

# Understanding Range for Trombone

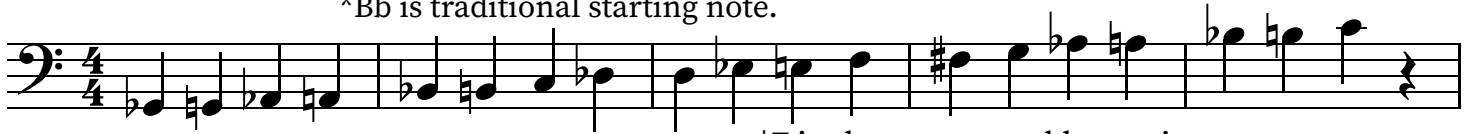
A guide for educators on what to expect and how to foster range on trombone and euphonium

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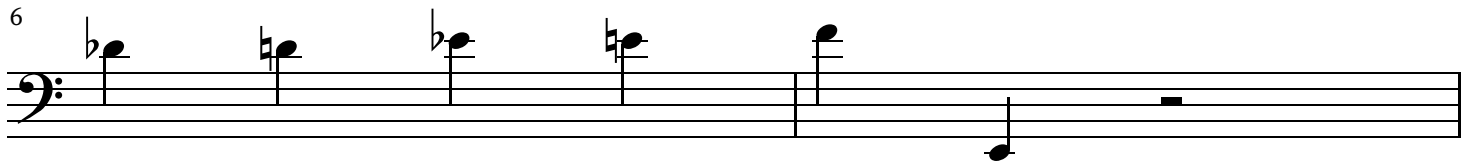
The following is fair to look for from any first year trombonist after a year of playing. Most method books take you through this range within the first school year. Keep in mind, Low B natural is usually omitted as most students have not grown long enough arms to reach 7th position.

$\text{♩} = 120$

\*Bb is traditional starting note.

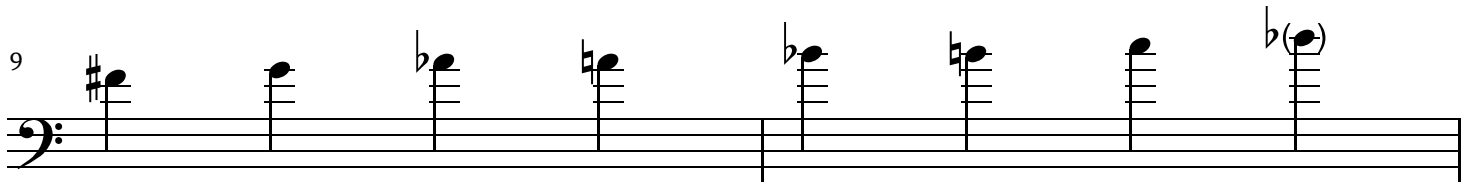
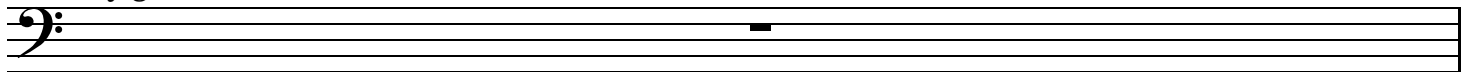


\*F is also an acceptable starting note.

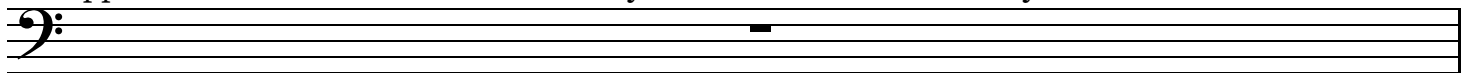


By the end of middle school (after 2-3 years of playing), the following range should all be possible. F is still a challenging note for many middle schoolers, particularly without regular practice and embouchure strengthening. Most middle school jazz charts have 1st trombone parts regularly accessing F, or even F# and the rare G.

One of the best things you can do for your students in order to build range is encourage them to practice slow scales and slurs without tongue. Don't encourage them to 'push as high as they can' each day, but rather to stay where it is still achievable and comfortable and slowly push that window upwards. Remember, if you ever see students pressing hard (rings remain on their face when horn is removed) or "smiling" with their embouchures, they're not using muscles correctly, and not making any gains from this.



At the high school level, the following 'upper range' notes are appearing in work. It is worth noting, not to your students, but to you as educators, that G5 is a NOTORIOUSLY difficult note on trombone. This is because it doesn't sit on a stable partial. The note is played best in a raised 2nd position on the slide. Remind your students of this if you see them not moving the slide. The absolute highest notes students see on trombone in high school, barring prodigious exceptions, is high Db, which only appears in the most rare situations. Only the best trombonists in any state have access to this note.



If your students have F-attachment valves on their trombones, the following notes are also possible from high school students (generally older students and bass trombonists). Low B natural does NOT exist on a tenor trombone- we must LIP down a C, and even professionals avoid B. Bass Trombonists can get B with their 2nd valve, as well as usually down to the F below what is written here.

