

Everything You Need to Know About The Trumpet- The Fundamentals

Daniel Head

Sound Concept –

- LISTEN, LISTEN, LISTEN!
- Who do you listen to? How do you want to Sound?
- A beautiful tone is the first priority of any musician.
- Recordings are a great tool but live performances are always preferred, get out there and find your inspiration.

Breathing –

- Relaxed, full, from the bottom up.
- You can take in more air than you think. (Sipping exercise)
- The air should have continuous motion, either entering the body or being directed back through the instrument. This diminishes tension in the body that impedes tone.
- Holding the air will cause tension.
 - Practice the 5 – 3 – 1 exercise.
- Inhale –
 - Use “Law” or “Poh” syllables for an effective inward breath.
 - Noisy breaths are a result of tension or poor vowel shape.
- Exhale –
 - **Don’t blow**, *release* warm air.
 - Use steady support, think bagpipes. “Support” is moving air, not tense muscles.
 - Imagine you’re flickering the flame of a candle from 5 feet away.

Embouchure –

- Everyone has a different natural shape, do not manipulate.
- Don’t place the mouthpiece on the red of the lips; the material is thin and easily damaged.
- The aperture should always be unrestricted. Keep your corners firm and don’t stretch out the lips.
- Contrary to popular belief the “buzz” happens naturally,
 - **DO NOT FORCE IT**, all you need is wind.

The Buzz -

- Free buzzing (without the mouthpiece) and mouthpiece buzzing are great tools to train our air and our ears but they are only useful if done without tension.
- **Leadpipe Buzzing –**
 - Open resistance, removes the need for tension, creates a more efficient aperture and airstream.



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Articulation –

- Don't think about the tongue, you will get tongue tied.
 - Imagine you are speaking, your air is moving and your tongue is striking as you enunciate each syllable. There should be no tension in the tongue.
- Personal preference – “tOO” instead of “tu” & “Qoo” instead of “Ku”
- Practicing Wind-Patterns will help with tongue, finger and air coordination.

Practicing –

- Short, goal oriented bursts. Slow practice = Fast results.

Intonation –

- Trumpeters tend to play sharp. Aim just below the center of the pitch, this will help with blending.
- Practice aids – **SINGING**. Tuner & drones. Straight/Harmon mute.

Endurance –

- To build a strong and developed embouchure practice long-tones, lip bends, lip slurs and pedal tones daily. Develop lip trills that can be played with ease.
- Tension free and efficient playing is the key.

Range –

- Work smarter, not harder. The more you push against the instrument, the harder it will push back and you *will* hurt yourself.
- Aperture tension controls the pitch while you supply the faster air. The higher you play the less air is needed, but a steady airflow is required!

Warm-up –

- Warm-up every time you play and **focus on your sound**.
- Light, easy playing to get the muscles supple and tension free.
- Make sure your body and mind are prepared for what ever you might play.

Tips –

- ALWAYS play with your best sound and never settle for less.
- Practice breathing efficiently.
- Sound is moving air: big air = big sound, small air = small sound, constricted air = constricted sound.
 - The instrument is amplifier broadcasting what the body is doing.
- Practice wind-Patterns: work on concentration, precision and air support while resting your face.
- Try playing a difficult fingering passage with the left hand.
- Practice with a friend when ever possible.
- Always continue learning, and find good teacher.

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