

Multiple Tonguing Basics

As you improve remember the **Law of Accommodation** - "What is difficult today will become easier if practiced! Continue to lift the level of difficulty & practice until this becomes easier. Repeat this process until the desired virtuosity is achieved." - Sam Pilafian & Patrick Sheridan

Paraphrasing the commentary by Joseph Alessi & Dr. Brian Bowman in the **Arban Complete Method for Trombone & Euphonium** the following are guidelines for developing multiple tonguing technique (double & triple). The key to this technique is the consistency of **5 Aspects of Performance:**

- 1) Articulation** - Each tongued note should have the same sound & clarity.
- 2) Weight** - Each note should have the same weight, don't play some notes accented more than others.
- 3) Length** - Each note should be the same length, not some long, some short.
- 4) Spacing** - The space between the duration of each note should be identical.
- 5) Volume** - All notes should be the same volume. For double tonguing syllables use either TAH-KAH or DAH-GAH, it's good to be able to use either for purposes of musical style. For triple tonguing syllables use either the traditional TAH-TAH-KAH or TAH-KAH-TAH, use whichever is most comfortable & most clear - additionally work to have both T-K & D-G options available. Initially practice each exercise & etude at a *ff* dynamic level to help strengthen the technique & drive the tongue. Speak, sing, & wind pattern your preferred syllables to help build coordination, once comfortable use those methods on exercises & etudes. Practice each exercise & etude with the following **3 Step Process:**

- 1)** - Articulate with the front half of the tongue (i.e. TAH or DAH).
- 2)** - Articulate with the back half of the tongue (i.e. KAH or GAH).
- 3)** - Articulate using an alternating pattern (i.e. TAH-KAH or DAH-GAH); also try accenting the KAH or GAH syllable to strengthen the back half of the tongue & then slowly soften that accent so both notes are the same weight. It is encouraged to practice different scales or modes to help develop key fluency & also to explore other materials to push the possibilities & use of this technique. A tempo range is provided but explore quicker tempos as comfort & clarity allows.

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Strive to interpret the marcato quarters as accented eighth-notes, providing full value to each note. Each note should have body & clear tone.

"Soft Touch" from **The Brass Gym** by Sam Pilafian & Patrick Sheridan

This exercise is initially written at pianissimo but for the purposes of developing this technique we've provided a dynamic range for practice. Initially start at forte & venture out from there. "Remember: Tension kills tone!"

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With this exercise focus on moving your air as a ♩ to help drive the tongue speed.

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Strive to blow long with each note & resist the urge to separate each note. When developing the multiple tonguing technique aim for connection of notes along with your vertical clarity.

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This is an altered version of an exercise from **Basics Plus** by Wolfgang Guggenberger & is dedicated to Vincent Cichowicz. Similar to exercises 3 & 4 strive for long & connected air stream to help drive the tongue speed, provide more depth to the tone, & increase endurance. Initially allowing space between each note will diminish tone quality & endurance as it will feel too mechanical & muscled with each note.

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Of course, the goal of these exercises is to apply this technique to a melodic context. The following etudes are borrowed from the **Arban Complete Method** which has several exercises & etudes to work on developing multiple tonguing skills. Strive to play across each bar line to provide direction to phrases & to move the tongue with the air.

#19 from "Studies on Dotted Eighth & Sixteenth Notes" in the Arban Complete Method Book.

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#20 from "Studies on Dotted Eighth & Sixteenth Notes" in the Arban Complete Method Book.

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