

TBZ Monthly

A new monthly content service from Brad Edwards

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Welcome!

Here is the next issue. Thank you to everyone who has subscribed so far. I'm always looking for ways to connect with trombonists and I love having the opportunity to share with people in a way I hope will provide benefit. If you are getting this pdf without having subscribed and would like to subscribe to future issues, simply [follow this link](#).

Chances are this little digital publication will evolve over time. If there's something you'd like to see included, please reach out to me: brad.edwards6251@gmail.com.
(IG: [@brad edwards trombone](#))

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Enjoy!

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A Pretty Good Melody

Light swing (♩ = c. 144)

The musical score is written in bass clef with a common time signature (C). The tempo is indicated as 'Light swing' with a quarter note equal to approximately 144 beats per minute. The dynamics are marked as 'mf' (mezzo-forte). The score is divided into two systems, each containing four staves. The first system is in C major, and the second system is in B-flat major. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth notes, quarter notes, and half notes, often grouped with slurs and accents to indicate phrasing. The first system concludes with a double bar line, and the second system also concludes with a double bar line.

First system of musical notation in bass clef, 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. It consists of three staves. The first staff begins with a measure rest and a half note G2, followed by a melodic line starting on A2. The second staff continues the melody with a half note G2 and a half note F2. The third staff continues with a half note E2 and a half note D2. The system concludes with a double bar line.

Second system of musical notation in bass clef, 4/4 time, key of D major. It consists of three staves. The first staff begins with a measure rest and a half note D2, followed by a melodic line starting on E2. The second staff continues the melody with a half note D2 and a half note C#2. The third staff continues with a half note B2 and a half note A2. The system concludes with a double bar line.

A Useful Lip Slur

Of course this can be tiring. Take breaks as needed. I didn't set a specific tempo, but use a metronome.

6th ...

6th ...

6th ...

5th ...

5th ...

5th ...

4th ...

3rd ...

2nd ...

6th ...

5th ...

4th ...

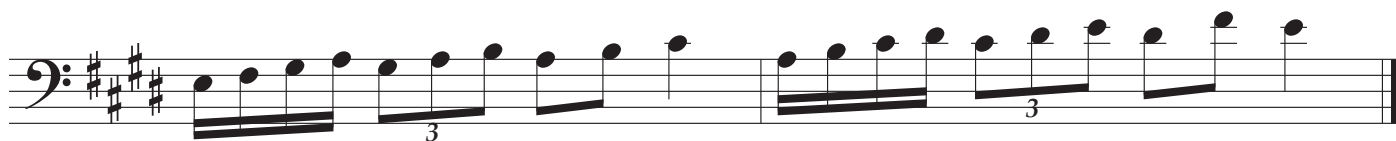
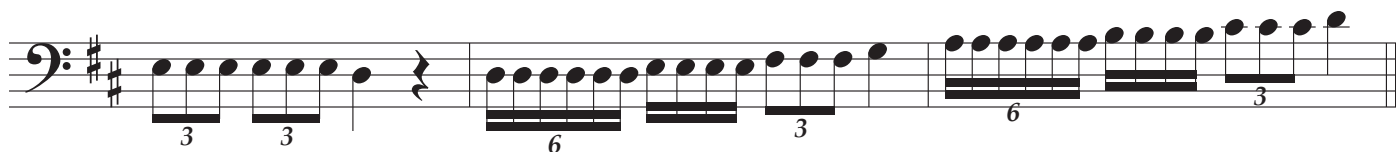
3rd ...

2nd ...

1st ...

Technique / Rhythm Builders

"Gear-shifting" with rhythm subdivisions is a valuable skill. I have always found it trickier to shift down than to shift up.



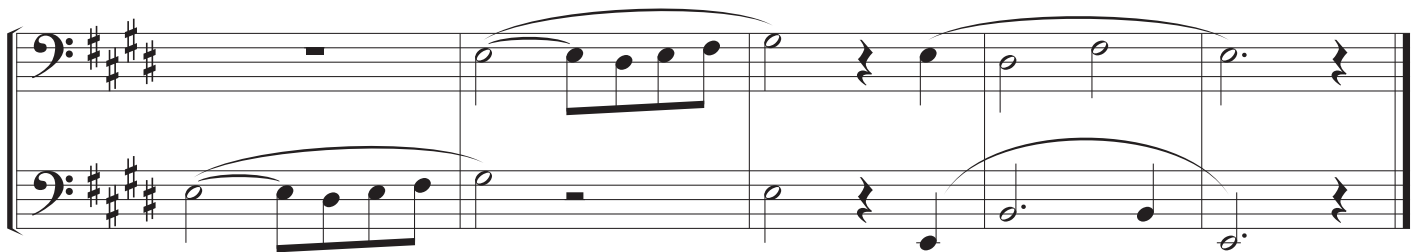
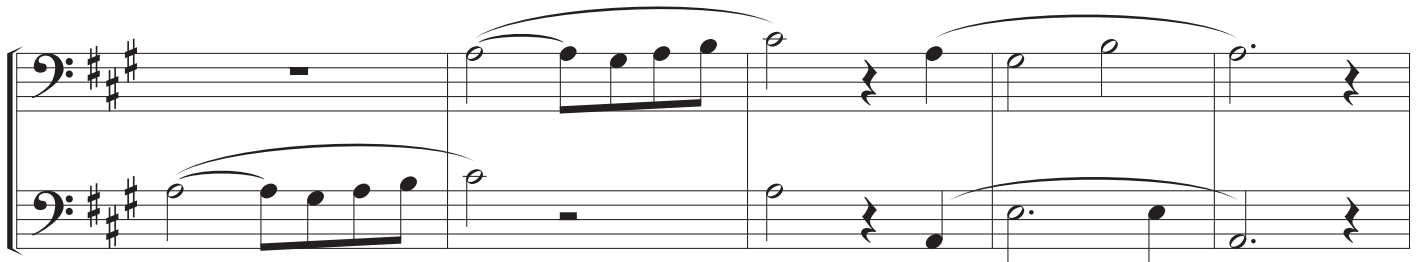
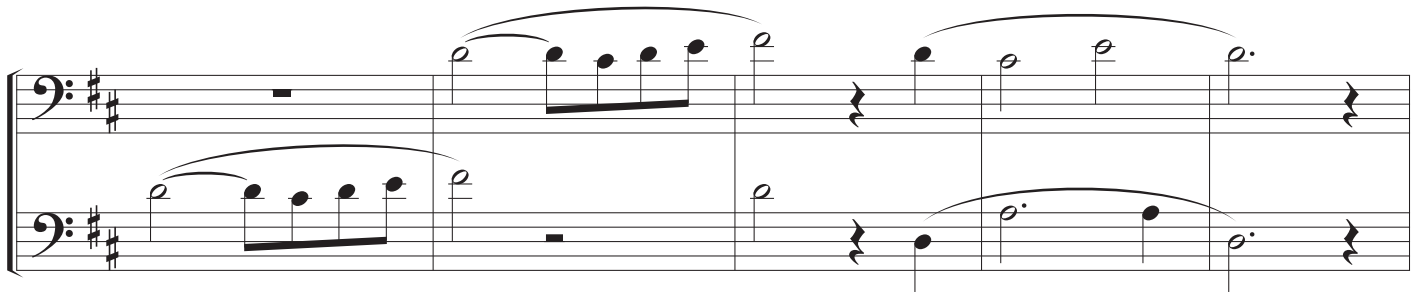
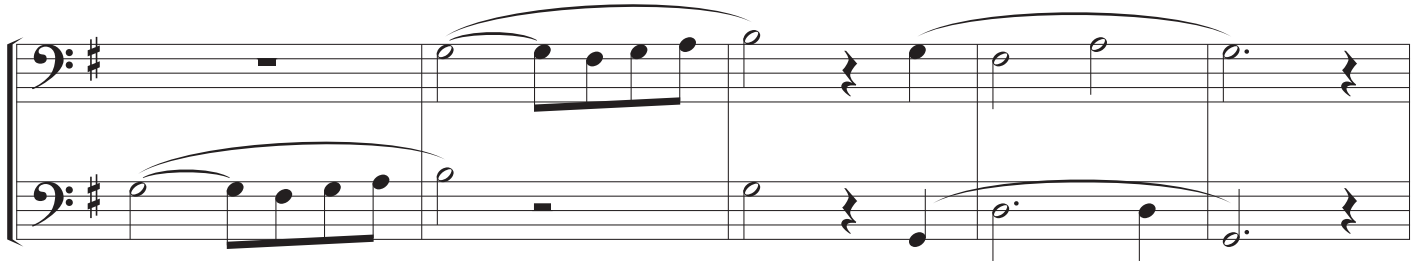
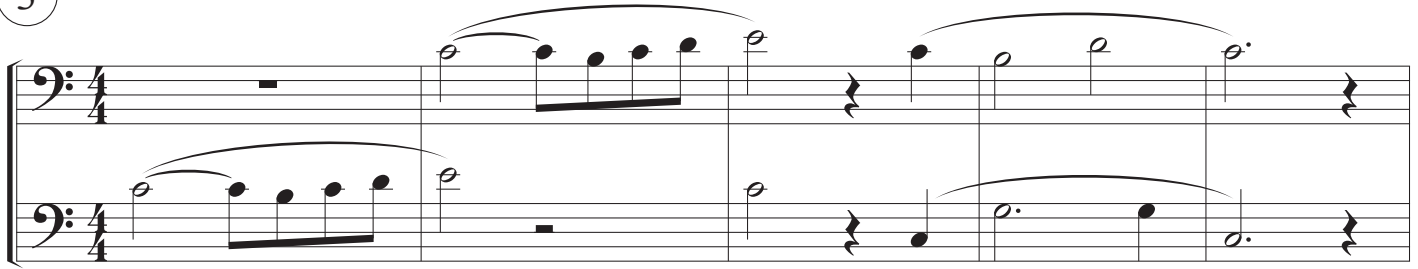
Free book sample:
First Habits - Tone Imitation Duets

There is a section of the 232-page First Habits book that is devoted to tone/tuning exercises for two players. The idea here is for the teacher to play first followed by the student's imitation. At the end of the line is a sample cadence for practice with tuning. Here are two pages from that section.

Try playing these in a lesson with a student and see how they work out!

Enjoy!

3



4

At the asterisk, it is the **bottom** note that needs to adjust down.

The musical score is presented in five systems, each with two staves. The notation is in bass clef with a 4/4 time signature. The key signature begins in C major, changes to B-flat major in the second system, and changes to E-flat major in the fifth system. The music consists of eighth and quarter notes, often beamed in groups. In the first system, the second staff has an asterisk (*) above a note, indicating a tuning adjustment. The score ends with a double bar line at the end of the fifth system.

Playing Tip: One Shot

This is a pretty simple tip but so many people don't use it enough. When we practice, it is natural to play things over and over. But in a performance or an audition, we only get one shot. So, how do you practice getting only one shot at a passage?

Rotation: Work on one thing for a while then leave it and work on something else. Come back to the first thing and give yourself only one shot. It works or it doesn't but don't allow yourself to stop and restart.

Playlist: Build a memorized playlist of licks that challenge you. At some point during your practice, grab a random excerpt and play it down without stopping. Here are three that might be in my playlist: David Concertino, Gould American Salute (arrange for brass ensemble), and Wagner's Ride.



Step away: Suppose you need to take a short bathroom break from your practicing. The moment you return is a golden opportunity to pretend you are performing. Give yourself just one shot.

Recording: For any of these “one shot” moments, turn on a recorder. After your run, give it a listen.

Here’s the important thing: compare your “one shot” run with your previous repetitions. The details you were striving to achieve - did they get into that “one shot” run or did some older habit reassert itself?

Next Day: Once you’ve warmed up at the beginning of the day, you have another great chance to try some “one shot” runs.

Mental Runs: Just because you are giving yourself “one shot” to play it *physically*, doesn’t mean that you can’t vividly imagine the run multiple times *mentally* before the physical run. Athletes do this all the time when preparing for a high-pressure run. We can learn from them.



The secret to all of this is to emulate what it will feel like when you are performing or auditioning.

As the old saying goes, if you get it right on the 5th run, you’ve taught yourself how to play it wrong 4 out of 5 times.

On Teaching and Playing: A Rough Lesson Outline



Last month, I talked about the inevitable collapse of elaborate systems and schemes. Once we begin teaching individuals, these detailed systems often give way like a leaky dam to all the exceptions we make (and usually should make).

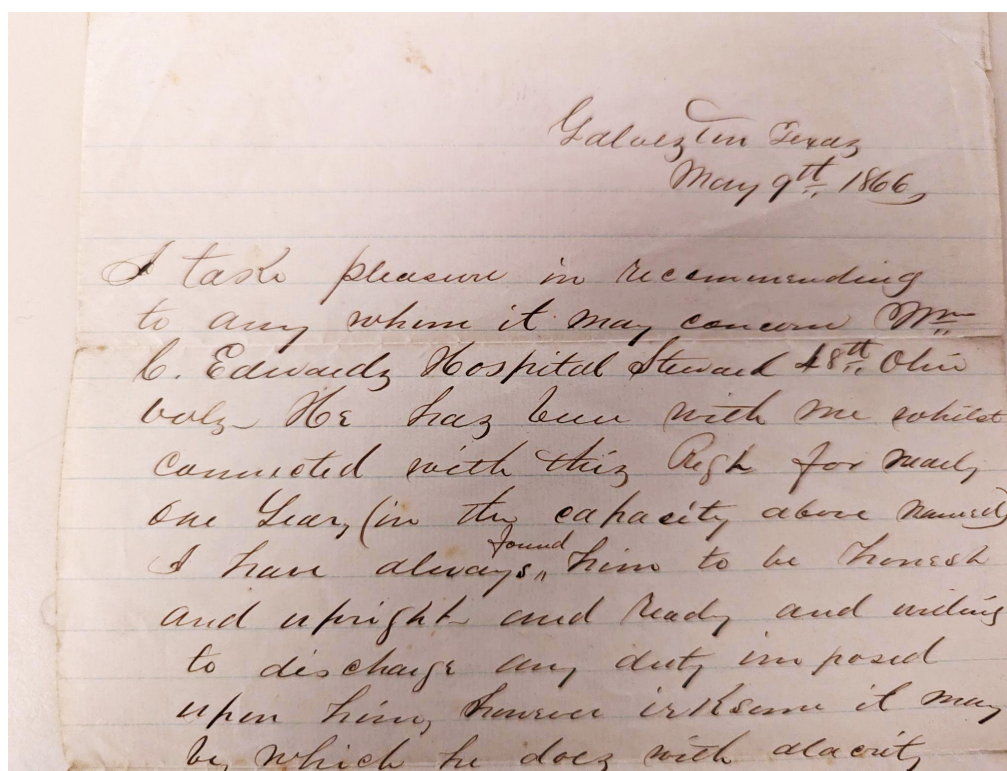
That said, I at least go into each lesson with a rough plan I'd like to follow. Here's a schedule for a one-hour lesson that I refer to when teaching lessons at ASU.

Start	Amount	Activity	Comments
00:00	3	Set-Up	Turn on recorder
00:03	7	Sing/Buzz/Play	So important! Mostly Simply Singing for Winds
00:10	15	Technique	Lip Slurs or Scales/Arpeggios
00:25	25	Prepared Materials	Etudes, Solos, Excerpts, Custom Exercises
00:50	5	Sight-Reading	Duets or clef work
01:00	5	Lesson Review	What concepts do you remember?

Have I actually *exactly followed* this in any given lesson? Nope - but it's a starting point.

A Random Thought: GPT and Civil War letters

My aunt gave me a box of old things to keep including original letters handwritten right after the Civil War. It's amazing to hold something so old right in your hands. One was basically a letter of recommendation from a commanding officer for one of my ancestors. Here's what impressed me: the handwriting was so clean. Judging from the beautifully penned writing, it is apparent that this officer really took his time to make the letter look nice.



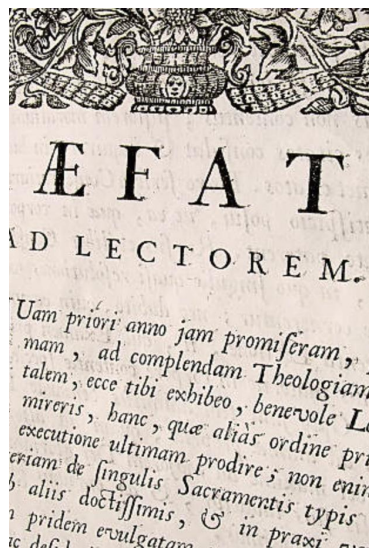
Is cursive a useful skill anymore?

Not in and of itself but I would argue that, in mastering cursive, **the brain develops in a certain way** that might help in other endeavors, not the least of which would be **concentration and patience**. Do we develop the same skills guiding Zelda on a video game adventure?



Maybe...

My kids went to an academic magnet for middle school - everyone had to learn Latin. Why? Besides indirectly helping with learning other languages and a bit with science terms, the program's director defended this course of study as a **good brain workout**.



In writing this, I must conceive of an idea, formulate reasonable sentences, type them without too many errors, and re-read them to tweak and correct. It's certainly much easier than writing a recommendation letter in cursive but it takes its own kind of mental discipline.

Now we are seeing the advent of LLM's (large language models like Chat GPT) with the ability to write essays for us. Some professional writers love this - they can enter a draft and ask the LLM to tighten up their writing and make it more punchy. My wife and I used Chat GPT to generate a batch of children's songs about different school topics like desert plants or interesting jobs. It quickly spit out verse after verse. What did we gain? Some usable lyrics for the year-end school concert. What did we lose?

If we cede more and more creative agency to a bot, what are we losing?
Are we developing flabbier brains?

These LLM products claim to offer the benefit of freeing us up to pursue other things.
What things, exactly?

Tik-Tok videos and Reels?

(so tempting)

OK, grandpa we get it. Go eat your oatmeal.