

A Thoughtful Progression of Flexibility Studies for CC Tuba

These studies are not presented as the only flexibility studies one should ever dedicate time & energy toward. Instead, they might be thought of as a progression of lip slurs which act like building blocks, each building and growing as a result of the intentional practice of the preceding study. They can be a thoughtful, helpful means to achieving greater flexibility and range for tubists of any ability level. As you approach each study, be mindful of the following three concepts: Smoothness & beauty of sound is our first priority. To achieve smoothness & beauty of sound, your airstream must flow beautifully without interruption or breaks of any kind. Every inhalation must be totally full and relaxed. These also can be thought of as building blocks: great breathing leads to beautiful uninterrupted air flow, which leads to smoothness & beauty of sound.

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0, 2, 1, 1-2, 2-3, 4, 2-4, etc.

No. 1 

6

No. 2 

13

No. 3 

20

No. 4 


28

No. 5 

34

No. 6 

40

No. 7 

46

No. 8 

54

No. 9 

59

No. 10 

(Don't turn the page until each of these studies sounds and feels pretty smooth to you.)

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2
67

No. 11

73

No. 12

78

83

No. 13

88

No. 14

93

No. 15

97

No. 16

107

No. 17

mf > *p*

115

f

f

123

mp

decresc.

mp

130

f

decresc.

139

p

p

f

No. 18

147 $\text{♩} = 80$ *Very slow at first* *cresc. e accel.*

156 *p* *p* $\text{♩} = 69-80$ *f*

165 *rit. p* *a tempo*

174 *p*

183

192

201 *p*

211 *f* *p*

221 *f* *p*

231 *f*

241 *pp*

The musical score consists of ten staves of music. The first staff (147) begins with a tempo marking of $\text{♩} = 80$ and the instruction "Very slow at first", followed by "cresc. e accel.". The second staff (156) features dynamics *p* and *f*, and a tempo marking of $\text{♩} = 69-80$. The third staff (165) includes "rit. p" and "a tempo". The fourth staff (174) has a dynamic of *p*. The fifth staff (183) has no markings. The sixth staff (192) has no markings. The seventh staff (201) has a dynamic of *p*. The eighth staff (211) has dynamics *f* and *p*. The ninth staff (221) has dynamics *f* and *p*. The tenth staff (231) has a dynamic of *f*. The eleventh staff (241) has a dynamic of *pp*. The score includes various time signatures (3/8, 2/4, 3/8) and dynamic markings (*p*, *f*, *pp*) throughout.

4
251

258

267

275

282

289

294

299

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

p

f

A Few Ideas

Be patient, persistent and consistent. In No.1 the 1st note of each measure should glissando or smear down to the 2nd note in each measure. Only use the embouchure to achieve this, not the valves. This exercise encourages constant air and informs the embouchure of where the bottom note is in relation to the upper note. As you move to No.2, try to imagine your embouchure still glissing from the top note to the bottom note, but now the gliss occurs at the exact moment of the note change. Steven Bryant related this idea to that of a violinist's portamento: the violinist's changing hand position being our changing embouchure, the moving bow being our constant air stream. No.3 adds the next higher partial. Continue to imagine your embouchure glissing between each note. In fact, it is a very helpful practice aid to actually play this exercise with a glissando between each note. Then go back and play it as written, imagining the glissando is still there between notes. The 1st three exercises focus on downward slurs. As you move into playing upward slurs, try to transfer your air and embouchure concepts from the previous exercises to those that follow. Be patient, persistent and consistent. To get even more benefit from these studies, try any or all of them first on your mouthpiece, or 1/2 valve each exercise. Then go back and play as written.

Please never forget that smoothness & beauty of sound should always be our first priority.