For all F INSTRUMENTS including English horn, and French horn

Truly FUNdamentals

The most FUN musical warmups ever

For all woodwind and brass instruments

by

MARY ELLEN GRACE

Exercises designed to make longtones, scales and more, *FUN*!

Truly FUNdamentals, The Most FUN Musical Warmups Ever

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Dedication

to my father,
who showed me the way in teaching and in life
Dr. James L. Grace, Jr.
(1929-2010)

to my mother,
whose encouragement and loving support brought me to today
Loretta M. Grace,
patron of the arts

Acknowledgements

When I began the process of writing this method, little did I know about all the pieces that were to go into the production and how much help I needed from so many people. There is a bit more involved than simply writing out the exercises!

I would like to thank Kathryn Williams for her tireless support, keen editing, and great ideas throughout the whole production process; Rupert Kinnard for the fantabulous design work and friendship; extraordinary teachers Kim Heron and Helen Minkle; dedicated students Larry Williams, Peter Kurtz and Davis Einolf for their assistance in evaluating this method; Dan Arrayan for his encouragement; Susanna Maida for tenacious creative and energizing support of my artistic process; and Anita Lacy for always being there with loving inspiration.

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Coordinated CD Tracks, Exercises and Sheet Music

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14. Merrily, Merrily, Merrily @ 100 bpm	27	60
15. Dona Nobis Pacem @ 60 bpm (w/shadow melody)	30	62
16. Dona Nobis Pacem @ 84 bpm	30	62

Introduction

Archaeologists have discovered what they believe is the oldest wind instrument, a 35,000 year-old flute found in a German cave. How different was life for the musicians in those days? Did they have to practice and do their longtones?

I can imagine the cave-moms and cave-dads gently reminding their offspring to practice each day when they got home from school. It's not too much of a stretch to further imagine that the teachers were instructing their students to practice longtones.

And you can believe that music students, whether they lived 35,000 years ago or today, have found longtones and other warmup exercises to be boring.

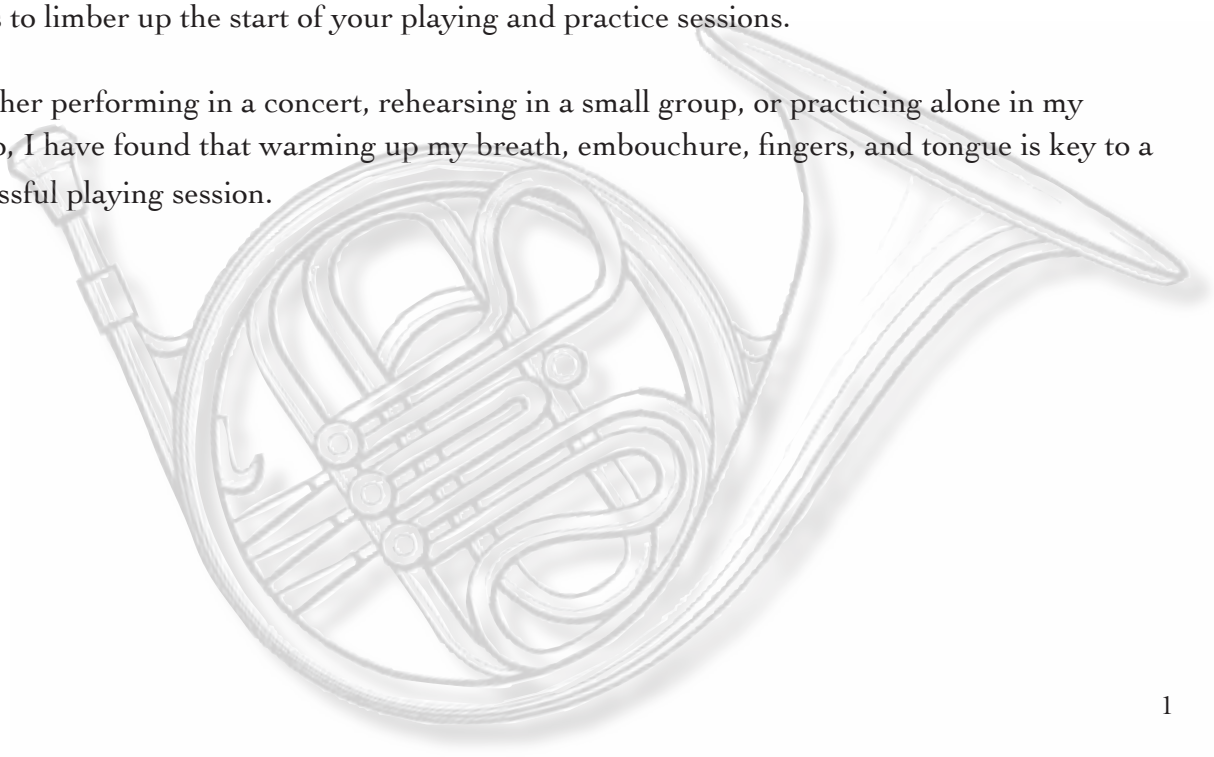
"Practice your longtones!" That's what I heard from every music teacher I ever had. But I struggled to make myself do them. I loathed them. They were boring to me. I just wanted to play! Longtones were, well... long, slow, single tones. Not very interesting.

As a music teacher, I find myself reminding my students to practice their longtones, too. I have learned that these crucial warmup and embouchure-strengthening exercises don't have to be a chore. They can be fun when you get a little creative with them.

Truly *FUNdamentals* to the Rescue

In comes Truly FUNdamentals: FUN ways for you beginning and advanced wind instrumentalists to limber up the start of your playing and practice sessions.

Whether performing in a concert, rehearsing in a small group, or practicing alone in my studio, I have found that warming up my breath, embouchure, fingers, and tongue is key to a successful playing session.



I'm here to show you ways to have fun practicing your longtones. Yes! In my method, I've prepared exercises that engage the player while practicing. I draw upon familiar melodies to use during each aspect of your warmup. I cover longtones, scales, triads, articulation, and improvisation. There are also four valuable appendices at the back of the book with information that supports the exercises in each chapter.

How to use the Truly FUNdamentals Method

This method is useful for a wide range of skill levels; wind players in middle school and high school, as well as adults. Beginning players can feel free to read from the sheet music in the latter half of the book. Advanced players are encouraged to play the exercises without the sheet music, doing the transposing in their heads.

Accompaniments for five of the exercises are recorded at slow and medium tempos, further allowing each student to practice at his or her own skill level. Both beginners and advanced musicians may find it helpful to first play some of the exercises without the CD accompaniment. This will allow you to practice at your own tempo. Personalize your practice sessions by taking these steps.

Organization: The exercises are presented in a recommended order. Stretch before you play. Start your playing with longtones and gradually work up to quick articulations. In the interest of variety, I provide a number of different exercises for each area of warmup. Once you become familiar with the material here, select one exercise from each area to create your own personal warmup.

Conventions used in the Truly FUNdamentals Method

When you see this image, it means there is an accompaniment for that particular exercise on the included CD.

Music: The notated musical exercises for F instruments are provided at the end of the method, in front of the Appendices. This symbol reminds you the exercise is written out in full at the end of the book for F instruments. This method is also available for C instruments, Bb instruments, Eb instruments, and bass clef instruments.

This eye graphic alerts you to something important to take note of.

GLOSSARY TERM Refer to the glossary, p. 81, for definitions of bold, all-capped words in the text.

METHOD

Warmup Your Body

✺

Longtones

✺

Scales

✺

Triads and Chords

✺

Articulation

✺

Improvisation

✺

Summary

✺

Warmup Your Body - 6 minutes

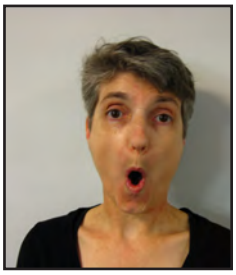
The first thing to warm up is your body. When we play our instrument, we sometimes hold our bodies in unusual positions, making it necessary to get those muscle groups stretched and warmed. Here are six simple stretches you can do before any playing session.

Let's start at the top and work our way down. That way we won't miss anything. However, you can do them in any order you like next time.

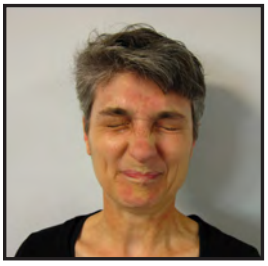
IMPORTANT: With each exercise move slowly and gently. Be sure to stop at once if you feel pain.

Face

Funny Faces. 1 minute. This is great fun to do with another person or in front of a mirror.



Here are some suggestions to get you started making funny faces. Push your lips outward toward the mirror. Pull them back away from the mirror. Open your mouth wide and stick your tongue out. Touch your chin with your tongue. Touch your nose with it!



Crinkle your eyes shut tight. Open them wide and blink. Look left and right without moving your head. Look up and down without moving your head. Wriggle your nose. Scrunch your nose and mouth to the left, to the right. Or opposite directions from each other!

Rub your hands over your face, gently or vigorously, whichever feels good.

Head and Neck

Gentle Neck. 2 minutes. From a standing or sitting position, start with your head level, facing forward. Slowly and gently tilt your head forward, chin toward your chest. You don't have to touch your chin to chest. Just move comfortably in that direction. You should feel a soft stretch in the back of your neck. Raise your head back to level. Now tilt your head back and look toward the sky.

Remember, the name of this exercise is gentle neck. Bring your head back to a level position, gazing forward.

Turn your head left and right—gently—then come back to center.
Make small circles with your nose taking the lead, clockwise and counterclockwise.

Center Body

Shoulder Shrug. 30 seconds. With your arms at your sides, bring your shoulders up in a shrug toward your ears. Then let go, allowing your shoulders to fall back down to a relaxed position. Do this two or three times, if it feels good.

Side Stretch. 30 seconds. "Bend and stretch. Reach for the stars. Here comes Jupiter. There goes Mars." That was a song I learned as a pre-schooler. Let's do a similar stretch.

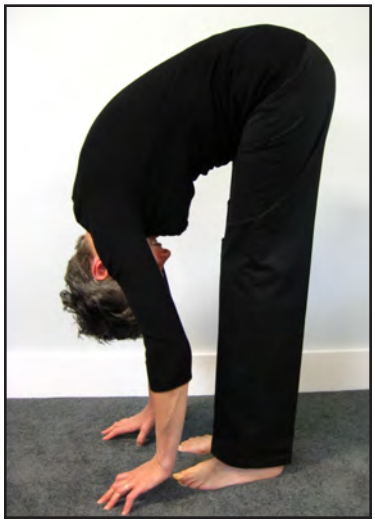
From a standing position with your feet about two feet apart, raise your right arm over your head, pointing your hand to the sky. Slide your left arm down your leg. Feel the gentle stretch in your right side. Switch arms; left arm pointing to the sky and right arm sliding down your leg. This will stretch your left side.

Arms and Hands

Worm Fingers. 30 seconds. Shake your arms and hands out while they are hanging at your sides. Alternate this activity with wriggling your fingers—like worms! Remember to wriggle your thumb too.

Full Body

Folderoo. 30 seconds. From a standing position, feet about hips-width apart, take a deep breath in as you bring your arms up above your body. As you breath out, fold your body at the hips, dropping your arms down at the same time. You want to end up folded in half, or as close to that as your muscles will allow.



Let your arms hang to the floor. Let your head hang loosely, taking the weight off your neck for a bit. Put a little bend in your knees so you don't overstretch your hamstrings. The goal here is to stretch the whole body and give your neck a respite from the weight of your head!

Longtones

Now that your body is stretched and warm, let's move on to getting your air moving well.

Breathing - 5 minutes

From a comfortable seated position with hands resting on your lap or legs, take a relaxed breath in through your nose and exhale through your mouth. Notice the feeling of the cool air inside your nose. Be aware of the warmer air that leaves your mouth.

Continue taking breaths: in through your nose, out through your mouth. On the exhale, direct the air coming out of your mouth. Use the same lip support you would use when blowing up a balloon. You may find yourself gently pursing your lips together to get your exhale focused.

Now silently add counting to your breathing: 1 count on the breath in, 4 counts on the breath out. Remember, you are still breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth. If you are using a metronome, set it to 60 Bpm. About every third or fourth breath, increase the exhale by 4 beats. For example, 1 count breathing in, 8 counts breathing out. After a few breaths at that count, do 1 count breath in, 12 counts breathing out.

Can you breath out (with focused air as explained above) for 16 counts? How about 20?

Be aware of the first few beats of the exhalation. Is it explosive? Are you controlling the out breath, keeping it even throughout the exhalation count?

Is your body tensing up? Return to the previous out-breath count if the current one is causing you to tense up.

This is not an exercise to see who can do the longest exhalation. This is a warmup to get your body fully engaged with supported breathing.

Identifying Scale Tones

Up until now, you have not picked up your horn. If it is not put together, now is the time.

Below is a Bb major scale written out in both concert key and for transposing instruments. The numbers underneath represent the scale position of each note.

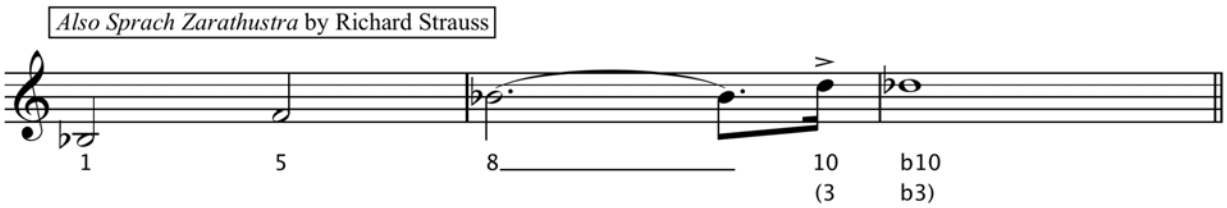
For example: When I give the instruction "play 1-5-8 scale tones," you will play the first scale tone, Bb, the fifth scale tone, F, and the 8th scale tone, high Bb. You will see more of these scale tone numbers throughout the book.

If you see a flat in front of a scale tone number (for example: b3) that indicates you should lower the pitch one half step in a major scale. If you see a sharp in front of a scale tone number (for example: #6) that indicates you should raise the pitch one half step in a major scale.

Another way to identify pitches is to use the **SOLFEGE** Syllable system. These syllables: do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, ti, do are another way of saying 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8. I go into more detail about Solfege in Appendix D, p. 79. Throughout the exercises in this book, I will use both the numbered scale tones and the Solfege syllables. Use whichever one is more comfortable for you. Both have their value and emphasize different aspects of music pitches.

Familiar Strauss

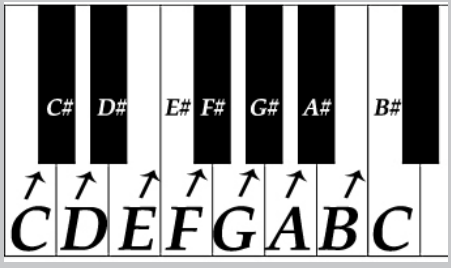
Our first longtone exercise comes from a melody by Richard Strauss, *Also Sprake Zarathustra*. You might have heard this melody as the theme for the Stanley Kubrick film, *2001: A Space Odyssey*.



Play this song snippet as a **LONGTONE** exercise. That is, play it at 48 bpm. This is slow on purpose. Playing very slowly like this gives you time to really listen to your sound, adjust your finger position, correct any **EMBOUCHURE** issues you may have, and strengthen your embouchure. Improving tone quality and strengthening your embouchure are the reasons for doing longtones.

Back to Strauss. After playing the first 5 notes of *Zarathustra* in the key of Bb, let's change key! Since we know the scale numbers, 1-5-8-10-b10, we can transpose this to any other key we know. By the way, the tenth pitch in a scale is the same note as the third, just an **OCTAVE** higher.

To Change Key Is To Travel



What does it mean to transpose? The short answer is that you are exchanging one set of notes for another. In the key of C major, the set of notes is C, D, E, F, G, A, and B. When we transpose from C major to C# major the new set of notes becomes C#, D#, E# F#, G#, A#, and B#. Each note in C major goes up in pitch the same distance. In this case the distance is one half step. Look at the graphic of the keyboard to the left. The distance between two sequential keys, black and white keys alike, is 1/2 step. I've marked the half steps between the notes of C major and C# major on the keyboard.

See Appendix C, p. 78, for some other methods of traveling through the keys.

For now, let's travel up by half steps (or ascend chromatically). Using the Strauss example above, start in the key of Bb major. The scale numbers 1-5-8-3-b3 in Bb major are Bb-F-Bb-D-Db.

Repeat the pattern in B major. The scale numbers 1-5-8-3-b3 in B major are B-F#-B-D#-D natural.

Here are a couple of ways to approach transposing in your head. Use whichever one works for you.

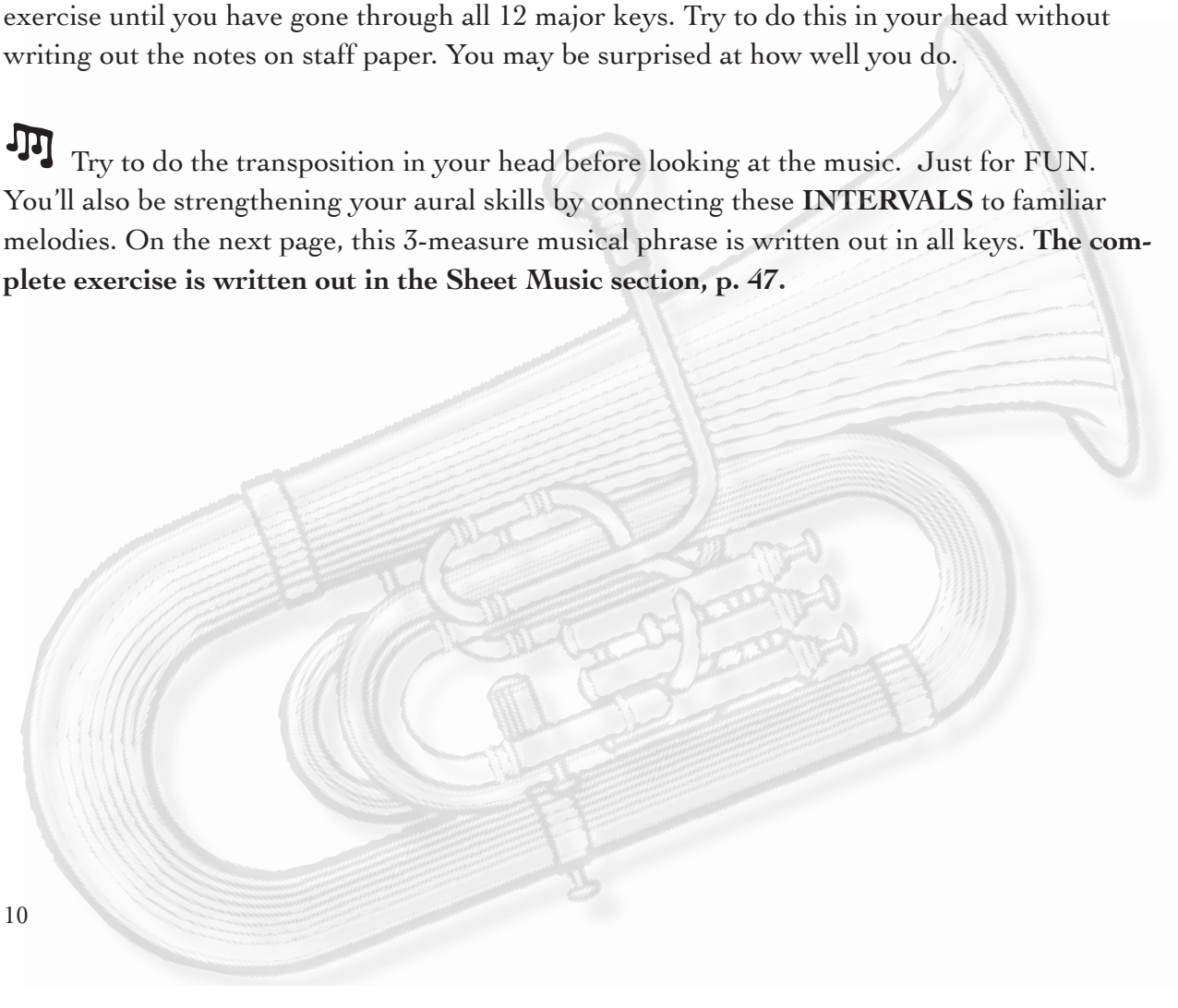
1) Think In Major Key: If the musical passage starts on the first scale tone, or Do, and you are starting on an F, then think in the key of F major. Do-mi-sol becomes F-A-C. Then, when you go up a half step to start on F#, think in the key of F# major. Then do-mi-sol is F#-A#-C#.

2) Think Relative: When you play a musical passage 1-3-4-5 starting on F, you have the notes F-A-Bb-C. Then when you go up one half step to F#, raise each note that distance. A to A#, Bb to B, and C to C#.

With both methods, the result is the same. These are two ways to think about it. Use whichever method is more comfortable for you.

In the Strauss exercise, continue up to C major. The notes are C-G-C-E-Eb. Continue this exercise until you have gone through all 12 major keys. Try to do this in your head without writing out the notes on staff paper. You may be surprised at how well you do.

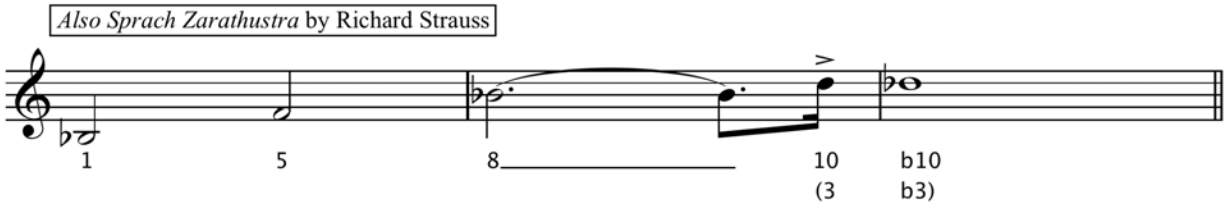
Try to do the transposition in your head before looking at the music. Just for FUN. You'll also be strengthening your aural skills by connecting these **INTERVALS** to familiar melodies. On the next page, this 3-measure musical phrase is written out in all keys. **The complete exercise is written out in the Sheet Music section, p. 47.**



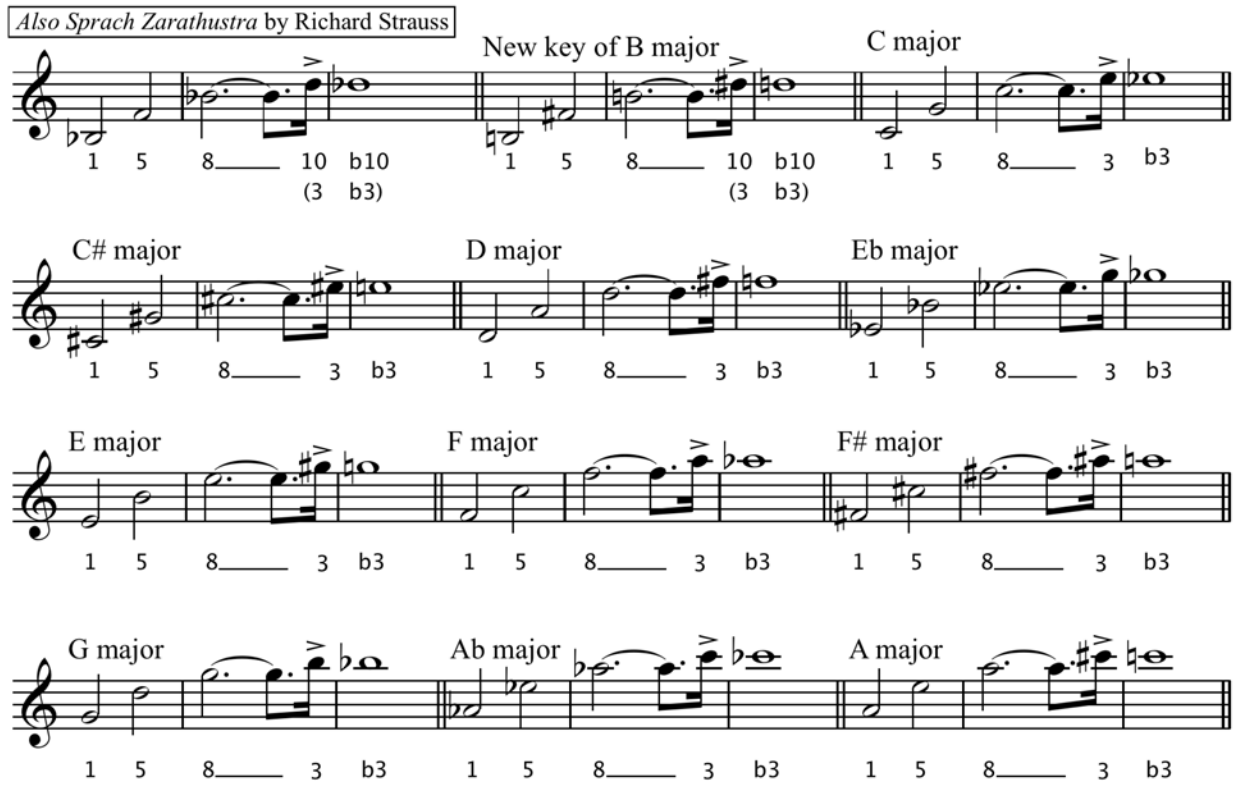
Longtone Play-Along

Using familiar melodies is only one way to add FUN to doing longtones. Playing them with accompaniment is another. I've recorded piano and acoustic bass for the Strauss longtones exercise.

Track 1 on the included CD has the rhythm section starting in Bb concert and ascending by half steps every 3 measures. The tempo is 48 beats per minute (bpm) with a 4-beat count-off. The slow tempo gives you plenty of time to think about what notes to play, while helping build embouchure strength.

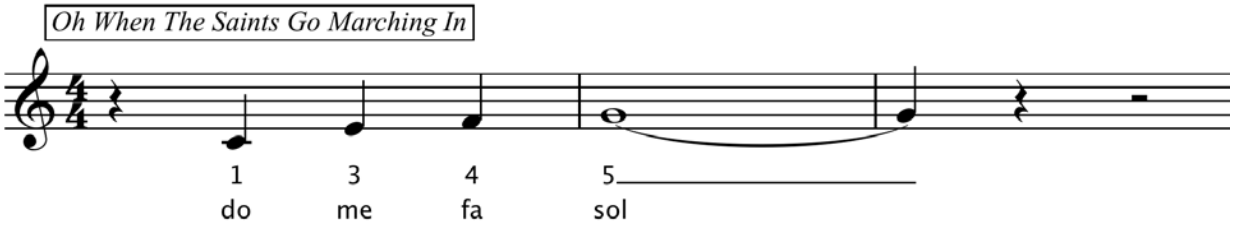


Play the above exercise in all the keys. You can read the music for your instrument in the Sheet Music section or try to do the transposition in your head.



Oh When The Saints

But why limit ourselves to one song for the longtone exercise? There are many song snippets you can use as a longtone warmup. For this next example, I've taken the first four notes of *Oh When The Saints Go Marching In*.

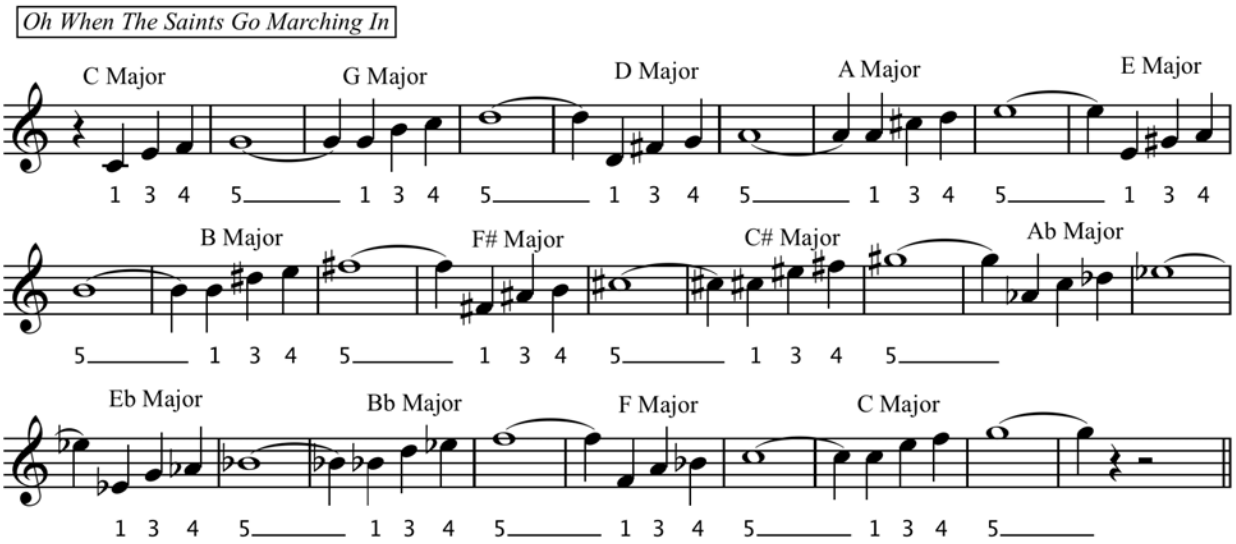


This song begins on Do or the first scale tone. The first scale tone is also called the root or tonic. Using the scale numbers, the first four notes are 1-3-4-5. In Solfege, it is do-mi-fa-sol.

Begin with the key of C major. The first four notes are C-E-F-G. Play this melody snippet as notated above at a largo tempo; between 40 and 60 Bpm. Play as slow as you need to.

When you are ready to play along with the accompaniment, you'll find it on **Track 2** played at 60 bpm and **Track 3** at 110 bpm. There is a two measure introduction by the percussion. Start playing on beat two of the third complete measure. End your last note of the phrase on beat one.

Start in the key of C playing C-E-F-G. The last note of the phrase is the starting note of the new key. Play G-B-C-D, then D-F#-G-A, continuing through all the keys until you arrive back at C again. Refer to the Circle of Fifths in Appendix A on p. 73, if you need help transposing. **The complete exercise is written out in the Sheet Music section, p. 48.**



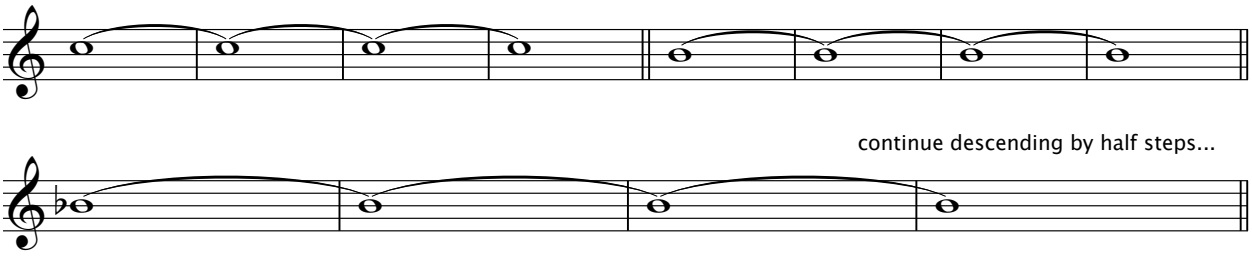
Other songs to try this with are the beginning notes of *Three Blind Mice*, or the chorus from *O Susannah!* Use just a few notes for a longtone exercise. For example, in *O Susanna!* play only 5-5-3-1-2 (measures three and four), or 4-4-6-6 (measures one and two), or 1-2-3-5-5 (end of measure four and beginning of measure five).

Get Into a Latin Groove

Playing along with a Latin rhythm section turns dry, single-note longtones into FUN, FUN, FUN. That's what we'll do next.

You'll find the accompaniment on **Track 4** of the CD. On this longtone exercise, you'll play one note for 16 beats, or 4 measures of 4/4. At 200 Bpm, you may find it easier to count "in two" or cut time.

Latin Groove

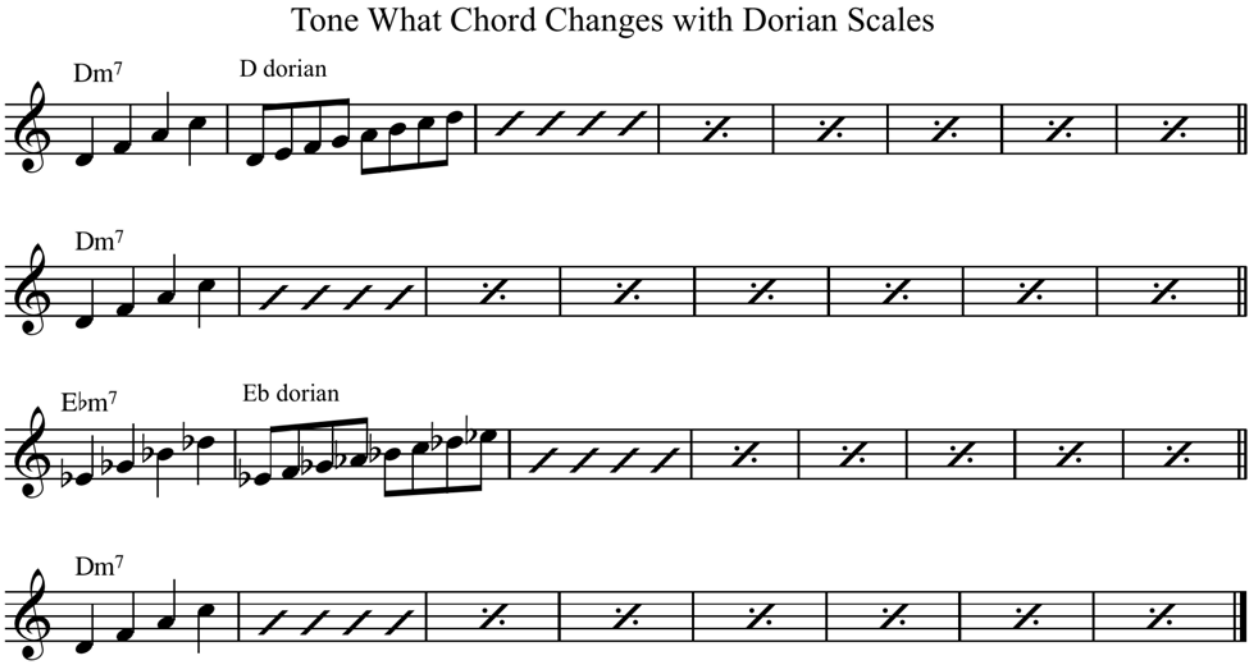


Continue the pattern of one pitch for every four measures by descending chromatically. Start on C concert. Bb instruments start on D. **The complete exercise is written out in the Sheet Music section, p. 49.**

Jazz Up Your Longtones

Playing along with a CD or music on the radio is a fantastic way to do longtones. I turned on the radio and happened to hear *So What* by Miles Davis. This is a great song to play along with on longtones, because the whole song only uses two **CHORDS**! You could play just one note for the first 16 measures. What a longtone! The song **FORM** of A-A-B-A where each letter represents 8 measures is played with two chords: D minor 7 played on all the A sections, and Eb minor 7 played during the B section.

Start out by playing a D for 16 measures, then an Eb for 8 measures, finish the form with 8 measures of D. Then start the form over. When you've got a cool rhythm section backing you up, longtones take on a whole new layer of FUN. The other notes of the chord can be played as longtones too: Dm7 is spelled D-F-A-C. Ebm7 is spelled Eb-Gb-Bb-Db. You could play these notes over the two chords as shown in the **CHORD CHANGES** below. The Dorian mode is a form of minor scale whose pitches can be used during the Dm7 and Ebm7 chords. These two modes are spelled out below.



The changes above are the concert chords and modes. Bb Instruments play Em7 and Fm7. Eb instruments play Bm7 and Cm7. F instruments play Am7 and Bbm7. These chords and modes are spelled out on the next page.

How to Use

On **Track 5**, you'll hear the melody (Jazz musicians call this *the head*) that I've written based on these chord changes. It is 32 measures long. The song form is A-A-B-A and each A and B section is 8 measures long. 8 + 8 + 8 + 8 = 32.

When the complete song form has played through, we say that is *one chorus*.

Track 5 plays four choruses of *Tone What* all in the original key, with a two-measure tag ending. You won't be transposing in this exercise. *Listen to the melody in the bass for the first chorus, then play longtones for the other three choruses.*

What to Play

I recommend playing a concert D for 16 measures, concert Eb for 8 measures, then concert D for the last 8 measures of the chorus. Really sink into each pitch and hear how it blends with the accompaniment. **The complete exercise is written out in the Sheet Music section, p. 50.**

For the other choruses, you can continue playing the same notes, D and Eb concert or choose two new pitches from the chords to play. This exercise is intended as a FUN variation to your regular longtone exercises.

Explore playing the other pitches from the D dorian and Eb Dorian modes when playing along with **Track 5**. Choose a pitch and hold it out as a longtone over the chord.