

JOSH BYNUM - DAILY MAINTENANCE ROUTINE (2021)

In addition to my own exercises, this routine borrows elements from Arban, Remington, Schlossberg, Marsteller, and others. Regardless of which routine you use, daily focus should be given to the following aspects of performance: breathing, buzzing, sound, articulation, and slurs/flexibility.

BREATHING: Fill up like a balloon - with total expansion occurring simultaneously (think of the syllable "OH"). Always breathe in tempo and in style. Inhalation should occur over one full beat and immediately lead into a full exhalation. Be sure to form a proper embouchure while blowing a VERY full airstream. **BUZZING:** Combined with glissing can be a great way to dial in a relaxed and full tone quality up and down. Work down a chromatic octave every day, using a combination of the exercises below.

SOUND: 15 - 20 minutes daily

Scales & Arpeggios: 1X - buzz | 2X - smear | 3X - tah
Buzz should also be very glissy - relaxed sound

Stamp: 1X - buzz | 2X - legato | 3X - tah
Buzz should also be very glissy - relaxed sound

SIMPLE SONGS: Keep a list of tunes to use. Different Range & Key each day
Buzz freely, and exploit large leaps by taking your time. Repeat pitch after taking a breath

Even Glissando - keep sound moving through partial change

Also III - VI | IV - VII
Also using different partials

Gliss through the partials - keep a rhythmically accurate slide motion

Continue down chromatically.
Create new patterns using harmonic slurs.

Remington: Ease of tone & consistency of pitch center
Breathe after every group of 2 | Slight dynamic shaping

For the following 2 exercises - play in free time with no strict tempo.
Use drones/tuner to ensure pitch center. When breathing, repeat previous pitch.

Transpose

Transpose

ARTICULATION: 15 - 20 minutes daily

I.  Cloning Exercises: Tone Stability, Shape, & Consistency Continue down chromatically

II. 

III.  Transpose for other relative keys.

Speed & Clarity: Keep sound moving past the tongue
Daily time getting into upper and lower register.



Five Note Scale Patterns: Relaxed but rhythmic slide technique Transpose to additional keys
Use rhythmic variation to illustrate accurate slide movement



Two Octave Chromatic Scales Continue up & down the octave
Practice Tongued & Slurred Transpose to additional keys



Alessi Chromatic Exercise: Transpose to different keys each day
Accuracy of slide position Also work in 16th notes & rhythmic variation



Arban: Intervals - Practice Slowly!
Consistent Tone and Articulation Transpose to different keys each day.



SLURS & FLEXIBILITY: 15 - 20 minutes daily

Harmonic Slurs: Aim for the end of the phrase. As you progress, think of reaching further OUT...not UP.

Continue adding partials
Also practice tongued

Range Building: Each line in one breath at a relaxed tempo

VII. VI. V. Continue up the slide

Marsteller & Remington: Flexibility Patterns - work chromatically down the slide

For each exercise: Flip the pattern & work different partials

I. II. III. IV. V. VI. VII.

BONUS TIME: 15 - 20 minutes daily

ACCURACY: Marsteller Exercises
Very Slow | During rests - stay "plugged in" on the mouthpiece

I.

Keep sound engaged as you move across register shifts

II.

RANGE EXTENSION: Sauer & Vernon Exercises
Practice slurred and with articulation

Continue up the slide

I.

7-----
Var. A 3 3
Var. B 3 3
Var. C
Var. D
Continue up the slide

II.

p

Ascend Chromatically

III.

Descend Chromatically

IV.

DYNAMIC EXTREMES: Softer dynamics - no tongue

I.

pp ----- *ff* ----- *ff* ----- *ppp*

Continue down scale | Different keys

Glissed or Light Legato | One phrase in one breath

II.

ff ----- *ppp*

Different keys | Mid/Low Register

A consistent warm up routine is essential for steady growth. I recommend spending an extended period of time with the same routine, taking care to play through it every day. Immediately following the daily routine, I spend additional time each day working on a fundamental aspect of my playing:

Articulation | Scales & Arpeggios | Slurs & Flexibility | Dynamics | Range | Sight Reading

Remember the three fundamentals of effective performance – always play with a great sound that is in tune, and with perfect rhythmic accuracy. In other words: TONE, TUNE, TIME.

Here are a few simple suggestions to improve these three fundamental aspects:

- o Improve Tone: Have a “sound concept” that is developed through a LOT of listening to world-class artists. Also, record yourself and be honest with what you hear.
- o Improve Pitch: Use tuning drones in your practice. A tuner will SHOW you when you’re in tune, but you need to improve your awareness of being in tune and out of tune. Drones will allow you to HEAR if you’re correct or not.
- o Improve Time: You must commit to SLOW PRACTICE with a metronome. Having a rock solid sense of pulse is vital to building consistency in your playing. Constant use of a metronome or click track is recommended. Establishing a consistent method of subdivision is essential in order to internalize pulse.

Here are a few resources for continued focus on your fundamentals:

Arban - Complete Method for Trombone	Remington - Warm Up Studies
Schlossberg - Daily Drills & Technical Exercises	Marsteller - Basic Routines
Mueller - Technical Studies vol. 1-3	Blume - 36 Studies for Trombone with F-Attach.
Edwards - Lip Slurs Patterns & Snippets	Colin - Flow Studies
Stevens - Scale & Arpeggio Routines	LaFosse - School for Sight Reading, vol A-E
Davis - Total Trombone	Snidero - Easy Jazz Conception

Great Practice Tools in iTunes App Store:

- Practice Center
- Tonal Energy – Tuner/Recorder
- Tempo – Metronome
- Sight Reading Machine/Factory
- Coach’s Eye
- iReal Pro – Jazz Charts/Changes
- Music Practice – Slow Down
- Music Journal Pro

Listening is an essential component of your musical growth – Find recordings of several different musicians, both jazz and classical. Go to concerts and listen to great playing. It is very important to have a standard that you are trying to reach. Great playing can serve as a compass. Ultimately, you just follow the sound in your head. Find recordings of these great artists and groups on iTunes, YouTube, Amazon, Hickeys...everywhere!

Tenor Trombone:

Joseph Alessi
Nitzan Haroz
Christian Lindberg
Achilles Liarmakopoulos
Megumi Kanda
Lars Karlin
Jorgen van Rijen
Jose Milton Vieira

Bass Trombone:

Blair Bollinger
Jim Markey (also tenor!)
Martin McCain
Tomer Maschkowski
Paul Pollard
Stefan Schulz
Jennifer Wharton (jazz)
Charles Vernon

Jazz & Commercial:

J.J. Johnson
Curtis Fuller
Marshall Gilkes
Wycliffe Gordon
Sara Jacovino
Carol Jarvis
Aubrey Logan
Dennis Rollins

Trombone Ensembles:

New Trombone Collective
Trombones de Costa Rica
Capitol Bones
Four of a Kind
Trombone Unit Hannover

Brass Quintets:

Center City Brass Quintet
American Brass Quintet
Empire Brass Quintet
Meridian Arts Ensemble
Seraph Brass

Brass Choirs:

German Brass
Summit Brass
London Brass
Philip Jones Ensemble
Canadian Women’s Brass Collective

TIPS & SUGGESTIONS FOR MINDFUL PRACTICE

This is following our 9/2 Shop Talk. The Role of Music & Performance Anxiety. Believe it or not, the discipline of practicing can have a lasting impact on these subjects. What follows are just a few suggestions for making the most of your preparation time each week. For anyone who raised their hand on the question of feeling as if your performances don't always match your preparation...this is for you. Always be willing to re-evaluate your process. Let me know what you think, if you have questions, or another point of view. I would welcome the discussion! ----- JB

1. Know thyself:

- What are your current practice habits? How much time each day? How is that time allocated? What are your session goals? Do these answers align with your performance (or career) objectives? If not, what habits are worth keeping...and which need to be re-examined?

2. Define what practice is to you --- and what you want from it:

- Practice doesn't need to carry an association of "forced labor." Who's forcing you? Why is labor a bad thing? I can easily remember some of my best feelings being after a long day of hard manual labor (landscaping). A very cathartic feeling of accomplishment....while being dog tired.
- I define practice as a period of creative problem solving. It's a balance of Artistic and Practical thought. I want to go into a session with a clear plan, and be able to walk out having done EXACTLY what I set out to do. Along the way, as obstacles present themselves ---- I don't get frustrated. I just try and identify what is the EXACT issue, and think of different methods of "attack." I try each of them until I land on what works. The longer you do this, the better your first instincts will be.
- Remember what Victor Wooten said in his video ---- Play more and practice less. Does that mean forget practice? Of course not. Just that creative performance can feed your inspiration to want to practice and become more communicative (expressive) on your instrument. But if we agree that music is a form of expression and communication ---- that also means you need to get a better grip on the language itself. Just allow yourself to MAKE MISTAKES and have the freedom to learn and grow.

3. What is your IDEAL practice environment? When is your IDEAL practice time?

- Take this week and actually chart when you are most AWAKE each day. Do you notice trends? Early, midday, evening, late night? This might be indicating when is best to get optimal work done.
- Do you crave distraction and noise? Not necessarily conducive to focused practice. You'll know focused practice when you stop watching the clock, and actually lose track of time. Now...ultimately, we want to be responsible with our time (so I encourage you to actually set alarms --- 10 minutes, 25 minutes, etc.) to get a feel for the passage of time and how you use (or misuse) it.

- Do you prefer to play outside or inside? Sitting or standing? Awareness of lighting, posture, concentration, fluency of technology (is it easily integrated....or a distraction), etc . These are a few factors to discover optimal learning TIME and SPACE.

4. Practice Journal:

- This is one of the functions of your lesson doc, but you may also like to have a physical journal to jot things down. 3 purposes of the journal: Results from TODAY. Ideas for TOMORROW. Goals for NEXT WEEK.
- Like anything, you get what you invest. Are your observations surface level? That is a likely indicator that your practice is as well. Not that you need to write War & Peace each day. I typically write in shorthand --- a few ideas, observations, plans, goals, etc. Keeps me moving in a linear direction. *MUSIC ED majors ---- get ready, this is a precursor to creation of lesson plans, which will definitely be a thing.
- If you haven't identified "the mission" how can you define success? Levels of goals: Daily; Weekly; Monthly; By Semester; Annual; Degree; Career. Musical; Personal; Professional.
- Make a habit of writing down your goals (or habits that you WANT to establish) and make them visible to you each time you get the instrument out of the case.

5. Self Recording:

- Sharpens musicianship. Prevents distorted self-perception (for better or worse). Heightens efficiency. Enhances lessons. This is effective for solo practice, and incredibly beneficial for chamber rehearsals (an objective and impartial judge of the group's product).
- Don't like what you hear? Do you tend to get emotional and frustrated about that, or kick into creative problem solving mode? Avoidance isn't the answer --- that means you don't trust your love of the Art of Music. If it can't bear or hold up to scrutiny, then it's a shaky love affair.
- I like to mix up what and how long my recordings are. I've recorded and listened back to my daily routine (several times). Excellent way to judge the effectiveness of your time spent and the quality of your routine. Do you sound better (more "dialed in" at the end than at the beginning?
- If working fragments --- I'll record a string of several runs and then listen back, taking note of progress...or lack of. Helps me evaluate HOW I'm practicing.
- After "shedding" an etude (entire or portion), I'll record the performance. That helps me not be panicky about "the red light" of recording, and to understand that it always counts. Not just at the performance (or recording).

Finally --- just to give you some buzz words to latch onto in your daily journey to improve your technical and artistic approach to music making. Gerald Klickstein (The Musician's Way) refers to this as the Habits of Excellence:

- Ease
- Expressiveness
- Accuracy
- Rhythmic Vitality
- Beautiful Tone
- Focused Attention
- Positive Attitude

Here's another exercise for you ---- define what these terms mean to you. Put them in rank order twice:

- 1. Based on how important you think they are
- 2. Based on their priority in your mind on a daily basis (in practice and performance).

Do these columns line up? If not, how can we get there? That's evaluating your process...making sure that it lines up with your goals.

Suggested reading:

Allen, David. Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity
Carter, Christine. The Sweet Spot: How to Accomplish More while Doing Less
Colvin, Geoff. Talent is Overrated
Covey, Stephen. The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People
Coyle, Daniel. The Little Book of Talent: 52 Tips for Improving Your Skills
Coyle, Daniel. The Talent Code
Erickson, Anders. Peak
Gallway, W. Timothy. The Inner Game of Tennis
Green, Don. Fearless Performance.
Hyams, Joe. Zen in the Martial Arts
Klickstein, Gerald. The Musician's Way: A Guide to Practice, Performance, & Wellness
Pressfield, Steven. The War of Art
Stulberg, Brad. Peak Performance
Werner, Kenny. Effortless Mastery
Williams, Susan. Quality Practice