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## The First Steps of Legato for the Young Trombonist

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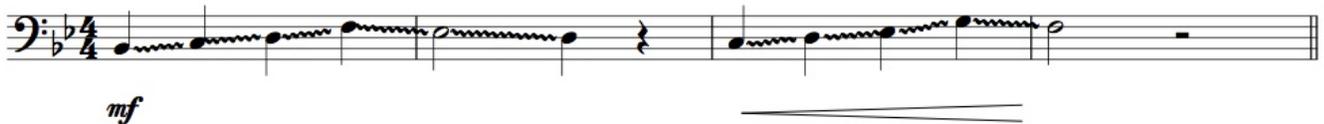
Clean legato on the trombone requires **constant air**, **light tongue**, and a **fast slide**. Address each component individually.

### The Process

Let's take an excerpt from a melody:



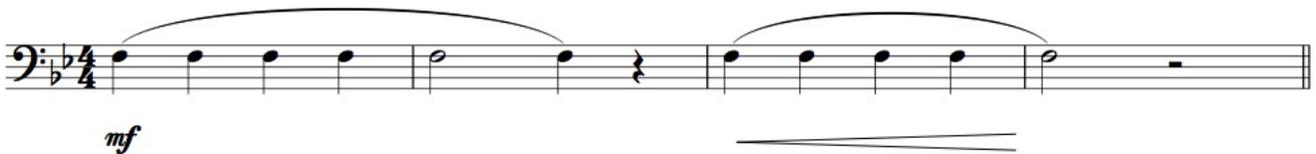
*Glissando* the same melody, focusing solely on **constant air**:



Key points:

- Listen for gaps, indicating that the air is stopping. Constant air should produce constant sound!
- First notes should still get tongued, but should start with immediate air.
- Try this exercise with a fast slide for an extra challenge later. Try to make it sound passible without any tongue.

Now retain the constant air and practice the **light tongue** by *playing the rhythm of the music on one pitch*. The 5<sup>th</sup> scale degree is often a good choice.



Key points:

- A light “loo” or “loh” syllable should produce the desired result, but proper tongue placement is important. Tip of the tongue touches the back of the top teeth at the gum line.
- There should still be no breaks in the sound. If there are, glissando again!
- This type of tonguing is called “feather-tonguing,” which highlights just how light this should be.



### Other Techniques to Try:

- Sing – Buzz – Play
  - The key is to buzz glissando, with no tongue after the first note
  - Try using a BERP or Brass Buzzer so the students can also use the slide
- Wind Patterning
  - Blow air against your hand, and tongue the rhythm
  - Feel the student's air, and have them feel yours. Do they feel the difference?
- Paper on Wall
  - Blow air to keep a paper against the wall.
  - Play a piece of music, and then tongue the rhythm while keeping the paper on the wall. Return to the music and evaluate any change.

### Suggested Literature:

- Introductory Melodious Etudes for Trombone Ferdinand Sieber, arr. Alan Raph
- 55 Phrasing Studies by Jaroslav Cimerá
- The Intermediate Trombonist: Building Blocks for Tone and Technique by Brad Edwards

### Complete 8 Bar Melodies:

Number 1:

Number 1: Musical notation for a two-staff bass clef melody in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The first staff starts with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and ends with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second staff continues the melody with a crescendo leading to a final forte (*f*) dynamic.

Number 5:

Number 5: Musical notation for a two-staff bass clef melody in 3/4 time, key of B-flat major. The first staff starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and ends with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second staff continues the melody with a crescendo leading to a final forte (*f*) dynamic.

### For more information, contact:

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