

ARTICULATION 101



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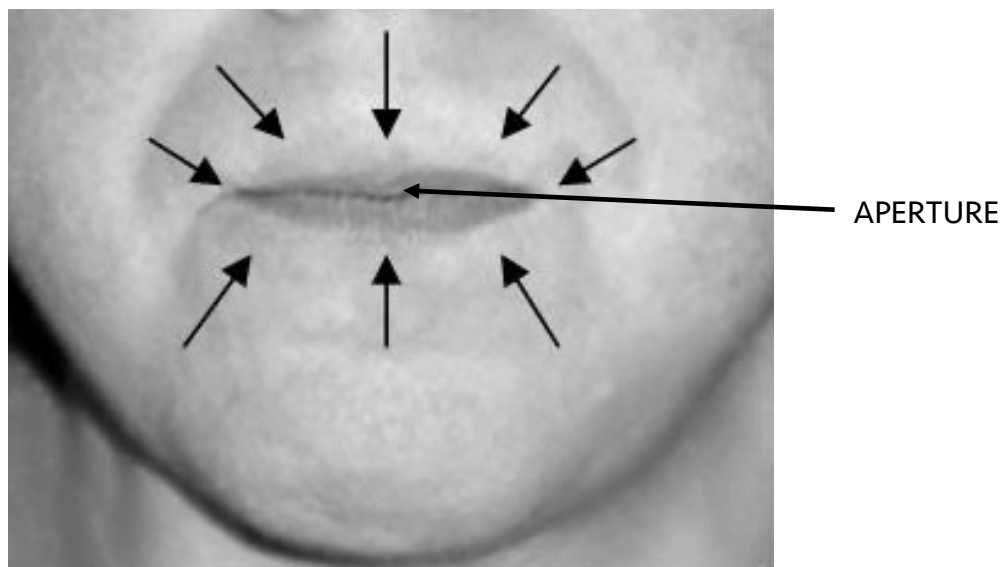
ARTICULATION 101

Understanding the THREE important aspects of attaining clear articulations:

1. Maintain a firm embouchure.
2. Keep your air constantly moving - free flowing and FREE from tension in your throat.
3. Using DAH, DU, DEE, TAH, TU, TEE etc. as a syllable to pinpoint the striking point of your articulation.

STEP 1.

MAINTAIN A FIRM EMBOUCHURE.

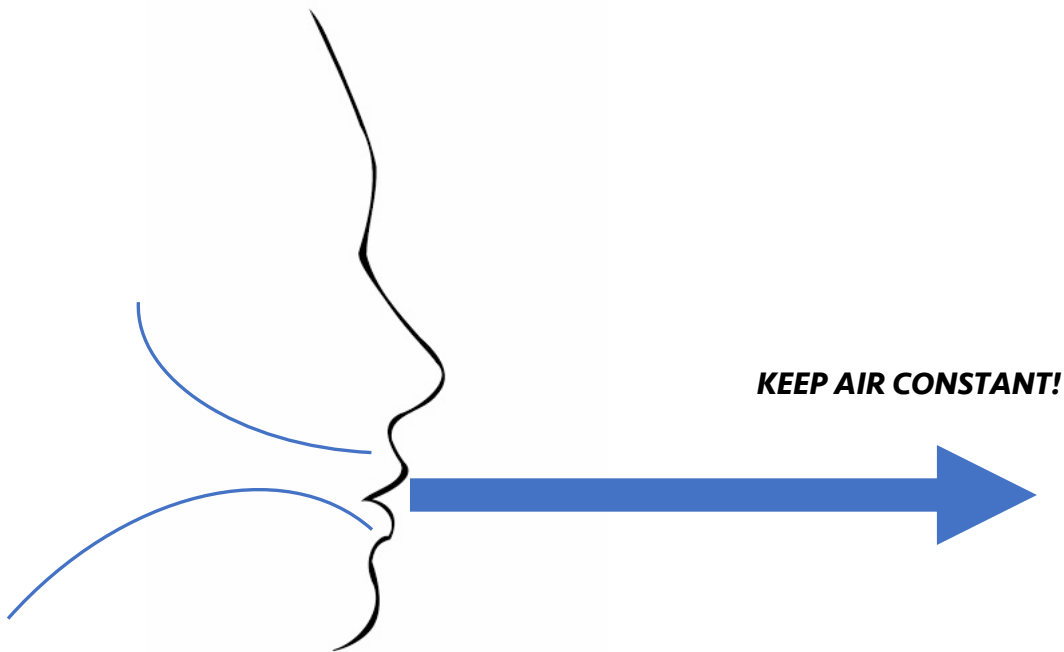


Notes:

Maintaining a firm embouchure is an extremely important aspect of playing any other brass instrument. As shown above, the entire embouchure is firm focusing everything towards the aperture. Strive for an even jaw alignment. You may be dealing with an over or underbite; In some cases, this may require you to push your lower jaw forward, ever so slightly.

STEP 2.

KEEP YOUR AIR CONSTANTLY MOVING AND YOUR THROAT **TENSION FREE**.

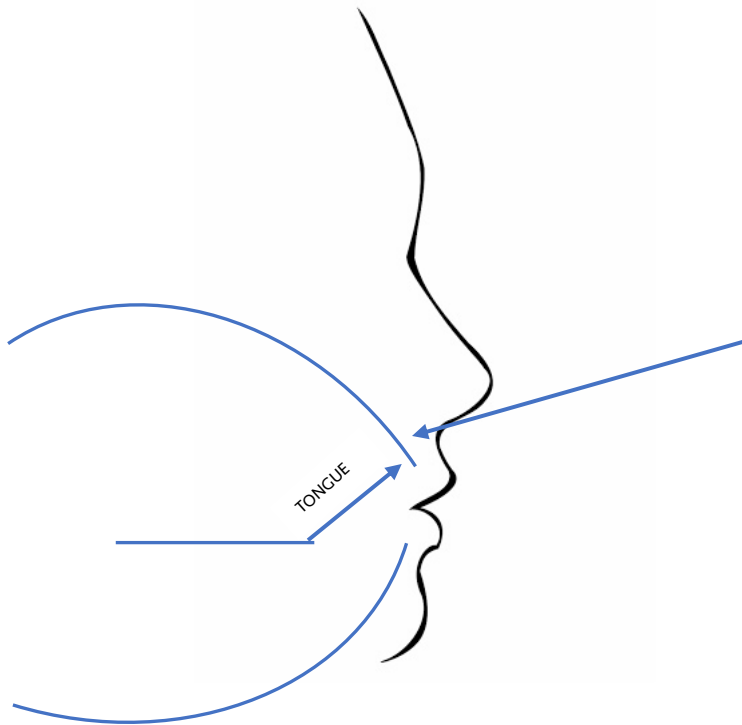


Notes:

During this step, I highly recommend you practice blowing through your instrument as if you were glissing. Blowing scales, and patterns will help ensure your air is **CONSISTENT** and **STEADY**. **LISTEN** to your air stream and examine the sound quality to make you're your air changing or being restricted by unnecessary tension in your throat. Constantly, engage your stomach muscles to achieve proper air support. **DO NOT** continue to STEP 3 until you have mastered STEP 2.

STEP 3.

Using DAH, DU, DEE, TAH, TU, TEE etc. as a syllable to indicate how you want to shape the air. (How firm or hard you want the articulation to be.)



To find the contact point for tongue say "TAH". It should be BEHIND TEETH at the gumline.... As you play in the lower register, your tongue will naturally lower toward the bottom of your top teeth lower.

Notes:

In this last and final step, we will now implement the tongue. Prior to the articulation, your tongue should lightly touch behind your teeth at the gumline and **RELEASE** at the same time you **BLOW OUT**. The only time your air should stop is when notes are indicated to be detached and extremely pointed. The oral cavity should always remain open. This will allow you to have a more resonant sound free from any tension.

Step 1: AIR ARTICULATION w/ HORN. *Listen to the sound, what is your air doing? Is it even? Do you hear any unnecessary flapping? Do you realize any tension in the throat?*

Step 2: Legato, Strive for flawless legato, FIRST! Keep the air constant Your legato playing should be smooth and comprised of constant air. **Again, blow thorough every note.** Work on scales, and other passages that do not require lots of efforts or energy. Focus on the continuous motion of air and of course your intonation.

Step 3: Your "Default" Articulation is one that speaks clearly and firmly. Becoming comfortable with your "default" articulation will help you as you continue on your quest toward mastering all articulations. Having command over your articulations will help you greatly in your "bag of expressiveness" when you are performing. Lastly, record yourself, start slow, and incrementally speed up as the concept locks in. Analyze recordings (don't obsess, track progress.) Remember, music making is a lifelong journey.

Happy Practicing! - Dr. Jefferson