# "The Building Blocks of Trumpet": Accessibility for Individual Practice with Exercises, Etudes, and Practice Techniques for the Developing Trumpeter

By

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#### **ABSTRACT**

The *Building Blocks of Trumpet* is a comprehensive and fully modular method book specifically designed for beginner trumpeters. It is designed to be approachable and accessible, providing a reliable resource for both starting students and teachers alike. The book aims to tackle and answer the major questions and challenges that beginning trumpeters often encounter at the onset of their musical journey. Its content is structured in a way that naturally guides performers from the initial steps of learning their instruments and progressively leads them to mastery of foundational musical concepts. These concepts equip students with the necessary knowledge to actively participate and contribute to Western cultural communities.

A key feature of this method book is its emphasis on fostering independent learning. It encourages students to delve into their private studies of music, guiding them through the process of perfecting their technique through routine exercises and understanding musical compositions through repertoire studies. Moreover, the progression presented in this book is not merely linear but also modular in design. The book is designed with plenty of material and organized in a clear and thoughtful manner. This allows students and teachers to design personalized lesson curriculums. The book's ultimate goal is to empower students to perform these exercises, etudes, and solos effectively and confidently to express their music to an audience.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page
LIST OF FIGURES
CHAPTER
INTRODUCTION
PROJECT PURPOSE
SECTIONS OF THE BOOK
PART I — RESOURCES
Explanation
References
Additional Material11
External Guides
PART II — THE ROUTINE
Chromatic Flow Studies
Centering Studies
Pentatonic Flow Studies
Positioning Studies
Slur Studies 23
Articulation Studies
PART III — REPERTOIRE
Scale Songs
Etudes

CHAPTER	age
Recognizable Songs	37
Duets	39
Solos	41
LESSON MODULARITY EXAMPLES	44
CONCLUSION	47
REFERENCES	49
APPENDIX	
A THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF TRUMPET: A COMPLETE AND MODULAR	
METHOD BOOK FOR THE BEGINNING TRUMPETER	51

# LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
Figure 1: Remington - Long-Tone Exercises: Ex. 1	15
Figure 2: Dicks - Chromatic Flow Studies: On G, No. 1a to No. 1c	15
Figure 3: Dicks - Chromatic Flow Studies: On G, No. 2a to No. 2c	17
Figure 4: Dicks - Snaking Exercise: On G	17
Figure 5: Cichowicz - Flow Studies	19
Figure 6: Dicks - Centering Studies: Centered on G	20
Figure 7: Dicks - Pentatonic Flow Studies: No. 1a to No. 3 - Full	22
Figure 8: Dicks - Positioning Studies: No. 1a to No. 2c	23
Figure 9: Lin - Slur Studies: Exercise 3	24
Figure 10: Dicks - Slur Studies: Centered on G, No. 1a to No. 2b	26
Figure 11: Arban - Articulation Studies: No. 77	28
Figure 12: Arban - Articulation Studies: No. 81	28
Figure 13: Arban - Articulation Studies: No. 97	29
Figure 14: Dicks - Articulation Studies: No. 1c to No. 1d	30
Figure 15: Dicks - Articulation Studies: No. 2c to No. 2d	30
Figure 16: Dicks – Etudes: Bb Major, No. 11d	34
Figure 17: Dicks – Etudes: Bb Major, No. 10a	36
Figure 18: Dicks – Etudes: Bb Major, No. 10e	36
Figure 19: Dicks - Recognizable Songs: London Bridge, In C to In F	39
Figure 20: Dicks – Duets: F Major, No. 3a	40

Figure	Page
Figure 21: Duets: F Major, No. 3d	41
Figure 22: Dicks – Solo: On the Riverwalk	43
Figure 23: Dicks - Etudes: Bb Major, No. 11a	45
Figure 24: Dicks - Duets: Bb Major, No. 5a	45

#### INTRODUCTION

With easy access to the internet, we can gather the information necessary to achieve our goals. This access enables us to learn and progress at an unprecedented rate. However, an abundance of knowledge can sometimes be more of a hindrance than a help. With advancing research technology, our core ideals can be harder to locate than ever before, given the numerous sources available worldwide. As Tiago Forte, the author of "Building a Second Brain" articulates:

So many of us share the feeling that we are surrounded by knowledge, yet starving for wisdom. That despite all the mind-expanding ideas we have access to, the quality of our attention is only getting worse. That we are paralyzed by the conflict between our responsibilities and our most heartfelt passions, so that we're never quite able to focus and also never quite able to rest.<sup>1</sup>

Musicians have an abundance of resources available online, including books, compositions, recordings, and more. The possibilities for learning extend beyond private lessons. These resources range from YouTube videos and podcasts to teaching books and training applications. Several resources are currently available, and many more are being developed, potentially leading to fantastic outcomes. The younger demographic has all the knowledge they need at their fingertips to learn their instrument, read music, count rhythms, and even discuss musicality. Everything online is easily accessible for all individuals. However, this wealth of knowledge is not necessarily gathered in one place and does not cater to the specific needs of beginner musicians or similar instrumental groups. Most of the time, these resources are compiled by an individual to help teach full

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Forte, Tiago. 2022. "Building a Second Brain,". New York, NY: Simon& Schuster, Inc. 26-27.

and complete lessons. As Eric Chase states, "Now, there's a near-limitless number of edtech tools and resources available for teachers. The problem is no longer about finding them, it's about finding the \*right\* ones for your students" <sup>2</sup>

For trumpet players, Arban's *Complete Method Book* is a renowned resource noted for containing all that is needed for trumpet playing. It is highly regarded for its comprehensive information and extensive exercises. Comprising around 350 pages, it was created by one of the most notable trumpeters in history, Jean-Baptiste Arban. It has stood the test of time for various reasons, including its exercises for physical development, challenging studies for personal practice, and well-crafted compositions like solos and duets meant to be performed publicly. Due to its large page count, many people don't view Arban's *Complete Method Book* as something to work through from start to finish. Instead, they find the most relevant chapters/exercises and navigate through them according to their own needs and focus. This is done to the point where there are manuals and guides, such as Eric Bolvin's "The Arban Manual," on how to effectively work through the Arban.<sup>3</sup> This book structures lessons by choosing specific areas and linking multiple chapters from Arban's *Complete Method Book* to create a cohesive lesson.

This contrasts with books like the Sigmund Hering Trumpet book *Trumpet Course, Melodic Method for Class, Private or Supplementary Study,* which employs a lesson-style format designed to be read page by page. It introduces concepts one at a time, building on them throughout the book. This gives the entire book the feel of a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Chase, Eric. 2018. "Teaching Resources Are More Important Than Ever. Here's Why.". September 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Bolvin, Eric 2006. "The Arban Manual"

curated lesson course, outlining the basics of how to succeed effectively. Both books have their advantages and disadvantages. Arban's book may seem daunting and intimidating for those unfamiliar with its navigation. On the other hand, Hering's book might feel too restrictive, lacking sufficient exercises to support a trumpeter over an extended period, as it only provides 36 pages of material. Thankfully, Hering also has more books available for purchase to extend the lessons. However, the lesson format model could seem restrictive for students and teachers who seek more personalized instruction. For instance, skipping passages might cause them to miss crucial information, making the difficulty level spike and become unmanageable for the trumpeter.

In comparison, Arban's book may seem like a valuable but complex resource. It requires in-depth knowledge to truly navigate and use for specific purposes. The book's construction leans more towards a modern, collegiate-level audience rather than being universally accessible. This is evident in the rapidly progressing exercises and specific musical teaching tools that may not be suitable for beginning trumpeters. These include musical ranges that are not accessible to modern-day junior high trumpeters or material that does not progressively build up difficulty over time. Instead, the material is more about the variations of scale patterns rather than progressive difficulty. Finally, Arban is not shy about using 16th notes as the primary figure throughout all the exercises. This approach makes the exercises seem more foreign and expert-level in their design. However, the ability to derive lessons from abundant material can prove quite helpful.

When considering the distinct styles of each book, it is intriguing to imagine the outcome of blending both concepts together. A book like this would be a comprehensive method showcasing a diverse range of exercises and studies. These exercises could serve

as building blocks to lessons, but are inherently lesson plans as well, through careful progressions in difficulty.

The goal would be to create a complete book encompassing physical development exercises, accessible studies, engaging etudes, and introductory solos. All components of the book, from the physical development exercises to the compositions and solos, would develop in parallel with one another. They would also progress individually within their specific component as well as in tandem with the other components of the book. This would provide students and teachers with a method to progress through the book at their own pace. This approach would not only function as a valuable resource for teachers and students to perform music but also as a means to enhance a student's understanding of how music functions in an accessible and approachable way.

The book, "The Building Blocks of Trumpet," is designed to be a fully modular and comprehensive method book. It includes all the necessary resources, physical development exercises, studies, and performance material to aid student progress. The aim is to provide an approachable and explorative learning experience that naturally develops their musical capabilities. This book is designed for beginners and will explore a wide range of possible creative lesson plans for the starting trumpeter.

#### PROJECT PURPOSE

Playing an instrument like the trumpet often involves various costs, including buying the instrument itself, purchasing method books, and obtaining private instruction. With technological advancements, students in recent times have shifted towards using internet resources such as YouTube and other music-focused websites as additional learning tools. These resources can be beneficial, providing visual and interactive lessons that can supplement traditional learning methods. In particular, the applications developed by software companies such as Binary Guilt Software have created interactive games for Rhythm Training, Ear Training, and Music Reading.

Despite their usefulness, online resources should not replace traditional teaching methods entirely, especially for motor-skills intensive musical activities like learning an instrument. Private teaching and musical ensembles remain vital, particularly when teaching certain musical concepts to students. Hering echoes this belief in his beginner's book, where he states, "It is best for you [the student] to study the trumpet or cornet with a competent teacher. The all-important questions of mouthpiece position, tonguing, lip control, and breathing, which may vary with each student, should be decided by your teacher." <sup>4</sup> The primary benefit is receiving direct, specialized feedback from a professional. This feedback provides specific information on areas that need improvement based on observed behaviors rather than personal perceptions of the student.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Hering, Sigmund. 1983. "The Sigmund Hering Trumpet Course: Beginning Trumpet Book 1". Carl Fischer. 2

Private lessons can significantly enhance a student's overall performance.

However, these lessons are not always accessible to everyone. Many people simply cannot afford them. Recent studies indicate that cost is a significant barrier to education, with two-fifths of lower-income families unable to budget for these lessons. 

Unfortunately, the cost of lessons cannot be reduced due to the ongoing socio-economic challenges faced by working-class musicians. Many musicians are being forced to seek employment in other fields to earn a living. In addition, the number of working-class actors, musicians, and writers has halved since the 1970s. Juhi Bansal showcases a telling quote about the current state of the working musician,

I want to be able to tell younger musicians from underprivileged backgrounds that there is space for them in this field. I don't want to admit that there is still an enormous element of elitism to classical music, that factors beyond their control that may well marginalize them despite their incredible talent and work. But until we can articulate these challenges in specific and concrete terms, we'll never come up with effective ways to solve them and open up our field to those from lower socio-economic groups.<sup>7</sup>

This underscores the challenges musicians encounter in certain social environments when educating and inspiring students. At present, musicians are primarily concerned with earning a sustainable income, usually in areas that don't support musical pursuits. If these regions can't afford private tutors or regular music teachers, there will be no music promotion, and fewer people will join the music community. Consequently,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Musician's Union 2018, Updated 2021. "Access to Music Lessons Dying out for Poorer Families" November 06

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Tapper, James 2022. "Huge Decline of Working Class People in the Arts". December 10

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Bansal, Juhi. 2022."We Need To Talk About Money: Musicians Without Financial Privilege Are Being Pushed Out" October.

these communities are largely ignored by most musicians and private tutors whose main concern is their own survival.

A common issue in these communities is individual students trying to teach themselves. They often adopt incorrect postures, use incorrect techniques, and experience frustration. These issues can alienate them from musicians who benefit from specialized, in-person instruction. Free resources are widely promoted and encouraged when compared to learning all by yourself. If individuals have access to a computer, tablet, or phone, they can receive instruction on how to perform effectively through Youtube courses, online books, and seminars. However, the reliability of each resource is a major issue. It requires diligence and understanding to distinguish between what is helpful and what could potentially be harmful. 10 With an endless amount of information and the ability to discuss topics online, finding truly helpful pedagogy for students is challenging. For those who rely on internetbased resources, sifting through the abundance of teaching books, YouTube courses, and lesson outlets to find something useful is a daunting task.

The main goal of this book is to compile a comprehensive set of free and accessible resources for learning the art and techniques of playing the trumpet. This valuable resource is not limited to individuals who can afford a traditional music education. It's designed for anyone with a passion for music and a desire to learn, regardless of their financial situation. A typical participant in traditional music education

<sup>8</sup> Musician's Union, "Access to Music Lessons Dying Out for Poorer Families"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> International Musicians, 2018. "Music Lessons Unavailable to Low Income Families" November 19

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Bansal, "We Need To Talk About Money: Musicians Without Financial Privilege Are Being Pushed Out"

is a beginning trumpeter who is part of a musical ensemble, often with access to music lessons or private instruction. These individuals likely had music classes integrated into their schooling from the age of six or seven. While the lessons in this book can assist the typical participant in traditional music education, it is primarily designed as a foundation for those without access to traditional music education outlets and private instruction.

Most students who have access to a music class or private teacher also have access to sheet music and physical warm-up resources as well. This is provided by the teacher to the students. Without the music class or private teacher, there isn't any sheet music or physical warm-up resources. If they find free resources online, they may not be specific to trumpet playing or may be lacking in quality. Beyond teaching the technicalities of playing the trumpet and exploring specific repertoire, this book delves deeper, offering resources that help learners understand the fundamental concepts of music. This includes understanding how to read music and rhythms, which form the backbone of any musical performance. It also gives introductory starts of how to hold the trumpet, how the trumpet works, and how to create a sound. By integrating these elements, the book aims to provide a well-rounded musical education that balances instrumental technique with theoretical knowledge.

This book is not just a beginner's guide but a comprehensive companion for the journey through the world of trumpet playing for a beginner. It provides everything a budding trumpeter needs for their musical journey, from initial lessons to the more nuanced aspects of performance. But the guidance does not stop at the basics. The book has been meticulously designed to contain enough material to sustain a learner's progress over a significant period of time — up to four years. This ensures learners can progress

naturally and effectively as performers, continuously building up their skills and knowledge.

This guide is more than a simple resource. It nurtures learners, fostering their growth from novices to confident players. Offering a comprehensive and accessible learning path, this book empowers learners to become not just trumpet players, but true trumpeters, embracing the art, skill, and passion that accompany this musical journey.

#### SECTIONS OF THE BOOK

The structure of this trumpet book contains othree main types of content: resources, routine, and repertoire. "Resources" provide additional reference material, explanations, and helpful guides for executing the exercises in this book. These resources come in three forms. "Explanations" answer any questions about the trumpet or music for the reader. "References" are materials likely to be constantly reviewed, like the fingering chart at the back of the book for quick access. "External Guides" links to outside resources for students to find additional content not covered in this book. "Routine" primarily focuses on exercises and studies that help players improve their physical abilities through repetitive performance. Lastly, the "Repertoire" consists of songs and music for the reader to analyze, study, and perform. In this section, we will review all of these types of content and the detailed chapters of each portion.

# PART I — RESOURCES

The Building Blocks of Trumpet consolidates resources to help understand trumpet playing and music analysis. Its aim is to provide teachers and students with immediate access to this material when needed. While information can be sourced from various places, having it directly associated with this book ensures quick and relevant assistance. It covers understanding how the trumpet works, how to read music, and how to count rhythms. Resources are categorized into explanations, references, additional topics, and external guides.

### **EXPLANATION**

These are guides and tutorials that explain how to use and understand the trumpet.

These instructions teach trumpet players how to properly handle their instruments,

including holding techniques, posture considerations, and the mechanics of the trumpet. These details are crucial for this type of book, as they provide clear starting points for beginners. Illustrations are included to offer visual guidance. Additionally, this section includes resources on how to read music. It covers note reading, rhythm counting, and the interpretation of style and articulation markings, aiding students in navigating through this book.

The explanations section is incredibly important for those without access to private instruction or in-school music education. Although it cannot replace teaching entirely, this guide serves as a starting point for learning music, specifically focusing on playing the trumpet. It provides the basics, removing any barriers for an aspiring trumpeter eager to learn the craft.

#### REFERENCES

This book includes references to assist trumpeters on their journey, designed for repeated consultation throughout the book. Specifically, trumpeters frequently need to reference fingerings, key signatures, and music terms. These resources were created with core teaching concepts in mind to help trumpeters quickly identify notes and apply the correct fingerings, or find the definitions of terms they may not be familiar with. Based on the partial series, the fingering chart illustrates the design and operation of the trumpet. When paired with the section on how partials work, it provides beginner trumpeters with a clear understanding of fingerings and their sequence.

#### *ADDITIONAL MATERIAL*

These additional materials are excellent supplementary resources for trumpeters lacking access to music education. They help enrich concepts usually taught in large

classrooms, which might not translate well to a private setting or one-on-one teaching. Among these concepts is 'counting games', rhythmic exercises that instruct how to effectively count through pieces. These exercises start simply with whole notes, half notes, and quarter notes, gradually introducing rests, ties, and eighth notes. They are particularly useful for understanding rhythm and timing. The materials also consist of playing and counting exercises, which are beneficial for those without a physically present instructor. These exercises can be utilized to help students fully comprehend rhythmic timing.

# EXTERNAL GUIDES

A wealth of external resources can supplement learning and development. These include, but are not limited to, YouTube videos, method books, and innovative applications. These resources offer a collaborative approach to learning and cover various aspects of musical education. External guides can provide comprehensive lessons on essential skills and concepts. For example, they may teach how to read and interpret musical notes, a fundamental skill for any musician. They may also delve into understanding music theory, which underpins all musical compositions in Western Culture. These resources might focus on counting rhythms to maintain the flow and tempo of a piece of music. Additionally, they can offer specific instructions and tips for playing the trumpet, from basic techniques for beginners to advanced practice techniques for more experienced players. In summary, these resources offer a comprehensive and collaborative approach to musical education.

## PART II — THE ROUTINE

Brass instruments, especially the trumpet, can be physically demanding for many individuals, both young and old. The history of trumpet pedagogy is filled with various, often differing, ideas on how to best combat the challenges of physical playing.

Nevertheless, most philosophies concur that establishing a simple physical routine to enhance a trumpeter's awareness of physical aspects is crucial. Unfortunately, many of these exercises can be challenging for starting trumpeters. Reviewing scales, etudes, and songs alone does not comprehensively build the trumpeter's vibration/embouchure, air/breathing, aim/flexibility, and clarity/articulation. In this book, exercises from notable pedagogues are distilled to their core and presented as approachable tasks for even starting trumpeters. These exercises help trumpeters identify the starting pitch, flow through a phrase, move around the horn with ease, and build clarity.

The main objective of a routine is to perform exercises that enable a trumpeter to focus on each physical aspect of trumpet playing. This encompasses everything from lip vibration to airflow control. By focusing on the physical elements in the routine, a trumpeter does not need to ponder how to create the sound during the repertoire portion of the practice. Instead, their attention can be directed to the music in front of them and how they wish to express it. This allows their creativity to flow into the music and gives them the freedom to express themselves.

Moreover, this routine provides the trumpeter with the creative freedom to understand how these physical aspects interrelate from their perspective. They can essentially become their own teacher and initiate creative discussions with other trumpeters, using the routine as a starting point for conversation.

## CHROMATIC FLOW STUDIES

The primary goal of any trumpet routine is to foster an understanding of the mechanics of trumpet playing. This involves not only focusing on the aesthetics of creating sound, which is indeed important but also understanding how modern trumpets and their valve systems function. To help build this awareness, the "Chromatic Flow Studies" descend and ascend musical lines with the valve system in mind. These studies aim to provide accessible exercises where students can play all the written trumpet notes in an octave, featuring simple descending or ascending passages through all fingering combinations. This approach aids in understanding trumpet fingerings and their navigation.

Many high school band students might be familiar with Emory Remington's renowned "Long-Tone Exercises". While these exercises are excellent, it is clear they were designed by a trombone player with instructions tailored to showcase the slide positions. As shown in Figure 1, The Remington Long Tone Exercises always return to one slide position from the next. Trumpeters can also perform these exercises, but since they don't have a slide, they return back to zero each time. On the other hand, compositions written for the trumpet typically involve moving between notes in a chromatic or diatonic fashion.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Hunsberger, Donald. 1980. "The Remington Warm-Up Studies". Accura Music. 11.

Figure 1: Remington - Long-Tone Exercises: Ex. 1

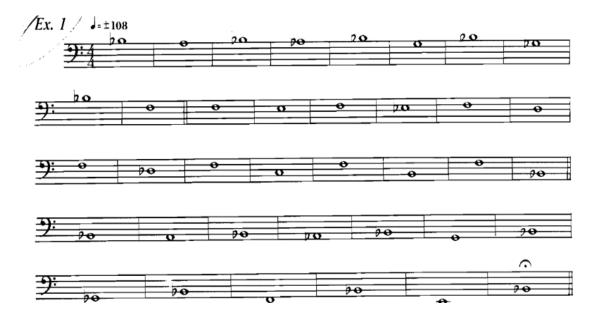
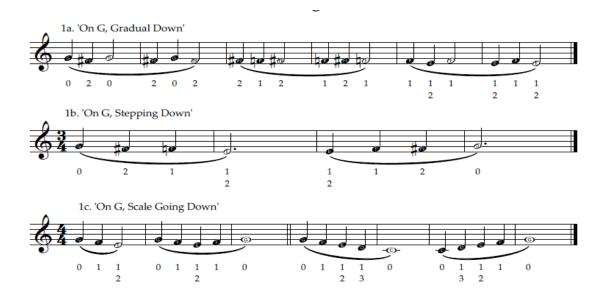


Figure 2: Dicks - Chromatic Flow Studies: On G, No. 1a to No. 1c



As depicted in Figure 2, chromatic flow studies serve as a specific supplement for trumpet players. Unlike Remington's "Long-Tone Exercises", "Chromatic Flow Studies" help trumpet players familiarize themselves with all chromatic notes using valves and transition the necessary airflow to common scales. Instead of jumping down

chromatically every other note and returning to an original partial, these studies gradually lower the trumpeter's pitches, making each fingering defined in the sequence. This is easier to achieve using valves. However, chromatic flow studies can be quite challenging for trombone players, as it is difficult to tune each lowering position. The "Long-Tone Exercises" are designed to help trombone players easily return to a note playable in the first position. This returning note then serves as a pitch reference for other pitches. In contrast, trumpeters primarily focus on the fingerings rather than tuning as they play lower notes. For this reason, an exercise focused on the descending notes associated with the valve system is essential.

The "Chromatic Flow Studies" are divided into two main sections: starting flow studies and snaking exercises. The starting flow studies focus on simple quarter and half note passages, allowing students to concentrate on the notes. As illustrated in Figure 3, the exercises begin with gradual chromatic descending lines, evolving into constant chromatic descending lines, and finally into diatonic descending lines. Ascending passages are also included, as shown in Figure 3, primarily focusing on G and C [Low]. The snaking exercises introduce rhythm and some expanded patterns to work on increasing dexterity as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 3: Dicks - Chromatic Flow Studies: On G, No. 2a to No. 2c

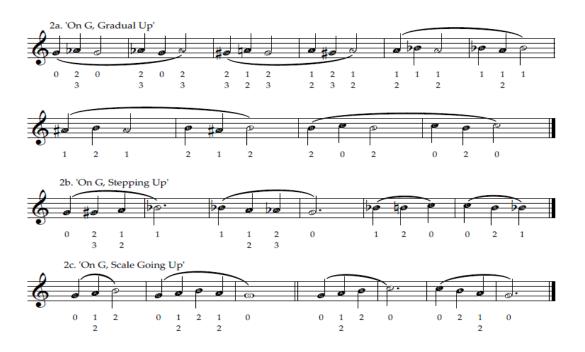


Figure 4: Dicks - Snaking Exercise: On G



Both flow and snaking studies in the chromatic studies are organized by 'Centering' or the starting note of the exercises. Each centering allows students to choose their comfortable starting notes. Students also have the option to switch to a different centering to expand their range to a full octave.

## **CENTERING STUDIES**

The purpose of including "Centering Studies" in this book is to provide beginner trumpeters with an accessible starting exercise during their initial six months of playing. This exercise offers an alternative to more common techniques found in routine exercises while maintaining a consistent level of engagement. It serves as a replacement for the overuse of long tones, which, while useful for sound development and breath extension, can hinder the creation of an effective routine if overdone in practice sessions. The "Centering Studies" provide all the benefits of long tones while keeping trumpeters engaged and making them accessible for an appropriate amount of time. Long tones can be added to the routine if desired.

Vincent Cichowicz's "Flow Studies" was the most significant inspiration for "Centering Studies." The "Flow Studies" are widely commended for helping trumpeters produce a smooth sound across the range of the horn and for keeping them grounded. However, these exercises can be intimidating to beginners due to their high range requirements and the necessary chromatic knowledge for effective performance. As seen in Figure No. 5, the flow studies start with the turn pattern and descend, then repeat the exercise chromatically until reaching an F-sharp starting note. The exercise then returns to the original pattern but extends the turn to include higher notes. <sup>12</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Cichowicz, Vicent "Trumpet Flow Studies" 2.

**Figure 5: Cichowicz - Flow Studies** 

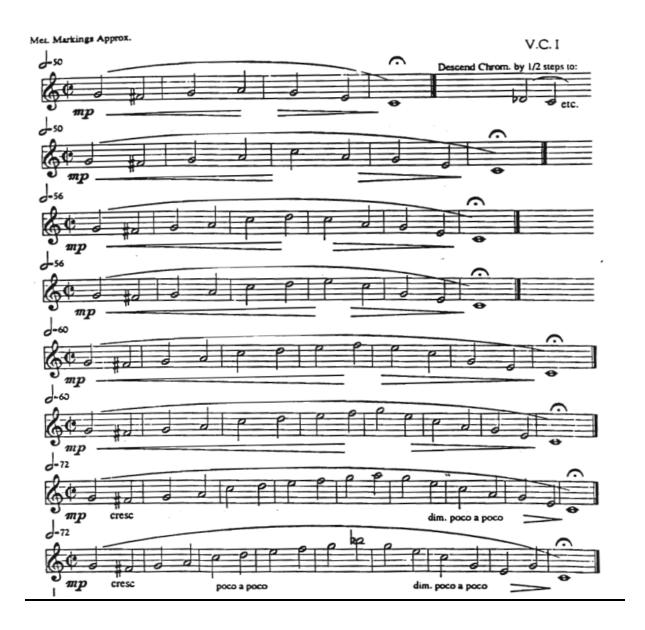


Figure 6: Dicks - Centering Studies: Centered on G



While Cichowicz's "Flow Studies" are beneficial for experienced trumpet players, they can be challenging for beginners. These exercises necessitate learning all 12 pitches, from high to low range, and expanding the player's range to potentially uncomfortable notes. Moreover, these exercises can sometimes take 15 to 20 minutes to complete.

The "Centering Studies" adapt Cichowicz's concepts into a long-tone exercise, focusing specifically on the turn. These studies develop the range of the opening turn throughout the exercise and progressively return to the centered turn, as shown in Figure 6. This method eliminates the chromaticism of the flow studies, making the exercise simpler to understand and execute. The exercise still encourages a player to effectively cover an octave of range. Additionally, the "Centering Studies" take significantly less time to complete, which can be beneficial for establishing a routine for beginners. As stated in James Clear's book *Atomic Habits*, it's best for any individual trying to form a habit to start small and progressively advance. <sup>13</sup> Unlike long tones and Cichowicz's "Flow Studies", which can be excessively difficult or overly simple, the "Centering Studies" promote consistent engagement throughout the exercise. The "Centering Studies" do include other variations changing the starting centering note higher and lower than the Figure 6 example.

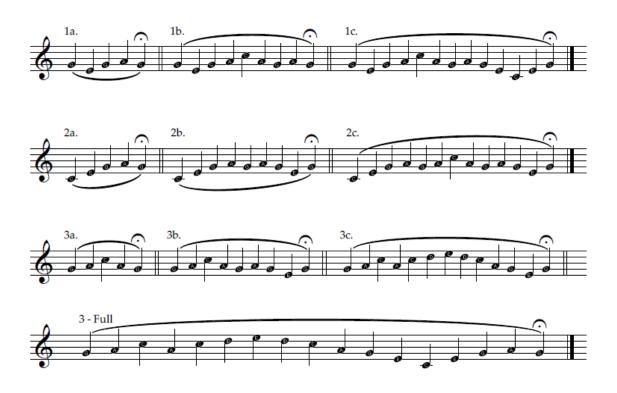
# PENTATONIC FLOW STUDIES

The "Pentatonic Flow Studies" is a natural extension of "Centering Studies," particularly because the rhythmic patterns and progression of each exercise feel akin to the prior "Centering Studies." While "Centering Studies" focus on similar long-tone concepts, "Pentatonic Flow Studies" simplify the required fingering knowledge and emphasize the trumpet's range. As shown in Figure 7, each pitch alternates between an open fingering and a 1+2 fingering, with the occasional 1 fingering. This approach allows trumpeters to concentrate less on the notes they are playing and more on effectively

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Clear, James. 2018. "Atomic Habits". Penguin Randon House LLC. 161.

navigating the trumpet's range. Practicing these exercises can provide a sensation like performing Cichowicz's "Flow Studies" in the higher range without needing to know the chromatic notes. This method effectively exercises the original goals of Cichowicz, which are to maintain sound throughout the trumpet's range. However, it simplifies the concept by allowing one to focus less on fingerings and more on changing the range.

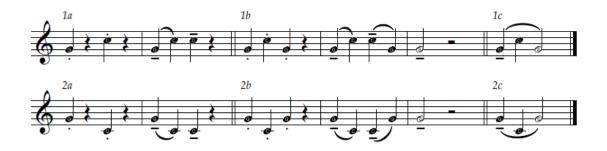
Figure 7: Dicks - Pentatonic Flow Studies: No. 1a to No. 3 - Full



# POSITIONING STUDIES

One of the greatest challenges for any trumpeter looking to expand their range is knowing where and how to play the notes. If unfamiliar, it can seem daunting. The "Positioning Studies" are exercises designed to tackle this issue. The exercises are divided into Pecks (Staccatos), Slur/Tongue Patterns (Tenuto), and Full Slurs as shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8: Dicks - Positioning Studies: No. 1a to No. 2c



In Pecks, the goal is to find the note with minimal effort and power. With Slur/Tongue Patterns, the focus is on putting your airflow behind the notes and using your tongue to confirm their positions. Lastly, a complete slur is performed. This method allows you to explore the notes on the trumpet and not only enhances your overall flexibility as a trumpeter but also expands your range in a healthier manner, rather than using overexertion.

The "Positioning Studies" enhances a trumpeter's ability to identify notes in different partials and pitches with similar fingerings but sound higher or lower. It can boost range and develop better flexibility when moving without any fingerings.

Gradually, it cultivates the concept of effortless slurring by familiarizing trumpeters with pitch locations.

# SLUR STUDIES

Slur studies are a vital component of brass pedagogy. They are often linked to a player's flexibility or ability to rapidly switch between pitches using just their lips, not their fingers. Most pedagogical or method books, including those by Farkas and Arban, contain numerous slurred studies, with some, like Bai Lin's Lip Flexibilities, dedicated

solely to lip flexibility. These studies typically focus on more enormous leaps and challenge players with complex passages and slurs. For instance, the opening excerpts of Bai Lin's book shown in Figure No. 9 illustrate this. 14

Figure 9: Lin - Slur Studies: Exercise 3

Performing slurs seamlessly can be particularly challenging for younger players.

Thus, it is essential to approach slur studies with a successful outcome in mind, as it paves the way for more advanced flexibility studies. The concept of "centering" can simplify this task. As previously mentioned, centering is defined by the starting note of the exercises. For most exercises in this book, the centering is at the beginning partials of the trumpet with the following notes: C (Low), G (Middle), and C (High). When applied to slurs, centering significantly enhances the physical awareness needed to execute changes effectively. When slurs are perceived as centering on one note, moving to another (either higher or lower), and returning to the center note, they become more

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Lin, Bai 1996, 2010, 2018 "Lip Flexibilities for All Brass Instruments". Monstrose, CA: Balquhidder Music 8.

accessible to perform. This is because students are constantly returning to the 'home base' of the exercises. These "Slur Studies" shown in Figure 10 are specifically designed with a focus on centering. Each exercise and centered section begins and ends on the same notes. The notes also move to the next partial without skipping any, helping students maintain their place during the exercise. If they deviate, the first and last notes will differ, allowing them to identify the mistake.

Figure 10: Dicks - Slur Studies: Centered on G, No. 1a to No. 2b



To further aid those struggling with effective slurs, the slurred/tongued pattern from the positioning studies can be used for assistance if needed. As previously stated, "Positioning Studies" can help build effective slur studies. Therefore, placing this

resource next to full "Slur Studies" can help students quickly build accuracy by tonguing the notes if needed.

# ARTICULATION STUDIES

So far, there have been no exercises dealing with trumpet articulation.

Additionally, the rhythmic elements of previous exercises have not solely focused on pulse or accuracy of time awareness. Although the "Slur Studies" have some possibilities for time-related elements, their primary goal is the navigation of higher and lower notes through slurs and not time. "Articulation Studies" aim to guide players in achieving clarity with each note, particularly at the start of the notes. These studies are featured in many notable books, including Arban's *Complete Method Book*.

A common element in most articulation studies is the use of scales. This is evident in Figures 11-13 of Arban's *Complete Method Book*, where exercises demonstrate ascending and descending a scale. <sup>15</sup> They begin with continuously repeating notes, as shown in Figure 11, gradually reducing the repetitions and ascending faster, like in Figure 12, before moving on simply ascending on a scale, like Figure 13. The exercises interspersed among the given figures mainly vary the scale patterns, such as using a thirds pattern. They generally follow this accelerated principle of advancing through repeating notes to diatonic scales.

Although most exercises ascend and descend a scale, the significant variable is when the transition to a new note occurs. Repeating the same note helps build students'

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Arban, Jean-Baptiste. 1982. "Arban's Complete Conservatory Method for Trumpet (Cornet)". Carl Fischer. 183-185.

awareness of their tonguing technique when changing notes and also requires them to consider the fingerings. Gradually changing the notes sooner and sooner challenges the player to ascend the scale smoothly. Effective articulation on the trumpet requires players to finger the note before articulating it. It can be challenging to change notes efficiently when the scale ascends with every note. However, when the scale ascends gradually, repeating the same note and changing the note before articulation can significantly enhance clarity. This also improves dexterity when ascending a scale without repeating notes by conditioning players in a more accessible environment.

While these exercises primarily focus on double-tonguing, the principles can easily be applied to single-tongue practices, especially for developing trumpeters.

Figure 11: Arban's - Articulation Studies: No. 77



Figure 12: Arban - Articulation Studies: No. 81



Figure 13: Arban - Articulation Studies: No. 97



The Building Blocks of Trumpet's "Articulation Studies" have modified Arban's concept to make them more accessible for younger trumpeters. The pattern of repeated notes is the primary feature in these articulation studies, as illustrated in Figures 6d and 6e. Instead of 16th notes, only quarter notes and half notes are used. This is done for numerous reasons. For example, when students begin playing an instrument, they are much more familiar with quarter notes, half notes, and whole notes. Even so, the best approach is to teach these durations in this area of the routine, where all three can be implemented concisely and repetitively. Showing different alterations and rhythmic patterns from these combinations can effectively show how rhythm can be constructed.

As the exercises progress through the "Articulation Studies", the main pattern of ascending notes remains consistent, but the rhythm changes. This difference is evident between Figure 14 and 15, where the starting measure of each is an inverse of the other. Over time, additional scale patterns and slur and tongue patterns are introduced, with 8th notes eventually added. These add variety and new teaching concepts as well.

Figure 14: Dicks - Articulation Studies: No. 1c to No. 1d

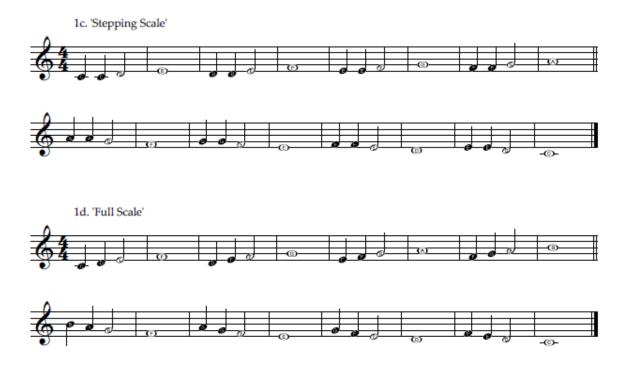


Figure 15: Dicks - Articulation Studies: No. 2c to No. 2d



#### PART III — REPERTOIRE

Contrary to "The Routine" section, the "Repertoire" section of the book focuses on various forms and variations of songs and musical studies. Its primary objective is to expose students to the functions of the trumpet alongside the construction, organization, and expression of music. This section includes scale songs, etudes, recognizable songs, duets, and solos. These components enhance a student's ability to perceive patterns in music and execute the performance of musical concepts. It is crucial for students to primarily focus on the repertoire section when they are first developing. While the routine is excellent for building physical awareness, it should be limited to 5 to 10 minutes, with the remainder of the time dedicated to repertoire practice. Most of their abilities and understanding of music will stem from their musical minds rather than their physical awareness.

Each portion of the "Repertoire" section has notable similarities. All sections, except for the recognizable songs, feature six different keys: C major, F major, G major, B-flat major, D major, and E-flat major. C major includes the most pages because it provides the fundamental learning of how scales work and the initial styles of reading music. While the other keys have fewer exercises, they still offer a substantial selection. For example, the etude section features a total of 4 pages of etudes per key, with an average of twelve etudes per key.

Each portion of the repertoire section is abundant in content. Specifically, the book contains a total of 507 exercises and 25,006 notes. This design lets students select what is most suitable for them at their current level, enabling faster learning. With more exercises, a teacher or student can switch to another study to learn similar concepts

instead of sticking to one due to a scarcity of provided studies. This also means that students can use this book longer, eliminating the need to purchase a new one due to financial constraints.

A common criticism of having excessive content is the difficulty in deciding where to start. However, each song and study in this book has a specific progression, making the choice of order clear for each student. For instance, the etude section of the book features two pages of more accessible keys for students to learn and then two pages of more advanced etudes for every key. A student can start with the more accessible works in that key and then progress to the difficult etudes later.

This leads to the last similarity between each section—the natural progression of difficulty. With all these materials, a trumpeter will have enough music to progress through at least two to four years of their musical career.

## SCALE SONGS

The primary purpose of including "Scale Songs" is to introduce rudimentary scale patterns in manageable, digestible songs. These songs specifically target the transition from one note to another in distinct patterns. They begin with step-by-step motion and gradually introduce skips and leaps to broaden the trumpeter's skills, aiding in mastering the notes of the utilized scale.

The "Scale Songs" are arranged in various ways. First, they are centered, echoing the "Routine." Second, they are organized by different keys, enabling trumpeters to gradually extend their range to the full octave required by each scale. Additionally, the "Scale Songs" are grouped based on the motion they use. Two pages focus on step-by-

step motion, while another two concentrate on skips and leaps. Each key includes both step-by-step and skip and leap motion exercises.

These "Scale Songs" are ideal for beginners beginning their repertoire practice after completing their physical routine They can also assist those struggling with the trumpet, aiding in understanding each fingering. While articulation studies are suitable for repetitive patterns, these "Scale Songs" can act as a bridge to beginning etude work, especially for students having difficulty navigating the trumpet and producing sound. Furthermore, these "Scale Songs" can offer quick wins for students, allowing them to check off more straightforward exercises progressively.

#### **ETUDES**

When introducing etudes to students for the first time, it is best to ensure they are accessible and easy to execute. They should embody simple patterns and incorporate elements of song, form, and development. Unlike the "Scale Songs", the etudes follow typical musical contours and motivic developments throughout the studies. As a result, students find the pieces moderately singable and memorable. However, the complexity is not overly ambitious. The primary goal in introducing these etudes is to develop students' musical senses through short, memorable studies that naturally enhance their form and pattern recognition.

Figure 16 illustrates the motif of singable development. There are numerous instances of specific repetition, such as the first two measures and rhythmically similar lines. The motif of four eighth notes and two quarter notes is consistently displayed

throughout the exercise, often with almost identical notes. These aspects contribute to the singable qualities of a technical work.

Figure 16: Dicks – Etudes: Bb Major, No. 11d



The "Etudes" progress in complexity in several notable ways. They evolve in terms of rhythmic complexity, interval changes, time signature changes, style changes, adding articulations, and form changes. The most important aspect for students progressing naturally through these etudes is rhythmic complexity. The etudes begin with mostly half notes and the occasional quarter notes. The quarter notes then become the dominant note value. Eventually, dotted half notes and quarter note rests become more common. Finally, eighth notes and dotted quarter notes are introduced. This progression allows students to focus on note recognition before addressing rhythmic changes. As their awareness improves, newer complexities in rhythm are introduced. It's crucial to introduce quarter notes and eighth notes later, as they can be perceived as more complex.

As the etudes progress, so does the arrangement of note patterns. In the beginning, most of the etudes are in the middle of the trumpeter's range and tend to follow a stepwise function with occasional skips rather than large leaps. As the etudes get progressively harder, leaps are introduced alongside more complex patterns. When these complex patterns are introduced, the rhythms are notably simpler to help the player adjust to the new changes in note selection. By the end of each key center, the difficulty in both rhythm and note patterns is at its peak.

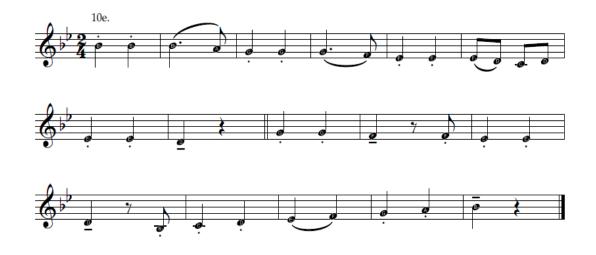
Time signatures are introduced to provide a greater variety and awareness of different meters. The meters introduced begin with 4/4, and then progress to 3/4, 2/4, and cut time. These are added later to allow the trumpeter to fully understand 4/4 rhythms before moving on to other meters. Style changes, such as staccato, tenuto, accent, and slurs, are also introduced. These highlight different methods of musical expression and hint at the styles portrayed through each technique. Lastly, additional elements of musical form, such as repeats and navigation markers like D.C al Fine, are included. This aids in building a basic understanding of how to navigate music.

Each topic and progression in the "Etude" sections is applied to every key. For instance, in the B-Flat Section, the first etude of 10a shown in Figure 17 starts primarily with half notes, but by 10e shown in Figure 18, rhythmic complexity and articulations have been added.

Figure 17: Dicks – Etudes: Bb Major, No. 10a



Figure 18: Dicks – Etudes: Bb Major, No. 10e



"Etudes" in the *Building Blocks for Trumpet* notably exclude tempo, dynamic, and phrase markings. This is done to encourage students and teachers to interpret and express the music as they see fit. Tempo markings are omitted so students can choose the most suitable speed for their etude. Similarly, dynamic markings are excluded for personal interpretation of crescendos and decrescendos. Finally, phrase markings are left out, leaving the performer to decide when to breathe.

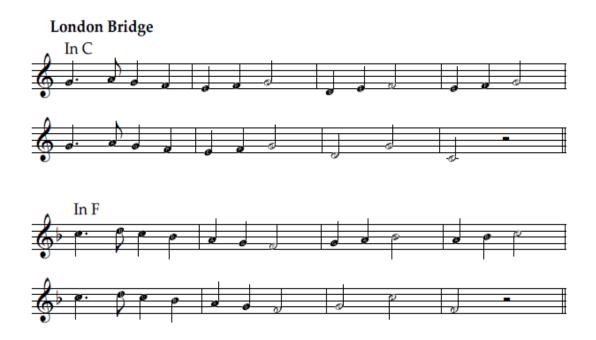
These "Etudes" are a safe way to explore self-expression and initiate musical ideas through simple patterns and structures in a non-exercise fashion. Every etude notably develops a motive throughout the work, making the song more singable and helping guide self-expression throughout the piece. In time, the "Etudes" can aid a trumpeter's development, enabling them to perform a solo in the future and gain natural intuition on navigating and expressing the music.

#### RECOGNIZABLE SONGS

Many beginner trumpet books leverage a variety of recognizable songs to teach individuals how to play the trumpet. Using familiar melodies, particularly singable ones, is an effective way to teach trumpet to students. This book primarily includes well-known songs such as nursery rhymes, classical tunes, patriotic music, and holiday music. While many books offer an extensive collection of recognizable songs, this book's selection is smaller, with the specific aim of including a curated set of works. These songs were chosen because they are in the public domain, highly memorable, and suitable for the trumpet's range. For instance, nursery rhymes generally do not span more than a sixth. This prevents students from stressing and overextending their vocal range. Additionally, they can quickly progress through these songs, gaining an understanding of rhythm and pitch patterns. The included classical tunes are relatively easy, but offer more rhythmic variety, which helps students build their rhythm awareness. The patriotic pieces are more complex in pitch organization, providing an additional challenge for those who want to learn them and figure out how to execute them effectively. Lastly, the holiday tunes are catchy and present similar challenges with extended-range considerations.

Many recognizable songs have versions in different keys. This is done not to change the listener's experience but to adjust the song's range. It makes the songs more accessible to beginner trumpeters who tend to play higher notes than average trumpeters. Figure 19 illustrates the range difference between the two pieces. By adjusting the pitches to be higher or lower, students can choose what is suitable for them. Additionally, it provides an easy environment for extending their high range. Since the tune is familiar, they already know how it should sound and only need to re-learn the fingerings.

Figure 19: Dicks - Recognizable Songs: London Bridge, In C to In F



Finally, including recognizable songs can enhance student motivation. Because they already know the melody, they do not need to decipher the notes and rhythms. They play the piece as they perceive it, eliminating any self-imposed limitations on how to perform it. This inclusion is essential for helping students to envision themselves performing in front of an audience.

## **DUETS**

Most beginner books and full-method books include a duet section. Playing with someone else has many benefits, primarily in fostering independent play while maintaining rhythmic integrity. Many performers who have not participated in a music program often struggle with maintaining an internal tempo or pulse, usually due to a lack of experience playing in large groups.

The "Duets" in this book begin with exercises where players perform together, gradually progressing to more independent parts. As shown in Figure 20, the first duet features homorhythmic motion. Over time, the parts become more independent. For example, one trumpeter might hold a note longer than the other. Eventually, there are imitative passages where one trumpet starts and the other follows shortly after, as shown in Figure 21. Focusing on passages played together eventually requires each performer to keep time for their own part. This teaches students to internalize the pulse effectively, making it easier for them to join a program or ensemble if they choose to do so in the future.

Figure 20: Dicks – Duets: F Major, No. 3a



Figure 21: Duets: F Major, No. 3d



These duets are not only teaching tools but are also designed for audience performances. Starting with simple duets is an excellent way for students to gain exposure and build confidence while performing in front of a crowd. As they will be performing with a teacher or a friend, the spotlight is not entirely on them. Instead, it focuses on the enjoyment both participants are having. This approach can help reduce performance anxiety and promote a positive attitude towards performance.

# SOLOS

Students are encouraged not only to practice their instruments privately, but also to express their musical craft to the world. However, there is a scarcity of accessible music for trumpeters to perform with piano, particularly for those with one to four years of playing experience. As a result, most trumpeters perform songs or etudes without any background accompaniment. While this is acceptable, it doesn't fully provide

opportunities for performers to connect with the world through a polished presentation. Piano accompaniment makes a composition feel like a complete product rather than just a study. Therefore, it is essential to have more compositions for trumpeters at this level to give them a goal to accomplish and enable them to express themselves in various ways.

Seven solos have been developed for trumpet and piano, providing trumpeters with complete pieces to perform for various audiences. These piano accompaniments have also been developed as backing tracks for those who cannot hire an accompanist. These pieces are fully developed for trumpet and piano, specifically with the beginner trumpeter in mind.

The compositions adhere to the same principles as the rest of the repertoire. The key of C Major has two compositions, with the remaining keys each having one. Each composition varies in style and time signature. For example, two compositions feature a waltz theme in 3/4; one focuses on a fanfare in D Major in cut time, and the other emphasizes a rhythmic groove in 4/4. This variety makes the solos feel like a collection in itself. Therefore, this collection of solos assists students in choosing a composition that both resonates with them and allows them to explore different styles to express in performance.

To build accessible solos, the compositions are repetitive and feature common scale patterns. Each composition has natural rests inserted. Tempo markings, dynamics, and phrase markings are included to guide the student's expression while fitting with a piano accompaniment. Figure 22 provides an excerpt to illustrate these changes. The tempo-style marking with an estimated beats per minute (bpm) is clearly displayed.

Dynamics are included, along with expressive markings underneath. Finally, a phrase marking is visible at the end of the excerpt.

Figure 22: Dicks – Solo: On the Riverwalk



In addition to the "Solos", each composition comes with a creative title and program notes. These assist students or teachers in explaining to the audience what they will be hearing. This element also reinforces the idea that this is a musical art meant to be performed for others. The program notes and creative title encapsulate this as a musical artwork rather than a study. Hopefully, this will encourage more students to perform their music in front of others.

## LESSON MODULARITY EXAMPLES

One of the most distinctive aspects of this book which warrants discussion is its innovative modular design. This design allows the reader a certain level of flexibility and autonomy in how they choose to navigate the content. While a certain group of readers might prefer to work sequentially from the beginning to the end, it has been observed that it is more common for readers to cherry-pick and focus on specific sections that pique their interest. This tailored approach to learning can be particularly effective in a context such as a method book like this one, where the content is designed to be versatile and adaptable.

The book's organization is designed to facilitate this modular approach to learning. Its structure is thoughtfully arranged not only in terms of larger sections, but also as it drills down into the detailed tools and exercises within each section. An example of such is the "Repertoire" sections, including the scale songs, etudes, duets, and solos, and some of the recognizable songs. These elements are organized by key, offering yet another layer of flexibility for students and teachers alike. This enables them to explore and teach the concepts in a way that aligns with their unique learning or teaching styles, and at a pace that suits them best.

Figures 23 and 24 below illustrate the benefit of having the Etudes and Duets next to each other in the same key. This arrangement allows for a smooth transition during the lesson, eliminating the need to flip back and forth between pages. It also aligns the key centers with progressions and learning. As the student progresses, more flats and sharps will be added, allowing further exploration of the keys.

Figure 23: Dicks - Etudes: Bb Major, No. 11a



Figure 24: Dicks - Duets: Bb Major, No. 5a



In the routine section, exercises are organized by the 'centering' method, which categorizes them based on the note that each exercise starts with. In this book, most exercises start on Low C, Middle G, or High C, as these are trumpeters' most common

starting notes. Placing similar exercises next to each other makes it easier for students to remember and progress through each routine aspect. It streamlines decision-making and simplifies comprehension instead of viewing the entire routine as a single complex point.

A good comparison concept is proposed by David Allen in his book *Getting Things Done*, where Allen discusses a horizontal and vertical approach to task completion, suggesting that one may be better than the other depending on the situation. <sup>16</sup> In the horizontal approach, one focuses on completing the following actions by their due dates. In contrast, the vertical approach has you complete all the following actions associated with one project only, not by the due date. Depending on the type of workflow you are doing, you would prefer to work either vertically or horizontally.

Applying this analogy to organizing a book, the horizontal approach would organize the book by Key Signatures with each category back-to-back of one another. In contrast, the vertical approach would the categories all together, as is presented in the current supplemented material. Both methods offer practical ways to digest the material, but having both options can lead to more benefits.

This is why multiple book versions, organized using different criteria, will be released. Furthermore, grouped section categories will also be released separately, allowing for increased flexibility. This enables students and teachers to design lessons as they see fit. This modularity ensures an accessible and customizable experience for all students to explore effectively.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Allen, David. 2003. revised 2015. "Getting Things Done". New York. NY: Penguin Group (USA) LLC. 22-23.

#### CONCLUSION

The Building Blocks of Trumpet is a unique, comprehensive, and fully modular method book specifically designed for beginner trumpeters. Drawing from established pedagogy and musical teaching concepts, this method book has been crafted to be approachable and accessible, providing a reliable resource for both students and teachers alike.

This extensive resource aims to tackle and answer the major questions and challenges that beginning trumpeters often encounter at the onset of their musical journey. Its content is structured in a way that naturally guides performers through the initial steps of learning their instruments, progressively leading them to mastery of foundational musical concepts. These concepts equip students with the necessary knowledge to participate and actively contribute to Western cultural communities.

A key feature of this method book is its emphasis on fostering independent learning. It encourages students to delve into their private studies of music, guiding them through the process of perfecting their technique and understanding musical compositions. The book's ultimate goal is to empower students to perform these compositions effectively and confidently to an outside audience.

Today the most scarce resource and thus the most valuable is perspective. Perspective is having a point of view an opinion about what matters and what doesn't. Perspective means holistic understanding being able to see the full picture instead of getting caught up in tiny details. Perspective includes wisdom an awareness of our own emotions and values – Tiago Forte<sup>17</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup>2023. "Today's Most Valuable Resource." Directed by Tiago Forte, Performed by Tiago Forte.

Having educational resources consolidated in one place presents a great advantage. It enables students to stay within these resources for an extended period, up to four years. This continuity helps trumpeters maintain their connection with the craft, preventing them from feeling overwhelmed or lost amidst a sea of disparate resources. Over time, this sustained engagement can help them evolve from mere beginners to expressive soloists who can share their talents within their local communities or even online spaces.

In the grand scheme, the goal is not just to learn an instrument but to accumulate study materials, build expertise, and then share this knowledge with a broader audience. This process should be as effective and seamless as possible, encouraging learners to stay motivated and feel a sense of progress.

The modular design of trumpet lessons promotes this learning approach. It breaks down the complex learning process to play the trumpet into manageable 'blocks' or facets. These are then introduced to students at the right moment, allowing them to gradually build up their skills until they are ready to achieve their ultimate goal – presenting music as a trumpeter to the world. This patient and structured approach to learning ensures that students are not overwhelmed, and they can thus enjoy the journey of learning as much as the end goal.

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# APPENDIX A

# THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF TRUMPET: A COMPLETE AND MODULAR METHOD BOOK FOR THE BEGINNING TRUMPETER [CONSULT ATTACHED FILE]