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[Interview with Thomas Jöstlein, SLSO French Horn](#) [French Horn Demonstration](#)

The French Horn is a brass instrument. Other brass instruments include the trumpet, trombone, and tuba. To make sound, the player “buzzes” their lips against the mouthpiece, which makes the air inside the horn vibrate. The air travels through the horn’s twists and turns until it comes out of the bell. The horn player puts their right hand inside of the bell, using different hand positions to adjust the tone. With their left hand, the horn player presses down different keys or valves to change the path the air takes to the bell, which makes the sound higher or lower.

Buzzing

To play the horn, Thomas makes a very specific shape with his lips, and blows fast air through them. This is called buzzing. To learn how to buzz your lips, watch **this video**.

Make Your Own Horn

You will need: a plastic soda bottle, cardboard tube, construction paper, tape, and scissors.

- Take the plastic soda bottle and cut off the top so that the cut end is slightly wider than the cardboard tube. This will be your mouthpiece.
- Tape the mouthpiece to the cardboard tube.
- Form a funnel shape with the construction paper and tape it together. Then tape the small end over the cardboard tube.
- Buzz your lips, then press them to the mouthpiece.

Where to Sit

Thomas says that because brass instruments are the loudest instruments, they sit in the back of the **orchestra**. Why do you think the loudest instruments are in the back? What would it be like to sit that far away from the conductor? How would the orchestra sound if the brass instruments sat somewhere else?

The Coolest Instrument

When he was in fourth grade, Thomas tried all the instruments. He thought the French Horn looked the coolest. There are lots of factors that might draw you to a certain instrument. What instrument do you think you would like to play and why? Which one do you think is the coolest?

