

Building A Better Trumpet Section

Dr. P. Bradley Ulrich



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DR. P. BRADLEY ULRICH, Professor of Music, has taught trumpet at Western Carolina University since 1989. Dr. Ulrich received his Bachelor of Music Degree in Trumpet Performance from the Florida State University where he studied with Bryan Goff. His Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in Trumpet Performance and Literature were awarded from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, where he studied with Ray Sasaki and Michael Tunnell. He has also studied with Raymond Mase, George Vosburgh, Adolphe Herseth, James Thompson, and Vincent DiMartino.

Maintaining an active performing career, Dr. Ulrich is currently Principal Trumpet with the Brevard Chamber Orchestra and the Hendersonville Symphony Orchestra. In addition, he also performs with both the Asheville Symphony Orchestra (NC) and the Greenville Symphony Orchestra (SC). He has formerly held positions in the Springfield Symphony Orchestra (IL), the Champaign-Urbana Symphony (IL), Sinfonia da Camera (IL), and the Cedar Falls Waterloo Symphony (IA). In addition to his orchestral experience he has performed numerous recitals in the Southeast, performed with the Smoky Mountain Brass Band, one of Western North Carolina's finest brass quintets, and has also been a featured soloist with the Brevard Chamber Orchestra.

Dr. Ulrich has published numerous articles in the International Trumpet Guild's Journal and since 1999, has been the Public Relations Director for ITG.

Brad is an Educational Clinician and member of the Product Advisory Council for Jupiter Band Instruments Inc.

Statement of the Challenge

- No band program can perform well without a solid trumpet section
- The trumpet is one of the most challenging instruments to develop proper technique and good tone
- Most students, regardless of size, begin learning on trumpet
- During extended and consistent practice, beginning students may find trumpets heavy and tiring, ultimately discouraging them from practicing
- Many students beginning trumpet study are of a size and stature that is better accommodated by a cornet

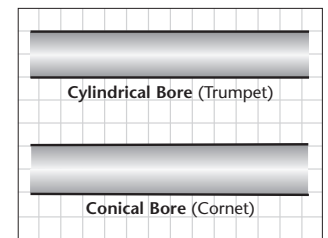
Advantages of Starting on Cornet

The cornet is easier for a beginner to hold in the correct position because its tubing is wrapped tighter, making the instrument's overall length shorter. It is easier for the beginner, with short arms, to balance the cornet and hold the instrument for longer periods of time. When the instrument is held at the correct angle it becomes easier to achieve the proper embouchure and the overall tone production will be more pleasant. With the proper instrument balance the student will be able to use the first and third valve slides more easily to adjust flaws in pitch.



The cornet has a naturally mellow sound that can give the student a better concept of tone.

The cornet has a conical bore verses the more cylindrical bore of the trumpet. Consequently, cornets are easier blowing. Particularly important when you consider beginning students usually have 1 to 1 1/2 liters of air (most adult trumpeters have 4-6 liters).



Switching To Trumpet

Though cornets offer beginning students the easiest and most comfortable opportunity to develop skills, trumpets are the more common performance instrument offering a wider range of tonalities, and abilities. In performance opportunities cornets are most appropriately suited for British Brass Bands, while trumpets offer the ideal tone colors for "American" music including symphonic, jazz, and brass ensembles. Consequently, it is recommended that upon development of basic skills, students switch to trumpet.

Students should switch to trumpet only after a clear understanding and use of the following disciplines are consistently displayed:

- Proper posture and hand position
- Proper breathing habits and breath support
- Development of a good “buzz” and the ability to buzz on pitch
- Development of a good “non-airy” tone
- Consistent use of 1st and 3rd valve slides to correct simple inherent pitch problems
- Display of excellent daily warm-up routine

Students are generally ready to switch to trumpet after two years of study.

Research indicates:

- Reasons for quitting an instrument include: too hard to play, too big and weights too much, don’t like the sound, it’s boring, it’s dumb, I don’t like it
- Adolescents have an uncontrolled desire to be equal or part of the “in-crowd” and will be less motivated playing a “different” type of instrument
- Beginning string players start on smaller instruments; flute players use curved headjoints to reduce the size of the instrument; tuba players begin on $\frac{3}{4}$ size instruments or euphoniums

Motivate by Creating a Friendly Environment

Try to avoid using the word “hard”, or “difficult” when referring to techniques, range on the trumpet, or passages in music, as this will create mental blocks for the student. Also avoid the phrase “high note” as students tend to equate it as being more difficult.

Try to mention positive aspects of a student’s playing before introducing constructive criticism.

Starting Off Correctly

Nothing is more important than starting students off correctly! Posture, breathing, mouthpiece buzzing, warming up, and attention to pitch should be taught from the beginning. It is easier to teach correctly from the beginning than it is to correct bad habits!

Posture

The student should sit or stand with an arch in their lower back, chest held high and neck straight. Good posture can be achieved by having the student stand up straight, stretching their arms up over their heads. Lower the arms out to the sides (9 and 3 o’clock position) keeping the chest high. Next,

the arms all of the way down to the sides keeping the chest in the high position. This should achieve the correct posture which is used when standing or sitting.

Breathing

Starting each session with breathing exercises is imperative!

Students should be striving for a low-pitched “HAW” sound on inhalation. An invigorated yawn is another way to gain a correct breath. A good sounding breath is a good breath!

$\frac{3}{4}$ " PVC pipe cut 3" long placed in the teeth will remind the students of the deep sounding inhalation required.

Breathing should be done in time with the music. Make sure that the breath is exhaled immediately after inhalation (no hesitation). The only sound one should hear in the inhalation process is a low-pitched “HAW”. Below are some examples of breathing exercises that should be used each day. These are done at approximately 60 beats per minute:

Exercise No. 1

4 beats in, 4 beats out (repeat)

2 beats in, 2 beats out (repeat)

1 beat in, 1 beat out (repeat)

rest

Exercise No 2

4 beats in, 4 beats out (crescendo on exhalation)

4 beats in, 8 beats out (crescendo on exhalation)

4 beats in, 12 beats out (crescendo on exhalation)

rest

2 beats in, 4 beats out (crescendo on exhalation)

2 beats in, 8 beats out (crescendo on exhalation)

2 beats in, 12 beats out (crescendo on exhalation)

rest

1 beat in, 4 beats out (crescendo on exhalation)

1 beat in, 8 beats out (crescendo on exhalation)

1 beat in, 12 beats out (crescendo on exhalation)

Mouthpiece Buzzing

Students must also work on mouthpiece buzzing everyday. The better the buzz, the better the tone, intonation, and pitch accuracy on the instrument.

At first, beginners should be encouraged to buzz on any pitch. It is difficult for beginner to match pitch right away. A good buzz is one with as much vibration as possible (the buzz should sound like a swarm of bees).

Have the student play a “siren” buzz on the mouthpiece starting very low and glissing as high as they can and then back down. Be sure to stress a strong vibration at all times in the buzz.

Over time, the student should begin to match pitches. This can be accomplished by playing a pitch on the piano, having the student sing the pitch and then match it on the mouthpiece. Simple melodies, with a strong, consistent vibration and attention to intonation should then be buzzed. When the student has mastered these basic buzzing suggestions they should progress to wider intervals.

Simple Solutions to Tone Problems

An airy tone is often an indication of the aperture of the lips being too wide. Correct this by having them use much more air and firming the corners of their mouth.

A pinched tone can be caused by:

- The student not blowing enough air through the instrument
- The teeth being too close together (should be approximately 1/8" apart; have them bite on the nail of their pinky finger to approximate this distance)
- The embouchure is too tense. RELAX!

Daily Warm-up Routine

Following breathing and mouthpiece buzzing exercises, the student should perform exercises incorporating long tones, simple flexibility, and articulation. These exercises can be elementary variations on the chromatic scale or major scales and arpeggios. Most beginning method books include exercises in each of these areas. To receive a complimentary warm-up sheet, contact Dr. Ulrich at Ulrich@email.wcu.edu.

Solving Simple Pitch Problems

The 3rd valve slide should be extended approximately 1/2" on low D and 1" on C#. D", E-flat", and E" are inherently very flat notes on the cornet/trumpet. A simple fix is to have the student raise their eyebrows on these notes! Using faster air and changing tongue placement by pronouncing “ee” will also help to raise the pitch.

On all long tones, the air should continue to move quickly through the instrument. Blowing quickly through the instrument will energize the sound and keep the pitch from sagging on long tones.

As the student descends, they should hold the pitch up. As they ascend, they should hold the pitch down. Not only will this correct some basic intonation problems, but it will also help center their tone.

Other Basics

Students should be taught NOT to use the “pinky” ring on the leadpipe. Using this ring will create tension in the 3rd valve finger and slow down its motion.

Keep the fingers on the right hand rounded. The pads of the fingertips should remain in contact with the valve buttons. Keep the wrist of the right hand straight. Bending the wrist will create unwanted tension.

What Else Can I Do?

- Start a trumpet ensemble, which will expose students to more literature
- Provide potential cornet students with audio and video examples of cornet performances
- Encourage students to join the International Trumpet Guild (ITG)
- Challenge beginners better suited for cornet to play a “cool” instrument - cornet. If the instrument is presented as unique and fun to play students will not feel “different”
- Choose interesting and enjoyable music that will maintain and increase the student’s interest
- Utilize solo and ensemble to develop student repertoire
- Strongly encourage all of your students to obtain private lessons with qualified instructors
- Bring in guest performers to demonstrate what is possible on the instrument

Helpful Resources

International Trumpet Guild www.trumpetguild.org

The Trumpet Players International Network trumpet.dana.edu

The Trumpet Spot www.trumpetspot.com

Jupiter Band Instruments www.jupitermusic.com

Selected Cornet/Trumpet Solo Repertoire

Grade 1

Barnes	<i>Clifford Barnes trumpet Album</i>	Smith	<i>Firefly</i>
Hartzell	<i>A Trumpeter's Prayer</i>	Smith	<i>Picnic time</i>
Hering	<i>Classic Pieces for the Advancing trumpeter</i>	Vandercook	<i>Lyra</i>
		Vincent	<i>Air for Cornet</i>

Grade 2

Bach	<i>Aria, bist du bei mir</i>	Vandercook	<i>Vega</i>
Fitzgerald	<i>English Suite</i>	Voxman	<i>Concert and Contest Collection</i>
Maltby	<i>Ceremonial March</i>	Williams	<i>Little Classics</i>
Telemann	<i>Suite No. 1</i>		

Grade 3

Anderson	<i>Trumpeter's Lullaby</i>	Scarlatti/ Fitzgerald	<i>Scarlatti Suite</i>
Bozza	<i>Lied</i>		
Burke	<i>Magic Trumpet</i>	Wastall	<i>Baroque Music for Trumpet</i>

Grade 4

Balay	<i>Petite Piece Concertante</i>	Hovhaness	<i>Prayer of St. Gregory</i>
Bernstein	<i>Rondo for Lifey</i>	Nagel	<i>Baroque Music for Trumpet</i>
Clarke, H.	<i>Twilight Dreams</i>	Reed	<i>Ode for Trumpet</i>
Corelli	<i>Sonata VIII</i>	Ropartz	<i>Andante and Allegro</i>
Gibbons	<i>Gibbons Suite</i>	Wallin	<i>Elegi</i>

Grade 5

Clarke, H.	<i>Bride of the Waves</i>	Hartley	<i>Sonatina</i>
Clarke, H.	<i>Carnival of Venice</i>	Latham	<i>Suite</i>
Clarke, H.	<i>Maid of the Mist</i>	Ravel	<i>Pavance</i>
Goedicke	<i>Concert Etude</i>	Smith	<i>Willow Echoes</i>
Handel/ Fitzgerald	<i>Aria Con Variazioni</i>	Turrin	<i>Caprice</i>

Grade 6

Arban	<i>Carnival of Venice</i>	Hummel	<i>Concerto in E-Flat</i>
Clarke, H.	<i>The Debutante</i>	Kennan	<i>Sonata</i>
Haydan	<i>Concerto in E-Flat</i>	Peeters	<i>Sonata</i>
Hindemith	<i>Sanate</i>	Stevens	<i>Sonata</i>

Trumpet Methods and Studies

Andre	<i>12 Etudes caprices dans le style baroque</i> (piccolo trumpet) (Editions Billaudot)
Balasanyan	<i>20 Studies, ed. Foveau</i> (International)
Balay	<i>15 Etudes</i>
Bellamah	<i>Forty-Four Melodius Warm-up Exercises, Gr. 3</i> (B112)
Bellamah	<i>A Trumpeter's Treasury of Information</i> (B450)
Bellstedt	<i>Twelve Famous Technical Studies, Gr. 2</i> (B113)
Bizet, N.	<i>12 Grandes etudes de perfectionnement</i> (A. Leduc)
Bodet	<i>16 Etudes de virtuosite d'apres J.S. Bach</i> (A. Leduc)
Bordogni/ Clark	<i>Twenty Solo Studies for Trumpet, Gr. 3</i> (B235)
Bordogni	<i>24 Vocalises, trans. Porret</i> (transposition) (A. Leduc)
Bousquet	<i>36 Celebrated Studies, ed. Goldman</i> (C. Fischer)
Brandt	<i>34 Studies and 24 Last Studies, ed. Vacchiano</i> (Belwin-Mills)
Broiles	<i>Have Trumpet . . . Will Transpose</i> (transposition) (C. Colin)
Broiles	<i>Trumpet Baroque, 2 vols.</i> (piccolo trpt.) (Queen City)
Charlier	<i>Etudes transcendantes</i> (A. Leduc)
Chavanne	<i>25 Characteristic Studies, ed. Voisin</i> (International)
Clarke	<i>Technical Studies</i> (C. Fischer) <i>Setting Up Drills</i> (C. Fischer) <i>Elementary Studies</i> (C. Fischer) <i>Characteristic Studies</i> (C. Fischer)
Colin	<i>Advanced Lip Flexibilities</i> (C. Colin)
Duhem	<i>24 Etudes</i> (C. Fischer)
Endresen	<i>Supplementary Studies</i> (Rubank)
Gallay	<i>22 Exercises, ed. Maire</i> (A. Leduc) <i>12 Grand caprices, ed. Maire</i> (A. Leduc) <i>39 Preludes, ed. Maire</i> (A. Leduc)
Glantz	<i>The Complete Harry Glantz</i> (C. Colin)
Goldman	<i>Practical Studies</i> (C. Fischer)
Gordon	<i>Physical Approach to Elementary Brass Playing</i> (C. Fischer)
Gower and Voxman (ed.)	<i>Rubank Advanced Method</i> (Rubank)
Harris	<i>Advanced Studies</i> (C. Colin)
Hering	<i>32 Etudes</i> (C. Fischer)
Hickman	<i>The Piccolo Trumpet</i> (Tromba Publications)
Hovaldt	<i>Lip Flexibility</i> (R. King)
Irons	<i>Twenty-Seven Groups of Exercises, Gr. 3</i> (B114)
Kase	<i>Twenty-One Studies in Style and Interpretation, Gr. 4</i> (B290)
Kopprasch	<i>60 Studies, ed. Gumbert and Herbst, 2 vols.</i> (C. Fischer)

(continued on back cover)

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- Monel pistons
- 1st valve thumb hook
- 3rd valve slide throw ring
- .460" bore
- 4.7" bell
- Woodframe case



520MS Bb Cornet

Above with silver plated finish



600ML Bb Standard Trumpet

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- Monel pistons
- .460" bore
- 4.8" bell
- 1st valve thumb hook
- Adjustable 3rd valve slide
- Woodframe case

600NL Bb Standard Trumpet

- Lacquered brass body
- Nickel silver pistons
- .460" bore
- 4.8" bell
- 1st valve thumb hook
- Adjustable 3rd valve slide
- Woodframe case

600NS Bb Trumpet

Above with silver plated finish

600MS Bb Trumpet

Above with silver plated finish

606MRL Bb Deluxe

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- Rose brass bell and leadpipe
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- 4.8" bell
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- Adjustable 3rd valve slide
- Woodframe case



1000S Bb Intermediate Trumpet

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Trumpet Methods and Studies (continued)

Laurent	<i>Etudes pratiques</i> , 3 vols. (A. Leduc)
Longinotti	<i>l'Etude de la trompette</i> (Editions Henn) <i>Studies in Classical and Modern Style</i> (International)
Pares	<i>Scales</i> (Rubank)
Petit	<i>15 Etudes techniques et melodiques</i> (A. Leduc) <i>Grandes etudes</i> (A. Leduc)
Pietzsch	<i>Twenty-Two Virtuosity Studies</i> , Gr. 5 (B115)
Ridgeon	<i>Brass for Beginners</i> (Boosey & Hawkes)
Robinson	<i>Rubank Elementary Method</i> (Rubank)
Rubank	<i>Elementary Method For Trumpet</i> <i>Intermediate Method For Trumpet</i> <i>Advanced Method For Trumpet, Vol. I</i> <i>Advanced Method For Trumpet, Vol. II</i> <i>Exercises On The Emission Of Fundamental And Harmonic Tones</i>
Sachse	<i>100 Etudes</i> (transposition) (International)
Salv. Army	<i>101 Technical Exercises</i> (Salvation Army)
Schlossberg	<i>Daily Drills and Technical Studies</i> (M. Baron)
Skornicka	<i>Rubank Intermediate Method</i> (Rubank)
Smith	<i>Top Tones</i> (C. Fischer) <i>Lip Flexibility</i> (C. Fischer)
Staigers	<i>Flexibility Studies</i> , 2 vols. (C. Fischer)
Stamp	<i>Warm-ups plus Studies</i> (Editions Bim)
Vacchiano	<i>Trumpet Routines</i> (C. Colin)
Webster	<i>Method for Piccolo Trumpet</i> (Brass Press)
Wiggins	<i>First Tunes & Studios</i> (Oxford)
Zauder	<i>Embouchure & Technique Studies</i> (C. Colin)

Supplemental Materials

Baird	<i>Developing Technique</i>
Caruso	<i>Musical Calisthenics for Brass</i>
Clarke	<i>Setting Up Drills</i>
Farkas	<i>The Art of Brass Playing</i>
Findley	<i>Bob Findley On Trumpet</i>
Lucas	<i>Pedal Note Studies</i>
Sanborn	<i>Brass Tactics</i>
Weast	<i>Famous Trumpet Players</i>
Williams	<i>The Secret of Technique-Preservation</i>



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