

Trumpet — Workbook

This workbook turns the Trumpet course into daily reps. It pairs each module with exercises, fill-in worksheets, and checklists you can take to the practice room, plus editable templates for tracking long tones, lip slurs, scales, and your first blues solo. Work through one section per course module and use the action plan to build a sustainable daily routine that protects your chops.

Setup, the Buzz, and Your First Note

Lock in safe assembly and oiling, a centered free and mouthpiece buzz, and an efficient embouchure that produces a clear, in-tune tone.

Exercise: Mouthpiece Buzz Pitch Check

Buzz on the mouthpiece alone while watching a tuner app (TonalEnergy or a clip-on). Try to buzz and hold a steady concert C, then G, keeping the needle near center. Then slide the buzz up and down like a siren and try buzzing Hot Cross Buns by ear.

- What pitch did your most comfortable mouthpiece buzz land on, and was it flat or sharp of your target?

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- Did firming the corners or speeding the air bring the pitch up more reliably?

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- How many seconds could you hold a steady buzz before it wobbled or sputtered?
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Worksheet: Instrument and Mouthpiece Inventory

Fill this in once after setting up your horn so you know exactly what gear you are on and your maintenance schedule.

Trumpet make and model

Mouthpiece make and size (e.g., Bach 7C)

Valve oil brand (e.g., Al Cass, Hetman)

Slide grease brand

Date valves last oiled

Date slides last greased

Does the horn have a first-valve saddle/trigger? (yes/no)

Checklist: Daily Setup and Care

- [] Oiled valves and worked them up and down 10 times to spread the oil
- [] Greased and resealed any stiff slides; third slide moves freely with its ring
- [] Held the horn by the valve casing block, never by the slides, during assembly
- [] Set the embouchure first, then brought the horn to the lips with light pressure
- [] Pressed both water keys to clear condensation and stored the horn with the mouthpiece out

Air, Articulation, and the Valves

Build a supported air stream, clean tonguing, and fast synchronized valve technique to play your first melodies.

Exercise: Long-Tone Intonation Ladder

Metronome at 60. Play each note for 8 beats, rest 4, moving by step from written G outward. Keep the tuner needle within a few cents of center for the whole 8 beats. Breathe in through the corners so the embouchure stays set, and do not let the note fade at the end of the breath.

- Which notes drifted sharp as you ran out of air (a sign of squeezing with the lips)?

• How far above and below written G could you hold steady before tone or pitch broke down?

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- Did pushing more air, rather than adding mouthpiece pressure, fix the sagging or sharp notes?

Exercise: Articulation Triple Set

On written G at metronome 70, play four notes legato (doo), four notes staccato (tut), then a five-note scale up and down fully slurred. Keep the air constant under all three; only the tongue or valves change.

- Was your tongue tapping behind the top teeth, or were you stopping the air (the common error)?

• Did the staccato notes have equal length and equal silence between them?

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- At what tempo did your articulation start to get uneven?

Exercise: Valve Synchronization Drill

Slowly alternate between notes that need two valves and open notes (for example C to A, fingering open to 1-2). At metronome 60, make sure both valves hit the bottom at exactly the same instant and snap up together. Listen for any gurgle that means a valve moved late or only halfway.

- Which two-valve combination was the hardest to land cleanly together?

• Did any note gurgle or split because a valve was pressed only halfway?

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- Were your fingers curved and pressing from the fingertip, with a relaxed wrist?

Checklist: Breath, Valve, and Finger Fundamentals

- [] Belly expanded on the inhale, shoulders stayed down
- [] Held a steady 12-count hiss without the throat closing
- [] Pressed valves with a quick, full stroke from the fingertip, never floating halfway
- [] Kept the right thumb under the leadpipe and the fingers curved
- [] Practiced 10 minutes of long tones before any tune work

Lip Slurs, Scales, and Reading Music

Slur smoothly across the overtone series, own all 12 major scales plus the chromatic scale, and read pitch and rhythm fluently as a transposing player.

Exercise: Overtone-Series Lip-Slur Ladder

On open valves at metronome 60, slur G to the C above (air and tongue arch only, no re-tonguing), then add E so you slur G-C-E-C-G. Use an ah shape for low notes and an ee shape for high ones. Then move the same pattern onto 1-3, 1, and 2 fingerings.

- Did the upper note speak with tongue arch and air, or did you reach for it with mouthpiece pressure?

- Where did the slur break or bump instead of staying glassy-smooth?

- Did exaggerating the ah-to-ee vowel shape make the higher note easier to catch?

Exercise: Scale-of-the-Week Drill

Pick the new key for the week. Say the note names and valve combinations, finger silently, then play slurred at 60 bpm (two notes per beat) up and down. Repeat tongued. Increase tempo by 5 bpm only after three clean repetitions.

- Which scale degree (note) caused the most valve fumbles, and why?

- What was your top clean tempo for this key by the end of the week?

- Did building the scale from the W-W-H-W-W-W-H formula help you predict the notes?

Worksheet: 12-Key Mastery Grid

Track every major scale from first slow play to brisk tempo, working around the circle of fifths.

Key (written): C

Key (written): G

Key (written): D

Key (written): A

Key (written): E

Key (written): B

Key (written): F-sharp

Key (written): D-flat

Key (written): A-flat

Key (written): E-flat

Key (written): B-flat

Key (written): F

Chromatic scale (one octave)

Top clean tempo per key (bpm)

Checklist: Reading and Theory Confidence

- Can name every line and space of the treble staff instantly
- Can count 1-and-2-and rhythms aloud while clapping
- Know the B-flat trumpet sounds a whole step below what I read
- Always download or buy the Trumpet / B-flat part
- Can play the chromatic scale slurred for one full octave

Tuning, Repertoire, and Your First Jazz Feel

Tune accurately with the slides, build endurance with a smart routine, read a lead sheet, and swing the blues with the blues scale.

Exercise: Slide-Tuning and Tendency-Note Check

Warm up, then tune written C (concert B-flat) to a tuner with the main slide. Now play low D (1-3) and low C-sharp (1-2-3) and watch how sharp they read. Extend the third-valve slide on those notes until the pitch centers.

- How many cents sharp were low D and low C-sharp before you used the third slide?

- How far did you extend the third-valve slide to bring each note in tune?

- Did re-tuning after ten minutes of warm playing change where the main slide needed to sit?

Exercise: 12-Bar Blues Roadmap

In a written C blues (concert B-flat), clap and count the 12-bar form, then play the root of each chord in whole notes. Loop a B-flat blues backing track at 80 bpm (or iReal Pro on a slow blues) and play the head of a simple blues such as C-Jam Blues.

- Could you always tell where bar 1 of the form was while playing?

- Which chord changes (I, IV, or V) did you lose track of, and at which bar?

- Did the roots line up with the backing track harmony?

Exercise: Blues-Scale Call and Response

Over a slow blues backing track, improvise using only the written C blues scale (C, E-flat, F, F-sharp, G, B-flat). Play a short 3 to 4 note idea, rest a full bar, then answer it. Develop one motif across several bars instead of playing nonstop.

- Did you swing the eighth notes long-short, or were they still even?

- How much space did you leave; did your phrases breathe and answer each other?

- Which one motif did you develop, and how did you vary it?

Checklist: Jazz and Endurance Readiness

- [] Can read melody, chord symbols, and form on a lead sheet
- [] Memorized one 12-bar blues head in one key cold
- [] Swing eighths long-short with accented upbeats
- [] Use the third-valve slide on sharp 1-3 and 1-2-3 notes
- [] Rest as much as I play and cool down with soft low long tones

Your Action Plan

1. Week 1: Drill safe assembly, valve oiling, water-key care, and the free and mouthpiece buzz until each is automatic.
2. Week 2: Add 10 minutes of daily long tones at 60 bpm and form an efficient embouchure on written G with light pressure.
3. Week 3: Build clean articulation (legato, staccato) and valve synchronization, then play three starter tunes from memory.
4. Week 4: Start a daily lip-slur routine on the overtone series and learn the five friendliest scales (C, G, F, D, B-flat written).
5. Weeks 5 to 8: Complete all 12 major scales around the circle of fifths plus a one-octave chromatic scale.
6. Week 6: Run daily note-naming sprints and sight-read one new 8-bar line each day in B-flat parts.
7. Week 7: Learn to tune with the main slide and correct sharp low D and C-sharp with the third-valve slide.
8. Week 9: Memorize the 12-bar blues form and play the head of one blues over an 80 bpm backing track.
9. Week 10: Improvise with the written C blues scale using call-and-response, swung eighths, and a developed motif.
10. Ongoing: Record one long tone and one 12-bar solo weekly, rest as much as you play, and listen daily to Armstrong, Clifford Brown, or Miles.

