

# **DROP THE BEAT**



**Oklahoma State University  
Horn Studio Warm-Up**

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## **COMPTON WARM-UP**

I would like to start out this whole presentation with giving you a few of my thoughts on the warm-up process. I have read and heard a variety of warm ups over the years and have come to one conclusion; there is NO one way to warm up. Some people warm-up the same way everyday and have for years while others change on a weekly or even daily basis. What is important is that you find what works for you and are thoughtful about what it is that works for you. I used to do a 5-minute warm-up everyday and call it good for eight hours of rehearsals and practicing. I suppose it worked at the time, but from a pedagogical standpoint, it probably was not the best thing and I was missing out on fundamental work that would make everything I played easier.

I could keep talking about the things I learned over the years, but this is about a method of warming up and practicing fundamentals that can add some variety and dare I say FUN to your day! The exercises that are mentioned can be replaced and rotated with anything you want to work on. The most important thing to remember is that at all times, you are focused on the three T's- In TIME In TUNE In TONE!! Pop songs are not an excuse to throw these necessities out the window and if you hear one of these T's suffering, STOP THE TRACK and listen! Get the old-fashioned metronome out and get back to work.

### **Why pop songs??**

Why not? I stole this idea, in part, from my husband. He has a strict hour-routine that includes a series of drones and funk tunes under it. I started using pop tunes for my students to play solos over it. Why? I heard a friend say once that many of us see the metronome as a disciplinarian and an enemy. Of course, it isn't, but it is harder to blame your favorite songs of being the "bad guys". Also, using a musical metronome like a pop song should help you play less static on scales, thirds, and other exercises. You should "feel" during all these exercises and treat all music like it matters because it does.

Pop songs also work well because they have a strong beat that doesn't fluctuate. You could use your own set of songs as long as you have a steady beat. It wouldn't hurt to go through all your warm-up playlist and find the tempo each song is so that you are aware of the tempos you are playing. One of my least favorite answers to the question "How fast are you playing this?" is "I don't know." That is NOT okay. Remember; be thoughtful of everything that is coming out of your horn!

The tracks I use every day are available on Spotify. You would have to download Spotify, but it is free! I have a playlist labeled "Studio Warmup" which you can subscribe to. Just be aware that some songs have explicit lyrics.  
<http://www.spotify.com>

Get your tuner out and let's get started!

## Remington Exercises/ Long Tones

Tuning and tone is the focus of these first long tones. We hold the first note until we all sound like one horn. Use these exercises to “center” yourself. Think about sound quality, air, and being relaxed. I use a “c” or “g” drone for all of these exercises. You can also take turns being the human drone if you don’t have a recorded drone. It might take you some time to get in tune and in tone but that is okay. If you do this everyday, you will find that it becomes easier and you will become more confident.

## Hoh-Toh-Tohs

*Underdog* by BANKS

*Wish You Would* by Marian Hill

Start the first note of each set with an air attack and then two tongued attacks. This helps create the note with the air and then lets the tongue merely define the next two notes. Keep the notes connected and work for the same sound throughout regardless of articulation. Also, as with any music, hear the next pitch before you play it to ensure best sound.



## Chromatics

*Brooklyn in the Summer* by Aloe Blacc

*Bad Idea* by Ariana Grande

This exercise gets the fingers going. I personally love this chromatic series because it starts fairly low and gets the air moving. I also like how it trains your fingers to play the chromatic pattern starting on all notes. Young students get used to playing the chromatic pattern in “F” or “C” and this will make all the patterns just as comfortable! Since you play each pattern three times, you can switch it up by flutter tonguing or articulating a line along with the slurring. You could also play full octave chromatics and then only run the pattern two times to line up with the music. Again, watch your breathing and stay relaxed.



~The Brass Gym – Sam Pilafian and Patrick Sheridan, Ed. John Ericson (Focus on Music) pages 15-16

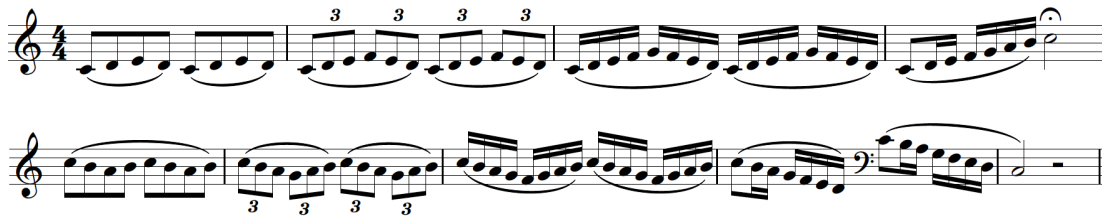
~Technical Studies for the Cornet – H.L. Clark (Carl Fischer) pages 5-7

## Rhythmic Scales

*The Middle* by Zedd, Marin Morris, Grey

*Never Give Up On Me* by MisterWives

This next exercise works on scales in an active and challenging rhythmic pattern while pushing technique. We usually add a second descending octave at the end of each key. Feel free to slur or use different articulation patterns, but pay special attention to the switch from duple to triple and keep the time precise.



~A Hornist's Handbook of Studies for Flexibility and Technical Development – Randall E. Faust (Randall E. Faust) pages 114-118

## Tonguing

*Look What I Found* by Lady Gaga

*Drum* by MØ

Now that the fingers are moving, we can get our tongue moving. You can pick any tempo and if you start with a slower tempo, you can always turn the last set of 16<sup>th</sup> notes into 32<sup>nd</sup> notes. Start at any pitch but I recommend nothing higher than third space C and continue down half-steps at least two octaves or even three if your tongue is up to it! Use the music to keep the air moving through the sixteenth notes and to keep you relaxed.



## Tongue Accelerators

*MIA* by Bad Bunny and Drake

*Human Touch* by Betty Who

This is a studio favorite and challenges the tongue along with the coordination of the fingers; so, if we do only one exercise for tonguing, we choose this one. As far as style, I prefer a connected and effortless sounding articulation, but you can switch it up to staccato or marcato or anything you prefer that day! Just make sure that you are using the repeated notes to propel you easily into the scale and in the same length and style.



~Smooth Connections - J.D. Shaw

### Major Two-Three Octave Scales

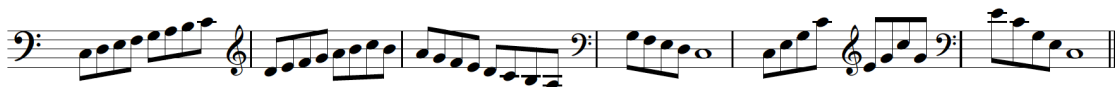
*Atlantis* by Bridgit Mendler and Kaiydo

*Talk* by Khalid

You can pick a variety of tempos in the songs you pick for scales. Right from the beginning, think of phrasing these scales with the songs you pick. It should make them feel easier and more musical. Who wants to hear mechanical scales? Why not make these musical?

The scales are straight eighth notes with a whole note on the last note of the scale and the arpeggio. You can tongue or slur or make your own articulation pattern! We do two octaves from low C to G and then take a short break before we drop the octave and play Ab to C three octaves. The odd part of these scales is the three octaves are not divisible by 4 until after two sets so be ready to embrace the slightly odd feeling in the middle of the scale pattern. It will keep you on your toes! Also, it would be a good idea to turn the beat around every once in a while! Start your scales or any exercise on beat 2 or the upbeat instead of the normal/comfortable downbeat of 1. Trust me, it's fun!

Two Octave:



Three Octave:



## Major Scales in Diatonic Thirds

*Do You Think About Me* by Captain Cuts  
*Let 'em Say* by Lizzo and Caroline Smith

You can play these thirds to the same tempo as the scales. You can also take the same break after G major before continuing on to Ab. Tongue or slur these but I can't say this enough; Make them musical!!

There is a fun option of swinging the 3rds for variation when these get easy. It moves the air differently and can propel you to the top notes.



~A Hornist's Handbook of Studies for Flexibility and Technical Development –  
Randall E. Faust (Randall E. Faust) pages 50-52

## Major/Minor/Dominant Seventh/Diminished Seventh Arpeggios

*Love Me Less* by MAX and Quinn XCII  
*High Hopes* by Panic! At the Disco

Here is where it gets fun. These are obviously a challenge technically, but it is an added challenge to play 3 against 2 and back again. It becomes absolutely necessary to feel the tempo. Make sure to pick a tempo you can play the sixteenth note patterns in before you start.



~Complete Conservatory Method for Trumpet – J.B. Arban, Ed. E.F. Goldman and  
Walter Smith (Carl Fischer) pages 142-149

## Smooth Air Movement

*Heaven Can Wait* by Sia, Diplo, and Labrinth

*Somebody Special* by Nina Nesbitt

These are another studio favorite mostly because they feel great at the end of the warm-up. Pick a nice slow tempo and focus on sound and trying to make the entire phrase consistent and in one breath. Feel free to take the last note down the octave. Watch your pitch!!



~The Brass Gym – Sam Palafian and Patrick Sheridan, Ed. John Ericson (Focus on Music) pages 21-22