# BRASS COURSE







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This course is designed to be used as an individual instructional study guide, as well as a class learning tool. Each lesson should take approximately 30 - 45 minutes long including teaching and practice time. Not everyone will progress at the same pace. It is advised to repeat or come back to a lesson so as to reinforce certain concepts.

If you are using this as a class learning tool, please remember that E-flat instruments will not sound at the same pitch as B-flat instruments.

Each student should take a placement test before being placed in a level. After a student completes a level, there is a separate final test that should be completed and passed before moving on to the next level. Be sure you have these materials.

In addition, the Brass Course is designed as a companion to the Music Theory course. Students should utilize the music theory books to help advance their knowledge of music making.

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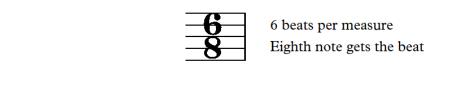
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# **Review of Level 4**

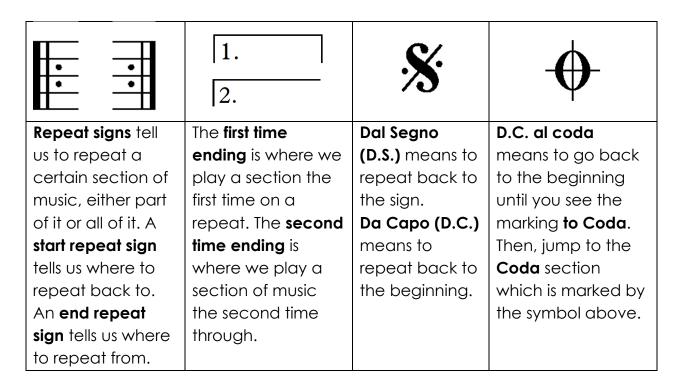
Before we start Level 5, let's take a quick look at some of the basics learned in previous levels. Be sure to go back to previous levels if you feel you need a refresher on any of the material. This review will help prepare you for what is to come in Level 5!

#### **Compound Time**

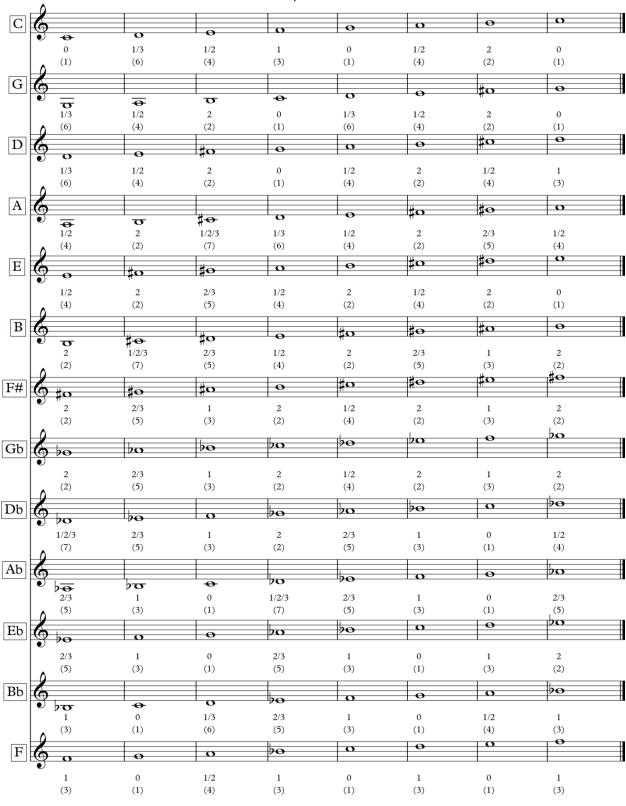




#### **Repeat Signs**



# Major Scales



# <u>Lesson 5.1 – Warm Up Routine</u>

In this lesson, we will focus on the importance of warming up each time you play your instrument. The practice of warming up is just like stretching before exercising or playing sports. As you progress as a brass player, you will notice that a warm up routine helps you achieve accuracy and increased endurance while playing.

Here is a simple outline that you can follow. Each exercise is listed in the order it should be played. They are also listed in order of importance.

#### **Long Tones**

Start with long, sustained notes that simply get the lips buzzing. This is a basic exercise but one of the most important aspects of warming up.



#### **Lip Slurs**

Stretch the lip muscles by slurring between notes of the same fingering.



#### **Scales**

Warming up your fingers is just as important. Play through your scales to familiarize yourself with the patterns. A good way to help yourself achieve rhythmic precision is by practicing scales at consistent speeds.



#### **Tonguing**

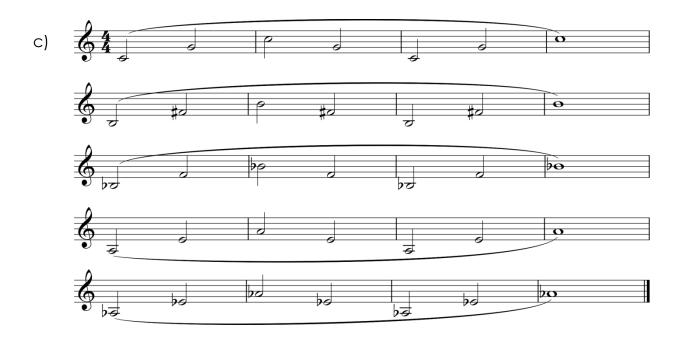
Lastly, play through various scales and passages using a variety of tonguing styles ("too" or "doo") and rhythmic patterns.

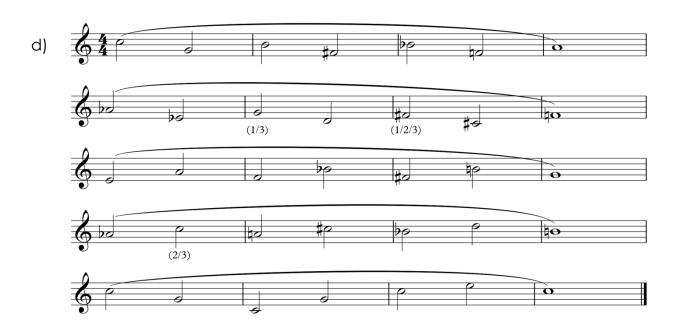


#### Long Tones – 5 minutes



#### Lip Slurs – 5 minutes





#### Scales – 5 minutes



#### Tonguing - 5 minutes









# **Lesson 5.2 - Tempo and Tuning**

#### **Metronome Markings**

In music, there are many different tempo markings that indicate the speed. Often, these are labeled alongside an additional marking that specifies the **beats per minute**. We call these metronome markings and they look like this:

$$(-120)$$

This means there are 120 quarter note beats within a minute. Using simple math, you can quickly figure out that there are exactly two beats per second. Using a metronome while practicing can help you figure out exactly what the tempo is for a piece of music. It helps internalize the pulse so you can accurately keep time. You can buy a metronome from a music store, or download a metronome app on your smart phone.

Here are several terms that you might see, in addition to the ones we have previously learned, along with <u>approximate</u> metronome markings:

Indication	Tempo	Approximate number of beats per minute
Adagio	slow	56 - 66
Andante	moderately slow; at a walking pace	69 - 72
Andantino	a little faster than andante	76 - 84
Moderato	at a moderate tempo	88 - 100
Allegretto	fairly fast (a little slower than allegro)	104 - 120
Allegro	fast	126 - 152
Presto	very fast	160 - 200

#### **Lesson Reminders:**

Remember that there are sixty seconds in a minute. If you see a tempo listed as  $\downarrow$ =80, this means you will be slightly faster than a beat per second. If you see  $\downarrow$ =104, the beat will be a little slower than half a second.

#### <u>Tuning</u>

At some point on your playing journey, you may have been asked to play something "in tune." Perhaps you have worked on tuning with a teacher. Just like the metronome, it is a good idea to have a tuner. You can get an app on your smartphone. When practicing, simply turn it on and see how your tuning is while playing. You can adjust your slide if needed.

Here are the basic rules for tuning.

If you sound **sharp**, you must lower the pitch. **Pull the tuning slide out.** 

If you sound **flat**, you must raise the pitch. **Push the slide in.** 

A lot of the time, tuning issues are caused by three factors:

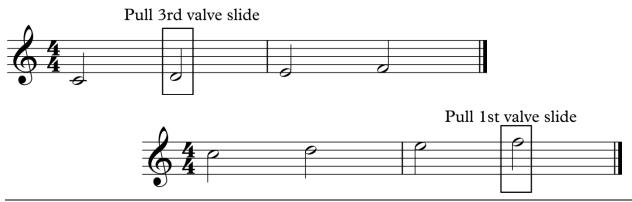
- 1. Lack of air support.
- 2. Fatigue in the embouchure.
- 3. Being unaware of a note's correct pitch.



Determine whether or not you need to adjust your slide. It is very common to adjust the slide (minimally) from day to day. Aim to find a sweet spot or a default position that allows most of the notes to be centered in pitch on the instrument.

#### **Other Slides**

Some instruments have other slides that increase tuning accuracy. Most cornets have a 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> valve slide. These slides are used to lower individual notes that might need adjusting, rather than pulling the main tuning slide out.



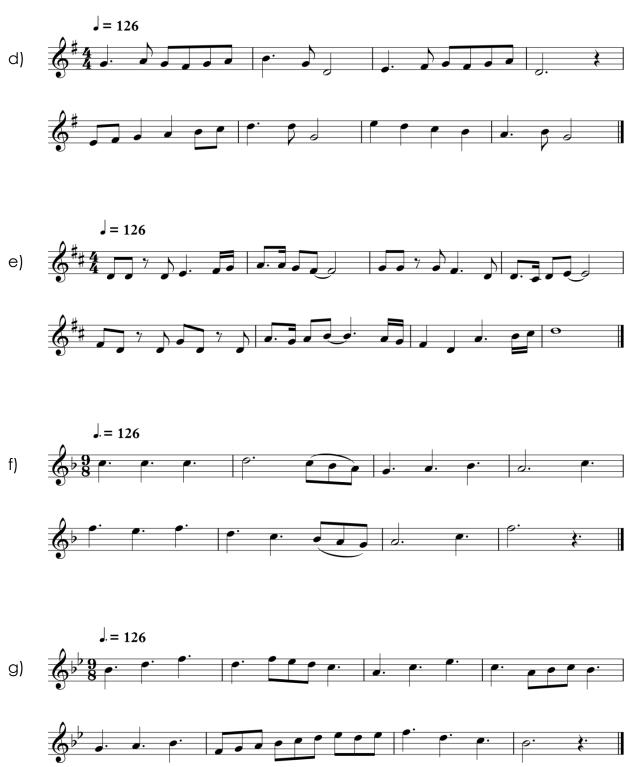
Each exercise has a metronome marking. Play along with a metronome to ensure a consistent tempo is maintained. Once you have achieved consistency, try the same exercises with different tempo markings.







If you haven't been doing so already, pay close attention to the D below the staff. As discussed in this lesson, you might need to pull out the 3<sup>rd</sup> valve slide to ensure it is played in tune. Keep using your tuner during practice sessions.



# Lesson 5.3 - Triplets

A group of three eighth notes can also occur in simple time signatures (2/4, 3/4, 4/4). In this situation, they are called **triplets**.

A triplet is a group of three notes that are played within one beat. For example, in 4/4 time, you could have **triplet eighth notes** which would take up the same amount of time as **two eighth notes**:



\* Notice that the two eighth notes in the first measure and the triplet eighth notes in the second measure both equal one simple beat in 4/4 time.



In 4/4 time, you can have as many as 12 triplet eighths in one measure.



Within a triplet, you can combine eighth notes in different ways. Here's an example that shows different groupings of triplets:



In understanding rhythms, it is important to recognize that the subdivision always lines up with the consistent beat. The counts "1-2-3-4" always remain at the same speed, while the triplet fits in between those numbers.





Watch out for ties. Notes that are tied into a triplet can be tricky. It may help to eliminate the tie while you figure out the rhythm, and then add it back in when you feel ready.





# **Lesson 5.4 - Stylistic Development**

(Legato, Marcato)

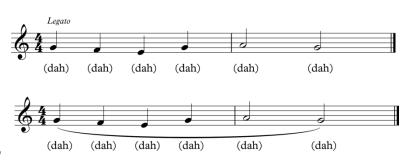
This lesson will focus on developing the **legato** and **marcato** style of playing. As you progress, keep in mind that the best musicians are well rounded in their approach to different techniques and musical qualities. These include being able to play loud and soft, fast and slow, long and short, smooth and articulated etc.

As of right now, you probably already play with some sort of *legato* and *marcato* style. Maybe without even realizing it! We want to refine and perfect these styles over time. First, let's look at how each one is produced.

#### <u>Legato</u>

This is a smooth and connected style of playing. Sometimes it will be marked on the music by a long slur, or simply labeled with the word *legato*.

Aim for the air stream to be well supported and consistent. Each note should lead into the next. There is a slight interruption of the air stream by placing the tongue lightly using the "dah" syllable.



#### **Marcato**

In simple terms, marcato means marked. The front of each note should be clean and precise followed by a slight decay in the sound. Often, a well-produced marcato articulation requires a slight separation between notes. However, a phrase that is marked marcato still has a line and shape.

Once again, aim for the air stream to be well supported



with a strong "**tah**" syllable articulation at the front of the note. After starting the note, come off of it slightly in volume. Always ensure there is both bounce and separation between each note.











# <u>Lesson 5.5 – Technique Development</u> (Arpeggio Patterns)

The first time you read through a new piece of music, you may feel frantic as you try to read everything that you see on the page. In this lesson, we will focus on learning, reading, identifying and utilizing arpeggios. Recognizing arpeggios right away can help you learn to read music quickly.

Time and time again, you will be told to practice scales. This is because scales enable us to perform music within a particular key with ease. Let's take this learning method one step further and look at arpeggio patterns that are often seen within music.

A series of notes taken from a chord is called an **arpeggio**. Most often, an arpeggio is made up of the root, third and fifth of the chord.

To play a chord on one brass instrument, you must play an arpeggio. Brass instruments can only produce one note at a time. In order to present the sound of an entire chord, the player must arpeggiate the notes of the chord.

Let's simplify this.



Basically, an arpeggio is a broken chord that rises (and falls), spelling out the notes of the chord one by one. It can appear in various forms and patterns.



Throughout this lesson, you will learn different arpeggio patterns with varied articulations and rhythms. This will help you read music at a quicker pace over time.













# Level 5 Wrap-up

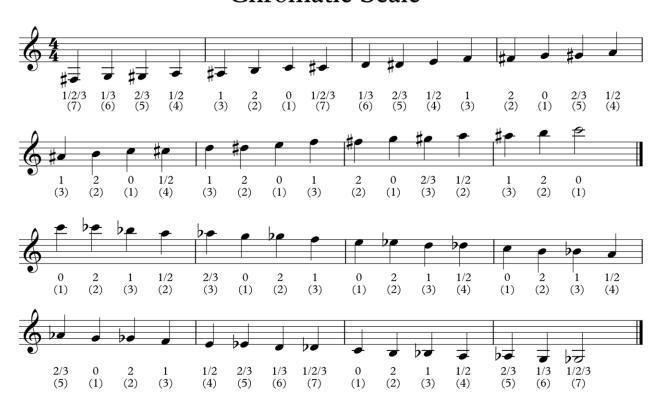
To finish up Level 5, let's review most of the material we have learned. As you play these exercises, look out for the new **style** markings, **arpeggios**, and listen carefully to your **tuning**.



#### **Bonus Material**

Developing your own practice routine is strongly encouraged. In addition to repeating this level and moving on to the next, you can utilize other practice material to supplement your learning. Take a look at methods such as the <u>Arban's</u> and <u>Clarke Technical Studies</u> to enhance your playing. Below you will see a list of selected solo repertoire that is appropriate for the completion of Level 5.

### Chromatic Scale



#### **Solo Practice**

For B<sub>b</sub> instrument:

- The Joyful Sound (Stephen Bulla) AIES8933
- Peter, Go Ring them Bells (Stephen Bulla) AIES9833
- I Love You Lord (Matthew Ingram) US371

#### For E<sub>b</sub> instrument:

- He Leadeth Me (George Twitchen) US395
- Happy Day (Dorothy Gates) AIES0933

AIES=American Instrumental Ensemble Series (USA Southern Territory) US=Unity Series (UKI Territory)

