

Method

This method is designed for warming up in a single key every day and keeping one's fundamentals sharp. It is based on the idea that musical skills are like several different soups cooking on a stovetop; give attention to only one or two, and the others start to boil over and make a mess.

How it works

All exercises are written for either F horn or in C Major with the intent that they be transposed into the key of the day. For example, on June 1, you will play in g# melodic minor and transpose natural horn exercises into E horn. You should only be playing the written notation a couple of times a month, at most! (N) means play in the *natural* horn key of the day and (V) means play with *valves* in the transposition of the day. Some exercises can be played both ways and will have both symbols.

There are five stages of the daily warm up and I strongly recommend that a player try to complete at least one exercise in each stage every day for best results:

pre-warm up - flexibility - scale pattern - interval practice - long tones

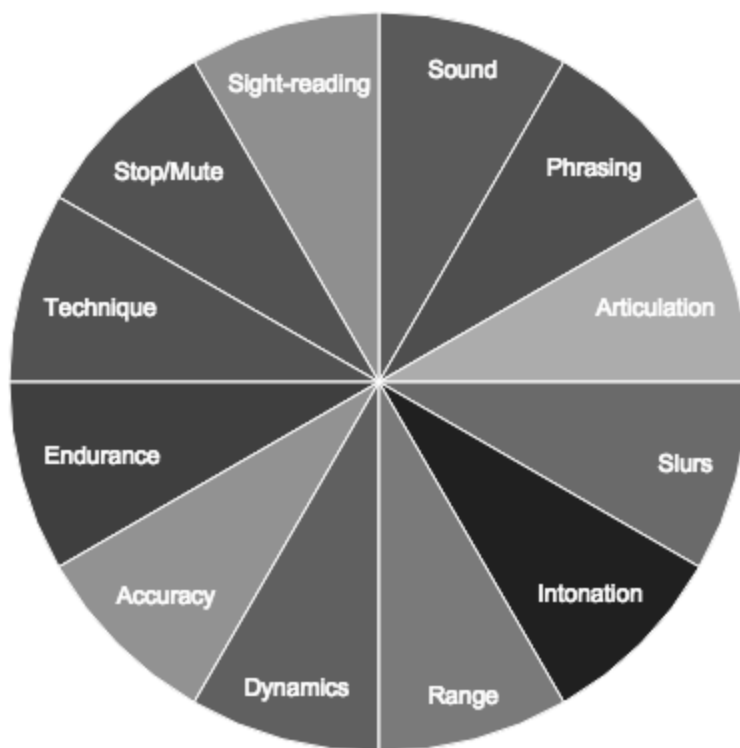
There are four options for each stage:

- **Hangover Style**, for days when you're not feeling quite your best or would like to reconnect with the basics.
- **Ol' Faithful**, a balanced, middle-of-the-road warm-up inspired by Philip Farkas.
- **Low-Range Specialty**
- **Rocky Balboa**, a more hard-core fundamentals routine that will put you through your paces, challenge your endurance, and prepare you for the big fight.

A player may do the related parts of each stage (AKA the complete *Hangover* or the *Rocky Balboa*) or may simply choose a random exercise in each stage. **I like to do a different series every day, rotating through the four options - this keeps the most soups stirred! There is no rule that says you only have to do one series in a day, either.**

Other notes

- There is a certain amount of semi-conscious “noodling” that many players engage in while they practice. If you are a noodler, see if you can transpose your noodling into the key of the day.
- When a natural horn exercise incorporates the *mediant* (or third) between the 2nd and 3rd harmonic, one must obviously change fingerings for just that note. Use whatever fingerings are easy to remember and in tune for you.
- Try to follow the directions. I have tried to only add text that is particularly useful.
- Memorization of scale and arpeggio patterns is quite helpful. Also, doing simple exercises (for example, the pre-warm up) with your eyes closed can quicken your physical learning.
- Unless specified, always try for your best sound, clear articulations, no “wah-wah,” etc.. When in doubt, play for a teacher or record yourself.
- Balanced practice also includes etudes and repertoire studies; sight-reading, phrasing, and general musicianship cannot be attained through these exercises alone!
- Below is a handy little chart of some “soups” that one should keep stirring.



Key Chart

DATE	Key	Natural Horn/ Transposition Key
1	g# melodic minor	F2 - E horn
2	g# harmonic minor	
3	B Major	
4	g harmonic minor	F1 - E ♭ horn
5	B ♭ Major	
6	f# melodic minor	F12 - D horn
7	f# harmonic minor	
8	A Major	
9	f melodic minor	F23 - D ♭ horn
10	f harmonic minor	
11	A ♭ Major	
12	e harmonic minor	F13 - C horn
13	G Major	
14	e ♭ melodic minor	
15	e ♭ harmonic minor	F123 - H horn
16	G ♭ /F# Major	
17	d harmonic minor	T0 - B ♭ Alto horn
18	F Major	
19	c# melodic minor	T2 - A horn
20	c# harmonic minor	
21	E Major	
22	c harmonic minor	T1 - A ♭ horn
23	E ♭ Major	
24	b melodic minor	T12 - G horn
25	b harmonic minor	
26	D Major	
27	b ♭ melodic minor	T23 - G ♭ horn
28	b ♭ harmonic minor	
29	D ♭ Major	
30	a harmonic minor	F0 - F horn
31	C Major	



Phase Zero: Pre-pre-warm up

There are days when you awaken limber and relaxed and ready to focus. Most days, however, you'd be surprised how helpful it can be to take a moment to relax your body and focus your mind before you begin practicing.

Step 1 Relax the body

While you do the following stretches, **relax your jaw (open your mouth) and breathe deeply.**

- Stretch your hamstrings (they affect your breathing) by reaching for your toes.
- Stretch your intercostal muscles by leaning to one side and reaching a hand over your head to the opposite wall.
- Gently stretch your neck muscles by letting your head loll slowly in every direction except backwards. (Keep breathing and go as slowly as you can.)

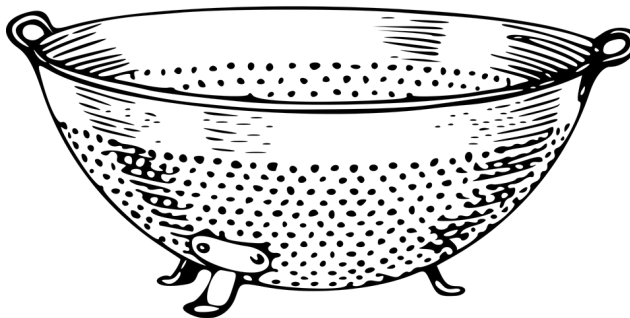
Do anything else that makes you feel physically ready and relaxed.

Step 2 Focus the mind

Set a timer for a five minute meditation. Begin by noticing your state of mind and labeling it. ("Busy," "Fuzzy," "Angry," "Nervous," "Happy," whatever...) Now, for five minutes try to stay aware of your breaths. Try counting them, starting back at one if you lose track. Practice gently bringing your awareness back to your breath and letting go of thoughts.

Why is this a helpful part of practice?

1. Because a mind that is good at staying present is more likely to have thoughtful and productive practice.
2. Because staying focused and present in performance situations is part of what makes a world-class musician.



Phase 1: Pre-warm up

Hangover Style - Start Small (N)

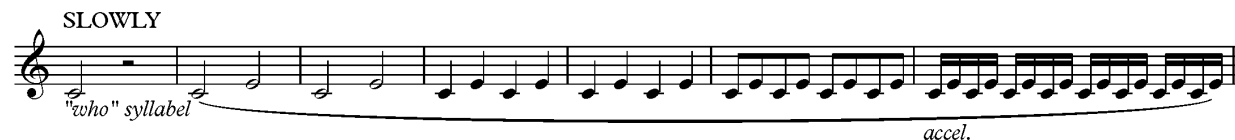
Start with gentle non-tongued attacks of the 6th harmonic. Try for a slow, gentle push of air at a *pianissimo* dynamic. When (and only when!) things start to resonate how and when you like, start investigating how far you must relax the tone before it flops onto the harmonic below. **With your eyes closed**, go back and forth between notes until the transition between the two notes is completely under your control and synchronized. Find your highest speed of alternation. Do this several times until you are feeling good about it.



Eventually, let this morph into the classic Teuger warm-up (continued in Part 2, Flexibility):



Repeat the earlier exercise moving from the 4th to the 5th harmonic. To achieve the higher pitch, find the perfect combination of “pressing on the gas” with your air and imagining squeezing a straw with your embouchure. Remember to take your time and not rush through finding that first attack and clear movement.



Ol' Faithful - Farkas-style pre-warm up (N)(V)

This is similar to the Farkas pre-warm up, played only in one key and with added "Caruso-style" mental subdivisions.

- For best results, transpose *down* and continue the pattern to your highest comfortable register.
- Use the mental subdivisions to be very precise with the start and end of each note.
- Scan the entire body for tension between each note. The top notes should feel effortless and sound sweet.
- If you're playing with valves, use a tuner.

$\text{♩} = 60$ 5

Continue Subdivision...

"who attack"

"too attack"

"who attack"

"too attack"

"who attack"

"too attack"

Low Range Specialty - Homage á Stamp ⑤

In this Stamp-style exercise, aim for smoothness, free flow of air, and an open throat. Always do in the key of the day, including melodic minor inflections of the sixth scale degree.

The Rocky Balboa - Diatonic Vermeulen ⑤

This exercise, based on one by Bill Vermeulen, can be played in a variety of ways, the most important is to **do it with non-tongued attacks**. Do it in the key of the day and go to your highest and lowest registers. Some ideas for continuation:

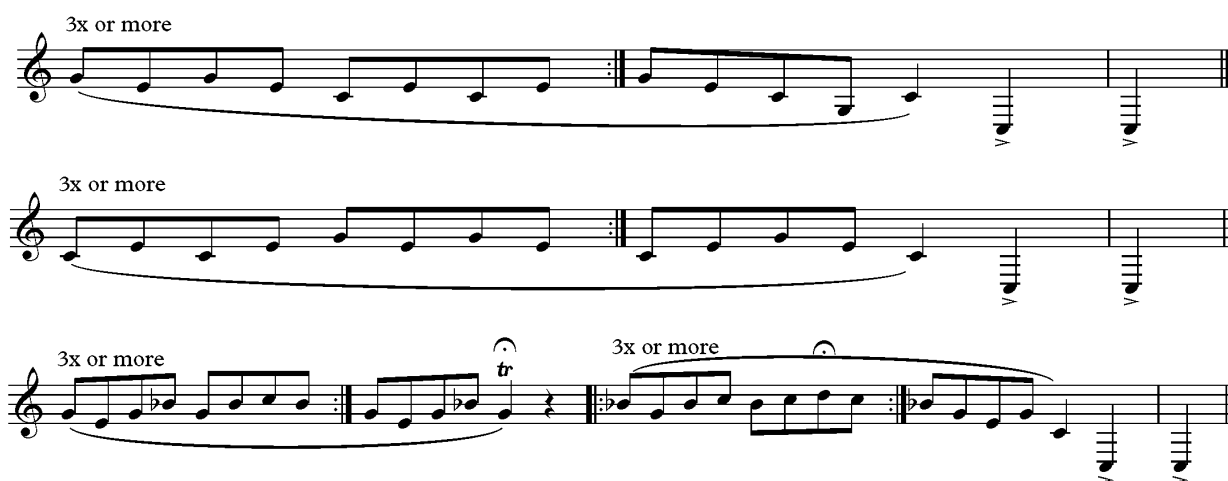
- Eyes closed and open them to look at a tuner once you've stabilized the note.
- Toh articulation, Koh articulation.
- Long tones.
- Bend pitch up, then down, then come to the middle, most resonant place.
- Stopped horn.
- Very short, *pp* and *ff*.
- Add pick-ups to each note from a fourth down or a fifth up.
- Sudden dynamic changes, *pf* and *fp*.



Phase 2: Flexibility

Hangover Style - Two-ger (N)

This is a natural continuation of the pre-warm-up in section 1. As with all flexibility exercises, stay aware of your *consistent air flow*, especially as you go between ranges. I like to practice note grouping by adding a *crescendo* through the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th eighth notes in each group. Notice the addition of the trill in the third section as well as the big, unprepared pedal tones at the end of each line.



If you're feeling great, try this natural horn extension, the short or long version. Use ideas of note grouping (4, 8, 12 or 16 note groups) to help move air through!



Ol' Faithful - Farkas Abbreviated (N)

Farkas-type warm up in the natural horn key of the day with some David Johnson-style breathwork and extra repeats.

$\text{♩} = 72$

f (very full!) exhale inhale exhale inhale

exhale inhale omit in highest keys exhale inhale

$\text{♩} = 100$

p (light and flutey!) exhale inhale exhale inhale

1x slurred and *mf*,
2x staccato and *p*

$\text{♩} = 108$

1x slurred (with breath accents!) and *mf*,
2x staccato and *p* (accents in *p*)

1x Slurred
2x Staccato

p *Accel!*

1x MOUTHPIECE (slur)
2x slurred
3x staccato

♩ = 54 start and end on lowest/highest possible tonics

p

Low Range Specialty - Getting Down

Option 1 (N)

Try this exercise in the opposite way you might normally approach low playing. Instead of trying to play the low notes with a “high embouchure,” see if you can maintain the set that works on the low note for the upper notes with the help of more air.

Accel...

Accel...

Accel...

Accel...

Option 2 (N)

This is a quick and dirty version of a Farkas low range exercise. Be certain to play *forte* at all times.

♩ = 72

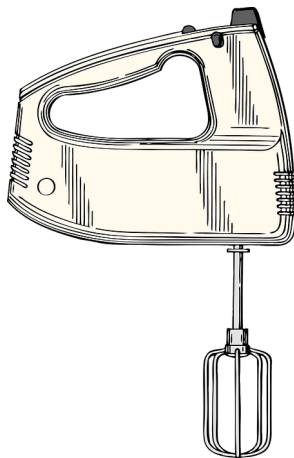
f

The Rocky Balboa - Dufrasne LOL (N)

These patterns are from the Dufrasne routine. He intends for them to become “trill-like” - control will stop and the technique takes on a life of its own. Monitor your mouthpiece pressure; experiment with not increasing pressure on the higher notes. If you get really stuck, play the pattern on the mouthpiece and then imitate on the horn.

Start slowly and accelerate.

The musical score consists of 11 staves of music. Each staff contains a series of eighth-note patterns, often grouped with slurs. The patterns are designed to be played slowly and then accelerated. The notation includes various note values, rests, and slurs to indicate phrasing and timing. The music is written in treble clef and features a series of ascending and descending eighth-note patterns, often grouped with slurs. The patterns are designed to be played slowly and then accelerated. The notation includes various note values, rests, and slurs to indicate phrasing and timing.

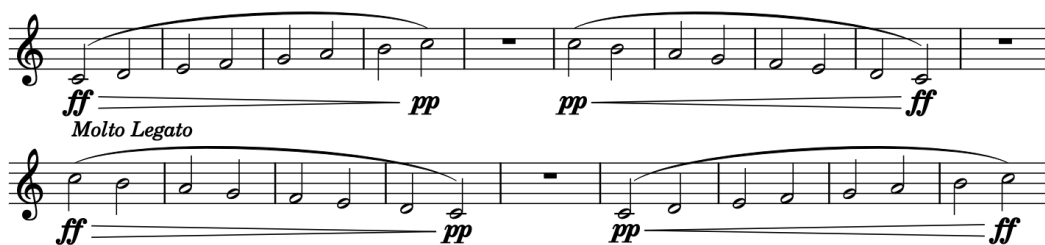


Phase 3: Scale Pattern

Hangover Style

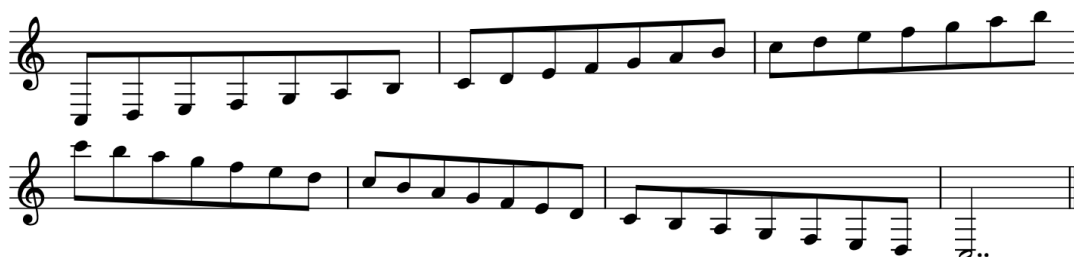
Option 1 - Slow as She Goes (V)

This exercise should be done with the utmost legato and connection between notes. Notice how less air but more support is needed on the high soft notes. Don't mistake this for a beginner's activity. The lower octaves become a great challenge for breath control. Don't be afraid to add lower and higher octaves, to suit the scale of the day! If you're starting to feel more human, you could try doing this with two octave scales.



Option 2 - Use 'Em If Ya Got 'Em

Use your mouthpiece as a tool for finding a flexible set that can do the whole of these three octaves with minimal movement. Listen for evenness of tone, volume, and articulation (if you are articulating.)



Ol' Faithful - Stand and Articulate

Option 2 (V)

While playing this Standley Method-type scale pattern, consider ways to shape each bar - following the topography of the line or leading always to the barline. Let your air feel uncontrollable in higher octaves.

simile

Optional articulation patterns for every day of the week:

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

T T K T K T K T K T K T K T K T K T K T K T K T

Saturday

Sunday

flutter tongue

freestyle

Option 2 (V)

Articulation need a tune-up? Quarter note is 88 - 120. You can do it! Perfect for a melodic minor scale day. Test out the triple tonguing line to find your speed and take a break after!

♩=88-120

The musical score consists of 13 staves of music, primarily in treble clef. The first six staves are in 4/4 time, featuring a variety of rhythmic patterns including eighth notes, sixteenth notes, and triplets. The seventh staff changes to 6/8 time and includes a tempo marking of ♩=88-120. The eighth staff returns to 4/4 time and includes a 'double tonguing' instruction. The ninth staff is in 4/4 time and includes a 'triple tonguing' instruction. The tenth staff is in 4/4 time and includes a 'triple tonguing' instruction. The eleventh staff is in 4/4 time and includes a 'triple tonguing' instruction. The twelfth staff is in 4/4 time and includes a 'triple tonguing' instruction. The thirteenth staff is in 4/4 time and includes a 'triple tonguing' instruction.

Low Range Specialty - Core and Power Scales!

Option 1 (V)

This exercise should be done with the utmost volume and legato.

ff sempre!

Option 2 (V)

The triple *forte* marking here is for real - you should blast these notes!

$\text{♩} = 60$

p mp mf f ff fff p mp mf f ff fff p mp mf f ff fff p mp mf f ff fff

Option 3 (V)

Do these Agrell “Core” and “Power” scales in the following way: **Repeat the pattern as many times as you need to “get it in the fingers.” Start slowly and go to your maximum tempo.**

If speed doesn't seem like the order of the day, try this: slowly, do each bar with the following articulation pattern: TTTT KKKK TKTK T. To get the most relaxed, efficient K motion, try whispering “KITTY” to yourself a few times. On the way back down, try something different, maybe TTKK TTKK TTKK TTKK T.

The image displays musical notation for two scales: the Agrell "Core" scale and the Agrell "Power" scale. The notation is presented in ten staves, each containing two measures. The first five staves represent the "Core" scale, and the last five staves represent the "Power" scale. The notation includes various articulation patterns (TTTT, KKKK, TKTK, T, TTKK) and a key signature change to 6/4 time in the fourth measure of the fifth staff. The scales are written in treble clef and include a double bar line at the end of the tenth staff.

The Rocky Balboa - We Artôt-ally Nailing This

Option 1 (V)

Artôt #6, transposed into the key of the day. Reserve this for a major key day. Like with earlier scale patterns, do once at a perfect tempo and then a second time slightly quicker.



Option 2 (N)(V)

This is somewhere between a flexibility exercise and a scale exercise and it is very strengthening! Notice that you will not play the thirty-second note bar with valves, since there will be no extra seventh. Reserve this exercise for a major day and play the tongued repetition with a brushy and supported *portato* articulation—perfect preparation for Ligeti's Horn Trio.

1x Flutter Tongued
 2x Slurred
 3x Tongued
Repeat with Valves





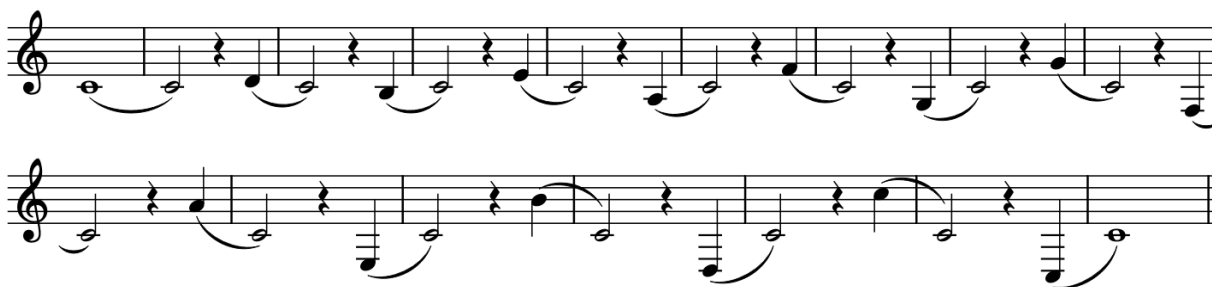
Phase 4: Interval Practice

Practicing intervals is about: 1) hearing the note you're about to play before you play it and 2) getting better making the physical adjustments to match what you hear in your head. All the interval exercises should be played with a tuner (or a drone—or even better—both!)

Hangover Style

Option 1 Wayfinding ⑤

Take your time experiencing what the first note *feels* like as you play it in tune so that you can return back to that same feeling. A variation: play with large crescendos or diminuendos.



Option 2 The Favorite ⑤

This isn't exactly Gail's favorite thing - but it is my favorite variation! Do in multiple ranges and inversions in the key of the day.



Ol' Faithful - Sing-er #29-31 ⑤

Despite what is written, always go to the top note of *your range*, not the tonic of the scale. Use a drone or a tuner, always. It's very important to *hear* the next note in your imagination before you play it - imagine it with a beautiful horn sound.

♩=84

The musical score consists of eight staves of music. The first staff begins with a tempo marking of ♩=84. The music is written in a single melodic line, alternating between treble and bass clefs. The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, and features several long, sweeping slurs that span across multiple measures. There are also repeat signs (double bar lines with two dots) and fermatas (half-circle symbols) placed over specific notes. The overall style is that of a traditional folk or hymn tune, with a focus on sustained, flowing melodic lines.

Low Range Specialty - Bend it like Baumann

Option 1 (N)

This one is done out of time, with an emphasis on not moving the jaw too much. Try to make the air “push” the pitch down until it “plops” onto the next harmonic. **The plop should be UGLY!** The last two measures are a pitch bend from the 2nd harmonic, down a fourth, and back up again. For extra fun, try the inverse, starting on the “fake” bottom note



Option 2 (V)

Actually, I have no idea if Hermann Baumann does an exercise remotely like this. However, it is excellent for improving the low range as well as aural accuracy in regards to smaller intervals.

- For best results, this should always be transposed *down* into the key of the day.
- To make this a longer challenge, do it on the mouthpiece first.
- Add the optional fingered “grace notes” if you have trouble hearing the thirds.

minor 2nd pitch bends

major 2nd pitch bends

minor 3rd pitch bends - use Bb fingerings and hand stopping if necessary

The image contains four staves of musical notation in bass clef. The first staff is labeled 'minor 2nd pitch bends' and shows a sequence of notes with sharp signs indicating minor second intervals. The second staff is labeled 'major 2nd pitch bends' and shows a sequence of notes with natural signs indicating major second intervals. The third staff is labeled 'minor 3rd pitch bends - use Bb fingerings and hand stopping if necessary' and shows a sequence of notes with sharp signs indicating minor third intervals. The fourth staff is unlabeled and shows a sequence of notes with natural signs. Each staff contains multiple measures of music with various accidentals and a final double bar line.

The Rocky Balboa - Big Ol' Intervals

Option 1 (V)

This should be played fast enough to get through one "bar" in a single breath. Try with a drone to see if you can keep coming back to an in-tune root.

omit in highest keys

omit in lowest key

Optional continuation - as strength and range permits!

Option 2 ⑤

Here's where the rubber meets the road. These Joseph Singer-style interval studies are tough looking but if you can get the technique to have that "trill-like" quality, you're really getting in fighting shape. Do with a drone on LOUD, if possible.

♩=100-120

Rest one minute

♩=100-120

The first system consists of six staves. The first four staves are in treble clef, and the last two are in bass clef. The music is composed of eighth notes grouped in triplets, indicated by a '3' below each group and a slur above. The first four staves each contain four measures of triplet eighth notes. The fifth staff contains four measures of triplet eighth notes. The sixth staff contains four measures of triplet eighth notes, followed by a whole note rest and the instruction "Rest five minutes".

$\text{♩} = 100-120$

The second system consists of eight staves. The first four staves are in bass clef, and the last four are in treble clef. The music is composed of eighth notes grouped in triplets, indicated by a '3' below each group and a slur above. The first four staves each contain four measures of triplet eighth notes. The fifth staff contains four measures of triplet eighth notes, followed by a double bar line and a repeat sign. The sixth staff contains four measures of triplet eighth notes. The seventh staff contains four measures of triplet eighth notes. The eighth staff contains four measures of triplet eighth notes, followed by a whole note rest and the instruction "Rest one minute //".

$\text{♩} = 100-120$

This section of the musical score consists of ten staves. The first two staves are in bass clef, and the remaining eight staves are in treble clef. The music is a continuous eighth-note exercise. The first staff contains five measures of eighth notes. The second staff contains two measures of eighth notes, followed by a double bar line and then four measures of eighth notes. The third staff contains five measures of eighth notes. The fourth staff contains two measures of eighth notes, followed by a double bar line and then four measures of eighth notes. The fifth staff contains five measures of eighth notes, with the first measure marked with a triplet '3'. The sixth staff contains five measures of eighth notes, with the first measure marked with a triplet '3'. The seventh staff contains five measures of eighth notes, with the first measure marked with a triplet '3'. The eighth staff contains five measures of eighth notes, with the first measure marked with a triplet '3'. The ninth staff contains five measures of eighth notes, with the first measure marked with a triplet '3'. The tenth staff contains five measures of eighth notes, with the first measure marked with a triplet '3'. The section concludes with a measure marked 'Rest five minutes'.

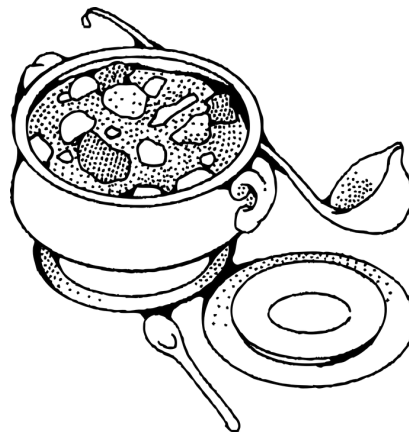
 $\text{♩} = 100-120$

This section of the musical score consists of four staves, all in treble clef. The music is a continuous eighth-note exercise. The first staff contains five measures of eighth notes. The second staff contains five measures of eighth notes. The third staff contains five measures of eighth notes. The fourth staff contains five measures of eighth notes, with the first measure marked with a triplet '3'. The section concludes with a measure marked 'Rest five minutes'.

This musical score is a piano exercise consisting of two main sections. The first section, spanning the top five staves, is written in treble and bass clefs and features a continuous pattern of eighth-note triplets. The second section, spanning the bottom seven staves, begins with a tempo marking of $\text{♩} = 100-120$ and continues the triplet pattern. The piece concludes with a final half-note rest. The notation includes various musical symbols such as staves, clefs, notes, beams, and slurs.

Rest one minute

$\text{♩} = 100-120$



Phase 5: Long Tones

Long tones should be played with a drone (playing the Root), or both a drone in the ear and a tuner on the stand, when possible. Note that most notes won't "ring" exactly in tune, besides the root. Allow yourself to play around with how things feel at equal temperament and natural chordal tuning.

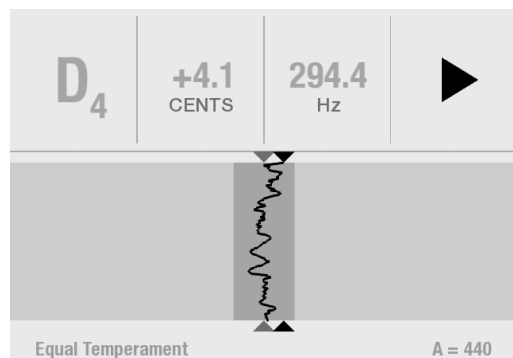
Hangover Style - Meditation (N)(V)

You're lucky to be alive so let's not press our luck, here.

With your tuner on, do the following exercise (tonic, dominant above, dominant below), each note the length of a full exhalation, with a steady tone at *piano*. Imagine you are playing along with a phrase of music.



You will notice that even though your body is mostly still and your pitch is probably at an acceptable range, there will be micro-fluctuations in pitch. Your tuner app (if you're using one) might look something like this:



Don't try to change things right away. Start shifting your awareness and see how that affects your pitch stability. In turn, become aware of your torso, the muscles of your face, the feel of air rushing through your lip aperture. Zero in your awareness on your tuner and then open your awareness to your sound and tone. How many layers can you hear in your sound? Be casually aware of how these shifts in focus and intention change your pitch and stability. Don't judge yourself if it doesn't smooth out - just notice!

Ol' Faithful - Traditional LT's ⑤

Classic long tones. Make incredibly even crescendos and diminuendos. Unlike some hairpin-style long tones, these are meant to push your ability to be loud with a round, non-edgy tone. There's nothing *wrong* with edge (imo), but the ability to play without edge at a healthy dynamic is trickier and takes maintenance.

♩=60

pp f pp p f pp p f pp p

f pp p f pp p f pp p f

pp p f pp p f pp p f pp

pp p f pp p f pp p f pp

Low Range Specialty - Low Plops, Low Stops ⑤

This one is frustrating, but oh-so-good for you! Don't fret if you can't get it to sound like you think you should; just try it a little every day and reap the rewards in your low playing! You can learn a lot from doing it with a tuner as well!

♩=60-80

p < f > p p < f > p p < f > p p < f > p

p < f > p p < f > p p < f > p p < f > p

The Rocky Balboa

Option 1 - Open Interval Bonanza (N)(V)

This exercise is perfect for drone work and should be done in both the key of the day with standard fingerings as well as in the transposition of the day, sans valves. When on the natural horn, be sure to bend the pitch down to the “unreal” dominant below the 2nd harmonic. This is a time-tested technique to get centered tones in the low range. Start on the highest *comfortable* tonic at the beginning and the lowest comfortable tonic on the fourth line.

One whole breath per bar

mp < f > pp mp < f > pp mp < f > pp

mp < f > pp

mp < f > pp

ff < pp > ff ff < pp > ff ff < pp > ff

ff < pp > ff

Option 2 - Swells on the High Cs (V)

There is no top dynamic given on these swells. They should be as big as you can do them comfortably. Focus on the *feeling* of letting more air through the lip aperture. Don't hurt yourself—STOP when you get to a point where you can't crescendo and NEVER play through any pinching/tingling/numbness!

ff < pp > ff

ff < pp > ff