

Figure 1. Borrowed Music for Alto Trombone: Practical and Historical Rubric

Practical	<p>Historical uses remain practical and relevant to reach the audiences that exist for those musics today.</p> <p>Improved design and technology like microphones makes lighter, faster, and more nuanced performances possible. Electronic recording technology has grown the potential audience markedly.</p> <p>Portability of musical experience adds to the market but devalues the experience by making it more accessible. Live performers compete with the comfort and ease of experiencing musical and visual media at home.</p>	<p>Write for the level of performer you are targeting. Pieces commissioned by virtuosos can push the envelope. However, pieces for students merit difficult but achievable scoring more in line with their ability.</p> <p>Performers today benefit from modern design and maintenance materials as well as technology like the microphone. Expectations of basic proficiency are higher than in the past.</p>	<p>Recordings are a relatively new venue and media for musical performances.</p> <p>The microphone adds subtlety to live and recorded performances in venues that hold tens or thousands. Unamplified performances in recital allow similar expression, to a smaller audience.</p>	<p>Used variously in performance of historic orchestral and sacred musics; stage and screen scores; brass ensembles; replacement for horn parts in woodwind quintets; potential for Jazz and contemporary musics as a solo instrument or trombone section leader; anywhere a wind instrument with a high range and singing tone is desirable.</p>	<p>Borrowing eases the creation of new works for alto trombone.</p> <p>One need not be an amazing composer in order to make a new text by an amazing composer.</p>	<p>The alto is lighter in tone and character than the tenor and bass trombones.</p> <p>A clearer tone than horn with the unique capacity for fluid movement between notes that a handslide provides.</p>
Historical	<p>Past audience members tended to belong to privileged classes who sponsored the musicians in one way or another. Today the trombone is enjoyed by a broad audience in many musics and settings.</p> <p>Audience has evolved from church and public ceremony instrument to wide usage in secular, sacred, and popular musics. The alto has largely been replaced by the tenor in many ensembles today out of convenience.</p> <p>Opportunities to grow the audience lie in applying the instrument in novel and traditional settings .</p>	<p>The great number of alto trombonists performed in concert with other trombonists around them as part of a larger setting. Background and support roles dominated the demands placed on the instrument.</p> <p>Pedagogical and cultural developments are growing the number of alto trombonists and what they are expected to be capable of accomplishing.</p>	<p>Usage in concert halls, band stands, and amongst militaries eventually led to dominance of tenor over the alto trombone because tenor is louder and easier to perform.</p> <p>Live performance was the only historical media to experience alto trombone</p>	<p>A group of three trombones is standard in orchestral music. Modern musicians tend to use two tenors and a bass trombone. Historical practice included alto, tenor and bass.</p> <p>Past and present use as a background and support instrument in large ensembles is supplemented by a growing number of accomplished performers and rising expectations of the instrument's capability. Scores range from unaccompanied works to solo with piano to small ensembles to concertos in front of a large orchestra.</p>	<p>Borrowed music has long been accepted among musicians of all types.</p> <p>Computer technology and programs make the creation and editing of musical scores easier than ever before. Computer scores follow the traditional methods of score creation and rules of musical text.</p>	<p>Sacred origins have grown to include secular and modern mannerisms at the will of the musician.</p> <p>Vocal colors in tone and articulation execute melodic material convincingly.</p>
Audience	Performer	Venue/Media	Ensemble	Borrowing	Character	

Figure 2. Alto Trombone: A Compositional Rubric

Range	Articulation	Intervallic Motion	Strengths & Weaknesses
<p>Built on the same principles as tenor and bass trombone but on a smaller scale, the alto trombone (in modern usage) is voiced a fourth higher than tenor. Thus it is based on Eb rather than Bb overtones in the first slide position.</p> <p>There are seven standard positions for the slide on alto and tenor trombones.</p> <p>Theoretical chromatic range from A1 to G5 with Bb valve attachment. The instrument is not chromatic between A2 and Eb2 on instruments that do not have a valve section.</p> <p>Pragmatic range from Eb2 to G5 for collegiate and professional performers. Less experienced performers tend to have a smaller accessible range that needs to be accommodated for in composition.</p>	<p>Articulations cover a gamut from smooth to very hard and vary somewhat between players.</p> <p>The extremely smooth legato embodied in melodious songs is an important part of the trombone's voice-like sound.</p> <p>Also important but perhaps more commonly associated with trombone are very hard "T" and "K" syllables. These may be articulated with greater or lesser force to make more or less marked beginnings and endings of notes.</p> <p>The potential for multiple-tonguing makes very fast repeated articulations possible.</p> <p>Use of plunger, wa-wah, hat, harmon, pixie and other mutes opens up possibilities for speech like articulations.</p> <p>Style of articulation is not completely represented in editor's markings. Study recordings with scores to develop a sense of what marks lead musicians to sound a particular type of articulation.</p>	<p>Intervallic motion on trombone is aided by the structure of the overtone series. The overtone series is similar to the different notes each of a guitar's strings make on any one fret.</p> <p>Melodic motion between notes that are in the same and close overtone series' respective slide position is a special advantage of the instrument. This motion is rapid and fluid.</p> <p>The wider the interval the greater preparation is required for performance.</p> <p>Difficulties with intervals that use widely separated slide positions are alleviated on the alto trombone due to its shorter slide, but not completely eliminated.</p> <p>Scalar passages with small intervals are easily performed more rapidly than many musicians expect of trombonists.</p> <p>Changes in direction (up or down the scale or arpeggio) are a challenge-the greater the number, the greater the difficulty in performance.</p>	<p>Alto is overshadowed by the tenor, but has its own place in the musical world. Singing tone similar to the human voice and melodious performance common to all trombones.</p> <p>Alto has a higher range, lighter character, and is not as powerful as its tenor and bass cousins. A tenor trombonist may easily overplay an entire orchestra. An alto blends the sounds of the trombone section into the upper brasses, wind and string sections of an ensemble differently than tenor.</p> <p>It is easier to perform florid, rapid passages with the alto than the larger trombones as the notes are closer together on a smaller slide. However proper performances require a greater amount of slide accuracy in order to place the slide on a reduced target. Pitch is a greater challenge to perform well with the alto trombone.</p>