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The Bare Necessities

CHAPTER 1

FINDING A 'PIECE OF THE ACTION

There is nothing more notable in Socrates than that he found time, when he was an old man, to learn music and dancing, and thought it time well spent.

—Michel de Montaigne (1533–1592)

What's Ahead:

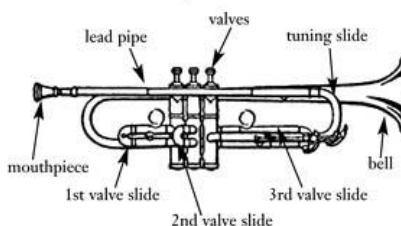
- How to find a good instrument
- Mouthpiece essentials
- How to find the right mouthpiece
- Mouthpiece size chart

GOT HORN?

You probably already have a trumpet or cornet, and if so, you still might want to read this section to be sure you've got a horn that's going to work well for you. Also, we trumpet players usually like to have many instruments (and even more mouthpieces!), so you can use this brief guide to help you when you buy your second horn.

Parts of the Trumpet You Should Know

When buying a horn, I've given you advice below about the valves, the lead pipe, and a couple other things. So you know what I'm talking about, here are the basic parts of the trumpet:



Consider Renting or Leasing

Most music stores will rent you an instrument, and many will put your rental fee towards the purchase of the instrument if you decide to stick with it. You can either rent a brand new instrument or, for a lesser fee, rent a used instrument. If you rent to own you may end up paying a little more than purchasing an instrument outright, but this is a good option if you're not sure you'll stick with this instrument or if you have limited savings to spend.

Where to Look

The end of a school year is a good time to look for a horn. This is often a time when instruments become available from those who have decided to discontinue their studies. Your local music store is also a good source of instruments for sale and information.

You don't have to buy a trumpet new from a music store. There are several alternatives available to you and with many of them you'll save some cash. Following is a list of some options along with pros and cons about the choice.

CHAPTER 8

LIP SLURS AND THE ORAL CAVITY

Smile—it's the second best thing you can do with your lips.

—Anonymous

What's Ahead:

- Regular slur
- What is a lip slur?
- Lip slur techniques
- Lip slur exercises
- Lip slur method books

Terms to know:

lip slur: The technique of moving from one note to another using the same fingering without the use of the tongue.

oral cavity: The space inside your mouth and throat. Used to affect the sound you get on the horn.

WHAT IS A LIP SLUR?

On a wind instrument, a regular slur is two different notes smoothly connected using the air alone, no tonguing. This is usually an easy skill, but with brass instruments like trumpet, many notes share the same fingering. When one note of a slur shares the fingering with the next note of the slur, the change has to be made with the chops and the airstream alone. This is called a *lip slur*.

In a regular slur, like the first example below, fingerings are different from one note to the next: Notice the fingerings change for each note.



Some lip slurs involve changing between notes with the same fingering without using the tongue. Here is an example. There is one regular slur in this example. Can you spot it? Notice the fingerings don't change for all but one note.

Track 36
[0:10]



Experiment with lip slurs to get a feel for what you can and can't do. Choose a valve combination and see how many notes you can get on that combination without using your tongue to change notes. Keep the air steady. Trying to figure out for yourself how to do lip slurs will help you understand what you need to learn.

different ways. If you see a standard jazz melody written out, the version you hear Miles Davis, Freddie Hubbard, or Clifford Brown play will probably be quite different from what is on the page. Music is *not* notes on a page.

The written music for “Dark Eyes” below is written in the *lead sheet* style. This means that what you see and what you hear will be slightly different. The notes you see are a simplified version of the melody you hear on the recording. If you play the notes exactly as they are on the page, you will sound fine. Once you get the fingering down, try to play along with the CD to get the other little details. For support go to www.sol-ut.com.

After the melody is played two times, the players get to *improvise*, which means one player at a time (in this case it’s me on trumpet and then Sean on piano) make up whatever they want. After the improvised solos are finished, the melody comes back again and the tune ends. This is the standard way many jazz tunes are played.



Dark Eyes Russian Cabaret Song

B7 Em

2 1 2 0 2 1 2

6 B7 Cmaj7 Am

1 2 3 2 0 2 1 2 0 1 2

11 Em B7 Em

17 B7 Em B7

2 1 2 0 2 0 2 0 2

23 Cmaj7 Am

2 0 2 0 1 2

28 Em B7 Em

Fan 3rd valve

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Sources for Further Study

There are *thousands* of song books available to you either online or from your local music store. Even better would be for you to sit down with your favorite recordings and learn to play them by ear. Clark Terry, a jazz trumpet legend, said about the process of learning to play, “Imitate, assimilate, innovate.” The *best* way to imitate is to listen and learn the music by ear. It’s tough at first, but rewarding. Check out your music collection!

SCOOPS, DOITS, RIPS, FALLS, AND THE HORSE WHINNY

All of those strange words in the title of this section use the same technique, the *half valve*. Just like the name implies, to do it you push the valve or valves down halfway and play. It's that simple. Try it.

One of the best ways to get your trumpet talking is to use the half-valve technique. You've probably already done this accidentally when not pounding your valves down or maybe when a valve is stuck or slow coming up. Done accidentally it's not a good thing because most of the time you want note changes to be clean. The half-valve technique is great to use if you want to give your sound a more vocal quality.

One of the terms you'll see used in this section is *glissando*, which is a long smooth slide from one note to another, either upwards or downwards. *Slide* is another name for glissando. Think of a trombone playing a low note with the slide (different use of the word) fully extended. With a continuous sound, the slide is pulled in. The sound rises smoothly upwards. A downward slide on trombone sounds like a dive-bombing plane. Two other instruments that can easily produce a smooth glissando are voice and violin. On trumpet, a glissando is done with the half valve.



trombone slide

The half-valve technique bypasses the horn's ability to "lock in" to the pitches of the overtone series. This allows you to make a smooth glissando from a low note to a high note or vice versa. You can do a glissando with just one valve halfway down, two valves halfway down, or all three.

With all of these half-valve techniques, you've got to use a *lot* of air to make the sound stand out. Half-valve notes are much quieter than a regularly fingered note, so to make them heard you really have to blow!

Try the following. Start at a low pitch with all three valves halfway down. Make the sound go steadily upwards as far as you can, then come back down. Keep your air moving. Try it with only the first valve halfway down, then only the second valve halfway down, first and second, third and third, first and third, etc. This is the basis of all the specific techniques we'll get to next.

Just like with any special technique, a little goes a long way. Be wary of overusing this or any special technique. Overuse makes the effect less dramatic.

The Scoop

Try this. Play an F (first valve) and go to a G (open), but let your first valve come up *very* slowly. Blow steadily through the change. Did you hear that wonderful smear from the F to the G? Try it again and emphasize the smear by blowing a little harder when the valve is between notes. You can help the smear by bending the pitch with your chops as you make the change.

When you use this half-valve trick just before a note, it's called a *scoop*. Scoops are a great way to ease into a pitch and are an effective device to use while playing a melody or improvising a solo. You can do a scoop with one valve halfway down before a note, two valves halfway down, or all three halfway down. As you approach where the note falls in the rhythm, gradually let your valves come up. A scoop doesn't change the rhythm of the note at all, so you've got to start the scoop a little bit early (half of a beat or less). Starting before the note in this way doesn't alter the rhythmic placement of the scooped note. Here's what a scoop looks like written down.



In this example, the note to be scooped is on beat 4, so the scoop starts just *before* beat 4. This way once you do get to beat 4, the note is there, just as it should be.

CHAPTER 18

TRUMPET LUMINARIES

Be humble, for the worst thing in the world is of the same stuff as you. Be confident, for the stars are of the same stuff as you.

—Nicholai Velimirovic (1881–1956)

What's Ahead:

- Cornet masters
- Orchestral masters
- Classical solo masters
- Jazz masters
- Present-day luminaries

THE BEST OF THE BEST

In this chapter you may find several of the teachers you need. One of the very best ways to educate yourself is to listen, listen, listen, and then listen some more. With the exception of many of the early masters, all of these players have laid down a lot of tracks on a lot of albums. Buy them, listen to them, learn the music if you like it. Play with your favorite recordings no matter what style or what instruments are used.

The trumpet players in this chapter will be broken down stylistically. Choosing which players to include was difficult, and in order to keep this chapter shorter than it threatens to be, I've included only the most well-known or most deserving (in my opinion of course) players. My humblest apologies to you if I've left out one of your favorite players.

THE CORNET MASTERS

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, bands like John Phillip Sousa's were incredibly popular. They specialized in concert marches but played a wide variety of other light classical and original music. Remember there were no radio broadcasts until after 1920 and even at that time only relatively wealthy people had record players.

One of the primary instruments at the time was the cornet and there were many virtuosi. Here are a few in rough chronological order.

Jean Baptiste Arban (1825–1899)

Yes, this is the J.B. Arban who wrote the Arban book, the "bible" for trumpet players around the world. Nobody alive today has heard Mr. Arban, because he was born in France in 1825 and after what must have been a whole lot of practice, he had a great career as a cornet soloist. He then became a professor at the Paris Conservatory at age 32. Three years later he produced his "Cornet Method," the standard text for all brass players from cornet to tuba for the next 144 years, and it's a good bet the book will be used for a long time to come. If you don't have one, go get one.

