

The Arban Challenge!

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Keep track of each exercise in your book. ALWAYS use a metronome and play each exercise at a *comfortable, conservative tempo* at first, paying careful attention to rhythmic and pitch accuracy, clear articulation and a beautiful sound.

There are three possible results:

- **Nailed it!** – Write down the tempo and mark the exercise as completed. At your next session start working on the next exercise. When you get through the whole section you will start over at the beginning and your goal is to play each exercise two clicks faster with the same great results.
- **The exercise was unsuccessful** – Play it as slowly as needed to clean it up. Don't mark it as "nailed" – try it again at your next session. Don't spend more than a few minutes on any single exercise... do your best and move on.
- **The exercise is just too darn hard** – Each section isn't necessarily "progressive" – some exercises are significantly harder than others in the same section. If after a *few sessions* you feel that you just can't get it right *at any tempo* just move to the next exercise tomorrow. After working through the section you may find that tricky exercise isn't as bad the second (or third or fourth) time around.

Keep a mental checklist of these elements (in this order) as you're playing:

Sound

Rhythm

Note Accuracy

Articulation

Phrasing (Yes, even in a "technical" exercise!)

Dynamics

Speed

Use your best judgment. You will only progress if you are *honest with yourself* about your playing: Can it be cleaner? Is my rhythm correct? Are my notes centered, open and pure? Can I play it faster or slower? Louder or softer? Am I staying with the metronome at all times?

The Arban method isn't necessarily designed to be played from cover to cover. I've surveyed the book and classified most of the sections as INTERMEDIATE or ADVANCED. Start with the INTERMEDIATE sections; as they become "old friends" add one or two ADVANCED sections to your diet. Don't play past the point of fatigue (physically or mentally), don't substitute quantity for quality, and take a moment to read the explanations in the book and pointers that I've provided on the following pages. I've listed the sections in the order that they appear in the book for ease of navigation, but you are certainly free to bounce around!

I've provided the page numbers for the Millennium Edition and earlier editions first, followed by the 2013 Hooten/Marotta "New Authentic Edition": pg. 12-22 / 6-21

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Intermediate Arban Exercises

<p>First Studies pg. 12-22 / 6-21</p>	<p>While they look “too easy,” Arban used the first two pages of the FIRST STUDIES to focus solely on pitch centering/intonation, sound development, and <u>articulation</u>. This focus should never go by the wayside when you’re dealing with more complicated exercises. I start my warm-up with #9 or #10, applying different rhythms (eighth notes, triplets, etc) or slurring patterns to add variety. Keep articulation “bouncy” (think timpani or marimba, not snare drum) and hit every note dead center. <i>This concept applies to 99% of the notes you’ll ever play so get used to it now!</i> [I suggest you skip #46 until you’ve gained key signature proficiency.]</p>
<p>Syncopation pg. 23-25 / 21-34</p>	<p>Keep the staccato bouncy, not ‘tut,’ and emphasize the marcato (^) notes. Notice that #2, if played in cut-time, is the same as #3. And #3, if played in cut-time, is the same rhythm as #10.</p>
<p>Rhythmic Figure pg. 26-28 / 24-26</p>	<p>Be absolutely sure to keep a 16th note subdivision here! No swinging, no 6/8 feel. Beware: If it starts to sound relaxed and comfortable you MAY be swinging. This must be squared away before adding speed.</p>
<p>Rhythmic Figure pg. 28-31 / 26-30</p>	<p>Keep staccato bouncy. Make sure 16ths speak as clearly as 8ths.</p>
<p>6/8 Meter pg. 32-37 / 30-36</p>	<p>NOW you can swing! Do the math on #31 – this rhythm is commonly misplayed. Think of the first three notes of “Silent Night” or the “tis of thee” in “America,” then speed this rhythm up to fit in one beat.</p>
<p>Scales pg. 59-74 / 62-82</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C 1-16 G 63-68 F 17-22 D 57-62 B\flat 23-28 A 51-56 E\flat 29-35 E 45-50 A\flat 36-41 *B 23-28 *D\flat 57-62 *F\sharp 17-22 *G\flat 63-68 *C\sharp 1-5 *C\flat 1-5 	<p>⇐ I’ve listed them in this order so that you’re adding a sharp or flat to your diet at every session, but you can certainly work them in numerical order to keep navigation simple.</p> <p>*To save space the publishers provided only ONE exercise for each of the enharmonic keys (D\flat/C\sharp, G\flat/F\sharp, C\flat/B) to show how they are related. But most of us need much more work in these keys! Apply the C\sharp major key signature to the C major scale exercises (#1-5 is enough to start with), and do the same “key signature switcheroo” for the other enharmonic keys. Great sound, correct notes and steady rhythm are the goals, not speed.</p> <p>Each key section ends with a ‘scary’ exercise with a bunch of 32nd & 64th notes. Don’t try to play them as written until you’ve achieved considerably mastery of the key signature and finger technique. On the other hand, don’t skip them either. Instead, play them in a more familiar rhythm pattern for a while: play the first three notes as an eighth+two sixteenth rhythm and the rest of the measure as 16th notes (so it’ll start out like #1). The final bars of some of these exercises switches to 64ths – just keep playing 16ths and keep your “finger rhythm” in control and your tempo steady.</p> <p>Once you’ve worked through all the major keys a few times start trying these exercises in minor forms!</p>
<p>Arpeggios pg. 142-145 / 170-178</p>	<p>Playing the entire page in one session may be too daunting or time-consuming at first, so break it up into a more manageable workload. I suggest playing the major and minor arpeggios on these four pages that are related to the scales you just played. That’s only one line per page! You’ll notice that some of the minors are respelled enharmonically (D\flat major and C\sharp minor, because D\flat <i>minor</i> doesn’t exist), and that to save space not all of the majors are represented in this section. Just like with the scales you should apply the C\sharp & C\flat major key signatures to the C major arpeggios, F\sharp to F, etc. Try different articulations too. It’s good for you!</p>

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<p>Double Tonguing pg. 175-177 / 214-216</p>	<p>The ultimate goal of multiple tonguing is simply to sound like fast single tonguing. Practice only the first two exercises at first, alternating single and double tonguing (ST the first measure, DT the next, ST the third, etc.) until your DT starts to sound like your ST. Using “too-koo” or “doo-goo” syllables best resembles the shape of the tongue and oral cavity in action and promotes good airflow, but the SOUND should be your guide. Always avoid the “ticky-ticky” sound – notes should “bounce” just like your ST even at a fast tempo. Once your tongue gets comfortable “bouncing in the breeze” add a few more exercises and start building speed. Be sure to keep the air and tongue relaxed as you start to add finger-work... your tongue should not care that your fingers/chops are moving around more. Stick with the first three pages of DT (#77-90) until you’re fairly comfortable with all of these exercises, then use <i>all</i> of these as your <i>daily</i> DT workout.</p>
<p>Double Tonguing pg. 178-179 / 217-218 Nos. 91-99</p>	<p>Once you’re comfortable with all of the exercises in the previous section work through these sections “a line a day” fashion.</p> <p>Remember: great multiple tonguing sounds like great single tonguing! Don’t worry about speed until you’ve achieved a good DT attack and tongue/finger coordination.</p>
<p>Double Tonguing pg. 180-182 / 219-221 Nos. 100-114</p>	
<p>The Slur & Double Tonguing pg. 183-187 / 223-229</p>	
<p>The Art of Phrasing pg. 191-244 / 232-305</p>	<p>Now put all of this great technique to use! Sight reading is extremely is an important skill and must be cultivated often. First, survey the piece, taking note of the key signature, time signature, dynamics, unfamiliar rhythms, tricky passages (Is it a scale or arpeggio you’ve seen before?). Set your metronome at a conservative tempo; you’re trying to get as many right rhythms, notes and musical elements as possible at first, regardless of the written tempo. (Use a metronome with a “downbeat” sound set for the time signature so you can be absolutely sure that you’ve not added/subtracted a beat – a common mistake on long notes and ties!). Now play it! Excellent rhythm is your first priority, even if that means letting a couple of notes get away from you. After your first attempt take a few minutes to work on the spots that gave you trouble, then play the whole thing once more. IMPORTANT: This section is not arranged in order of difficulty. Play the tunes that look easier at first to maximize your success.</p>

Advanced Arban Exercises

Continue working Intermediate Exercises and add...

Slurring/Legato pg. 39-45 / 37-43	Centered, smooth & connected is the name of the game, regardless of tempo. Don't let a note go sharp as you slur up or go flat as you slur down. Exercises 16-25 are great for agility and developing a lip trill and shake, but you should supplement your flexibility studies with exercises that move around the horn more (Earl Irons' <i>27 Groups of Exercises</i> , Bai Lin's <i>Lip Flexibilities</i> , Walter Smith's <i>Lip Flexibilities</i> , etc).
Slurring/Legato pg. 48-56 /	
Chromatic Scales pg. 76-79 / 85-89	Strive for even "finger rhythm" and solid note centers. Once you've squared away the fingers and developed your multiple tonguing a bit, try these with DT or TT!
Chromatic Triplets pg. 80-86 / 90-97	
Preparatory Exercises on the Turn pg. 91-93 / 100-	Nos. 1-3 can be divided into more manageable chunks (one key a day; a couple of keys a day; sharps one day, flats another, etc.). Each line may have its own tempo; some are a little trickier than others! In all exercises be sure that the staccato note is articulated clearly and with emphasis – it is the important note, the slurred notes are "accompaniment."
Preparatory Exercises on the Turn pg. 94-98 /	No. 4 on. One exercise daily.
Intervals pg. 125-130 / 144-154	Again, take these pages in manageable chunks; do one or two lines per day at first. Start with the more familiar keys and/or more comfortable ranges, not necessarily starting at the top of the page. Numbers 1 and 4 tend to be easier on the chops because the repeated notes are on the bottom. Keep your ears and eyes focused on the moving notes. SLOW and CORRECT is much better than FAST and SLOPPY!
Broken Octaves and Tenths pg. 131 / 154	The goal here is smooth, connected and clean transitions between notes, but don't get discouraged if this doesn't come easily at first. Focus on keeping the air moving over an arched tongue and keep the chops relaxed, as if you're whistling the intervals.
Triplets pg. 132-136 / 155-162	Observe slurs carefully. Keep finger rhythm even. Don't allow any triplets to clump to the left (sounding like three 16th notes); make sure the notes are spread through the beat evenly.
Rhythmic Figure pg. 137-141 / 162-170	Observe the articulations carefully. Be sure you're slurring the right number of notes and that your staccatos are bounced or plucked, not over-tongued. Once you get a handle on them as written, try them as single- and double-tongue studies.
Dominant 7th & Diminished 7th Arpeggios pg. 147-148 / 178-181	Numbers 53-55 should be taken in chunks at first. Be sure you're hitting every note with a pure, centered sound and excellent articulation. Add various slur patterns to keep it challenging.

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Diminished 7th Arpeggios pg. 150-151 / 181-185	I consider #56-61 as a separate section because you're playing through <i>several</i> Dim7 arpeggios in each exercise rather than one per. There are more notes to keep track of here than in the major/minor/dom7 arpeggios so go slow and be sure you're keep the key signature in mind. This kind of "note finding" is <u>very</u> beneficial for your sight reading!
Triple Tonguing pg. 155-157 / 189-	<p><i>I strongly suggest that you practice both common TT patterns: T-T-K and T-K-T!</i> As with the DT studies, practice a few of these alternating ST and TT per measure to get the air and tongue to work together. Once things start to sound balanced and comfortable continue on with the rest of this section. I use these exercises (exercises 1-11) as my daily TT workout, alternating T-K-T and T-T-K per exercise, and then I play one exercise from the following sections daily.</p> <p>Be sure your TT stays "triplety" and not compressing into a DT three 16ths pattern. This is a common pitfall of the T-K-T pattern.</p> <p>If you have trouble keeping the tongue patterns consistent or it seems that you get tongue-tied after a few beats you can practice these "rudiments" without the horn... when no one is around, of course! Singing "tu-ku-tu, tu-ku-tu, tuu" in the shower or while walking to class can help train the tongue to do the repetitions automatically.</p>
Triple Tonguing pg. 158-161 / 189-	Nos. 12-25: Once you're able to work through all the exercises in the previous section daily work this section one exercise per day. Be sure to try them with both TT patterns.
Triple Tonguing pg. 162-165 / 189-	Nos. 26-46: Don't let all these 16th notes coax you into playing too fast! Consistency of sound and articulation is most important. Be sure to try them with both TT patterns.
Triple Tonguing pg. 166-171 / 189-	Nos. 47-69: These are some of the most challenging exercises in the book. But don't let your sound, intonation/centering, or articulation suffer because you're moving around the horn more. (Number 48 uses the same "drummer" as number 1, right?) Try the exercise with ST first, then TT at the same tempo until your tongue/air forgets about all the territory you're covering. Remember: the tongue is just playing triplets; the fingers and chops are doing all the real work here. Be sure to try them with both TT patterns.
Triple Tonguing pg. 172-174 / 189-	Nos. 70-76: This section combines repeated triplets, scalar triplets and arpeggiated triplets. Forget about the TT (let the TT "drummer" take care of the rhythm) and focus on your sound and intonation/centering.

I have left out some sections from this "daily routine" plan. Once you start to become friends with the routine, start investigating these omitted sections. The ornaments (trills, turns, mordents, etc.) are helpful for your solo work and are fun to play. (Be sure to read Arban's and the editors' comments/explanations at the beginning of the section before digging into the ornament exercises.) The Cadenzas, Characteristic Studies and 12 Celebrated Fantaisies are like graduation pieces, where you can put all of your skills to the test. And there are fine recordings available of the Characteristic Studies and Fantaisies ... be sure to listen to what a virtuoso can do with them!