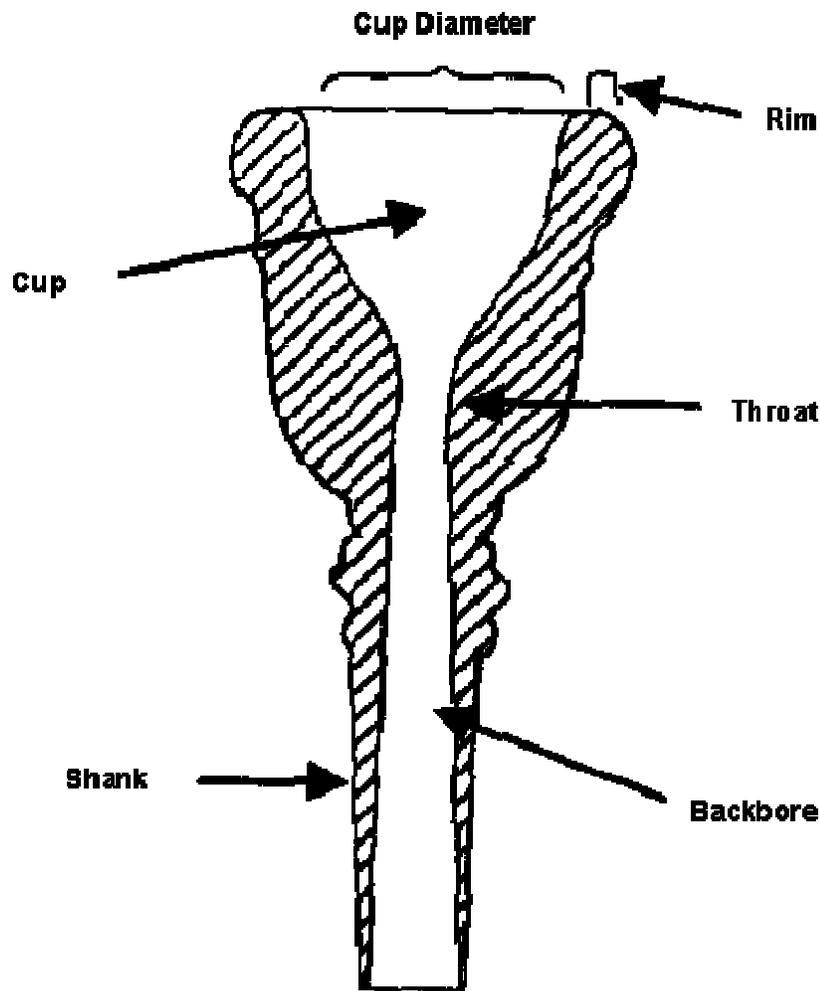


The Mouthpiece



The mouthpiece commonly given to beginning students is called a “12C”. Personally, I prefer if students begin on a 6.5AL. If the student is not strong enough to play on a 6.5AL then they should start on a 12C and move to a 6.5AL as soon as they are ready. The mouthpiece is an important part of a player's sound and facility, but the younger the student the less the mouthpiece comes in to play. Most students, if not told how a mouthpiece affects their playing will never be any-the-wiser, and this is a good thing. There are tendencies which an educator should know, but not tell a student unless the student is mature enough to handle the information.

Cup Diameter/Inner Rim Diameter- Large inner diameters are “rim size” are usually accompanied by large/deep cups. These larger mouthpieces usually aid in production in the low register and generally make the high register more difficult. Regardless, a student should not be instructed to switch to a bigger mouthpiece because they are not producing a full sound in the low register. They should be instructed to practice.

Rim- A wide rim is often more comfortable for playing for long periods. A sharp “bite” or edge on the inside of the rim usually aids flexibility and clarity of articulation while robbing the player of endurance. The rim shape should not be manipulated to try and “band-aid” a problem.

Cup- Deeper cups can sound bigger and more rich, but can also sound tubby and dull. Smaller cups usually have a sweeter more tenor-like quality but often lack the broadness trombone players are looking for. Most players will do well to take the middle road.

Throat- The throat should be balanced to the rest of the mouthpiece. A large can open up the sound, but can also cause inconsistencies in the pitch.

Sizes

Many manufactures still use the Bach numbering system, but some do not. It is best to investigate and understand the sizes before making a recommendation. Bach sizes are as follows

Smallest	12C
	7C
	6.5AL (Good for beginning students)
	5G (Common size for large bore)
	4G
	3G (Too large for most high school and college players)
	2G (Small Bass Trombone)
	1.5G (Standard Bass Trombone)
Largest	1G

For players in middle and high school, it is advisable to find a decent mouthpiece and stick with that piece. Once the student is in college and is under the supervision of a knowledgeable teacher then they can experiment with different mouthpieces.