

Dear French Horn Teacher,

Thank you for downloading this free sample of **Sound Habits® Brass Builder for Horn**. Included you will find introductory text, the table of contents from the full book, and instructions for Series One and Series Four.

The audio tracks are a critical part of this method book. The horn recording features examples of buzzing and playing by Mike McCoy. Instructions are provided on the recording so that on the first day with their instrument, beginners can turn it on, open their book, and play! See the instructions below on how to get the free audio tracks that go with this sample.

After just a few weeks of use, beginning horn players will be listening critically and improving their tone, pitch and rhythm accuracy.

I hope you like the sample. To get the full book, visit [www.SoundHabitsBrass.com](http://www.SoundHabitsBrass.com) The pdf version of the book with audio tracks provided on the TMC Tunes app is just \$4.50, and school discounts are available upon request.

Trumpet, Trombone/Baritone, and Tuba versions are also available.

Happy horn playing!

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## **HOW TO GET THE AUDIO TRACKS**

### IF YOU ARE NEW TO TMC TUNES

1. Create an account at [www.TMCTunes.com](http://www.TMCTunes.com) using the access code: **286525**
2. After you create your account you'll see links to download our iOS or Android app called "TMC Tunes". Get the app and log in using the account information you just set up. You'll find your music waiting to be downloaded.

### IF YOU ALREADY HAVE A TMC TUNES ACCOUNT

Log in to your account at [www.TMCTunes.com](http://www.TMCTunes.com). Click on "Enter Access Codes(s)" - which you'll see above "Music Collections" - and enter: **286525**

VIDEO INSTRUCTIONS: <https://youtu.be/x7AeFOed0ZY>

EMAIL SUPPORT: [support@tmctunes.com](mailto:support@tmctunes.com)



# SOUND

# HABITS<sup>®</sup>

## Brass Builder for Horn



Robert Sayer

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Cover Illustration: Lindsay Taylor

# SOUND HABITS<sup>®</sup>

## Brass Builder for Horn

By Robert Sayer

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With this ten-minutes-a-day, fun-to-play method, beginning students will:

- Improve their pitch accuracy
  - Establish a correct embouchure
  - Develop a full, pleasant tone quality
- 



When learning to play the horn, what could be more important than listening to a great horn player?

The enclosed CDs feature Mike McCoy of the Presidio Brass to imitate!

The author:

Robert Sayer is a music educator specializing in early childhood music development and beginning instrumental instruction. He has a master's degree from the Manhattan School of Music and has studied trumpet with Edward Treutel, Allan Dean, William Vacchiano, Arnold Jacobs, and James Thompson. Robert was a school band director for many years before founding The Music Class, Inc., an international early childhood music education company.

The recording artist:

Recording by Mike McCoy. A San Diego native, Mike has been the horn player for the Presidio Brass since its inception in 2006 and is 4th horn with the Las Vegas Philharmonic as well as an active recording studio artist for games, TV, and movies. He has been Co-Principal with San Diego's Orchestra Nova, and currently performs in the horn sections of San Diego Symphony, San Diego Opera, and Pacific Symphony. He enjoys spending time with his wife and two boys, and tossing the ball to his Golden Retrievers.

The project manager:

Elizabeth Meeker is a freelance trumpeter and music instructor in San Diego. She has a bachelor's degree from Boston University and a master's degree from Yale University. She is a member of the faculty at Southwestern College.

The book's name:

Daily Play-Along Brass Builder was the original name of the trumpet version of this book. With the 2012 edition we felt a simpler name was in order, so we updated the name to be part of our Sound Habits® series. Other Sound Habits materials published by The Music Class include "Sound Habits: Learning to Read Music" and "Sound Habits: Keyboard Class"

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# Introduction For The Teacher

This book and tape were designed to be a helpful supplement to traditional beginning brass books. With regular practice, these materials will help to improve the pitch accuracy, tone quality and embouchure of the beginning brass player. The lessons are designed to take about ten minutes each. They are short enough for students to stay focused, and they leave you time to teach your regular material afterwards. The book can be used for private lessons or group brass classes. The companion books are designed to be used together, in any combination desired. The soundtrack was composed to appeal to today's students, establish good musical habits, and make class fun. Best of all, you will discover rapid progress among your students as they play exercises and music that they enjoy!

## IMPROVING PITCH ACCURACY

Tired of horn players pushing the right valves but guessing what partial to play? You will find this book a fun and simple way to improve the pitch accuracy of your horn players. Because the first three series do not use written music, students naturally focus on the pitch of the performance they need to imitate. This type of practice encourages each student to develop a critical listening habit. By playing on the mouthpiece without note reading or fingering distractions, students discover what needs to be done to match pitches on the mouthpiece. In series two they are starting to transfer that skill to the horn. When written music is used in series four through eight, the students are always asked to listen first and then buzz the song before playing it on the horn. This forces them to use their ears, audiate, and then go for the right note.

## IMPROVING TONE QUALITY

We know that when a student is able to audiate a good model of sound in his ear, he is more likely to succeed at reproducing that sound on his or her instrument. The echo format of this tape provides outstanding examples of horn playing on almost every exercise and song.

For many students, excessive tension occurs when they see a high note. This tension constricts the air flow and results in decreased range and diminished tone quality. On the other hand, students who play more "by ear" tend to stay more relaxed. They have greater ease in their high register, and due to the relaxed state of the body, have a better tone quality. This book helps the beginning horn player to develop the habit of focusing on the sound he/she desires to produce. Due to the absence of music in the first three series, students are not aware of how high they are being asked to play. They simply focus on sound. This keeps the body relaxed and improves the tone.

## ESTABLISHING A CORRECT EMBOUCHURE

The text at the beginning of this book will help guide students away from many of the most common mistakes beginning horn players make. Once a habit is formed it is very difficult to change. Students should study pages 4 through 9 of this book during their very first week of playing and then review frequently as they move on. This will help to establish as many correct habits as possible.

# THE BUZZ – A Note for Teachers

By buzzing from the very beginning, young horn players will establish correct aural/oral thought habits. While using this tape, students will need to listen first (aural) and then produce sound on the mouthpiece (oral) without the assistance of the horn. The sequence of hearing a pitch in your mind and then getting the lips to produce that pitch is the essence of brass playing. In fact, music is an aural/oral tradition. It's very important to develop a habit of aural/oral thinking at the very beginning. Students who are first taught the analytical process of reading music and determining the correct valve combinations tend to count on the horn to produce the right sound. Frequently these students need to spend many years trying to readjust their thinking habits from an analytical style to the more musical aural/oral style when they become older.

## WHILE BUZZING, THE LIPS NEED TO BE RELAXED, NOT TENSE.

The mouthpiece has less resistance than the horn. Therefore, by playing the mouthpiece alone the player will get used to flowing more air through the instrument. As you practice on the mouthpiece the less resistance tends to let the lips relax and buzz more freely into the mouthpiece. Analyze the sound of the mouthpiece buzz. As the lips become less tense the tone from the mouthpiece will become fuller, with more overtones sounding. Of course, the same benefit will be heard on the horn.

## ONE EMBOUCHURE

We want to be able to set one embouchure to play over the whole range of the instrument. Most brass players will have one embouchure setting for their middle range and then make adjustments to their embouchure when they go into their high range or low range. With beginners, these adjustments can be dramatic and may include pivoting, changing the amount of lip in the mouthpiece, excessive muscle fluctuation around the embouchure, or even muscle tension around the entire face. With advanced players, adjustment to the embouchure also takes place, but usually in a very small manner. Nonetheless, even minute changes create differences in tone quality in the different ranges of the instrument. These changes also create troublesome "breaks" where they occur.

By working on the exercises with glissandos the breaks will be stretched outward and the player's tone, ease, flexibility, and precision will all benefit.

## HORN RANGE

This book was designed to be a compliment to the other brass books, so that a mixed brass ensemble can play together. Due to the nature of the horn, some students will have immediate success with the high register, and other students will need extra time to develop that range. In two tunes, ossia lines were added to facilitate playing. The CD demonstrates the lower line. If a student is struggling with the range of anything in this book, it is recommended that the student play it down the octave. Ideally, the instructor would demonstrate the sound of the exercise being played down the octave. If this is in the context of a mixed brass class, horns should be told that when they play something down an octave, they will be playing the exercises in the same range as the trombones.

## F VERSUS Bb HORN

Because some beginning horn players will have Bb horns, some will have F horns, and some will have double horns, it is extremely important that a young horn player have the guidance of an experienced teacher. Also, because of the natural range abilities of beginning players and range tendencies of the various horns, a teacher may decide to alter the range of some of the following exercises. In this book, to facilitate lip slurs (rather than fingered slurs) we recommend playing the slurs on the Bb side of the horn. Beyond that recommendation, we leave further decisions in the hands of the private teacher, as they will know best how to handle the individual needs of each student.

## GLISSANDO

Students should try to imitate the glissandos as demonstrated on the tape. Make the glissando as smooth as possible. The glissandos are very important; they train the lips to go smoothly into the break areas without changing the embouchure setting. Be careful to keep the glissando steady and not to make any change in the airflow or any abrupt changes in muscle tension. Your students' playing will become more accurate as their glissando becomes fine-tuned and controlled. Their lips will be able to adjust to the exact pitch they need quickly and accurately. Wasteful and inaccurate lip movement will be reduced, efficiency will be improved and you will find that their endurance will increase.

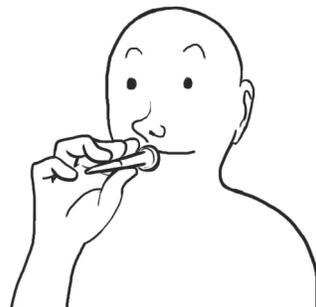
In some cases, horn players will be slurring across partials in horn. If they hit some of those partials while they passing through, that is okay. As their embouchure gets used making those movements, the student will be able to move accurately from one note to the next. The written glissandos and crescendos help ensure that they are breathing through the phrase and connecting the notes.

## BREATHE THROUGH THE NOSE

The reason that you keep the mouthpiece on the lips and breathe through the nose is **NOT to maintain an isometric tension**, but to make sure that the mouthpiece does not change its setting.

## TINGLING LIPS

Some students may notice that their lips will tingle as they do these exercises. That is perfectly natural. DON'T PANIC. The tingling is a positive sensation. When the lips have been held in a tense state before and then are forced to relax the tingling will occur. As they get better and more flexible the tingling will gradually go away.



Now— Are you ready to begin?

## Mouthpiece Up!

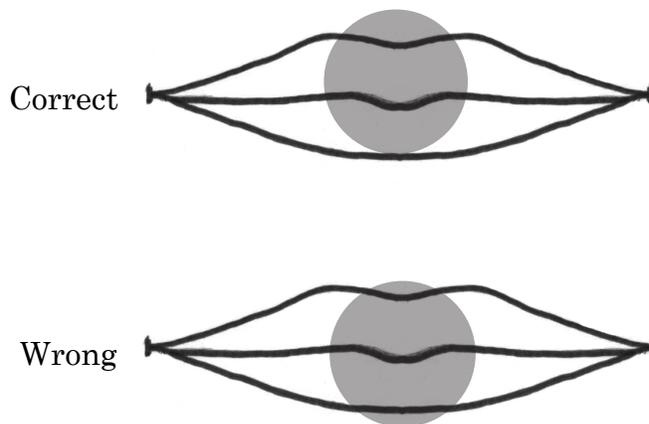
Start by putting your mouthpiece in the center of your lips.

From left to right, the mouthpiece should be centered in the middle of your lips. That's easy, but you're not done yet. Placement of the mouthpiece from top to bottom is a little trickier. A lot of people make a mistake here, so pay attention and get it right!

You'll need a friend or teacher to help you with this, or a mirror if you're doing this by yourself.

Place the mouthpiece so that it is one third on the bottom lip and two thirds on the top lip.

Buzz a long note on your mouthpiece and then take the mouthpiece off your lips. You should see part of a circle (a mouthpiece print) on your upper lip. **The top center of this circle must go ABOVE the red part of your lip.**



### Practice

Be sure to place your mouthpiece correctly when you play. Use a mirror or a friend to check the position frequently during your first few weeks of playing.

# Your Cheeks, Dizzy's Cheeks

Don't let your cheeks puff out when you play!

## Practice

If you're one of those people who can't seem to stop your cheeks from puffing out while you play, try this:

- Put the tip of your finger over your lips where your mouthpiece would be.
- Close your lips so no air can get out.
- Try to blow really hard and don't let your cheeks puff out.



Did you try to blow hard? Did your cheeks puff out?  
Most people are able to keep their cheeks in when they do this.

Try doing this one more time. Put your finger to your lips, blow, but don't let any air out and don't puff your cheeks.

Now take your mouthpiece and try buzzing on it. Remember what it feels like to hold your cheeks in! With a little practice you should be able to transfer the feeling of blowing against your finger to buzzing in your mouthpiece without puffing your cheeks.

## DIZZY'S CHEEKS

Dizzy Gillespie was one of the greatest jazz trumpet players of all time. He helped to invent a style of jazz called bebop. If you've ever seen a picture of him playing you probably noticed two unique things about him:

His trumpet bell was bent up. Originally it happened by accident. The story goes that someone knocked his trumpet over and bent the bell. He felt he could hear his own sound better so he decided to keep it that way!

Dizzy's cheeks puffed out when he played – a lot! His cheeks were not like yours or mine. The whole area from his shirt collar up to his glasses puffed out when he played. Remember, there are exceptions to most rules. Dizzy was an exception. Listen to Dizzy. Do your best to play like Dizzy. Just don't try to look like him!

# SERIES ONE

Buzz Rock, Buzzing the Blues, Buzz on Down  
CD 1, Tracks 1 - 3

## BEFORE YOU START SERIES ONE:

You need to have studied "Where to place the horn mouthpiece" and "Your Cheeks, Dizzy's Cheeks".

## AS SOON AS YOU START SERIES ONE:

Study the remaining information in the beginning of this book. You will need to review "Ha-Ta-Horn" before you play "Buzzing the Blues".

All you need for Series One is your mouthpiece. As you listen to the tape simply echo the example. Do your best to match the tone quality and pitch you hear on the tape.

A good athlete will spend weeks in training before he or she is ready to play the first game of season. An athlete needs to develop strength and coordination in order to play well. Series One will help you to develop your lip strength and your embouchure coordination so you'll be ready to play the horn. It will take some time, but if you practice daily you'll notice that playing will get a little easier every day.

When you can:

\_\_\_\_\_ Set the mouthpiece correctly

\_\_\_\_\_ Play **without** puffing your cheeks

\_\_\_\_\_ Tongue **without** letting the tip of your tongue go between your teeth

\_\_\_\_\_ Play with good posture

\_\_\_\_\_ Buzz the mouthpiece with a full tone

\_\_\_\_\_ Accurately match the notes played in Buzz Rock, Buzzing the Blues,  
and Buzz on Down

\_\_\_\_\_ Demonstrate the correct placement of your hand inside the bell

**...then you can go on to Series Two!**

# SERIES FOUR

## America

CD1, track 10

First time listen and finger along, second time play on your mouthpiece, third time play on your horn.



## Exercise 1

CD1, track 11

Follow the music as you listen to the tape and echo the performance.

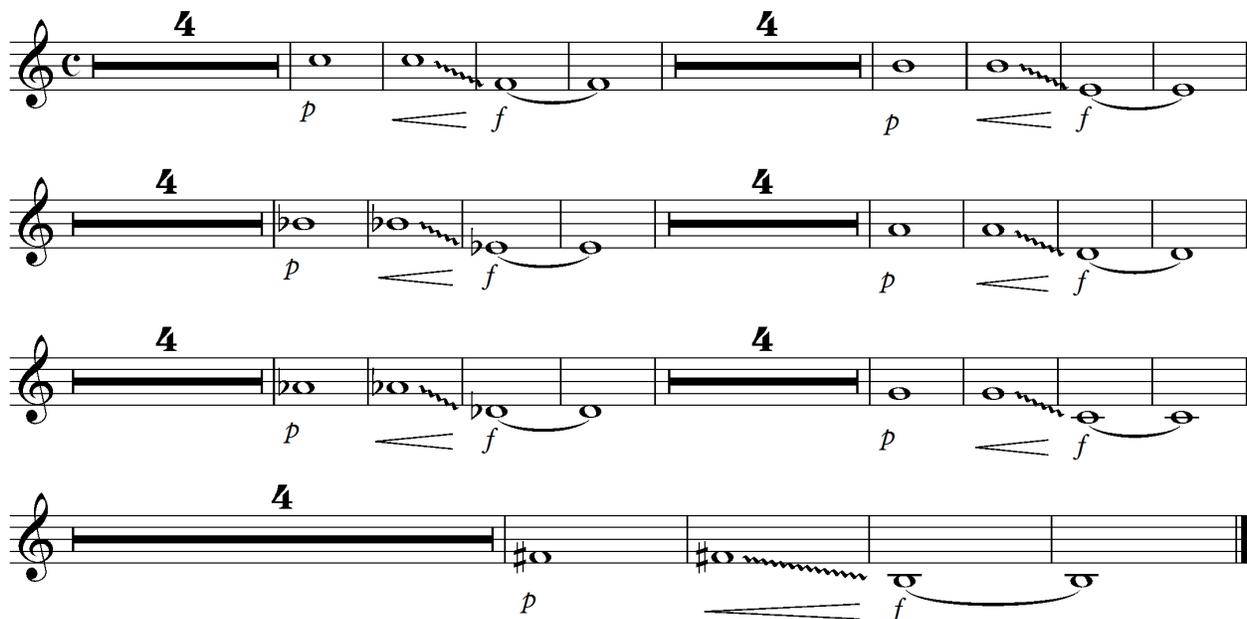
Keep the mouthpiece on your lips during the rests and breathe through your nose.

Even though you should always breathe through your mouth when you perform, leaving the mouthpiece on your lips and breathing through your nose on these exercises will help you develop more lip strength and will help to set your embouchure correctly.

Crescendo and glissando at the same time. Always start softly.

As usual, do your best to imitate the tone quality, dynamics, and glissando on the tape.

Play first time through on your mouthpiece, second time on your horn.







# SOUND HABITS<sup>®</sup>

## Brass Builder for Horn

"Brass Builder is a kid-proven hit and an invaluable adjunct to the student's regular method book. Rob Sayer has developed an appealing and well-founded utility destined to engage and improve the brass players of tomorrow. Highly recommended!!"

*Rob Roy McGregor  
Trumpet, Los Angeles Philharmonic  
Publisher, Balquhidder Music*

"I use the Brass Builder with my 5th grade brass students. They really enjoy playing the rock and jazz tunes, and are thrilled to be able to play "cool music" on the first day of class. Brass Builder will improve intonation, listening skills, and endurance. A great book and CD that I recommend to every band director and private teacher. You can't miss!!!"

*John K. Gronert  
Band Director and Clinician.  
Perth Amboy NJ*

"Brass Builder is a great book and really needed!"

*Ed Treutel  
Professor of Trumpet at The Juilliard School from 1937-1998*