

## Trumpet Lessons 101

### I. Why do you want to play the trumpet?

- I like the sound.
- I like what the trumpet looks like.
- I like listening to great trumpet players like \_\_\_\_\_.
- I like \_\_\_\_\_ music which features trumpet.
- I want to be like my \_\_\_\_\_ who plays the trumpet.
- I was encouraged to play it by \_\_\_\_\_.

No matter what inspired you to choose the trumpet, you will find learning how to play it can be one of the most exciting and rewarding ventures in life. Before we begin to play the trumpet, let's explore its long and exciting history.



### II. History of the Trumpet

The origin of the trumpet can be traced back thousands of years to ancient civilizations around 2000 B.C. The early trumpets were long cylindrical-shaped devices made from animal horns, metal or wood. Ancient civilizations that used early models of the trumpet included Israel, Egypt, Greece, Rome and many nations of Asia and Africa. Many of these early trumpets were used for wartime functions and in religious ceremonies and occasionally for musical purposes. In fact, it is believed that the trumpets of antiquity possessed little ability to produce any real musical sounds outside of low foghorn-like calls.



Greek musician playing a Salpinx

In fact, the Israelites were the only people that placed a high honor on the position of the trumpet player, with priests set as those designated to play the instruments. From approximately the time of

the fall of Rome in 476 A.D. to the Middle Ages, the trumpet saw very little advancement in its makeup and cultural position. During the Middle Ages, around 1400 A.D., the trumpet began to be used more in church settings and played a small part in some musical venues.



Baroque trumpet replica

With the rise of the Baroque revival of the arts in Europe beginning in 1580, music began to take on a more significant role in the lives of royals and the common people of the day. Special guilds of trumpet players were formed in Italy and throughout Europe. The art of trumpet playing was at an all-time high in the Baroque period, as instruction manuals on performance techniques and practices were published.

Then in 1796, Joseph Haydn composed his Trumpet Concerto in Eb for his friend Viennese trumpet player Anton Weidinger and his new invention the keyed trumpet. The keyed trumpet was the first trumpet that could play the entire chromatic scale.

In 1814, the first valve system was invented in Germany by Heinrich Stozel. Then in 1825, the first valved cornets appeared and would become a major player in the trumpet family for the rest of the century. With its more refined tone and the ability to handle more demanding music than its trumpet counterparts, the cornet not only became popular in some orchestral circles, but also became a mainstay in military bands and drum and bugle corps.

The trumpet and cornet continued to become more prominent in the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the rise of jazz and other popular music styles by artists like Louis Armstrong. During the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the trumpet took on its final form that we use today.



Clark Terry playing the flugelhorn

### III. Important Trumpeters (listed in alphabetical order)

#### CLASSICAL:

Herbert L. Clarke (1867-1945) – Father of the cornet  
Rafael Mendez (1906-1981) – Legendary technical master  
Bud Herseth (1921-2013) – Chicago Symphony Orchestra  
Maurice Andre (1933-2012) – Helped establish the piccolo trumpet  
Ray Mase – American Brass Quintet & soloist  
Phil Smith (1952) – New York Philharmonic  
Wynton Marsalis (1961) – Classical and Jazz artist  
Hakan Hardenberger (1961) - Soloist  
Allison Balsom (1978) - Soloist  
Tine Thing Helseth (1987) - Soloist

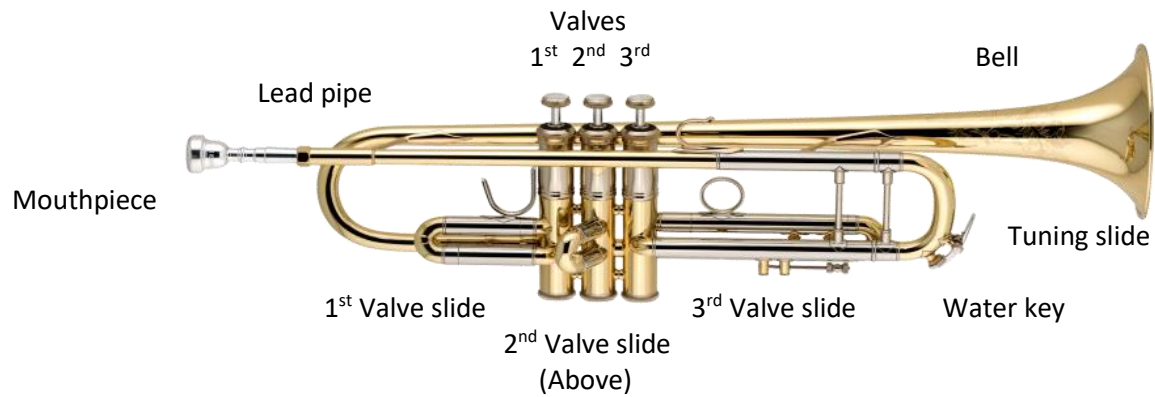
#### JAZZ:

Louis Armstrong (1901-1971) – Father of Jazz  
Bix Beiderbecke (1903-1931) – Paul Whitman Orchestra  
Roy Eldridge (1911-1989) – Fletcher Henderson  
Dizzy Gillespie (1917-1993) – Co-originator of Bebop and technical virtuoso  
Miles Davis (1926-1991) – Stylistic innovator of Cool, Modal & Jazz Rock  
Maynard Ferguson (1928-2006) – Stan Kenton and his own band  
Clifford Brown (1930-1956) – Hard bop technical virtuoso  
Lee Morgan (1938-1972) – Dizzy Gillespie, Hard bop & blues master  
Freddie Hubbard (1938-2008) – Hard bop and Jazz Rock virtuoso  
Chuck Mangione (1940) – Father of Smooth Jazz. Popularized the flugelhorn  
Woody Shaw (1944-1989) – Harmonic solo innovator

#### RECORDING ARTISTS:

Chris Botti (1962) – Sting, Boston Pops & Yo-Yo Ma  
Chuck Findley (1947) – Buddy Rich and the Tonight Show with Jay Leno  
Roger Ingram (1957) – Harry Connick Jr. lead trumpet player  
Malcolm McNab (1943) – Performed on over 2000 film and television sound tracks  
Doc Severinsen (1927) – Tonight Show with Johnny Carson  
Allen Vizzutti (1952) – Educator, composer & performer

#### IV. Trumpet Basics



##### 1. How it works:

1. Air is blown through the mouthpiece
2. Air travels through the lead pipe to the valves
3. Air hits the valves and travels through the slide path altered by the depressed valves
4. Sound produced exits the bell

##### 2. Embouchure:

Definition - The way in which a musician applies the mouth to the mouthpiece of the instrument.



Pucker lips like a kissing position  
Tight corners of lips no puffy cheeks!



Mouthpiece centered on the lips

### 3. Breathing: AIR

Just like an athlete needs AIR to run or play a sport we must use AIR to play the trumpet.

Try running in place and pay close attention to how you breathe.

This is the type of breathing we must do when playing the trumpet – Relaxed and through the mouth

Relaxed Position  
No tension in upper body



Breathe from lower abdomen

1. Breathe in through the mouth
2. Think the word HO. You will sound like Darth Vader!
3. Always fill up with AIR – you will feel like you are going to pop.

### 4. Posture: When sitting or standing



Arms at about 45 degree angles  
Body Straight



Head position parallel to the ground  
Trumpet almost parallel with ground

## V. Beginnings Exercises

### 1. Breathing

Begin with practicing breathing by taking in deep breathes for one count and releasing the air for 4 seconds. Repeat this pattern a dozen times or so to help release tension in your body. Take in air on beat 4: Count 1 – 2 – 3 – (4) Breathe in – (1) Breathe Out – 2 – 3 – 4. As you get more comfortable with this exercise increase your exhale time by 4 second increments to 16 seconds (4 – 8 – 12 - 16).

### 2. Lip Buzzing

Now practice buzzing your lips using the same exercise pattern as listed above. To achieve a good buzz sound practice keeping your lips very tight in a pucker position like when you spit out a seed. Repeat buzzing for a few minutes until you get a nice even sound then add 4 second increments to buzz times.

### 3. Mouthpiece Buzzing

Now take your mouthpiece and put it to your lips and buzz it in the same manner as in step 2. The sound you should get when buzzing the mouthpiece will be a deep hum. Repeat buzzing the mouthpiece until you get an even sound for 4 seconds then continue the pattern presented above. Make sure to keep a steady buzz sound.

### 4. Lead pipe Blowing

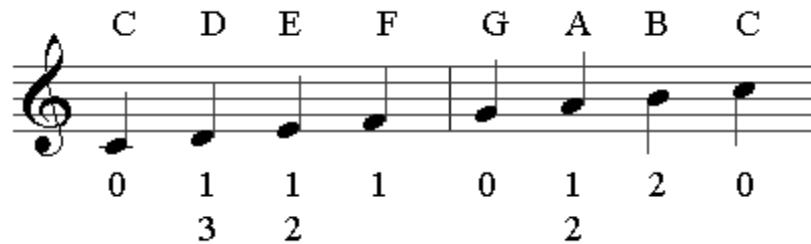
The last preparatory exercise is playing the lead pipe with the mouthpiece in the trumpet and the tuning slide removed. The note you are trying to sound is the F on the bottom of the staff on the Bb trumpet. The sound that you should get when blowing the lead pipe will remind you of a fog horn. Remember to try for a nice even sound. This exercise may be very difficult at first but try it for a couple of minutes then continue the pattern established above. Once you are comfortable with the F add the G above the staff and the D above that focusing on even effortless playing.



Staff lines with a treble clef sign (left) and F quarter note (black circle with stick)  
Play this F without the lead pipe

## VI. Long Tones

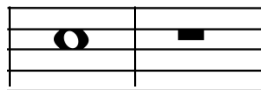
Now replace tuning slide and play long tones (4 seconds in length) starting on low C below the staff. Play at a moderate volume and rest between each note. Begin exercise by moving up the major scale below (C-D-E-F and so on). Once you gain confidence in this practice expanding long tones (C-B-C#-Bb-D and so on). More advanced players begin on middle G and expand unto highest attainable notes.



2 measure quarter note C major scale in treble clef with trumpet fingerings  
 (There are only seven fingering combinations on the trumpet)  
 0 – 2 – 1 – 12 – 23 – 13 – 123

### Before Playing Always Remember This Checklist:

1. Hear the sound in your head (Ear)
2. Breathe in through your mouth (Air)
3. Produce the sound with your lips (Technique)



Whole note Whole rest

Now play this whole note (4 beat) whole rest (4 beat) pattern between C and G (quarter note = 60).

1. C – Rest – C – Rest – C – Rest – C and so on
2. C – Rest – D – Rest – E – Rest – F – Rest – G – Rest

**Start memorizing the notes and the fingerings.**

**See fingering chart**

## VII. Tonguing

Definition – Sound (a note) distinctly on a wind instrument by interrupting the air flow with the tongue.

To tongue a note on the trumpet/cornet say the syllable “ta” – **Do not put your tongue between your teeth.** Try playing all notes using the “ta” syllable making sure to keep it light and crisp.

Continue the whole note pattern from the previous page then add the following exercises in half notes, quarter notes and so on.

1. C - C - C - C, D - D - D - D and so on
2. C - C - C - C - D, D - D - D - D - E, E - E - E - E - F and so on
3. C - C - C - D, D - D - D - E, E - E - E - F and so on
4. Up and down the major scale C - D - E - F - G - A - B - C - B - A - G - F - E - D - C

Practicing tonguing every day is an integral part in developing proper technique. Come up with different ways to practice tonguing like utilizing different types of scales or using chords and leaps. Advanced players add triple and double tonguing to your single tonguing arsenal. Study the *Arban's Complete Conservatory Method for Trumpet* section on multiple tonguing and regularly practice the triple and double-tonguing exercises. Make sure to be creative and change things up every day!

### VIII. Lip Slurs

Lip slurs are essential to the trumpeter's quest to becoming fluid and flexible on the trumpet. Lip slurs involve playing notes (overtones) in a sequence without using the tongue. Below is a chart with the overtone series and the corresponding fingerings for each.

#### Beginning exercises:

1. Start by slurring up in quarter notes (quarter note = 60) C - G - C then down G - C. Continue pattern through the seven-fingering sequence at a moderate volume.

Example: C - G - C - G - C, B - F# - B - F# - B and so on

2. Once comfortable with the exercise add a note to the pattern and play the entire sequence.

Example: C - G - C - E - C - G - C and so on

Continue to add notes to build range and flexibility. Advanced players should be able to play beyond the listed overtone series below.

The image displays two staves of musical notation in treble clef, illustrating overtone series for trumpet. The first staff shows four patterns: 'OPEN' (C), '2 (half step)' (G), '1 (whole step)' (C), and '1-2 (1-1/2 steps)' (E). The second staff shows three patterns: '2-3 (2 steps)' (G), '1-3 (2-1/2 steps)' (B), and '1-2-3 (3 steps)' (C). Each pattern consists of a sequence of notes on a five-line staff, with some notes marked with accidentals (sharps or flats) to indicate specific fingerings or pitch bends.



## IX. Warm-up Routine

Here is a suggested breakdown of a daily warm-up routine with example times and references to suggested resources. When developing a routine, it is important to be consistent in your practice, play in short segments with regular breaks and always stretch yourself outside of your comfort zone.

*Remember legendary basketball player Stephen Curry had to fail at being a great long-range shooter before he could become the expert he is today!*

### Set #1 20 - 30 minutes

1. **Mental Preparation (read Arbans opening section of the book)**
2. **Listening** (refer to list on Trumpet Lessons 101)
3. 4 Exercises from Trumpet Lessons 101
  - a. **Breathing**
  - b. **Lip Buzzing**
  - c. **Mouthpiece Buzzing**
  - d. **Lead pipe blowing on F**
4. **Expanding Long tones** - starting on G in the staff (play to highest possible note)
5. **Lip Slurs** - 3 and 4 note on Trumpet Lessons 101  
3 note - C - E - G - C - G - E - C  
4 note - C - E - G - C - E - C - G - E - C  
Continue up the overtone series as high as you can go 7, 8, 9 notes...  
Example exercises include Schlossberg #14 & 15 as good starting points for building effective lip slur exercises to develop your range and flexibility.

### Set #2 20 - 30 minutes

6. Chromatic Scales:  
**Clark Technical Studies** – First Study (Slurred - expanding from G in the staff)  
or *practice scale starting on note like low C then go up one octave and back down practice slow slur 1x and tongue 1x.*
7. **Major Scales** – 1<sup>st</sup> time slur – 2<sup>nd</sup> time tongue (quarter = 60)  
play the chord after each scale example C - E - G - B - C - B - G - E - C (135787531)  
play 4 each session be very focused on accuracy and memorizing the fingerings.

Set #3 20 - 30 minutes

8. **Arbans pages 11-14 exercises** - play 2 or 3 exercises then rest as long as you play. Repeat this pattern up to #17. On #9 and #10 try slurring exercises in addition to tonguing. Try to get comfortable recognizing the key of each and not looking at the fingerings.
9. **Band music** - from your book from your band. Play through a half dozen or so simple songs from the book making sure to follow instructions. Systematically break down each song for efficient practice.
10. **Arbans etudes** – beginning on page 191. Once comfortable with band music and reading Arbans early exercises start working on these short pieces. Pay close attention to notations, key, tempo...
11. **Warm Down** – Long tones and lip slurs - 5 min or less