

Breathing and Airflow

Inhale

Inhale until you get “fat” with air. Fill the body forward, then back, then into the rib cage. The shoulders will not rise upward when inhaling. They should feel relaxed and heavy. As the body expands with air, the shoulders will open up, but never rise up.

Keep throat open and relaxed by using a silent “ho” mouth formation. Never stretch the corners of the mouth on the inhale. The aperture stretches and tightens if you pull the corners of the mouth back.

Exhale

Blow a steady, even airflow on the exhale. The airflow is supported by the diaphragm. Avoid a tight abdomen. Think of the diaphragm as lifting and holding the airstream. When using the diaphragm properly, the lower abdomen will remain pushed down and forward. Check that you are properly utilizing the diaphragm by holding a book against your abdomen 2” below the belly button. Inhale and watch the book push outward. Blow air and watch the book remain out until you are out of air. If the book goes inward immediately, then you are not using the right support with the diaphragm.

Air Manipulation

The airflow is not the same throughout the range of the horn. Blow slow, warm air to keep throat open and relaxed in middle and low range. Blow fast, cold air toward your chin to play in the high range. The airflow changes for loud and soft playing. Blow an abundance of warm air for loud playing. Blow fast cold air for soft playing.

As the player moves around the horn the airflow changes in anticipation of what is coming.. Therefore air is not stagnant. It is continually manipulated with every note.