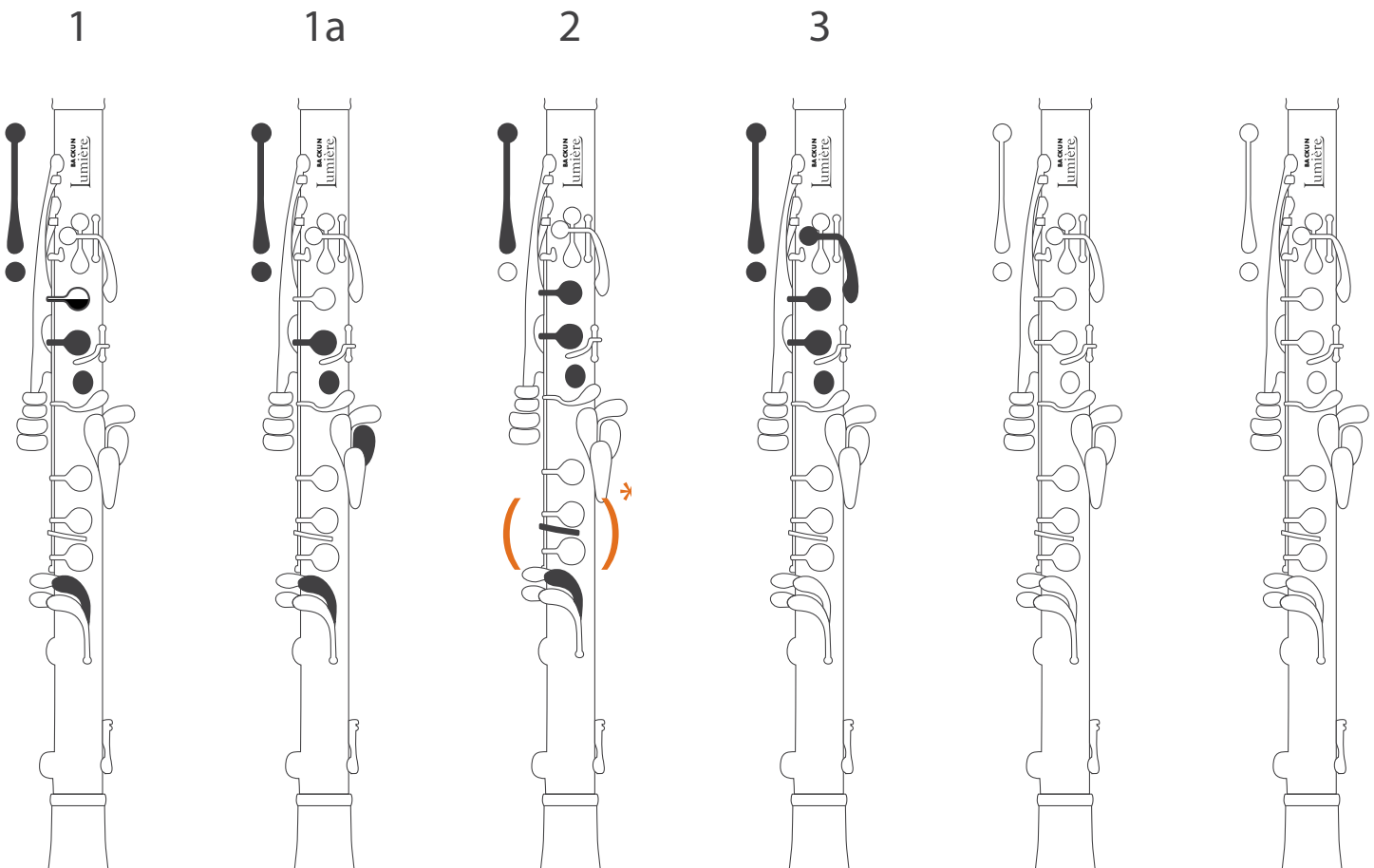
Example: Strauss, *Der Rosenkavalier*, Op. 59, Act 1 - Waltz Solo
 Strauss, *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*, Op. 28 - Six measures after Rehearsal 8
 Strauss, *Don Juan*, Op. 20 - m282

2. The "Backless E" is dark in color and excellent for slurs, but is a bit flat. Works best in quiet slurs to/from the clarion. *It can be made sharper with the sliver key, but doing so makes it much brighter in color.

Example: Strauss, *Don Quixote*, Op. 35 - Final E Minor arpeggio at the end

3. This fingering is stable for leaps, tends to be well in-tune and bright in color.

Example: Schubert, *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen*, D. 965, *Allegretto* - m6, m224, m348



Fingerings for High F

1. The standard F is usually a bit flat and needs some additional venting to improve its response and intonation (see 1a).
- 1a. Slurs well, especially when using the half-hole. This should be the standard F fingering.

Example: Weber, *Clarinet Concerto No. 2 in E♭ Major*, Op. 74 -
 First solo note
 Debussy, *Première Rhapsodie* - m26 and m77
 Pierné, *Canzonetta* - Last note

2. The “Covered F.” It is used mostly in fast, articulated work. It is not very reliable for legato and tends to be sharp.

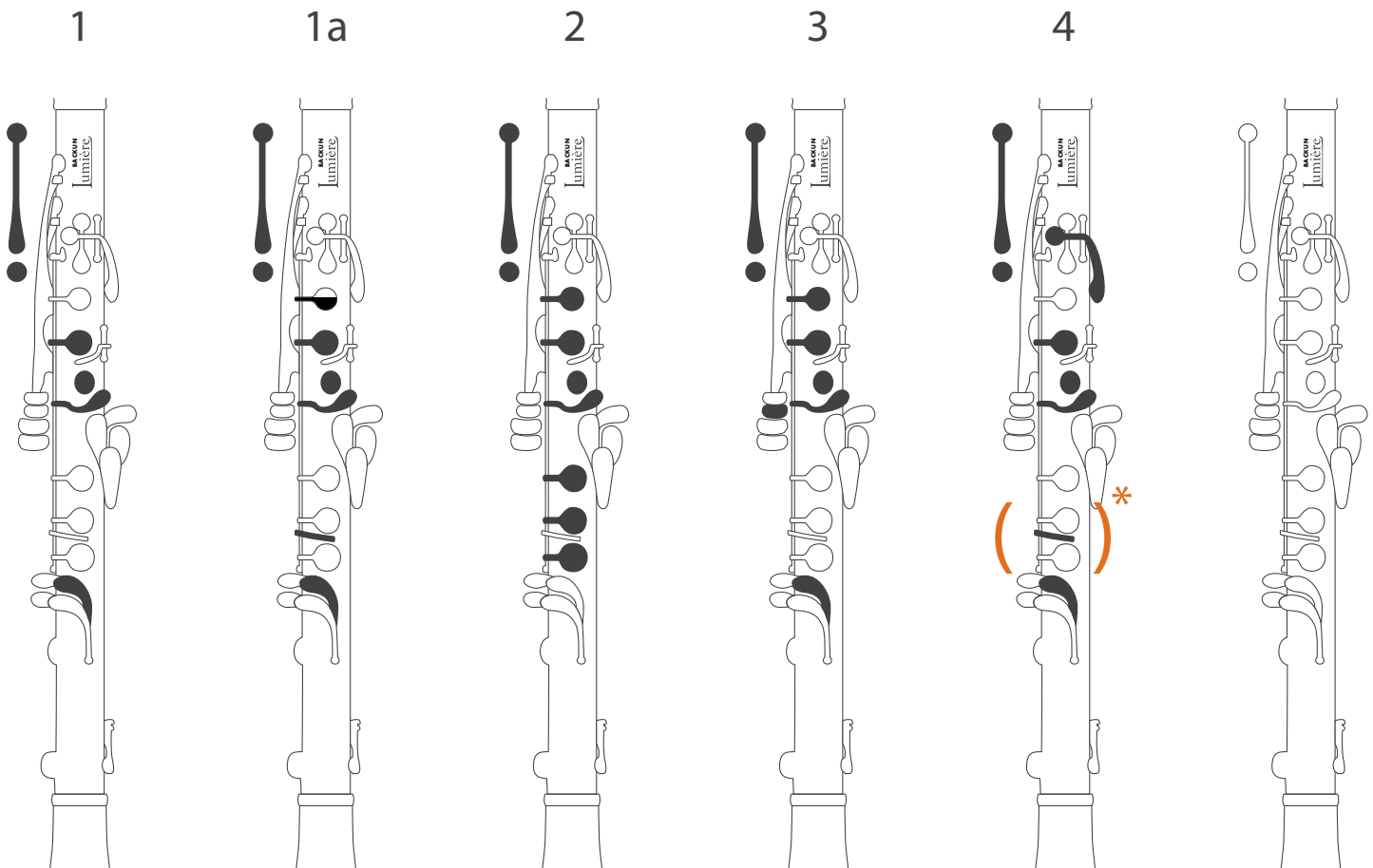
Example: Rossini, *Introduction, Theme and Variations for Clarinet* -
 Introduction, First Var.

3. This F tends to be full and stable. If it is too sharp, the side trill key might be too open.

Example: Copland, *Clarinet Concerto* - m101

4. This is a secure F that slurs well, but tends to be sharp and bright.*

Example: Pierné, *Canzonetta* - Last note



Fingerings for High F#



1. This fingering is considered to be the standard F#. Without the sliver key, it is too flat and unstable.
 - 1a. Darker and more secure, depending on voicing. The pitch can be lower and warmer in color.
 2. This would be considered a variation on the “Long F#,” which is without the F#/C# key. However, this version offers much better intonation and response.
- Example: Copland, *Clarinet Concerto*, Cadenza - m115
3. A warm and well in-tune fingering.
- Example: Poulenc, *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano in Bb*, First Mvt. -
Two measures after Rehearsal 3

4. Very well in-tune, it slurs very well in loud as well as soft dynamics.

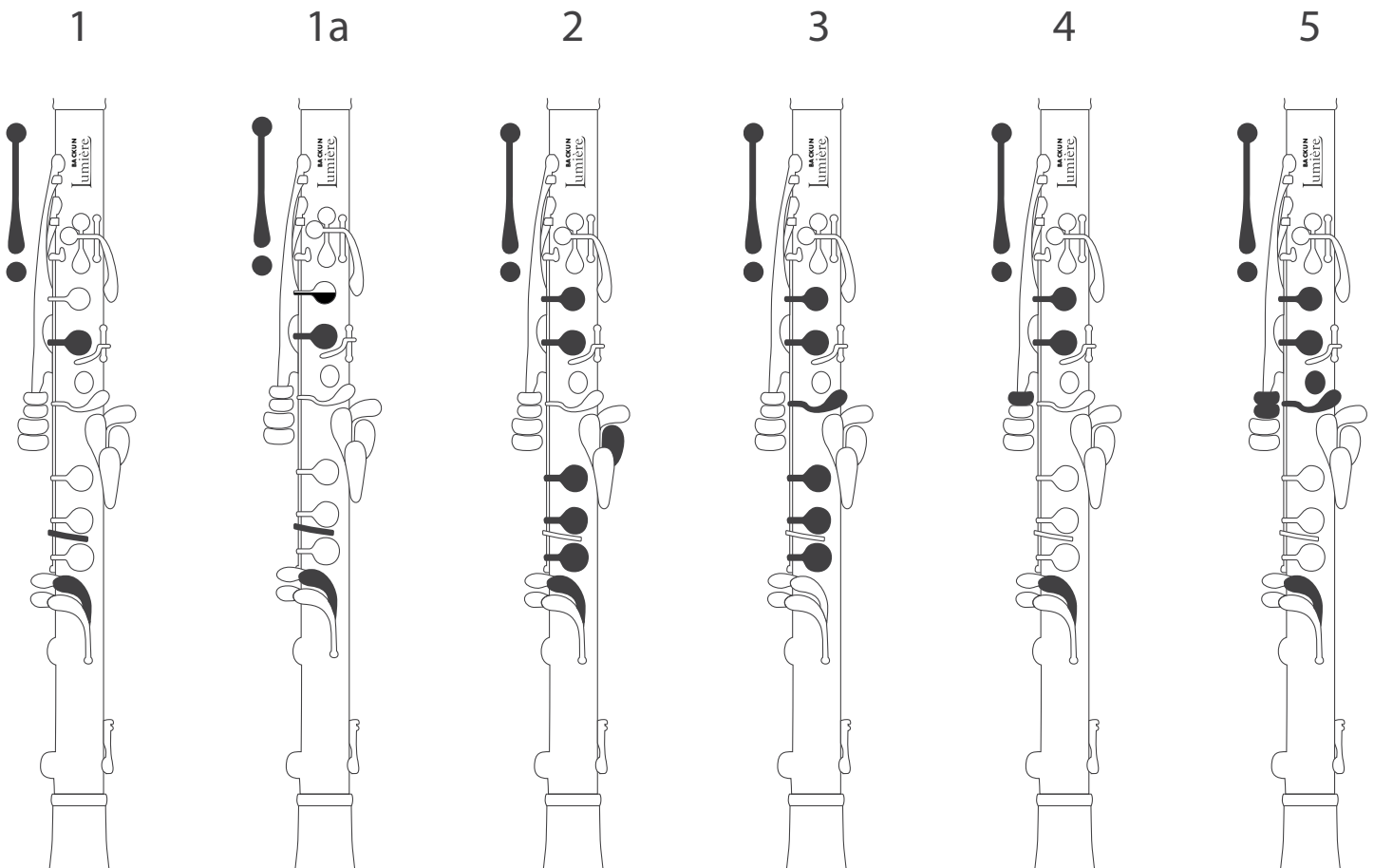
Example: Copland, *Clarinet Concerto* - m50

Shostakovich, *Symphony No. 9 in Eb Major*, Op. 70, Second Mvt. - m19

5. Similar in color and response to Fingering 4, but a bit more stable. Depending on voicing, it can lean lower.

Example: Copland, *Clarinet Concerto* - m50

Shostakovich, *Symphony No. 9 in Eb Major*, Op. 70, Second Mvt. - m19



Backun Barrels & Bells



Lumière Barrel

The Lumière Barrel offers a sweet, balanced tone with increased focus and projection that illuminates every corner of the concert hall. Elegant curves and flowing design perfectly complement its sweet, refined character. Artists appreciate the incredible richness and resonance of the Lumière Barrel for chamber, solo, and orchestral playing.

Available in grenadilla and cocobolo woods. Designed for both B \flat and A clarinets.



MoBa Barrel

The MoBa Barrel produces an unmistakable, full-bodied, dark sound that makes it a favourite amongst orchestral players worldwide. With increased resistance and focus, and an unbelievable ease of articulation throughout the entire range of the clarinet, this barrel is a great option for artists wanting a darker tone. Artists prefer this barrel for orchestral repertoire.

Available in grenadilla and cocobolo woods. Designed for both B \flat and A clarinets.



Fatboy Barrel

The Fatboy is at home in the world's most prestigious concert halls, famous jazz clubs, and everywhere in between. It's our best-selling barrel, and for good reason. Artists who are called upon to interpret a wide variety of music appreciate the Fatboy Barrel's unique flexibility and versatility. Note: In Japan, this model is known as the Backun Barrel.

Available in grenadilla and cocobolo woods. Designed for both B \flat and A clarinets.



E \flat Cutback Barrel

Backun E \flat Barrels feature a unique cutback design that allows the use of B \flat clarinet reeds on an E \flat mouthpiece, without the need to trim them. Artists love how this barrel improves intonation and flexibility, while stabilizing the tone of the instrument throughout all registers. Paired with the Backun E \flat Bell, this barrel really tames the savage beast.

Available in grenadilla and cocobolo woods. Designed to fit most E \flat clarinets.



Lumière Bell

The Lumière Bell features a unique Double Voicing Groove (DVG) that improves intonation and stability in the clarion register. A modestly sized bell set between a carbon fibre tenon ring and a pronounced bell flair, this wooden work of art is a musical sculpture that allows the clarinet to sing.

Available in grenadilla and cocobolo woods. Designed for both B \flat and A clarinets.



MoBa Bell

Big halls are no match for the MoBa Bell, which is a powerhouse well suited to orchestral and solo stages. With a taper unique to the MoBa product line, an integrated Voicing Groove, and a bold bell curve, the MoBa Bell offers players exceptional versatility and projection.

Available in grenadilla and cocobolo woods. Designed for both B \flat and A clarinets.



E \flat Bell

Tuning the E \flat clarinet can be a major challenge, so we designed a bell as fearless as most E \flat players. Adding yet another dimension of versatility to your impressive repertoire, the Backun E \flat Bell aligns the registers and delivers a warm tonal centre to your sound. The Backun Voicing Groove is standard on all E \flat Bells.

Available in grenadilla and cocobolo woods. Designed for both B \flat and A clarinets.

Fingerings for High G



1. This is considered the “Chromatic G,” as it blends and tunes well.

- Example: Weber, *Clarinet Concerto No. 1 in F Minor*, Op. 73 - m271
 Nielsen, *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra*, Op. 57 [D.F.129] -
 Six measures before Rehearsal 4 (use without the sliver key)
 Ravel, *Daphnis et Chloé* - Four measures after Rehearsal 219

2. This is a versatile fingering that slurs very well and is centered, in-tune and stable. The optional F#/C# key lowers the pitch and darkens the sound.*

- Example: Beethoven, *Symphony No. 8 in F Major*, Op. 93, Third Mvt., Trio - m78 (Last G) and m63 with the F#/C#

3. Similar to Fingering 2, but more covered. It slurs very well, especially on the B \flat clarinet.

- Example: Beethoven, *Symphony No. 8 in F Major*, Op. 93, Third Mvt., Trio - m63

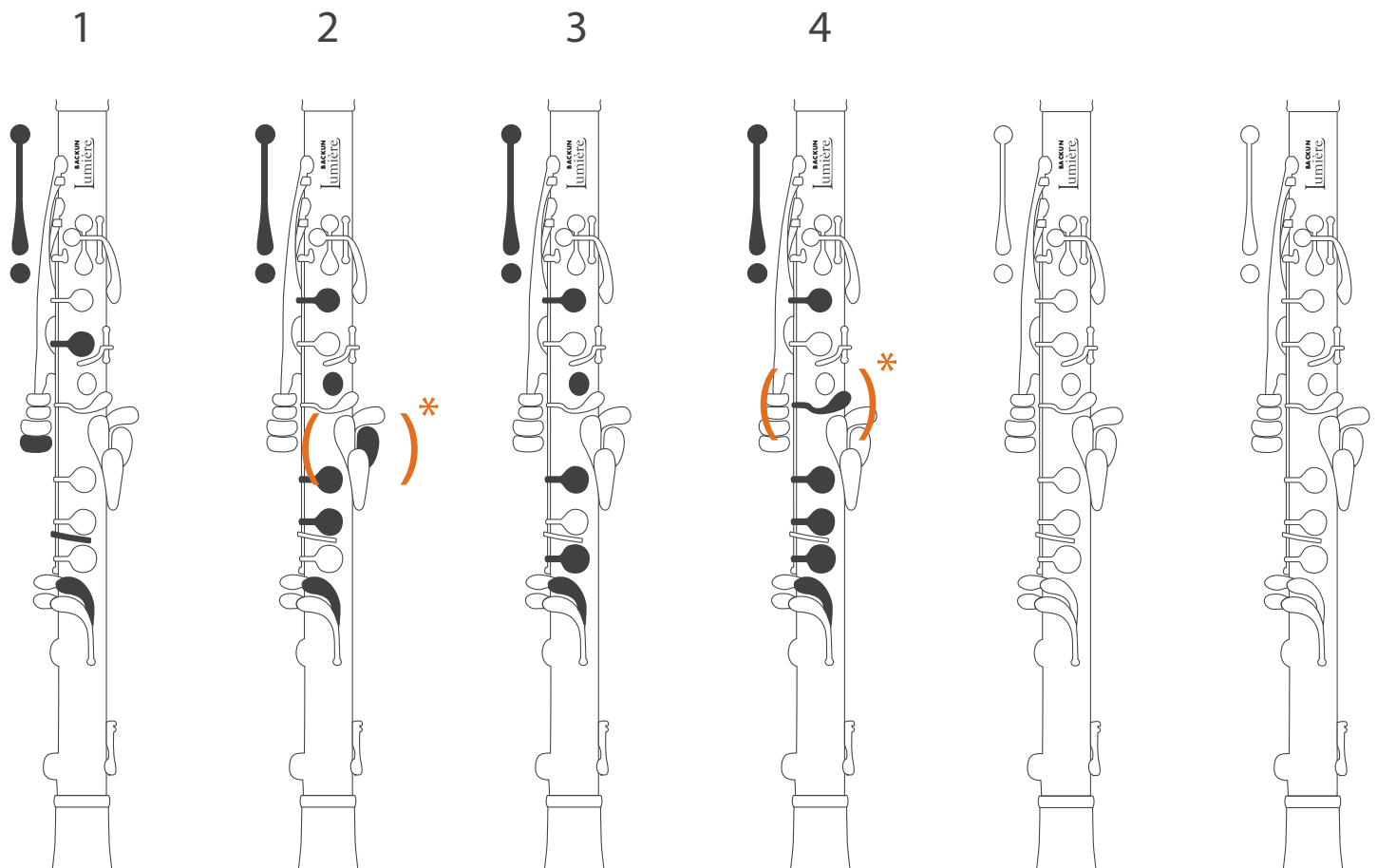
Continued from 3. in the previous column.

- Example: Weber, *Clarinet Concerto No. 2 in E \flat Major*, Op. 74, Rehearsal F - m134
 Spohr, *Clarinet Concerto No. 3*, WoO 19, First Mvt. - m80

- Example: Poulenc, *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano in B \flat Major*, Second Mvt. - Four measures after Rehearsal 4

4. This is more useful on the A clarinet, as it is brighter, slurs well and is more in-tune. *The C#/G# can be added if it voices low.

- Example: Brahms, *Clarinet Trio*, Op. 114, First Mvt. - Six measures before Rehearsal 1
 Brahms, *Clarinet Quintet in B Minor*, Op. 115, Second Mvt. - m70
 Stravinsky, *3 Pieces for Clarinet Solo*, Second Mvt. - All G's
 Strauss, *Don Juan*, Op. 20 - One measure before Rehearsal AA



Fingerings for High G (cont.)



5. This fingering can also be played without the sliver, but is more stable and responsive as shown.

- Example: Weber, *Clarinet Concerto No. 1 in F Minor*, Op. 73, First Mvt. - m273
 Weber, *Clarinet Concerto No. 1 in F Minor*, Op. 73, Third Mvt. - m365, Last note
 Spohr, *Clarinet Concerto No. 2*, Op. 57, First Mvt. - Fourteen measures before Rehearsal G
 Poulenc, *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano in B \flat Major*, Third Mvt. - Four measures after Rehearsal 3

5a. More covered, slightly higher in pitch.

Example: Beethoven, *Symphony No. 8 in F Major*, Op. 93, Third Mvt., Trio - m63

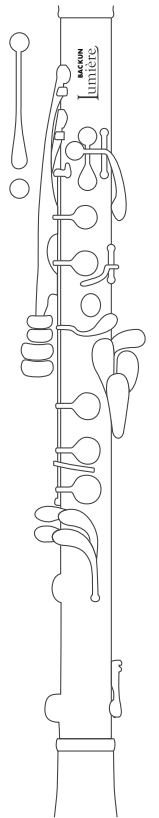
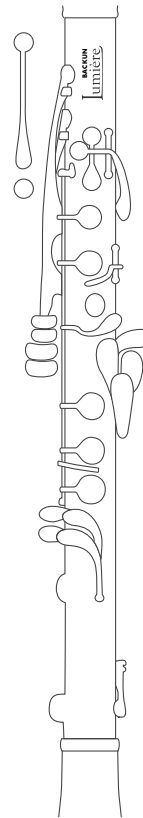
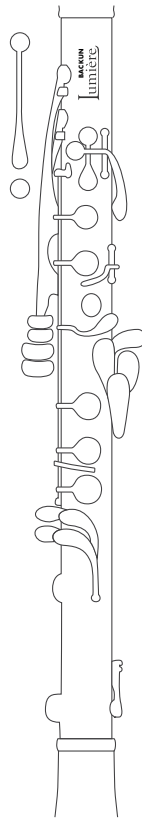
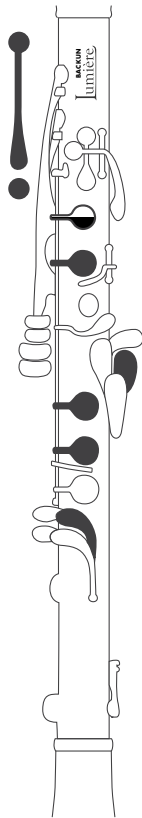
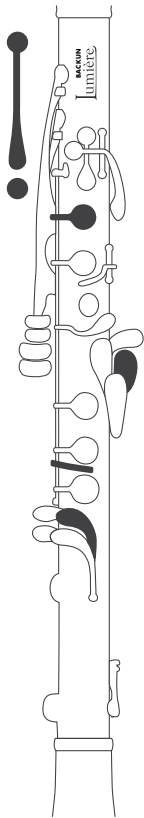
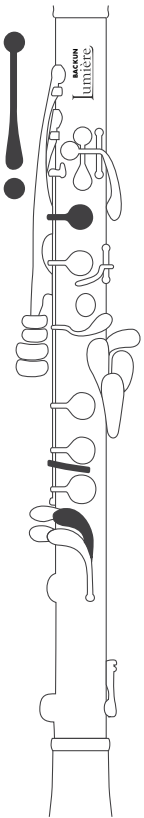
6. This fingering plays extremely well in softer dynamics and slurs well. It requires practice to become familiar with the delicate half-hole.

Example: Poulenc, *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano in B \flat Major*, Second Mvt. - Four measures after Rehearsal 4

5

5a

6





Vocalise Bb R, G, H and Z

Vocalise Bb CG

Vocalise Mouthpieces

By Hawkins and Backun

Richard Hawkins collaborated with Backun Musical Services to develop a series of mouthpieces with tonal ring and clarity that will change the course of mouthpiece history. Designed using advanced CAD/CAM software and tested with 3D printing technology, Vocalise Mouthpieces are crafted on highly advanced nine-axis CNC machines.

Each mouthpiece helps the player centre articulation, pitch and altissimo, with impeccable ease and consistency of voicing. It is the first mouthpiece of its kind specifically designed to play well on both synthetic and cane reeds, in strengths 2.5 to 4.5. Designed for all ages and experience levels, Vocalise Bb Mouthpieces features a model for every player and occasion. Complex resonance at a reasonable price.

R - Close/Short

Evenness and a focus of sound that sings with ease are two characteristics of this close facing mouthpiece that allows to articulate with reduced effort, while ringing true with fabulous clarity.

G - Medium/Medium

A medium faced mouthpiece that combines exceptional evenness and round tonal complexity. The G has a smoother influence on interval connections just where you need it.

H - Open/Long

The most open facing in the lineup, the H is both smooth and dark, with ample cushion for those who need more robust flexibility throughout the registers. This mouthpiece requires unyielding passion in performance.

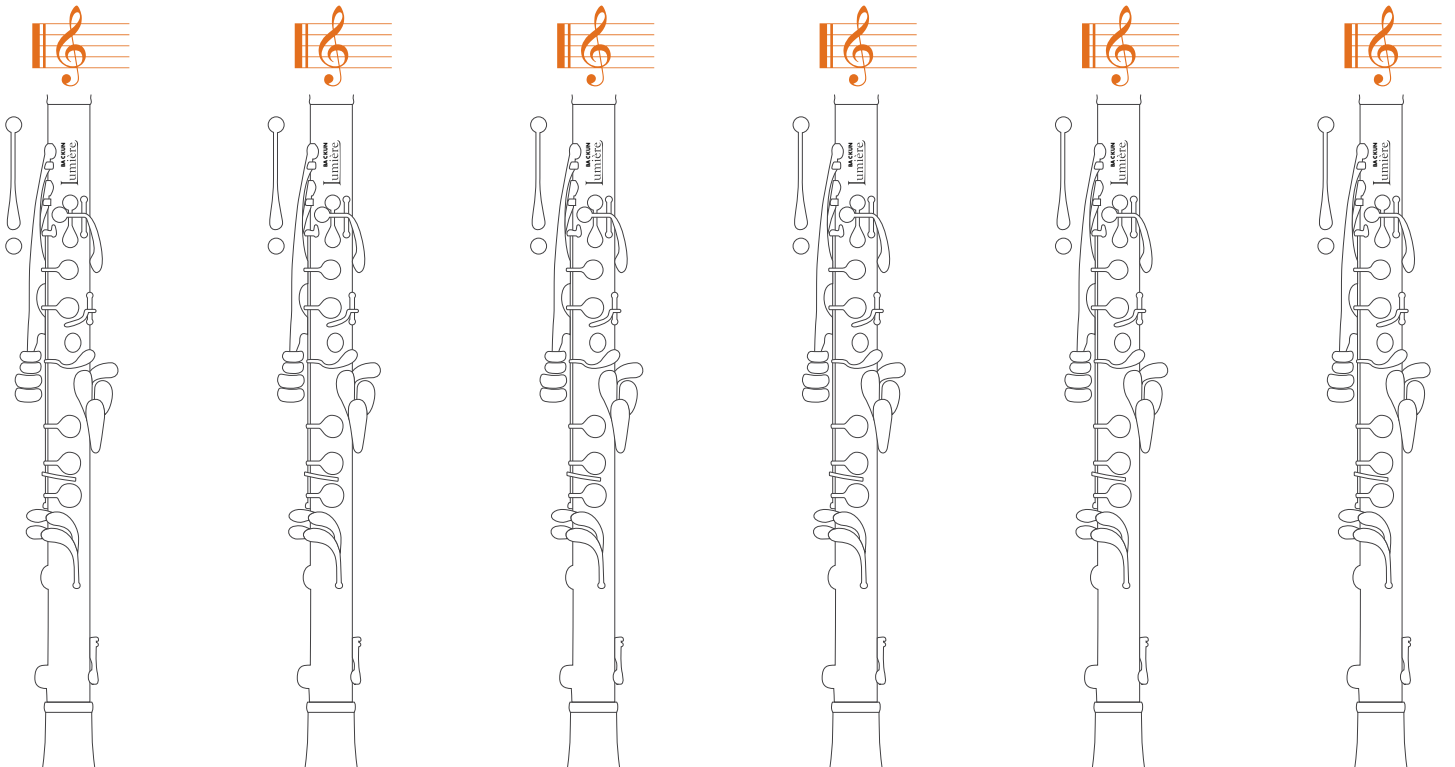
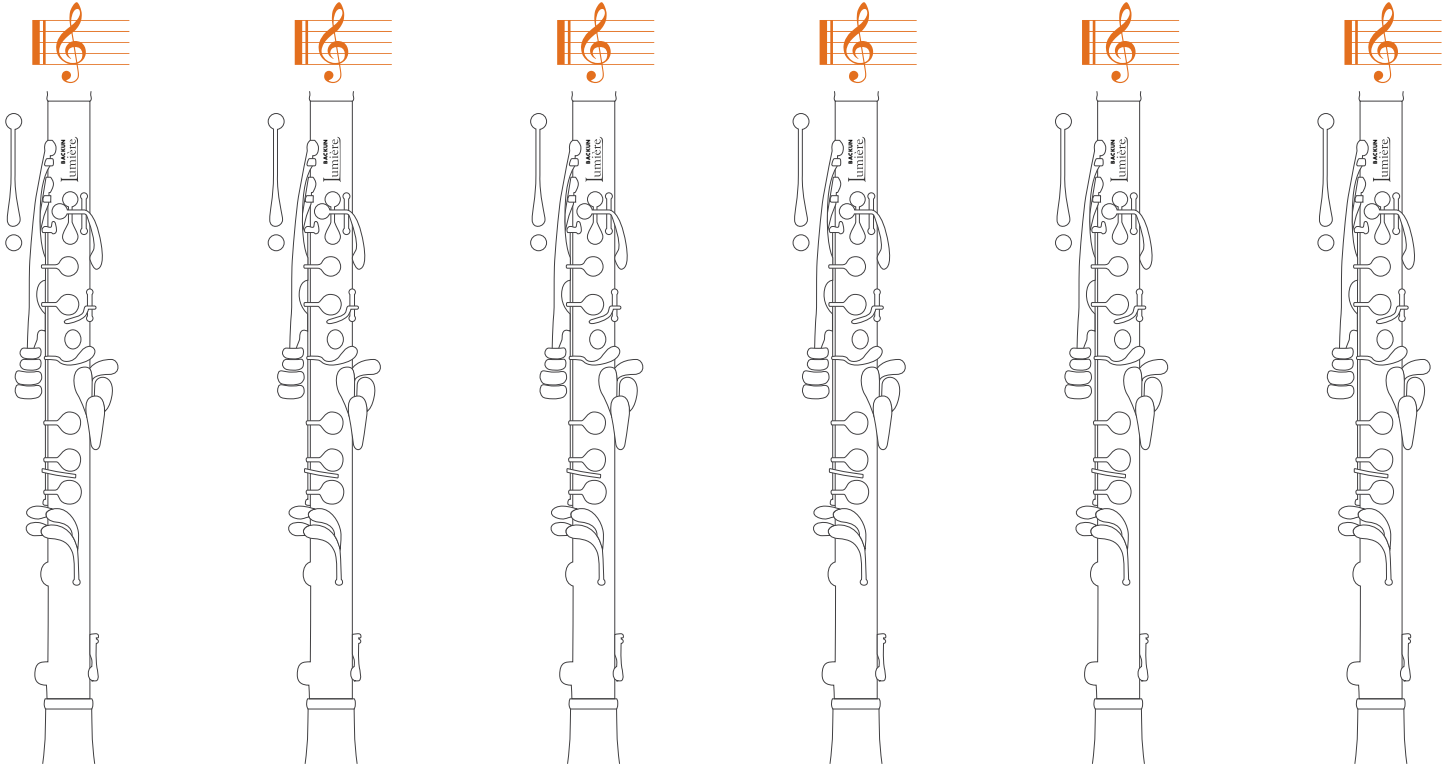
Z - Extremely Open/Long

The Vocalise Z was developed to meet the needs of artists who prefer mouthpieces with a larger facing, while offering significant volume and projection. With a robust tone, it is reminiscent of more current European models.

CG - Open/Long

Crafted from a proprietary clear synthetic material, the Vocalise CG Mouthpiece is Open/Long, while giving players a flexible and vibrant tone. This model articulates with ease and holds a clear quality of sound at extreme volumes.

Additional Fingerings



Visit the Backun Musical Services Website for More Clarinet Resources:

Alternate Fingerings for Throat Tones, Vol. 1
Alternate Fingerings for Altissimo Range, Vol. 3

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