



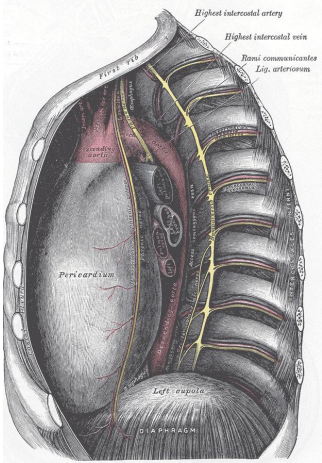
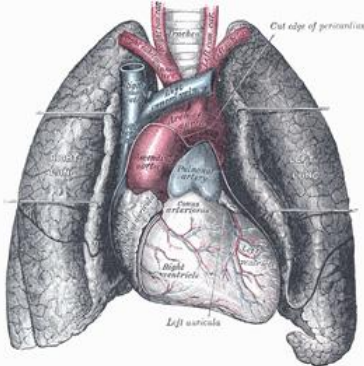
# Teaching Younger Horn Players 2011 Southeast Horn Workshop

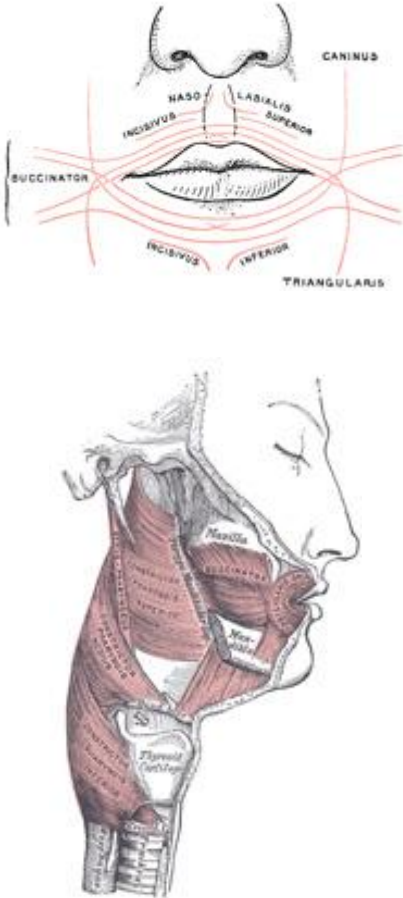
Appalachian State University

Presenter: James Boldin, Assistant Professor, The University of Louisiana at Monroe



Challenge	Key Concepts	Options	References
<p>Playing position and posture.</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Bring the horn to the body, not vice versa.</li> <li>2) Sit at least a few inches away from the back of the chair.</li> <li>3) Keep feet flat on the ground.</li> <li>4) Let the angle of the lead pipe match as closely as possible the structure of the jaw and teeth. Since many horn players have at least a slight overbite, a proper playing position often results in a descending lead pipe angle.</li> <li>5) Make sure the bell of the instrument is not facing directly into the body, as this will result in an overly muffled sound.</li> <li>6) If the playing position looks or feels uncomfortable and awkward, then chances are it is not the most efficient one for that student.</li> <li>7) Feel the "sits" bones to find a balanced and relaxed sitting position.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Three-quarter size horns: various manufacturers including Holton and Ricco Kuehn</li> <li>2) Horn support to allow off the leg playing.</li> </ol>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3) Horn holding strap or left hand support.</li> <li>4) Adjust valve levers to fit size of hand.</li> <li>5) Use finger cups, dimes, etc. to extend valve levers.</li> </ol>	<p>Farkas, Philip. <i>The Art of French Horn Playing</i>. Evanston, IL: Summy-Birchard, 1956.</p> <p>Hill, Douglas. <i>Collected Thoughts on Teaching and Learning, Creativity and Horn Performance</i>. Miami: Warner Bros. 2001.</p> <p>(Three-Quarter Size Horns) <a href="http://www.gleblanc.com/">http://www.gleblanc.com/</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.ricco-kuehn.de/">http://www.ricco-kuehn.de/</a></p> <p>(Horn Support Stick) <a href="http://www.paxman.co.uk/">http://www.paxman.co.uk/</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.ergobone.com/">http://www.ergobone.com/</a></p> <p>(Holding Strap/Left Hand Support) <a href="http://store.osmun.com">http://store.osmun.com</a></p>

<sup>1</sup> Photographs by Kristen Boldin.


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<p data-bbox="92 313 212 342">Breathing</p>  	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="562 313 1129 407">1) At the beginner and intermediate level, focus on a sensation and a few useful images rather than detailed physiological explanations.</li> <li data-bbox="562 448 1115 574">2) Balloon imagery: As a balloon fills with air, it naturally expands without needing to be forced out, and as it expels air it naturally contracts. Another helpful image is a bellows.</li> <li data-bbox="562 615 1094 675">3) Feel the sensation of air rushing across the bottom of the mouth.</li> <li data-bbox="562 716 1115 842">4) Thinking round syllables on the inhale such as "how," "hoh," or "hah" help to keep the throat and oral cavity open. (As opposed to syllables such as "hee" )</li> <li data-bbox="562 883 1129 943">5) The sensation of a relaxed breath is similar to an open-mouthed yawn.</li> <li data-bbox="562 984 1129 1078">6) Remember that playing with good air support does not necessarily require a tight or tensed stomach and abdomen.</li> </ol>	<p data-bbox="1159 313 1583 472">There are numerous types of breathing exercises, including those developed by Arnold Jacobs, Douglas Hill, Verne Reynolds, and Sam Pilafian.</p> <p data-bbox="1159 513 1604 639">If practiced regularly, breathing exercises can help increase efficiency in playing and help develop tone, range, and endurance.</p> <p data-bbox="1159 680 1583 807">Breathing exercises ought to be practiced as a precursor to warming up on the instrument, or as a relaxation exercise.</p> <p data-bbox="1159 847 1604 1006">Numerous possibilities exist for incorporating breathing exercises into an ensemble format, both as a warm-up routine and as a relaxation technique prior to performances.</p> <p data-bbox="1159 1047 1583 1174">Feel free to create your own variations on well known breathing regimens, as well as to create wholly original exercises.</p>	<p data-bbox="1631 313 1971 440">The following contain excellent information on breathing as well as detailed breathing exercises.</p> <p data-bbox="1631 480 1971 574">Farkas, Philip. <i>The Art of Brass Playing</i>. Rochester, NY: Wind Music, Inc. 1962.</p> <p data-bbox="1631 615 1950 774">Hill, Douglas. <i>Warm-ups and Maintenance Sessions for the Horn Player</i>. Eau Claire, WI: Really Good Music, 2004.</p> <p data-bbox="1631 815 1976 1006">Pilafian, Sam and Patrick Sheridan. <i>The Breathing Gym</i>. Fort Wayne, IN: Focus on Excellence, 2002. (Includes DVD and 32 page guide)</p> <p data-bbox="1631 1047 1971 1141">Reynolds, Verne. <i>The Horn Handbook</i>. Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1997.</p> <p data-bbox="1631 1182 1971 1308">Vining, David. <i>The Breathing Blog</i>. <a href="http://mountainpeakmusic.wordpress.com/">http://mountainpeakmusic.wordpress.com/</a></p>

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<p data-bbox="130 297 283 321">Embouchure</p> 	<p data-bbox="579 297 1125 427">1) One of the main purposes of the embouchure is to allow for the formation of an aperture. The function of the aperture is to vibrate in response to air.</p> <p data-bbox="579 464 1104 594">2) Philip Farkas describes a properly formed horn embouchure as a “puckered” smile—with neither too much lip in the mouthpiece (pucker) nor too little (smile).</p> <p data-bbox="579 631 1125 729">3) Both firm corners and a flat chin are usually key physical features of a well-formed embouchure.</p> <p data-bbox="579 766 1104 961">4) Especially at the beginner level, work to identify and eliminate any air pockets that may form behind the upper or lower lip or in the cheek area. The flesh of both the upper and lower lip should rest against the teeth, with no air behind.</p>	<p data-bbox="1152 297 1566 427">1) Saying the words “emm” while pointing the chin towards the ground can be effective in forming a working embouchure.</p> <p data-bbox="1152 464 1566 594">2) Feel the lower teeth firmly behind the lower lip—avoid letting the flesh just below the lower lip bunch up.</p> <p data-bbox="1152 631 1566 794">3) Practice free buzzing as an aid to embouchure formation—if you can produce a decent free buzz, then you are forming a basically correct embouchure.</p> <p data-bbox="1152 831 1566 1232">4) A common problem that becomes apparent when young students attempt to free buzz is a lack of chin control—the chin and lower lip have a tendency to bunch and creep up. One way to assist in producing a free buzz is to place the index finger directly on the lower lip and chin, holding it in position. Muscular development and control will gradually replace the need for the index finger.</p> <p data-bbox="1152 1269 1566 1367">5) To initiate a free buzz, imagine spitting a hair off the end of the tongue, or spitting out a seed.</p>	<p data-bbox="1608 297 1917 492">Clevenger, Dale. “Basics for Beginning Horn Students.” <i>The Instrumentalist</i> 51, no. 8 (March 1997): 34, 36, 38, 40, 42.</p> <p data-bbox="1608 529 1917 691">Ericson, John. <i>Introducing the Horn: Essentials for New Hornists and Their Teachers</i>. Tempe, AZ: Horn Notes Edition, 2010.</p> <p data-bbox="1608 729 1917 859">Farkas, Philip. <i>The Art of Brass Playing</i>. Rochester, NY: Wind Music, Inc. 1962.</p> <p data-bbox="1608 896 1917 1026">Farkas, Philip. <i>The Art of French Horn Playing</i>. Evanston, IL: Summy-Birchard, 1956.</p> <p data-bbox="1608 1063 1917 1226">Hill, Douglas. <i>Collected Thoughts on Teaching and Learning, Creativity and Horn Performance</i>. Miami: Warner Bros. 2001.</p> <p data-bbox="1608 1263 1917 1466">Robinson, William C. “The Beginning Horn Embouchure-Pitfalls, Problems, and Progress.” <i>The Instrumentalist</i> 22, no. 4 (Nov. 1967): 68.</p>

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Mouthpiece Placement	<p>1) The age old prescription of two-thirds upper lip and one-third lower lip generally works, although there are exceptions. Jaw and lip structure also play a very significant role in the specific placement for a player.</p> <p>2) For players with thin to medium lips, lining up the bottom of the mouthpiece with the lower outside edge of the bottom lip can help in finding a correct embouchure placement.</p> <p>3) For players with thick or full lips, the bottom of the mouthpiece may not need to rest on the outside edge of the lower lip, but somewhere above it.</p> <p>4) It is important that the angle of the mouthpiece follow the natural contour of the player's face. Since many people have at least a slight overbite, this results in a descending angle. Players with even bites or under bites will tend to have straight to slightly ascending mouthpiece angles.</p> <p>5) Moist lips are important in finding a comfortable and workable mouthpiece position. Moistening the lips allows the mouthpiece to settle into a comfortable place and can help keep the embouchure from sticking during wide slurs.</p> <p>6) Many young players end up with too little top lip in the mouthpiece, often making it difficult to produce higher pitches or a characteristic tone on the instrument.</p>	<p>1) To find the proper proportion of upper to lower lip, first lightly moisten the lips and form the embouchure described in the previous discussion. Allow the mound of flesh on the upper lip to rest just inside the mouthpiece rim.</p> <p>2) Think of the lower lip as an anchor point for the mouthpiece, while the upper lip acts as a hook for the upper two-thirds or so of the mouthpiece.</p> <p>3) Consistent practice with a mirror on the stand is very important for beginners, until the embouchure muscles become accustomed to a regular mouthpiece position.</p> <p>4) A good test of mouthpiece placement is being able to produce a fairly loud, "buzzy" buzz. A buzzy buzz on the mouthpiece is one produced by lots of air, and one in which the buzz sounds free and open, rather than tight and constricted.</p>	<p>Ericson, John. "Embouchure 101" and "Embouchure 201," <i>Horn Articles Online</i>. &lt;<a href="http://www.public.asu.edu/~jqerics/Kopprasch_zone.htm">http://www.public.asu.edu/~jqerics/Kopprasch_zone.htm</a>&gt;.</p> <p>Farkas, Philip. <i>The Art of Brass Playing</i>. Rochester, NY: Wind Music, Inc. 1962.</p> <p>Farkas, Philip. <i>The Art of French Horn Playing</i>. Evanston, IL: Summy-Birchard, 1956.</p> <p>Hill, Douglas. <i>Collected Thoughts on Teaching and Learning, Creativity and Horn Performance</i>. Miami: Warner Bros. 2001.</p> <p>Matlick, Eldon. "Solving Horn Mysteries." <i>The Instrumentalist</i> 48, no. 9 (April 1994): 34-49.</p> <p>Perrini, Nicholas. "Basics for Beginning French Horn Students." <i>The Instrumentalist</i> 24, no. 7 (Feb. 1970): 64.</p>

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<p data-bbox="92 326 336 354">Right Hand Position</p>  	<p data-bbox="504 326 1119 488">1) Along with embouchure formation, mouthpiece placement, and breath control, right hand position is important in producing a characteristic sound on the horn. An improper position can affect tone quality, articulation, and intonation.</p> <p data-bbox="504 529 1119 626">2) Many younger horn players play with their hand too far into the bell, or with an overly covered hand position.</p> <p data-bbox="504 662 1119 760">3) Ideally, the right hand should be considered an extension of the instrument, allowing for flexibility in tone quality and intonation.</p> <p data-bbox="504 797 1119 894">4) Hand positions vary among professionals, but some general characteristics of good right hand position are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="537 930 1119 995">a) fingers bent at the knuckle and fairly straight from the knuckle to the tips of the fingers</li> <li data-bbox="537 998 1119 1063">b) thumb close against the side or top of the index finger, with no spaces between</li> <li data-bbox="537 1066 1119 1099">c) no spaces between fingers</li> <li data-bbox="537 1102 1119 1167">d) palm of hand slightly cupped, as if swimming the freestyle or holding shampoo</li> </ul>	<p data-bbox="1157 326 1604 488">1) Allow the right hand to conform to the shape and size of the bell—this will result in a slightly rounded shape when the back of the hand is pressed against the far right side of the bell.</p> <p data-bbox="1157 529 1604 724">2) Line up the knuckle of your thumb with the bell brace, and then insert the right hand until the thumb touches the upper part of the bell and the bottom edge of the hand makes contact with the bell.</p> <p data-bbox="1157 764 1604 862">3) Avoid the temptation to curl the fingers inside the bell or to splay them out.</p> <p data-bbox="1157 898 1604 1060">4) Keeping the right elbow well away from the side of the body helps maintain an open hand position that will not muffle or otherwise obstruct the sound.</p>	<p data-bbox="1633 362 1940 492">Farkas, Philip. <i>The Art of French Horn Playing</i>. Evanston, IL: Summy-Birchard, 1956.</p> <p data-bbox="1633 529 1927 724">Hill, Douglas. <i>Collected Thoughts on Teaching and Learning, Creativity and Horn Performance</i>. Miami: Warner Bros. 2001.</p> <p data-bbox="1633 764 1940 995">Smith, Christopher M. “Misunderstood Basics of Horn Playing Among Even Advanced Students.” <i>The Instrumentalist</i> 56, no. 8 (March 2002): 36, 38-40.</p>

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Producing a characteristic tone quality	<p>Assuming that a player is breathing properly and has a well formed embouchure, an individually correct mouthpiece placement, and a proper right hand position, a characteristic tone has:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) A full and resonant sound, which projects more than just a few feet.</li> <li>2) Ease and openness—most easily demonstrated in the middle register and at a comfortable dynamic level.</li> <li>3) A distinct core, without air or crackling around the edges.</li> </ol> <p>Although concepts of bright and dark can be subjective, a characteristic horn sound is not brittle or piercing, nor is it diffuse and unfocused.</p> <p>Most of these issues can be addressed by reexamining embouchure formation, mouthpiece placement, breathing, and right hand position.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Providing beginners with examples of characteristic horn sounds is very important, and much easier today with the availability of solo and orchestral recordings in Mp3 format.</li> <li>2) Imagine blowing the air through every bend and coil in the horn, all the way into the right hand.</li> <li>3) Try to make the entire room vibrate, no matter what size it is. Make the room as well as the horn the instrument.</li> <li>4) Feel the vibration of the sound in the nasal cavity, as if humming.</li> <li>5) Imagine the sound as a continuous stream of liquid flowing out of the bell and to a listener's ear.</li> </ol>	<p>Numerous solo recordings available on amazon.com, iTunes, etc.</p> <p>Ericson, John. "Striving for Tone," <i>Horn Articles Online</i>. <a href="http://www.public.asu.edu/~jqerics/Striving%20for%20Tone%202003.pdf">http://www.public.asu.edu/~jqerics/Striving%20for%20Tone%202003.pdf</a></p> <p>Farkas, Philip. <i>The Art of Brass Playing</i>. Rochester, NY: Wind Music, Inc. 1962.</p> <p>Farkas, Philip. <i>The Art of French Horn Playing</i>. Evanston, IL: Summy-Birchard, 1956.</p> <p>Hill, Douglas. <i>Collected Thoughts on Teaching and Learning, Creativity and Horn Performance</i>. Miami: Warner Bros. 2001.</p> <p>Matlick, Eldon. "Teaching Horn Tone." <i>The Instrumentalist</i> 42, no. 10 (May 1988): 40.</p>

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<p>Braces (possible complications include playing discomfort, loss of range and endurance, lack of dynamic contrast, unfocused sound, frustration and discouragement, etc.)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) These effects are not permanent!</li> <li>2) Work slowly but consistently, remaining focused on producing a characteristic sound in the middle range.</li> <li>3) Avoid excessive mouthpiece pressure as an aid to producing higher pitches.</li> <li>4) Work towards a relaxed and open aperture in the middle register, as a precursor to high range development.</li> <li>5) In the middle and upper registers, allow more mouthpiece pressure on the bottom lip, while relaxing pressure on the top lip to allow it freedom to vibrate.</li> <li>6) Think of the bottom lip as an anchor.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Brace guards to relieve discomfort. Avoid wax, as it can get blown into the horn.</li> <li>2) Use a mouthpiece with a wide, flat rim to more evenly distribute pressure and allow greater playing comfort.</li> </ol>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3) Practice middle register long tones at a comfortable dynamic range.</li> <li>4) Practice slow, slurred scales in the middle register.</li> <li>5) Incorporate mouthpiece buzzing into daily practice.</li> </ol>	<p>(Brace Guards)  <a href="http://www.dentakit.com/brguli ppr.html">http://www.dentakit.com/brguli ppr.html</a></p> <p>(Mouthpieces)  <a href="http://www.hornmouthpiece.com/">http://www.hornmouthpiece.com/</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.osmun.com">http://www.osmun.com</a> (for specific information on the Neill Sanders rim, follow this link  <a href="http://store.osmun.com/browse.cfm/osmun-neill-sanders-rim/4,2218.html">http://store.osmun.com/browse.cfm/osmun-neill-sanders-rim/4,2218.html</a></p> <p>(Articles)  Laudermilch, Kenneth. "Coping with Braces on Brass Students." <i>The Instrumentalist</i> 48, no. 4 (November 1993): 46-53.</p> <p>Ericson, John. "Suggested Horns, Mouthpieces, and Mutes." <i>Horn Articles Online</i>. &lt;<a href="http://www.public.asu.edu/~jgerics/sug_hnmp.htm">http://www.public.asu.edu/~jgerics/sug_hnmp.htm</a>&gt;.</p> <p>Morehead, Twanette. "Dentures, Braces, Overlays, and Brass." <i>The Instrumentalist</i> 36, no. 8 (Mar. 1982): 38.</p>

<sup>2</sup> Comparison of normal mouthpiece rim (right) with Neill Sanders rim (left) Image obtained from Thomas Greer, *Moosewood Hornists' Requisites*, <<http://www.hornmouthpiece.com/>>.

**James Boldin** is an Assistant Professor in the School of Visual and Performing Arts at the University of Louisiana at Monroe, where he teaches applied horn and music history. He holds degrees from Appalachian State University and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. This presentation is based on his article "Teaching Young Hornists," in *The Instrumentalist* 65, no. 2 (Sept. 2010): 40-42. For more information on this and other horn-related topics, visit his blog at <http://hornworld.wordpress.com>.