

TRÖMBÖNE

FIRST STEPS



MR GÖLDING



/brassblastuk

Starting your trombone journey

Playing a musical instrument is one of the most rewarding things a human can achieve! Music is an international language and every culture and sub-culture on planet earth has it's own music, made for themselves by themselves.

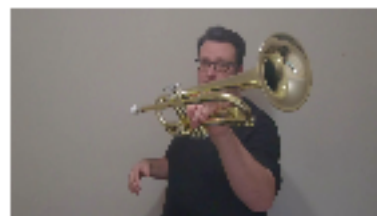
Learning how to play an instrument has been proved time and time again to really benefit children, improving a host of skills that have uses and positive impacts reaching far beyond the music making its self.

Brass instruments are interesting in many ways, from the outside they seem technical and difficult to understand but to the experienced brass player playing brass is the most natural thing in the world.

In this guide I will try to make your first steps as easy, simple and natural as possible.

How use this book?

This book links to youtube clips with via QR code (just open the camera on your phone and point it to the code to go to the link) or in PDF mode (reading online just click the picture next to the code to go to the link.



How do brass instruments make a sound?

Sound is vibration travelling through the air. When the vibration reaches your ears the brain performs a magical transformation of this sensation into the sounds we hear. A brass player vibrates his or her lips together and this in turn cause vibrations inside the instrument that create the wonderful noise of a brass instrument...in this case the trumpet!

Brass players call this lip vibration **"Buzzing" or "the Buzz"** and it really is the heart of becoming a brass player. As you will learn, no buzz can happen without air blown through your lips and into the instrument so these two elements **blowing** and **buzz** are the heart of trumpet, cornet and bugle playing.

With these two simple skills in place you can begin to take your first steps into the trombone world!

What is a trombone?

The trombone is a brass instrument, which basically means that it is an empty tube where the player vibrates the air inside by vibrating their lips to make a sound.

Like many brass instruments you can change the length of this tube, in the case of the trombone by sliding a section of tubing in and out.

The trombone originally grew from the trumpet which was already common by Medieval times, in fact the trombone was documented in Ferrara court records as early as 1439.

The Duke of Burgundy had a trombone player at his wedding so trombone players were already getting gigs in 1468! During the Renaissance and Baroque eras the trombone was referred to as a shakbusse or sackbut.

Trombone Facts:

The word 'trombone' is derived from the Italian word 'tromba' which means 'trumpet', and 'one' which means 'big'. Together they formed the word 'trombone' which means 'big trumpet'.

The first composer to create a symphony trombone part was Beethoven who included it in the last movement of his famous "Fifth Symphony".

The trombone is a popular instrument to portray dark moments in operas such as "Don Giovanni" (by Mozart), or "Till Eulenspiegel" (by Richard Strauss) or to support the singers in the choir in choral pieces like Mozart's Requiem.

Left-handed trombone players must learn to play with their right hand because of its design. Some of the most famous trombone players were left-handed.

Trombones are versatile instruments and are commonly found in jazz bands, marching bands, and orchestras. They are also found in brass choirs, brass bands, military bands, swing music, salsa music, R&B music, and merengue music.

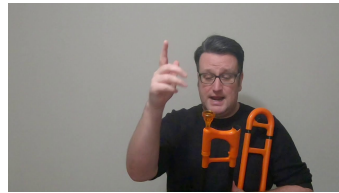
There are different types of trombones, in fact the trombone is a whole family of instruments, including the bass trombone, the tenor trombone, the contrabass trombone, the soprano trombone and the alto trombone.

Glenn Miller, Paul Newman, Nelly Furtado, Tommy Dorsey, Slide Hampton, Trombone Shorty, and Jonathan Frakes (Bill Riker or Number 1 from "Star Trek: The Next Generation") are a few of the most famous trombone players.

The cartoon characters Homer Simpson (The Simpsons) and Peter Griffin (Family Guy) play the trombone. Jean Chretien, Canada's former Prime Minister, plays the trombone.

Last but not least! the teacher in the "Peanuts" cartoon speaks, her dull and boring voice is the sound of a trombone..."Good grief, Charlie Brown!"

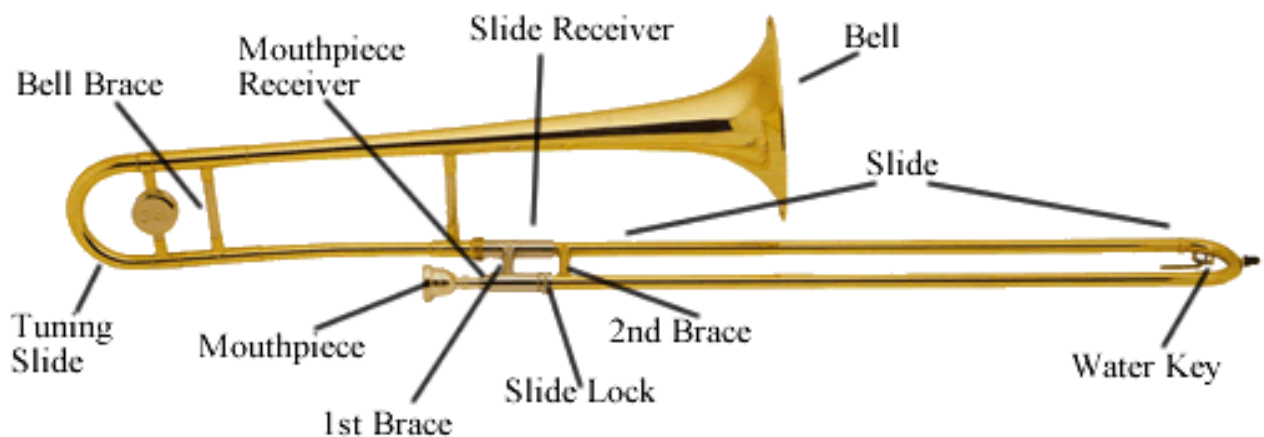
Looking after your trombone



Putting the trombone together

Remember if you have any problems with the trombone, Mr Golding can fix it in the lesson!

Parts of the trombone



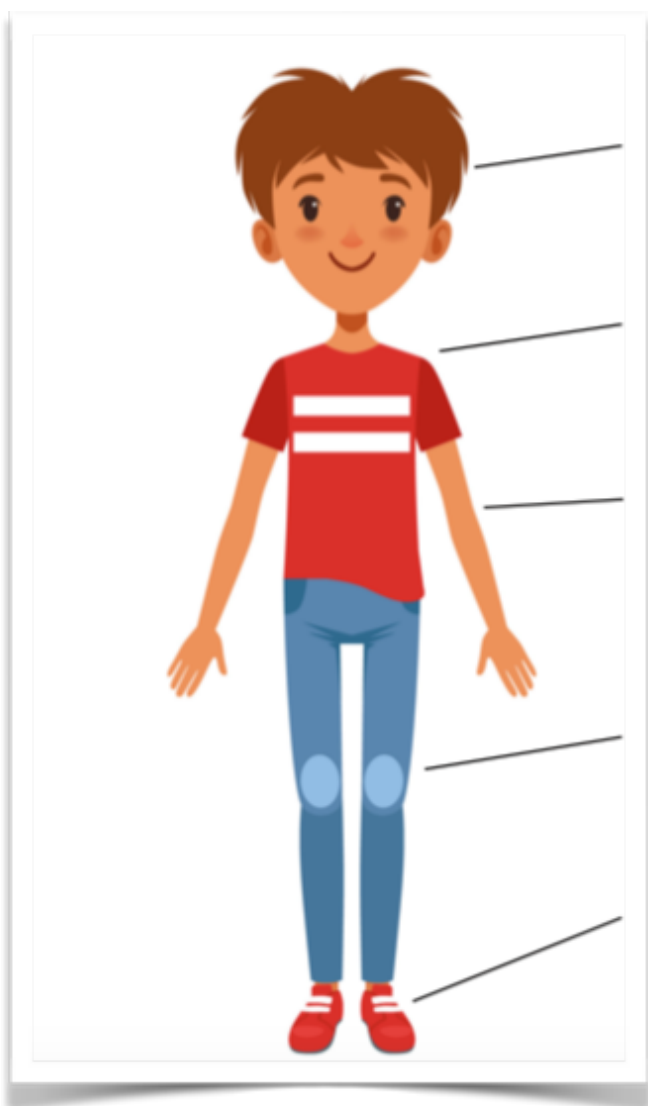
Good posture

“Good posture really matters when it comes to playing an instrument...”

That is true! but let's start at the beginning... What is posture anyway?

Basically posture describes how we hold our body...what position it is in, and how we hold our instrument, especially in relation to our body.

This includes everything from our toes to our head and all are just as important. When we are playing a brass instrument we are using lots of air, both breathing in and blowing out, so holding our bodies in a way that makes this as easy as possible is vital...it's also great for our general health and well being. Think about how important good, deep and controlled breathing is for our day-to-day lives! “take a deep breath!”. Controlling breathing and posture is also good for mindfulness and is used in meditation and yoga...so that's all good!



Your head is up straight and looking straight ahead!

This is really important because you need to slightly point your pTrumpet down and keep your head up to get the best sound!

Shoulders need to be relaxed and down... Lots of people think that by lifting their shoulders they will get a bigger breath...not so!..down and relaxed is best!

Arms are going to be holding your Trumpet but again relaxed is best.

Legs should be slightly apart, about the same distance apart as your hip.

Feet nicely flat on the floor!

How do I hold this thing?

It's important to get into the habit of holding the trombone the correct way right from the start!



Your **Left Hand** does all the holding! it wraps around the body and index finger touches the mouthpiece.

Your **Right Hand** holds the slide.



We need to stand with good posture and the trombone in a slightly down relaxed position.

Remember - Shoulders relaxed and elbows not tucked in!

Breathing in and blowing out....

Everyone knows how to breatheright? so breathing is no problem.

Playing a brass instrument is all about blowing air out... so you will need some air to blow, a strong steady flow of air is what helps make the sound on all brass instruments.

Here are a few simple steps to getting a great breath in.....



Step 1

Breathe in through your open mouth and **not** your nose.

Step 2

Take a big, deep and relaxed breath in.

Step 3

Imagine the breath going deep into your body, feeling cool and refreshing.

Step 4

When your lungs feel full of air blow out through your lips..... a bit like blowing a candle out.

Did you Know?

The average person breathes in (and out!) over 8000 litres of air a day by taking around 20,000 breaths.

Slow Flow

Dangle a piece of paper in front of your lips. Fill your lungs with a big, deep relaxed breath and blow the paper so it ripples. How long can you make it ripple for? Maybe you can change the speed of the ripples?

Tower of Power

Put your pencil on the table (it needs to be a round one!). Fill your lungs with a big, deep relaxed breath. How far can you blow the pencil? You might need to do this in the floor if you get really good at it!

Buzzing

Let's get the air flowing

Remember when we talked about posture, looking straight ahead with head up straight? Now is the time this becomes important!

Look straight ahead, take in one of your big, deep breaths and blow some air at your fingers.

Keep your fingers a little lower than your mouth to get a downwards angle.

Now try a buzz

Whilst you are blowing slowly put your lips closer and closer together, as long as the air flow keeps moving you should get a buzz!

Always make sure you have a hole in the middle of your lips for the air to flow through, we call this the aperture! If there is no air flow there can be no sound.

If your buzz doesn't start straight away, adding the mouthpiece often helps.

Make sure the mouthpiece is following the same path as your air and that it's in the middle of your lips.

The mouthpiece should be central to your lips, both sideways and up and down.

Try not to press the mouthpiece too hard against your lips.

Buzzing Demo



Playing your first notes on Trombone

1. Bring the trombone to your mouth without moving your head from the good posture position, try not to bring your lips to the instrument.
2. Make a nice seal between your lips and the mouthpiece, just like when you were buzzing.
3. Also try to make the angle between your face and the trombone the same as when buzzing, pointing down a little. You may not point as far down as the picture but that's OK.
4. A big breath in through the sides of your mouth.
5. Now buzz into the trombone...we should have a great sound!
6. Practice some long, relaxed notes, if they come out different, that's OK, if they are all the same, that's OK too!
7. Concentrate on making a really nice sound.

Making your first sound



Putting it all together!

Now you can play some notes on the trombone let's put your sounds to music! There are 5 backing tracks for you to play along to. In the first version I will play and you can copy straight after me. You could also use my notes and rhythms as questions and you make up answers.

Join in and make some notes...you can't play a wrong note, every trombone note will fit, as long as you keep the slide in.

See if you can make notes of different lengths, how many beats do your notes last?

Dancy Demo



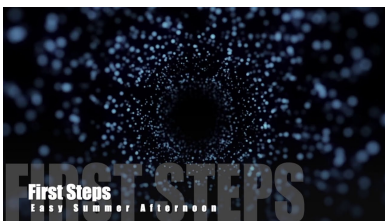
Dancy Backing



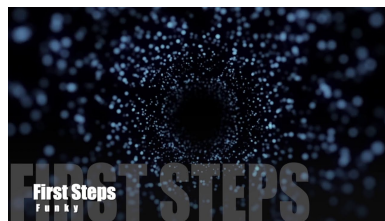
Take it Easy Backing



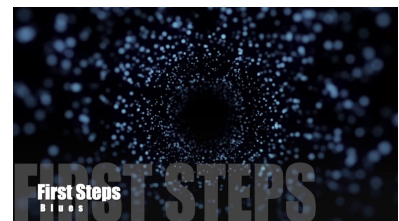
Easy Summer Backing



Funky Backing



Blues Backing



High, Middle and Low

Getting different pitches.

Pitch in music simply means how high or low a note is.

There are two ways a brass instrument can change its pitch, changing its length (valves) or harmonics. Let's start with "High, Middle and Low" or harmonics.

Remember that by changing the way you blow air and hold your lips you can get different pitches without using your valves?

We have to be able change the buzz we make with our lips, remember you can practice this on the mouthpiece?

Blowing

The type of air we blow really makes a difference to the pitch or how high or low a note is.

Slow, wide air helps make lower notes. Think about making a window steamed up in the Winter. Some brass teachers call this "hot" air because it's the kind of breath that we'd use to warm up our hands in the cold!

Fast, thin air will make really bright, clear, high notes. Think about the kind of breath you would use to put out a candle or blow an insect off your hand.

Another great tip if you are trying to play some higher notes is: "try the higher note first!". I hear lots of players always try the low note first because this is the "safe" or "easy" one, then they

try to add the higher pitch.

If you think about how full your lungs are when you have just taken in a great breath you will see that it is much easier to blow out fast air first and slow air second.

1, 2, 3, breathe, **High, Middle, Low**

(Also, you can think loud for high and quiet for low...this sometimes helps!)

Tongue position also helps - Think EEE for high notes Ahhh for middle and OOOO for low.

With our slide in(1st Position) we can play Shotgun by George Ezra - in the chorus play 2 middle notes where George sings Shotgun!

Listen, Sing, Buzz, Play

When you are playing the Trombone the closer you can get your buzz to the pitch you want to play the better the sound will be.

A great way to develop this skill is to listen to the note, sing the note, buzz the note on your mouthpiece then play the note on the Trombone.

When you see the following icons Listen, Sing, Buzz and Play

Listen

Sing - Sing the tune, say the notes and show the fingers.

Buzz - Lips and/or Mouthpiece.

Play



Slide Positions



Brass Gym

Brass playing needs both musical and physical training. This works best when music is in the driving seat!

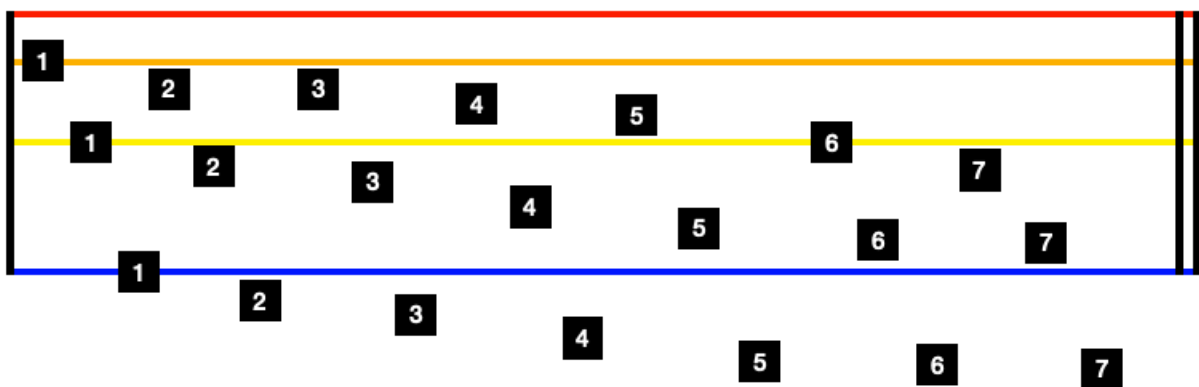
I've developed a series of exercises to build your brass playing skills in both musical and physical ways together.

Like at any gym, doing a regular work out really helps to build your brass playing strength and stamina as well as honing your musical skills .

Doing BrassGym will also improve your sound and how many different pitches you can play!

Lets we'll play high, medium and low on every slide position, starting on position 1, the shortest our instrument can be. Listen to my demonstration then join in.

Notice how the "high, medium, low" pattern gets a little lower every time we add a little more tubing to our instrument.



Brass Gym Demo



Remember that if you listen, sing, buzz and play the exercise it will be even more effective in building your brass skills!

How to play tunes with BrassTabs: Ode To Joy

Always start by listening!

Here you can hear the tune being played with the backing track or the backing track on its own.

Ode to Joy Demo



Ode to Joy Backing



Now try singing the trombone part, start with the backing track demo with trombone playing then maybe just the backing track.

How about buzzing it on your mouthpiece, do the same routine as the singing above. Great! Did you notice that this tune has four main sections and a little introduction on the drums?

Sections one, two and four are exactly the same (apart from the last 3 notes), here is the BrassTab for these sections:

Super High															
High															
Middle	1														
Low	4	4	3	1	1	3	4	6	1	1	6	4	4	6	6

Sing and practice the valves whilst resting your mouthpiece on your chin. Then dive into playing the line. You could start slowly before adding the backing track?

How about section three?

Here's the BrassTab for that line of music...practice this in the same way then we'll bring it all together!

Super High															
High															
Middle	1														
Low	6	4	1	6	4	3	4	1	6	4	3	4	6	1	6

Ode To Joy: Bringing it all together!

Ok let's play the whole piece!

Remember to take a big breath and at the same time that I do in the video.

Don't forget to wait for the drum intro: Dom...Dom...dom dom dom dom

Super High

High

Middle

Low

A musical staff with four lines: Super High (red), High (orange), Middle (yellow), and Low (blue). The staff is divided into four measures by vertical lines. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4. The notes are: Measure 1: Middle (4), Middle (4), Middle (3), Middle (1); Measure 2: Middle (1), Middle (3), Middle (4), Middle (6); Measure 3: Middle (1), Middle (1), Middle (6), Middle (4); Measure 4: Middle (4), Middle (6), Middle (6).

Super High

High

Middle

Low

A musical staff with four lines: Super High (red), High (orange), Middle (yellow), and Low (blue). The staff is divided into four measures by vertical lines. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4. The notes are: Measure 1: Middle (4), Middle (4), Middle (3), Middle (1); Measure 2: Middle (1), Middle (3), Middle (4), Middle (6); Measure 3: Middle (1), Middle (1), Middle (6), Middle (4); Measure 4: Middle (6), Middle (1), Middle (1).

Super High

High

Middle

Low

A musical staff with four lines: Super High (red), High (orange), Middle (yellow), and Low (blue). The staff is divided into four measures by vertical lines. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4. The notes are: Measure 1: Low (6), Middle (4), Middle (1); Measure 2: Low (6), Middle (4), Middle (3), Middle (4), Middle (1); Measure 3: Low (6), Middle (4), Middle (3), Middle (4), Middle (6), Middle (1); Measure 4: Low (6), Middle (1), Middle (6).

Super High

High

Middle

Low

A musical staff with four lines: Super High (red), High (orange), Middle (yellow), and Low (blue). The staff is divided into four measures by vertical lines. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4. The notes are: Measure 1: Middle (4), Middle (4), Middle (3), Middle (1); Measure 2: Middle (1), Middle (3), Middle (4), Middle (6); Measure 3: Middle (1), Middle (1), Middle (6), Middle (4); Measure 4: Middle (6), Middle (1), Middle (1).

Who composed this tune, can you find out on the web?

Remember you can slow down the backing track by using the playback options and playback speed in youtube.

The Saints: a classic, swingy tune for brass

Can you use the way we learnt "Ode to Joy" to learn "The Saints"? Remember to start by listening!

Watch out for the little count in! Click..click..click..

When The Saints Demo



When The Saints Backing



Super High				
High				
Middle			1	
Low	1	6	4	1

Super High				
High				
Middle			1	
Low	1	6	4	4

Super High				
High				
Middle				
Low	1		4	6

Super High				
High				
Middle				
Low	4	6	1	1

Super High				
High				
Middle			1	1
Low			4	3

Super High				
High				
Middle			1	
Low	4	3	4	4

Super High				
High				
Middle				
Low			1	6

Super High				
High				
Middle				
Low			1	1

Bone Idol Blues: a chance to make up your own music

It has three main sections: the tune (which we sometimes call "the head" in jazz), a middle section, that has no trumpet on the video, then at the end the "head" comes back again.

The tune is our most complicated so far and will need some practice to listen, sing, buzz and play. It would also be useful to read about "Starting Notes" for this tune.

We can actually split the tune into two smaller parts or lines which will make learning easier.

If you listen carefully to the video I play the second half of each of these lines more quietly...try to copy.

Super High				
High				
Middle	1 3 1 3	1 3 1 3 1	1 3 1 3	1 3 1 3
Low				

Super High				
High	3 3	3 3	3	3
Middle			1 3 1	1 3 1
Low				

Bone Idol Demo



Bone Idol Backing



Starting notes or Articulation

You might have noticed in the videos that I do something extra at the beginning of the notes, more than simply blowing air to make my lips buzz?

I use my tongue to help the note have a clear start. In brass we call this tonguing and how we start the note is usually called articulation.

You can do this too, try singing a tune using this sound "Taa" for every note. Now try a few mouthpiece buzzes, not singing but blowing with a "Taa" at the beginning of each blow. OK! let's add that to playing with a very quick "Taa" on every note. It's important that your tongue doesn't get in the way of the air you are blowing, so timing is important.

Make sure your tongue is never touching your teeth when tonguing, if it does it's too far forward in your mouth.

Once you feel comfortable "Taa-ing" your notes you can experiment with "Tee" for higher notes or "Toh" for lower notes. These sounds help get the right speed of air!

Structure or shape

Let's put lines one and two together to make the whole tune.

There is a little four count drum intro...boom, tap, boom...boom, tap then we are straight in.



Improvising

Improvising is really simple, easy and fun!

All it means is that the music has a space where you can choose what to play, usually as a chance to show off your creativity!

In this piece there is a space in the middle that is the same length as the whole of the tune, twenty four bars long, with four beats in each bar.

There are two easy ways to start improvising:

The first is simply playing the tune and making some small changes to it as you go along, playing around with the tune. This is how jazz improvisation started and how classical composers improvise.

The second way is to understand that if you choose notes with 1st position (Slide in) then every note you play will fit. Now try adding positions 1,3 & 6 to add a bit of musical spice to your mix!

Next steps - We will now move on to reading notation but in the mean time have a look at www.brasstabs.com

If you want to annoy people see if you can learn to play Baby Shark from my video! these notes work with the original version on youtube!

Baby Shark



BrassTabs

You can find BrassTabs for lots of great tunes on www.brasstabs.com.

It's free to use so everyone can join in.

You'll find pop, R&B and other cool tunes to play with, just like being in the horn section!

