

Air Concepts

The music ultimately dictates the way that you blow because each variation in air flow creates a distinct difference in the sound.

Since breathing in doesn't create a sound on the trombone, you can breathe in many ways but keep in mind that the manner that you breathe in is generally reflected in the way you blow out, i.e., if you take a breath in tempo you will probably blow out in tempo, if you breathe fast you will probably blow fast, if you breathe 'big' you will probably blow big!

Therefore, you must always have an idea of what you want to sound like because, otherwise, the natural inertia of breathing will impose its own 'default' sound upon your playing. Create your own sound! Don't be a victim of generic breathing!!

Notice in these exercises how you can articulate using just the air and embouchure.

Don't use your tongue to start the note.

Just start blowing softly and accelerate the air until the lips start to buzz.

Play the note making some crescendoes and decrescendoes. Diminuendo to nothing.



Play a different note using the same process. Again - don't use your tongue.

(Advanced players take notice:)

The embouchure is an active - yet often unconscious - participant in this articulation.

As you observe the reaction of the embouchure you'll recognize you are producing the same sensation as a very slow lip vibrato.

Cultivate this awareness because without it your vibrato will be uncomfortable and erratic!

Now try this process now in a more rhythmic context.

Start with the rhythms in the following exercise, then continue, improvising your own rhythms.

Try rhythmic patterns using syncopation, quarters, triplets, eighths, etc.

