

Warm Up: is it really necessary?

Every trombonist is an athlete as well as an artist. Regardless of where you are in your trombone playing journey, warming up well accomplishes three very important goals. Firstly, you give your embouchure, breathing, and tonguing muscles a chance to stretch before being used for work at an intense level. Secondly, you help build a routine of success and reliability within the muscle memory of your different performing muscles. Third, you give yourself time at the beginning of your playing day to assess obstacles, and help center each mechanic of your playing individually, before putting them all together in performance. I do this warm up as part of my daily routine each day. It is always the first thing that I play, and I play it right through from start to finish. I never allow this routine to take me more than 40 minutes, but I also make sure to stop and work each individual exercise if I'm having trouble with it. There's no sense in speeding through things that aren't working if you can fix them right away.

1. Mental Focus Moment

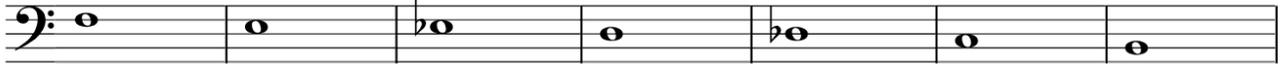
Before I begin to warm up, while taking my trombone out of the case, I take a minute to calm my brain. Sometimes, this works best with the lights off, and sometimes, this works best with you talking out loud to yourself and coaching yourself into a mode to work. I try to reign my thoughts in, and focus on what is important. Calming down, and getting focused. This minute or so of relaxed breathing and calm headspace can save you hours of frustration throughout the day of practice.

2. Long Tones

The first thing in your day should be long tones. The pattern I play each morning is below. Focus on keeping a nice and even sound, and support your air stream from your core, not your corners. Take this as a chance to experiment with tension, and try and get as relaxed as possible.



8



15



3. Slow Slurs

I play these at MM. =60. Try and keep the slur as relaxed and sustained as possible. If it feels muscled or forced, repeat it. Some days, it takes me 10 times to get the first one right. That's ok.



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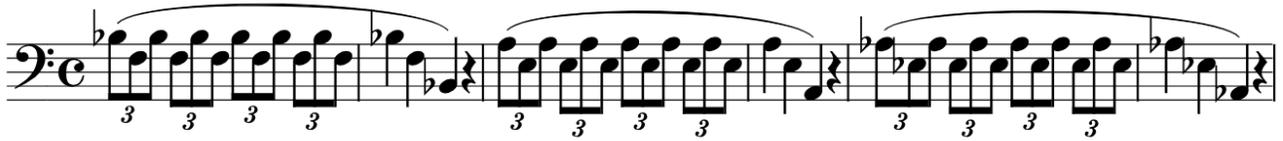


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4. Triplet Slurs

I play these at MM. =92, but if you haven't done them before, start at MM. =80. The trick here is to make sure you don't accent the first note of each triplet group. Stay relaxed, and focus on an even flow of air.





10. Arban's Tongue Line Up

Try this exercise with each measure's articulation alternating. First measure, all 'Ha', second measure, all 'Da', third measure, all 'Ha', and so forth. This helps me line me tongue and air up really well.

6

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11. Deep Alternating Pitches

When you finish this, take the whole thing up a half step. Then, again. Follow this pattern upwards until you are having Bb be the lower note that you keep

returning to, and are playing an Eb major scale.