

Trumpet Topics: Single Tonguing, Maintenance, Part 5

by Bryan Goff, Florida State University

This Trumpet Topic article is the conclusion in a series of articles related to improving one's single tonguing. Like so many of our trumpet techniques, maintenance is often simply a matter of disciplining ourselves to regularly devoting just a few minutes every single day to exercises which were designed to preserve that technique.

If you have incorporated the basic exercises from my preceding four articles into your daily practice routine your single tonguing should have shown considerable improvement by now.

Following is my exercise for single tonguing maintenance. The entire exercise should be played in one breath. After you are able to make it in one breath (at approx. quarter = 120) you should always practice it with a metronome, constantly trying to keep pushing your tempo faster and faster.

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My exercises from the previous articles in this series should have given you a good preparation for perfecting the opening excerpt from Ravel's Piano Concerto in G major. My suggestion is that you think of starting this excerpt on the downbeat of a 3/8 measure rather than starting it after a sixteenth rest, as it was originally notated. Starting on a downbeat gives better focus, better rhythm, and you are less likely to start with a closed throat.

Bryan Goff is the Coordinator of the Winds and Percussion division of the School of Music, and is Professor of Trumpet, having served on the faculty of Florida State University since 1974. He has appeared as a soloist and clinician throughout the United States and Europe, both on modern trumpet and Baroque trumpet. Professor Goff plays Principal Trumpet in the Florida State University Chamber Orchestra, the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra, and the Florida State Brass Quintet. He served for 16 years as the Treasurer of the International Trumpet Guild and is a past-president of the National Association of College Wind and Percussion Instructors.