

TrumpetStuff

A Collection of Articles, Notes and exercises

This collection of trumpet performance articles comes from many sources. I am presenting them here together so that trumpeters can read what other trumpeters are saying and doing in their quest to improve trumpet playing.

Some of these articles you will find useful and will apply to your situation; others will not. I do not represent these as my philosophy of trumpet playing as I agree with some suggestions and not others. You make up your own mind and use what makes sense to you. These are only a few of the available writings on trumpet playing. There are probably as many different approaches as there are trumpeters.

Good luck in finding solutions to your needs and remember that you are your own best critic and teacher.

Notes on a Warm-up

Vince DiMartino

Most teachers and performers agree that some form of warm -up is necessary to facilitate performing. The types of materials employed in these warm -ups, however, sometimes seem to be at opposite ends of the spectrum up on casual observation of related materials.

In order to evaluate this or any other warm -up one must define what end we are trying to reach with these materials, as we have in the first line of the former paragraph "to performing," and what are trying to "warm-up. Most people agree that setting the embouchure is a very important part of the warmup. To me, the embouchure is more than just lips or face muscles. It is the balance between the supported air column, the muscles of the lips and the tongue position. It is also the ability to play any note, in any order, at any dynamic, at any speed, at any time. Therefore, when you warm -up, you must use a total embouchure on all notes. No flabby, unsupported low notes or squeezed and forced high notes. If a warm -up satisfies these criteria, it is technically a good one.

With this in mind, the most important part of any warm -up is listening to your sound and developing it. The only thing people can hear is the sound of your music, so it should always be in the forefront of your work. Your sound must be the focal point of your music~ and practice. People can only hear the "sound" of high or low notes, fast or slow notes, or soft or loud notes. It never makes sense to practice any of these techniques disregarding the sound. The music can follow the sound if proper stylistic considerations are taken along with sensitivity training. I believe some things should be practiced before the horn ever is picked up. If we ever are to improve our habits, they must be practiced before the horn is introduced. The two most important are breathing and muscle forming.

I think breathing or air delivery is essential to fine brass playing. Breathing helps the muscles to form properly when it is correct. There are many fine articles and comments on breathing but few exercises to work on it. However, I learned an excellent walking exercise from Emery Remington, the legendary trombone teacher at the Eastman School of Music. You breathe in slowly while walking for 5 seconds and release the air without resistance. Rest in between repetitions of this for at least 5 seconds. Gradually breathe in for fewer counts and out for a longer time, making sure the exhalation is steady and unrestricted, until you can breathe in for a quick count and out for an unrestricted 10 count. Dropping the jaw on the inhalation helps secure a greater volume of air. Also, maintain a very relaxed muscular state on the inhalation. On the exhalation, use a light abdominal force around the belt area which compresses the air a bit. This gives the air the force it needs to support a tone. This must be practiced so the throat does not enter into the picture. It is a passage, not a valve. Air should meet the lips unrestricted.

Breathing

Reinhold Friedrich felt that it was very good to start the practice session with some good breathing exercises.

1. "The Fish"

Start by expelling all air (see picture above) and bend a little forward.

Inhale with open throat.

Breathe out - but only 2/3 of all air.

Then fill up.

Again breathe out 2/3.

Repeat until completely full. The cycles will be shorter and shorter

Hold for 4 count

Then breathe out all air.

A variation of this exercise was to take the arm out from the body and lift them above the head while repeating doing the intake cycle.

When you are completely filled up, the arms will have reached it position above the head.

2. Timed breathing

Inhale with open throat.

Breathe out - counting to 10.

Inhale

Breathe out - counting to 9.

Inhale

Breathe out - counting to 8.

..etc.

When reaching 1 count you really have to expell the air fast.

3. "Heech --- ooh"

Inhale with open throat.

Breathe out - counting to 10, but use the tongue arch and let it start high (Heech) and then gradually lower the tongue to OOH when reaching count 10.

Repeat as in Ex. 2 by counting down for each round.

When reaching 1 count you really have to expell the air fast, with an uninterrupted "HEECH-OOOH" sound.

4. Timed breathing through the mouth pipe.

Inhale with open throat.

Breathe out through the mouthpipe (without mouthpiece) - counting to 10.

Inhale

Breathe out through the mouthpipe - counting to 9.

Inhale

Breathe out through the mouthpipe - counting to 8.

etc.

Isometric Exercises

Date: Thu, 26 Feb 1998 19:45:08 -0500
From: Jeanne G Pocius <jarcher@shore.net>
Subject: Re: *Isometric Exercises*

Folks:

A number of people have expressed an interest in the types of isometric exercises that I recommend for use when you must be away from the horn....Here are a few ideas which I hope you'll find to be useful in maintaining and developing your chops when you can't take the time to practice:

1. The first exercise consists of merely holding your lips closed, as in saying the **mmm** sound. When done correctly, this requires you to slightly roll your lips nward... Hold this position for as long as possible(you'll eventually be able to do it for hours at a time), until your muscles begin to burn, then rest an equivalent amount of time before repeating.

2. The second exercise is like the first, except that this time, besides the **mmm** position, you should also draw the lip muscles in, toward the center of your lips(avoid an obvious pursing, however). You should feel as though your lip muscles are **hugging** against your teeth. It is also important to keep the corners where they are when your mouth is relaxed while you are doing this(neither stretched outward into a **smile** nor drawn down as in a frown). Once again, hold until the muscles develop the lactic acid **burn**, then release, rest, and repeat...

3. This one is best done before a mirror, at least the first few times that you perform it, until you are sure that you are correctly performing the exercise. While observing yourself in the mirror, complete the following movements:

a). Roll your bottom lip out as far as possible.(Try to touch your chin with it). Be sure to keep the upper lip in contact with the inside of the bottom lip as you are doing this. Hold in the extended position for a count of ten, then gradually roll the bottom lip back up, so that it is hugging the outside of the upper lip. Rest. Repeat.

b). Purse your lips as far forward as possible. Hold for a count of ten, then gradually relax them. Rest. Repeat.

c). Roll your lips inward, so that the red(membrane) of your lips disappears. Be sure that both lips are in front of the teeth as you do this. Hold for a count of ten. Rest. Repeat.

There are other exercises which are also beneficial, including that of bouncing a small paper tube between your lips(but, again, in front of your teeth--gripping the paper only between your lips)...With practice, you'll eventually be able to do this with a pencil or pen...

Finally, there is an exercise which I do all day long (when I'm not playing) which is difficult to describe with words, but creates a sort of a squawk when done correctly....Roll your lips slightly inward, then use your tongue to force air through them, stopping the air by having your tongue close against the roof of your mouth....With practice, it's possible to play chromatic scales this way, and it's a good way to prevent the dreaded **braccck** attacks, since your lips become more accustomed to placing pitches very accurately....

Herseith lesson notes.

Notes taken by Tim Kent during lessons he took with the master, Adolph Herseith.

The Practice Session and All Playing.

- Practice long tones in all registers and volumes.
- Overlap single tonguing speed with double and triple speeds.
- Solfege--Sight sing--buzz excerpts and studies.
- There are appropriate times for beauty and crudeness - use both.
- Sound is criterion for how you do this or that.
- Melodic playing is very, very important. Know the importance of TONE, even in technical passages.
- Play tunes in high range, also pick off high notes for practice.
- Remember-shaky high range can be due to letting up before hitting the note--rather take the lump and blow, that is the only way to be great. If you let up on all the notes, endurance is lost, and the overall sound is sickening.
- Be consistent, and NEVER PRACTICE BUT ALWAYS PERFORM.
- Never have any tension in the body when playing, just learn to always relax.
- Don't favor slurs, and in fact, DON'T FAVOR ANY NOTES.
- Only practice in 45 minute sessions, that is what Bud does.
- There is nothing wrong with your chops, your mind is messing them up. High register is no more physical than low, it should be as easy and sound just as good. Don't make such an issue of it. This habit must be worked out and will eventually go away, however there is only one way to get rid of this bad habit, and that is to apply concepts every day in your playing.
- Play arpeggios to get all ranges to sound good by being in tune and listening to the sound.
- Play Bud's exercises; like singers do.
- Don't think mechanics at all on the high range, just play and listen.
- When a note sounds beautiful, it is in tune(and vice versa)
- Approach on the lines of good sound and intonation will come there too. The ear will do all the work if you let it.
- Say "tay" on the lower register to get away from the tubby sound.
- Increase air on the lower register. D and B are good examples of good low range sound.
- D, E, and E flat - let them float up to where they belong.
- Don't think, just play beautifully. Your ear will tell you, and do all the work for you if you allow it to. Don't try to place notes, but let them go where they want.
- After working on the mouthpiece, do the same on the horn. Play everything from excerpts to to pop tunes on it to do things musically. Remember you are performing these pieces, and not practicing them.
- NEVER PRACTICE, ALWAYS PERFORM.
- When encountering problems, technically or musically, sing them and play them on the mouthpiece. Then transfer this singing through the horn. Also, add words for added expressiveness, and sing these words through the horn. When a person sings, he does it in a naturally musical way.
- Always take 10 minutes or so off after the first 15-20 minutes of playing (the warmup).
- Rest, like Bud. FEEL FRESH ALL THE TIME.
- Project a message when you play, never impress with mere mechanics.
- Put words to everything.
- THINK ONLY WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE, NOT WHAT IT FEELS LIKE!
- Practice solos much more than drills or exercises for tonguing. Every time Bud learns a new solo (or rehearses one) it adds a new spark to his playing. Vocalize through the horn. Get a message

across to the people - tell them a story, an interesting one. **REMEMBER THINGS THAT YOU DO NOW WILL BECOME CONSISTANT LATER AS YOU APPLY CONCEPTS.**

- Pulse the primary point - it keeps the music moving, and makes the overall sound more musical.
- Practice all three forms of tonguing; only use legato for extreme double and triple tonguing, to make this tonguing move very fast.
- Slur all technical passages first so you get the tones in mind.
- Do same as above for staccato passages also.
- In all technical and lyrical passages, remember that first and foremost is **TONE QUALITY and MUSICALITY.**
- When playing slowly, remember that tongue and fingers have to move as fast as usual.
- Everybody comes in late after rests, do something about it.
- Keep dynamics through phrase, and keep dynamics consistent.
- Keep slurs smooth, don't jolt them - they are easy.
- High range is not a seperate part of trumpet playing, yet most players make such a big deal of it. It is not any more physical than any other aspects of trumpet playing, rather it should be just as musical. Just move the air more and keep a good sound, and it will always be there.
- High C is not sharp, it's high C. No notes are naturally sharp. Just play and listen for the best sound and you will be in tune. It is very important that you think sound and not intonation. The intonation will be there if the sound is.
- It is important to hear the note played before playing it. If you do, it will be there.
- High range - don't just think "high" before you play and expect to be able to play it.
- On releases - know how long you want to hold the note, and then stop it. Don't just hold it until it stops.
- On soft playing - play soft as if you are playing loud. Flow air the same as a forte.
- Picture the whole phrase before you start to play. Do this all the time.
- Every note must have direction - always must be going somewhere.
- For high range, just use good air flow, with ease of middle and low registers.
- Practice a tune in all registers. Do this often, it will tell whether you are using the right concepts.
- Balance exercises with solos (music)
- Practice a session on just the mouthpiece.
- Tonguing has to be 5% consonant and 95% vowel. To much tongue inhibits the air flow. Use no more tongue than in normal speech, and release air immediately.
- Think SOUND always - loud and soft.
- Never practice- always perform.
- Practice various ways of articulating everything. (excerpts, solos, etc. i.e. slur Petroushka solo, tongue Schlossberg #18, etc.)
- Get the sound you want in your head first, then play it. Listen as much as possible.
- Send a message when you play.
- **USE ONLY MECHANICS TO THINK OF PLAYING AS A WHOLE, AND BREATHING, AND ALL THE REST IS MUSIC.**
- Play by sound, not by feel.
- Never work harder than necessary for a desired result.
- Do interval exercises (all articulations).
- Accent is not more tongue, but more air.
- For etude practice, get them clean slowly, then speed them up.
- Melodic playing is very important. Know importance of tone (even in technical passages).
- When you get high horns, play tune on them, then take low horn and play same pitches the same way. You will forget which horn is which.
- Relate little horns to the big ones. The same concepts apply.
- **WHEN YOU MAKE A MISTAKE, BE PROUD OF IT. PUT YOUR HORN DOWN AND STARE AT THE CONDUCTOR. UNLESS HIS EAR IS GREAT, HE WON'T KNOW. IF HE DOES, FINE!**

- NEVER PRACTICE, PERFORM.
- Don't just listen to yourself on ensemble playing - let the ensemble help you on your entrances so you can be part of it and not playing along with it. All accompaniments will help you to play. Have them in your head so you just don't play out of context.
- Listen to good artists, and know what you want.
- A trumpeter's life is risky, and you have to be able to take those risks. No great playing is accomplished if a person is afraid of playing. To be timid or favor notes or ranges is running away from that risk.
- DON'T THINK YOU HAVE PROBLEMS TO WORRY ABOUT IN YOUR PLAYING, JUST CERTAIN ASPECTS OF YOUR PLAYING AREN'T PERFECTED YET. DON'T WORRY ABOUT ANYTHING IN YOUR PLAYING, JUST ENJOY IT!
- Practice on the mouthpiece every day before your regular session. Walk around and play anything musical (no drills) from excerpts to pop tunes. Concentrate on being very musical on these pieces, and most important, on a very LARGE SOUND on the mouthpiece.
- The mouthpiece, because of the lack of divisions, it is possible to go over all ranges, and it forces you to use your ear. Also in emergency situations, it can be used as a substitute for regular practice on the horn.
- Play a complete session on the mouthpiece once in a while. This keeps you from getting hangups on the horn, and improves everything from sound to articulation.
- Whenever you are having problems on any piece, play it on the mouthpiece.
- Play no drills on the mouthpiece, only music.
- REMEMBER - BIG SOUND ALL THE TIME.
- When taking a breath, pronounce the word "ho" yet inhaling at the same time.
- When using this method for practice, put hand on stomach and chest - it should move out on its own due to lungs filling up.
- For getting the feeling of an absolutely open airway and flow, put one end of a toilet paper roll in mouth and inhale - note the equal ease of inhaling and exhaling.
- Breathe from low in the lungs rather than from the chest. If done correctly, the stomach will go out on its own.
- To get a big sound, it is imperative that the air flow (or movement) is greater. The pressure of air flow is not what creates the big sound, it is much the same as violin, which creates a bigger sound when the bow is moved faster across the strings than from pressure on the strings.
- Release air immediately - don't hold it.
- Differences between cornet and trumpet - there is none due to modern methods of construction. Most of sound difference is due to bends in tubing, rather than conical vs. cylindrical bores.
- Stravinsky pieces - in world premieres of many of his works, Stravinsky said that cornets need not be used because of little difference between them and trumpets.
- Keep your horn free from ANY dirt inside. Clean it weekly if necessary. Clean mouthpiece daily. Clean horns and mouthpieces so nothing is ever in the horn.
- To have good all around range you have to have good pedal tones. This is due to more and better vibrations producing more harmonics and a richer sound.
- Slur pedal tone from octave, finger according to chart below:
C - open, B - open, Bb - 2, A - 2, Ab - 1, G - 12, F# - 23, F - 13, Eb - 123
- Play pedal tones on both Bb and C horns (harder on Bb)
- Slur and tongue down from normal notes an octave to pedal, so you have an in tune note to relate it to.
- Don't overblow, just blow to get the best sound.
- Do Carnival of Venice starting on pedal C
- I would rather jump right in and make mistakes than be timid.
- Essence of Bud's lessons is that he builds ego, attitude, and musicianship. He lets the technical things work themselves out.
- Have the attitude of "I can play anything". This is necessary for great trumpet playing.

- Always, after hearing someone play something, say "I can do it better, or if not better, different."
- Whenever you have difficulty technically, think of the passage more musically, that's what is wrong.
- The reason Herseth is better than you are, is not that he tries harder, but he thinks musically. It is amazing what the chops can do when you get the head out of the way!
- Don't over-warmup for a performance; always go in a little under warmed up. Just warmup as low and high as the piece will go, that's all, then quit.
- On any orchestral excerpt, study the scores and listen to recordings. Remember that Bud really believes in listening as a teaching guide to good playing. Never play any isolated notes in orchestra. Always be aware of the color that you add and know your role. Know what is important. Remember that there are different interpretations (that is important). Don't just go by one recording.
- Always be heard - no matter the dynamics.
- When studying the score, know how it is to sound, and don't change unless the conductor forces you to. Don't wait to be told, if he isn't taking your tempo, change it.
- For your own personal satisfaction, **DO THE BEST JOB THAT CAN BE DONE!**
- **IT IS NOT A MATTER OF BEING BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE, HOW CAN YOU LOVE TRYING TO BE BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE. PLAY FOR YOUR OWN SATISFACTION, AND FOR OTHERS ENJOYMENT.**
- **IF I COULDN'T PLAY THIS THING AS WELL AS IT COULD BE PLAYED, I WOULDN'T PLAY IT!!!!**
- Don't think of auditioning for a job, or against someone, just offer what music you have to offer. If they like it, fine. If not, that's fine too, go somewhere else. Just make music and enjoy yourself. If you do get excited, apply it to the music and not to the situation. Your goal should be to play as well as Bud, not to have a particular job!!!
- Be anxious to play, not afraid to play.
- Sound is criterion for how you play and whether you are doing things right.
- Say "tu" with the tongue for fast and nice sounding tonguing. This keeps it out of the way, or it will hinder the sound. It also keeps multiple tonguing faster and more even. Do lip trills daily for strong and more dependable high range.
- You never really know how much Doc and Bud hurt when they are playing, just play beautifully and forget how it feels.
- Don't only try for musicality and precision in performance, try all the time as in performance. **REMEMBER - NEVER PRACTICE, ALWAYS PERFORM.**
- **LIVE!!!!** Play and show you are alive, and have something to say to the audience.
- The horn is just a megaphone of yourself, show them how you feel!
- Don't overblow. Take it easy. You will play better if you don't actually blow so hard, and concentrate on the actual volume of air for a **BIG SOUND.**

How to practice the "Technical Studies" by **Herbert L. Clarke**

*This preparatory exercise is from a series of articles published in "Brass Bulletin" (1980), by James Stamp, called **Practical Hints**. Here, Stamp show how to practice the "Technical Studies" by **Herbert L. Clarke**.*

First Study

Start by re-numbering the lines of this study as follows: line 13=1, line 14=2, line 12=3, line 15=4, etc.

Example: (*line 1 (13)*)

Play legato



The additional portion (bar 2, the repeated c - b) is only played first time.

By practising like this you will learn to "place" and "centre" your notes correctly, and to improve the fluency, flexibility and intonation of your playing.

Second Study

First choose an easy key in order to familiarise yourself with the simplified musical line.

For example (*exercise 37*)

Play legato



Then repeat the original line. On the third repeat, play double speed.

By practising like this you will learn to "place" and "centre" your notes correctly, and to improve the fluency, flexibility and intonation of your playing.

Third Study

For example (*exercise 57*)

Play legato



Maximizing Practice

Mark Van Cleave

The physical demands for trumpet players have evolved so quickly in the last forty years, that trumpet players have not been able to keep up. The range and endurance required to perform today's music has turned playing the trumpet into an athletic event. Trumpet players need to address these physical demands in the same systematic and focused approach as athletes. Understanding the physical skills needed to play the trumpet correctly can be a frustrating search for answers.

In my own search for these answers, I have studied with, and picked the brains of some great trumpet teachers and players. Some of these teachers are: Jerry Franks, Dominic Spera, Bill Adam, Claude Gordon, Jerome Callet, Don Jacoby, and Max Greer.

My books: Maximizing Practice Volume 1: A Daily Practice Routine for Developing Trumpet Skills and Maximizing Practice Volume 2: Developing Trumpet Range, Power, and Endurance, are a combination of information on how the trumpet *machine* works, and exercises that are focused on individual skills. The exercises in these methods are designed to change and improve your *machine*. (In order for your *machine* to improve, it has to change). The exercises are focused in order to maximize results. There are many books with great exercises you can play, but how you practice the will determine your improvement. (A great exercise practiced wrong will not help you).

SMART PRACTICE

One of the biggest problems with developing trumpet players is the way they neglect to use all of the tools they have to accomplish their goals.

The mind is the most powerful resource for learning or developing skills that any trumpet player has. Yet most players practice by playing through a prescribed set of exercises. When they are finished, they are done practicing for the day. No thought went into how or what they were trying to improve.

Once programmed with the correct information, the brain can not only calculate how to best perform the desired task, but also has the ability to control the body and make necessary physical adjustments without having to consciously. It is important to remember that the brain is a very powerful computer and is capable of tremendous feats. Although, the greatest computer is only as good as the software that you are running and is completely dependent upon the quantity and the quality of information programmed into it. Without this quantity and quality of information, even the most powerful computer is rendered completely useless. All the information in the world cannot help you if you are unable to recognize when you are producing the correct end results.

Without the necessary information (how the trumpet works), your brain has no idea how to make the correct calculations or physical adjustments in order to help you. You would be playing a game of trial and error. Just aimless blowing. Not the most efficient way to develop a skill. Without a clear idea of the end result, if you were to achieve it, you might not even recognize it. And then, back to the

drawing board.

One of the most important aspects of developing as a trumpet player is to have a very clear idea of exactly how you want to sound. For this, you must listen very carefully to great players that you admire. Without a goal, it is impossible to reach one.

AVOIDING BAD HABITS

When you practice, you develop muscle memory or reflexes. These reflexes are what you draw from when performing or playing music. When you are playing music, you do not have enough time to think about all of the physical mechanics involved. You can only think about the music...what you sound like.

The reflexes that you draw on while playing are developed during the practice session. Everything that you play builds reflexes...good ones and bad ones. While practicing, you must be careful not to build undesirable reflexes. Practicing while tired (mentally or physically) can lead to bad habits or reflexes being learned. Unlearning a bad habit takes much longer than learning a good habit.

Remember:

How you practice is how you will play. If you practice forcing the upper register because you are tired, you will only be learning how to force out high notes (not play them). When you are tired or distracted - **DO NOT PRACTICE!** Wait until you feel like practicing. Do not make your practice session a bad experience by forcing yourself to practice. When practicing something as difficult and challenging (mentally and physically) as range, the opportunity for developing bad habits is very good. You must concentrate even harder than with normal (safer) practice. Never practice past when you feel physically comfortable. If your chops need a break...take one. Know when to stop!

There are many *Trumpet Jocks* out there that can play the trumpet well but cannot play any music that is worth hearing. It is easy to get caught up in the business of high notes or the higher, faster, louder syndrome. Try to remember that ultimately the trumpet is part of the MUSIC business (not the trumpet business). The creation of good music should be your ultimate goal.

Mark Van Cleave was born and raised in Indiana and is in demand as soloist, clinician, teacher, and show conductor. He has appeared as soloist with many high school and college bands. For ten years Mark traveled the globe conducting and playing lead trumpet with many traveling shows and circuses.

Mark is currently playing lead trumpet with the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra in Washington, D.C., and recording with his own group. Look for his upcoming CD "RIGHT BRAIN" late '94.

Mark's method books can be ordered from:

D'note Publications
7255 S. Fairfax Rd.
Bloomington, In, 47401.

How to Practice

by Ray Mase

This practice routine has some ideas on practicing, particularly when not playing for someone regularly.

1. Maintenance (20-30 min.)

In this part of your practice, try to briefly "hit" as many aspects of playing as possible. By doing a routine similar to the one shown on page two, you can clearly evaluate what needs to be worked on and what doesn't. Don't get bogged down in this part of your practice--play many different things briefly, and use this information as the basis for what will be done in part 2 of your practice.

2. Specific Technical Practice (60-90 min.)

Assign specific technical studies for a reason. Put a date on assigned material, and do it regularly for 6-10 practice sessions. Keep a record of your assigned materials in a notebook, with the date. Try to jot down some comments on your practice in this notebook. Go on to new material after 6-10 sessions even if the material is not perfected.

Set modest goals for yourself and achieve them. Setting big goals tends to be frustrating. Improvement at anything is done in small steps---not big leaps.

3. Musical (30-45 min.)

Remember that Nos. 1 & 2 are done for a reason--to perfect a technique that will allow us to express ourselves musically in an effortless way. Technique should be improved out of a need to have more resources to use musically--not just for the sake of improvement. An enormous vocabulary is not useful unless we can express thoughts more concisely by having it.

Play easy material regularly and beautifully---without technical considerations. If an Arban song or Concone study can be done in this way, then more difficult material---like solos and orchestral excerpts--will also be able to be played easily with practice. Make technique a natural expressive tool, not an end in itself.

Play with others as often as possible. Music is a social and communicative art and we should relate musically to others easily. Making music requires more flexibility and thought than practicing, and needs to be done regularly.

The Adam Routine

Well, here it is: Bill Adam's daily maintenance routine (or at least my version of it). Use caution and common sense in adding these exercises to your practice routine. If you really want to understand the routine and Adam's approach to the trumpet, you really should study with Bill Adam or one of his students. Adam's approach is very individualized and can't be adequately described in such a public forum. Again, to get an understanding of the routine, get together with Adam or his students and learn first hand.

First, there is no such thing as a single routine that Bill Adam merely hands out to his students. These exercises are assigned and modified as necessary to aid in the development of the individual student. My routine combines exercises assigned by Bill Adam and from my previous teachers (Richard Winslow and Dan Keberle, both Adam students).

Most Adam students have made their own subtle variations on the routine so that it works best for them. If you are truly interested in the Adam approach to trumpet playing, you really should take some lessons from either Bill Adam or one of his many students teaching across the country. Remember what Bill Adam used to tell me: "If this exercise works, then fine. If it doesn't, **DO SOMETHING ELSE.**" As with all exercises, use common sense while practicing.

BUZZING THE LEADPIPE

In Bill Adam's article about [trumpet pedagogy](#), Bill Adam states "I know there has to be a certain amount of mouthpiece buzzing to warm up the resilience that we have to have here. But if we can set the mouthpiece and tube in vibration, the embouchure is much more relaxed. What we're trying to do is to get the air through that horn with the least amount of tension and the least amount of muscle."

To buzz the leadpipe, remove the tuning slide. On a Bb trumpet, the mouthpiece/leadpipe should resonate at approximately an F (Eb concert) at the bottom space on the staff. Cornets and higher keyed trumpets will resonate at different pitches as the pitch is determined by the length of the tube. Hear the pitch in your mind (*can you sing the pitch?*), take a full, relaxed breath, place the mouthpiece to your lips and blow. Think about accelerating the air through the leadpipe and of letting the air blow the embouchure into place. The sound should be a resonant, reedy buzz. Focus on creating a resonant buzz, not an airy sound. I typically will buzz the leadpipe about a dozen times, or until I feel my embouchure responding to the breath in a relaxed manner.

LONG TONES

These are sustained tones starting on 2nd line G and expanding higher and lower. Hold each pitch as long as comfortable at a volume of *mf* to *f*. Hear the sound you desire in your mind before you play. Take a full relaxed breath and blow, accelerating the air through the horn. Keep your mind focused on the sound you desire and let your body adapt as it attempts to achieve your goal. Rest after each tone. The tones follow the pattern: G, F#, G#, F, A, E, Bb, Eb, etc. The exercise ends on high G and low F#.

Notes on Technique by David Bilger

Trumpet technique can be broken down into 6 main headings: Sound (tone production), Articulation, Flexibility, Agility, Range, and Endurance. The following are ideas and examples of exercises and etudes that can be used to improve these necessary trumpet skills. Ideas about how the warm-up and practice routines will be offered later.

Sound:

Good tone production on the trumpet is a combination of a functional embouchure and the proper use of air. Therefore, the following examples will focus on improving embouchure strength and focus, or air flow (or both!).

1. Long tones. Play sustained notes for at least 12 beats at quarter = 60, making sure that the tone is full and that the pitch is stable. Continue the same feeling of air flow that you got with the long tones while playing Herbert L. Clarke Technical Studies (#1-5). I call these "moving long tones", and the idea is to keep the free air flow that we achieve on regular long tones. Also look at Schlossberg Daily Drills and Gordon Systematic Approach to Daily Practice.
2. Flow Studies. These could also be called lyrical studies. Just as we talked about keeping the air flow in the above "moving long tones", playing flow studies continues to reinforce the feeling of always using enough air. Materials to use for this purpose are Stamp Warm-up Studies (also used for pedal tones), Concone Lyrical Studies, Bordogni 24 Vocalises (also used for transposition). and Cichowicz Trumpet Flow Studies (examples are in the addendum).
3. Pedal tones and lip bends. Using both pedal tones and lip bends can strengthen the embouchure. Pedal tone exercises from the Stamp Warm-up Studies and Gordon Systematic Approach to Daily Practice are a good place to start. Lip bends will be discussed in depth at the class, and examples will be found in the addendum.
4. Mouthpiece buzzing. All of the above etudes can be done on the mouthpiece alone. Mouthpiece buzzing is an important part of sound development because it forces the player to focus the notes instead of relying on the trumpet to do it for you.

Articulation:

Articulation and response are completely interrelated. Both are a combination and appropriate balance between the tongue and the air. When working on articulation, a player must always concentrate on floating the tongue on a foundation of air, and then work on tongue position and easy tongue motion. Single and "K" tonguing are the basis for all articulation, and must be practiced independently of one another. Without a quick single tongue, smooth triple tongue is impossible. There is no substitute for practice on articulation. The following are suggestions for exercises, but literally every text has a section on tonguing. Try Charlier 36 Etudes (#14, 16, 22, and 25), Goldman Practical Studies (1-4), and most of the Arban book.

Flexibility:

Flexibility actually impacts all aspects of trumpet playing, especially articulation and range. Lip flexibility exercises are actually "tongue level" exercises, since the tongue channels the air to produce the notes. The Arban book is a good starting place, but other materials include Colin Advanced Lip Flexibilities, Schlossberg Daily Drills, and Irons 27 Groups of Exercises.

Agility:

Agility actually refers to the quickness of a player's fingers and brain. Included in this topic will be dexterity drills, transposition etudes, and sight reading texts.

1. Finger dexterity is extremely important, and often overlooked. To improve dexterity, I recommend practicing major and minor scales, chromatic scales, and arpeggios right out of the Arban Complete Method. Nothing can replace these etudes. Other sources of challenging finger benders are Nagel Speed Studies and Vizzuti Advanced Etudes.
2. Transposition is a necessary skill for any player with professional goals. It is also one of the most overlooked, since it is hard work and is unrewarding in the short term. Start with the Caffarelli 100 Studi Melodici and Bordogni 24 Vocalises, and graduate to the Sachse 100 Etudes. Be aware that transposition requires a constant long term investment of your time (years!), and should not be overlooked.
3. Sight reading is a skill that can be practiced on a daily basis. Take out any new, old or unfamiliar piece of music, and you have an instant text. Sight read duets with a friend, or challenge yourself just for fun. Hickman Music Speed Reading is a quality text with tips on improving your skills, as is Dufresne Develop Sight Reading.

Range: Range (both high and low) are functions of embouchure strength, tongue position, air flow, and centering. Many exercises that we have already discussed will increase range, such as pedal tones, lip bends, flexibility studies, flow studies, etc. Try practicing octave slurs while making sure to change your vowel sound from ah to eee as you go from low to high. Also make sure not to over-adjust by playing too small or with too much pressure in the high register. Remember, if you don't practice it, you can't do it--and this applies to high notes as well. Some things to practice are Stamp Warm-up Studies, Gordon Systematic Approach to Daily Practice, Smith Top Tones, and Vizzuti Advanced Etudes.

Endurance:

As is the case with range, endurance is also a combination of many of the topics we have already touched upon, and will benefit from many of the same etudes. The two other things that will most quickly improve endurance are efficiency and loud practice.

1. Efficiency is a necessity for any brass player. Playing the trumpet is extremely physical, and efficient playing will reduce the demands on the player. Efficiency can be achieved by taking care of the following:
 - A. Always use a good volume of air, and high air speed
 - B. Always play with your embouchure set
 - C. Do not use excessive pressure
 - D. Practice upper body relaxation
 - E. Always think about what you are doing while you play
2. Loud practice is another part of trumpet playing that is often overlooked. Remember, when practicing at loud dynamic levels, always keep your sound from distorting, and never cause yourself physical pain. Do not use excessive pressure! Orchestral excerpts are a good source of loud material, as are the Brandt Orchestral Etudes. Perhaps the best resource for loud playing is the Schilke Power Exercises. Playing 5 minutes of these a day will be all you need to develop the necessary strength for increased endurance. They are not published, but are outlined in the addendum.

Notes on Practicing:

The first and probably most important part of practicing is the warm-up. Warming up is a personal thing, and everyone will need to experiment with what works for them, but the following are some ideas and guidelines for establishing your own personal warm-up.

I think of the warm-up period as having two main goals, the first being to wake up your chops (and brain), and the second to practice the basics of technique. The warm-up should start you off slowly, and then move on to include the six aspects of technique as discussed earlier. Of course further specific practice of the problem areas in your playing will be required, but a certain amount of all technique should be covered in the first session of the day.

I like to begin with Clarke Technical Studies and Cichowicz Trumpet Flow Studies. By the time I have played 5 or 10 minutes of these, I have accomplished the first part of my warm-up. Sometimes I will continue with Stamp Warm-up Studies, which I use as a "centering medicine" if I feel I need it.

Then I continue with Ray Mase's 10 Week Practice Routine, which is a simple compilation of technical drills from a number of sources. I believe that Ray's book is an excellent example of how to put together a warm-up/practice book. The book is unpublished, since it is a compilation of copyright materials, but I have included the guide page in the addendum, which tells you how to put the book together. You can also put together your own book using the same principles.

Additional practice sessions should be dedicated to practicing weaknesses, learning new etudes and excerpts, and learning solos and other performance pieces. No matter what you are practicing, your metronome should always be handy, since it can act as both the "rhythm police" and the "practice coach." The metronome can help you become aware of inconsistencies in your rhythm, and also help in your training by making you practice things at more difficult tempi than are called for, so that performances will seem easy.

Another sidekick should be a tuner, so that you get in the habit of playing in tune with yourself. It is impossible for anyone to play in tune with another musician if they cannot play in tune with themselves. The tuner doesn't lie.

Chris Gekker (of the American Brass Quintet) wrote about practicing, "Every player, no matter how good, makes mistakes, but the very best performers do two things: they don't tolerate them in practice sessions, correcting the slightest mishap in an unhurried, determined manner (also practicing with concentration and slowly enough so that mistakes are not learned); and in performance, they react to any error by immediately raising their level of energy and concentration, staying loose and aggressive."

Etudes should be a part of your regular practice, and a good way to approach them is to perfect one a week. There are endless sources for etudes, but some of my favorites are Arban 14 Characteristic Studies, Charlier 36 Etudes, Bitsch 20 Etudes, Brandt Orchestral Etudes, Gates Odd Meter Etudes, Reynolds 48 Etudes, Wurm 40 Studies, and Longinotti Studies in Classical and Modern Style. Your teacher will be able to tell you what books are most appropriate for your level, and professional level players will benefit from all the books mentioned above.

The other advice I have on practicing is to invest time in training your ear and your musical soul. Every player needs to develop an understanding about that the trumpet's role is in each piece of music, as well as to understand what emotions the music is trying to express. The best way to achieve this is to listen to all kinds of music every chance you get, and to experiment as an artist on your instrument. Polished technique is a means, not an end.

Most of all, keep practicing, keep improving, and remember that only you are responsible for how you play!

Notes on Performing, Recitals, and Equipment:

Every type of performing situation places special and unique demands upon a performer. I have identified six ways in which you can meet these demands, regardless of the style of music or performance situation. The following are skills that you must develop to achieve excellent performances.

1. Practice your part. Thorough practice not only improves your chances of hitting the right notes, but will add to your physical conditioning. Your "chops" can learn to pace themselves for individual difficult passages.
2. Learn the music. Every good performer understands the style of the piece, as well as having a feeling about what the composer was trying to say with the music. A musical approach can actually help technique, as well.
3. Communicate with your colleagues. Communication is what performing is all about. We communicate with our audience through the content of the music, but more importantly, we must communicate with the musicians with whom we share the stage. This is accomplished by listening (to players other than yourself!!), leading when appropriate, moving your body to dictate phrasing and pacing, and eye contact--both with other musicians and the conductor.
4. Be reactive. Every good musician must listen and react to tuning, ensemble, and style; especially articulation, note length, and phrasing.
5. Concentrate at all times. Most of the mistakes that creep in at performance time are a result of a lack of concentration. Every player should develop a few tricks that they can use to re-focus wandering attention.
6. Play with confidence. Playing with assurance results in a proper use of air and better technique, and is the first and best step to prevent nerves. A well deserved belief in one's abilities (combined with good preparation) will go a long way towards eliminating nervous reactions.

The majority of concerts that musicians participate in are planned for us. The one major exception is the solo recital. Recitals may be required by a university or conservatory for graduation, or they may be for profit or merely for fun. No matter what the genesis of the recital is, one basic question remains: How does one program for it?

The following are some ideas that have helped me to come up with successful programs.

1. First of all, it is important to define the purpose of the recital. Is it educational, a fee concert, or merely for the enjoyment of friends and family.
2. Understand your audience, their special circumstances and expectations or, if it is a student recital, what will you be gaining from the experience.
3. Make a list of possible repertoire with timings of each piece, and be sure to pick music you enjoy. I always make three separate lists: pieces I already know, pieces I am learning, and pieces I should know but don't yet. Once you have these lists, you can select from them to assemble a workable program.

4. Select a good strong opener first. I prefer either something a bit flashy or something for piccolo trumpet. Next, select your closer. I look for something a little lighter or a chamber music piece, and then select the major works (Sonatas or Concertos). Lastly I pick a few filler pieces that will provide contrast and rest.

5. Write down some potential concert orders, taking into account how the pieces flow from one to the next, what kind of endurance demands they place on you, placement of specialty pieces (i.e. piccolo), and the logistics, especially if there are stage changes involved.

Full Recital (30 min. per half)

Opener
Transition (Contrast)
Concerto or Sonata

INTERMISSION

Concerto or Sonata
Rest piece (Contrast)
Closer

Half Recital (35 min. total time)

Opener
Transition (Contrast)
Major work (Sonata or Concerto)
Closer

Equipment is the most highly personal and controversial aspect of trumpet playing. I would not presume to tell anyone what set-up to play on, but I can give some general advice. Remember that when you are changing to something new, it should always sound immediately better than your old equipment. The idea of "working into it" is bunk. There may be an adjustment time, but there must be some immediate improvement. Also make sure to play your new equipment in a couple of different rooms, and always play for other musicians. Their ears may catch something in the sound that you cannot hear from your side of the bell. Here are some other ideas.

1. Identify your needs. Do you require a set-up for a specific style or job, or do you need something more versatile? Do your chops tolerate switching equipment for different repertoire? Do you need more than one set-up to meet the demands of your playing? By answering these questions, you can narrow your possible choices.

2. There are general tendencies in horns. For Bb trumpet, most people use medium large bore. The weight of the bell is a matter of taste. C trumpets are generally large bore. I prefer Bach trumpets for Bb and C because they have a good balance between high and low overtones in the sound. Many players are getting off track by trying to play too dark and sacrificing the highs in the sound. To my ear, it then is no longer a true trumpet sound. For small trumpets, look for quality of sound, response, and ease of high playing.

3. Most trumpet players spend a great deal of time (and money) selecting mouthpieces. I play on a Bach 1 1/4 C (or 1 1/2 C or 1B), and I have found that most legit players favor this size of mouthpiece. The best idea is to try a wide variety of mouthpieces keeping the following in mind:

A. Cup depth and shape affect the range, response, sound, and pitch. Too deep a cup results in a weak high range, slow response, dead sound, and flat pitch. Too shallow a cup tends to weaken the low range, thin out the sound, and raise the pitch too high.

B. The size and shape of the rim must fit your facial structure, your dental shape, and take into account the amount of pressure you use. Too flat or cushioned a rim will slow response, too thin a rim will decrease endurance.

C. Opening up the backbore and throat increase the volume and richness of the sound, but can destroy the focus of the sound and flexibility. Most orchestral players open up their mouthpieces.

4. Mutes are an often overlooked part of trumpet equipment. Every serious trumpeter should own a wide variety of mutes, and be selective about their use. I have loud and soft straight mutes, as well as in tune ones and sharp ones. There are times all of the above come in handy. Make sure to practice with your mutes, because "if you don't practice it, you can't play it." A harmon mute without the stem can also be an effective practice tool. Try to practice etudes while keeping the timbre (the amount of buzziness) the same.

5. Other accessories you should carry are:

A. Oil. Make sure never to mix valve oils. Some are incompatible and can seriously gum up your valves.

B. Cleaning supplies--mouthpiece brush and snake. It also helps if you use them.

C. Slide grease. Any non-water soluble grease will do. I use Vaseline on my slides.

D. Pencil with eraser.

E. Aspirin or Advil (both for headaches and as an anti-inflammatory for the chops).

Preparing Orchestral Excerpts

WSU Trumpet Masterclass, 9/3/92--Leslie Linn

I. Listen

II. LISTEN

III. LISTEN!!

A. Use as many different recordings as possible, to detect variations and different interpretations. Listen in these ways:

1. Without score or music.
What are your general impressions of the style and character of the music?
2. Using the score.
How do all the instruments and sections relate to one another?
How does the composer notate the effects and colors you hear?
3. Using the score, focus on trumpet in relation to overall.
How does the trumpet part fit with the rest?
Is the trumpet subdued in relation to the group?
Prominent?
Soloist?
4. Using score or complete part, focus on trumpet part.
Great time to compare different recordings.
Listen for articulation, note length, phrasing, tone color, other specifics of technique and style.

IV. EARLY PRACTICE

- A. Read through the part or excerpts to get a general feel for the character and possible problems.
- B. Begin to work out specific problems, using standard practice procedures.
- C. Experiment with different styles and sounds to develop flexibility on the excerpt and develop your own concepts.
- D. LOOK UP ALL THE TERMS THAT ARE ON THE PART AND IN THE SCORE
 1. most musical markings in Italian
 - a. in Italian or (usually) music dictionary
 2. many composers use terms in their native language
 - a. e.g. Mahler uses MORE German than Italian (traditional) musical indications--these terms need to be looked up as well
- E. Investigate background on pieces
 1. basic questions to ask
 - a. WHEN written?
 - b. WHERE written?
 - c. any WHY behind the piece?
any extramusical associations
(e.g. program or other story behind the piece)?

- related to some larger work (Overture to opera? Ballet score?)?
- d. get an idea of WHERE the work falls in the composer's overall output what stylistic period for the composer, etc., and try to determine if anything occurring either in the composer's life or any major historical events that might affect the reasoning or intent behind the work.

V. FINESSE PRACTICE

- A. After you can play the excerpt cleanly at tempo, try the following:
 1. Play the excerpt in different keys (as many as possible)
 2. Use every instrument you own on the part.
 - a. Use correct transposition for that horn.
 - b. Using the "odd" horn, use the same transposition you would use with the "normal" horn.
 3. Play along with the recordings you like best.
 4. Starting at normal tempo, play 4-5 times, each time setting the metronome one notch slower, then work your way back to normal tempo.
 5. Analyze your performance between each setting.

VI. RECORD YOURSELF

- A. This can be done at any of the practice stages.
- B. It is one of the most valuable tools we have to evaluate our own performance.
- C. Listen for
 1. obvious (tempo, missed notes, intonation) and
 2. subtle (style, interpretation, phrasing). The tape doesn't lie!

VII. AUDITION PRACTICE

- A. Play the excerpt with others as you would an audition.
 1. It's got to be perfect the first time!
 - B. Play for other people.
 1. Often, your peers can be the toughest to play for perfect practice for playing under pressure. They also can at times be your best teacher next to yourself. Listen to them.
 2. You get past the first round of an audition by playing with a great sound, accuracy, pitch, and TIME.
 3. You win the final round by having great musicianship and excitement in addition to the above.
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How to Practice

by Ray Mase

This practice routine has some ideas on practicing, particularly when not playing for someone regularly.

1. Maintenance (20-30 min.)

In this part of your practice, try to briefly "hit" as many aspects of playing as possible. By doing a routine similar to the one shown on page two, you can clearly evaluate what needs to be worked on and what doesn't. Don't get bogged down in this part of your practice--play many different things briefly, and use this information as the basis for what will be done in part 2 of your practice.

2. Specific Technical Practice (60-90 min.)

Assign specific technical studies for a reason. Put a date on assigned material, and do it regularly for 6-10 practice sessions. Keep a record of your assigned materials in a notebook, with the date. Try to jot down some comments on your practice in this notebook. Go on to new material after 6-10 sessions even if the material is not perfected.

Set modest goals for yourself and achieve them. Setting big goals tends to be frustrating. Improvement at anything is done in small steps---not big leaps.

3. Musical (30-45 min.)

Remember that Nos. 1 & 2 are done for a reason--to perfect a technique that will allow us to express ourselves musically in an effortless way. Technique should be improved out of a need to have more resources to use musically--not just for the sake of improvement. An enormous vocabulary is not useful unless we can express thoughts more concisely by having it.

Play easy material regularly and beautifully---without technical considerations. If an Arban song or Concone study can be done in this way, then more difficult material---like solos and orchestral excerpts--will also be able to be played easily with practice. Make technique a natural expressive tool, not an end in itself.

Play with others as often as possible. Music is a social and communicative art and we should relate musically to others easily. Making music requires more flexibility and thought than practicing, and needs to be done regularly.

Clint 'Pops' McLaughlin

The question was "How do I get more endurance?"

There is not a single answer to this. Some people have one problem while others may have all of these.

Plus there are other factors I'm leaving out because it would take days for me to list them all.

Endurance is affected by:

1. Muscle strength,
2. Pressure,
3. Work-load

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1. The muscle strength issue should be a NON -issue. It takes 4 minutes a day to build and maintain more lip strength than a player will ever need.

You need to use an isometric exercise to strengthen lip muscles. This has nothing to do with playing it is to build lip muscle.

Take an unsharpened pencil and support it between your lips by the eraser like a cigarette. Do not use your teeth (keep them closed). Use the lip muscles to keep the pencil in place and horizontal.

At first 30 seconds will seem like a long time. Your goal is to do this 3-4 minutes a day. Once you can do the entire 3 -4 minutes at one setting you are done.

Do not do more than 4 minutes any day. It can stiffen the chops and hinder flexibility, tone soft playing etc.

Think of this as weight lifting.

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2. Pressure is something we all need to use. However; many players use more than needed.

I've had players come to see me who use more mouthpiece pressure to play low c than I use to play high c. This is just wearing the lips down for no reason.

We get in this habit when we first start playing. WE use pressure to form and close the embouchure in order to play higher than second line g.

Our lips get stronger and we gain control over our embouchures. But if we don't work on unlearning our elementary school habit of using pressure; then we keep it. (I did this too. And I had to retrain myself.)

We can't just stop using pressure. We have to fix the reason why we started using pressure.

Focus the vibrating area of the lips.

Lip Buzz 15 minutes a day.

This allows the lips a chance to learn how to create their own corners instead of just stopping the buzz where the mouthpiece touches the sides.

When I buzz a high c my buzz is less than half the width of my mouthpiece diameter. When you play that note and allow the mouthpiece to make your corners then you lose focus and need too much mouthpiece pressure.

Work on soft playing. So soft that you almost can NOT hear it. That will help you learn to control a small lip aperture for playing high with a good solid center.

I like Clarke Technical Studies # 1. You want to almost not be able to hear it but still have each note speak.

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3. Work-load

We can take some of the work off of the chops by making a better use of air and using a closer lip set.

Project the notes where they belong.

The notes have to project to be heard. The higher notes have a smaller vibration and lose energy faster than low notes.

WE want to project notes like this:

Low G rolls out of the bell,
Low C goes out 5 feet,
Second line G goes out 8 feet,
3rd space C goes out 12 feet,
G on top of the staff goes out 20 feet,
High C goes out 40 feet,
G above high C goes out 80 feet.

Relax the stomach muscles. Tension only hurts the sound. Tensing the stomach muscles does NOT create a smaller body cavity or pressurize the lungs.

Bringing the abs in toward the spine and contracting the muscles around the girdle does create a smaller body cavity. That moves your guts (intestines, liver etc) and since the pelvic bones won't let them go down; they have to go up. That makes the part of your chest cavity available for your lungs smaller. And that places the air in the lungs under pressure.

Pull the stomach in farther for each higher note.

Lip set point.

Take line 1 of page 125 in the Arban. It is a C Major scale with every other note jumping down to low G.

If you start on the Low G the middle c is hard for some players. If you set (and play) a middle c first and then start the high notes are easy.

I make my students do a 2 octave C scale. They set and play a G on top of the staff and without resetting they start the exercise.

It is easy to compress the lips to play a half an octave higher than your set point. It is easy to learn to relax and (drop the jaw) to get to a full low g.

The G on top of the Staff should ALWAYS be your starting point. That way you have a base from which to judge where every note is in relation to your starting aperture/tension level.

This gives you more endurance instantly as the lips do less work on every note.

Information about my trumpet & embouchure books.
<http://www.BbTrumpet.com>

Best wishes
Clint 'Pops' McLaughlin