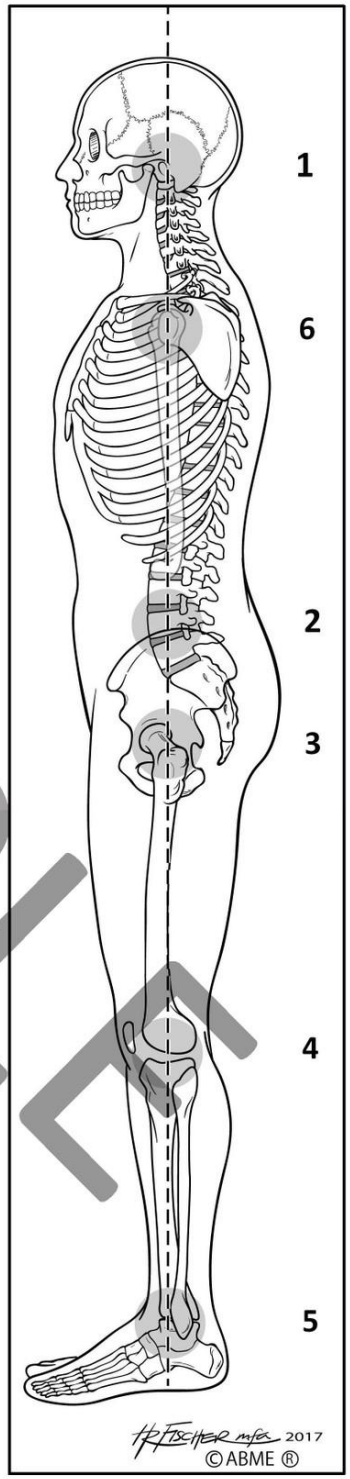
Standing Dynamic Balance

Image 2.1 shows the skeleton in standing dynamic balance. (Seated balance will be addressed on page 14.) The dotted line shows how the bones are organized around a central plumb line for efficient weight distribution in cooperation with gravity. The numbers refer to the gray circles in the image representing areas with clusters of proprioceptors (receptors which sense position, movement, and force). These six balance areas offer an excellent way to learn how to be balanced because an imbalance at any of these places can cause other parts of your body to compensate. By using your kinesthesia to learn about each area individually, you can learn to feel your weight being distributed efficiently through your bony structure and its associated connective tissue to the floor.

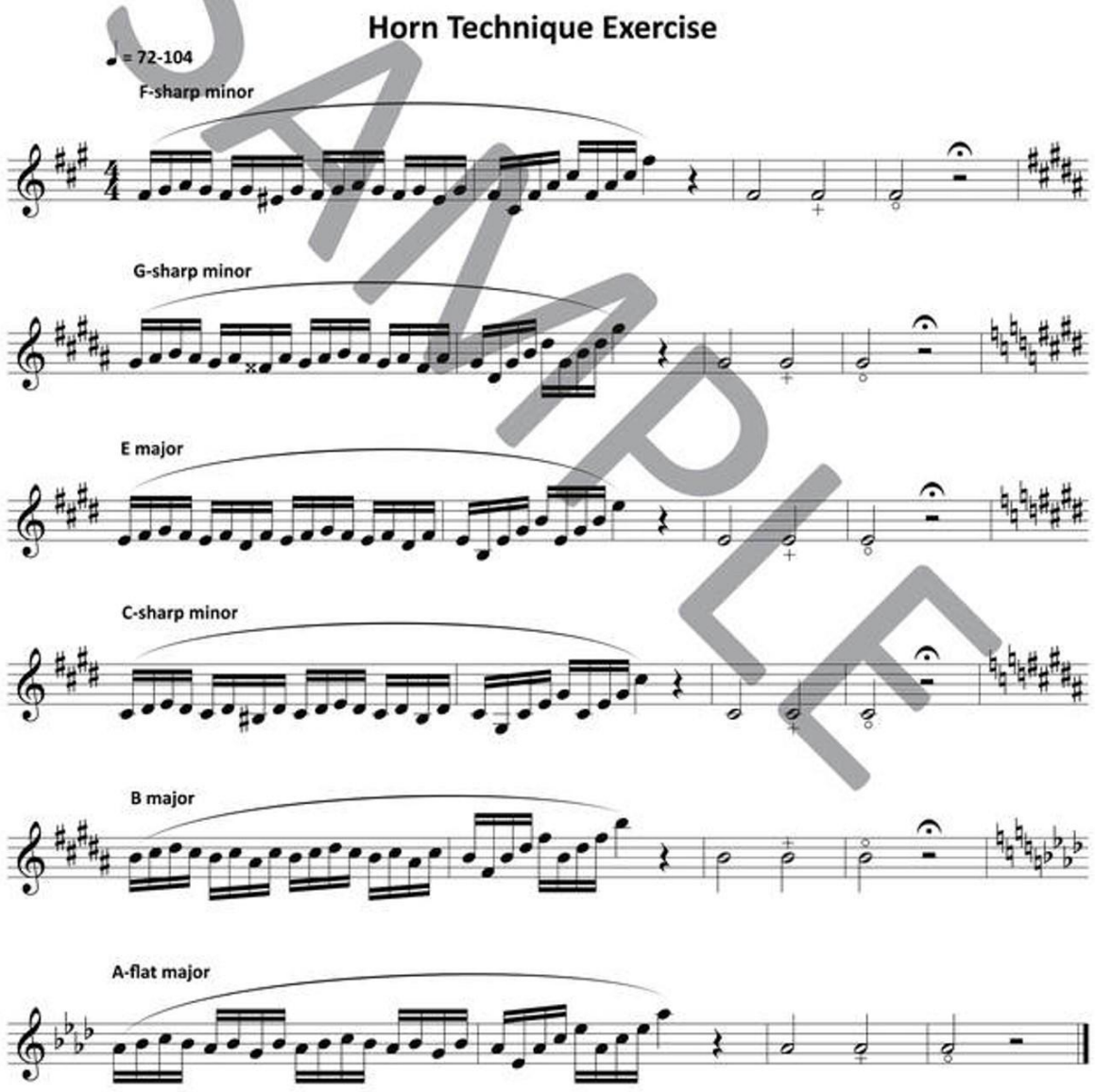
As you learn about each place of balance, try the Body Mapping activities described in the text. To further explain the places of balance, there are two videos at the end of this chapter—one for standing and one for sitting.



2.1 Standing dynamic balance

♪ This exercise serves as a capstone for the Body Mapping principles of horn technique covered in this chapter. Watch the video first, then try the exercise to incorporate what you have learned.

Horn Technique Exercise video



Tuba

♪ To achieve dynamic balance with the tuba, rest the instrument on your lap, the chair, or a tuba stand (discussed on page 50) without using muscular effort to bear the weight of the instrument. A good rule of thumb is that tuba players should use their arms and fingers to press valves, move slides, and balance the instrument, but *not* to support the weight of the instrument. As with the other brass instruments, bring the mouthpiece to your embouchure—don't move your head to meet the mouthpiece, as this will create tension. Scan the QR code for a video introduction about holding the tuba.

Introduction to holding the tuba

♪ Sit with your feet below your knees as in image 3.72. This allows the weight of the instrument to travel easily through your legs and to the floor. Notice the bell is at an angle to the player's right, not straight up. The angle of the bell should change according to the height of the player to adjust the position of the mouthpiece—shorter players would angle the bell more to bring the mouthpiece down to meet their embouchure. Use the left arm to steady the instrument but not to bear its weight. The right hand should remain free to operate the valves, and the right elbow is not elevated unnaturally. Note that instruments with front facing valves would be angled to the player's left (see image 3.75 on page 50 for an example of this configuration).

3.72 Correct tuba sitting position

bodymapping
for brass players

Body Mapping for Brass Players provides a starting place for more efficient and healthier playing by applying anatomically accurate information to playing brass instruments. This book contains anatomical information and activities designed to help you use the knowledge as you play your instrument. By teaching and playing from a position of anatomical accuracy, not only do we avoid misunderstandings, we also provide ourselves and our students with a secure somatic foundation upon which to make music—resulting in movements that are free of tension, a beautiful tone, improved technique, and more efficient music-making. Move in cooperation with how you are built and ***play smarter, not harder!***

"***Body Mapping for Brass Players*** is the sorely needed resource for basic body information that all brass musicians have been missing. Musicians who play any brass instrument may have anatomical misconceptions that can interfere with achieving our musical intentions, and, at worst, make us vulnerable to career-ending injuries. This book can set us on a path to performance health with its many anatomically accurate drawings and helpful photos of how—and how not—to move.

I wish I had had this book fifty years ago."

TIMOTHY MYERS
Principal Trombone, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Retired
Licensed Body Mapping Educator

About the Author

Trombonist **DAVID VINING** is the founder of Mountain Peak Music, a publishing company devoted to offering innovative, healthy teaching methods for all musicians. Mountain Peak Music represents Mr. Vining's personal mission, combining his extensive performing and teaching background with insights learned through his remarkable recovery from embouchure dystonia.

Currently Professor of Trombone at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, Arizona, Mr. Vining has also served on the faculties of the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music and the University of Kansas. As trombonist with the Chestnut Brass Company, he toured the United States and Europe performing recitals, masterclasses, and concerts with orchestras.

Mr. Vining's teaching transcends his trombone specialty, covering a wide range of topics appealing to musicians of every discipline. He is equally at home teaching trombone technique, helping instrumentalists become more efficient, and helping musicians cope with injuries. His publications include the *Breathing Book* series, *Cross Training for Musicians*, *Rangesongs*, and *Teaching Brass*, to name a few.

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