



Rhythm Savvy

Rhythm puzzles for trombone

Michael Lake
altobone.com

bass clef edition

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Introduction

The idea for this book has been with me for a while. In part because I believe rhythm to be the single most important part of music and also because time and rhythm have always been intuitive for me—much more than harmony or trombone technique.

We are steeped in rhythm, and not just in music. The yearly orbit of the earth around the sun, the monthly orbit of the moon around the earth, and the daily rotation of the earth all provide an evolving rhythm within which we wake up to each day. Your sleep cycles, breathing, and heartbeat are the rhythms that govern your life. Without those long and short rhythmic cycles, life as we know it would cease.

Rhythm Savvy is a method for strengthening your rhythmic skills – the pulse driving the feel and spirit of your music. Rhythm is the most fundamental aspect of music. It's far easier to eliminate harmony or melody than rhythm. Think of any great musician – jazz, classical or otherwise who lacks great time and an impeccable sense of rhythm. You won't find one.

Given the role of rhythm, command over it as a musician is required. A classical musician needs a strong sense of the beat and a good facility with rhythm. For my low brass friends sitting in the back of the orchestra, they perform slightly ahead of the beat so that their notes will arrive to the listener with the rest of the orchestra.

I believe that jazz musicians have the most challenging rhythmic tasks. They play a variety of styles, each with their own note placement relative to the metronome. For an improviser, rhythmic skills are put to a higher test because they must not only perform within the particular musical style but create melodies and phrases each containing their own rhythms.

This book breaks rhythm down into three separate but related types of rhythm. I am dedicating a section to each:

1. **Metronomic rhythm** - Playing notes and rhythms relative to a steady metronomic beat.
2. **Groove rhythm** - Playing steady rhythm based upon a particular musical style. While metronomic rhythm is precise note placement relative to a clock, groove rhythm is creating a certain feel or emotion from your deliberate placement of notes and phrases. Consider the precision of a Sousa march as apposed to Basie's laid back groove of *Lil' Darlin*.
3. **Phrase rhythm** - While metronomic and groove rhythm focus on individual notes, phrase rhythm examines entire phrases and improvised solos. Phrase rhythm is also the ability, within improvisation, to land well on modulations within the song form and to lets you time your arrival at the bridge of a song or the end of the entire form.

To make this challenging material fun, I've built this book as a collection of rhythmic puzzles. I may call them exercises in the book, but in truth they are very unique puzzles that will test and strengthen your rhythmic ingenuity and performance.

Train your brain to get the most from this (or any) book

Your brain is an amazing organ. Three pounds of tissue contain more neural connections than stars in the known universe. And we know of a LOT of stars! By learning and practicing something new, you build new connections in your brain that after a while develop into habits—activities like driving a car or operating software without much thought just like playing trombone with a beautiful groove in your unique style.

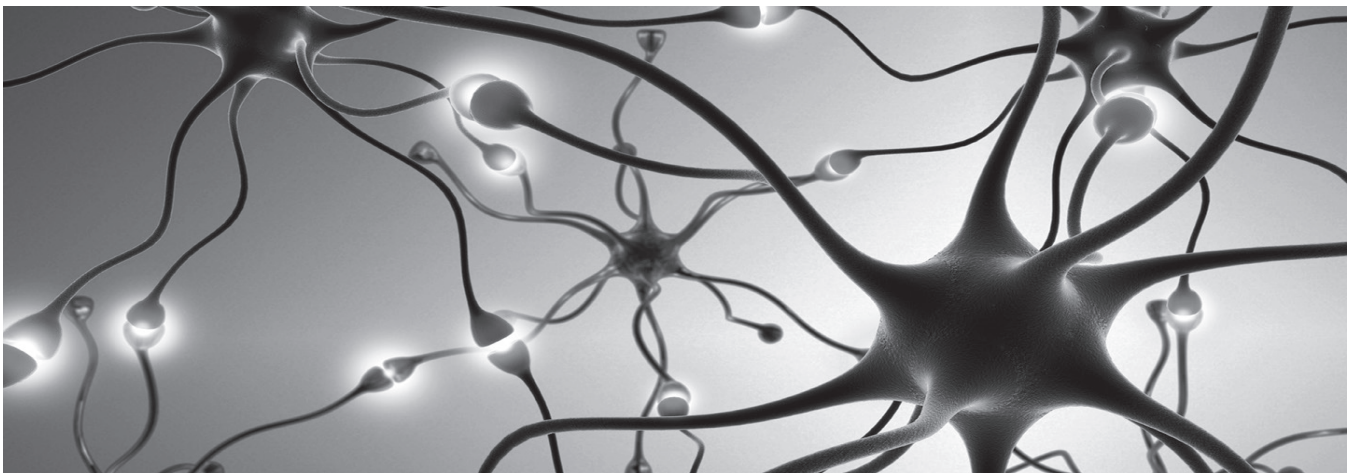
Don't worry, this isn't a book on brain surgery, but take the next minute to better understand how your brain can rewire/reprogram itself to turn the content of this book into you playing beyond your expectations.

Cells that fire together wire together

A new thought or new way of doing something fires electrical signals across a tiny gap into a neighboring nerve cell. Keep repeating that activity and eventually that gap closes and becomes a “hardwired” path. Think of it as the difference between an electrical spark firing across the air into a conductor and that same energy speeding down a thick copper wire. Your brain craves efficiency and it will build those new pathways every time you give it a reason to do so, like when you play subdivisions of five within a four beat metronome click and vice versa (yes, you'll get to that on page 23).

Repeat those activities enough and your brain will build insulation known as a myelin sheath around those connections to protect and further insure that efficiency of the energy pathway. All this is like the first time you off-road in your vehicle. You leave light tire tracks the first time. Follow that same path and the tire tracks deepen until you've worn a channel into the dirt. With those channels deep enough, your tires follow along without steering. Autopilot. Wouldn't it be nice for things you currently struggle with not to only improve, but become a habit? A habit of excellence.

Your brain cannot help but operate this way as long as you provide it with a new activity or new way of doing something. So one reading of this book or listen to the audio files will not automatically elevate your playing. But play, record yourself, and listen back critically enough over that Bossa groove on page 49 and your brain will eventually say, “I've got this. Leave it to me. You go concentrate on something else.”



Finding and playing the audio files

Nearly 100 audio files are available to you as examples and accompaniments throughout this book. These sound files are a fundamental asset to this book and great tool for helping you strengthen your sense of time and rhythm.

Each time a soundfile is available for an exercise or example, the following symbol appears along with the name of the soundfile to its right:



Before and after rhythm proficiency - ML playing

The soundfiles are all located within a playlist on soundcloud.com. The address for that playlist is:

<https://soundcloud.com/mlake/sets/rhythm-savvy>

Once you are in that playlist, you will see all the soundfiles within this book. Simply select the soundfile to begin playing the particular exercise or example referenced within this book.

If you lack an internet connection that feeds a sound system, find a fast connection and download some or all of the files into a folder. Then feed them through your sound system which could be everything from a state-of-the-art stereo to an iPhone. Upon selecting a sound file on the Soundcloud playlist, click to the right of the file (three dots) and select *Download* from the dropdown options.



You can also download the complete playlist as a .zip file containing each soundfile as an mp3.

That address is: bit.ly/rhythm-savvy-mp3-files

The very bottom of the playlist page displays some controls for going to the file start, play/pause on current file and next file. There is also a cycle link that will repeat the current file if you want to keep cycling through it. This is an important feature that will allow you to continually practice a particular exercise by cycling through its file.



Recording yourself as you work through the book

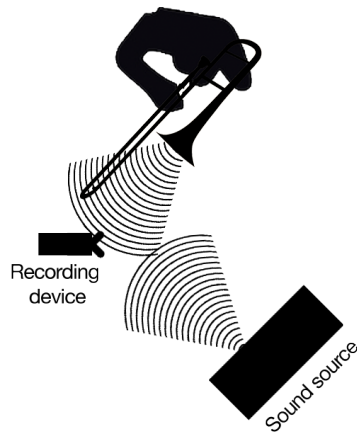
Throughout this book, I will remind you to record and then critically listen back to the result. I've spent enough time earlier in the book selling you on why, now let's talk about how.

If you have a full recording setup with high quality mics, good mic preamps, and a state-of-the-art DAW, you can skip this section since you probably know how to record yourself. Now, just do it!

If you need a little help in this area, let me start by saying that you DON'T need a full recording setup in order to record yourself for purposes of this book and your routine practicing. An iPhone with a cheap recording app can do very nicely. It won't make you sound like a hit record, but that is not the point. You want to hear yourself well enough to hear what you played well and what you need to improve.

The better your recording gear, however, the more nuance you'll hear in your playing, and that will benefit you. More sensitive gear will help you hear your attacks and tone better but for hearing how accurately you're playing with a click or how well timed your improvised phrases are, simple and cheap work just fine.

The important thing is to position yourself and the sound source (metronome, audio speakers playing sound files, etc.) so that you can clearly hear both. To demonstrate proximity I used this diagram in *Trombone Improvisation Savvy*:



High quality recording is not your main objective. As long as you can clearly hear yourself along with the music source, your recording needs are met. Try recording in a somewhat dead room. A smaller room with furniture and rugs will dampen the reverberation. Reverb is a beautiful thing when it is controlled, but a smartphone or other inexpensive recorder sitting in the middle of a reverberant space will not give you a clear recording, especially if you are performing over a sound file like the exercises within this book.

If you'd like a high quality digital stereo recorder that won't break the bank, try the Zoom H6. For \$350, it will record you, your band, and other sources very nicely. (I'm not a reseller, just a satisfied owner.)

Recording tips

- Choose a recording device that is simple for you to operate.
- Play close enough to the microphone for a clear recording.
- Try to achieve a balance for hearing both you and the sound source as clearly as possible.
- Record in a room without a lot of reverberation.
- Taking all this into consideration, try to have a recording environment that is as hassle-free as possible.

If recording yourself is a easy effort, you will do it more often.



Zoom h6

Metronomic Rhythm



*"But you can't extend, or go beyond any point musically,
without the basic fundamentals."*

- Chico Hamilton

Metronomic rhythm is the core pulse of music, the steady heartbeat of music that drives melody and harmony. Time can change within a piece of music, but regardless of that change, the pulse continues within the context of the music.

The foundation to good time and a well developed sense of rhythm is the basic ability to play note-accurate over a steady beat. That beat can be a metronome, a world-class drummer, or anything in between. Your goal is not to turn into a metronome, but rather a musician with good time performing the pulse or groove of any music you play. It's a fundamental skill for any musician.

The most basic exercise with which to begin this section is eighth note patterns over a quarter note pulse. I'll assume that you own a metronome or some sort of click generator on a phone app or Digital Audio Workstation. For each exercise, I'll recommend a starting tempo, but feel free to adjust the tempo to suit.

With any metronomic exercise, trombone players have an additional challenge or opportunity. They must articulate the notes in time which requires a certain facility with their tongue and embouchure. It's beyond the scope of this book to offer embouchure and articulation methods, but rest assured that playing the exercises with a good basic technique will certainly build your articulation skills.

When listening back to your playing, keep in mind that a lag or inconsistency in time can be due to technique as much as your inner sense of time. The same can be said for piano, string or percussion players, but wind players enjoy an extra layer of complication to playing with good time. As a wind player, once you hear a persistent dragging in your playing, remove the horn and articulate the exercises using only your tongue. Is your time and rhythm better without the horn? If so, guess what you can also be working on?

Try also tapping with your hand or fingers in time with a click. Record that and listen back. How's your time? I had a chance to try that while recording Moment's Notice for my CD *Roads Less Traveled*. I created the rhythm by slapping my thighs with my fingers. Weird, I know, but it provided me with an inexpensive percussionist!

There are many everyday things you can do to practice and evaluate your sense of time and rhythm. The time you're out for a walk, listen to the rhythm of your steps and subdivide them by two, four, five, seven or any division that you find fun and challenging.



Keeping time

The following section contains a variety of metronome click tempos and patterns. It's one thing to simply play with a steady metronome, so let's mix it up a bit. Starting with the first audio file of each tempo, you'll get a click that challenges you with longer and longer intervals between bars. Play a repeating note, scale, pattern, etude, or improvisation throughout the file keeping a steady tempo through the silence and returning clicks.

The files get progressively slower, and therefore, more difficult. Record yourself so that you can be objective about how steady your tempo was. Feel free to play straight notes or swing. Just keep the tempo.

Start by playing single notes or some very simple scale or pattern. Feel free to play more complex patterns or even etudes that you know well.

110 bpm



Bar of click very other bar @110



Bar of click every fourth bar @110



Bar of click every third bar @110



Bar of click every fifth bar @110

90 bpm



Bar of click very other bar @90



Bar of click every fourth bar @90



Bar of click every third bar @90



Bar of click every fifth bar @90

60 bpm



Bar of click very other bar @60



Bar of click every fourth bar @60



Bar of click every third bar @60



Bar of click every fifth bar @60



Maniacal metronome

Let's play with an odd metronome. Something less predictable. Something weird.

The Sound File *Maniacal Metronome 1* is a 86 bpm click track that does more than just repeat four clicks each measure. Every few measures you'll get six beats per measure for a single measure. So, you'll hear two bars of four then a bar of six, then back to four. It's not as hard as it sounds. You simply have to keep the steady tempo. That's the point of the exercise.

To make things easier, the file *Maniacal Metronome 1 - with kick* contains a steady quarter note kick as a constant reference to the quarter note pulse. The sound file *Maniacal Metronome 1 - no kick* will provide a track of just the click without the quarter note kick. Play along with the no kick version as soon as you can. (The kick is training wheels!)

Play eighth notes, or quarter notes if eighths are too difficult at the moment. If so, you'll move into eighth notes soon enough. Play single notes, scales, patterns, etudes, or jazz. If you want some suggestions as to what to play over this click, here are three:



Maniacal Metronome 1 - with kick



Maniacal Metronome 1 - no kick

#1

#2

#3

Morphing rhythm

This section provides practice reacting to evolving simple rhythmic patterns. Rather than playing the previous static rhythms, the next three sound files contain simple rhythmic patterns, but now they morph over time.

Each audio file consists of the exact same four notes played over a groove. Play those notes on your horn in unison or octave with the pattern. After a few repeats, that pattern changes and another variation on those four notes is played and lasts for another few repeats. Discover that new pattern as quickly as you can while it repeats a few times.

Mimic the synthesizer lead playing the pattern, and as the rhythm changes, lock in and play the new rhythm as quickly as possible so that you are again playing with the lead. The change often comes at odd times which makes thinking (listening) on your feet one of the points of this exercise.

If quickly picking up on the rhythms on your horn is difficult, sing the patterns. Follow the exercise as described about, but by singing.

The four note sequence is provided below for each of the three sound files.



Morphing Rhythm #1



Morphing Rhythm #2



Morphing Rhythm #3

What is the point of this exercise?

Strengthening your sense of rhythm requires that you quickly pick up on a rhythm you hear.

Better skilled drivers can instantly make adjustments to avoid obstacles. High-level athletes can quickly adapt to their opponent's moves. Part of their greater skill is their quick and accurate reaction to a variety of circumstances.

For a jazz player, these morphing rhythm exercises speed up your reactions to the rhythms you hear and improves your instincts.

For the non-improviser, these exercises build quicker reaction in sight-reading and rhythmic flexibility helping you with more complex music.



Groove

Rhythm



"Be yourself; everyone else is already taken."

- Oscar Wilde

Groove rhythm addresses the *style* of one's rhythm. The feel of it. It answers the question, what is the difference between a line from a classical pianist and one from Thelonious Monk? It also answers the more subtle question as to the difference between a phrase played by Paul Desmond and that same phrase played by Bird. It identifies where in time notes are placed and the dynamic emphases each is given.

Hundreds of pages could be dedicated to examining dozens of music styles or grooves from all over the world, but this section will focus mainly on jazz. It is for the musician who wishes to discover his or her voice relative to the jazz style and to learn how best to play their instrument consistent within the jazz idiom.

Perhaps I could have just written, "This section will teach you how to swing," but that's a tall order for a book so maybe I'm somewhat afraid to come right out and making that claiming. Second, I truly believe that each of us has a unique musical voice so I'm hesitant to prescribe the word "swing" to how everyone must sound, even for jazz.

Maybe we should have a conversation about the definition of swing. Cecil Taylor doesn't swing in the same way as Oscar Paterson. The same can be said for Ornette Coleman and Cannonball Adderley. How do *you* interpret the notes you play? This section will give you a chance to dive into the subject and come out with a little more clarity about your style and how best to more fully develop it.

I want to help you develop a confident jazz style to your playing. Even though going through this book will not immediately transform your musical personality, it will get you closer to the rhythmic feel you desire. The ideas and the exercises within this section will give you much to work on for as long as you wish to develop and strengthen this important aspect of your playing.



Syncopation

Not everything lands neatly on the downbeat. If you are a jazz or latin music player, most of what you play is syncopated.

Syncopation is a term for notes falling on unexpected parts of the beat - off beat. Think of it as a disturbance or interruption of the regular flow of rhythm. Syncopation is not just in jazz. It can be found in Handel, Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven. And Stravinski.

Listen to your improvised solos. Are your phrases starting and ending on the beat? How many of your notes are hitting the offbeat and how often are you at playing syncopated rhythms?

Set your metronome and play through these three and four bar repeated rhythmically notated syncopated phrases. Play any notes you wish within the written rhythms while listening for your groove and accuracy.

The sound file, *Dat Dere - ML playing variations on the A section* includes me talking through six variations of the first 8-bar A section. I'm demonstrating how note placement, dynamic emphasis, and articulation effect the outcome of the melody, and through exaggeration, not always in a good way.

Being skilled at using these three elements to project a pleasing and unique groove to one's playing takes years. But it starts with being aware of the role these elements play in the process and then having command of them so that you can use them as your musical personality sees fit.

When you first started playing trombone, you were probably taught to read exactly what is on the page using the marked rhythms, dynamics, and articulations. That was okay because you needed to learn the fundamentals. But now, you want to play a style of music (jazz, latin, rock, etc.) that allows some free musical expression, so how do you break free of your adherence to that straight precise phrasing you've become accustomed - or that rigid feel that lacks expression?

It begins with your awareness of the subtle and sometimes not so subtle elements of style. Play the sound file, *Dat Dere - ML playing variations on the A section*, and follow the instructions in my narration. As you listen to each variation, say out loud what you hear in order to be as definitive and specific as possible. For example, "*That sounded mechanical because there was very little variation between the articulation of each note.*" Or, "*I liked that because the dynamic variation of each note kept me interested*". Or, "*I liked that because I could follow the groove of the beat throughout even though there was a lot of rhythmic variation in the lines.*"

I don't want to put answers in your mouth but I do want you to understand specificity required for you to be aware of the elements involved in you playing a nice groove. What helped me grow musically throughout these past years has been writing books, teaching, and creating videos. Those activities force me to intensely focus on certain topics in a way that has improved my musical skills. Take this to another level and actually write down what you hear and be as specific as possible.



Dat Dere - ML playing variations on the A section



Phrase Rhythm



"What I have is a malevolent curiosity. That's what drives my need to write and what probably leads me to look at things a little askew. I do tend to take a different perspective from most people."

- David Bowie

Phrase rhythm is the pulse of musical phrases flowing through a complete performance. It requires a wider perspective. Hearing Bowie's *Space Oddity* proves the uniqueness of perspective Bowie refers to in the above quote.

The timing of phrases, their length, dynamic, and harmonic content result in the musical dance giving music its identity and character. Without the rhythm of phrases performed throughout a piece of music, the listener is left with little more than stale and predictable sound.

Since rhythmic patterns are composed and organized into written music, my concept and method of phrase rhythm pertains mainly to improvised solos where the performer can intentionally vary the length and emphasis of phrases in order to create interesting and satisfying music.

The length, structure and placement of phrases is not often discussed relative to jazz improvisation. With the focus on scales, patterns, and chords, phrase rhythm is often taken for granted. Listen to the great soloists and you will hear a pace and structure to their lines that defines the greatness of their jazz voice. From the laid back musical conversations of Miles, to the sweeping lines of perfect melodies of Bird, to the curious musings of Monk, the rhythm of their phrases was as unique as the notes they contained.

So, how do you learn rhythmic phrasing? First, you must be aware of it as a core component of improvisation. If the need for a breath constitutes the only reason for a break in the running of scales, patterns, and licks, phrase rhythm doesn't exist.

Skill in phrase rhythm requires practice as does proficiency with Metronomic and Groove Rhythms. The purpose of this chapter is to provide not just an illustration of good phrase rhythm but to give you exercises that can help develop an instinct for the timing of musical phrases throughout a solo.



Developing your feel for phrase lengths

Developing a stronger sense of phrase rhythm is what we will explore throughout this section. We'll work on helping you consciously and deliberately play phrases of varying lengths and attributes.

Rather than occupy your mind counting "One - 2,3,4, Two, 2,3,4, and so on. You are practicing the skill of feeling the four bars. By acquiring this sense of phrase length you free your mind to express better music.

In the following exercises, you will play one bar, two bar, four bar and eight bar phrases with a backing track. For each, I will play the phrase first, then you follow. We'll go back and forth throughout the sound file. If you want to practice this without my playing, use the *Spy Versus Spy - rhythm only* file. Start with the eight bars and progress to the shorter durations. eight and four bar phrases are easier than the shorter ones.

Mastering the performance of precise phrase lengths is a life-long endeavor so don't feel bad if you have difficulty:

- Feeling the length of the phrase within the exercise without counting
- Finishing your melodic idea within the allotted time
- Ending on time
- Creating an interesting melodic idea

Incorporate this into your daily practice. Even if you play only one of durations a couple times through, you'll be building your sense of phrase rhythm.



Spy Versus Spy - trading 8 bar phrases



Spy Versus Spy - trading 4 bar phrases



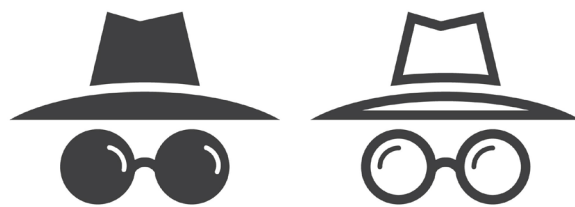
Spy Versus Spy - trading 2 bar phrases



Spy Versus Spy - trading 1 bar phrases



Spy Versus Spy - rhythm only



Phrase rhythm examples

Each improviser has their own sense of phrase rhythm, and the more accomplished musicians craft a solo rhythm that tells an interesting and very personal story.

The following three pages contain transcriptions, not of notes in a staff, but of lines illustrating phrases. Each solo is a classic representing an important piece of the jazz language. Listen to the solo as you follow along with the transcription. The link to the Youtube page is listed below along with the starting time of the transcribed portion.

Various length lines represent notes and their relative position on the graph represents their approximate pitch. In order to distinguish one phrase from the next, phrases are color coded using black and gray. Within any great solo, phrases are not distinct and separate entities, but rather musical blocks building on each other leading logically from one to the next. But for purposes of analysis and for learning the principles of phrase rhythm, each phrase within these great solos has been identified individually.

As you listen and follow along with the transcriptions, ask yourself:

- Am I hearing separate and distinct phrases as drawn in the solo illustrations? If so, how are they distinct?
- How does the player vary the length and pace of the phrases and do I hear the logic in that variation?
- Do the phrases build one to the next? Can you describe how?
- Is there a relationship between the length of phrases and their position within the form of the song?
- Do I hear the role that silence plays within these solos?

"Every sound perceived by the acute ear in the rhythm of the world about us can be represented musically. Some people wish above all to conform to the rules, I wish only to render what I can hear."

- Claude Debussy

The songs in the following transcriptions can be listened to on Youtube at these addresses:

1. **Miles Davis solo on *So What*** (*Kind of Blue*) starting at 1:31
bit.ly/altobone_so-what
2. **Sonny Rollins solo on *St. Thomas*** (*Saxophone Colossus*) starting at 1:32
bit.ly/altobone_st-thomas
3. **Dexter Gordon solo on *Darn That Dream*** (*Ballads*) starting at 3:20
bit.ly/altobone_darn-that-dream

SONY ROLLINS 3RD CHORUS ON ST. THOMAS

The musical score consists of seven staves, each divided into four measures by vertical bar lines. The notes are represented by short horizontal dashes. The first six staves use black dashes, and the seventh staff uses blue dashes. The notes are scattered across the staves, indicating a complex rhythmic structure.

Let's string phrases together in a more musical context.

The following exercises require you to improvise over set lengths but to tie them into each other for a complete 16 bar musical statement. A dark gray bar above each staff designates the length of each phrase. The first exercise maps out a two-bar phrase followed by another two-bar phrase followed by two four-bar phrases and ending with two one-bar phrases and a two bar phrase.

These are not meant as structures to be adhered to once you are performing. They are simply guidelines for this exercise.

Listen to the sound file *Phrase rhythm connection exercise 1 - ML playing*. My performance is played over the *Organ Trio Turnaround*, but you can use any musical backing you wish. Record yourself and listen back for how well you connected the phrases. In other words, did each phrase sound like a completely distinct idea or did one flow to the next? Does it feel like your phrases have a logical rhythm to them?



Phrase rhythm connection exercise 1 - ML playing



Organ trio turnaround - rhythm only

PHRASE RHYTHM CONNECTION EXERCISE 1

5

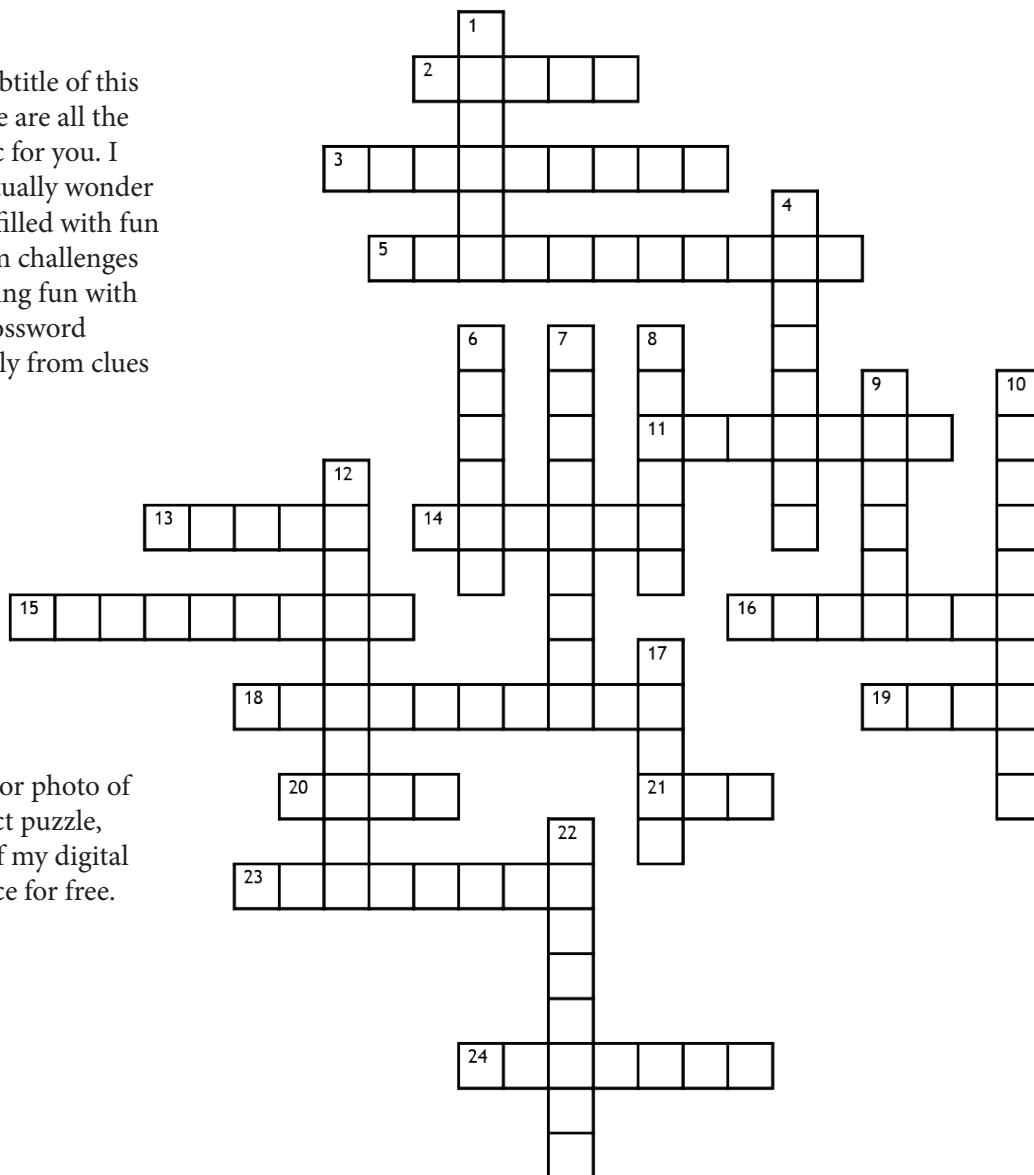
9

13



Rhythm Savvy Crossword Puzzle

In case you saw the subtitle of this book and asked, where are all the puzzles, here's a classic for you. I do hope you didn't actually wonder that since the book is filled with fun and interesting rhythm challenges that I hope you're having fun with as puzzles. Here's a crossword puzzle made exclusively from clues within this book.



If you send me a scan or photo of your completed correct puzzle, I'll give you any one of my digital products of your choice for free.

Send it to:
mlake@altobone.com

Across

- 2 Antonio Carlos Jobim learned what from Brazilian forest birds?
- 3 What type of path is created in the brain after repeated activity?
- 5 Name of the section under the Jazz Funeral sign
- 11 Name of the first pattern exercise called _____ Funk
- 13 Author of "Music and rhythm find their way into the secret places of the soul"
- 14 The third type of rhythm explored in the book
- 15 _____ Colossus
- 16 Last name of the poet quoted next to the phrase rhythm illustrations
- 18 Word in the center of the page six illustration
- 19 The first melodic rhythm exercise called _____ Habitat

- 20 Donald Fagen says *what* flies when you get a groove going?
- 21 One of the phrase length exercises: _____ versus _____

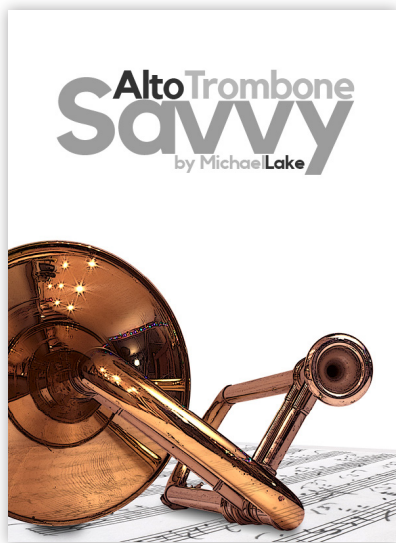
- 23 _____ metronome
- 24 The CD mentioned with Gerry Pagano and Doug Yeo

Down

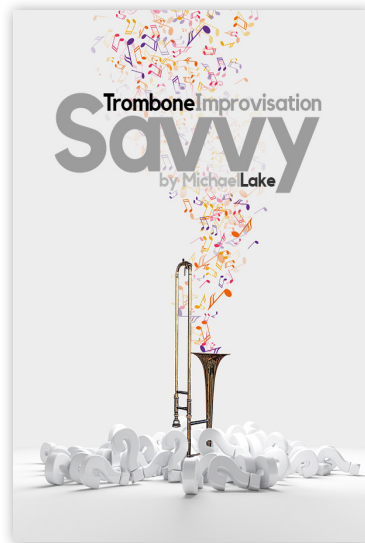
- 1 Dexter _____
- 4 Word used to describe evolving rhythm patterns on page 31
- 6 The name of this book: _____ Savvy
- 7 What Eleanor Catton believes really strongly in?
- 8 Linda Flor means Beautiful _____
- 9 Animal under the "Stupid Human tricks"
- 10 The rhythm type of section one
- 12 "Phrase rhythm _____ exercises" on pages 64-67
- 17 Name of the doctor quoted on page 19
- 22 The animal in the last phrase of the book's Dat Dere lyrics

Be more Savvy in all aspects of your playing.

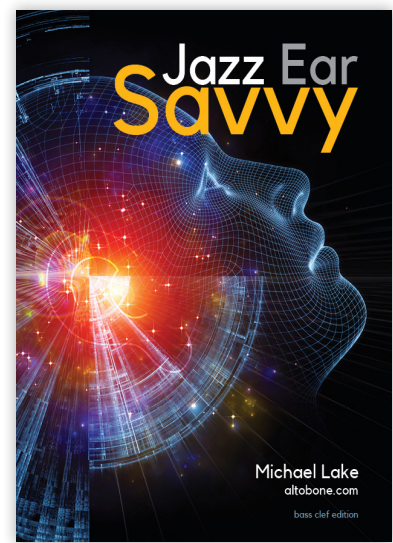
Each book within the altobone Savvy series builds your technique and performance skills like no other. Unique exercises backed by hundreds of sound files accessible on line and through download guide you through an enjoyable and challenging journey through discovering your ability to play beyond expectations.



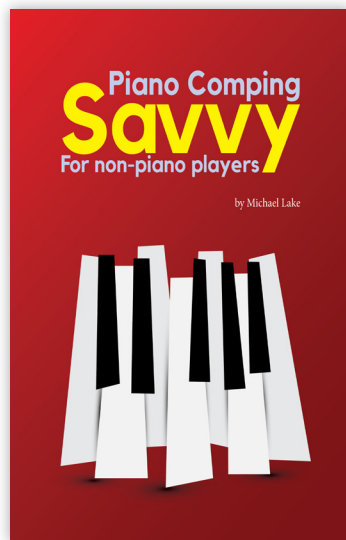
Alto Trombone Savvy



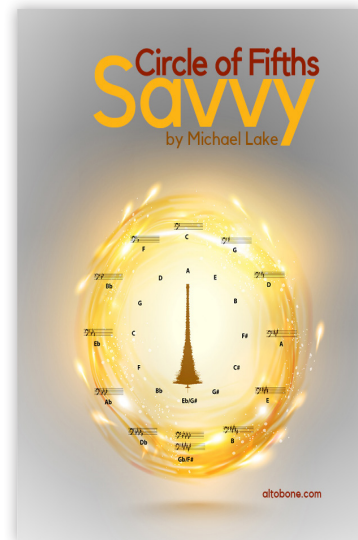
Trombone Improvisation Savvy



Jazz Ear Savvy



Piano Comping Savvy
for non-piano players



Circle of Fifths Savvy

All these books and much more are available at www.altobone.com

“In my personal musical journey, I’m discovering connections that are unleashing new capabilities in my musicianship. I’m thrilled to hear the same in the students and peers that are exercising the ideas within this book.”

-Michael Lake

Possibly the most fundamental and important skill of any musician is their sense of time and rhythm. In this rich collection of exercises, audio files, and ideas, Lake breaks down the study of rhythm into the categories of Metronomic, Groove, and Phrase.

Fully addressing each category, the book guides the reader /performer through an ever broadening journey starting with self discovery of their own rhythmic acuity and ending with an analysis and challenge of performing connecting phrases defining a rhythmically musical whole.

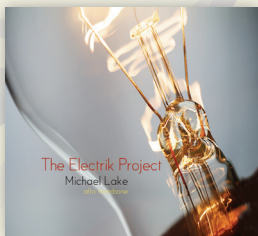
Within this work, you will discover:

- An accurate assessment of your own rhythmic sensibilities
- Beneficial and more enjoyable ways to play with a metronome
- A method for strengthening your performance skills in reacting to the rhythms around you
- Effective ways to model favorite players in order to develop a more musical feel to your playing
- A new way to think about the rhythm and pace of improvisation
- By recording and practice excellence, how you’ll gain the most from this book

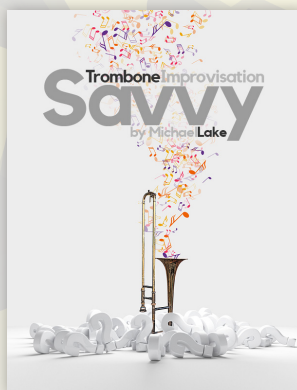
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Michael Lake