

Basic Range Building

The upper register is a logical extension of the middle register. It is not "foreign," or "different." You can make an easy comparison to weight training or any other physical skill. It's all about developing fundamentals. **EVERYTHING is about fundamentals.**

Use the same concepts and procedures from the Daily Practice Routine. Nothing changes. Build upwards **SLOWLY**. Don't rush to the next higher note until you are perfectly comfortable and in control of the previous notes. **Every note must be EASY.**

Caveats:

- Be sure your embouchure is set correctly! Refer to your teacher if you have any doubt about your embouchure or breathing. (These have been covered earlier in this manual.) If you are not using your embouchure and air correctly, no amount of work is going help, and you will get frustrated and lose confidence.
- If you are not going to commit to doing these studies every day for at least 6 months, you won't see significant improvement. It takes that long to learn how "you" work. So if you can't make that commitment, *don't even start.*

Part I. A.

In the first exercise below, just a simple F Major Scale, begin with a completely relaxed full breath; keep the air moving and blow the air one foot farther away from you than the one before it. The actual numbers are arbitrary. You may to use any unit of distance you want. The concept is to increase the speed of the air and this little "mind game" works to do that. And yes, you do **LOOK** at a point farther away from each note. It works. You will discover this for yourself *if* you follow the plan.

After each fermata in #1, ask yourself *THESE* questions:

- Is the top note as easy, comfortable and beautiful as the starting note?
- Is it comfortable, relaxed, resonant, powerful (not loud), open and beautiful?
- Do you feel as if you could hold that note all day without getting tired?
- **Are you smiling because it felt so good to play?**

If the answers are all "yes," then do it again. Still feel great? If so move on. If not, keep working on the balance of airspeed and corner strength until it's a habit. Then move on.

Exercise 1: Musical notation for an F Major Scale. The first staff shows notes G4, A4, B4, C5, D5 with a fermata on D5. An arrow labeled "Air" points from G4 to D5. The second staff shows notes E5, F5, G5, A5 with a fermata on A5. An arrow labeled "Air" points from E5 to A5. Below the notes are distance markers: 5', 6', 7', 8', 9' for the first staff and 5', 6', 7', 8', 9', 10' for the second staff.

Exercise 7: Musical notation for an F Major Scale. The first staff shows notes G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5 with a fermata on E5. An arrow labeled "Air" points from G4 to E5. The second staff shows notes F5, G5, A5, B5 with a fermata on B5. An arrow labeled "Air" points from F5 to B5. Below the notes are distance markers: 5', 6', 7', 8', 9', 10', 11' for the first staff and 5', 6', 7', 8', 9', 10', 11', 12' for the second staff.

If the full scale was perfectly easy and made you smile because it was a **JOY** to play, you are ready to move on. If not, don't go any further until it is. Repeat the steps as many times as necessary. Going forward with frustration and angst will only lead to more frustration and angst, and playing won't be the joy it can be if done correctly.

SO IF YOU'RE READY - the next part is easy. Repeat the entire process starting on the F# Major scale.

The image displays two rows of musical notation for the F# Major scale. Each row contains two phrases. The first row's first phrase starts on G# (labeled 5') and ends on D# (labeled 9'), while the second phrase starts on A (labeled 5') and ends on E (labeled 10'). The second row's first phrase starts on B (labeled 5') and ends on F# (labeled 11'), and the second phrase starts on C (labeled 5') and ends on G (labeled 12'). Each phrase is marked with 'Air' and an arrow indicating breath direction. The notes are connected by slurs, and the final note of each phrase has a fermata.

When that makes you *happy*, start on the G scale. Continue the pattern, up by half steps until high C feels and sounds as easy and comfortable as 3rd space C. Don't rush this process, even if it takes a year to get to high C. It **won't** take a year if you've been following the Daily Practice Routine and the instructions on "how" to play and practice.

If the full C scale was perfectly easy and made you smile because it was a **JOY** to play, you are ready to move on. If not, don't go any further until it is. Repeat the steps as many times as necessary. Going forward with frustration and angst will only lead to more frustration and angst, and playing won't be the joy it can be if done correctly.

Part I. B.

Building range does require building strength. Here's an easy way to build strength consistently, with a built-in assessment system.

Select a song, any song that spans approximately an octave. There are 1000's!

Here are just few you can download:

- [America the Beautiful](#)
- [Ode to Joy](#)
- [Danny Boy](#)
- [God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen](#)
- [Joy to the World](#)
- [My Country Tis Of Thee](#)

Use any melody you want. Play it at a COMFORTABLE forte.

Transpose to the key in which the highest note in the song is the same as top note of the scale you are working on in Part I. A. Use the correct stylistic tempo for the piece, or go slower.

This is about balancing air, corners and light pressure with your very best sound! Feel like you are blowing a flute, using just enough pressure to keep air from leaking. Practice this feeling: ANTI-Pressure! Your embouchure is reaching out to the mouthpiece, not your arms pulling the mouthpiece into your face. If you have to use extra pressure, take the song DOWN a step or two.

Play it 5 times in this pattern:

Play - Buzz - Play - Buzz - Play

Five times through, with 10-15 seconds rest between each repetition.

Work daily until you can do all five repetitions and feel **STRONGER** at the end than when you began.

NEVER sacrifice tone or musicality! Never move on until you can do the 5 repetitions without any extra pressure and with "effortless effort" and a beautiful sound.

Part II.

CAUTION:

BEFORE you start #2, make sure you're fingers can do the job! **MEMORIZE** the finger pattern **BEFORE** putting the horn to your face. Stumbling fingers can destroy everything you're working so hard for! (Hint: practice it left-handed while generating airspeed contour through embouchure.)

When you can play 3rd space C to high C Major Scale easily, an **AFTER** you have memorized the finger and air patterns for #2, add the following:

4x's

mf ————— *f*

Rest to Recovery:
at least as long as it
took to play.

Use a slight tongue arch forward as you ascend. Do not back-off of the airspeed until 4 space E. Tongue drops slightly as you descend.

Tongue arch tip: Use **ONLY** the amount of tongue arch needed to work in balance with corners firming and air moving faster. All factors must balance. All the Checkpoints apply here as well.

THE NEXT LEVEL:

Can you play #2 four times, with rests, comfortably, easily, and with a beautiful, consistent tone using “effortless effort” and minimal pressure? Do you feel stronger on the last time than on the first 3? If so, let’s move on.

If not, go back and keep working Parts I and II until you do. You need to build more strength. Remember that range building is only PART of what you are working on. The other exercises will help strengthen the platform for the next octave.

Part III.

Add a simple 2-octave chromatic scale. This should feel very light and easy, as if you are just moving the air faster and moving your fingers on top of the breeze. You should not feel much, if any, increase in mouthpiece pressure.

CAUTION: PERFECT YOUR FINGERS FIRST! ANY, repeat, ANY finger problems will destroy this entire concept. They have to be automatic and PERFECT. **NO EXCEPTIONS!** If you have to think about fingers, you will not be thinking about the concepts needed to make this effortless.

The image shows two staves of musical notation for a 2-octave chromatic scale exercise in 4/4 time. The first staff starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. It contains a chromatic scale starting on G4 and ascending to G6. The notes are: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F#6, G6. A dynamic marking of *mf* is placed below the first few notes. A long horizontal line with an arrow pointing right spans the entire length of the scale. The second staff continues the chromatic scale from G6 down to G3. The notes are: G6, F#6, E6, D6, C6, B5, A5, G5, F#5, E5, D5, C5, B4, A4, G4. Below the first few notes of the second staff, the text "Do not back-off on air." is written with an arrow pointing right.

Do not move on until you can play this scale in one breath, perfectly and perfectly easy, at least twice. The airspeed and tongue-arch concepts never change. So ask yourself the questions:

- Is the top note as easy, comfortable and beautiful as the starting note?
- Is it comfortable, relaxed, resonant, powerful (not loud), open and beautiful?
- Do you feel as if you could hold those notes all day without getting tired?
- **Are you smiling because it felt so good to play?**

REALLY? Don't lie to yourself. Be patient and keep working!

Bonus Advice for free: If the Chromatic is problematic, use Clarke's Technical Study #1. You should be playing Clarke Studies every day, but for a strategy for using them [CLICK HERE.](#)

Repeat 4 - 8x in ONE breath.

a.

123+s *mp* airflow

Repeat 4 - 8x in ONE breath.

b.

123+s *mp* airflow

Repeat 4 - 8x in ONE breath.

c.

123+s *mp* airflow

When these are comfortable, add Part VII.

If you've made it through Parts I – VII in C# and aren't tired,
CONGRATULATIONS!!

You're reward? You get to start over up a half step up in the key of D! Then Eb, E, F ⇒ ?
More later, but until then:

The Concept – Noted in the words
from a famous football coach

**“Excellence is achieved by the mastery
of the fundamentals.”**

- Vince Lombardi

*Even the greatest professional
football teams spend most of their
time practicing blocking, tackling,
and handling the ball*

