

Martin Symphony Trumpets

1916 to 1933

The Martin Symphony had several changes to the design over the years that it was produced. The first ones appeared in 1916 around serial #14900 with a design similar to their Superlative model introduced in 1916.

The Symphony model is not in the 1916 catalog and seems to have been introduced later that year. More advertising and catalogs are needed from this period to really determine its origins. Early examples have no model name.

Symphony #1490x from late 1916 w/large bore (below & top r).



Symphony model c.1917 (Trumpet-History)
This is the only example found with a longer outer tuning slide section.



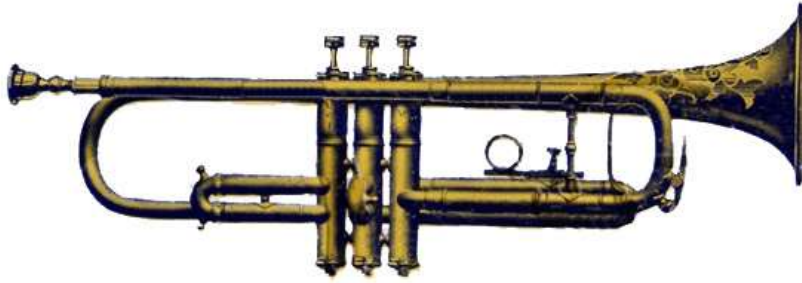
#2474x from 1920 (auction photos below & 2nd right)



Martin factory at right from the time these were made.

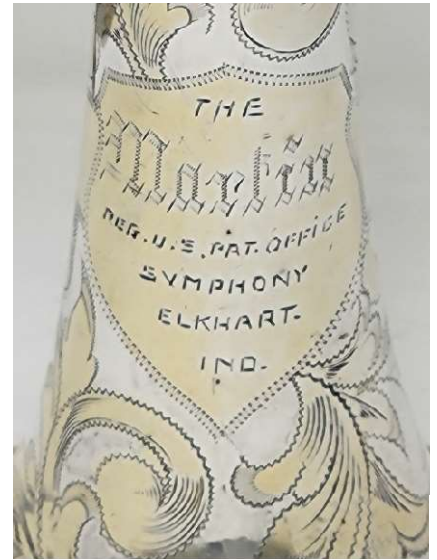


1922 Catalog Image



This is described as “New” in 1922, but companies often used this term several years after they introduced models. As shown here, they came with an adjustable finger ring on the third slide; something often missing 100 years later. For some reason, Martin did not set up the third slide for tuning notes until the 1930s.

#29614 c.1922 in Medium bore (author’s photos this page).
I added a Martin pinky ring and modified the third slide.



After taking the time to make the third slide adjustable, I can understand why Martin held off for so many years doing this. It’s a time-consuming project to get it right.

One design change from the catalog image is that the second slide now angles to the rear.

Bore = 0.435”, length = 18.325”, bell = 4.5”, wt = 36.2 oz

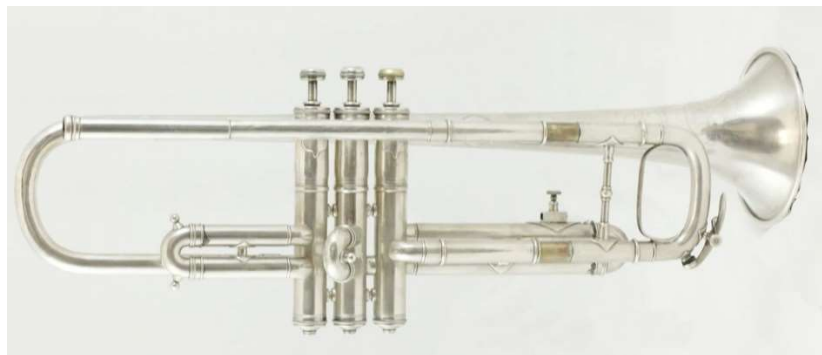
The 1922 catalog says that the Symphony model was usually made in medium bore (0.435") but was also available in small or large bore (0.468").

#36123 from 1922 (auction photos below and at right). The third slide adjustment must have been a custom option.



#42622 c.1923 at right (Horn-u-copia.net).
This is still pre-Handcraft marking.

#60319 from 1925 (auction photo below)



#63189 from 1925 (auction photo below)
They now have a pinky ring and change to "S" bell braces.



These all have an internal Bb/A stop on the bottom slide tube.

What Martin said about the Superlative and Symphony models in 1923.

“Truly wonderful trumpets which have won the approbation of discriminating and particular trumpeters and bandmasters everywhere. Tone of remarkable brilliancy, yet in no sense tinny or strident. When played softly, it retains its characteristic richness, not becoming thin and colorless and when played triple forte its ringing resonance excites the wonder and admiration of all who hear it.

“Their evenly tempered scale in all keys make them a delightful revelation to the conscientious trumpeter who has been able to play in fairly good tune only by great effort. It’s easy to play in tune on a Martin because they are built in tune throughout their entire compass.

“Martin valve actions are shorter than those on other makes, giving the player of a Martin a distinct advantage and making it easy for him to execute rapid passages with confidence. The shortness of action of Martin trumpets and their dependability, due to the Martin perfected “Three Point” tiltless valve star, insure the player against embarrassment and loss of prestige.”

#65058 from c.1926, L bore (author’s photos this page)

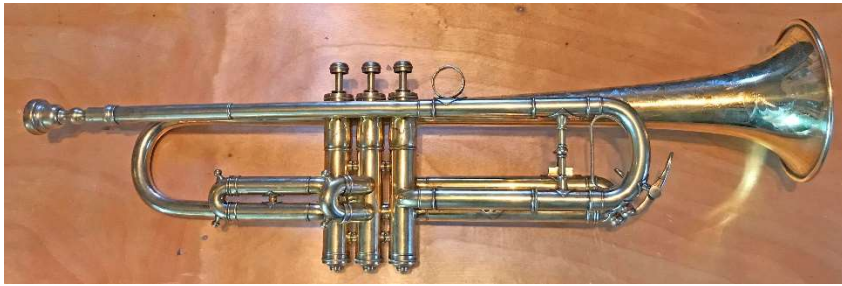


L bore = 0.468”, 19.25” long, 4.5” bell, 38.75 oz wt

This photo shows how different this design was from just four years previous (top). Almost an inch longer and shorter in profile. This design probably started in 1923.



#70221 presentation trumpet from 1926 (author's photo)



#7162x from 1926 (auction photo)

This one has an unusual Bb/A stop rod on the tuning slide.

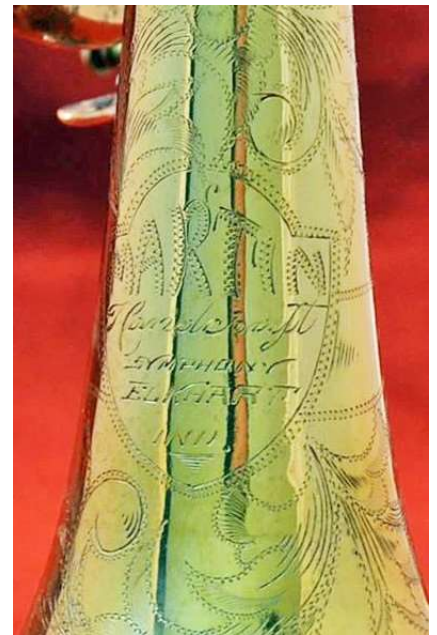
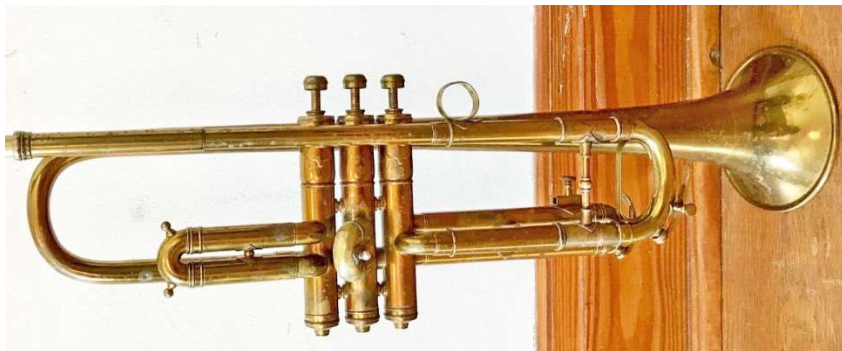


Bell from #831xx, second at right, from 1927.

#84860 from 1927 (auction photo)



#99469 from 1930 (auction photos below & 3rd on right)



#10004 large bore from 1930 (auction photos below & right)



#103569 from 1932 (photos 2-4 at right)

This is a set of matched Symphony trumpets in Bb, C, D, & F originally owned by Karl E. Rissland (1894-1971). Karl played with the New York, Minneapolis, and San Francisco Symphonies before retiring in 1933; about the time these trumpets were purchased. He later spent twenty years as the bugler for the NY Racing Association at Saratoga Springs (below in 1958 playing the Martin Bb), Belmont, and Aqueduct.



#104xxx New Symphony model from 1932.



Only a few examples of the New Symphony have been found. They either dropped this, or it became the Imperial model in 1933. The last one I have record of is #105760 with the "New Symphony" name added near the bell rim.

MARTIN