

# Practising in the living room *made easy!*



## Mute Tube sound absorber for the trumpet

The headlines are saying once again: practising acoustic musical instruments, such as for example brass instruments, at home does not necessarily please the family and the neighbours; and anyone who is in rented accommodation, for example, and wants to keep his playing up to scratch needs efficient solutions. The new Mute Tube is a sound insulator that has been developed for practising and recording at home. It promises problem-free practising at room volume in your own home.

By Markus Bebek

"Music is often not found to be beautiful, because it is always associated with noise." This often quoted saying describes a dilemma experienced by many enthusiastic trumpeters: in order to remain proficient on an instrument, you have to practise – there is no getting away from it; but not everyone has a suitable spare room available in which he can practise himself undisturbed and also without causing a disturbance to his fellow human beings. The Mute Tube is a completely new approach to solving this problem, when practising freely in the home or in an attached house is not possible: an absorption unit that does not block the sound in the bell of the trumpet like a practice mute, but absorbs the sound and nevertheless gives a feeling of playing freely.

### Assembly

The Mute Tube comes in a big cardboard box containing a sound protection drum made of metal with an opening, which is clad on the inside with sound absorbing material. The drum is relatively heavy, but heavy and substantial material is necessary in sound insulation. Anyone who does not want to practise standing up places the drum with the opening to the front on a table, two metal feet enable it to be placed obliquely to the player.

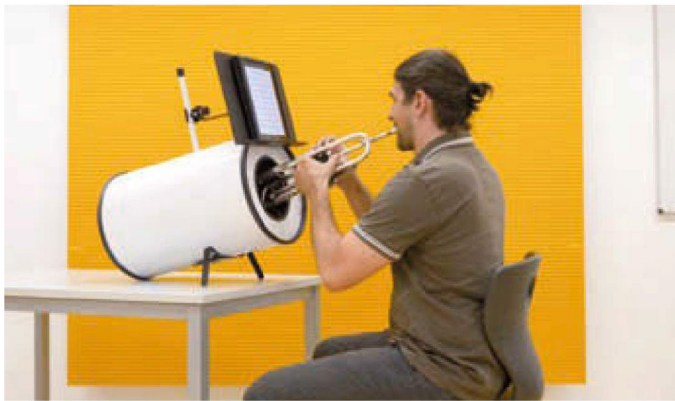


The Mute Tube comes ready assembled – no further assembly is needed. Anyone who likes to practise standing up can do so in just a few easy steps: with four screws a leaning adapter is fastened to the metal drum, and it is placed on a height-adjustable stand – and then you can already start practising. Due to screws on the leaning adapter or stand, the Mute Tube is adjusted to the height of the person using it. A music holder can be fastened on the top of the drum with a fastening rod in a few easy steps. All in all it is really very easy to put together and can be done without the help of anyone else. The white gloss finish looks elegant and modern, and any sharp edges on the drum are rubber-coated. It is true that the Mute Tube is quite heavy, but it is mobile and you can take the drum to recording places away from your own home for example or even take it with you on holiday.

### Practice test

To practise with the Mute Tube, the bell of the trumpet is now guided through the opening in the drum, so that the sound and the sound pressure of the instrument are fundamentally damped and the sound is much softer and quieter. With the Mute Tube, the room volume often mentioned does not present a problem. But the Mute Tube is suitable not only for practising, on the back there is a 3/8 inch screw for microphone holders and also a 3-pole microphone jack; so the Mute Tube can be connected very easily to an XLR microphone cable. Anyone who wants to record clear, direct trumpet sound is best set up for this with the Mute Tube, also external signals and extraneous sounds are screened off.

With the Mute Tube it is really pleasant to play. You do not have the impression that the feeling of playing freely is hindered or that the air is prevented from flowing freely. The feeling of the air being blocked, which over time has a negative impact on playing, does not arise. Practising can be done anywhere – practising mutes on the other hand often fail in the lower notes and the intonation is poor. With the Mute Tube, the trumpeter has good contact with his playing. I find the little freedom of movement that the Mute Tube offers not very pleasant, or it needs getting used to. Over time it needs some practice not to hit the instrument on the sides of the opening, and moving when playing music is rather difficult, if not even impossible.



Also the music holder is for my taste set rather too high, you have to look unnaturally far up in order to read the notes. You can of course get used to it if you have otherwise learned to appreciate the advantages of the noise absorption provided by the Mute Tube.

### Conclusion

The Mute Tube offers a good and relatively inexpensive way of practising the trumpet in a small space, without risking annoyance for the family or neighbours. The sound insulation is very good and is sufficient to spare the ears and nerves of fellow human beings;

the volume experienced is reduced sufficiently and also in terms of recording acoustics the Mute Tube scores well. It is easy to assemble and can be done by one person, the sound absorber can be loaded into the car quickly and it can easily be used on holiday. That is not the case with a practice cabin. The feeling of playing is pleasant with the Mute Tube and certainly preferable to the practice mute at home – the air is not blocked and correspondingly there is no negative effect on liping and breathing. Whether the restricted freedom of movement reduces the enjoyment of making music, everyone has to decide for themselves – but for a daily and uninterrupted practising programme the Mute Tube seems to be a good alternative and is certainly preferable to not practising.