

## Tuning the Horn to the Piano

Tuning to the piano and playing in tune with the piano is very different from tuning with other wind or string instruments, so it is a skill that you may need to consciously develop at some point.

When you are playing with other wind or string instruments, you adjust to get rid of the "beats" that you hear when pitches are out of tune. Because pianos are tuned to equal temperament, you will always hear some "beats" even when the piano is playing by itself. This may be somewhat confusing to your ear, so you must regularly practice tuning to the piano until you feel reasonably secure about it.

As with anything you are trying to learn, you must first figure out what you *can* do, and then work into the "new territory." Many people find it easier to tune to something other than a unison. Work through the following list of suggestions in several different practice sessions until you can tell which choice seems to work the most consistently for you. See if playing the note on the horn before sounding the piano makes it any easier for you to hear any intonational difference between the two instruments.

	<u>horn</u>	<u>piano</u>
unison	f" (top line)	b flat ' (middle line)
P5	f"	e flat'
P4	f"	f'
TT	f"	e'
minor triad	f"	e flat', g, b flat
unison	c" (3rd space)	f' (1st space)
P5	c"	b flat
P4	c"	c'
TT	c"	b'
minor triad	c"	b flat', d flat, f

Always play the horn pitch with a moderately loud, full sound that "feels" and sounds well-centered on the instrument, then don't allow yourself bend the pitch around with the embouchure: use only your hand to help you "fish" for the correct intonation. When you are not certain which way to search for it (up or down), start far away (really sharp or really flat) and slowly move. Remember it's much harder to tell which way to go when you are very close.

If your instrument tends to sit a little flat on the pitches at the top of the staff, tune to those pitches, then strive to keep the lower pitches low enough: you don't want to be lipping up at the top of the staff.

Remember, too, that you may need to adjust (pull) your slide if the horn starts out rather cold and warms up.

It is also interesting to check your pitch by holding down the piano's sustaining pedal and seeing how readily the strings respond with sympathetic vibrations to the pitches you play on your horn