

Trombone Clinic

Atlantic Festivals of Music 2024

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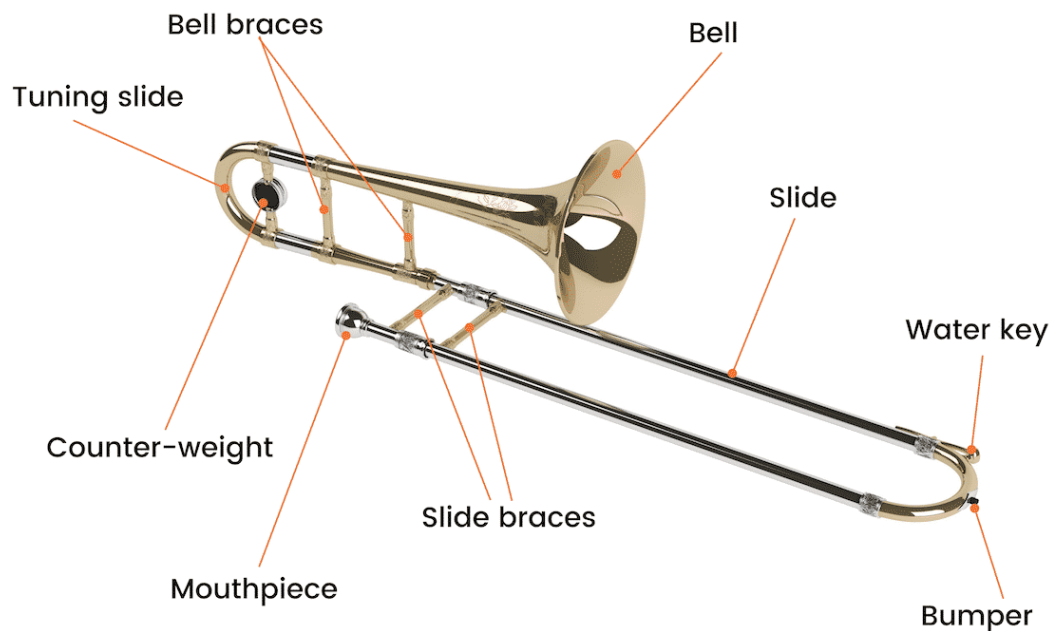
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Parts of the Trombone



Needed Items

- Slide cream or grease
- Spray bottle (if using slide cream)
- Tuning slide cream or grease
- Mouthpiece brush
- Snake brush
- Cleaning cloth

A "trombone cleaning kit", Yamaha brand or similar, should contain all these items

Storing Your Instrument

- When not using your instrument, keep it closed in its case to help protect it and to prevent the possibility of damage.
- Do not store the instrument in areas of extreme temperature changes. In other words, do NOT keep it in your car or garage overnight! Always, always bring it inside with you.
- Keep the instrument away from heating supplies or from windows where direct sunlight or other weather can cause damage.

Putting The Trombone Together

- Open the case with the brand name up and facing you.
- Begin with the slide. Take both the inner and outer slide from the case. Make sure your slide lock is secured!
- Rest the bumper on the floor with the slide lock and mouthpiece receiver at 12 o'clock and the bell receiver at 6 o'clock.
- Remove the bell from the case and fit it into the bell receiver of the slide. The bell should be pointing to 9 o'clock (to your left). Lock these two pieces together by tightening the screw.
- Remove the mouthpiece from the case and rest it into the mouthpiece receiver. Give it a gentle quarter-turn to seal it in place.

Hand Positioning and Posture

- With the trombone to your left, point your left index finger away from you. This finger rests beside the mouthpiece receiver. The other three fingers curl around the inner slide brace. The weight of the instrument rests on your palm and is supported by your arm.
- Sit tall, both feet on the floor shoulder width apart. It may be more comfortable to have one foot slightly ahead of the other. Keep your shoulders relaxed
- Position your music stand slightly to your right, at a height where you can clearly see the music on the stand as well as your conductor at the front of the ensemble in the same line of vision.
- While sitting in this tall, relaxed posture, slowly bring the instrument to your lips. *Your instrument should always come to you, not the other way around!*
- Make a "duck" with two fingers and the thumb of your right hand. This holds the slide at the base of the outer slide brace.

Breathing

- When we breathe IN, we think of expanding our full torso. Air comes in, moves straight down, and fills us up both outwards and upwards.
- Think about "O vowel" breaths. Pretend to fog up the glass of a window with wide, warm air. Then reverse it to inhale deeply.
- When we breathe OUT, we think of the air going directly from our torso out to the instrument. We want fast and consistent air on our exhale to support our buzz and give us a nice, full tone.
- No "chipmunk cheeks"!
- Everything we do as wind musicians relies on our breathing. It is the first place we look to when trying to improve our playing.
- *A full and consistent air stream is the best way to achieve a full and consistent sound.*

Embouchure

- Keep the corners of your mouth tight and the centre of your lips loose.
- Remember to keep the rest of your body relaxed.
- Focus on taking deep “O vowel” inhales and focused, steady exhales.
- Use the power of your fast exhale to make a buzz with your lips.
- Gently bring your mouthpiece to your lips and try to buzz again.
- The mouthpieces can sit slightly differently for different people, but usually it’s placed about two-thirds on the upper lip and one-third on the bottom lip.
- Can you manipulate the sound higher and lower? Louder and softer? Can you play a tune?

Sound Production

- The instrument itself is basically an amplifier for the mouthpiece. Everything that happens on the mouthpiece is transferred out of the bell. This means that mouthpiece buzzing can be a great tool for improving your sound.
- Remember that taking deep, O vowel breaths, keeping a consistent airstream, and staying relaxed are all key parts of making a great sound.
- We can think about using vowels with our exhale. What does the airstream sound and feel like if we exhale with an “eeee”, an “ahhhh”, or an “ohhhh” vowel shape?

Articulation

- The tongue starts the note. That’s it! It cannot control the sound of a note, only the start of one.
- We usually want the articulation to be light and clear, not heavy and muddy. Think “lower case t, upper case AHFFF” when making a sound on the instrument.
- Take a deep inhale, make a light “t” sound with your tongue to start your exhale. The air should be ready behind the tongue so that your note will sound right away.
- Legato (connected notes) uses a “d” articulation. It is very important to sign up the start of the note with the movement of the slide!

Practice Routines

- Practice every day. It can help to have a schedule on the fridge, in your phone calendar, etc.
- Practicing at the same time each day can help to keep the habit going.
- Make sure you have all your practice tools with you: music, chair and stand, slide grease or water spray, pencil, metronome, tuner, and mirror.
- Before you start, do some light stretching and deep breathing to warm up your body.
- Always start your practice session with a warm-up routine that includes your fundamental techniques: slurs, tonguing, scales, dynamics, etc. (see example at the end of this handout).
- Treat your warm-up as you treat your performances. Take them seriously, make them count!
- Take short breaks throughout each practice. It’s hard work!
- Keep a reasonable (slower) and consistent tempo. You do not want to practice mistakes!
- Isolate difficult sections and practice them slowly. Can you play through it three times with no mistakes? Then, put the difficult part back into the music, and play a few measures before it to a few measures after it. Repeat these two steps as needed.
- Do NOT practice using the run-through approach. You will burn all your energy very quickly, and the parts that really need the work won’t get the time and attention they need.
- Record your practice sessions and listen back to them. It’s amazing how much more we can hear when we are not actively playing. Recording is a great way of making sure that what you THINK you are doing is what you are ACTUALLY doing.

Trombone Maintenance

Daily Maintenance

- As you play, your trombone collects moisture inside from the warm air coming out of your mouth. If you do not clean this moisture out after each playing session, it can accumulate in your instrument and cause serious problems. Gross!
- After playing, open any water keys and blow air through the instrument to remove any water.
- Wipe the trombone off with a polishing cloth to remove fingerprints and prevent tarnishing.

Weekly Maintenance

- The mouthpiece should be cleaned weekly using warm water and soft liquid soap and your mouthpiece brush. This sanitizes the mouthpiece and removes any debris from the inside.
- Make sure all slides move easily. Use slide grease to lubricate slides if they are difficult to move. To do this, give the inner slides a wipe with a paper towel or soft cloth to remove any previous grease, then apply a very thin layer of slide grease and move the outer slide over it several times to work in. Apply more grease as needed until slides are moving as they should. The tuning slide should move when you want it to, but not on its own. The main hand slide should move freely, needing to be locked or held in place to prevent it falling.

Monthly Maintenance

- Every few months the instrument should be taken apart and given a bath.
- Begin by laying a towel in the tub to protect both the bottom of your tub as well as the instrument parts. Take the tuning slide out of the bell and wipe the grease off it. Then take the inner slide out from the outer slide. Everything can then be laid on the towel in the tub.
- Making sure that the water is a comfortable temperature (comfortable for you is comfortable for your horn), fill the tub with enough water to cover the instrument. **HOT WATER WILL DAMAGE YOUR INSTRUMENT!**
- You can use a small amount of a mild dish soap in the water to help clean it.
- Let the instrument soak for about an hour to loosen dirt and debris. Once the horn has been soaked, clean out all of the tubing using a snake brush. Run the snake's bristle heads in and out of all of the tubing several times while rinsing underwater to remove any build-up.
- Hand slides of trombones can also be cleaned by filling the outside slide with water and then inserting the inside slide, working it in and out. Be sure to handle the slide section carefully to avoid denting the tubing.
- After you're satisfied that everything is clean, rinse everything with lukewarm water. To prevent spotting, wipe off the outside of the horn with the softest cloth you can find. Blow out any water hanging up in the tubing, and lay the horn out to dry.

Reassembly After A Bath

- Remember that your slides are bare metal and need grease to keep them moving properly, otherwise, they can get stuck!
- Place a small amount of tuning slide cream or grease on the tuning slide. Spread the grease evenly all the way around the slide, and then reinsert only one of the tubes back into place, rotate around, and repeat with the other side, then reassemble normally.
- Do the same on the hand slide, but this time with slide cream or grease. Apply the cream down at the stocking of the inner slide. Test it and see how it feels. If it's a little hard to move, put on more cream. Once the instrument is reassembled, try playing to make sure everything is back to the right place.

Yearly Maintenance

- Have your instrument checked out at a music store. You may ask for an estimate for cleaning and repairs before having the work done. Early summer is a great time to do this. If you are renting an instrument, this work will be covered in the rental program.

Further Opportunities

- Private lessons (along with regular practice!) are the best way to get the most out of your band experience. If you are interested in setting up a trial lesson, please contact me! I have more than fifteen years of teaching experience and offer fun and engaging lessons to all ages and levels.
- There are a number of music summer camps available throughout the province, which can be a fun way to meet other young musicians, improve your skills, and explore new music.
- There are a number of province-wide ensembles you may be interested in joining, such as the Nova Scotia Youth Orchestra and the Nova Scotia Junior Wind Ensemble or Youth Wind Ensemble. These groups perform exciting and challenging repertoire at a high level and often include instrument-specific workshops and mentorship.
- Listen to live music as much as you can. There is so much to learn and discover from watching professionals play and hearing all of the wonderful things that this beautiful instrument can do!

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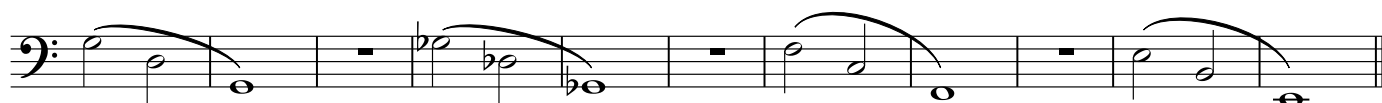
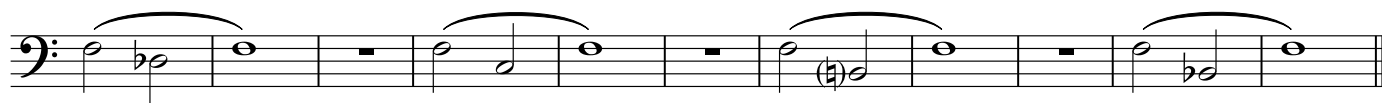
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Daily Trombone Warmups

AFM 2024 Trombone Clinic

Shauna DeGruchy

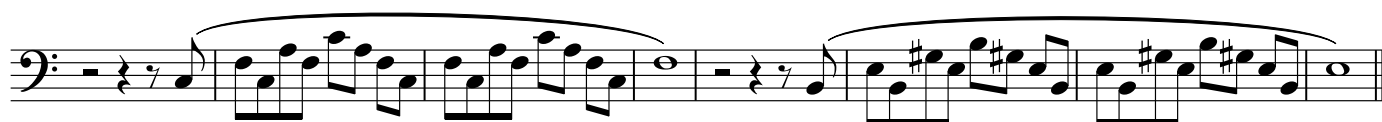
Flexibility Study #1 Long Tones



Flexibility Study #1



Flexibility Study #2



Tonguing

A musical staff in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It contains a sequence of eighth-note patterns. The first two measures are eighth-note runs starting on G2. The next two measures are eighth-note runs starting on F2. The fifth measure is a whole rest. The final two measures are eighth-note runs starting on E2.

Continue to second line Bb.
Rest as needed.

A musical staff in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It continues the eighth-note patterns from the previous staff, starting on D2, C2, B1, and A1.

Five Note Scales

A musical staff in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It shows five-note scales: G2-F2-E2-D2-C2, B1-A1-G1-F1-E1, and D1-C1-B0-A0-G0.

A musical staff in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It shows five-note scales: F2-E2-D2-C2-B1, E1-D1-C1-B0-A0, and G0-F0-E0-D0-C0.

A musical staff in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It shows five-note scales: E2-D2-C2-B1-A1, G1-F1-E1-D1, and F1-E1-D1-C1.

A musical staff in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It shows five-note scales: D2-C2-B1-A1-G1, F1-E1-D1-C1, and E1-D1-C1-B0.

Dynamics

A musical staff in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It features three measures of dynamics exercises. Each measure contains two half notes with a slur over them. The first measure is G2 and F2, the second is E2 and D2, and the third is C2 and B1. Below each measure is the dynamic marking *p* < *f* > *p*.

Also play this exercise in your upper and lower ranges.

A musical staff in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It features four measures of dynamics exercises. Each measure contains two half notes with a slur over them. The first measure is G2 and F2, the second is E2 and D2, the third is C2 and B1, and the fourth is A1 and G1. Below each measure is the dynamic marking *p* < *f* > *p*.