

BRASS COURSE

STUDENT WORKBOOK
BASS CLEF ADAPTATION



↑ LEVEL 2 ↓

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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.

This Bass Clef adaptation book is designed for students who cannot read treble clef. For this purpose, all exercises and examples have been transposed and the written wording of notes has also been revised. 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. You can use the E-flat adaptation book to make playing together possible.

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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Review the Basics

The fundamentals of playing a brass instrument are the same whether you are a beginner or more advanced. It is important to develop good habits and follow routines when practicing and performing. Here is a quick checklist.

How to Sit	How to Breathe	How to Buzz	How to Play
Sit up straight with your feet on the floor. Don't allow yourself to sit in a position that will hinder your ability to play.	Take a deep relaxed breath. Never strain your airway.	Say the letter M and leave the lips lightly together. The buzz is created by the slight vibration between the lips and the air stream.	Place the tip of the tongue at the inner top of the upper teeth and buzz into the instrument. The speed of the air will change the register of the note.

Here are a few other fundamentals you learned in Level 1.

Note name and fingerings

A musical staff in bass clef showing the notes B \flat , C, D, E \flat , F, G, A, and B \flat . Below each note are the fingerings: B \flat (0 (1)), C (1/3 (6)), D (1/2 (4)), E \flat (1 (3)), F (0 (1)), G (1/2 (4)), A (2 (2)), and B \flat (0 (1)).

Note and rest values

A musical staff illustrating note and rest values. From left to right: a whole note (4 beats), a half note (2 beats), a quarter note (1 beat), a whole rest (4 beats), a half rest (2 beats), and a quarter rest (1 beat).

Dynamics and Tempo

A musical staff illustrating dynamics and tempo markings. The tempo markings are Adagio (Slow), Moderato (Medium), and Allegro (Fast). The dynamics markings are *p* (Soft), *mp* (Medium soft), *mf* (Medium loud), and *f* (Loud).

Let's practice

One of the best ways to create healthy practicing habits is by following a routine. Here are some easy exercises you can use to begin your practice session, no matter your level of playing.

a) ¹⁻²⁻³⁻⁴

0 (1) 1/3 (6) 1/2 (4) 1 (3) 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 2 (2) 0 (1)

b) ^{1-2 3-4 1-2 3-4}

0 (1) 1/3 (6) 1/2 (4) 1 (3) 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 2 (2) 0 (1)

2 (2) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 1 (3) 1/2 (4) 1/3 (6) 0 (1)

c) ^{1 2 3 4}

0 (1) 1/3 (6) 1/2 (4) 1 (3)

0 (1) 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 2 (2) 0 (1)

d) ^{1-2 3 4}

p 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 1/3 (6) 1 (3) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 1 (3) 1/2 (4)

0 (1) 2 (2) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 2 (2) 0 (1) 0 (1)

Moderato

e)

f 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 1/3 (6) 1 (3) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 1 (3) 1/2 (4)

0 (1) 2 (2) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 2 (2) 0 (1) 0 (1) 1-2-3-4

Moderato

f)

p 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 1/3 (6) 1/2 (4) 0 (0) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 1 (3) 1/2 (4)

mf 1/2 (4) 2 (2) 0 (1) 0 (1) 1 (3) 1/3 (6) 1/2 (4) 1-2-3-4

Allegro

g)

mp 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 1 (3) 0 (1) 0 (0) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 1 (3) 1/2 (4)

f 1/2 (4) 1 (3) 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 1 (1) 0 (1) 1 (3) 1/3 (6) 0 (1) 1-2-3-4

Lesson Reminders:

Posture – sit up straight.

Breathe – always take low and deep breaths.

Cheeks – keep them firm, don't puff them out.

Sound – make it nice and steady.

Lesson 2.1 – Bar Lines and Time Signatures

Music is divided into measures. Each measure is separated by vertical lines called **bar lines**. Bar lines are like musical punctuation. In the same way that we use punctuation when writing sentences, we use **bar lines** to help organize the music. We call the space within the bar lines a **measure**. At the end of a piece of music, there is a special bar line called a **double bar line**.



Notice at the beginning of this example that there is a **time signature**. The top number tells us how many **beats** are in a measure, and the bottom number tells us what kind of note gets one **beat**.

	4 beats per measure Quarter note gets the beat
--	---

	3 beats per measure Quarter note gets the beat
--	---

	2 beats per measure Quarter note gets the beat
--	---

Look at the examples below. Notice the time signature and the count for each measure. Try clapping and counting these out loud.

1)

2)

Let's practice

Be sure to look at the time signature and count the number of beats indicated within each measure correctly.

Moderato

a)

 Musical notation for exercise a) in 3/4 time. The first staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and contains four measures: a quarter note (finger 1), a quarter note (finger 2), a quarter note (finger 3), and a half note (finger 1-2). The second staff starts with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and contains four measures: a quarter note (finger 0), a half note (finger 0), a quarter note (finger 1), and a quarter note (finger 1/2). The third staff contains two measures: a quarter note (finger 1/3) and a quarter note (finger 1/3).

Moderato

b)

 Musical notation for exercise b) in 2/4 time. The first staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and contains four measures: a quarter note (finger 1), a quarter note (finger 2), a half note (finger 1-2), and a quarter note (finger 1). The second staff starts with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and contains four measures: a quarter note (finger 0), a half note (finger 0), a quarter note (finger 1/2), and a quarter note (finger 1/3). The third staff contains two measures: a quarter note (finger 1/3) and a quarter note (finger 0).

Adagio

c)

 Musical notation for exercise c) in 2/4 time. The first staff starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and contains four measures: a quarter note (finger 1), a quarter note (finger 2), a half note (finger 1-2), and a quarter note (finger 1). The second staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and contains four measures: a quarter note (finger 1/2), a half note (finger 1/2), a quarter note (finger 1/3), and a quarter note (finger 1/3).

Adagio

d)

 Musical notation for exercise d) in 3/4 time. The first staff starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and contains four measures: a quarter note (finger 1), a quarter note (finger 2), a quarter note (finger 3), and a half note (finger 1/2). The second staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and contains four measures: a quarter note (finger 1/2), a quarter note (finger 1/2), a quarter note (finger 1/2), and a quarter note (finger 1/3). The third staff contains two measures: a quarter note (finger 1/3) and a quarter note (finger 1/3).

These last two exercises do not have any fingerings (slide positions) labeled. It is important to know the fingerings. If you are still struggling, you can review previous lessons or write in reminders where you need them.

Allegro

e)

f

p

f

Allegro

f)

p

f

Lesson 2.2 – Accidentals

There are many different types of scales. So far, we have learned the B \flat major scale. The notes are: B \flat -C-D-E \flat -F-G-A-B \flat . Before we talk about other scales, let's take a look at **accidentals**.

Sharp Symbol #	Natural Symbol ♮	Flat Symbol ♭
A sharp makes the note slightly higher (semitone).	A natural cancels a previous sharp or flat within that measure.	A flat slightly lowers the note (semitone).

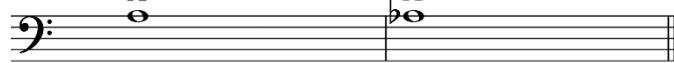
If you look at a piano keyboard, you will see white and black keys. The notes we have learned are all on the white keys.

B \flat	C	D	E \flat	F	G	A	B \flat
							
0 (1)	1/3 (6)	1/2 (4)	1 (3)	0 (1)	1/2 (4)	2 (2)	0 (1)

To keep things simple, let's start by learning two new notes that use accidentals.

E \flat is 1st valve (3rd position). If we place a natural beside it, that will raise it to what fingering?

E \flat	E \natural
	
1 (3)	2 (2)

A	A \flat
	
2 (2)	1 (3)

A is always 2nd valve (2nd position). If there is a flat beside it, what is the fingering?

Accidentals last for an **entire measure**, even if the note is repeated within that measure. They are only cancelled out when a natural is placed.

Let's practice

Be on the lookout for accidentals. For now, the fingering is labeled. Don't forget the other fundamentals like breathing and counting.

Adagio
1-2-3-4

a) Musical notation for exercise a) in bass clef, 4/4 time. It consists of two staves. The first staff has four measures: a whole note G2 (fingering 0 (1)), a whole note F2 (fingering 2 (2)), a whole note E2 (fingering 1 (3)), and a whole note D2 (fingering 1/2 (4)). The second staff has four measures: a whole note C2 (fingering 1/2 (4)), a whole note B1 (fingering 1 (3)), a whole note A1 (fingering 2 (2)), and a whole note G1 (fingering 0 (1)).

Adagio
1-2 3-4 1-2 3-4

b) Musical notation for exercise b) in bass clef, 4/4 time. It consists of two staves. The first staff has eight measures: G2 (0 (1)), F2 (2 (2)), E2 (0 (1)), D2 (1 (3)), C2 (0 (1)), B1 (2 (2)), A1 (0 (1)), and G1 (1 (3)). The second staff has eight measures: F1 (0 (1)), E1 (2 (2)), D1 (0 (1)), C1 (1 (3)), B0 (0 (1)), A0 (1/2 (4)), G0 (2 (2)), and F0 (0 (1)).

Adagio
1-2-3-4

c) Musical notation for exercise c) in bass clef, 4/4 time. It consists of two staves. The first staff has four measures: G2 (0 (1)), F2 (2 (2)), E2 (1 (3)), and D2 (1/2 (4)). The second staff has four measures: C2 (1/2 (4)), B1 (1 (3)), A1 (2 (2)), and G1 (0 (1)).

Adagio
1-2 3-4 1-2 3-4

d) Musical notation for exercise d) in bass clef, 4/4 time. It consists of two staves. The first staff has eight measures: G2 (0 (1)), F2 (2 (2)), E2 (0 (1)), D2 (1 (3)), C2 (0 (1)), B1 (2 (2)), A1 (0 (1)), and G1 (1 (3)). The second staff has eight measures: F1 (0 (1)), E1 (2 (2)), D1 (0 (1)), C1 (1 (3)), B0 (0 (1)), A0 (1/2 (4)), G0 (1 (3)), and F0 (2 (2)).

e) **Adagio**

1 2 3 1-2 3

p 0 1/3 1/2 2 0 1 1/2
(1) (6) (4) (2) (1) (3) (4)

f 0 1/3 1/2 2 1/3 2 0 1 1/2 0
(1) (6) (4) (2) (6) (2) (1) (3) (4) (1)

f) **Moderato**

1 2 3 1-2 3

f 1 1/2 1 0 2 0 1/2 0 1
(3) (4) (3) (1) (2) (1) (4) (1) (3)

p 1/2 1 1/2 0 2 0 1/2 0 1
(4) (3) (4) (1) (2) (1) (4) (1) (3)

g) **Moderato**

f 0 1/2 1 1/2
(1) (4) (3) (4)

mp 1 0 2 1 1/2 0 1
(3) (1) (2) (3) (4) (1) (3)

h) **Allegro**

mf 2 1/2
(2) (4)

f 1 2 0 1/2 1 2 0
(3) (2) (1) (4) (3) (2) (1)

Lesson 2.3 – Major Scales

(B \flat -A \flat -C)

The best way to gain more confidence and develop your skills is by practicing. Like playing piano and other musical instruments, we improve our reading ability by learning and practicing scales.

A **major scale** is formed by notes in a specific order, covering an **octave**. Remember, an **octave** is the distance between two notes of the same letter name (i.e. **C** to **C**, **D** to **D**).

A major scale can go **up** (ascending), **down** (descending) or both, and is formed using **tones (T)** and **semitones (S)**. In particular, the **ascending** scale is built on the following pattern of tones and semitones: **T T S T T T S**

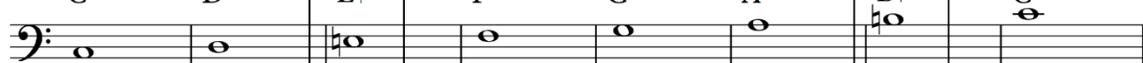
B \flat	C	D	E \flat	F	G	A	B \flat
							
0	1/3	1/2	1	0	1/2	2	0
(1)	(6)	(4)	(3)	(1)	(4)	(2)	(1)

At this stage, you have learned all of the notes in the B \flat major scale. This scale, as explained in the previous lesson, uses B \flat and E \flat . Now, let's learn two more scales. The A \flat and C major scales.

A \flat Major Scale

A \flat	B \flat	C	D \flat	E \flat	F	G	A \flat
							
1	0	1/3	2/3	1	0	1/2	1
(3)	(1)	(6)	(5)	(3)	(1)	(4)	(3)

C Major Scale

C	D	E \natural	F	G	A	B \natural	C
							
1/3	1/2	2	0	1/2	2	1/2	1
(6)	(4)	(2)	(1)	(4)	(2)	(4)	(3)

Let's practice

All of these exercises should be practiced at various speeds. Use these exercises to help you review the new scales. The goal is to eventually have the scales memorized.

Moderato

a)

Moderato

c)

mf 1/3 (6) 1/2 (4) 2 (2) 0 (1) 1/2 (3) 0 (1) 2 (2) 1/2 (4) 1/3 (6)

1/2 (4) 2 (2) 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 2 (2) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 2 (2) 1/2 (4)

2 (2) 0 (1) 1/2 (4) 2 (2) 1/2 (4) 2 (2) 1/2 (4) 0 (1) 2 (2)

0 (1) 1/2 (4) 2 (2) 1/2 (4) 1 (3) 1/2 (4) 2 (2) 1/2 (4) 0 (1)

Moderato

d)

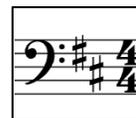
Moderato

e)

Moderato

f)

Notice that up to this point, we have only used accidentals. The next few exercises will use a key signature. A key signature appears at the beginning of the piece and indicates what flats or sharps are to be used. If nothing appears, you can assume there are no flats and sharps unless they are marked as an accidental.



Moderato

g) *f* $\frac{1}{(3)}$ $\frac{2/3}{(5)}$ $\frac{1}{(3)}$ $\frac{2/3}{(5)}$ $\frac{1}{(3)}$

Moderato

h) *f* $\frac{2}{(2)}$ $\frac{1/2}{(4)}$ $\frac{1/2}{(4)}$ $\frac{2}{(2)}$

Adagio

i) *f*

Adagio

j) *f* $\frac{1}{(3)}$ $\frac{2/3}{(5)}$ $\frac{1}{(3)}$

Adagio

k) *f* $\frac{2}{(2)}$ $\frac{1/2}{(4)}$ $\frac{1/2}{(4)}$

Continue to work on these exercises throughout the rest of this level. Play each one at various dynamics and speeds. Remember – even the most advanced players practice fundamentals!

Lesson 2.4 – Tonguing and Articulation

Every note that is played on a brass instrument has a beginning, middle and an end. What is happening at each of these moments? How are we starting and stopping the sound of each note? In this lesson, we will look at several articulation basics that help us play the notes in the right style.

“Too” vs. “Doo” & “Toh” vs. “Doh”

There are different approaches that can be taken when articulating or starting a note. Here are four different syllables to think about when playing. They are slightly different, but will become more noticeable as you advance.

T – Starting with the **T** syllable should give a concise front to the note.

D – Starting with the **D** syllable should give a smoother front to the note.

“Too” vs. **“Toh”** – Playing **“too”** is considered the default approach for brass. It is a good way to blow air straight through the instrument and achieve a supported sound. However, **“toh”** is useful if you want to achieve a deeper sound.

“Doo” vs. **“Doh”** – This concept is the same as **“too”** vs. **“toh”** except the front of the articulation is now softened by the **D** syllable.



Short

To play short, you use a quick **“too”** articulation with fast air. The air stream should be open and free, not stopped by the tongue or by closing off your throat. Imagine flicking an object with your finger.



Accented

To play an accented note, place a strong and well supported **“too”** at the front of the note. Think of your air stream as wide at the beginning before returning to normal. The sound or shape of an accented note should sound just as the symbol looks.





Connected

Playing connected is achieved when the air stream is continuous without any interruption by the tongue. This is called a **slur**. It is vital to make sure you move the valves (slide) quickly between notes. Depending on the style of the music, any of the syllables we've learned will be required.

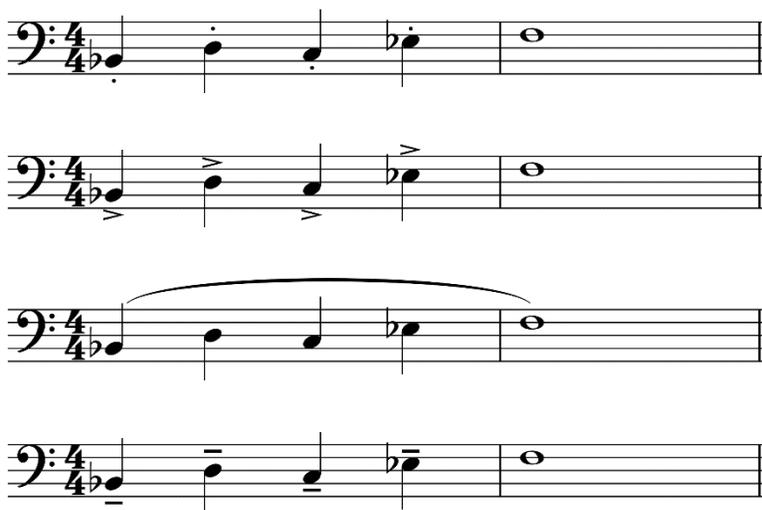


Long

The difference between slurred and long articulations is the tonguing in between the notes. Much like slurs, you must blow right through the note but clearly define the next note with the tongue.



Let's practice playing the different articulations. Notice that there are four different ways to play the exact same notes. Can you hear the difference?



Lesson Reminders:

Another approach includes the syllable **"tah"** or **"dah."** Each one promotes a solid, supported sound and is an alternative to **"too"** or **"doo."**

Let's practice

Here are several exercises that use various articulations. Play everything with a lot of sound and good support.

Allegro

a) *f*

1 (3) 2 (2)

Allegro

b) *mp*

1 (3) 2 (2)

Allegro

c) *f*

1 (3) 2/3 (5)

Allegro

d) *mp*

1 (3) 2/3 (5)

Moderato

e)

mp

Musical notation for exercise e) in bass clef, 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The first staff starts with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The melody consists of quarter notes: B-flat, A, G, F, E, D, C, B-flat. The second staff continues the melody with slurs over the first two measures and the last two measures, ending with a whole note B-flat.

Moderato

f)

f

Musical notation for exercise f) in bass clef, 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The first staff starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The melody consists of quarter notes: B-flat, A, G, F, E, D, C, B-flat. The second staff continues the melody with slurs over the first two measures and the last two measures, ending with a whole note B-flat. A fingering of 2 (2) is indicated above the second measure of the second staff.

Allegro

g)

p

Musical notation for exercise g) in bass clef, 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The first staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The melody consists of quarter notes: B-flat, A, G, F, E, D, C, B-flat. The second staff continues the melody with slurs over the first two measures and the last two measures, ending with a whole note B-flat. A fingering of 1 (3) is indicated above the first measure of the second staff, and a fingering of 2/3 (5) is indicated above the final note.

Allegro

h)

mp

Musical notation for exercise h) in bass clef, 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The first staff starts with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The melody consists of quarter notes: B-flat, A, G, F, E, D, C, B-flat. The second staff continues the melody with slurs over the first two measures and the last two measures, ending with a whole note B-flat. A fingering of 2/3 (5) is indicated above the first measure of the second staff, and a fingering of 1 (3) is indicated above the second measure.

Lesson 2.5 – Group Practice

Here are two pieces to play as a group. There are two different parts, so read the music carefully. Remember to listen to the other part as you play.

Allegro

a)

1 *mf*

2

2
(2)

Moderato

b)

1 *mp*

2 *mf*

f

Level 2 Wrap-up

To finish Level 2, let's review most of the material we have learned. We must remember to watch for **time signatures**, **accidentals** and **articulations**.

Allegro

a)

p

f

Moderato

b)

mp

mf

2
(2)

1
(3) 2
(2) 1
(3)

Moderato

c)

mp

f

1
(3)

2
(2) 1
(3)

2
(2) 1
(3)



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