

Beginning Trumpet Solutions

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Fundamentals of Tone

- Wind
 - Breathing Gym Book & DVD
 - Swinging the racquet
 - Paper Airplane
 - Analogies > Anatomy
 - Cyclic motion of air without suspension
 - Visualizer (notice this is in the wind category rather than vibration)
 - Balloons with variable counts
 - Breathing tubes
- Vibration
 - “M” Face
 - Coffee stir straw
 - Buzzing (free and with mouthpiece)
 - Buzz simple lips slurs with a slight glissando
 - Buzz simple, smooth melodies (Twinkle Twinkle, Somewhere Over the Rainbow, The Christmas Song, America, etc...)
 - Buzzing the mouthpiece is not the same as playing the trumpet: be sparing
- Embouchure
 - “M” or “Dim” face: not a smile
 - 50/50 placement between top & bottom, bottom lip shouldn’t recede under top
 - Start in center, sideways deviation can happen without much alarm
 - Firm corners (shouldn’t be pulled down), flat or pointed chin, soft lips

Balanced Set-up

- Left Hand
 - Healthy handshake, don’t squeeze
 - 3rd valve slide ring position (they need to use it!)
 - Palm remains perpendicular to floor
- Right Hand
 - ‘C’ curve, thumb between 1st & 2nd valves, pinky above hook
- Arms
 - Elbows out from torso so ribcage isn’t constricted
 - Relaxed, a tense left hand sends signals through your arms and shoulders that you are about to lift a heavy weight

- Head
 - Lifted, “swan neck” – teach proper posture from the beginning without instrument. A balanced, agile position. Bring the trumpet to the face.
- Feet
 - If standing: square the feet with the shoulders, balance lends confidence & focus
 - If sitting: have feet flat in natural position, supports centering

Routine

- Informed by SAFARE - a mnemonic device to create a well-rounded routine
 - o sound, articulation, flexibility, agility, range, endurance
- Establish a routine in class that transfers to at-home practice and allows them to demonstrate the following by the end of the first semester:
 - Proper breathing
 - Buzzing mouthpiece sirens/simple melodies
 - Responsive tone supported with full breath
 - Tongue smoothly without stopping air
 - Flexibility on mouthpiece and instrument
 - Basic understanding of counting system
 - Long tones with capability to crescendo and decrescendo
 - Memorized scales

First Notes

- Have students play their first note without restricting them to one pitch.
- Low C or 2nd line G will probably sound - Gradually bring the class to the pitch that is predominant.
- Model, Sing, Buzz, Play - Routine, Repetition, Retention

Sound Concept

- Live examples, videos (maintain playlist for each instrument, suggestions on final page)
- Vocabulary to reinforce concepts for positive & negative feedback – warm, open, full, rich, healthy, dark, vibrant, resonant ----- weak, brittle, unhealthy, thin, fuzzy, harsh, wimpy, tight, pinched, nasal, airy
- Singing is critical!
- Private lessons – If local teachers are unavailable, Skype/Zoom makes the world a smaller place. Maintain a roster of qualified teachers for all instruments. Invite private instructors to present a fundamentals clinic at the beginning of the semester and a sectional leading up to

performances. Lessons or periodic clinics led by a specialist can be very impactful in providing a healthy sound model.

Sound Production

- Long tones: utilize Remington Studies, Cichowicz Flow Studies, or other simple exercises for students to allow the breath, ears, and lips to achieve a healthy working relationship.
- Breath attacks can help bring the aperture into a natural position.
 - Followed by “hoo-doo” to then engage the tongue in legato articulation
- While trumpet players don’t run into a break as on clarinet, we do move through harmonic partials. Creating harmonic bridge exercises or adding half steps in difficult passages can help students develop a healthy approach when ascending.
- Bending: Lipping a pitch lower by half step can help relax the center of the lips and find a more resonant sound. Should be modeled.

Articulation

- Relative to pitch placement
 - A high tonal center will result in more cracked or missed notes.
- Connect the dots
 - The tongue interrupts the air without stopping it
 - Avoid taking staccato markings too literally
- Consistency in attack
 - All notes begin the same way regardless of length or volume
- Multiple tonguing
 - Slow and steady wins the race
 - Match the T and K tongue with simple rhythmic patterns
 - Increase tempo as the articulations match
 - As one pitch becomes consistent move on to changing notes.

Flexibility

- Lip slurs
 - Listen for telegraphing
 - Be adamant about metronome use
 - Whistle to feel the tongue move up and down naturally
 - Think down as you ascend and up as you descend

Agility

- Scales
 - Slur and tongue

- Memorize – muscle memory will improve sight reading
 - Simple mode of assessment – in person or SmartMusic
 - Harmonic bridge exercises
 - Learning scales without a scale sheet can be helpful if they learn the chromatic scale early on.
 - Memorize the order of sharps and flats and the number of sharps and flats for each key.
- Technical studies
 - Scales should be paired with technical exercises in the same keys
 - H.L. Clarke Technical Studies for the Cornet
 - Focus on time (Drum Beats+ app)
 - Fermatas on selected notes to check air stream
 - Pop valves down quickly (unscrew valve caps to hear clicks)

Range

- Scales & arpeggios - Slur and tongue; pp to mp in volume
- Chromatics - Clarke 1st study, half steps eliminate the bumpy breaks between partials
- Follow a “three strikes and you’re out” approach
- Improvisation - the mind will gradually shift to product rather than process
 - o Simple, fluid melodies based on a designated major key
 - o Play over a drone
 - o Trade phrases between partners or between student and teacher

Intonation

- Tuning slide should be pulled out $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch
- Teach use of the 3rd valve slide as soon as students begin playing low D and low C-sharp
- Concert B-flat (third space C) is a typical tuning note but it tends to be sharp
- The D, E-flat, E directly above the C are usually flat. Other pitches have their own tendencies.
- Young students often have their slides pulled out too far in an effort to find the center of the pitch rather than reducing embouchure tension and focusing on healthy breathing habits.
- Resist the urge to allow students to adjust their tuning slide very often
- Singing often and matching pitch with a full voice will serve them better in the long run

Stay vigilant

Students fall into common pitfalls so look out for the following issues that may arise:

- Breathing as they bring the trumpet to the face.
- Playing flat on G-sharp in the staff
- Fingering G-flat 23 instead of 2
- Fingering low D-flat 23 instead of 123
- Not using the third valve slide
- Using third valve slide for 23 combinations
- Stopping notes with the tongue
- Bending their neck/head to the instrument rather than bringing it up to the face
- Letting the right thumb come out of its place between the 1st and 2nd valves
 - this can cause the student to overcompensate in supporting the instrument with the pinky hook
- Mouthpiece often set too low allowing red of lip to rise above rim of mouthpiece
- Slides aren't greased so the 3rd valve slide doesn't move easily or at all
- Students continue to play on small, beginner mouthpiece (Bach 7C or Yamaha 11B4) 3 or 4 years into their musical journey. Teachers can assist the shift to larger equipment by keeping a small collection of common mouthpieces to test and communicating the need to parents.

Sample Thirty-Minute Practice Routine

1. Warm-up (10 minutes)

- Long tones - All dynamics and registers
- Flexibility - Slurs should be smooth and connected
- Articulation - Evenly tongue in legato and staccato styles over simple exercises.
- Scales - Memorize all 12 keys! Focus on one every week. Using an app like Drum Beats+ makes playing scales more fun!

2. Work out (15 minutes)

- Practice your music for school to prepare for rehearsals and concerts.
- Play music from etude books. Teachers can recommend specific books/etudes.
- Work on a solo that you may perform in a future contest or concert.

3. Sight read (3 minutes)

- Read straight through music you don't know to help you more quickly process information. This gets easier the more you do it!

4. Warm down (2 minutes)

- Soft, long tones. Low notes help relax the lips. Try improvising a slow, lyrical melody while focusing on making a beautiful sound at a soft dynamic.

Purchasing a Trumpet

Reputable brands from a local dealer will serve students well and are good long term investments for parents. A beginning student will need a well-functioning B-flat trumpet. A basic cleaning kit will include valve oil, slide grease, polishing cloth, and wire brushes to clean the inner tubing and mouthpiece.

Student trumpets generally come with a 7C mouthpiece. This is an acceptable size for most beginners, but I have increasingly started my beginning students on 5C. The smaller number equates to a wider rim that allows more lip to vibrate in the mouthpiece. The C equates to a medium depth of the cup. A D cup would be more shallow. A B cup would be deeper. Many high school trumpet players will later move on to 3C or 1 ½ C as their embouchure strengthens and their tone develops.

Recommended brands include the following with suggested model numbers for student level instruments:

Bach (TR 300)

Yamaha (YTR 2330 or 2335)

King (601)

Jupiter (JTR 700)

Holton (T 602)

Conn (23 B)

Prelude (TR 711) ~ An affordable brand produced by the Conn-Selmer company

Etude (ETR 200)

Allora (ATR 250)

Professional level instruments: Each brand offers various models at a professional level. This level of investment should include test playing an instrument if possible, and have a teacher accompany the student to listen to a variety of techniques.

Bach Stradivarius (180S37)

Yamaha Xeno (YTR-8335RS)

Shires (Model B series)

Suggested Performers for Student Listening

Each performer is hyperlinked to personally selected audio/video recordings on YouTube.

Classical Soloists

[Håkan Hardenberger](#)

[Matthias Höfs](#)

[Timofei Dokshizer](#)

[Reinhold Friedrich](#)

[Alison Balsom](#)

[Tine Thing Helseth](#)

[Selina Ott](#)

Jazz Soloists

[Louis Armstrong](#)

[Clifford Brown](#)

[Bria Skonberg](#)

[Miles Davis](#)

[Freddie Hubbard](#)

[Charlie Porter](#)

[Chet Baker](#)

[Clark Terry](#)

[Wynton Marsalis](#)

[Ingrid Jensen](#)

[Terrance Blanchard](#)

[Roy Hargrove](#)

[Sean Jones](#)

[Chris Botti](#)

Orchestral Principal Trumpet Players

[Michael Sachs](#), Cleveland Orchestra

[Esteban Batallán Cons](#), Chicago Symphony

[Chris Martin](#), New York Philharmonic

[David Bilger](#), Philadelphia Orchestra

[Tom Hooten](#), Los Angeles Philharmonic

[Paul Merkelo](#), Montreal Symphony

[Micah Wilkinson](#), Pittsburgh Symphony

Brass Quintets

[American Brass Quintet](#)

[Boston Brass](#)

[Empire Brass](#)

[Seraph Brass](#)

[Spanish Brass](#)

[Canadian Brass](#)

Lead Trumpet/Commercial Trumpet

[Doc Severinsen](#)

[Maynard Ferguson](#)

[Wayne Bergeron](#)

[Roger Ingram](#)

[Jon Lewis](#)

[Malcom McNab](#)

Thank you for attending! Please contact me if you have any questions or have interest in arranging a virtual or in-person masterclass/clinic for your students. I am happy to share my presentation slides with you upon request.

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