DAILY ROUTINES for trumpet

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Introduction

Developing fundamental playing skills on a daily basis is one of the most important keys to becoming a better brass player. Most successful brass players rely on warm-up/daily routines for three reasons:

- Increased strength and endurance
- Greater consistency at top performances levels
- Continued improvement in basic skills over time

Many famous trumpeters including J.B. Arban, Herbert L. Clark, Vincent Chichowicz, James Stamp, Bill Adams, John Haynie, Ray Mase, Michael Sachs, Wolfgang Guggenberger, Allen Vizzutti and Anthony Plog have written valuable materials designed to help trumpeters improve their fundamentals. Even with ample resources such as these, it is most common for trumpeters to select exercises from a variety of books in order to develop an all-inclusive routine.

Daily Routines for Trumpet offers a new spin on practicing fundamentals because each routine addresses the most important aspects of trumpet technique. Simply play one thirty minute routine each day as though you would play an etude and you will cover your fundamentals.

This book is divided into eight routines, each of which is constructed to cover eight skill areas. The routines are:

- Basic Routine
- Drone
- Minor
- Starting with the Mouthpiece
- Pentatonic
- Chromatic and Octatonic
- Duet
- Easy

Since each of the eight routines covers all the skill categories, trumpeters need only play one routine each day to cover all the fundamentals of playing.

Following are some guidelines for each of the skill areas to help you maximize your practice time. While it is not within the scope of this book, it is very important for trumpet students to practice in an artistic realm in addition to acquiring these skills.

Skill Area #1: Tone Production

Strive at all times for a relaxed airflow, proper postural balance and an ever-improving concept of sound. Listen carefully to your tone and intonation while playing and strive to buzz the mouthpiece in tune. Tone production should be practiced at all dynamic levels and with crescendos/diminuendos.

I highly recommend keeping a copy of David Vining's ***Breathing Book for Trumpet*** (published by Mountain Peak Music) on the stand and reading at least one page of text every day while practicing tone production and other basic trumpet techniques.

Skill Area #2: Connecting Notes in Slurred Passages

Concentrate on how one note connects to the next at very slow tempos; this gives you time to coordinate all necessary physical actions and assess the aural quality of each connection.

Faster slurred passages are extremely valuable in developing coordination between fingers, embouchure and airflow. In all slurred passages, think about the quality of sound and keep the tone quality consistent between the end of one note and the beginning of the next.

Skill Area #3: Flexibility

When playing these studies one must develop flexibility in the blowing mechanism as well as flexibility in the embouchure. Use the flexibility skill area to develop the ability to change air speeds (generally fast in the high register and slower in the low register) while keeping the airstream relaxed. Always keep the sound sustained as long as possible—changes from one partial to the next should be immediate and with consistent tone quality.

A number of lip bending exercises are included in this book to increase embouchure strength and control. If the upper notes do not bend as easily at first, give them time and use regular fingerings until the necessary strength and flexibility is established. Maintain a constant airflow throughout each lip bend.

Skill Area #4: Articulation

To develop great articulation it is imperative to maintain a consistent and relaxed airflow. The tongue does not create the tone—a vibrating column of air does, so keep the airflow generous and steady as you articulate.

For the "T" articulation, the tip of the tongue is placed between the top back-side of the upper front teeth and the gums that come into contact with that area. The exceptions to this tongue placement guideline are in the very low register and in the rare instance of "anchor tonguing" technique. The "D" articulation uses a portion of the tongue that is slightly farther back than the tip. There are infinite variations between the "T" and "D" articulations; cultivate these articulation variations as you work on this skill area.

Skill Area #5: Development of Range

One of the best ways to develop range is to take a passage that is comfortable in the middle register and transpose it (both up and down) into registers where it is less comfortable. Strive for the same ease and clarity of sound regardless of the register.

This book has many examples of exercises starting in the low register that are transposed chromatically up to the high register. There is no need to stop transposing where the book does. Continue to transpose the passages upward to your heart's content, but keep the sound quality and relaxation that comes more naturally in the middle register. When playing in the high register, use faster air and accurately buzz the higher pitches. The fourth routine, for example, uses the familiar second movement from Haydn's *Trumpet Concerto* to accomplish this.

Skill Area #6: Initial Attacks/Timing Drills

These two areas are related to one another because so much of successfully performing initial attacks is about the coordination of several different muscle groups at one precise moment. This coordination is best achieved by simplifying one's frame of mind to the proverbial "Song and Wind" phrase developed by the great tubist and pedagogue, Arnold Jacobs.

A useful preliminary exercise for the timing drills found near the end of the routines (such as 7A and 7B in the first routine) is to practice the air patterns without making any sound on the trumpet. Use short, isolated bursts of air as if blowing a small dart through a straw with no residual tension between the bursts (the wind). Next, when playing on trumpet, create a mental image of precisely what you desire for pitch, sound and attack (the song), while keeping the air exactly the same as in the preliminary exercise. Adjust as needed to improve and return your focus to "Song and Wind."

Spend a few moments each day practicing finger technique without making a sound on the trumpet. Strive for ergonomically correct right-hand position—use curved fingers with fingertips placed on the valve caps. Work toward a fast motion from open to closed valve positions (or vice-versa) while maintaining a completely relaxed right hand. Try practicing tricky fingering passages by silently fingering the passages while singing them out loud.

Skill Area #8: Intonation/Ear Development

Always keep in mind the musical applications in your development of technique and always look for ways to improve your musicianship while practicing your instrument.

Using a drone (preferably a commercially produced audio recording and less preferably a tuner that creates all chromatic pitches) and listening carefully for beautifully in-tune intervals that you create with the drone can make an exercise much more applicable to creating music at a high level. Similarly, the potential for developing listening and ensemble skills while playing the duet routine with another player is vast. Don't hesitate to create ways to practice with other musicians. The duet routine serves as an example of how to practice basic techniques with others.

Practicing trumpet is a mindful activity. If these exercises need to be altered in any way to help you become a better player, make those changes. Minimally, add rests if helpful and rest between exercises as much as necessary.

Each of these routines takes about half an hour to play. When I have the time, I like to intersperse listening to music and reading about technique within my daily routine, which increases the amount of time I need to complete a routine to about an hour. Conversely, there are days (like it or not) when I have less than fifteen minutes to get in a "mini-routine." If you don't have time to complete an entire routine, it is acceptable to abbreviate the drills to accommodate your schedule.

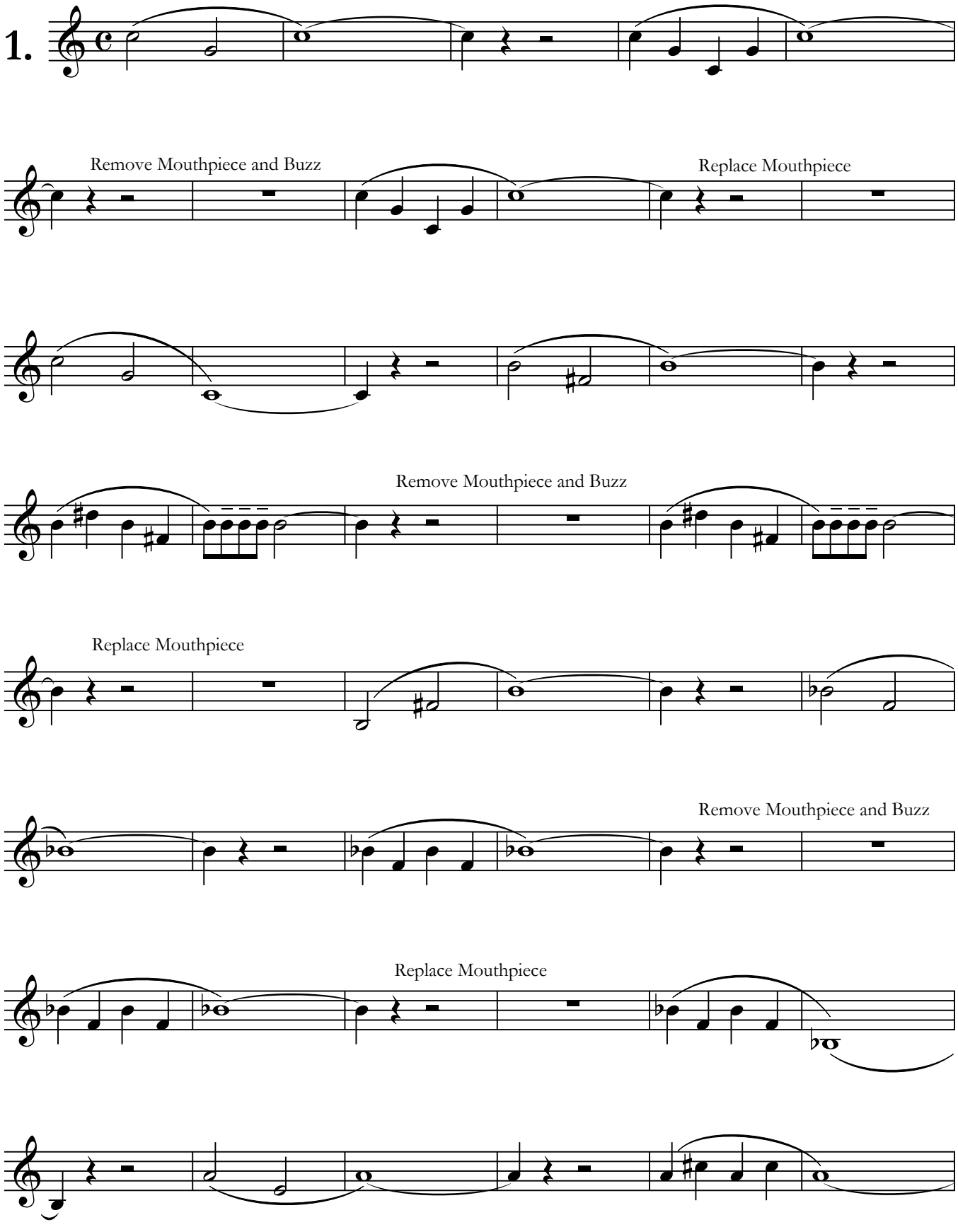
Best wishes for many excellent, productive practice sessions!

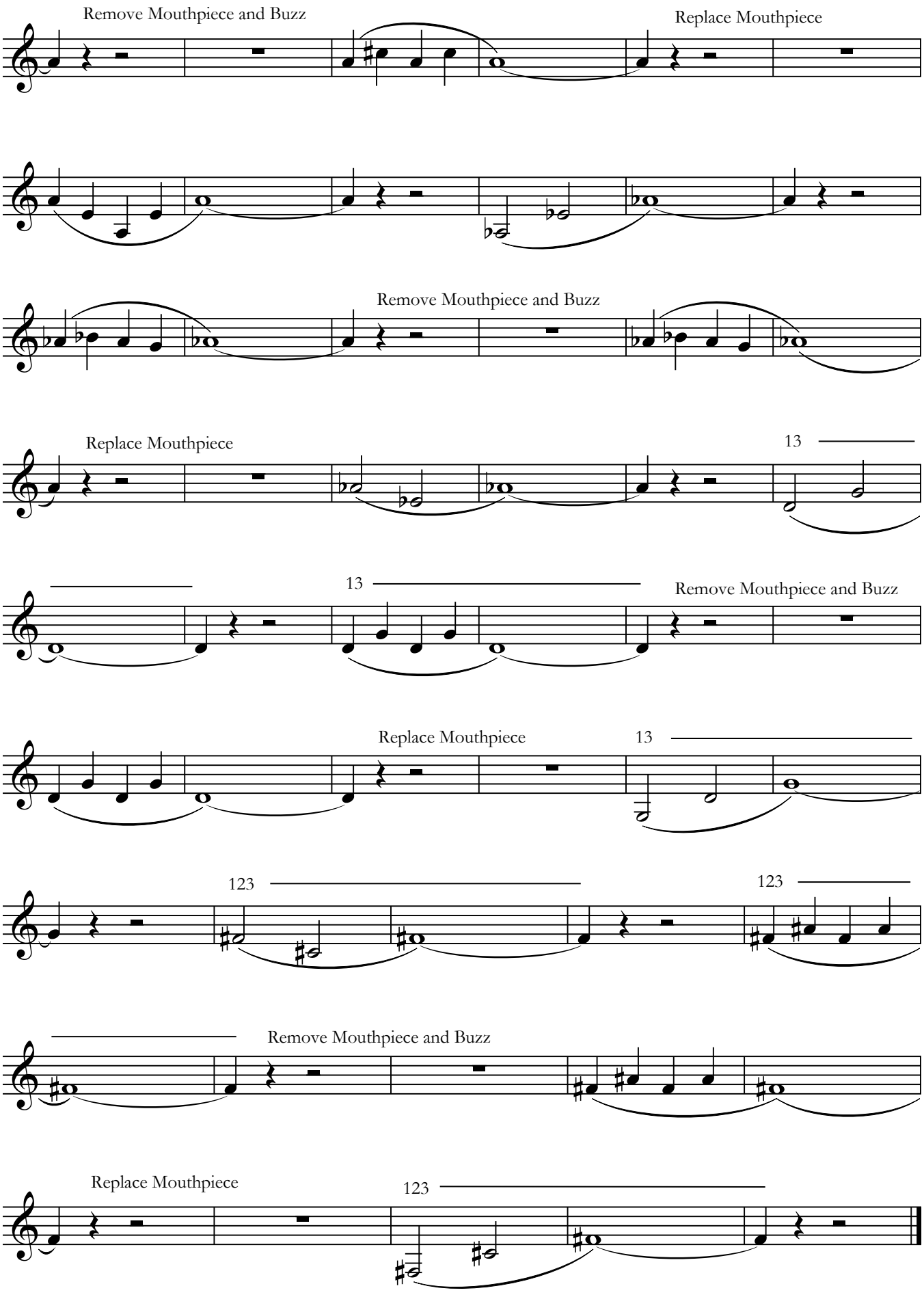
Stephen Dunn
Flagstaff, Arizona
January, 2012

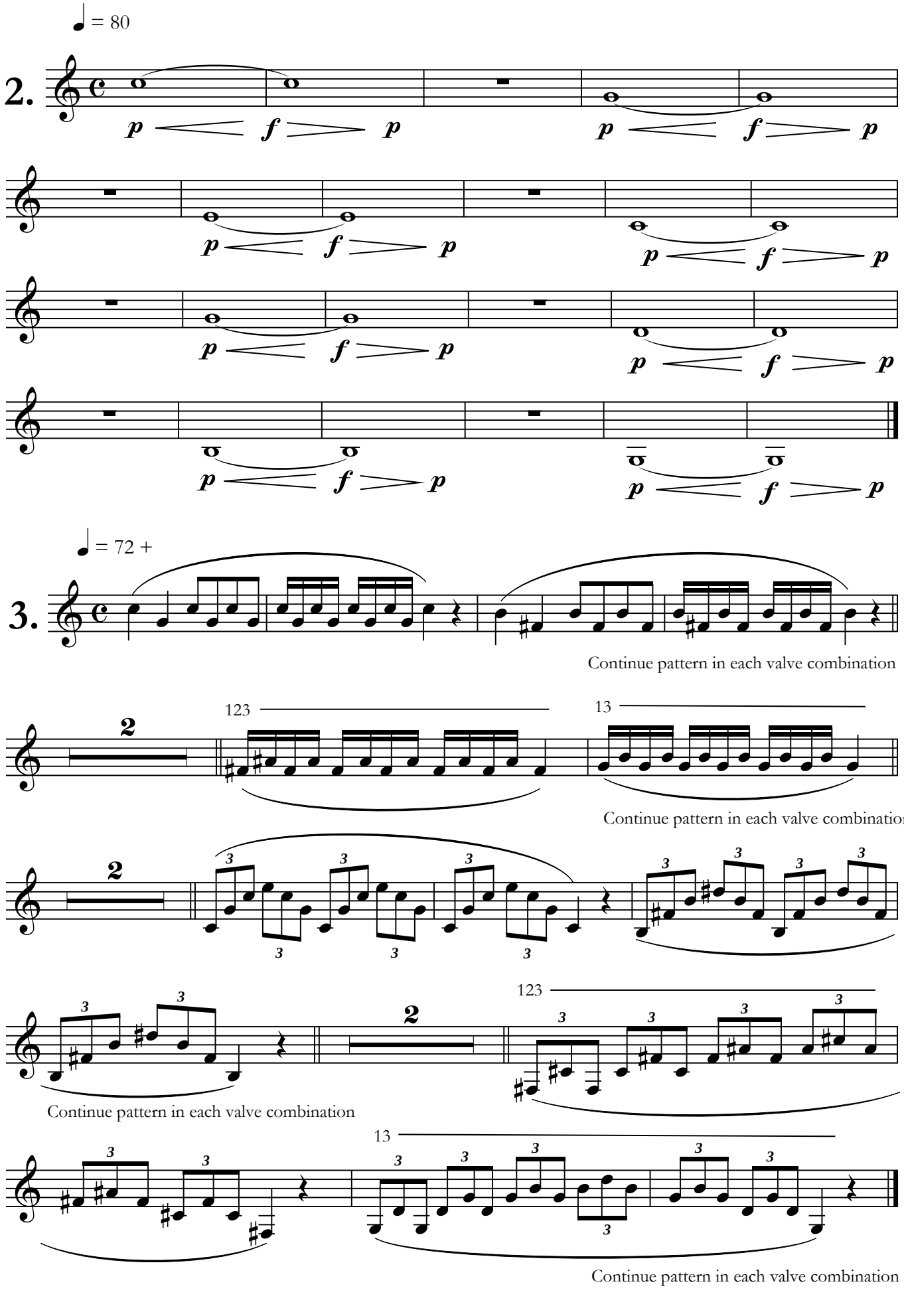
I. Basic Routine

♩ = 72

1.




Remove Mouthpiece and Buzz
Replace Mouthpiece
Remove Mouthpiece and Buzz
Replace Mouthpiece
13
13
Remove Mouthpiece and Buzz
Replace Mouthpiece
13
123
123
Remove Mouthpiece and Buzz
Replace Mouthpiece
123

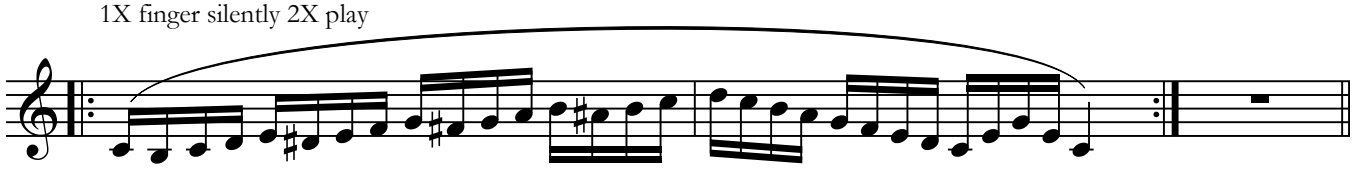

♩ = 80
2.
p f p
p f p
p f p
p f p
p f p
p f p
p f p
p f p
♩ = 72 +
3.
Continue pattern in each valve combination
123
13
Continue pattern in each valve combination
123
Continue pattern in each valve combination
13
Continue pattern in each valve combination

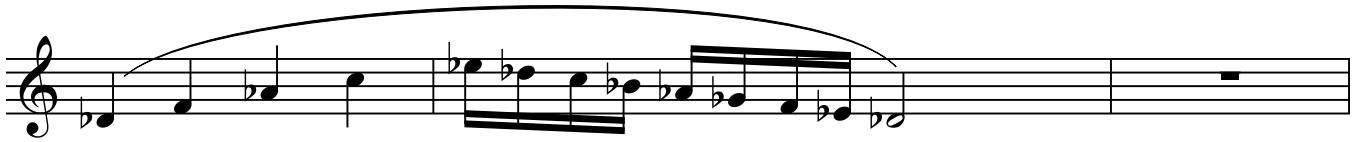
♩ = 76 +

Choose appropriate lines according to daily needs. It is not necessary to play each line every day, although it is recommended to choose lines in both the low and high registers.

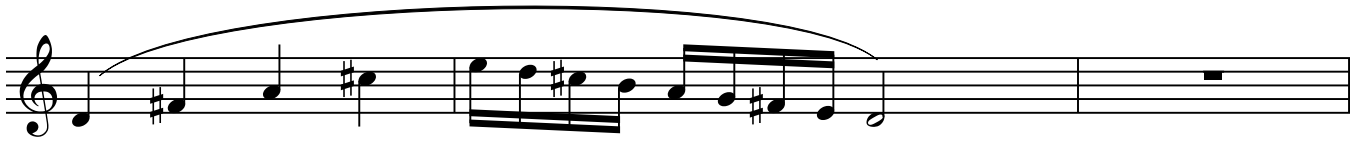
4.

1X finger silently 2X play

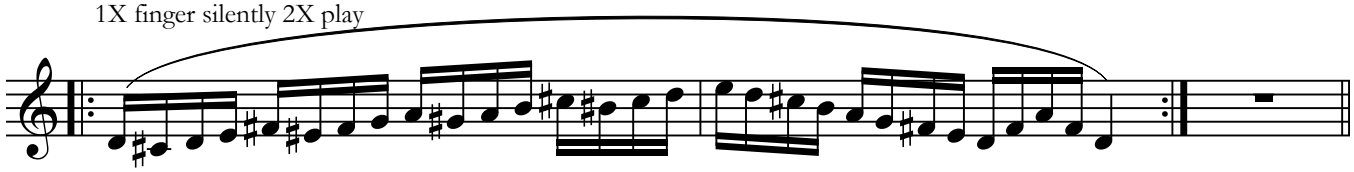


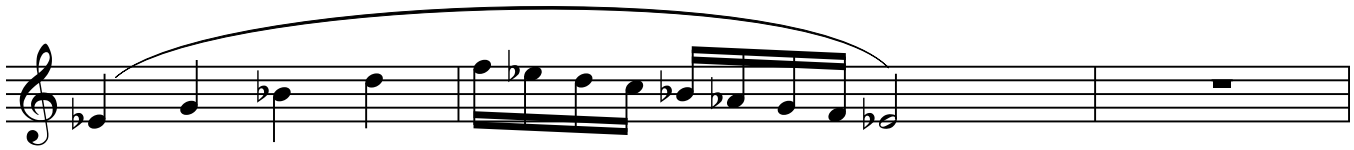


1X finger silently 2X play

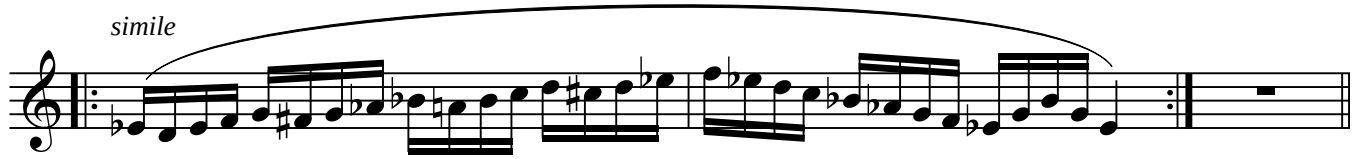


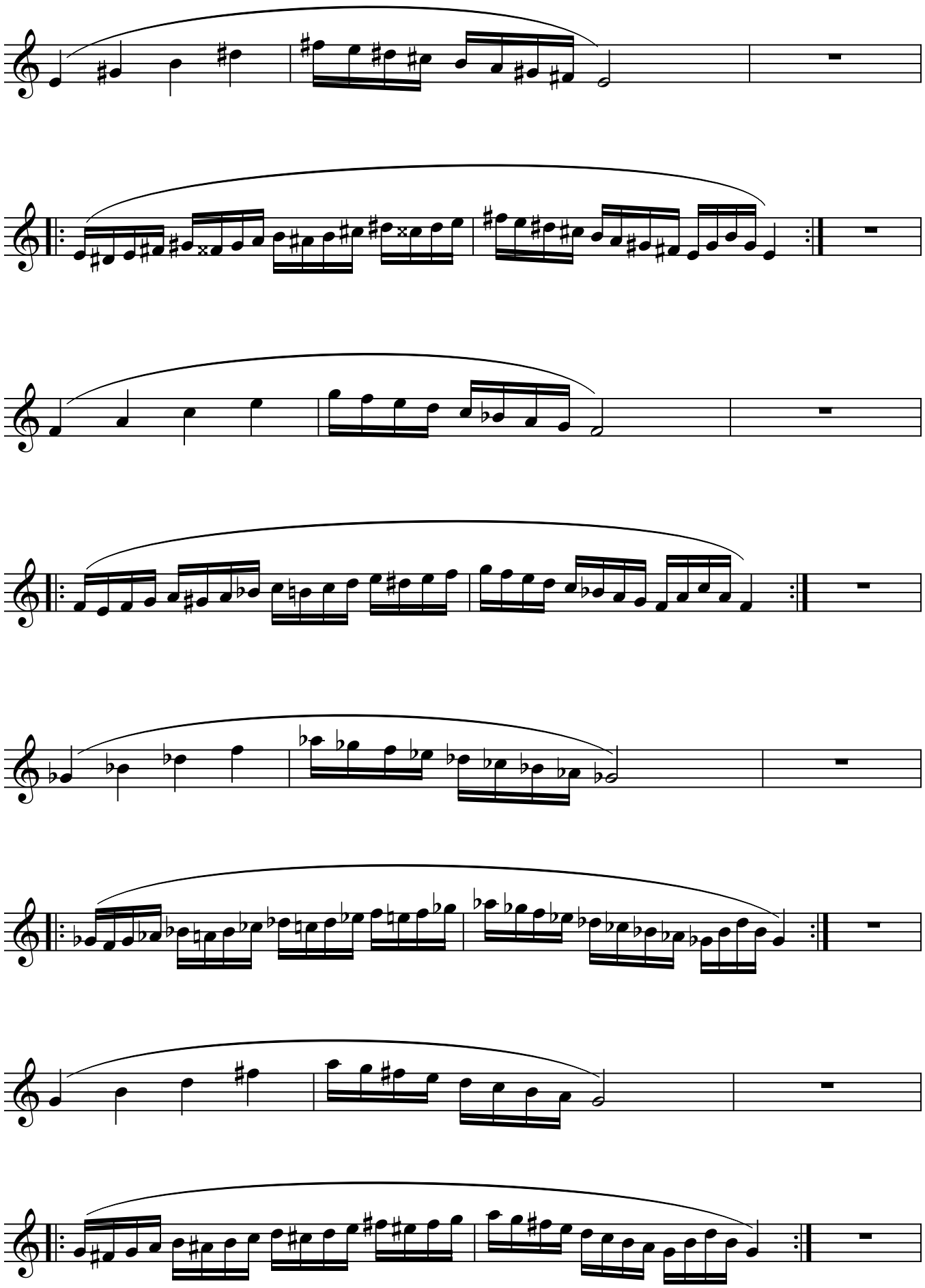
1X finger silently 2X play

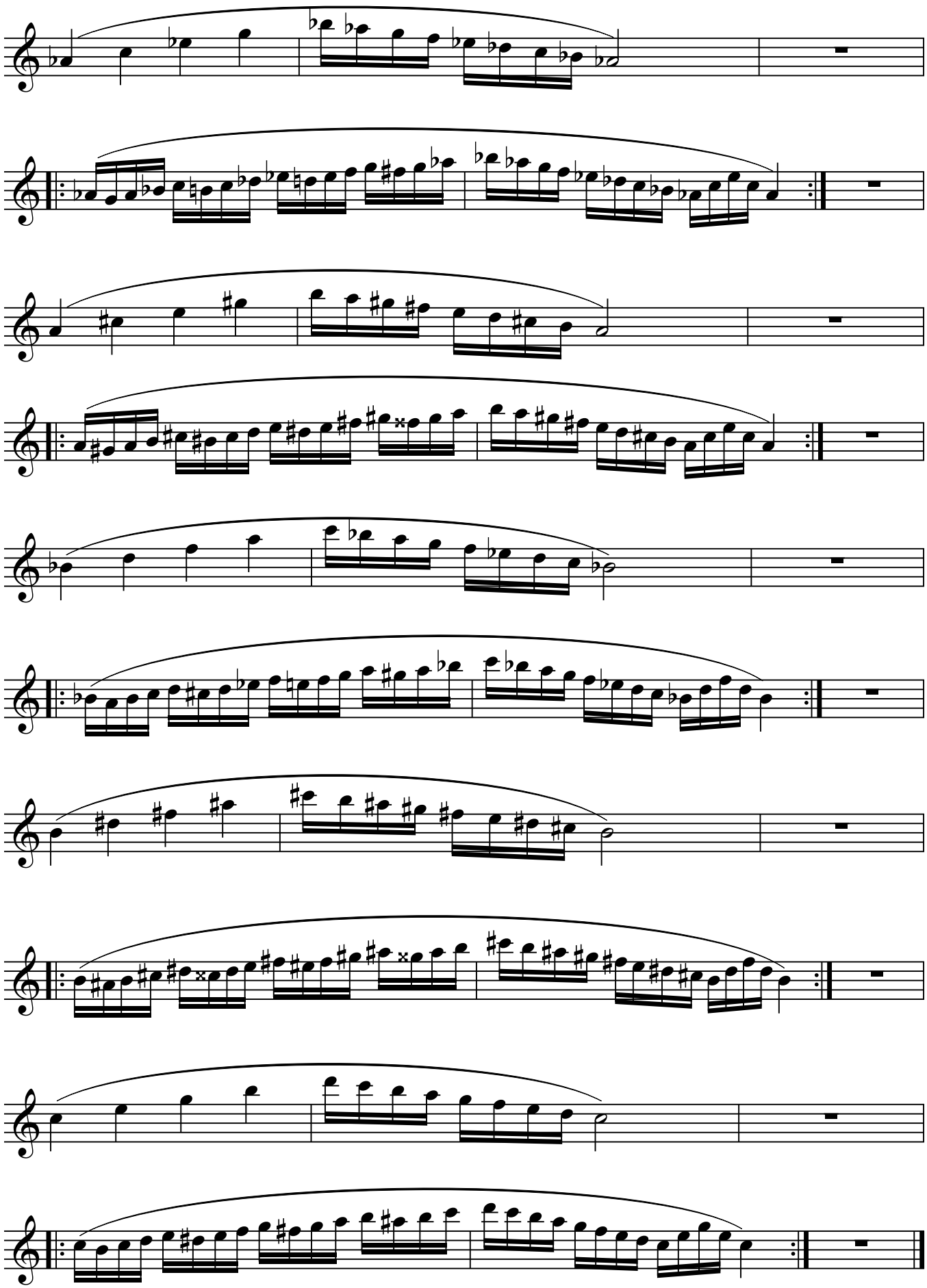


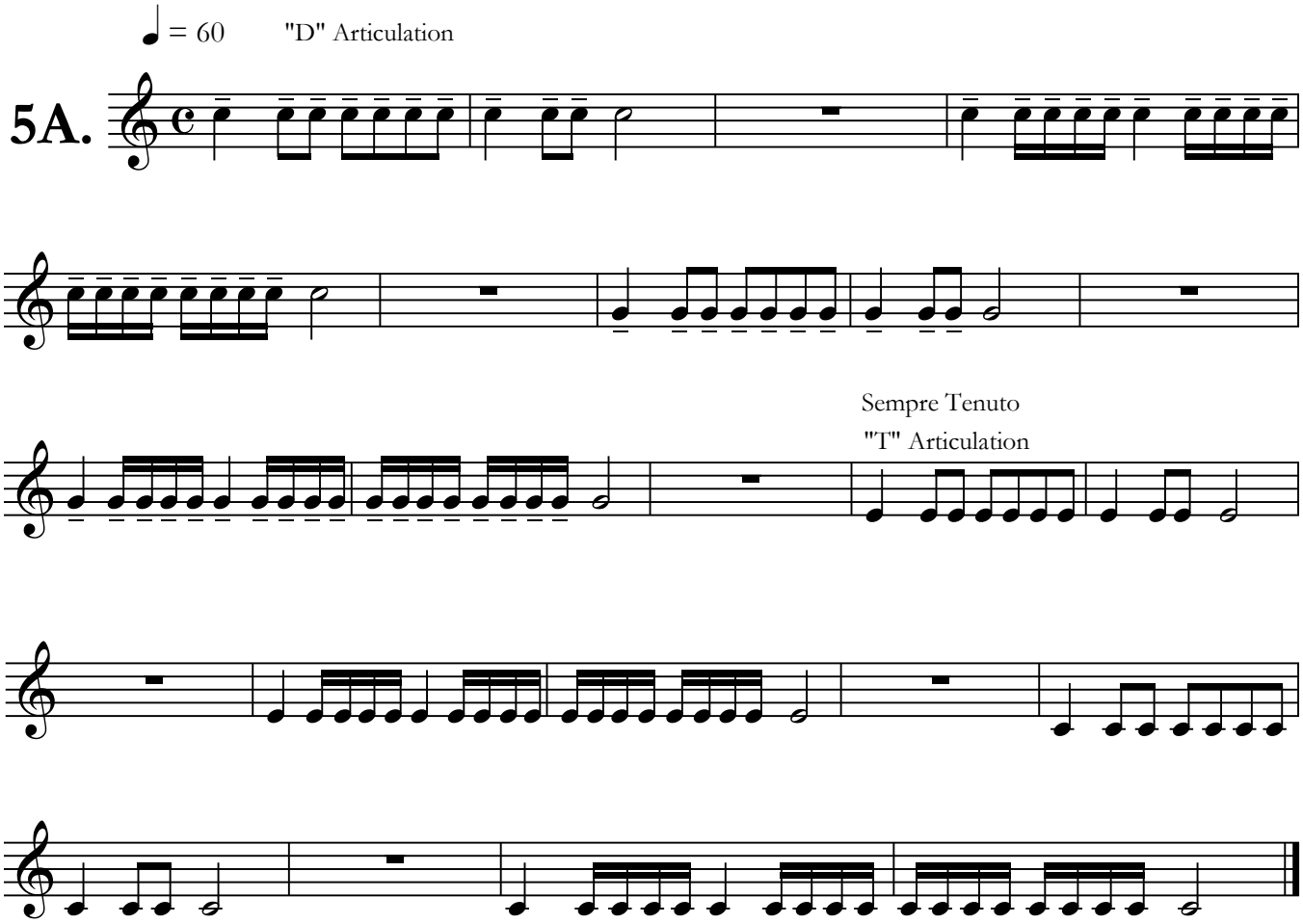


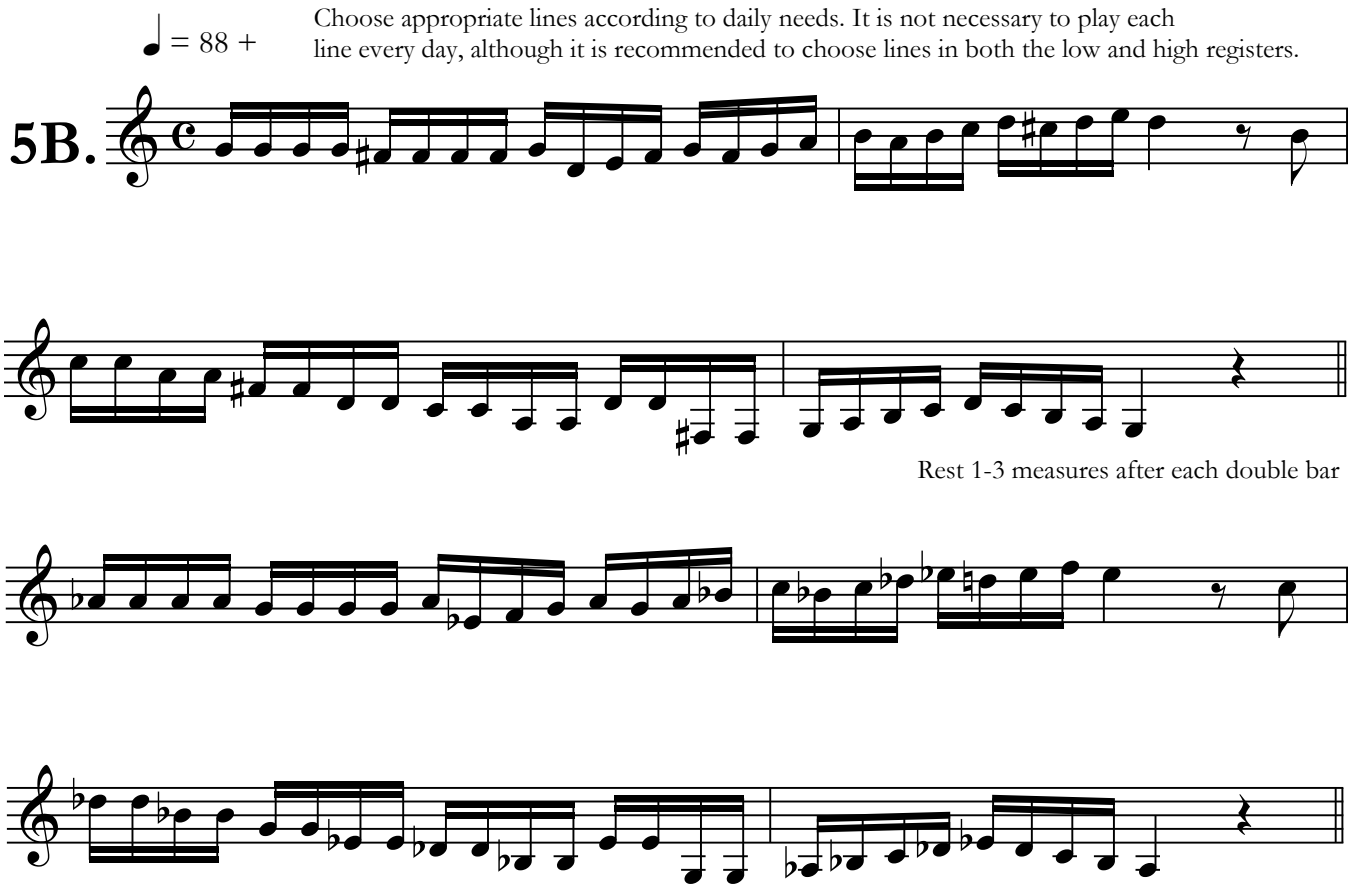
simile

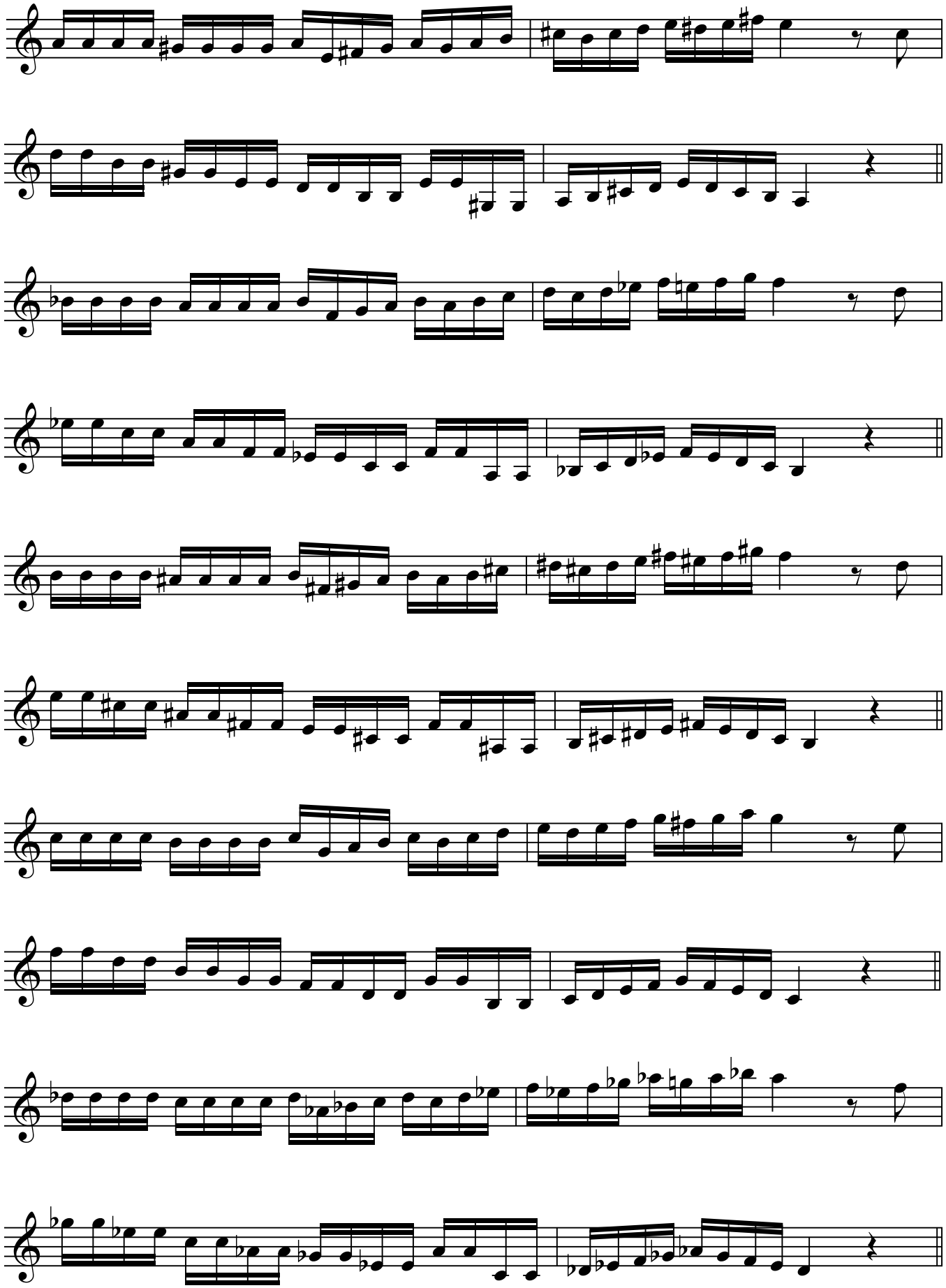


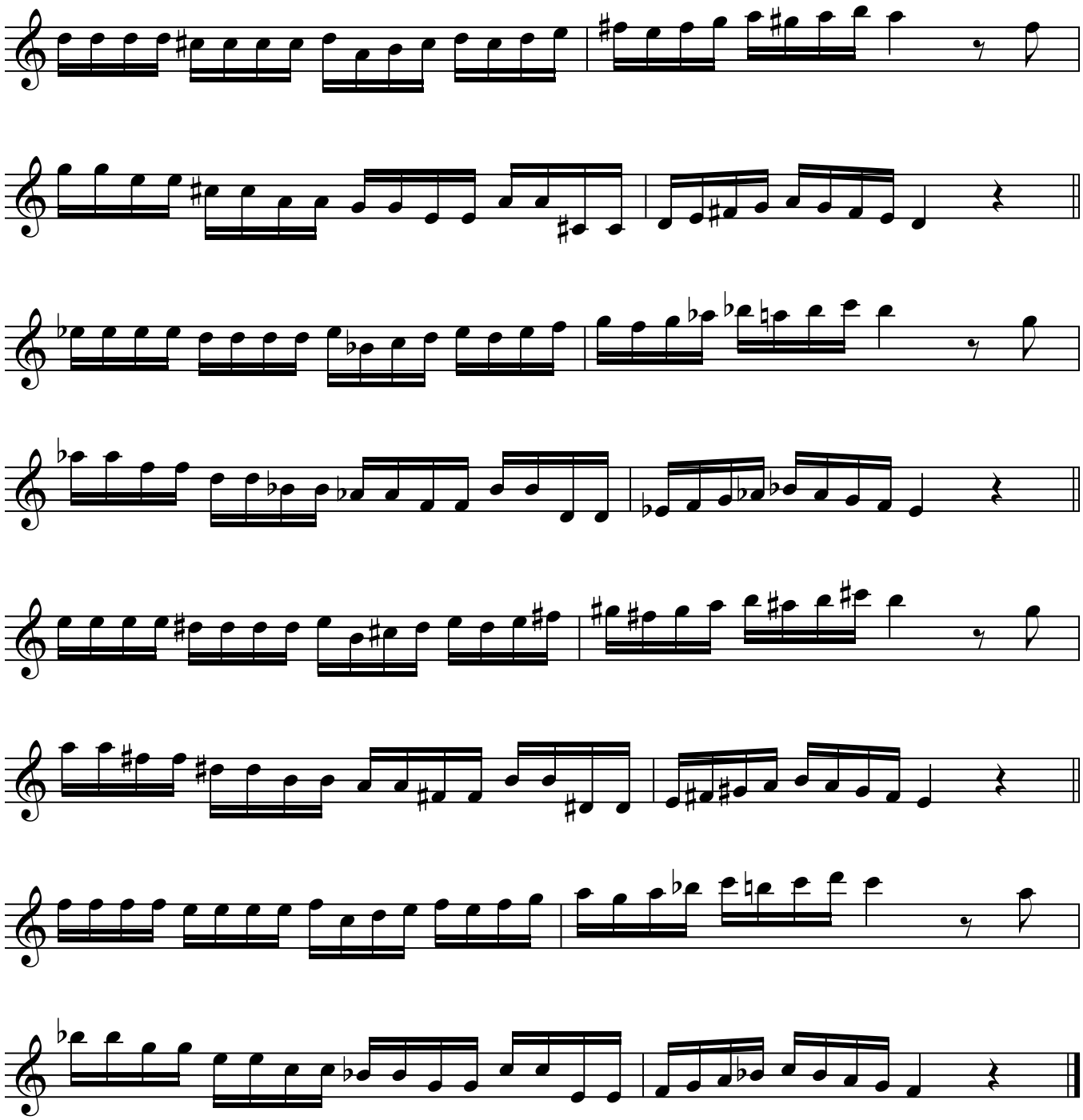





♩ = 60
"D" Articulation
5A.
Sempre Tenuto
"T" Articulation

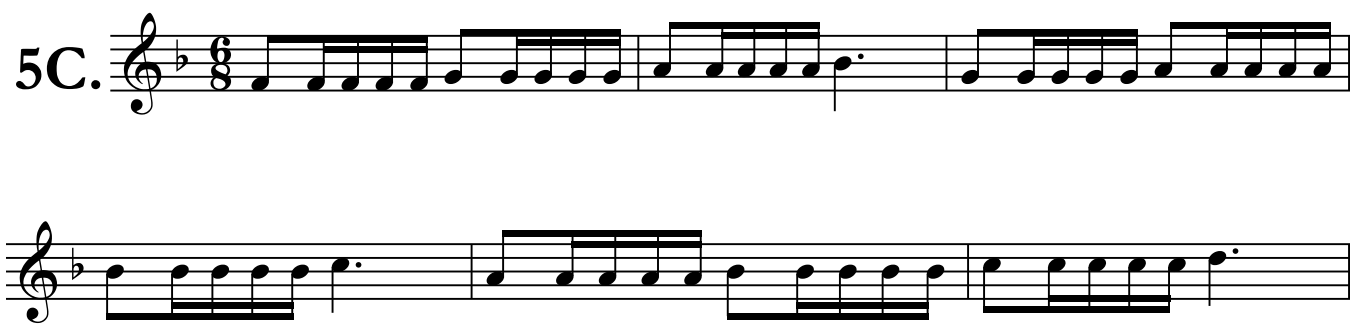

♩ = 88 +
Choose appropriate lines according to daily needs. It is not necessary to play each line every day, although it is recommended to choose lines in both the low and high registers.
5B.
Rest 1-3 measures after each double bar

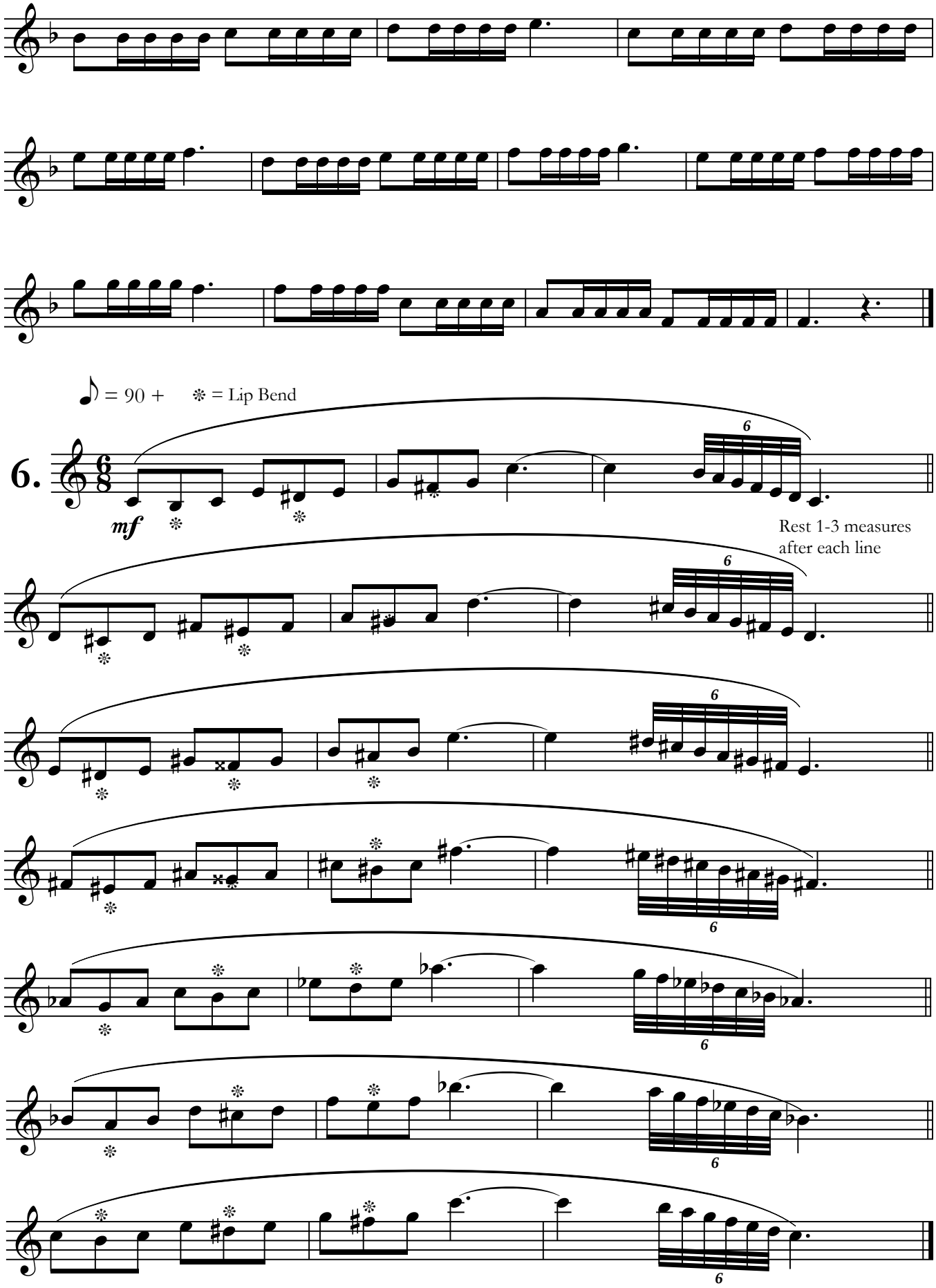


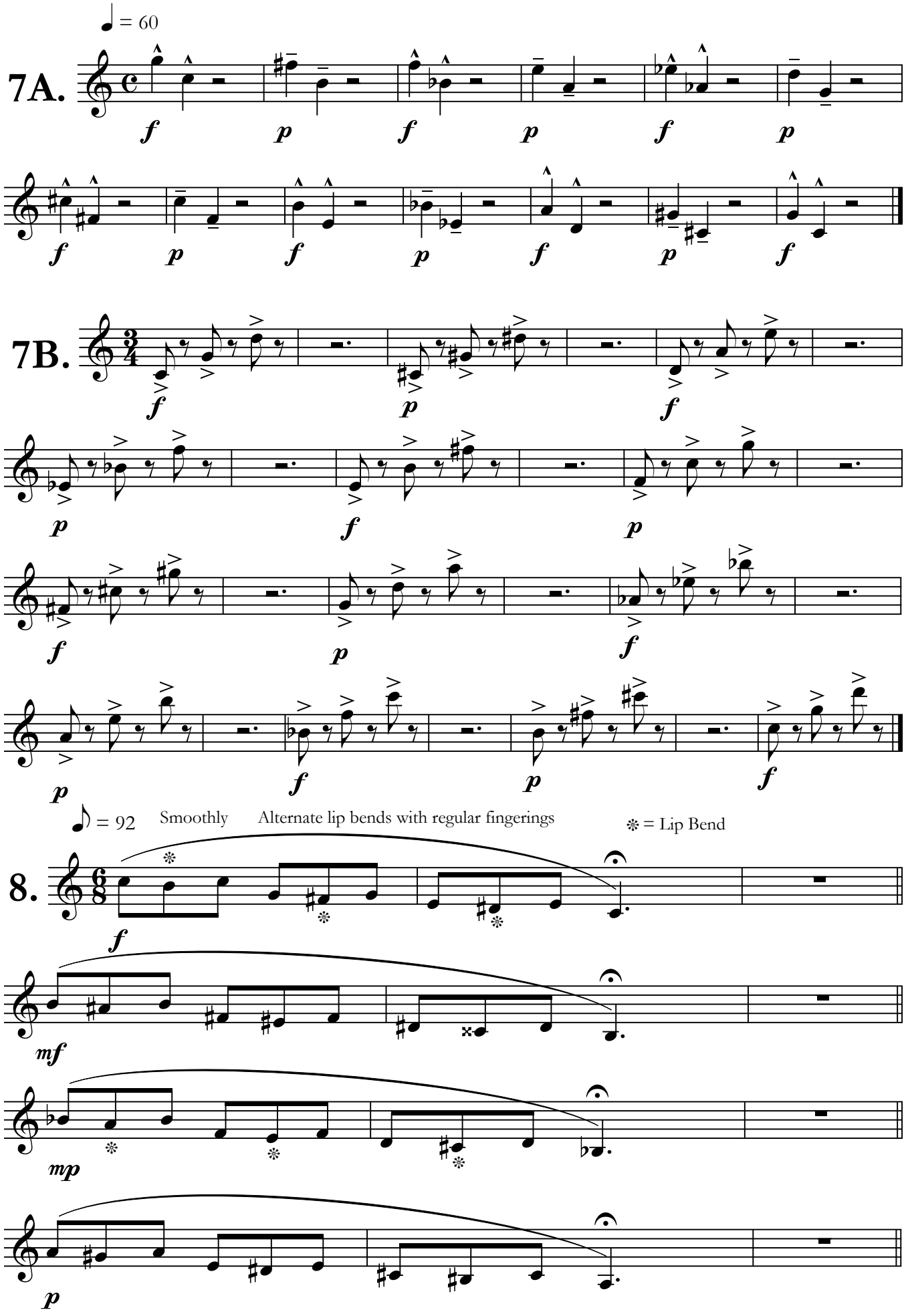


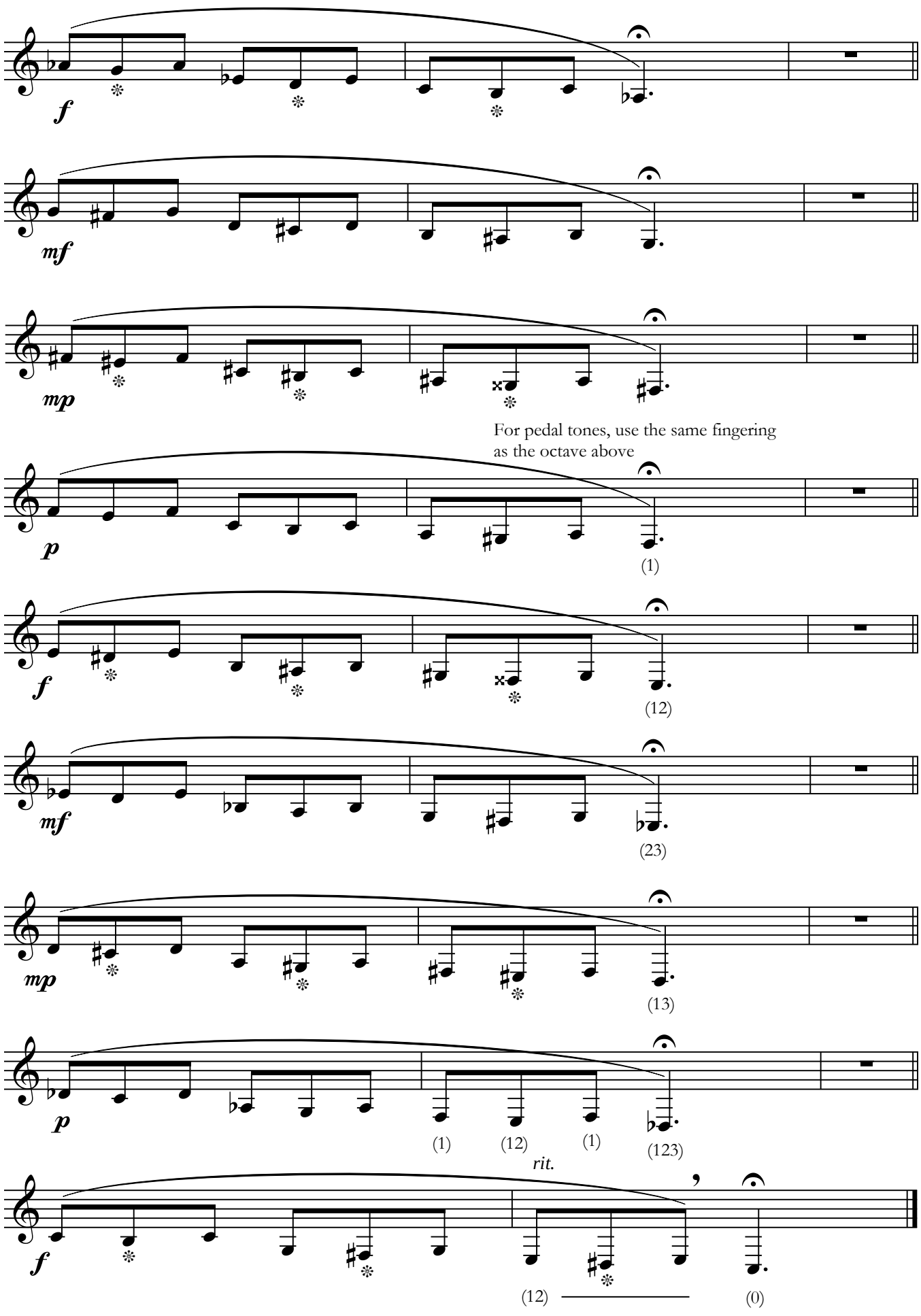
♩. = 88 + Double Tonguing

5C.




♪ = 90 +
❊ = Lip Bend
6.
mf
Rest 1-3 measures
after each line
Continue up chromatically
as far as comfortable


♩ = 60
7A.
f p f p f p
f p f p f p f
7B.
f p f
p f p
f p f
p f p
♪ = 92
Smoothly
Alternate lip bends with regular fingerings
❊ = Lip Bend
8.
f
mf
mp
p


f
mf
mp
For pedal tones, use the same fingering
as the octave above
p
(1)
f
(12)
mf
(23)
mp
(13)
p
(1)
(12)
(1)
(123)
rit.
f
(12)
(0)