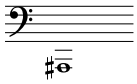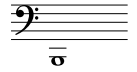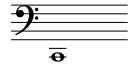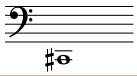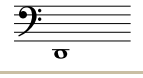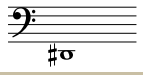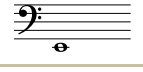
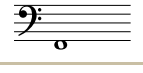
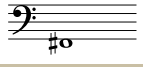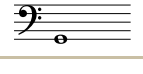
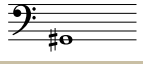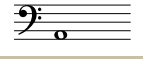
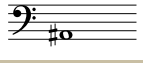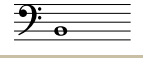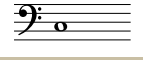
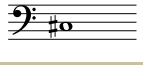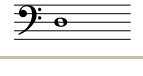
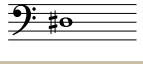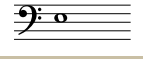
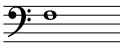
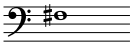
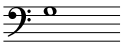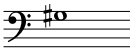
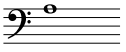
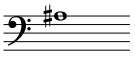
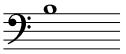
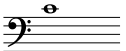
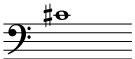
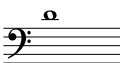
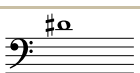
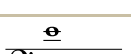
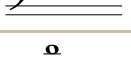
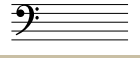
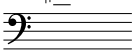
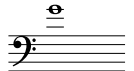
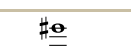
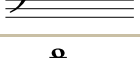
MUSIC THEORY

Positions of the bass trombone reference

The 37 notes of the usual range with their slide position. ● marks the position: 1st is the slide pulled in and 7th the most extended.

Note	Staff	Position 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Harmonic	Valves
A♯₁ / B♭₁		○ ○ ○ ○ ● ○ ○	—	F + G♭
B₁		○ ○ ○ ● ○ ○ ○	—	F + G♭
C₂		○ ○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○	—	F + G♭
C♯₂ / D♭₂		○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	—	F + G♭
D₂		● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	—	F + G♭
D♯₂ / E♭₂		○ ○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○	—	F
E₂		○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ●	2nd	—
F₂		○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ● ○	2nd	—
F♯₂ / G♭₂		○ ○ ○ ○ ● ○ ○	2nd	—
G₂		○ ○ ○ ● ○ ○ ○	2nd	—
G♯₂ / A♭₂		○ ○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○	2nd	—
A₂		○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	2nd	—
A♯₂ / B♭₂		● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	2nd	—
B₂		○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ●	3rd	—
C₃		○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ● ○	3rd	—
C♯₃ / D♭₃		○ ○ ○ ○ ● ○ ○	3rd	—
D₃		○ ○ ○ ● ○ ○ ○	3rd	—
D♯₃ / E♭₃		○ ○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○	3rd	—
E₃		○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	3rd	—

Note	Staff	Position 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Harmonic	Valves
F₃		● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	3rd	—
F♯₃ / G♭₃		○ ○ ○ ○ ● ○ ○	4th	—
G₃		○ ○ ○ ● ○ ○ ○	4th	—
G♯₃ / A♭₃		○ ○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○	4th	—
A₃		○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	4th	—
A♯₃ / B♭₃		● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	4th	—
B₃		○ ○ ○ ● ○ ○ ○	5th	—
C₄		○ ○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○	5th	—
C♯₄ / D♭₄		○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	5th	—
D₄		● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	5th	—
D♯₄ / E♭₄		○ ○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○	6th	—
E₄		○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	6th	—
F₄		● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	6th	—
F♯₄ / G♭₄		○ ○ ○ ○ ● ○ ○	8th	—
G₄		○ ○ ○ ● ○ ○ ○	8th	—
G♯₄ / A♭₄		○ ○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○	8th	—
A₄		○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	8th	—
A♯₄ / B♭₄		● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	8th	—

Each position lowers the note by a half step. The exact note is also chosen with the **harmonic** (the lip position): that is why the same position serves for several notes. The low register of the bass trombone is played with the **valves** (F, G♭ or both together, which give D).

The bass trombone does not transpose: what is written is what sounds. **F♯ and G♭ are the same note**; that is why the altered notes carry both names. The subscripts are the octave.