

WSU Low Brass Class 2020 Handout 1

Learn These Terms:

Embouchure: The complete system of lips and associated muscles as it pertains to playing an instrument. Practically, this is your entire face below the eyes and nose, and includes the cheeks, chin, and area between the upper lip and nose.

Aperture: The opening between your lips that the air passes through when playing a brass instrument.

Corners: The area on either side of the mouth. Should be firm when playing.

Chin: The area below your lips. Should be firm and flat when playing.

Anchor: The area just below the bottom lip where the mouthpiece touches.

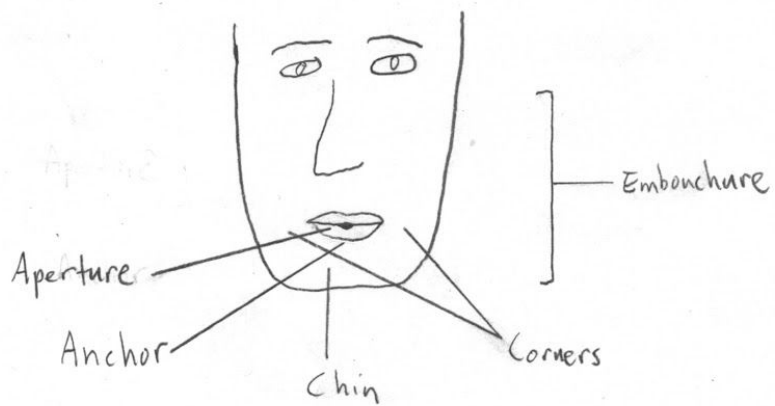
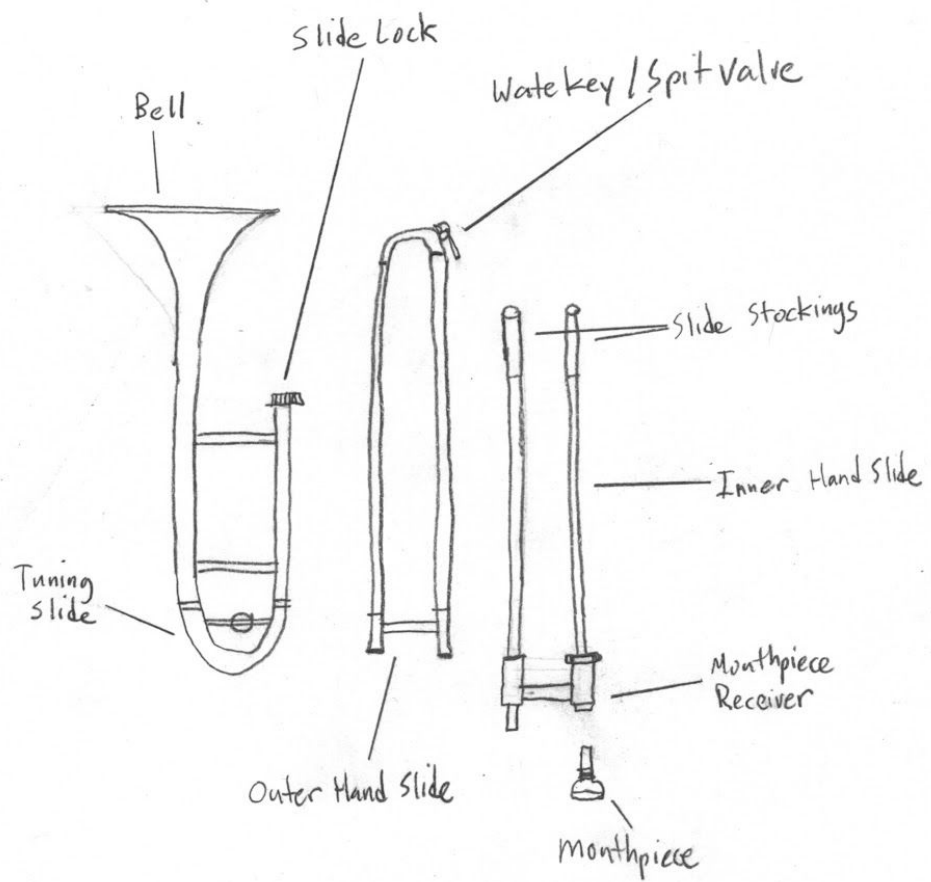
Slide Position: The trombone has seven slide positions. They are equidistant from each other and numbered in order. 1st position is all the way in. 3rd position is where the hand lines up with the edge of the bell. 6th position is when the slide stockings are just barely visible.

Harmonic Series: All sounds are made up of one “fundamental” frequency and a series of “overtone” frequencies. We hear all of this together as one sound. The balance between fundamental and overtones (generally called “timbre” or “color”) is what makes two instruments playing the same pitch sound different. “Harmonic Series” is a term that describes this complete set of fundamental and overtones. Practically speaking, it describes the collection of pitches that can be resonated in any given slide position or valve combination.

Partial: One step (or “overtone”) of the harmonic series of pitches that can be resonated on a brass instrument. On trombone, we use the term “partial” to describe the 7 pitches playable between 1st and 7th position without changing to a higher or lower overtone. For example, F, E, Eb, D, Db, C, and B on the staff are all on the 3rd partial.

Pedal Tone: The first partial on a brass instrument. On trombone, this is Bb, A, Ab, G, Gb, F, and E below bass clef.

Lip-Slur/Natural-Slur: Changing between partials without rearticulating with the tongue. These terms are essentially interchangeable, with the slight distinction that “lip slur” generally implies that the two notes in question are in the same position.



Stolen from: Dale Sorensen

Position:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1 ----- 7
9th partial								
8th partial								
7th partial								
	* Note: This A ₂ is too flat in 1st position to be useable.							
6th partial								
5th partial								
4th partial								
3rd partial								
2nd partial								
1st partial								
(pedal tones)								
Slide positions:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	