The Bill Adam Daily Routine

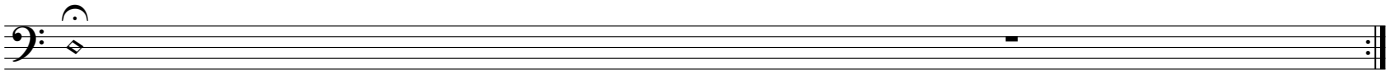
for Trombone

Codified by Mark Minasian
Adapted by Benjamin Coy

Buzzing the Leadpipe

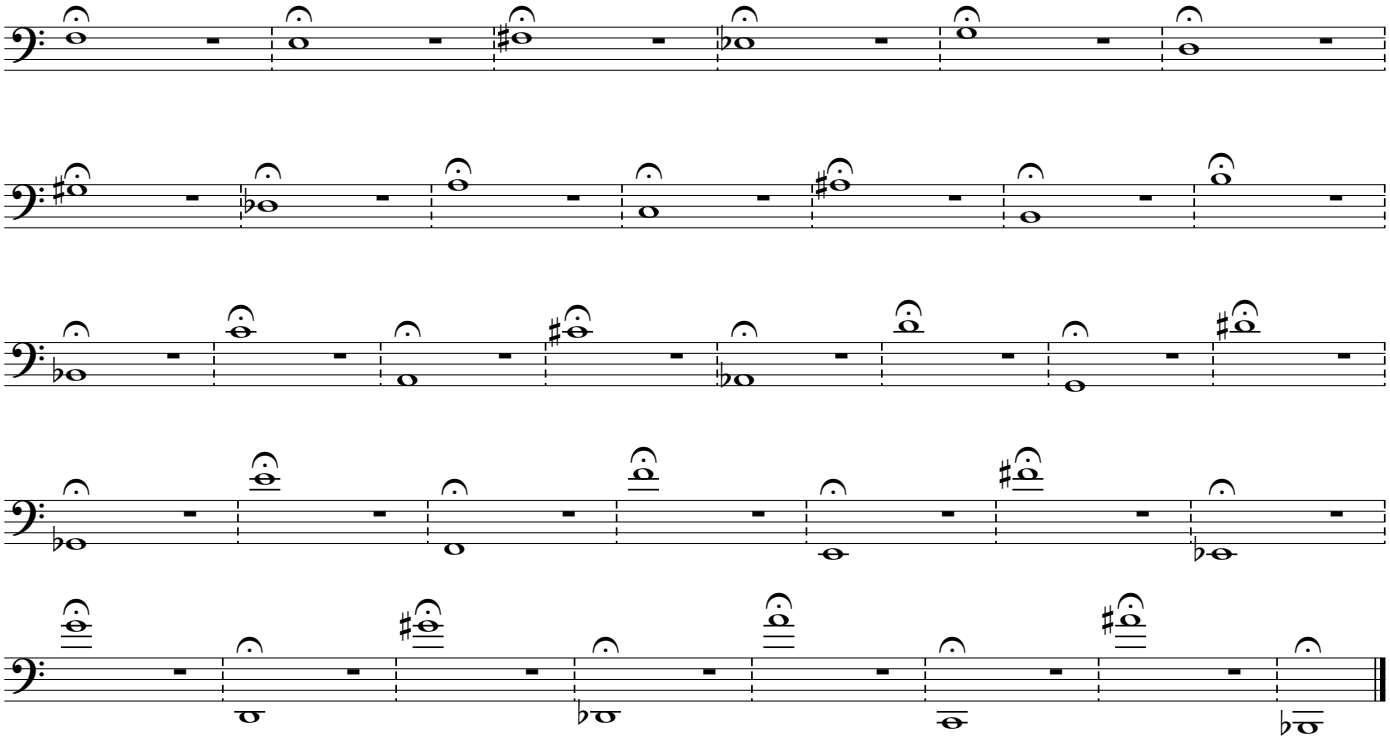
Bill Adam states "I know there has to be a certain amount of mouthpiece buzzing to warm up the resilience that we have to have here. But if we can set the mouthpiece and tube in vibration, the embouchure is much more relaxed. What we're trying to do is get the air through that horn with the least amount of tension and the least amount of muscle."

To buzz the leadpipe, simply remove the outer slide from the trombone. Your horn will resonate at approximately a D flat. Take a relaxed breath, place the mouthpiece to your lips and blow. Start with your embouchure too relaxed and bring the sound into focus. Your embouchure is in the right position when you achieve a coherent, resonant buzz with audible overtones and a minimum of excess air. Repeat this note several times until it speaks immediately with a steady, clear tone.



Long Tones

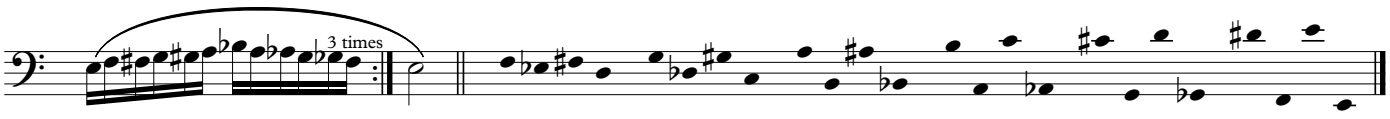
Replace your outer slide, and strive to maintain the same resonant sound throughout these long tones. Hear each pitch in your mind (can you sing the pitch?), then blow through your embouchure the same way you did into the leadpipe.



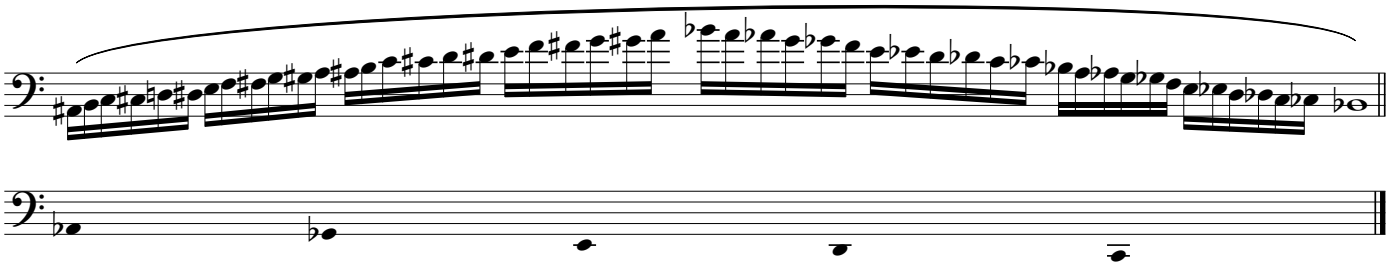
Clarke #1

Play the exercises at *mf* to *f* and repeat as many times as comfortable. Rest after each exercise. Don't extend any of these exercises to the point where you are running out of air and tension creeps into your chest. To again quote Bill Adam, "Any time we play Herbert L. Clarke exercises, it's a good idea to think of the acceleration of the air. Play the first note with a fermata, accelerate the air through the [instrument], and when you start to [move the slide], continue to accelerate the air so the tone stays free. Go slow enough so the notes themselves are being blown and so that there is no muscle restriction that will diminish the sound: keep the sound good and full!"

I have notated the pattern first, and then given the initial pitches for subsequent iterations of the exercise.

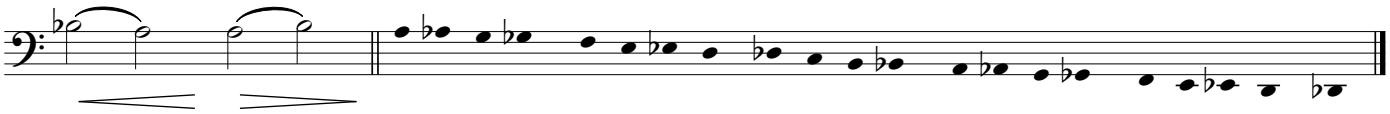


Two Octave Chromatics



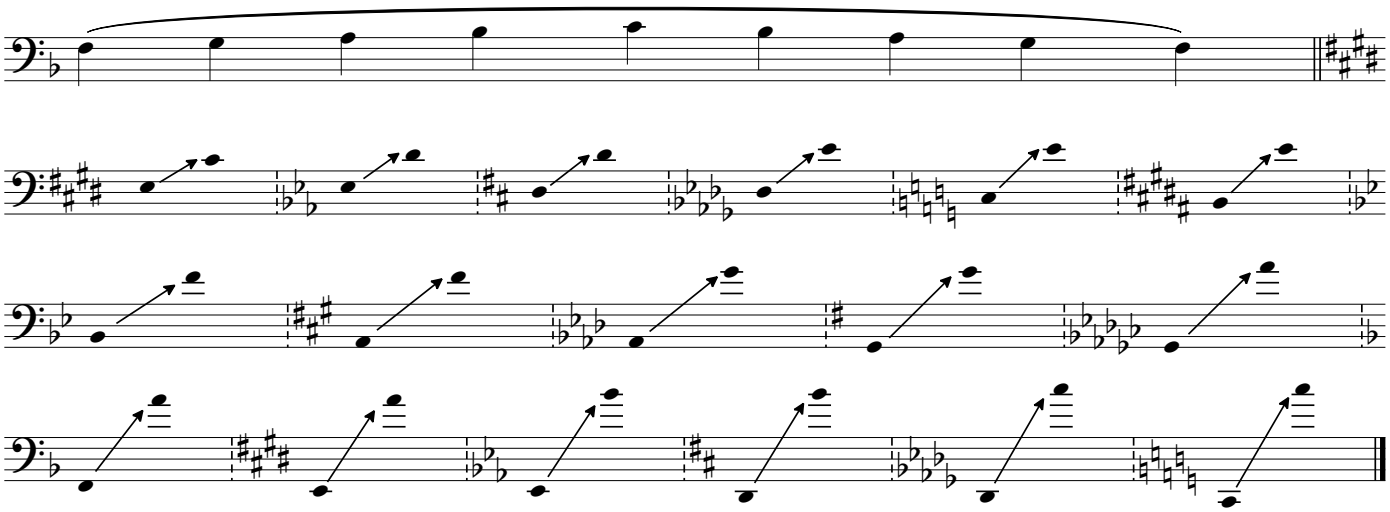
Schlossberg #6

Pace your crescendo and diminuendo so that it is even and gradual. Articulate the third note exactly as cleanly as the first note, but do not allow the sound to stop in between. Keep the sound character consistent throughout all the dynamic changes.

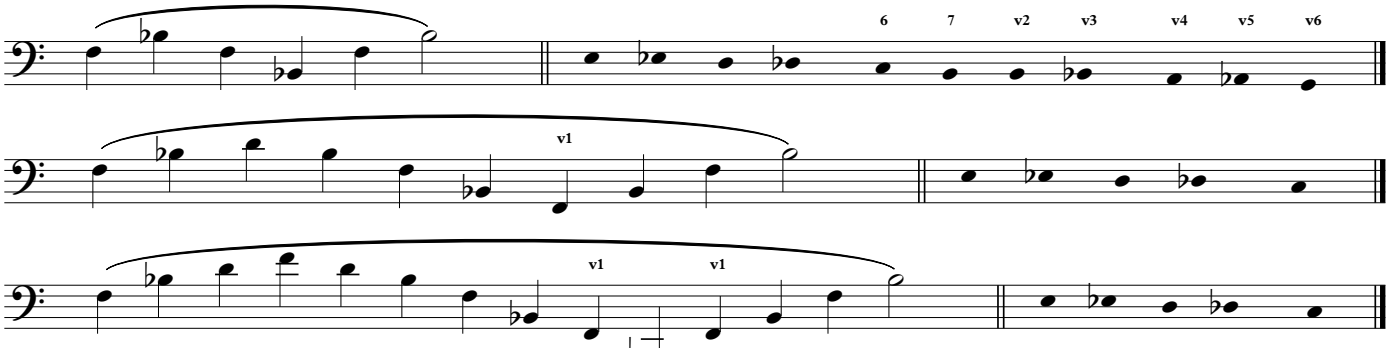


Expanding Scales

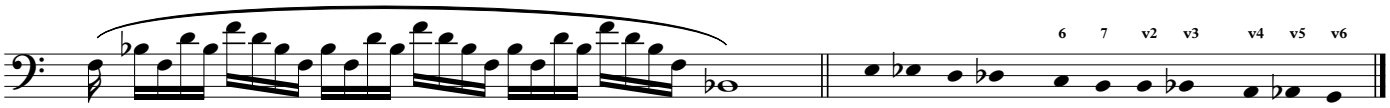
For this exercise, Bill Adam wrote: "A good warm-up routine is one of the most important parts of daily practice. It should cover the complete range of the instrument in not more than ten minutes. When practicing these exercises it might be wise to form the embouchure first rather than to blow it into existence. Firm or lock the corners of the mouth into place, slightly part the lips, hold the chin firm and pointed toward the floor. The lips should be resiliant, not tight. Do not change the embouchure for the entire range of the instrument. Get stronger for the high notes and more relaxed for the lower tones. Try not to move from the original position and keep the corners always firm." Bill Adam always states that "There are no high notes or low notes. It's all flat out."



Schlossberg #14

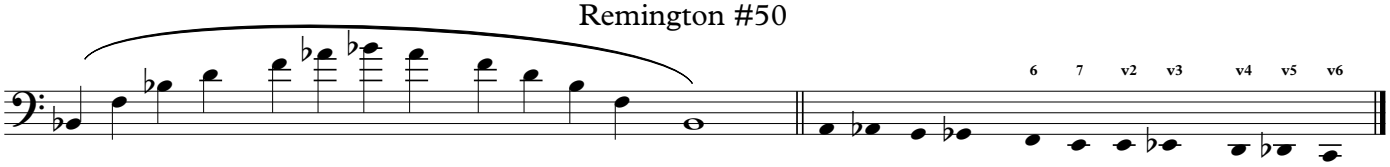


Remington #40



Malterer #2

Remington #50



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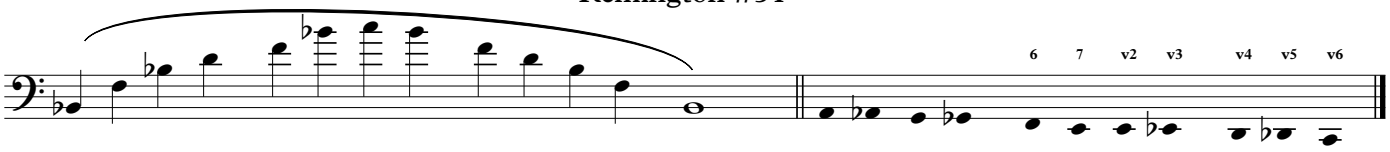

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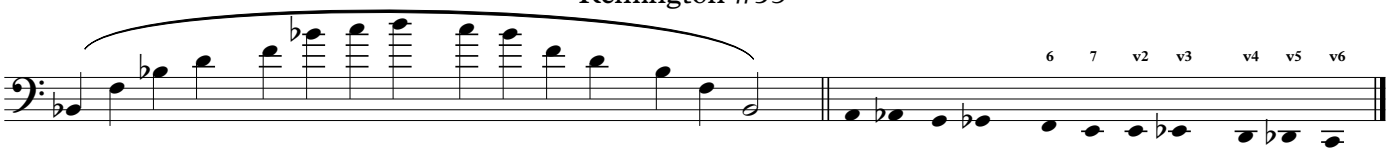
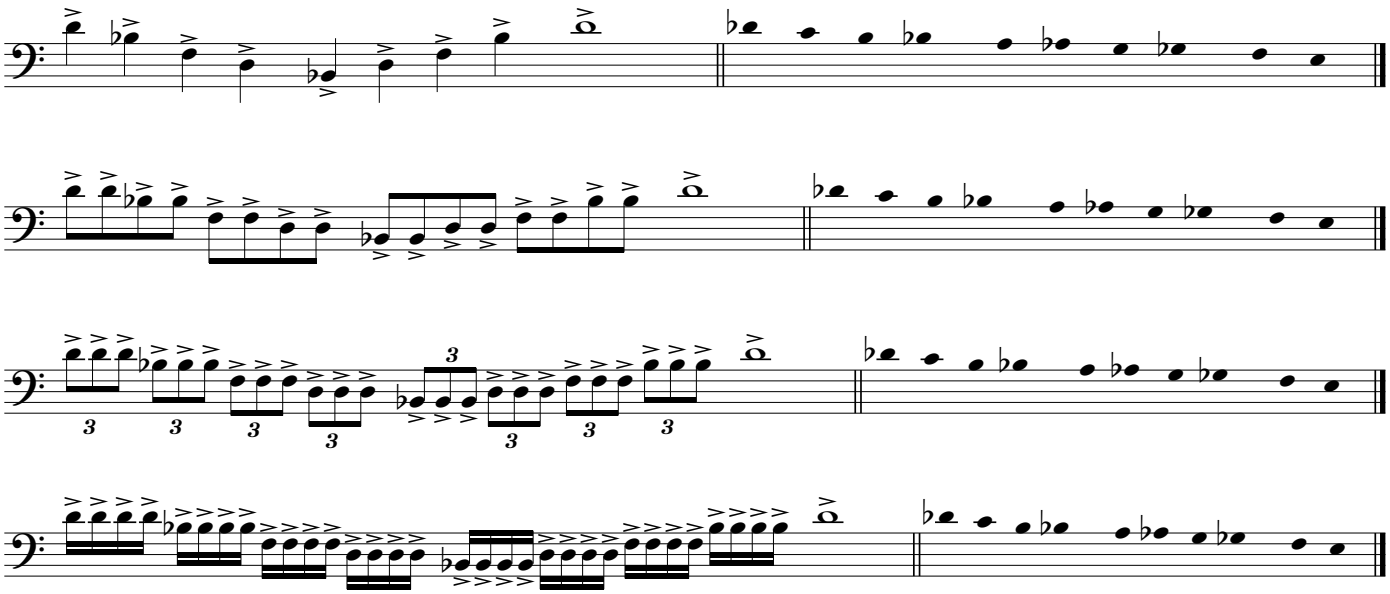


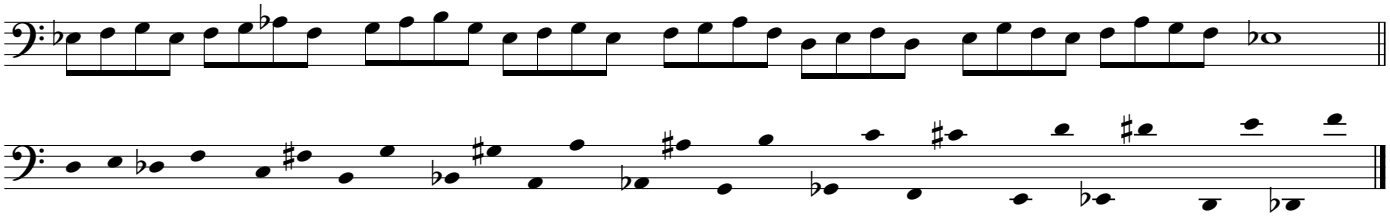
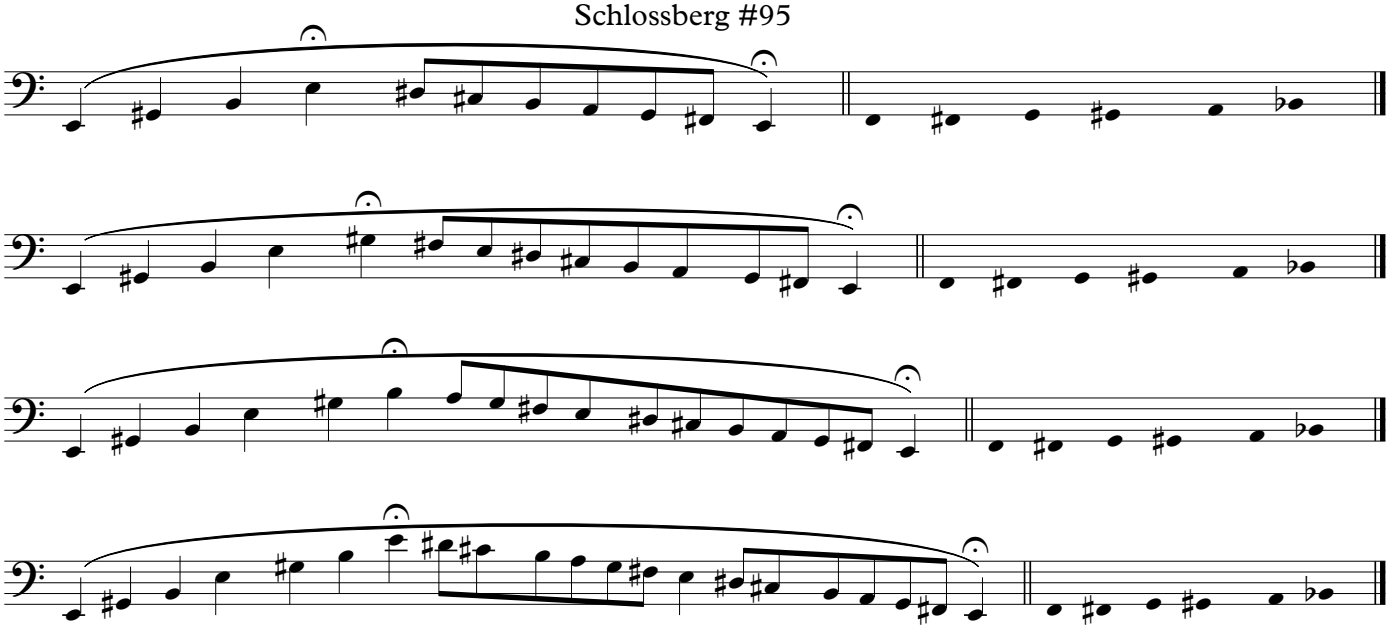
Malterer #15

Schlossberg #17

In these articulation studies, make each articulation sound exactly the same. The first note should be indistinguishable from all the others. Keep your embouchure and jaw steady, and do not let them move as you release the air.



Clarke #2



Schlossberg #95