

# John Francis Daily Warm-up and Method

This warm-up consists of things that I have learned from my trumpet teacher Richard Illman. Rich is all about a good warm-up, and his specific one is included as part of this document. However, I have personalized it to my playing, and after memorization, I bet you will too. Any warm-up you use **should be memorized**. Concentrate on sound

Go long, and slow.

The first two lines of musical notation are in 7/4 time. The first line contains measures 1 through 3, and the second line contains measures 4 through 6. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes with various accidentals, including sharps and naturals. Some notes are marked with a fermata.

Then again slow

The second part of the warm-up exercise consists of seven lines of musical notation, numbered 3 through 11. Each line contains two measures. The notation is in 7/4 time and features a complex sequence of notes with many accidentals (sharps, naturals, and flats). Fermatas are placed over several notes throughout the piece.

The above is a warm-up written by Richard Illman, then trumpet instructor at Eastern Kentucky University (at Michigan State at the time of this writing). However, I invert the measures – this is how I personalized it:

Instead of:



So I could have better accuracy in my higher register I do this . . .



Adding the pedal-tone at the end, I then progress upward by half-steps to around the first “C” above the staff. I then invert back to the original warm-up . . . adding a pedal on the end; then ascend in the routine as high as I can.



Then I try to knock out major scales all in one breath.



Every other day, I will start upwards with a G scale, rather than an F# scale – forcing me to invert all of the scales I did yesterday.

At this point, I’ll work a lick or two that I need to work on for a few minutes. Sometimes, I’ll work on a Bach transcription or something fairly technical.

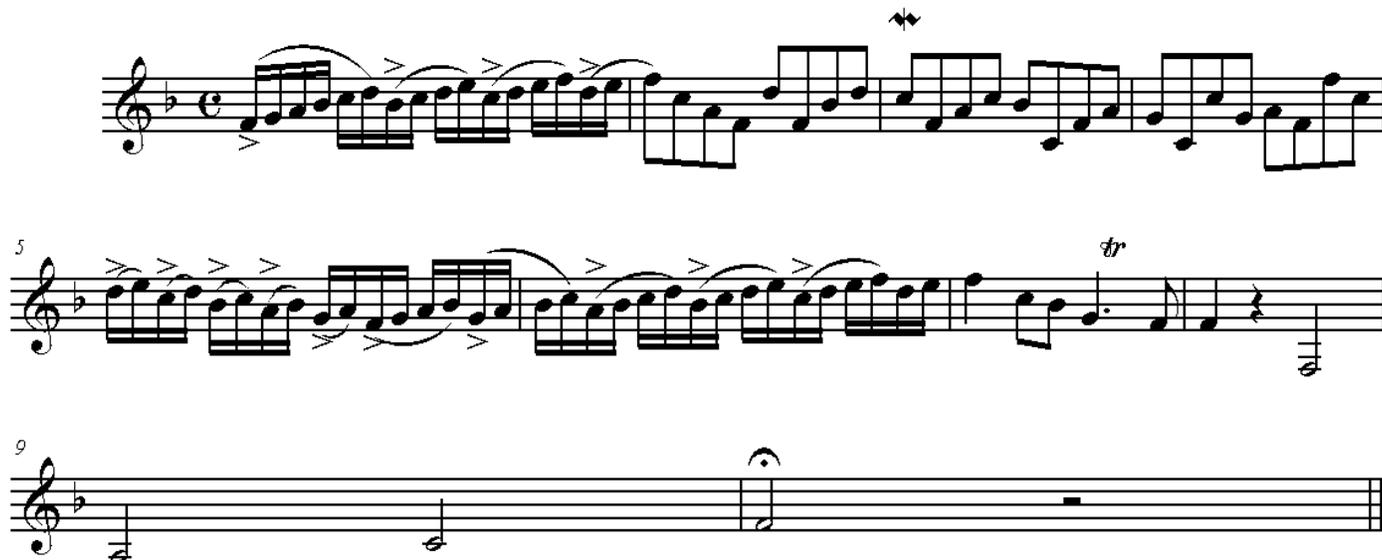
Then I do this light resistance drill learned from Dr. Marty Deutsch, rapidly 5 times, then a hold on the last note:



This combination of 123 valves are all lip slurs, I aim for bottom and top notes – otherwise not an extremely musical process. Then I progress upwards using the other 6 valve combinations: 13, 23, 12, 1, 2, 0.

### REST AND DRINK WATER

After my break, I often will work a different horn. I play a “C” and a “A Piccolo” trumpet. So, I usually do piccolo next. After I warmup the piccolo trumpet with arpeggios, I play two things, that I play more than anything on piccolo. *Ablasson*, of Gottfried Reiche, and *Trumpet Voluntary* by Jeremiah Clarke. I include *Ablasson* here, as every trumpeter should know this great little fanfare – even on the Bb, it is notable. On Bb – take the low F on ms. 8, up an octave..



Then I go to the “C” trumpet and do something to work on the lyrical qualities of the horn. An aria, or something like that works well. Because I am often asked to play “some classical piece” in public, I can often do just a simple version of Bach’s, “Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring” – work on tone and airflow (this also works well on Bb trumpet). This is another good thing to have memorized, for just the right occasion. See next page:

The image displays a musical score for a brass instrument, likely a trumpet or trombone, in G major (one sharp) and 3/8 time. The score is written on ten staves, with measure numbers 5, 9, 15, 19, 23, 29, 33, 37, and 42 indicated at the beginning of their respective lines. The music features a consistent eighth-note rhythmic pattern. A double bar line with a '2' above it appears at measures 10 and 24, indicating a second ending. The key signature remains G major throughout the piece.



After this, I will do the following M. Deutsch isotonic exercise then rest – free meter (go through all valve combinations – 123, 13, 23, 12, 1, 2, 0) Try only three times, go easy!



After resting a little bit (at least five minutes). I work from *My Trumpet Book* –

### **My Trumpet Book –**

My notebook consists of cool licks that I've transcribed, also jazz 'heads' that I am memorizing – memorization is a large part of my playing. It contains scales and other things that I am working on.

I have a couple of lip flexibility books that I have physically taken apart, scanned them to pdfs, then transferred them into transparencies. I then keep them in individual notebooks, extracting at will to *My Trumpet Book*.

I also keep notebook pages in it to keep track of my progress.

The cool thing about transferring music to pdf, is you can then keep it on a laptop, and when you travel a lot like I do, you don't need to take method books with you, just flip open 'lappy' – and there you have it.

### **Sound Advice –**

When you are playing all this material, let me urge you to focus on making every note sound round and beautiful, because I mean face it – you can have a killer technique, monster high chops, but people want to hear beauty more than anything. High notes, focus on sound quality, keep the lips wet and free to buzz.

One other piece of advice: Brush your teeth at least twice daily, and floss. Good dental hygiene should be considered an active part of your practice routine. As you age, and if you eat like I do - you'll be so glad you did.

### **The Cool Pocket Trumpet**

This last little note is on the coolness of the pocket trumpet. First, I get a surprisingly good sound out of a \$99.00 horn. I don't use it so frequently for performance, but I do use it for practice. It stows away so well. It can even fit in my suitcase, case and all.

I can stop at a rest stop or whatever, to play so quick licks, or to even warm-up.

It stays in my car for that impromptu gig that can break out any moment.

God bless you. Make a joyful noise to HIM,  
John Francis

*John Francis is a trumpet player who lives to 'jazz up' gospel music and hymns. John is also the webmaster and creator of [www.churchbrass.com](http://www.churchbrass.com). John is employed as the Worship Specialist of the Missouri Baptist Convention (SBC).*