

Applications of Alternate Fingerings in the Alto Flute

by Mariana Gariazzo

Alternate fingerings in the alto can offer several solutions to:

Tough passages: We can select special fingerings (partials) to facilitate difficult passages in a piece. (Play a fast G scale)

Optimize Response: We use them to make a note sound better, have better response, improve articulation, and reduce the chances of cracking the note.

Trills: We use to facilitate trills. (E to F#, Ab to Bb – leave pinky down)

Tremolos: They are surely used for tremolos, to facilitate the rapid change between two distant pitches. (Eb and Gb – leave index down)

Color changes: in contemporary music, composers employ alternate fingerings to explore a wide palette of colors. (G fingering + Off Thumb + 123 RH ad libitum)

Color trills or *bisbigliando*: is a tremolo between different fingerings of the same pitch, often referred to as a timbral (color) trill. Provides a fast and shimmery change of color.

Intonation: alternate fingering must be used to correct intonation on the third register. *The Alto Flute Method* by Christine Potter provides an extensive list of alternate fingerings for the alto and bass flutes.

67 regular fingering This F tends to crack. Add the trill key to stabilize it. If this C is sharp, try these fingerings.

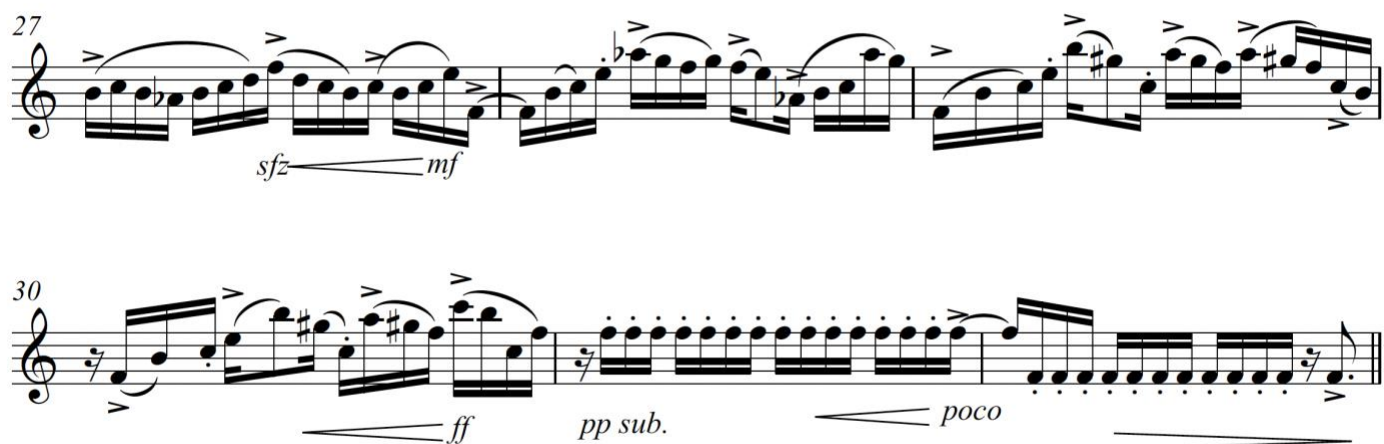
The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5. Below the staff, there are fingering diagrams for each note. The first three notes (G4, A4, B4) are labeled 'regular fingering'. The fourth note (C5) is labeled 'This F tends to crack. Add the trill key to stabilize it.' The fifth note (D5) is labeled 'If this C is sharp, try these fingerings.' The sixth note (E5) is labeled 'This F tends to crack. Add the trill key to stabilize it.' The seventh note (F5) is labeled 'If this C is sharp, try these fingerings.' The eighth note (G5) is labeled 'This F tends to crack. Add the trill key to stabilize it.' The fingering diagrams show various combinations of fingerings, including regular fingerings and alternate fingerings using the trill key.

Recommended tuner: *Total Energy*

<https://www.tonalenergy.com/>

shadowspot by Marty Regan (2016)

Response: Use trill keys to enhance the response of E and F in the middle register.

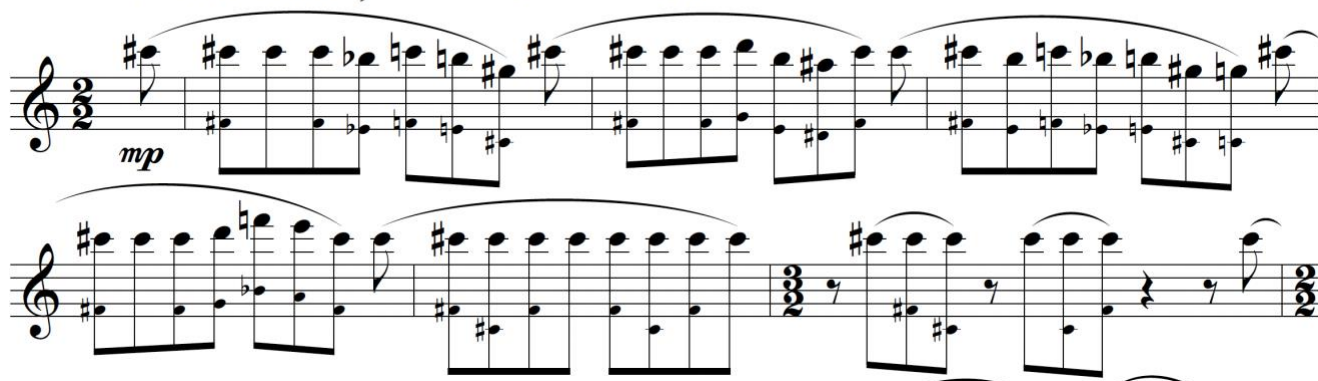


Eight Preludes for alto flute or bass by Daniel Kressner (2015)

[Harmonics](#)

V - Scherzando armonico

Andantino, $\text{♩} = 48 - 52 \text{ ca.}$



Nakoda by Ellen Lindquist (2002)

[Color changes](#)

gl. *gl.* *(TP) vib.* *H.T. senza vib.* *rall.*

p *mp* *n* *sf* *mf* *p* *n*

G#

sound produced by air (approximate):

sfz *subito*

what your fingers are doing: *accel.* *bisbigliando (color trill)* *subito stop air: key clicks only* *molto rit. (repeat)*

pp *sfz* *ff* *n*

(increase air to produce overtones)

finger movement becomes faster, random and more intense—gradually use all fingers

lift thumb; continue to use random fingers in a flurry

Desert Song by Philippe Hersant (2010)

Microtones

9

p

11

63

p *mf* *pp*

8

*bisbigliando **