

STONE PRODUCTION:

AN OUTLINE OF THOUGHTS BY MILT STEVENS

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1. Consider your posture first. Investigate the Alexander Technique and Feldenkrais.
2. Listen to and imitate great tone quality. "Imagine the most beautiful tone quality."
3. Use **lots** of air! It's free! Fill lungs! Of course, your ribs and abdomen will move.
4. Feel the resonance of your tone through the floor into the soles of your feet.
5. Inhale thinking "OH"; exhale thinking "HO". Keep opening between lips round.
6. Always keep the air column moving. Think of wind.
7. Think of the analogy of water moving through a hose.
8. Use "thick", wide air for low notes; use fast, "cool" air for high notes.
9. Think of using a "rope of air" for low notes; use a "thread of air" for high notes.
10. Have moisture in your breath; pretend you are fogging inside of mouthpiece.

11. Keep your mouth "tall"; think of having a hot potato in your mouth.
12. Keep your mouth in an oval shape; think of having a hard-boiled egg in your mouth.
13. Think of a free, unimpeded throat. Do not create resistance in your throat.
14. The tongue should be at rest in the low part of your mouth.
15. Shape your tongue like a ski jump-a little elevation in back to low in front.
16. Consider the look of the "brass player's face". Read Farkas: **The Art of Brass Playing**.
17. Keep the inside of your cheeks touching your molars; funnel the air to the lips
18. Keep corners of lip firm; "think!" inward direction of corners when ascending.
19. Never allow the chin to bunch up. Keep the chin flat, down, and in a point.
20. Think of having thick muscle fibers in your lips; lips are a cushion for mouthpiece.
21. Be able to sing the notes. Are you able to hear the exact center of every pitch?
22. Be able to lip buzz (free buzz) at least enough to demonstrate how the lips work.
23. Be able to mouthpiece buzz almost everything you are expected to play.
24. Your lips should be aligned properly; be able to start notes with a "pa" attack.

25. Be able to start notes just as easily with a breath attack ("ha" attack) or tongued.
26. Consider the "buzz point" on your lips for every note in your range. It changes!
27. Perform lip ripples (glissandos) from low to high and high to low.
28. Distribute the pressure of the mouthpiece equally on both lips for all registers.
29. Use the "pivot system" to direct the air stream through lips naturally for all registers.
30. Allow tongue elevation changes to take place naturally for register changes.
31. Do not raise the tip of your tongue for high register-only the back of the tongue.
32. Adjust your mouthpiece pressure for dynamics; use less pressure for soft notes.
33. Shape your notes; allow a gentle taper or "round off" to add elegance to your sound.
34. Use vibrato to enhance tone quality; think of a fine singer or string player.
35. Remember "Never louder than lovely."

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