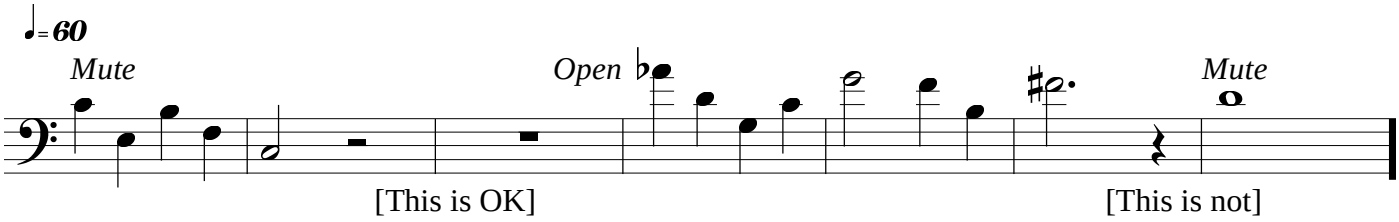
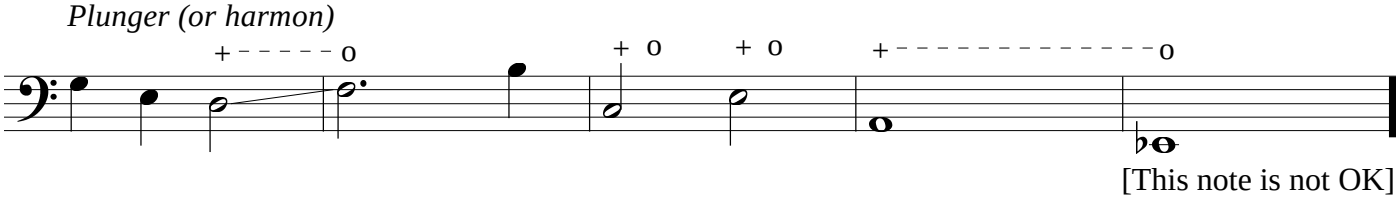
Mute Considerations for the Trombone

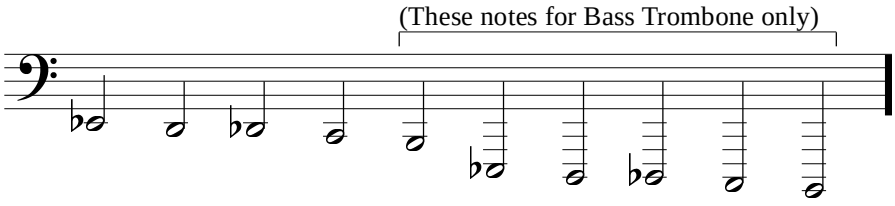
Make sure to allow sufficient time to insert or remove a mute between passages. 4-5 seconds should be considered the minimum amount of rest given, more if switching from one mute to another. A bucket mute requires even more time, as most buckets require clipping to the bell, as opposed to a simple insertion.



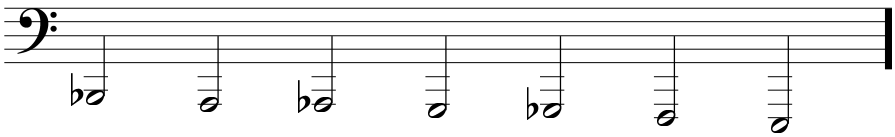
As the plunger mute requires the use of the left hand of the trombonist, notes that require the valve(s), which are also operated by the left hand, cannot be written. This applies also to the harmon mute, if the music calls for opening and closing the hand over the mute (wa-wa effect).



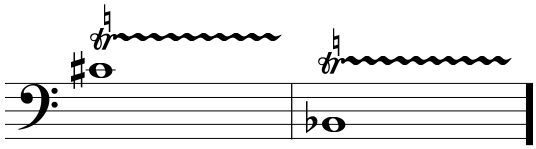
Avoid using these "F-trigger" notes in combination with these mutes:



Notice that these pedal notes are OK:



Certain trills - ones that require the valve - are also not possible in combination with the plunger or hand-operated harmon:



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