



The United States Army Field Band

The Musical Ambassadors of the Army
Washington, DC

Tuba Clinic

by
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Playing the tuba should begin with good habits. Fundamentals must be practiced daily. In order to produce the best tone, large amounts of air must be inhaled to fuel the sound. Music is the ultimate goal, but the primary task is to master the basics of consistently producing a good sound. Therefore, the focus of this clinic is practicing and utilizing fundamentals to sound the best at all times.

WARM-UP

Although students do not always have a chance to warm up before band rehearsals, players should strive to go through a warm-up routine every day to practice fundamentals. No one has ever been born with a tuba in his or her hands—playing tuba is an art that must be practiced to be realized.

The warm-up will consist of long tones descending and ascending, flexibility exercises, tonguing exercises, scale studies, and etudes.

LONG TONES

Long tones are just what the name implies: tones performed for a long period of time to maximize sound output and breath control. This is the part of the warm-up routine which concentrates most on sound. These easy exercises allow the player to concentrate on the basics of tone production. Correct fundamentals include posture, embouchure, breathing, tongue position, and jaw placement. All of these have a direct impact on tone. Spending a short time every day on producing a great sound will have long-term benefits.

To practice long tones, start on a Bb in the staff (see *Long Tones on page 11-4*). For four seconds, breathe in fully; without holding the breathe or

tonguing, start the tone at a *mf* level. (If available, a metronome can be set to 60.) Play the note as evenly and smoothly as possible for eight to twelve seconds. If the note is not as smooth and even as desired, play it again. Repeat this for every pitch, descending chromatically to low F. Then move upward from low F two octaves to F in the staff. Do not go on until every note has the same sound or timbre. The first time this is done, it may take an hour to complete—that is OK. Producing a great sound in different ranges and perfecting fundamentals is a major accomplishment.

FLEXIBILITY EXERCISES

Often, tubists are not able to slur as evenly as they should. These flexibility exercises will concentrate on a the fundamentals of a good slur.

Start again on the Bb in the staff. Slur a Perfect 4th from the Bb in the staff to the F just below the staff (see *Example 1 below*). Again set the metronome to 60. The slur should imitate the sound of the long tone. The air stream should not stop between notes. When slurring down, the jaw will drop slightly; it will return when ascending.

This exercise will descend chromatically. Use the same valve combination for each slur. If the best possible sound is not produced, repeat the exercise until satisfied, always using correct fundamentals.

Once F below the staff is reached, slur a Perfect 5th down to the Bb. Continue down to the low F, then ascend to the F in the staff, or higher if possible! (See *Example 2 below*.) It is important to rest frequently to avoid fatigue and carelessness, especially in the higher registers. If extensive warm-ups have never been done before, doing all of this done at once will quickly exhaust the player.

Example 1

Example 2

SCALES & TONGUING EXERCISES

Every audition consists of three elements: scales, a prepared piece, and sight reading. These elements should also be included in a practice routine. Playing scale patterns is also a great way to practice the fundamentals of tonguing.

To rearticulate a pitch, the tongue should be positioned just **BEHIND** the teeth, **NOT BETWEEN** them. This is to ensure that the tongue will not impede the air exiting the mouth.

Start with a one octave C scale. Repeat the rhythmic pattern in *Example 3* on each note of the scale. Do not forget the previous exercises on long tones and flexibility. Strive to incorporate those fundamentals into this exercise. Again, do not continue until the best results are achieved. Once this exercise has been mastered using all scales (*see Scale Supplement*), try the pattern in *Example 4*.

Example 3



MUSICAL STUDIES

Once the fundamentals of producing a good sound are understood and drilled, they can be applied to music. Before performing a piece, mark in the mu-

sic where to breathe. Air is the fuel for the sound, so plan where to fill up to sustain a great tone.

Example 4



Also determine the character of the piece. Is it happy or sad? Does it have a certain style? Should it be smooth and sustained or detached? Does it tell a story or paint a picture? Almost all studies have a certain emphasis. They enable the student to concentrate on that one aspect of technique in a musical context. Always attempt to convince the listener that each aspect has been studied and practiced diligently.

There are many fine study books available to tubists today. A list of recommended books and solos can be found at the end of this section.

Always remember that perfect practice does make perfect. Players must want to sound great every time they play—that takes consistent, steady practice. It is not about how many minutes or hours are spent practicing, but how often one practices and performs with an excellent sound, good fundamentals, and proper technique. All the natural ability in the world would be lost without the desire to strive for the very best every day! Good luck!

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Freshman Studies

The Arban-Prescott First and Second Year Arban/Prescott (Carl Fischer, Inc.)
Beginning studies from the famous Arban method. Emphasis on fundamental aspects of beginning brass performance. Designed to be used in class with other brass instruments.

Practical Studies, Book II Robert W. Getchell (Belwin-Mills)
Beginning studies with particular emphasis on rhythm. Most selections are short and interesting, but a few are longer and more complex.

Freshman Solos

Honor and Arms George F. Handel/William J. Bell, 1:56
(CPP/Belwin, Inc.) Grade II–III.

Entr'acte from “Rosamunde” Franz Schubert/George Masso, 4:10
(Kendor Music, Inc.) Grade II.

Sarabanda and Gavotta Arcangelo Corelli/Himie Voxman, 3:00
(Rubank, Inc.) Grade II–III.

Upperclass Studies

*Studies in Legato
for Bass Trombone and Tuba* Reginald H. Fink (Carl Fischer, Inc.)
Musical studies emphasizing smooth, sustained playing. Many studies are prefaced with instructions.

Progressive Techniques for Tuba Donald Knaub (Hal Leonard)
Intermediate method begins with a warm-up/practice routine complete with instructions; also includes *70 Studies by Blazevich*.

Upperclass Solos

Air and Bouree Johann S. Bach/William J. Bell, 3:25
(Carl Fischer, Inc.) Grade III–IV.

Variations on a Theme of Judas Maccabeus Beethoven/Handel/Bell, 4:45
(Carl Fischer, Inc.) Grade III–IV.

Suite for Tuba Don Hada, 9:00
(Shawnee Press, Inc.)

Suite for Unaccompanied Tuba Walter S. Hartley, 5:00
(Elkan-Vogel) Grade IV.

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Long Tones

The musical score consists of eight staves of music, all in bass clef and common time (C). The notes are organized into pairs, with a slur connecting the two notes in each pair. The notes are as follows:

- Staff 1: $\flat B_1$, B_1 ; $\flat B_1$, B_1 ; $\flat B_1$, B_1
- Staff 2: $\flat B_1$, B_1 ; $\flat B_1$, B_1 ; $\flat B_1$, B_1
- Staff 3: B_1 , B_1 ; B_1 , $\flat B_1$; B_1 , B_1 ; B_1 , $\flat B_1$
- Staff 4: B_1 , $\flat B_1$; B_1 , $\flat B_1$; B_1 , $\flat B_1$
- Staff 5: $\flat B_1$, $\flat B_1$; $\flat B_1$, $\flat B_1$; $\flat B_1$, $\flat B_1$
- Staff 6: $\flat B_1$, $\flat B_1$; $\flat B_1$, $\flat B_1$; $\flat B_1$, $\flat B_1$
- Staff 7: $\flat B_1$, $\flat B_1$; $\flat B_1$, $\flat B_1$; $\flat B_1$, $\flat B_1$
- Staff 8: $\flat B_1$, $\flat B_1$; $\flat B_1$, $\flat B_1$; $\flat B_1$, $\flat B_1$

Flexibility

Continued down:
2, 1, 12, 23,
13(4), 123(24)

The musical score consists of ten staves of music in bass clef. The first staff begins with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. The music is written in a single melodic line with various rhythmic values and phrasing. The second and third staves continue the melodic line with similar phrasing. The fourth staff introduces a key change to one sharp (F#) and features a more complex rhythmic pattern. The fifth and sixth staves return to one flat and feature a fast, sixteenth-note melodic line. The seventh and eighth staves continue this fast melodic line, with the eighth staff including a '6' above the staff, likely indicating a sixteenth-note group. The ninth and tenth staves conclude the piece with a melodic line that includes a key change to one sharp and a final cadence.

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Flexibility, cont.

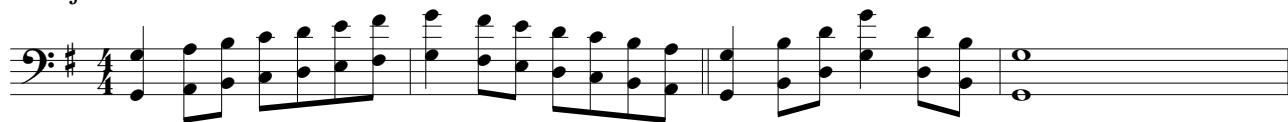
Three staves of musical notation in bass clef, featuring various rhythmic patterns and articulation marks. The first staff contains a series of eighth-note runs with a slur underneath. The second staff features dotted eighth notes with accents. The third staff continues with similar rhythmic exercises, ending with a double bar line.

Scale Patterns

Four staves of musical notation in bass clef, showing scale patterns with slurs and accents. The first staff shows a scale with a slur and an accent. The second staff continues the scale pattern. The third staff shows a more complex scale pattern with slurs and accents. The fourth staff concludes the scale patterns with a final note and a double bar line.

Scale Supplement

G Major



E natural minor

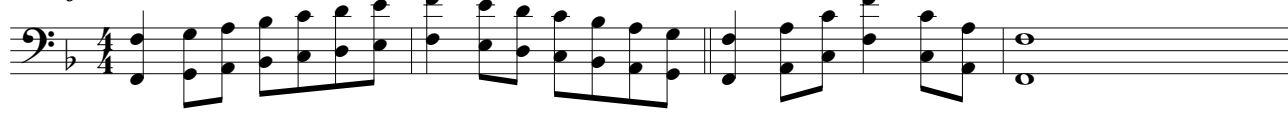
E harmonic minor



E melodic minor

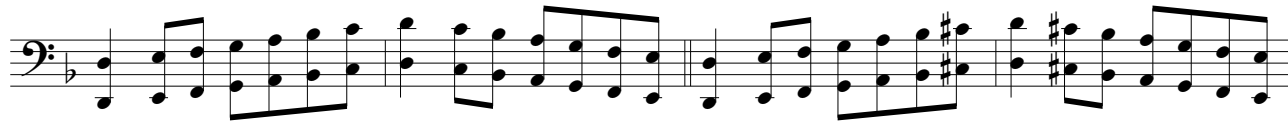


F Major

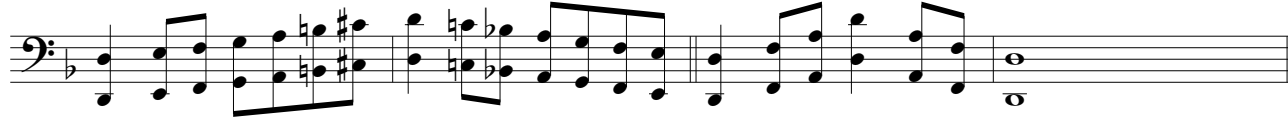


D natural minor

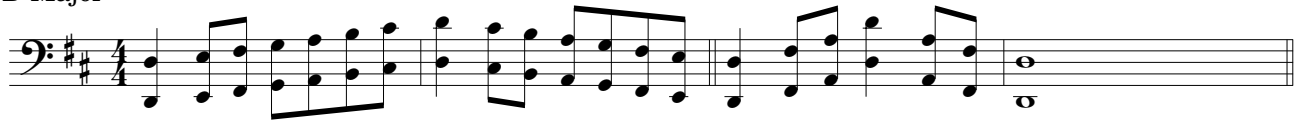
D harmonic minor



D melodic minor



D Major



B natural minor

B harmonic minor



B melodic minor



Bb Major



G natural minor

G harmonic minor



G melodic minor



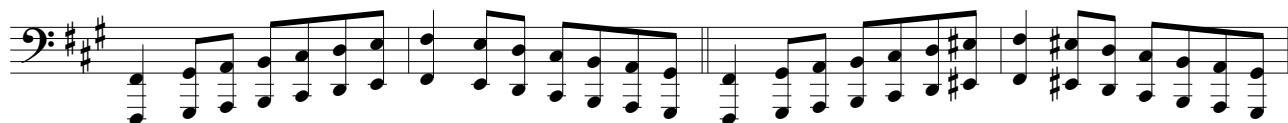
Scale Supplement

A Major



F# natural minor

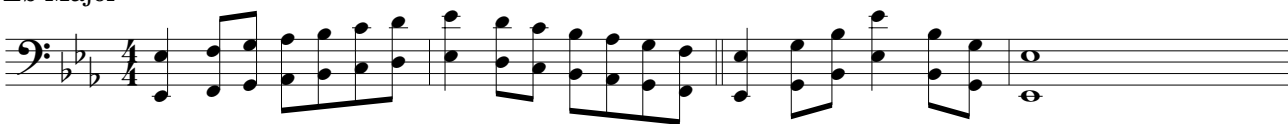
F# harmonic minor



F# melodic minor

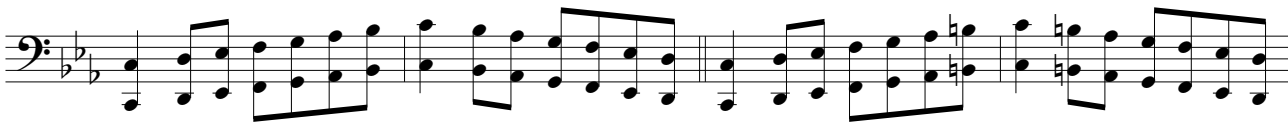


Eb Major



C natural minor

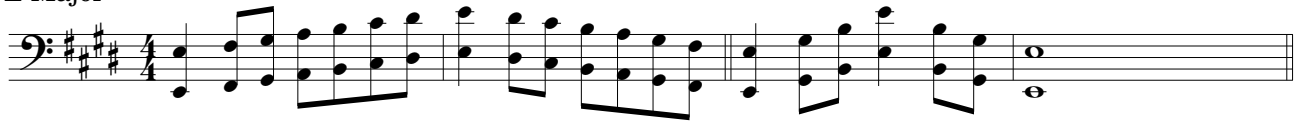
C harmonic minor



C melodic minor



E Major



C# natural minor

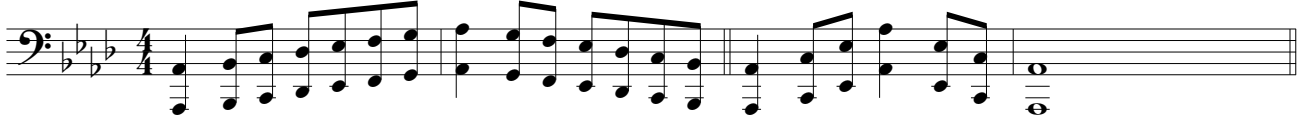
C# harmonic minor



C# melodic minor

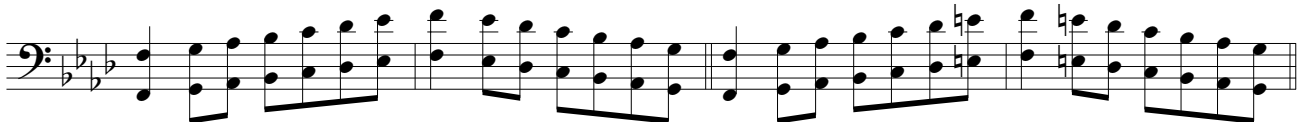


Ab Major

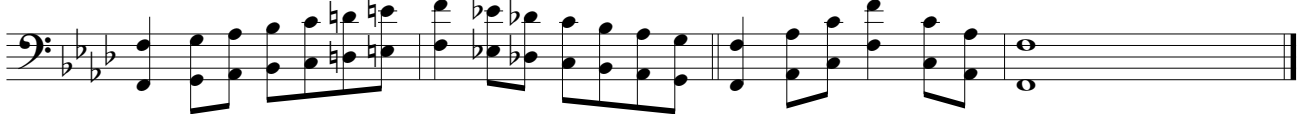


F natural minor

F harmonic minor



F melodic minor



Scale Supplement

B Major

Musical notation for the B Major scale in bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The scale is written in two measures: an ascending eighth-note scale and a descending eighth-note scale. The key signature has three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The piece concludes with a whole note chord of B major.

G# natural minor

G# harmonic minor

Musical notation for the G# natural and G# harmonic minor scales in bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The G# natural minor scale is shown in two measures (ascending and descending). The G# harmonic minor scale is shown in two measures (ascending and descending), with the raised 7th degree (F#) marked with a double sharp (x). The piece concludes with a whole note chord of G# minor.

G# melodic minor

Musical notation for the G# melodic minor scale in bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The scale is written in two measures: an ascending eighth-note scale with a raised 6th degree (E#) and a descending eighth-note scale with a natural 6th degree (E). The piece concludes with a whole note chord of G# minor.

Db Major

Musical notation for the Db Major scale in bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The scale is written in two measures: an ascending eighth-note scale and a descending eighth-note scale. The key signature has five flats (Bb, Eb, Ab, Db, Gb). The piece concludes with a whole note chord of Db major.

Bb natural minor

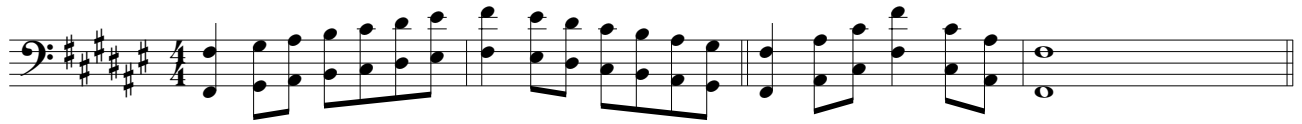
Bb harmonic minor

Musical notation for the Bb natural and Bb harmonic minor scales in bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The Bb natural minor scale is shown in two measures (ascending and descending). The Bb harmonic minor scale is shown in two measures (ascending and descending), with the raised 7th degree (Ab) marked with a double sharp (x). The piece concludes with a whole note chord of Bb minor.

Bb melodic minor

Musical notation for the Bb melodic minor scale in bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The scale is written in two measures: an ascending eighth-note scale with a raised 6th degree (Gb) and a descending eighth-note scale with a natural 6th degree (Gb). The piece concludes with a whole note chord of Bb minor.

F# Major

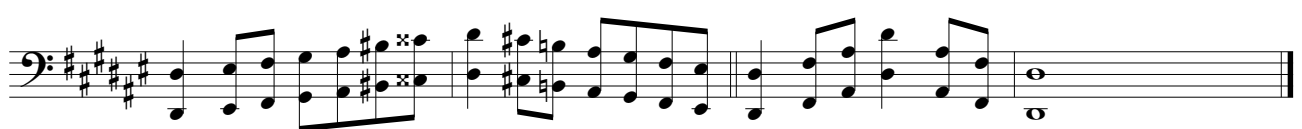


D# natural minor

D# harmonic minor



D# melodic minor

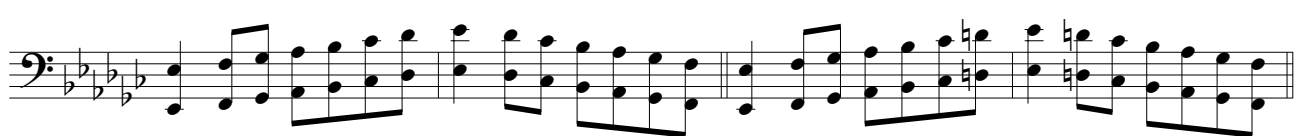


Gb Major



Eb natural minor

Eb harmonic minor



Eb melodic minor



Scale Supplement

C# Major

Musical notation for C# Major scale in bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The scale is written in a single line, starting on C#4 and ending on C#5. The notation includes a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a time signature of 4/4. The scale is presented in a single line, with a repeat sign at the end.

A# natural minor

A# harmonic minor

Musical notation for A# natural and harmonic minor scales in bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The natural minor scale is written in a single line, starting on A#4 and ending on A#5. The harmonic minor scale is written in a single line, starting on A#4 and ending on A#5, with a double sharp (x) above the 7th degree (F##) and a double flat (x) below the 6th degree (E##). The notation includes a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a time signature of 4/4. The scales are presented in a single line, with a repeat sign at the end.

A# melodic minor

Musical notation for A# melodic minor scale in bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The scale is written in a single line, starting on A#4 and ending on A#5. The notation includes a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a time signature of 4/4. The scale is presented in a single line, with a repeat sign at the end.

Cb Major

Musical notation for Cb Major scale in bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The scale is written in a single line, starting on Cb4 and ending on Cb5. The notation includes a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb) and a time signature of 4/4. The scale is presented in a single line, with a repeat sign at the end.

Ab natural minor

Ab harmonic minor

Musical notation for Ab natural and harmonic minor scales in bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The natural minor scale is written in a single line, starting on Ab4 and ending on Ab5. The harmonic minor scale is written in a single line, starting on Ab4 and ending on Ab5, with a double flat (x) below the 7th degree (Gbb) and a double sharp (x) above the 6th degree (F##). The notation includes a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb) and a time signature of 4/4. The scales are presented in a single line, with a repeat sign at the end.

Ab melodic minor

Musical notation for Ab melodic minor scale in bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The scale is written in a single line, starting on Ab4 and ending on Ab5. The notation includes a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb) and a time signature of 4/4. The scale is presented in a single line, with a repeat sign at the end.