

# Daily Routine and Practice Techniques

The technical aspect of playing an instrument comes down to coordination. Coordinating a few physical actions in time will lead to clear and concise performing. For most brass instruments, these actions include: breathing, embouchure, valve or slide technique, and articulation. In your practice, try to isolate each action and develop exercises for each. Issues will mostly be a combination of actions and you may have to work on multiple actions to correct many issues.

The huge caveat is coordination of the body will not work if your mind does not understand the issue. Having a solid mental image of time, pitch, tone, and musical goals is necessary before physical issues can be resolved. **No daily routine is complete without listening, singing, and recording.**

This sample daily routine will layout exercises meant to target different aspects of actions that require coordination. You may use these exercises as a warm-up or incorporate them into your practice routine. For example, if you are having an issue with articulation in a passage, do some of the articulation exercises or if the issue is phrasing, do some breathing exercises and play through some examples on the *Melody and Tuning* page.

Another important aspect of a daily routine is to facilitate your best sound. This routine is designed to work in the middle register and expand outward. You should start in a register of the horn where you produce your best sound or easiest articulation. Then slowly expand registers until you cover the complete range of the horn. Pay close attention to the typical orchestral register for tenor and bass trombone; you may want to expand past these limits in order to achieve an easy sound within this range.

Bass Trombone



Tenor Trombone



This routine is made up of exercises from a variety of sources and collaborations with other trombonists including:

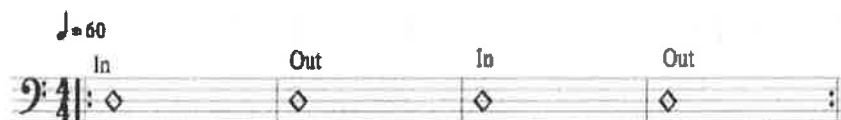
Brad Edwards' *Lip Slurs*  
Arbans' *Complete Method for Trombone and Euphonium*  
James Stamps' *Warm-up and Studies*  
Arnold Jacob's *Song and Wind*  
Don Hunsberger's *The Remington Warm-up Studies*

This routine only includes basic outlines. The intent is for the performer to adjust exercises as needed. For example, transpose the lip slurs up or down by half step to utilize the entire range of the horn or improvise rhythms in the articulation section. You should also work on singing, buzzing, and transposing the *Melody and Tuning* page. Include some of your own improvised melodies or use ones from your literature. And above all, think while you practice.

# Breathing

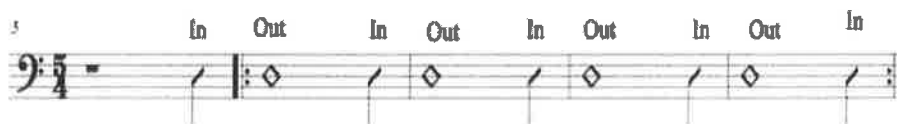
Creating a relaxed and consistent airstream is imperative in playing a brass instrument. Choose a few of these exercises every time you warm-up. You can even perform them with your mouthpiece or horn.

While seated, bend over and touch your toes. Your body should be relaxed and your stomach should be as close to touching your lap as possible. While doing this breathing exercise concentrate on air filling up your back and intercostal muscles. If you are breathing deep enough, your stomach might cause your torso to lift a little.

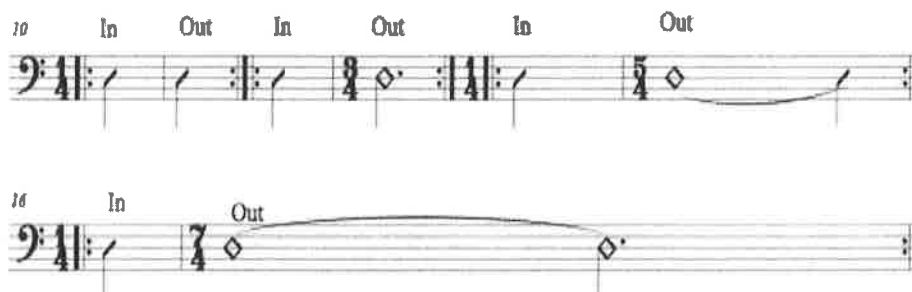


Now while sitting up repeat the exercise above and think about a circular breath. Your air should turn around immediately without stopping or holding your breath.

In the next exercise focus on the same circular breath while shrinking the amount of time you take for a solid inhale. You can even practice breathing in for an eighth note or sixteenth note.



Still using a quality breath, perform the next exercise. Repeat each section three times. You must concentrate on slowing the air down as the amount of time for the exhale increases.



With your horn, breathe in on count 3 and out for 1 and 2. Start with the open horn, then after a number of measures close your horn (Slides all the way out and all valves down). *From Arnold Jacobs*

Trombone

Open Horn Closed Horn

8 Open Horn Closed Horn Open Horn

16 Closed Horn Open Closed Open

22 Closed Open Closed Open Closed

# Slow Lip Slurs

Trombone

Russ Zokaite



Down  
by Seven

# Fast Slurs

Russ Zokaites

Trombone

Edwards  
Down by half step

Edwards  
Down by half step

Edwards  
Etc.

Zokaites  
Down by half step

Arnow  
Etc.

Zokaites  
Etc.

# Articulation and Scales

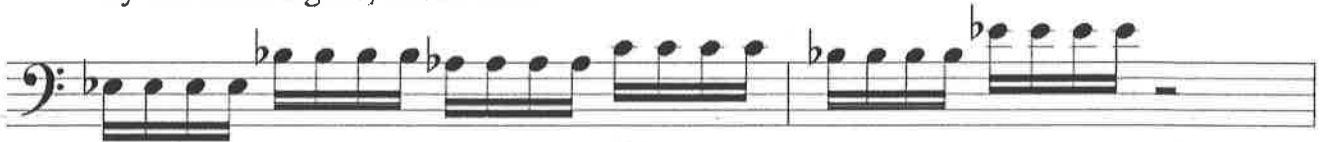
for Trombone

Russ Zokaites

Repeated notes



Try the same figure, backwards



Scales



Play them faster



Combine repeated notes and scales



# Melody and Tuning

Trombone

Russ Zokaites

## G Pentatonic Scale



## Example Improvised Melody



## D Pentatonic Scale



## Example Improvised Melody



Copland



Berkowitz

