

French Horn Lip Slurs

Liz Graden

How to use these exercises:

Each exercise gives a phrase using all open fingerings. After playing the phrase as written, repeat it seven more times going down by half-steps, using the following fingerings in order: 2 - 1 - 12 - 23 - 13 - 123. The first exercise is written out for you completely, and the next few are written out for the first couple of phrases so that you'll get the idea.

You should practice lip slurs at least 3-5 minutes every time you warm-up.

Tips:

1. Go slow. You should change quickly between each note, but the tempo itself should be slow enough to make sure you are accurately playing each pitch.
2. Air! Keep a sufficient air flow throughout each slurred phrase or the slurs just won't work for you. Changing pitches is a combination of a change in embouchure (lips) and a slight change in air. Don't forget to take a deep breath before you start the exercise and between each phrase.
3. Mouthpiece. If you're having trouble with an exercise, practice it on your mouthpiece alone. This is especially important for larger intervals when you are skipping one or more partials.
4. Find the right notes. Finding the right note is harder on horn than on most other brass instruments because the partials (the notes you can play with the same fingering) are so close together. There is no shame in working your way up or down from a note you're certain that you can find (like middle C) to get to the starting note of the exercise. Many of the exercises don't do their jobs if you're not starting on or getting to the right pitches.

Level 1

Exercise 1

Exercise 1 is a 4-measure phrase in 4/4 time. The notes are: C4 (Open), D4 (2), E4 (1), F4 (12), G4 (23), A4 (13), B4 (123), and C5 (12). The first measure is a whole note C4. The second measure is a half note D4. The third measure is a half note E4. The fourth measure is a half note F4. The fifth measure is a half note G4. The sixth measure is a half note A4. The seventh measure is a half note B4. The eighth measure is a half note C5.

Exercise 2

Open

Exercise 3

Exercise 2 is a 4-measure phrase in 4/4 time. The notes are: C4 (Open), D4 (2), E4 (2), F4 (2), G4 (2), A4 (2), B4 (2), and C5 (2). The first measure is a whole note C4. The second measure is a half note D4. The third measure is a half note E4. The fourth measure is a half note F4. The fifth measure is a half note G4. The sixth measure is a half note A4. The seventh measure is a half note B4. The eighth measure is a half note C5.

Exercise 3 is a 4-measure phrase in 4/4 time. The notes are: C4 (Open), D4 (2), E4 (2), F4 (2), G4 (2), A4 (2), B4 (2), and C5 (2). The first measure is a whole note C4. The second measure is a half note D4. The third measure is a half note E4. The fourth measure is a half note F4. The fifth measure is a half note G4. The sixth measure is a half note A4. The seventh measure is a half note B4. The eighth measure is a half note C5.

Exercise 4 is a 4-measure phrase in 4/4 time. The notes are: C4 (Open), D4 (2), E4 (2), F4 (2), G4 (2), A4 (2), B4 (2), and C5 (2). The first measure is a whole note C4. The second measure is a half note D4. The third measure is a half note E4. The fourth measure is a half note F4. The fifth measure is a half note G4. The sixth measure is a half note A4. The seventh measure is a half note B4. The eighth measure is a half note C5.

Exercise 5 is a 4-measure phrase in 4/4 time. The notes are: C4 (Open), D4 (2), E4 (2), F4 (2), G4 (2), A4 (2), B4 (2), and C5 (2). The first measure is a whole note C4. The second measure is a half note D4. The third measure is a half note E4. The fourth measure is a half note F4. The fifth measure is a half note G4. The sixth measure is a half note A4. The seventh measure is a half note B4. The eighth measure is a half note C5.

Exercise 6 is a 4-measure phrase in 4/4 time. The notes are: C4 (Open), D4 (2), E4 (2), F4 (2), G4 (2), A4 (2), B4 (2), and C5 (2). The first measure is a whole note C4. The second measure is a half note D4. The third measure is a half note E4. The fourth measure is a half note F4. The fifth measure is a half note G4. The sixth measure is a half note A4. The seventh measure is a half note B4. The eighth measure is a half note C5.

Exercise 7

Exercise 8

Exercise 7 is a 4-measure phrase in 3/4 time. The notes are: C4 (Open), D4 (2), E4 (2), F4 (2), G4 (2), A4 (2), B4 (2), and C5 (2). The first measure is a whole note C4. The second measure is a half note D4. The third measure is a half note E4. The fourth measure is a half note F4. The fifth measure is a half note G4. The sixth measure is a half note A4. The seventh measure is a half note B4. The eighth measure is a half note C5.

Exercise 8 is a 4-measure phrase in 3/4 time. The notes are: C4 (Open), D4 (2), E4 (2), F4 (2), G4 (2), A4 (2), B4 (2), and C5 (2). The first measure is a whole note C4. The second measure is a half note D4. The third measure is a half note E4. The fourth measure is a half note F4. The fifth measure is a half note G4. The sixth measure is a half note A4. The seventh measure is a half note B4. The eighth measure is a half note C5.

Exercise 9 is a 4-measure phrase in 3/4 time. The notes are: C4 (Open), D4 (2), E4 (2), F4 (2), G4 (2), A4 (2), B4 (2), and C5 (2). The first measure is a whole note C4. The second measure is a half note D4. The third measure is a half note E4. The fourth measure is a half note F4. The fifth measure is a half note G4. The sixth measure is a half note A4. The seventh measure is a half note B4. The eighth measure is a half note C5.

Exercise 10 is a 4-measure phrase in 3/4 time. The notes are: C4 (Open), D4 (2), E4 (2), F4 (2), G4 (2), A4 (2), B4 (2), and C5 (2). The first measure is a whole note C4. The second measure is a half note D4. The third measure is a half note E4. The fourth measure is a half note F4. The fifth measure is a half note G4. The sixth measure is a half note A4. The seventh measure is a half note B4. The eighth measure is a half note C5.

Tips:

1. Go slow
2. Air!
3. Mouthpiece
4. Find the right notes

Level 2

This exercise introduces a new partial, the flat 7th. This one can be hard for beginners to find because it's not diatonic. Furthermore, this partial is naturally out of tune (flat). We never play the note in music using this lip-slur fingering, but since it is there and horn players have to slur past it all the time, it's important to know where it is and how to play it. In this exercise, first play the phrase using the traditional fingering for the flat 7th, then you'll repeat the same overtone series as a true lip slur using the same fingerings for all notes.

Exercise 11

Open — 1 Open — Open — Open — 2 — 12 2 —

2 — 1 — 23 1 —

1 — 12 — open 12 — 12 —

23 — 2 23 — 23 —

13 — 1 13 — 13 —

123 — open 123 — 123 —

Exercise 12 Exercise 13 Exercise 14 Exercise 15

Exercise 16 Exercise 17 Exercise 18

Tips:

- 1. Go slow
- 2. Air!
- 3. Mouthpiece
- 4. Find the right notes

Level 3

This section extends the range up to high C and down to a low C-sharp, and also introduces octave and other large-interval slurs.

A single musical staff containing 15 exercises, labeled Exercise 19 through Exercise 33. Each exercise is a short melodic phrase, often spanning an octave or more, indicated by a slur. Exercises 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 31, and 33 are in the treble clef. Exercises 23, 26, and 29 contain notes with flats. Exercises 23, 26, and 29 also contain notes with a sharp sign. Exercises 23, 26, and 29 are in the bass clef. Exercises 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 31, and 33 are in the treble clef. Exercises 23, 26, and 29 are in the bass clef. Exercises 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 31, and 33 are in the treble clef. Exercises 23, 26, and 29 are in the bass clef. Exercises 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 31, and 33 are in the treble clef. Exercises 23, 26, and 29 are in the bass clef.

Write your own exercises!

Three blank musical staves, each with a treble clef, provided for the student to write their own exercises. Each staff is divided into six measures.