BLUE LINES

STUDIES IN JAZZ TRUMPET
& IMPROVISATION

TONE
TIME
LANGUAGE
IMPROVISATION

30 DAYS
OF FOCUSED PRACTICE
FOR THE MODERN
JAZZ TRUMPETER



START HERE

One small musical win

A practice companion for B♭ trumpet players beginning jazz improvisation.

You do not need to finish thirty assignments in thirty consecutive days. Work at your own pace. Repeat a day when you need it, and keep your teacher’s fundamentals routine alongside these musical exercises.

I came to trumpet after years of playing guitar and listening to Chet Baker, Miles Davis, and the jazz of the 1950s and ’60s. This book is a focused practice companion from an adult learner and app creator, not a claim that thirty days makes anyone an expert.

Your first five minutes
After your normal warm-up, choose written C4, D4, and E4 if they speak comfortably. Sing a small phrase. Play it with a steady pulse. Leave space. Repeat it with one change. If those notes are not reliable yet, clap and sing the rhythm, and ask your teacher to choose a suitable range.

A repeatable session
1 minute: hear or sing the idea.
2 minutes: play slowly, resting between attempts.
1 minute: change one thing.
1 minute: record or reflect.
Rest whenever your sound or comfort deteriorates; five minutes is a guide, not a playing quota.

The four weeks
Days 1–7: sound and simple phrases.
Days 8–14: pulse, rhythm, and space.
Days 15–21: chord tones and short jazz ideas.
Days 22–30: connect those ideas into a short solo.

START FREE: PLAY YOUR FIRST BLUE LINE

READ THIS FIRST

Written pitch, clear rhythm

All examples use treble clef and written B♭ trumpet pitches.

Match your accompaniment

A B♭ trumpet sounds a whole step below its written pitch. Written C major matches concert B♭ major. Written G blues matches concert F blues. Confirm whether an app or backing track names written or concert keys before playing along.

Octave labels remove guesswork

C4 is middle C, one ledger line below the treble staff. G4 is on its second line. C5 is in its third space. D4 uses valves 1+3; D5 usually uses valve 1. A note name alone does not tell you the register or fingering.

Count the space too

The notated starter patterns are in 4/4. Each filled note with a stem is a quarter note: one beat. The quarter-rest symbol is one silent beat. Two bars contain eight beats total. Keep counting while you rest.

Keep the range comfortable

The core examples stay near C4–G4. Later examples may reach B♭4 or D5; sing them first and use a teacher-approved alternative if they are outside your current range. Do not force a note just to complete a page.

About swing

Listen to the rhythm section and imitate a short phrase. Swing eighths vary with tempo and player; a rigid long-short ratio is only an approximation. Most core patterns here use quarter notes so you can focus on steady time first.

Free and Pro

The exercises on these pages can be practised with your horn and a metronome. Links marked FREE lead to starter exercises. Links marked PRO / OPTIONAL lead to additional app material that requires Pro access. A partner pass can unlock that material during its stated access period.

SOUND

Days 1 & 2

Five focused minutes after your usual warm-up. Rest freely; repeat any day.

DAY 01

An easy, steady sound

Play C4, D4, and E4 separately for four relaxed beats each at 60 BPM. Rest at least as long as you play. Use a comfortable dynamic.

Listen for: A stable sound without forcing the attack.

Go deeper (optional): Repeat on F4 and G4 only if comfortable.

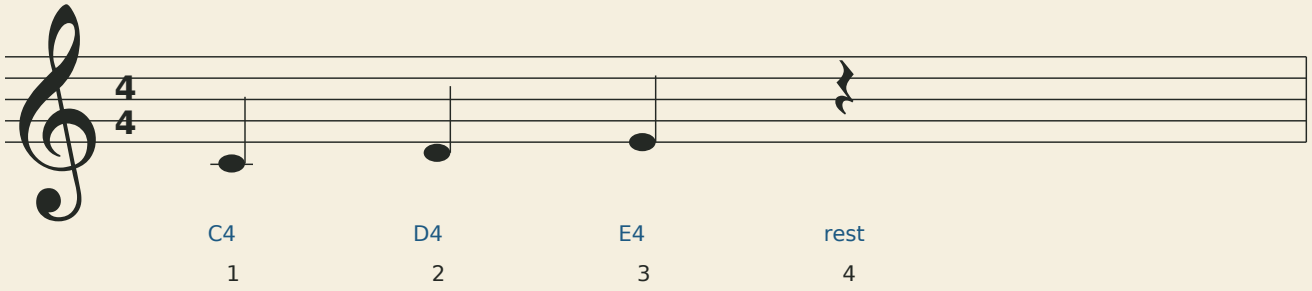
PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / PRO / OPTIONAL / C MAJOR SCALE

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

DAY 02

Clear beginnings

On C4, start three separate notes gently. Rest between them. Then play C4–D4–E4, one beat each, followed by a rest.



Listen for: A clear start without a scoop or a hard jab.

Go deeper (optional): Record three attempts and compare the starts.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / PRO / OPTIONAL / C MAJOR SCALE

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

SOUND

Days 3 & 4

Five focused minutes after your usual warm-up. Rest freely; repeat any day.

DAY 03

Connect two notes

Slur C4–D4, then D4–E4. Use two beats per note and generous rests. Stay with two notes until the change feels easy.

Listen for: An even sound through the change.

Go deeper (optional): Ask your teacher for a comfortable two-partial lip slur.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / PRO / OPTIONAL / C MAJOR SCALE

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

DAY 04

Repeat a small phrase

Play the pattern below at 60 BPM. Rest for a full bar before repeating. Keep each note in a comfortable register.



Listen for: The same sound and pulse on each repetition.

Go deeper (optional): Play it once softly, then once at a comfortable medium volume.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / FIRST BLUE LINE

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

SOUND

Days 5 & 6

Five focused minutes after your usual warm-up. Rest freely; repeat any day.

DAY 05

Shape the volume

Hold G4 for four beats at a comfortable volume, with a small swell and return. Rest four beats. A tuner can help you notice pitch drift.

Listen for: Smooth volume changes without squeezing.

Go deeper (optional): Try six beats only if easy; shorten the note if needed.

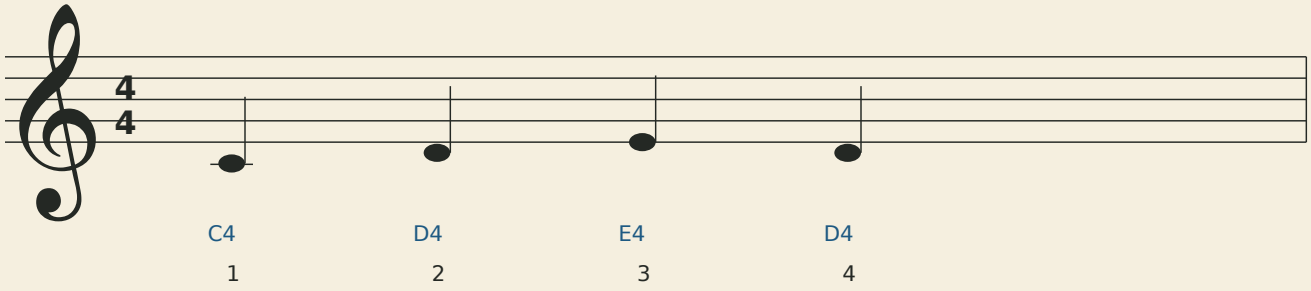
PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / PRO / OPTIONAL / C MAJOR SCALE

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

DAY 06

Sing before playing

Sing C4–D4–E4–D4 or a comfortable equivalent. Find the same shape on the horn. Alternate singing and playing with rests.



Listen for: Whether you hear the next note before playing it.

Go deeper (optional): Invent a different three-note order.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / FIRST BLUE LINE

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

SOUND

Days 7 & 8

Five focused minutes after your usual warm-up. Rest freely; repeat any day.

DAY 07

Your first checkpoint

Repeat Day 4 and record one short attempt. Listen once. Write one thing that is steadier and one thing to revisit.



Listen for: A recognisable phrase with a deliberate ending.

Go deeper (optional): Share the attempt with your teacher; feedback is optional.

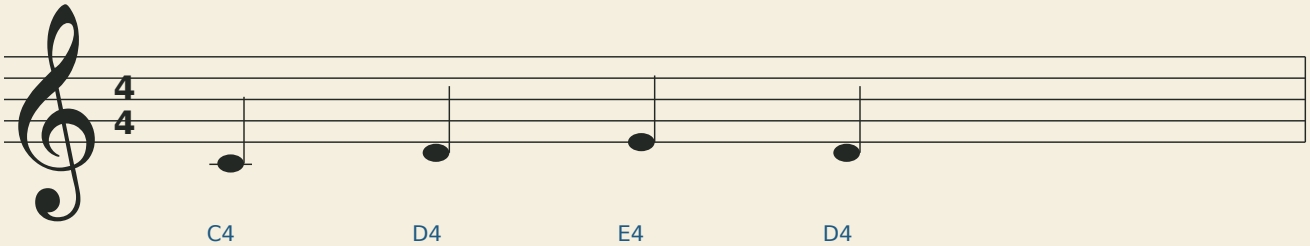
PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / FIRST BLUE LINE

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed: _____

DAY 08

Keep a steady pulse

Set the metronome to 60 BPM, one click per beat. Clap four beats, then play C4–D4–E4–D4. Rest one bar while counting.



Listen for: The pulse continuing through silence.

Go deeper (optional): Tap your foot or clap the rests before adding notes.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / PRO / OPTIONAL / C MAJOR SCALE

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed: _____

TIME

Days 9 & 10

Five focused minutes after your usual warm-up. Rest freely; repeat any day.

DAY 09

Use fewer notes

Play only C4 and E4. Invent a one-bar phrase, followed by one bar of rest. Repeat it three times.

Listen for: A rhythm you can repeat intentionally.

Go deeper (optional): Keep the pitches but change the rhythm.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / C MAJOR TRIAD

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

DAY 10

Question and answer

Play the first bar as a question, then the second as an answer. Rest two full bars. Sing both phrases before the next attempt.



Listen for: A connection between the two phrases.

Go deeper (optional): Change only the answer's last note.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / FIRST BLUE LINE

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

TIME

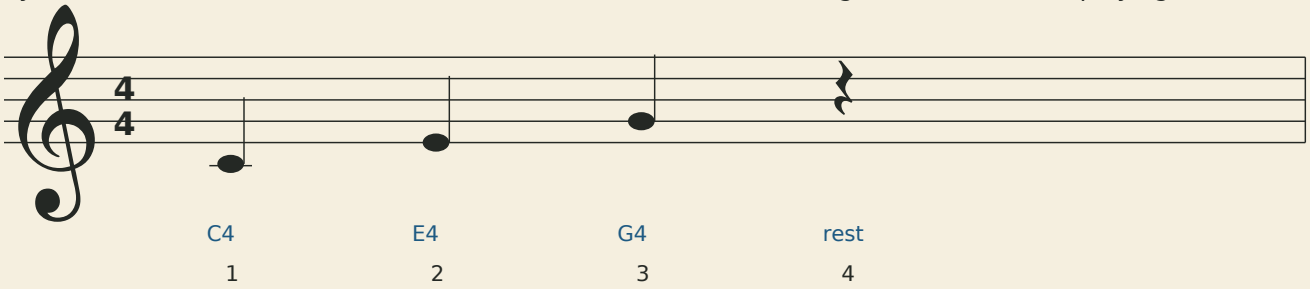
Days 11 & 12

Five focused minutes after your usual warm-up. Rest freely; repeat any day.

DAY 11

Count an empty bar

Play one bar, rest one bar, then re-enter on beat 1. Count aloud through the rests before playing the exercise.



Listen for: A clean re-entry without speeding up.

Go deeper (optional): Rest two bars instead of one.

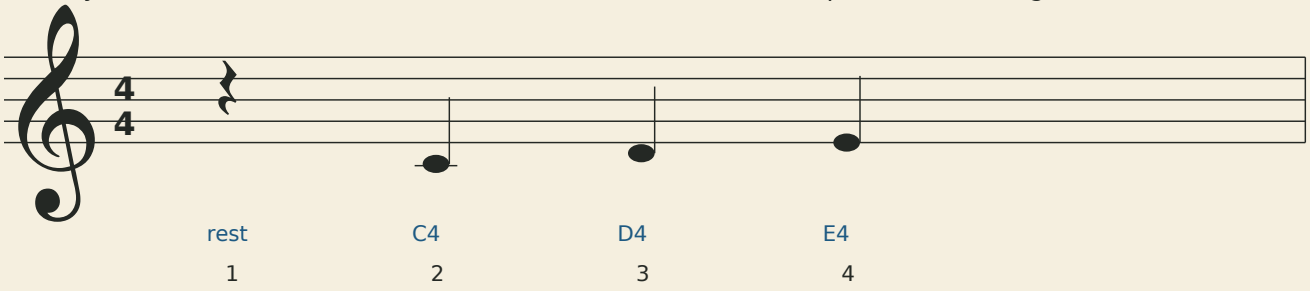
PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / C MAJOR TRIAD

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

DAY 12

Move the entrance

Take Day 4’s first three notes. Start on beat 2: rest, C4, D4, E4. Compare with starting on beat 1.



Listen for: How the entrance changes the feel.

Go deeper (optional): Try beat 3, continuing across the barline with careful counting.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / FIRST BLUE LINE

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

TIME

Days 13 & 14

Five focused minutes after your usual warm-up. Rest freely; repeat any day.

DAY 13

Hear the swing

Listen to a short passage from a jazz recording you own or can stream. Clap its rhythm and sing a small fragment. Play it only after you can sing it.

Listen for: Placement, note length, and articulation.

Go deeper (optional): Try two swung eighth notes on one pitch; use the recording as your model.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / FIRST BLUE LINE

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

DAY 14

Time checkpoint

Record Day 10 at a comfortable tempo. Keep counting the rests. Compare with Day 7 and choose one rhythm goal for next week.



Listen for: A consistent pulse from beginning to end.

Go deeper (optional): If quarter-note time is steady, try a click on beats 2 and 4 at half tempo.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / FIRST BLUE LINE

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

LANGUAGE

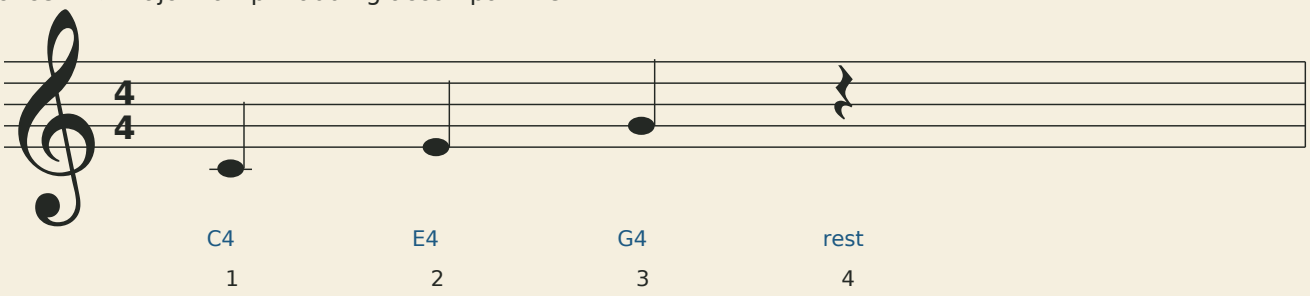
Days 15 & 16

Five focused minutes after your usual warm-up. Rest freely; repeat any day.

DAY 15

A triad becomes a phrase

Use C4, E4, and G4: root, third, and fifth of written C major. Play the pattern, then rest a full bar. Match a concert B♭ major vamp if adding accompaniment.



Listen for: Each note relating to the same chord.

Go deeper (optional): Change the order while keeping the rhythm.

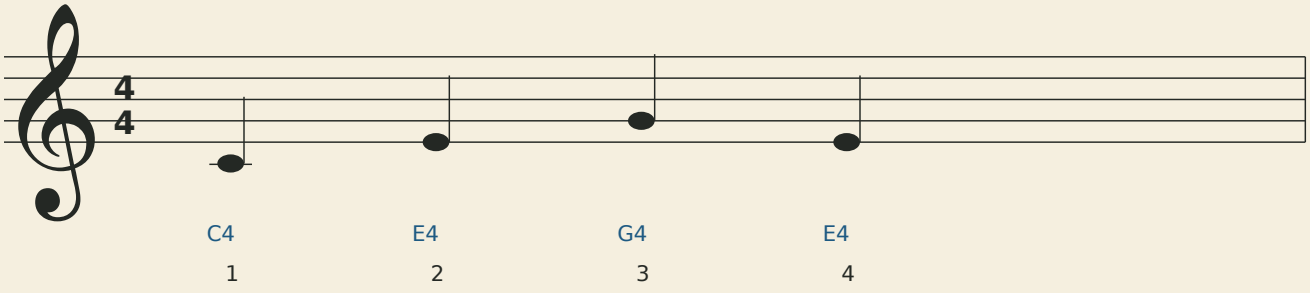
PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / C MAJOR TRIAD

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

DAY 16

Choose your landing note

Over the same written C major setting, play C4–E4–G4–E4. Then change the final note to C4. Compare the endings.



Listen for: The different character of the root and third.

Go deeper (optional): Hold the final note for two beats and shorten the phrase.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / C MAJOR TRIAD

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

LANGUAGE

Days 17 & 18

Five focused minutes after your usual warm-up. Rest freely; repeat any day.

DAY 17

Hear a ii–V–I

In written C: Dm7–G7–Cmaj7. Sing F4–F4–E4, one note per chord. F is the third of Dm7, seventh of G7, then resolves to E, the third of Cmaj7.

Listen for: The half-step resolution F to E.

Go deeper (optional): Try C5–B4–B4: seventh of Dm7, third of G7, seventh of Cmaj7.

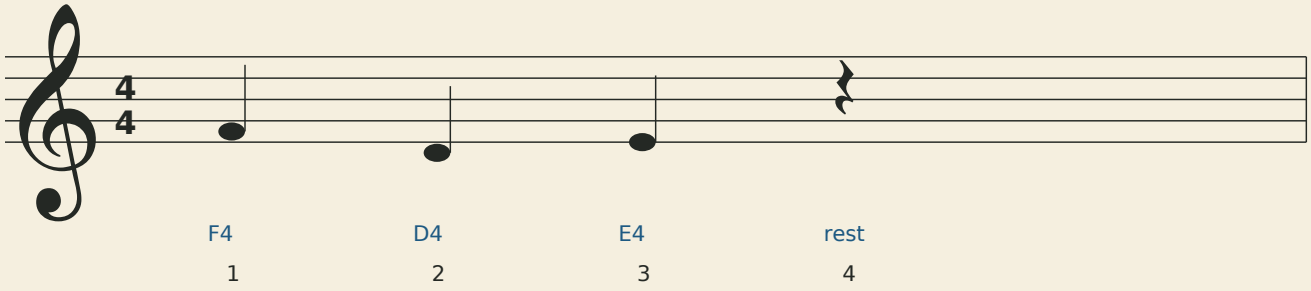
PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / PRO / OPTIONAL / II–V–I WORKSHOP

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

DAY 18

A small enclosure

Over written C major, play F4–D4–E4, then rest. F is a half step above E; D is a scale step below. E is your target.



Listen for: The tension releasing when E arrives.

Go deeper (optional): Place the target E on a strong beat in your own rhythm.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / C MAJOR TRIAD

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

LANGUAGE

Days 19 & 20

Five focused minutes after your usual warm-up. Rest freely; repeat any day.

DAY 19

A chromatic approach

Over written C major, play D♯4–E4, then rest. Approach E from a half step below and listen to the resolution. Use valves 2+3 for D♯4.



Listen for: A deliberate approach and landing.

Go deeper (optional): Try F4–E4 from above.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / C MAJOR TRIAD

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

DAY 20

Take one idea to one new key

Transpose Day 15 from written C major to written F major: F4–A4–C5. Sing first. If the range is not comfortable, sing the new-key version and keep playing the original.

Listen for: The same root-third-fifth relationship.

Go deeper (optional): Add written G major: G4–B4–D5 only if comfortable.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / C MAJOR TRIAD

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

LANGUAGE

Days 21 & 22

Five focused minutes after your usual warm-up. Rest freely; repeat any day.

DAY 21

Learn a tiny phrase by ear

Choose a short fragment from a recording. Sing it, find the notes slowly, and copy the articulation. A few notes are enough; do not rush to a whole solo.

Listen for: Rhythm and note length as well as pitch.

Go deeper (optional): Write it down after you can sing it. Later, try one other key.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / PRO / OPTIONAL / JAZZ LICK LIBRARY

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

DAY 22

Develop one motif

Use C4, D4, and E4 over a matching concert B♭ major vamp. Play a one-bar idea and rest one bar. Repeat with a changed ending.

Listen for: A repeated idea with a small, audible change.

Go deeper (optional): Change the rhythm instead of the ending.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / FIRST BLUE LINE

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

IMPROVISATION

Days 23 & 24

Five focused minutes after your usual warm-up. Rest freely; repeat any day.

DAY 23

Start the written G blues

Sing the scale below. Play slowly only within your comfortable range. Written G blues matches concert F blues. The upper D5 uses valve 1; D4 would use 1+3.

Listen for: The root and the sound of the blue note, D♭.

Go deeper (optional): Stay with G4–B♭4 at first if the full scale is too high.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / WRITTEN G BLUES SCALE

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

DAY 24

One phrase over the blues

Use G4–B♭4–C5–B♭4–G4 if comfortable. Choose a simple rhythm, then leave a full bar of space. Practise over written G / concert F blues.

Listen for: A phrase that belongs to the pulse.

Go deeper (optional): Transpose a small fragment to written C blues after singing it.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / WRITTEN G BLUES SCALE

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

IMPROVISATION

Days 25 & 26

Five focused minutes after your usual warm-up. Rest freely; repeat any day.

DAY 25

Hear the move to IV

Over written G7, sing B4 and F4; over written C7, sing B♭4 and E4. Follow B→B♭ and F→E: each voice moves down a half step.

Listen for: Two separate guide-tone lines changing with the chord.

Go deeper (optional): Play F4→E4 first; add B4→B♭4 only when comfortable.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / PRO / OPTIONAL / II–V–I WORKSHOP

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

DAY 26

A complete twelve-bar chorus

Follow the simplified blues map in the bonus section. Use short phrases in bars 1–4, answer in 5–8, and leave space near the end.

Listen for: Knowing where you are in the form.

Go deeper (optional): Use guide tones at the change to C7, then return to G7.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / WRITTEN G BLUES SCALE

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

IMPROVISATION

Days 27 & 28

Five focused minutes after your usual warm-up. Rest freely; repeat any day.

DAY 27

Make a melody your own

Choose a familiar melody you can already play. Play it clearly once; repeat with one changed rhythm or a short added note.

Listen for: The melody staying recognisable.

Go deeper (optional): Use a ballad tempo with a matching accompaniment.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / FIRST BLUE LINE

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

DAY 28

Shape a chorus

Play your twelve-bar chorus at a comfortable volume. Let the middle become a little stronger, then relax toward the ending.

Listen for: A clear beginning, middle, and ending.

Go deeper (optional): Try changing register rather than volume, within your range.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / WRITTEN G BLUES SCALE

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

IMPROVISATION

Days 29 & 30

Five focused minutes after your usual warm-up. Rest freely; repeat any day.

DAY 29

Record and choose one thing

Record one chorus. Listen once and write a specific next step: steadier rests, clearer endings, or a better chord landing. Then repeat if useful.

Listen for: One practical improvement you can hear.

Go deeper (optional): Compare with your earlier checkpoint recordings.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / FREE / WRITTEN G BLUES SCALE

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

DAY 30

Play and keep going

Play a short tune or chorus for someone, your teacher, or your own recording. Note what improved and choose three favourite days to repeat next week.

Listen for: A musical idea you meant to play.

Go deeper (optional): Try another key or more advanced changes when the core feels secure.

PRACTISE IN JAZZVALVE / PRO / OPTIONAL / JAZZ LICK LIBRARY

☐ Practised / One thing I noticed:

BONUS / PRACTICAL REFERENCE

The written G blues

Written G blues sounds as concert F blues on a B♭ trumpet.

Six pitch classes, plus the repeated root
G4 – B♭4 – C5 – D♭5 – D5 – F5 – G5
Degrees: 1 – ♭3 – 4 – ♭5 – 5 – ♭7 – 1
D♭ is enharmonic to C♯. We spell it D♭ here to show the flattened fifth.

This complete one-octave reference reaches G5. It is not a required beginner range. Sing the full scale; play only the comfortable portion. Your teacher can adapt the register.

G4	B♭4	C5	D♭5	D5	F5	G5
open	1	open	1+2	1	1	open

A small phrase
G4 – B♭4 – C5 – B♭4 – G4. Sing first. If those notes are easy, invent a rhythm and leave a full bar of silence afterward. A five-note phrase is part of a chorus; it is not a complete twelve-bar chorus by itself.

The blue-note connector
C5 – D♭5 – D5 – D♭5 – C5. Fingerings: open, 1+2, 1, 1+2, open. In this register D5 uses valve 1. Keep the tempo slow enough for clean valve changes.

An open-valve triad, with register specified
G4 – C5 – E5 – G5 outlines written C major, starting on its fifth. All four notes use open valves in these registers. This is an optional upper-register reference, not a tone exercise every beginner must play.

FREE / OPEN THE WRITTEN G BLUES SCALE

BONUS / HARMONY

Guide tones and the blues

Hear chord function before trying to fill every beat.

G7 to C7: two voices
G7 has B (third) and F (seventh). C7 has E (third) and B♭ (seventh). Follow B4→B♭4 and F4→E4: both voice-leading moves descend a half step, and the functions switch. Practise each voice separately before combining them.

A sequence B–F–E–B♭–B alternates between voices; it does not show each voice descending in order. Choose one clear voice-leading path when learning the sound.

A simplified twelve-bar dominant blues
These are written trumpet chord names; concert accompaniment is a whole step lower. This is one common simplified form, not every jazz blues variation.

BAR 1	BAR 2	BAR 3	BAR 4
G7	**G7**	**G7**	**G7**
BAR 5	BAR 6	BAR 7	BAR 8
C7	**C7**	**G7**	**G7**
BAR 9	BAR 10	BAR 11	BAR 12
D7	**C7**	**G7**	**D7**

Your phrase plan
Bars 1–4: state a short idea; leave space.
Bars 5–6: answer over C7; try F→E or B→B♭.
Bars 7–8: return to the original idea over G7.
Bars 9–10: listen to D7→C7; use a simple phrase or rest.
Bars 11–12: end clearly; D7 prepares the next G7 chorus.

If your backing track uses a quick IV, ii–V substitutions, or a different turnaround, follow that track’s chart. The D7 in bar 12 leads forward; it is not the final tonic ending of a performance.

REFERENCE

Fingerings with octaves

Common starting fingerings; tuning and alternate fingerings depend on context.

C4	0	**A♯4 / B♭4**	1
C♯4 / D♭4	1+2+3	**B4**	2
D4	1+3	**C5**	0
D♯4 / E♭4	2+3	**C♯5 / D♭5**	1+2
E4	1+2	**D5**	1
F4	1	**D♯5 / E♭5**	2
F♯4 / G♭4	2	**E5**	0
G4	0	**F5**	1
G♯4 / A♭4	2+3	**F♯5 / G♭5**	2
A4	1+2	**G5**	0

0 means open. Numbers show valves held down together. C4 is middle C below the staff; C5 is the third-space C. This chart starts at C4 to keep the core range clear. Lower notes and alternate fingerings are outside this compact reference.

For low D4 and C♯4, ask your teacher about using the third-valve slide to adjust pitch. Fingerings alone do not establish the correct partial, sound, or tuning.

PRO / OPTIONAL / HEAR THE C MAJOR SCALE

MAKE PROGRESS VISIBLE

Your thirty-day practice log

Mark days when you practise. Repeat days freely; missed days do not erase progress.

- ☐ Day 01
- ☐ Day 02
- ☐ Day 03
- ☐ Day 04
- ☐ Day 05
- ☐ Day 06
- ☐ Day 07
- ☐ Day 08
- ☐ Day 09
- ☐ Day 10
- ☐ Day 11
- ☐ Day 12
- ☐ Day 13
- ☐ Day 14
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- ☐ Day 22
- ☐ Day 23
- ☐ Day 24
- ☐ Day 25
- ☐ Day 26
- ☐ Day 27
- ☐ Day 28
- ☐ Day 29
- ☐ Day 30

Checkpoint notes
Day 7: What sounds steadier?
Day 14: Can I count through rests?
Day 21: Can I hear a target note?
Day 30: Can I play a phrase I intended?

KEEP GOING

From practice to a habit

Choose three favourite days. Repeat them next week with one small change.

Keep it simple. Choose your next exercise and comfortable tempo before putting the horn away. Save a short recording so you can hear your progress.

Hear it. Practise it. Play it.
Start with a free exercise below. Pro is optional for completing this workbook.

FREE / FIRST BLUE LINE

FREE / C MAJOR TRIAD

PRO / OPTIONAL / C MAJOR SCALE

PRO / OPTIONAL / EXPLORE JAZZ LICKS

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