

Trombone

Quick Overview



Trombone and Euphonium Studio

Equipment

Trombones come in a variety of sizes, voice-parts, and manufacturer quality. Our family includes soprano, alto, tenor, bass, and contrabass instruments. However, you will likely only work with tenor and bass trombones as a middle or high school band director. We sort instruments by bore size (the diameter of the cylindrical pipe).

.500 The Peashooter: Small bore horns are typical for beginning students and jazz trombonists. The actual bore size can vary between .495-.525. Bell size is also small 7.5-8.5 inches. Please use these horns in a jazz setting for advanced students.

.547 Symphonic Horn: Modern trombonists use a large bored symphonic horn. These come in a variety of sizes, however .547 is the most common bore size. Use these horns for your wind ensemble, symphony orchestra, or for those students seeking further study.

.562 Bass Trombone: Bass Trombones are at the same pitch level as the smaller tenor trombones. However, the large bore size and bell produce a rich tone. Please do not start students on bass trombone until they have an advanced understanding of the trombone in general. (On a side note, the bass trombone is a trombone and should be able to perform in the same register as the tenor trombone. Encourage your students to use the standard tenor trombone versions of etudes, scale exercises, etc..)

F-Attachment: A trigger trombone facilitates technique in the low register. This is for Bb, B, and C at the bottom of the staff and below the staff. The bore size of the instrument is much more important for sound quality. Make sure the f-attachment is attached to a large bore horn.

ExtendaBone: extendabone is a slide extension handle! <https://extendabone.com>

Standard brands: Conn 88H, Bach 42, Shires Q-series, King 2B, or King 3B

Standard Mouthpieces: Small Bore: 12C/6.5AL, Large Bore: Bach 5G, Bass: Bach 59

Breathing

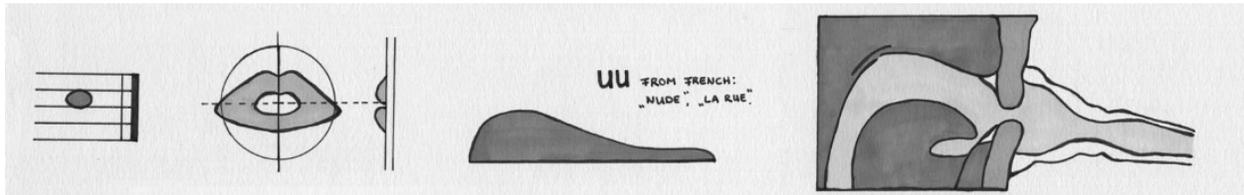
- 1) Inhale, turn around, exhale, consistent exhale
- 2) Match the inhale and exhale (breath in the way you want to blow out)
- 3) Use a target when doing breathing exercises (paper, pinwheel)

Speed: Fast for high notes, slow for low notes

Volume: More air for loud notes, less air for softer notes

Constancy is key! **Keep the air moving!**

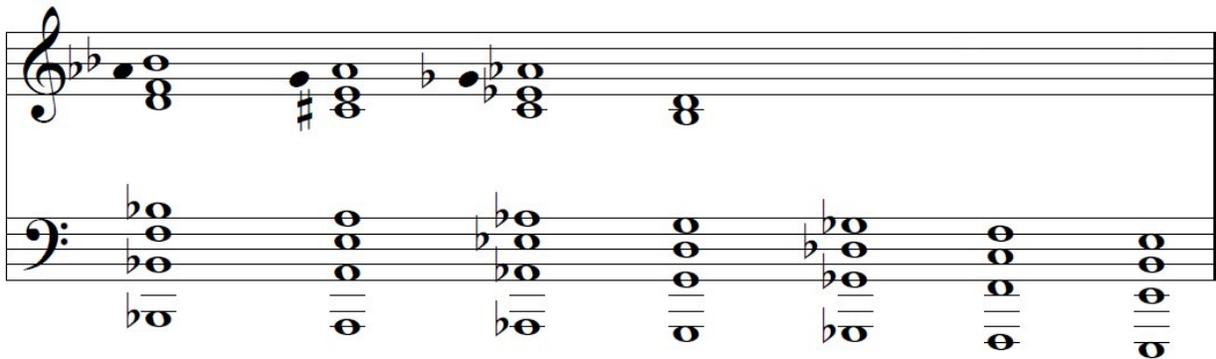
Embouchure



KISS: The mouthpiece should be placed 50/50 upper/lower lip. AND have a downward angle. The mouthpiece should have a natural angle that matches the teeth position with a relaxed jaw. DO NOT allow students to play with an upward angle unless they have an extreme underbite.

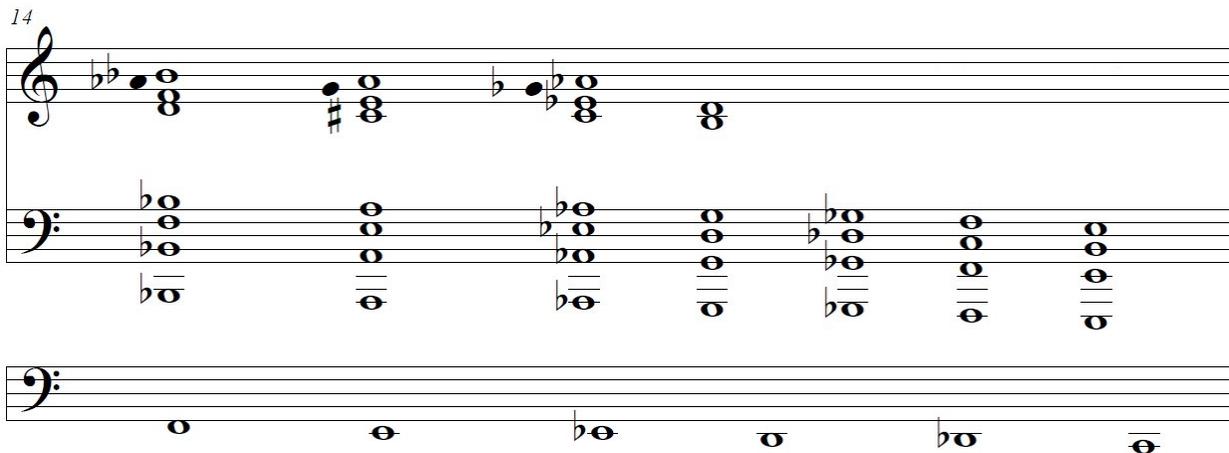
The corners should be firm as if saying the letter “m” and the chin should be pointed down.

Overtone series



Trigger register

14



The trigger register only has 6 slide positions. Starting with low Eb, the positions need to be moved significantly lower in the slide. You can see the approximate adjustments here.

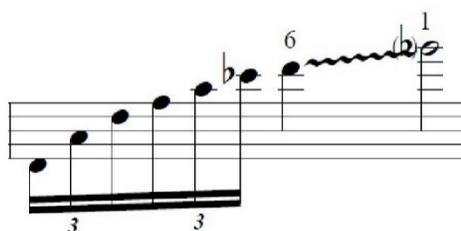
High Register

Hearing the Pitch: Select an easy melody that can be transposed up by step. You will be more accurate with intonation. The horn and your air will respond in a more natural way. You can use a five-note pattern, scales, arpeggios, or a simple tune. Here is an example from Schlabach.

13



Glissing-up: This exercise helps reduce mouthpiece pressure and gives the performer time to speed up their air. Starting on low F rip up to F two ledger lines above the staff. Then gliss up by step. Speed up your air as you go higher. Use a fermata to see how long you can stay on a given pitch.



Legato is the most wanting technique among young musicians. On the trombone you need a fast slide, consistent exhale, and a La or Lu syllable. When you hear the gliss sound, please remind your trombonist to move quickly between notes!

Common Pitfalls

Hand Slide Care: The hand slide is the most important part of the trombone. Remember, when a valved musician moves a half step, they only move their fingers, a trombonist might have to move their arm over three feet! **The slide must be working and clean!**

The slide should be washed with dish soap and luke warm water. A plastic-coated cleaning snake is best for scrubbing the inner and outer tubes.

Dings, bends, and miss-alignments will all cause issues with the slide. These must be fixed immediately. Your trombonists will stop the slide at a ding, or grimy area and this will determine intonation! Clean slides = more in tune trombones!

Ear Training: We find a slide position by using our ear and through muscle memory. The ear must be developed along with ability on the horn. Teaching your students to hear whole/half steps, scales, and intervals will help your trombonists!

Fresno Area Trombone Teachers:

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Fresno State Trombone Students ready to start teaching private lessons:

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