

THE BASICS

Posture

On the edge of your chair, and always keep your:
 spine straight and tall
 shoulders back and relaxed
 feet flat on the floor

Breathing & Airstream

Breathing is a natural thing we all do constantly. To discover the correct airstream to play your instrument:
 Place the palm of your hand near your mouth.
 Inhale deeply through the corners of your mouth, keeping your shoulders steady. Your waist should expand like a balloon.
 Slowly whisper "tah" as you gradually exhale air into your palm.

The air you feel is the airstream. It produces sound through the instrument. Your tongue is like a faucet or valve that releases the airstream.

Producing The Essential Tone

"Buzzing" through the mouthpiece produces your tone. The buzz is a fast vibration in the center of your lips. Your embouchure (*ahm'-bah-shure*) is your mouth's position on the mouthpiece of the instrument. A good embouchure takes time and effort, so carefully follow these steps for success:

Buzzing

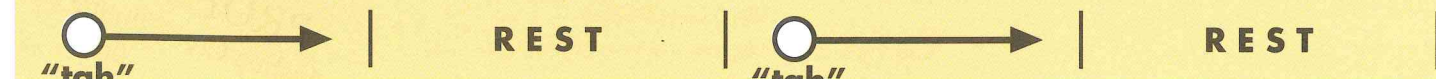
Moisten your lips.
 Press your lips together as if saying the letter "m."
 Relax your jaw to separate your upper and lower teeth.
 Form a slightly puckered smile to firm the corners of your mouth.
 Direct a full airstream through the center of your lips, creating a buzz.
 Buzz frequently without your mouthpiece.

Mouthpiece Placement

Form your "buzzing" embouchure.
 Center the mouthpiece on your lips. Your teacher may suggest a slightly different mouthpiece placement.
 Take a full breath through the corners of your mouth.
 Start your buzz with the syllable "tah." Buzz through the center of your lips keeping a steady, even buzz. Your lips provide a cushion for the mouthpiece.

Mouthpiece Workout

Using only the mouthpiece, form your embouchure carefully. Take a deep breath without raising your shoulders. Begin buzzing your lips by whispering "tah" and gradually exhale your full airstream. Strive for an even tone.



Taking Care Of Your Instrument

Before putting your instrument back in its case after playing, do the following:

- Use the water key to empty water from the instrument. Blow air through it.
- Remove the mouthpiece. Once a week, wash the mouthpiece with warm tap water. Dry thoroughly.
- Wipe off the instrument with a clean soft cloth. Return the instrument to its case.

Tuba valves occasionally need oiling. To oil your tuba valves:

- Unscrew the valve at the top of the casing.
- Lift the valve half-way out of the casing.
- Apply a few drops of special brass valve oil to the exposed valve.
- Carefully return the valve to its casing. When properly inserted, the top of the valve should easily screw back into place.

Be sure to grease the slides regularly. Your director will recommend special slide grease and valve oil, and will help you apply them when necessary.

Getting It Together

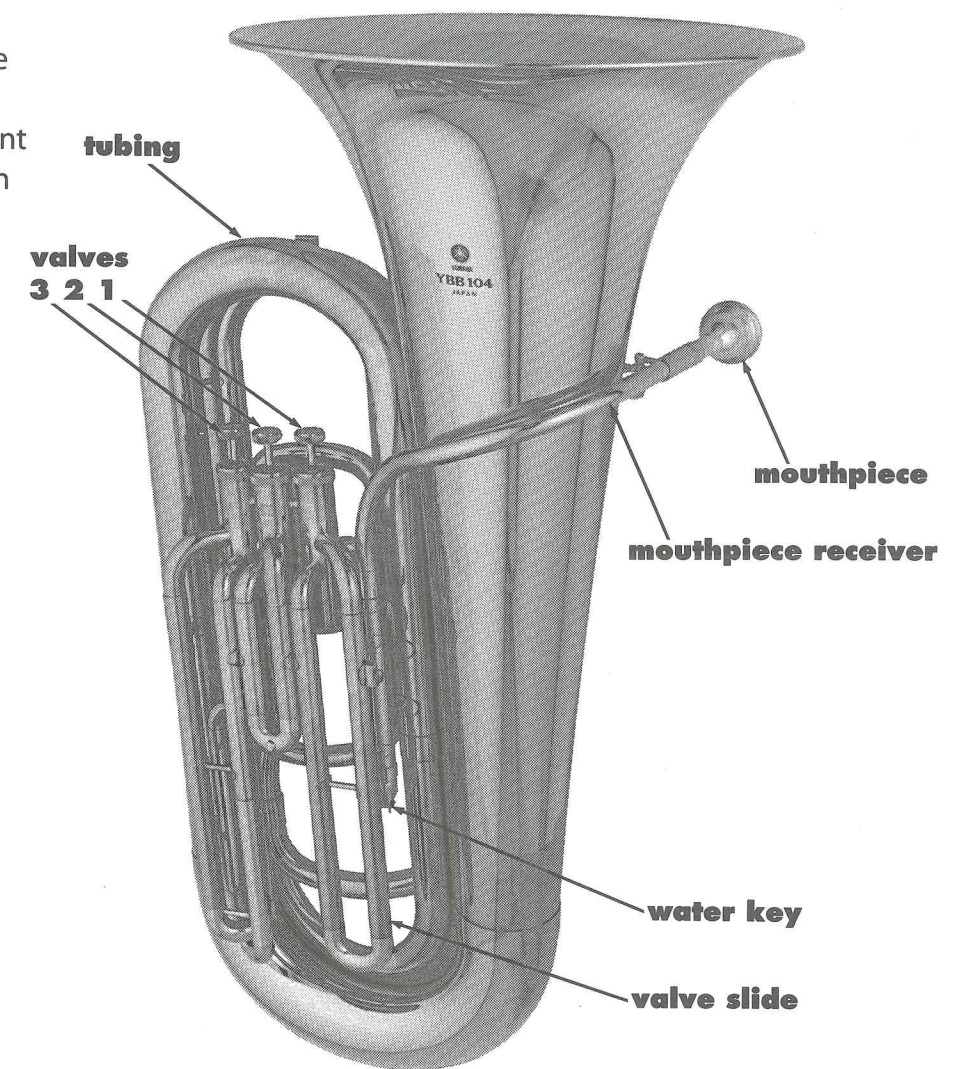
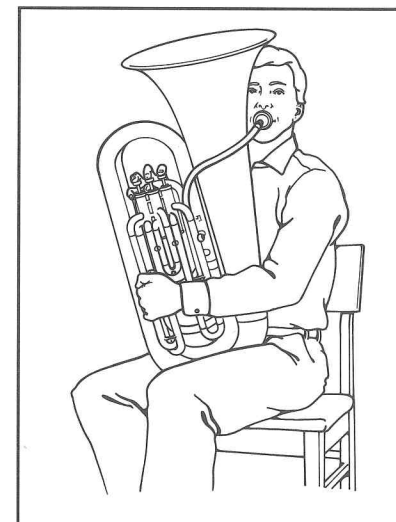
Step 1 If you are playing a TUBA, rest it across your lap with the mouthpiece receiver toward you. If you are playing a SOUSAPHONE, place the open circular section over your left shoulder. Rest your right arm comfortably on the tubing.

Step 2 Carefully twist the mouthpiece to the right into the mouthpiece receiver.

Step 3 Place your right thumb in the thumb ring. Rest your fingertips on top of the valves, keeping your wrist straight. Your fingers should curve naturally.

Step 4 For TUBAS, place your left hand on the first valve slide or on the tubing next to this slide. Lift the instrument up toward you and rest it in your lap.

Step 5 Be sure you can comfortably reach the mouthpiece. Hold the tuba as shown:



READING MUSIC

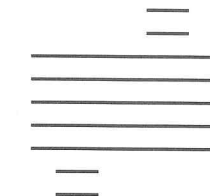
Identify and draw each of these symbols:

Music Staff



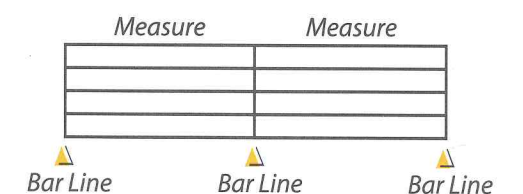
The **music staff** has 5 lines and 4

Ledger Lines



Ledger lines extend the music staff.

Measures & Bar Lines



Bar lines divide the music staff into **measures**.