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The Recorder Course:

Complete Tutorial & Reference

Howard Fosdick



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About the Author (None of this book was written by AI)

Howard Fosdick is a computer consultant who has written many articles and half a dozen books on computer software. Music has been his hobby since childhood. He started on saxophone as a youth, then graduated into flutes including recorders, ocarinas, xuns, tin whistles, ethnic flutes, and others. His website FolkFluteWorld.com covers all these and more, and from there you can download his two free ebooks on ocarinas.

Why I Wrote This Book

I enjoy studying and researching a topic that intrigues me. Writing is a fun, challenging way to summarize and share what I've learned.

Some say it's foolish to hand write a book when AI companies will steal it, and then use it to generate competing products. As a computer scientist myself, I understand what that means. I also know that their intellectual pillaging will occur regardless of the fact that this book's license expressly forbids it.

I believe there will always be a few people who appreciate having a guide written for them by someone who cares, freely given in a spirit of sharing. If you agree, please share this book!

Don't die with a song in your heart
Nor with wishes buried in bone
Sing of a beauty all your own.

Print Copies

Order a print copy of this book at Amazon.

Nice large format -- 8 ½" by 11" -- so the scores are easy to read.

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To download the **two free** ebook companions to this one that teach you how to play ocarinas **click here.**

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Or order print copies from Amazon**.** The titles are --
Ocarina Course: Transverse & Inline Ocarinas and
Ocarina Course: 6 and 4 Hole Pendants**.**

No joke! These free ebooks are complete tutorials and references. They're professionally written by Howard Fosdick **(not** AI).

Nice large format -- 8 ½" by 11" -- so the scores are easy to read.

Introduction

Ever want to play a musical instrument?

The recorder is a great choice. It's widely taught because it's so easy to learn. But that's not all there is to it!

Recorders are versatile -- they can play **any** kind of music. They cost less than a dinner on the town and with proper care, they last forever. They're lightweight, fit all hand sizes, and they're portable.

Best of all, they sound beautiful... simply lovely!

Does that surprise you? It might if you have memories of being force-fed recorder in elementary or middle school as part of your musical education. But played properly -- as this book will teach you -- the mellifluous sounds of the recorder compete with those of any musical instrument.

You can learn to play in a couple weeks. This book will teach you how. It's your complete guide.

You don't need any prior musical background. (And you don't need to buy anything, beyond the instrument itself. This book contains everything you need.)

This book will tell you --

- What recorders are and how they work
- The different kinds available and how to select a good one
- How to play it in easy lessons
- How to read music
- We'll play 220 practice songs that are included
- With access to 1 million more free songs!

With very minor exceptions, all recorders finger the same way. So this book teaches you to play **all** recorders, from the tiniest and highest pitched, to the largest deep bass, and everything in-between. That's regardless of cost and whether they're made from plastic or wood.

Why not adopt a new hobby? You, too, can learn to play and enjoy music.

Your introduction to the fabulous world of recorders awaits. Turn the page and let's learn together.

Howard

FolkFluteWorld.com
-- free fluting resources

The Recorder Course: Complete Tutorial & Reference

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Lesson 1 -- About Recorders



Recorders

If you're familiar with the recorder from your grade school or middle school days, you may think of them as ill-mannered, squawking little toys. Remember those unpleasant squeaks?

But that image doesn't do the instrument justice -- at all.

Recorders feature a mellow, sweet voice if played properly. That's exactly what this course will teach you. How to produce lovely sounds from this simple, easy to learn musical instrument.

Don't believe me? Click here to listen to musicians make their recorders sing on Youtube. (Or, just search for "beautiful recorder music" at Youtube.com. You'll find lots of it!)

Some people think you have to play classical music to enjoy the recorder. But that's another myth.

These versatile instruments can play **any** kind of music -- from folk songs, to popular tunes, to the Celtic ballads and jigs of the British Isles, to lovely melodies -- everything from Renaissance to rock.

For example, here are a few popular songs that feature recorder:

- Led Zepplin -- *Stairway to Heaven*
- Beatles -- *Fool on the Hill, Penny Lane*
- Rolling Stones -- *Ruby Tuesday*
- Siouxsie & the Banshees -- *Green Fingers*
- Toto -- *Africa*
- Jefferson Airplane -- *How Do You Feel, Comin' Back to Me*
- Lynsey de Paul -- *Ivory Tower*
- Yes -- *I've Seen All Good People*
- Vashti Bunyan -- *Diamond Day*
- Jimi Hendrix -- *If 6 Was 9*
- Dido -- *Grafton Street*
- Feist -- *In Lightning*
- The Move -- *Curly*
- Carpenters -- *Sing a Song*
- Vanity Fare -- *Hitchin' a Ride*

Take this brief course, and you'll be playing songs in days. You don't need any musical background.

Recorders come in a wide variety of sizes, pitches, and appealing designs.

They're inexpensive: you can buy a good one for the price of a meal.

They fit anyone's hands. And, they're portable. You can carry yours anywhere. It will last for a lifetime with proper care.

What's not to love?

So, let's get started. In this first lesson, we'll give you a very brief overview of the recorder and explain how it produces sound.

About Recorders

Recorders boast a long history, going all the way back to the Middles Ages. They were quite popular in the Renaissance and Baroque musical periods.

Some of the famous historic composers who wrote for recorder include Bach, Handel, Vivaldi, Telemann, Monteverdi, and Purcell. (Henry the VIII was a big recorder fan: his flutes outnumbered his wives.)

But as instruments modernized and mechanized, recorders fell out of favor. They faded into obscurity. In the mid-20th century they experienced a dramatic comeback. Now they are recognized worldwide for their versatility and ease of play, and they form the basis of musical education in many countries.

Recorders don't have mechanical keys. They are keyless **simple flutes**. The larger sizes, such as the tenor and bass, often have a key or two to reach the furthest fingering holes.

Recorders come in a range of sizes. The larger the instrument, the lower its voice or **pitch**. This photo shows the most common sizes of recorder.



Popular Recorder Sizes

One of the great advantages to the recorder is that **you finger the notes the same way on any size of recorder** (with minor exceptions that we'll note). So your skills are applicable to **all** recorders. **If you can play one, you can play them all!** And that's exactly what this book will teach you.

Recorders are made in a variety of materials. High quality instrumental plastic and various woods are most common. But you might see a ceramic, metal, carbon fiber, or even an ivory one on rare occasion.

What's a Recorder?

A recorder is defined as an end-blown flute that has 7 top holes and one thumb hole underneath.

In the photo below, the two topmost instruments are recorders. Both have 7 top holes.

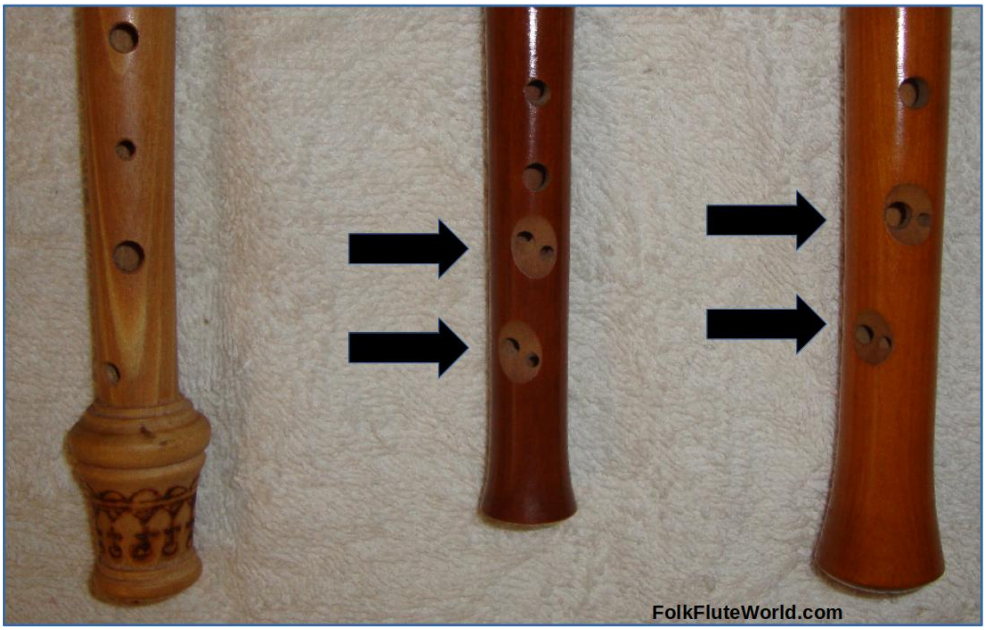
But look closely and you'll notice that the second flute has two **double holes** to the far right side. **These count as one hole**, since you normally cover both with a single finger, as if it were a single hole. That's why those holes are so small and close together. (Double holes are used to play sharps and flats, which we'll explain later.)



Two Recorders and a Tin Whistle

The bottom flute has only 6 top holes. If you were to turn it over, you would see that it has no thumb hole. It's not a recorder. It's a kind of simple flute called the **tin whistle** or **penny whistle**. That's an entirely different musical instrument, so this book does not cover it.

Here's a close-up of those double holes so you can see them better. The arrows point to them. The leftmost recorder has only single holes. Double holes make it a little easier to play a couple notes. We'll teach you to play both varieties. Most recorders have double holes.



Double Holes

Recorders are further defined as **duct flutes**. That means that they are designed such that when you blow into them, they automatically direct your breath to produce sound.

Contrast this to the common metal concert flute with which you're undoubtedly familiar. With a concert flute, the musician must carefully direct his breath across the open blow hole to produce sound. If he blows at the wrong angle, no sound is produced.

Remember how you would blow across the lip of a bottle to produce a sound when you were a child? You had to blow at the proper angle to sound a note. That's exactly how a concert flute works.

With a recorder, you don't have to worry about the angle at which you blow. You just blow and the instrument automatically manages the direction and flow of your breath to produce sound.

A beginning concert flutist must spend hours to learn how to blow into the mouthpiece at the proper angle. In contrast, a beginning recorder player can voice notes almost immediately. Let's explore how recorders work in more detail.

How Recorders Work

Recorders are **end-blown flutes.** You blow into the mouthpiece end of the instrument and hold it pointing out from your body. This differs from those flutes you play at right angle to your body, such as the metal concert flute. (Those are sometimes called **transverse flutes**.)

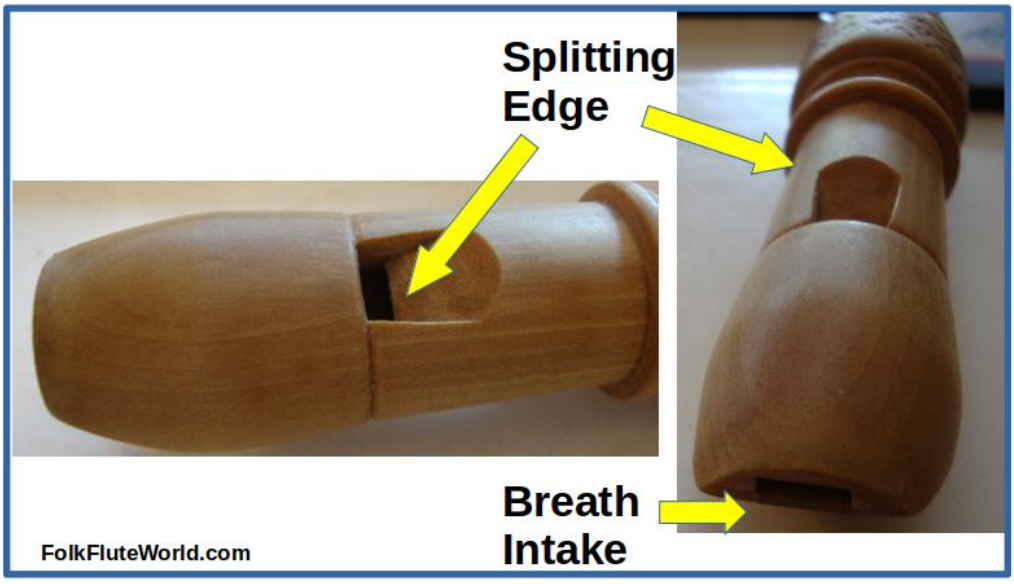
You put your lips on the **mouthpiece** of the recorder and gently blow. By covering the proper combinations of the instrument's holes with your fingers, you sound different pitches or notes.

The holes are called **fingering holes** or **tone holes**. Covering them with your fingers in various combinations sounds the various **pitches** or **musical notes** the recorder can voice.

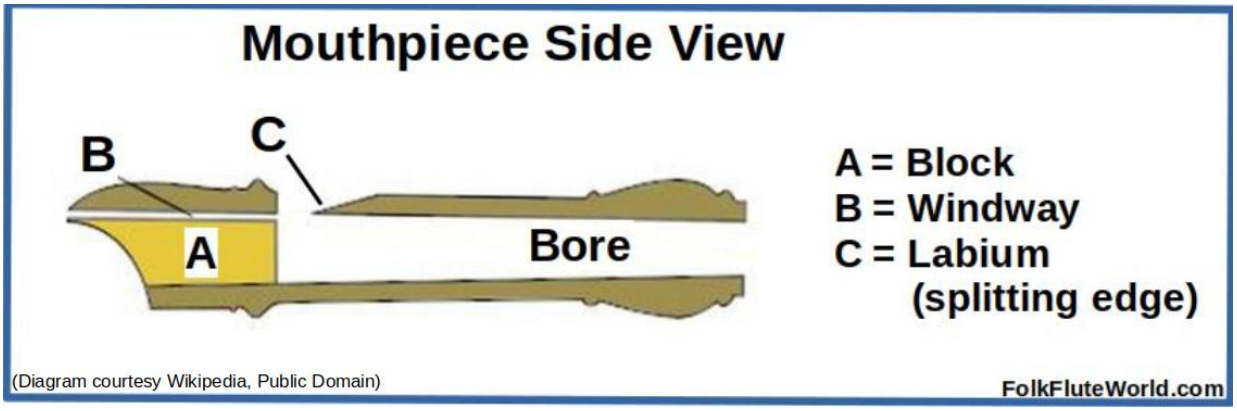
Below is a close-up photo of a recorder mouthpiece. You blow into the **breath intake** and your breath is split into sound waves on the **splitting edge** (or **labium**) located in the **windway opening**. The recorder automatically directs your breath to the splitting edge to produce sound -- you don't have to worry about blowing at the correct angle, as you would with a concert flute. So recorders are easier to learn.

The accompanying diagram gives more detail about how the mouthpiece directs your breath to the splitting edge to create sound waves.

As those waves reverberate down the recorder's body, the tone holes that are open and closed determine the pitch of the note it plays.



Mouthpiece close-up with Windway and the Splitting Edge



So there you have it.

You put your lips on the recorder's mouthpiece and softly blow. The mouthpiece directs your breath to a sharp edge located in the windway opening or **aperture**. That splits your breath into sound waves. The sound waves resonate through the tubular body of the flute. The combination of tone holes you cover with your fingers dictates the musical note the instrument plays.

Summary

In this lesson, we learned about the different sizes of recorders. The bigger a recorder is, the lower its pitch. Since all recorders finger in the same way (very nearly), if you can play one, you can play them all.

Recorders are made from a variety of materials. High quality plastic and various woods are by far most common.

We'll provide more detail on recorder types, sizes, and history in an upcoming lesson.

We also described how recorders produce sound and play musical notes.

In the next couple lessons, we'll tell how to select a quality recorder, where to buy one, how to hold it, and how to play notes. Then we'll teach you your first song.

And bam! In just a few lessons, you'll be playing music.

Lesson 2 -- Selecting a Recorder

If you already own a recorder, that's great. You can use it for this course. It doesn't matter what size or style it is. You can use it for this course if you want to.

But ... is your recorder really the best choice for you to learn with? Please continue reading to find out.

If you don't own a recorder, you'll need to acquire one. Which should you buy?

Choose Soprano

While any recorder could work, my advice would be to start with the ubiquitous **plastic soprano**. There are good reasons these are so popular.

They're very inexpensive -- you can buy an excellent one from Amazon or any music store for between $20 and $40 USD (in 2027 dollars). Yet they last forever with minimal care.

The soprano recorder fits anyone's hands, small or large. They're in the key of C, which is by far the most common key for sheet music. Most tutorials and how-to's address the soprano.

Sopranos measure about a foot long, and most assemble from two parts (some cheap ones are one-piece, and a few are three-piece.) They're highly portable and easy to carry. Sometimes you'll hear them referred to as **descant recorders**.

The soprano's "home note" -- the lowest note it can play -- is that which voices with all fingering holes covered. This is also called the **base note** or **fundamental.** For the soprano recorder, this note is **C**. You might hear it referred to as **C5**, to indicate that it sounds one octave above **middle C** on the piano. (Middle C is defined as C4.)

A flute keyed to C is a big advantage because so much music is written in that key. It's the simplest key to play.

So that's it: start with a soprano.

Choose Plastic

Another question you'll face right off is: plastic or wood?

Good plastic instruments are much less expensive than quality wood recorders. Plus machine manufacturing means better quality control for plastic instruments -- you won't get a manufacturing dud.

Stay away from those cheap wood recorders you can get from Amazon for $20 or $30. They often play out of tune or won't even hit some notes. Their quality control is abysmal.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, some people figure that if they start out with an expensive wood instrument, they'll be a better recorder player. That's a mistake. It won't happen, at least not until you attain a fairly high level of expertise. For the musician who is a hobbyist or student rather than a professional, plastic is every bit as good as wood.

Look for a plastic recorder made of **ABS resin plastic**. **A**crylonitrile **B**utadiene **S**tyrene is the specific type of plastic used to manufacture high quality musical instruments.

Choose Baroque Fingering and Double Holes

Another question you'll face is whether to buy a recorder that uses the **baroque fingering system** or **German fingering**. (On rare occasion you may hear baroque referred to as **English fingering**.)

The differences between the two are slight, but nearly everyone agrees you should choose baroque fingering. It's the de facto standard and it predominates in classes and tutorials.

This book teaches you how to play both baroque and German systems.

Choose a recorder composed of either two or three pieces. This allows you to break apart the instrument to clean it. Most plastic sopranos you'll run across consist of two parts. Only the very cheapest are molded one-piece.

A final question is whether you want **double holes** (as described in the previous lesson). I recommend double holes for your last two right hand fingering holes. They're more flexible, and they make it easier to play a couple low sharps and flats.

Most recorders on the market include double holes. But be certain to verify this before you make a purchase. A photo of the item will show you whether it has double holes, just like the photo in the previous lesson.

This book will teach you to play all recorders whether or not they have double holes.

Recommendations

It can be baffling to decide which recorder to buy because there are so many choices. If you want to simplify your decision, I recommend a plastic soprano made by either **Yamaha** or **Aulos**. These are the leading vendors and their instruments are of good quality.

Don't buy the cheapest instrument in their line. Those are made for elementary school kids, where cost is an overriding consideration. They sell for less than $15 USD. Some don't play the entire scale fully in tune, while others sound like the cheap plastic flutes they are.

You need a quality **ABS plastic resin** instrument that will play the widest range of notes, all in tune. (Otherwise, if you're out of tune, how do you know whether the problem is you or the instrument?) You definitely do not want to start out with an inferior or substandard instrument.

An excellent top-quality plastic soprano from Yamaha or Aulos will cost you from $20 to $50 (USD 2027 prices). You can easily find them at Amazon online or any music store.

Buy a baroque plastic soprano, in either two or three parts, that has double holes for your last two right hand fingers.

The good news is that the recorder will be your **only** cost. You won't have to buy a tutorial or any sheet music. That's all included in this book.

This book contains some 220 songs, and it tells you where to download one million more -- **all for free**. You won't have to buy sheet music unless you seek a specific copyrighted piece.

Summary

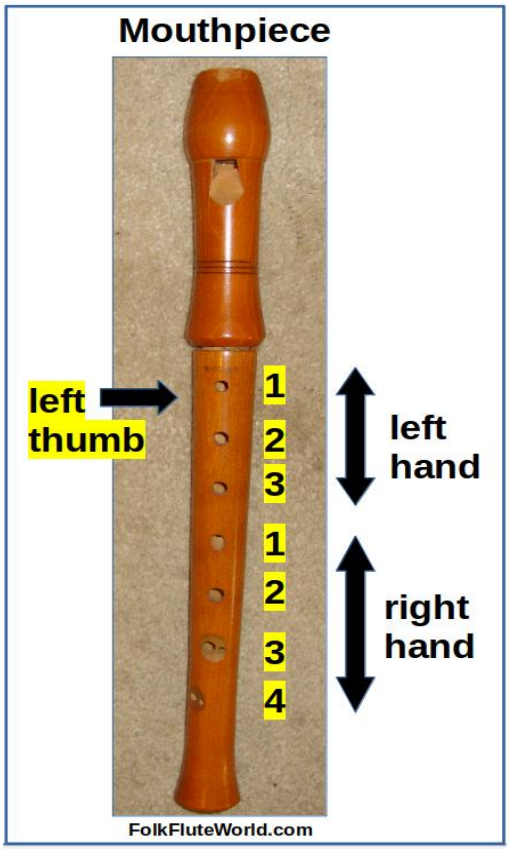
In this course I'll assume you're playing a soprano recorder. We'll cover both baroque and German fingering, and instruments with and without double holes. It doesn't matter whether your flute is plastic or wood.

With that as your learning tool, this book will teach you to play **all** recorders (regardless of their size or style).

A world of entertaining music awaits. Let's get started.

Notes -- The songs in this book are scored for C Major recorders (soprano, tenor). I receive no compensation for product recommendations. They are solely based on product merit and are intended as helpful advice.

Lesson 3 -- How to Hold Your Recorder



To hold your recorder, place your lips on the mouthpiece.

Hold the recorder extended out from your body at 45 degree angle.

The diagram at left shows that you use your left hand to manage the three tone holes at the top of the flute. The numeral **1** stands for your first or "index" finger.

The four fingers of your right handle the bottom four fingering holes.

Your left thumb manages the single thumb hole beneath the instrument.

Notice that the fourth finger of your left hand (your smallest or pinky finger) is not used at all. Let it dangle free, or just rest it on the body of the instrument, if that helps you hold it.

Nor is your right thumb ever employed in covering a tone hole. You can place it on the underside of the instrument to steady your grip on the flute.

Here's how playing the instrument looks.



Notice how the musician's fingers lay flat across the instrument. You don't need to curl your fingers. Nor do you need to "punch" the fingering holes when you cover them.

Cover tone holes with the pads of your fingers, not your fingertips.

You don't want to grip your recorder too tightly. A firm but gentle grip works fine. If you grip too tightly, you might experience the same hand-fatigue issues you can get when you're too tense or tight when typing on a computer keyboard. If your hands get tired, you're gripping the instrument too tightly.

Good posture is important. Don't hunch over or slump. Don't tense up. Take deep breaths when you play, and relax. You'll play better.

Summary

Practice holding your recorder and covering the holes. Lift your fingers up and down again to cover the holes. Get comfortable with how your flute feels. After the next couple lessons you'll develop "muscle memory" and it will become easy to instinctively cover the holes when you need to.

The trick to it is that you must **fully** cover all the holes that you intend to cover when you play. Otherwise, the notes won't sound true.

Move your fingers on and off the fingering holes -- and be sure to always cover **both** holes if you have any double holes. See if you can cover the holes fully each time. You'll need to develop this ability.

In the next lesson we'll blow our first notes.

Lesson 4 -- Playing Your First Notes

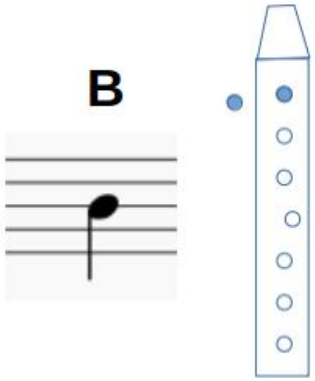
Let's try playing a few notes. You'll hold your recorder as shown in the previous lesson.

Now, cover the first hole on the flute nearest your face with your left hand **index finger** (your first finger). Cover the thumb hole with your left hand thumb. Other fingers can be used to steady the flute (without covering or shading any other holes!). These photos show how that looks:





Here's a diagram of how to finger that note. Colored-in holes means you cover them completely with the pads of your fingers. Empty circles represent fingering holes you leave uncovered. The thumb hole is to the left of the instrument:



This note is called B. The position of the note on the horizontal lines (or **staff**) shows how it appears in musical scores.

Now, be sure that you cover each of the two holes completely!

Place your lips gently on the mouthpiece and blow a gentle, steady airflow.

You want to blow in directed fashion, like how you would blow out a candle. Direct your airstream into the **fipple** (mouthpiece).

Did you get a nice sounding note at a steady pitch?

If not, there are three likely problems. First, you might not be covering one of the two holes **completely**. *Make sure you're covering both holes in their entirety and try blowing again.*

You may have to look at your fingers a couple times to get this right, and it may feel strange. But believe me, after just a couple days of practice, you'll develop **muscle memory** as to where the holes are. It will become second nature to cover them completely when you need to.

Second, leave the uncovered holes completely open. Don't accidentally shield them or cover them partially with your other fingers.

The third possible problem is that you're blowing either too softly or too loudly to get a good tone. People often blow too hard when they start. The recorder is a softly played instrument, so you must blow into it **gently**.

If you want to figure out the correct breath pressure, experiment a bit. Try blowing very softly, then increase your breath pressure until the instrument squawks or squeals to tell you that's too strong. Then try blowing softer and softer, until the tone goes flat or falls away.

Once you calibrate the proper breath pressure, make sure you blow at that same pressure steadily. You want to sound a continuous note at a constant volume. If you vary your breath pressure, the note will sound uneven in pitch.

Just like covering the holes at first, you may have to learn how much pressure you need to blow true notes. But this also quickly becomes very easy.

Practice playing the note with all fingering holes closed several times. You should gently tongue each note with a "du" or "too" sound to articulate it. Start a note with your tongue, not solely with your breath. Just go "du", "du", "du" or "too", "too", "too" to articulate each note.

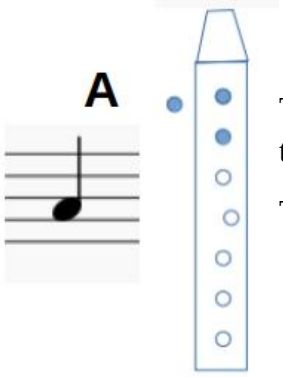


Above, you can see how playing that note four times looks in musical notation.

The vertical position of the note on the horizontal lines or **staff** indicates the pitch of the note. Notes that appear higher on the staff sound higher. Notes that appear lower in the staff sound lower.

Another Note: A

Let's try another note. This note, A, sounds one note lower than B. You finger it the same way as B, plus you cover the next fingering hole on the flute with your next finger (your middle finger) of your left hand:



That A appears lower (vertically) in sheet music notation than B tells you that it's lower pitched.

The rule is: **the lower a note appears on the staff, the lower its pitch.**

Ensure you have completely covered the three holes. Leave all other holes totally open. Then blow softly. If you don’t produce a true note -- the instrument squeaks or just plays air, check your fingering to ensure you've completely covered the holes.

Also, blow with the proper breath pressure. Too little breath will sound a flat note, while too much breath will sound sharp or forced or overblown.

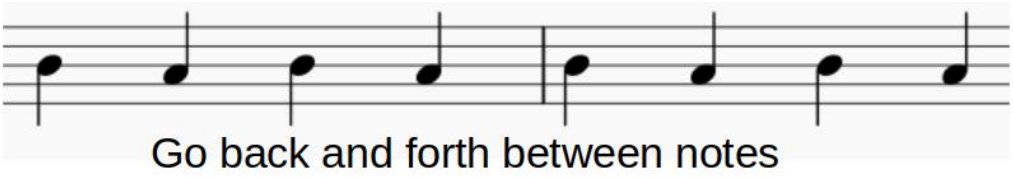
Try playing the note several times, each time articulating it by softly tonguing the mouthpiece. You can do this by imaging your saying "du"-- "du"-- "du", or "too" -- "too" -- "too".

As with B, if you don't get a pure, true tone, check that you have covered each hole **completely**.

Also, blow with the proper breath pressure. Too little breath will sound a flat note, while too much breath will sound sharp or forced or overblown.

Experiment a bit with different breath pressures, and it will quickly become evident what pressure you need to voice nice-sounding notes on your recorder.

Try blowing four B notes, then four A notes. Next, go back and forth between the two notes quite a few times, just as this diagram indicates.



Are you starting to get a feel for how to grasp and blow into your recorder?

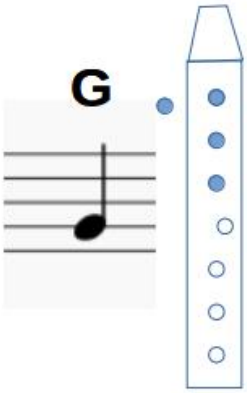
The big thing to remember is that, to play any note, you must **completely** cover all the holes you're supposed to cover, without exposing even the tiniest air gap!

And make sure your other fingers aren't accidentally shading a hole you intend to left uncovered or open.

A Third Note: G

Let's try one last note, G. G is the next lower note in the scale below A.

To play G, you just cover the next fingering hole on your left hand, like this:



Blow several G notes.

As always, ensure you cover all the holes you intend to, and leave the others completely open. Blow softly but steady, and start the note by articulating a "du" or "too" into the flute.

Summary

In this lesson you learned how to hold your recorder and how to sound three notes.

If your recorder squeaks, squawks, or squeals, it's probably because you're blowing too hard or not completely covering all the holes you're trying to cover.

If your recorder sounds out of tune, you can always push the mouthpiece in to raise (sharpen) the pitch, or pull it out a little to lower (flatten) the pitch.

Experiment a bit and practice so that you feel comfortable playing these three notes. It will feel awkward at first, but very quickly you'll find it becomes natural to hold your recorder and play pretty tones.

In the next lesson we'll learn start playing some songs.

A Note on Methodology

This book starts with the simplest notes to play (B, A, G) and progressively expands your purview to others as you practice songs. We emphasize practice as the primary learning technique -- "learning by doing". We choose tunes with which most people are familiar to avoid introducing too much musical notation.

Lesson 5 -- Let's Play Some Songs

The best way to learn to play recorder is to play it. So far you've learned three notes, called B, A, and G. That's enough to start playing some simple songs.

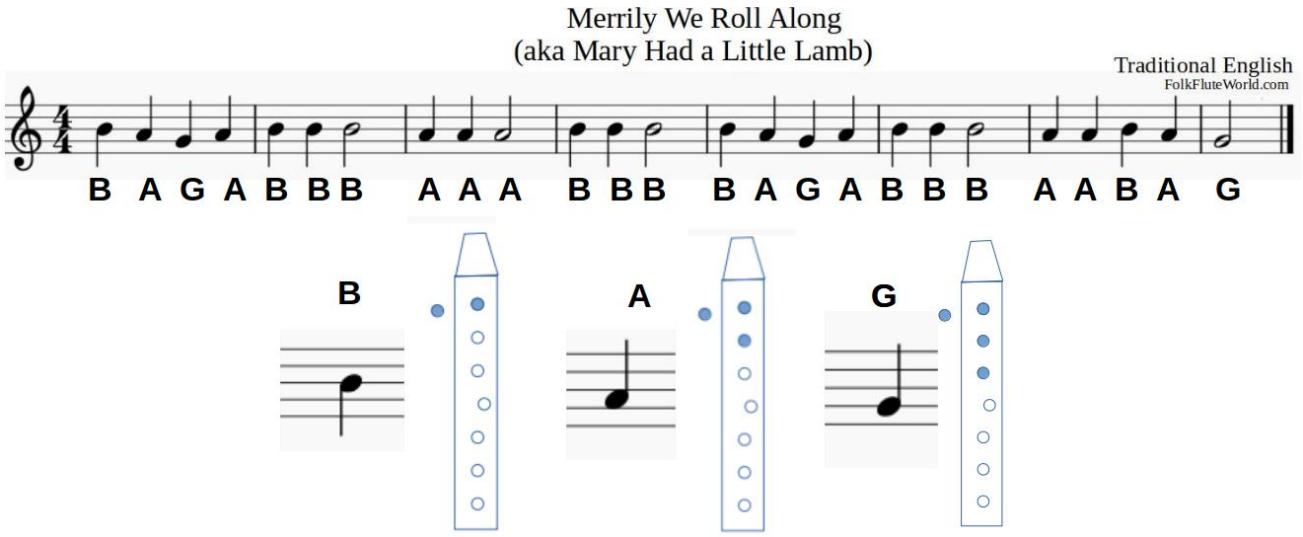
A First Song

This first tune is one you surely know, so you won't have to worry about the timing of the notes. You want to learn to finger the notes correctly, shift between them, and blow each correctly and in tune.

Most people know this tune as *Mary Had a Little Lamb*, while others call it *Merrily We Roll Along*. Still others know it as the chorus of the 19th century folk song *Good-night Ladies*. Warner Brother's famously transformed it into the theme song of their *Looney Tunes* cartoon series in the 1930s.

For quick reference, we've placed the fingering chart for the three notes you're learning right beneath the score. Try to memorize the fingering for each of these notes. You want to be able to associate each fingering with its representation on the staff.

Okay, let's try the song:



The notes you see on the staff that are filled-in circles with attached vertical lines (or **stems)** are called **quarter notes**. Each quarter note gets one beat (like the beat of a song).

The notes that are empty circles with an attached vertical stem are called **half notes**. Each of them gets two beats. In other words, the duration of a half note is twice that of a quarter note -- you play it for twice as long. Thus, a half note consumes the same amount of time as two quarter notes.

Have you ever tapped your foot to the beat of a song? Well, a quarter note gets one tap, while the half note takes up two.

You know how this tune goes, so you can see how the sheet music expresses the difference between the shorter notes in the tune (the quarter notes), and the notes that you hold longer (the half notes).

If you think about it, you can see that sheet music notation tells you two things:

- The notes to play
- How long to play each note

It's up to you to have memorized how to finger each note correctly on your recorder. That will be a big part of what you'll learn in these lessons.

Did all the notes in the song sound right? Remember -- you must always **completely cover** any hole that is supposed to be closed. If you didn't sound true tones for these notes, leaving any hole even the least bit uncovered is the most likely cause.

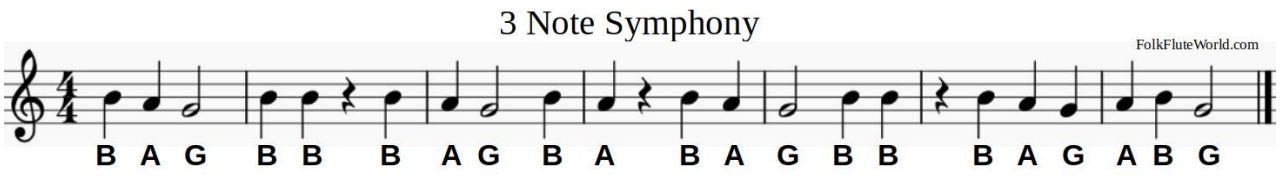
Another Song

Let's try another song. But first, we introduce the concept of the **rest**. A **rest** is where you play nothing at all, you just remain silent.

This squiggly line is a **quarter note rest**, meaning that you remain silent for the length of time it would take you to play a quarter note.



You already know the three notes this song uses, B, A, and G. Now try playing the tune:



How does the timing of this melody go? Remember that each quarter note gets one beat, and each half note gets two. You play or "hold" a half note for double the length of a quarter note.

So, you could say that the timing of this song goes like this:

da - da - daah - da - da - (silence) - da - da -daah - da - da - (silence) …. etc

Notice how vertical lines in the staff separate each group of notes into units called **measures**. Each measure contains four beats.

Don't worry about the symbols at the start of the staff, or if the musical notation isn't clear. We'll discuss it more later.

Right now the goal is to learn to play three notes on your recorder and to be able to accurately transition between them. Practice them a bit... get comfortable changing your fingering as you move between them... and be sure you're sounding strong, true notes for each. That's what's really important at this point.

You want to get a feel for how to cover holes completely for these notes, and how to switch between the notes.

A Third Song: Gently Sleep

Here's another song that employs the same three notes. *Gently Sleep* is a Welsh lullaby thought to be at least two hundred years old.

This time we haven't named the notes for you. Your goal is to memorize them and associate each with its representation in the **sheet music** and your fingering on the recorder**.** This is how a real **score** looks:



Were you able to follow that okay? If you need a refresher, look up the fingering for the notes earlier in this lesson.

Song: Hot Cross Buns

Let's try another song, called *Hot Cross Buns*. Hopefully you're starting to feel more adept and secure at recognizing notes, fingering them correctly, and transitioning between them cleanly.

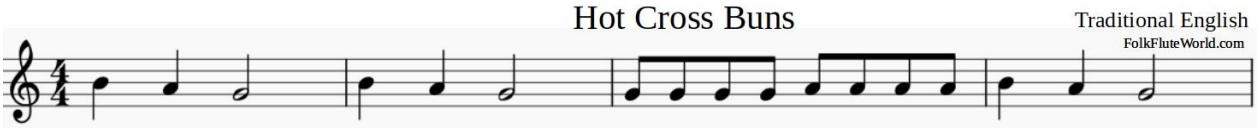
This song was originally a cry shouted by street corner vendors in 1700s London to sell their wares. The lyrics go like this:

Hot cross buns!
Hot cross buns!
One a penny, two a penny,
Hot cross buns!

If you have no daughters,
Give them to your sons.
One a penny, two a penny,
Hot cross buns!

One new feature in this song is the **eighth note**. Those are the notes in the third measure that have the horizontal bar attached to their stems.

The eighth note gets one-half of a beat. You play two of them in the same time it takes to play one quarter note. So eighth notes are quick.



Each beat is one tap of your foot. To summarize the timing of the notes we're learning:

Note:	**Beats:**	**Looks Like:**
Quarter note	1 beat	Filled in circle with stem
Half note	2 beats	Empty circle with stem
Eighth note	½ beat	Filled in circle with stem and a "flag" on the stem
Whole note	4 beats	Empty circle without any stem

Song: Au Claire de la lune

This is a French folk song from the 18th century. The title translates as *By the Light of the Moon*.

This song is thought to be the first ever recorded. Frenchman Édouard-Léon Scott de Martinville achieved this in 1860, beating out Thomas Edison who is often (incorrectly) credited with first musical recording.

Here's the score:



The only new feature in this score is the last note on each line. That's the note that is not filled in and has no stem at all. That's a **whole note.** The whole note consumes four beats. Its duration equals that of four quarter notes. Or, two half notes.

If you think about it, many songs end on a long, extended note. So it's not surprising to see each line of this score end on lengthy whole notes.

Summary

Now you're cooking. You've learned how to play a three notes, transition between them, and play several songs. Practice the songs until you feel you know these three notes, and how to get a decent sound from your recorder.

It may take a little practice to fully cover the holes as you move from one note to another, but don't get discouraged. Just practice a bit and you'll get it right. You're developing your muscle memory, and pretty soon it will be very easy to cover fingering holes accurately and completely.

In the next lesson, we'll learn a few more notes and try some more challenging songs.

We start with easy songs like these because everyone knows the tunes. That way you only have to concentrate on fingering and blowing the notes. You don't have to worry about the timing of the notes.

Just a few lessons more, and you'll be able to read and play many popular songs!

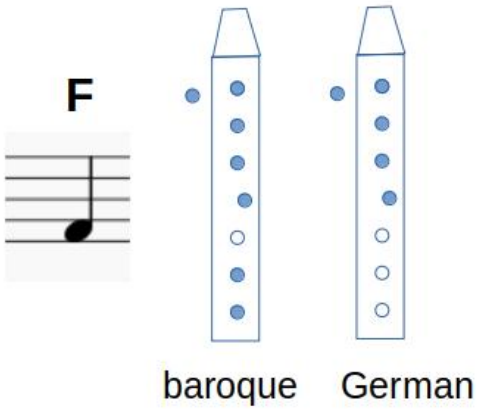
Lesson 6 -- More Notes & New Songs

The next lower note in the scale below G is F. So, the part of the descending scale we've learned thus far is:

B → A → G → F

Remember how in Lesson 2 we said that baroque and German recorders finger nearly the same, but that there are some minor differences between them? The fingering for F is one of those differences.

Here is F, as fingered on baroque/English and German system recorders:



The German system makes this note a little easier to finger. You just cover the next hole down in the sequence from G.

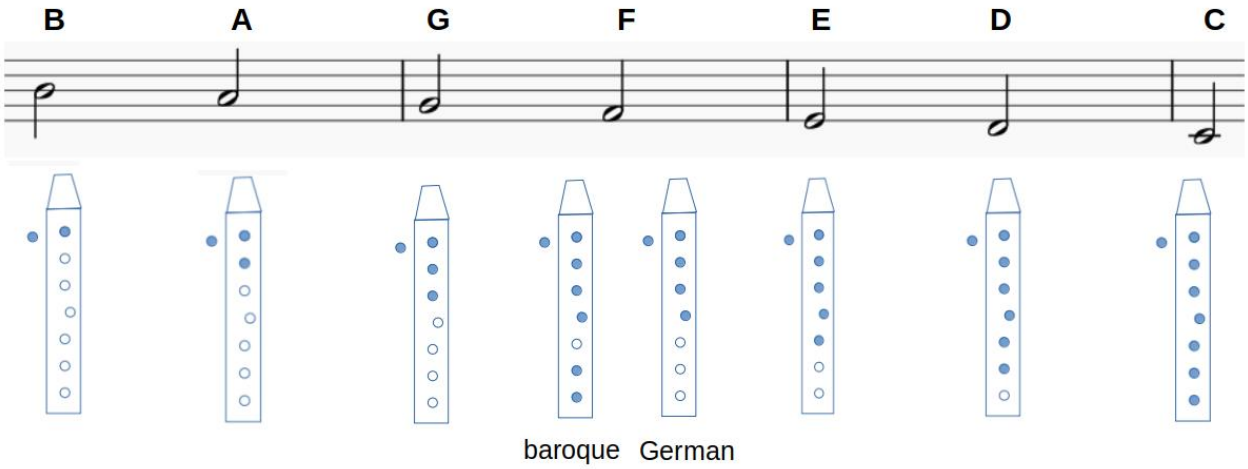
Baroque requires that you keep the second hole for your right hand open, while covering the first one and the last two. This is termed **split** or **forked fingering.** You may also hear it called **cross fingering**. (That's as opposed to **linear fingering**, where consecutive holes are all open or all closed.)

Try to play F a few times to get the feel of it. Look at your fingers if you have to ensure you're fully covering the proper holes.

Let's add three more lower notes to our descending chain:

B → A → G → F → **E** → **D** → **C**

Here's how all these notes look in musical notation, and how you finger each:



Notice that for the notes below F (E, D, and C) you just cover one more fingering hole to play each one.

For all these notes, cover the thumb hole fully.

You must you finger F correctly for either baroque or German recorders. What if you don't know whether your flute is baroque or German?

Simply play the descending scale above twice. The first time through use the baroque fingering for F. The second time through use German. You'll easily be able to tell which fingering is correct for you.

One other thing to check is whether your instrument has **double holes** for the last two fingers of your right hand. Remember double holes?

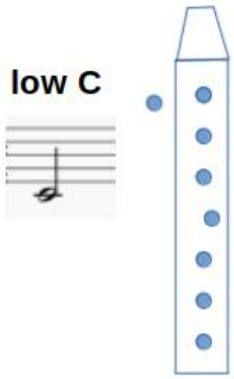


This photo shows two flutes with double holes to the right. For contrast, the recorder on the left has single holes.

If your flute has double holes, you always want to **cover both of them completely** with the last two fingers of your right hand.

That's why our fingering diagram above represents double holes as a single covered hole. Until much later in this course, the rule is: **If you have double holes, treat them as one. Either cover both of the two little holes, or leave them both open.**

You'll have to take care to fully cover both holes at once. If you don't, you won't sound a true note.



The rightmost note in the staff diagram above is C. It's often called **low C** because it's the lowest note you can play on a soprano recorder. It's the note you play with all holes closed. Call it the instrument's **base note** or its **fundamental**.

Note that on some German fingered flutes you must play low C rather softly to voice it clearly.

Before we get started with some practice songs, play the above scale a number of times to learn the new notes and cement their fingering in your mind. Play it both ways: descend the scale, then ascend it… repeatedly. (Repetition is the best way to learn and remember many musical skills.) You want to train your muscle memory so that you completely cover all the right holes for each note.

Okay, let's practice some new songs. We'll especially focus on the new notes, F, E, D, and C.

Song: Jingle Bells

Jingle Bells was composed in the 1850's. Many believe that this song -- likely the most popular Christmas song ever -- was originally intended as a drinking song for a tavern in Massachusetts. Who knew?

This score gives you a good workout with the new low notes you're learning. One new item of musical notation is important. Notice how the half notes in the 4^{th}, 8^{th}, and 12^{th} measures are immediately followed by a dot?

A dot that appears immediately after any note extends the length of that note by half. Since a half note consumes two beats, this adds one extra beat to the half note. Therefore you hold this note for three beats.



Any note can be followed by a dot. For example, following our rule, a quarter note with a dot after it would be extended by half, so it would have the duration of three eighth notes. (Remember that a quarter note alone is equal to two eighth notes.)

To summarize: sheet music tells you the timing of how to play the song by the length of its notes. A quarter note gets one beat, a half note gets two beats, a dotted half note gets three, and a whole note gets four.

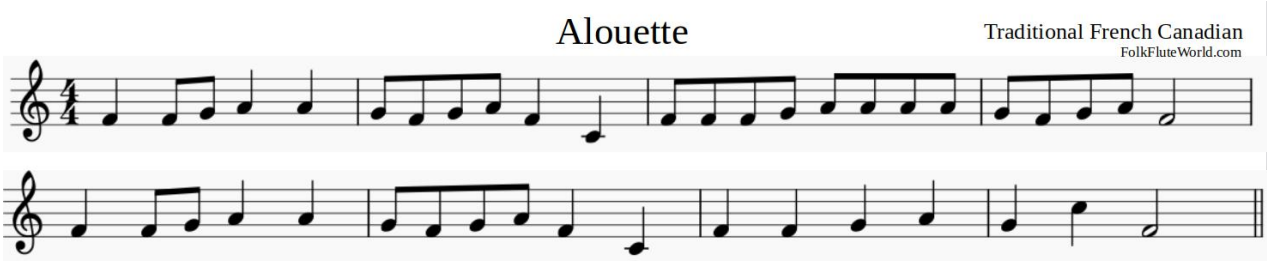
That sounds like a lot to remember. But it's really not. Since you already know how the timing of *Jingle Bells* goes, all you have to do is match up the timing of the song as you know it with the appearance of the notes in the sheet music.

Be sure to do that, so you'll recognize how musical timing works and is represented in scores. You want to learn how to read sheet music because that's a critical skill.

Song: Aloutte

No doubt you've heard this popular French Canadian song. You might even know the French lyrics.

The song is so popular it's linked to Quebecois identity, as a sort of national theme song. Many anglophones first became aware of it when doughboys picked up the catchy tune while serving in France in the first world war.



This tune gives you some extensive practice in playing eighth notes. As you recall, they're played quickly -- two within the time of a single quarter note. Try to tongue them distinctly but not too boldly on your recorder.

Practice

So here's what we've discovered about sheet music. To play it correctly, you must:

1. Be able to identify the notes on the staff
2. Be able to finger the corresponding notes on your recorder from memory
3. Recognize how many beats each note consumes (their timing)

To improve your play, you'll want to keep practicing these songs until you've achieved this level of skill.

If you're like me, you'll play a piece very slowly several times. This is called **sounding it out**. Once you've figured out how the piece goes, you can speed it up and play it faster.

This is a great technique for learning how to play recorder. Never be afraid to play a song as slowly as you need to in order to interpret it and suss it out. Get the proper fingering down. Figure out the timing. Now, once you've got a grip on how the song goes, then you can speed it up and play it at the correct tempo. That's how to teach your fingers to correctly pattern the score.

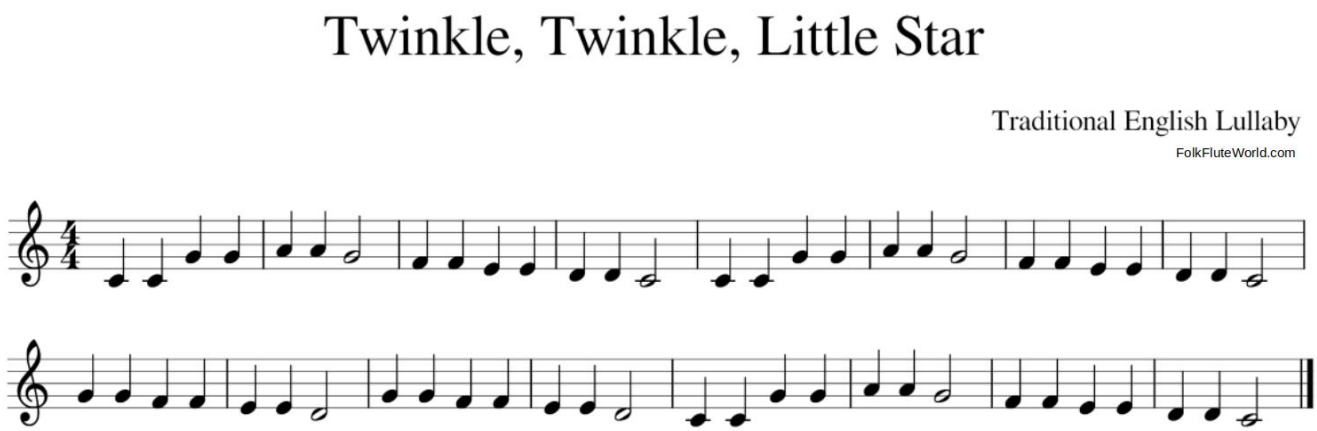
Being able to read sheet music is a vitally important skill. It's the means by which you gain access to millions of free songs to play. We'll practice reading music a lot more, so don't worry if it's not yet all clear.

At the end of this course, we'll provide links to TONS of free sheet music for songs you can play on your recorder.

How cool is that? You can play almost any popular song! This is the fun of learning a musical instrument.

Song: Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star

Here's a traditional English lullaby everyone knows. The melody is from an 18th-century French song, while the lyrics derive from an 1806 poem by Jane Taylor.



The score practices your ability to ascend and descend the scale using nearly all the notes you know. Try to get to the point where it becomes easy for you to connect the notes you see in the score with where you place your fingers on your recorder.

You're developing your **muscle memory**, your instinctive feel for where each of the fingering holes are located on your recorder. Very soon you'll cover each tone hole completely without ever having to worry about misplaying a note. It will become second nature after you practice more.

If you play a note and it doesn't sound right, remember to check to see that you've **completely** covered all holes that should be covered.

In terms of reading sheet music, this song consists of only two kinds of notes: quarter notes and half notes. Quarter notes get one beat each, while half notes are twice as long -- each gets two beats.

Inspect the score so that you understand how these two kinds of notes tell you how the timing of the melody goes.

Song: Long, Long Ago

Here's a nostalgic song written by English composer Thomas Bayly in the 1830s.

In 1940, *The Glenn Miller Orchestra* updated the lyrics and hyped the tempo. With the Andrews Sisters on lead, the result was the hit song *Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree (with Anyone Else but Me)*.

You'd be amazed at how many hit songs are actually based on old melodies that have been updated to the musical style of the moment. We'll encounter many more in this course.



If you need help with the timing of this piece, remember that each quarter note gets 1 beat. Each half note gets 2 beats. And the whole notes -- those notes that do not have vertical stems -- each get 4 beats.

When Do You Breathe?

So far we've been concentrating on learning notes and stringing them together into songs. But have you wondered: when should I take a breath while I play?

Listen carefully to a professional singer or musician, and you'll find that they control themselves so as to breathe at times that least disturb the melody. They don't breathe after each note.

And that makes sense, right? With the songs you've been playing, as you gain some facility, you may have noticed that taking a breath at some points in a song disturbs the entire feeling of the song, while breathing at other times is minimally disruptive.

Worst of all is if you leave a noticeable "air gap" between each note. (Beginners often do this.) Yes, gently tongue each note separately, but let the notes flow one after the other without stopping between them. Don't hesitate between notes.

Let's take another look at the song you just played. We've reproduced it below, but this time notice the presence of "flying commas" after every fourth measure.

These commas are **breath marks**. They indicate the optimal times to take breaths without disrupting the song's flow.

Most sheet music doesn't include breath marks. The reason is that most people instinctively know when to breathe. This will be after you complete a **musical phrase**, a group of measures that naturally "fit together".

On the other hand, some composers consider breath marks useful to musicians and include them in their scores.

Now that you know about breath marks, try playing *Long, Long Ago* again. This time follow the breath marks to see if they enhance your performance. You'll breathe after every fourth measure.



Note that instead of flying commas, some composers will use a checkmark to indicate a breath. Or you might even see a vertical tick ('). These are placed in the exact same position relative to the staff as are flying commas.

Here's a general rule about recorders: **the larger the flute, the more breath it requires**. Play a bass recorder, and you have to breath more frequently than if you play a tiny sopranino. So the larger your recorder, the more important good **breath control** becomes.

You don't want to disrupt a melody by breathing at an inopportune time.

When you first start playing recorder, it's pretty common to blow each note separately and distinctly, and to take breaths whenever you need them. Your playing will sound "choppy" and you may disrupt a tune when you take breaths.

That's perfectly natural and a good place to start. But now, try to get to the next level. Try to "smooth out" your play. Play an entire musical phrase before you breathe, instead of breathing after each note or two. Gently tongue notes separately, but don't separate them with big air gaps or hesitation. Let your notes *flow* gently from one to the next.

Listen to how the notes you produce sound together, and try to breathe only at intervals that do not disrupt the flow of the melody. Master this, and you'll sound **much** better when playing!

How To Breathe

This brings us to an important topic. How you breathe impacts your playing.

Whether you're an opera singer, a professional flutist, or a recorder player, **breathing deeply into your diaphragm** enables you to better manage your breaths.

Deep breaths suck more air into your lungs such that you can better control its release into your recorder. You'll have more air to play longer passages before you must breathe again.

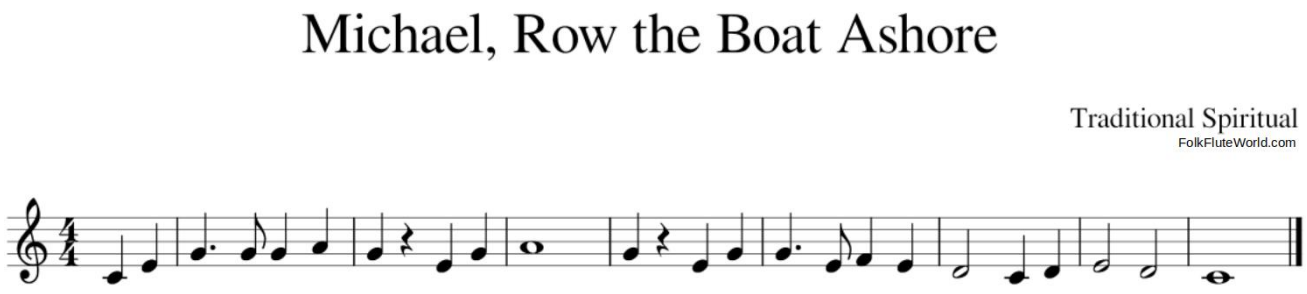
Shallow breathing has the opposite effect. If you take shallow breaths, only your upper chest and shoulders move. In contrast, deep breathing moves your lower chest and stomach as well.

You can develop consistent deep breathing simply by being conscious of it when you practice. Adopt an upright posture. Then breathe every breath fully, and you'll be well on your way to better playing.

Song: Michael, Row the Boat Ashore

Here's another song you undoubtedly know. It evolved with African Americans in the mid-1800's in the sea islands of South Carolina.

Like many traditional songs, it became a popular hit years later in 1960 when it was recorded by *The Highwaymen*, a folk group. That was during the height of the "folk era" in the United States.



Notice the quarter notes with a dot appearing right after them. **The rule is: a dot that immediately**

follows any note extends the length of the note by half. So a dotted quarter note consumes the same amount of time as quarter note plus an **eighth note**.

In this tune, eighth notes appear right after the dotted quarter notes. You identify eighth notes by the curved line (or "flag") attached to their stems. (Or, as you've seen before, sometimes a horizontal bar will connect a series of eighth notes.)

An eighth note takes half the time of a quarter note. So if a quarter note gets one beat, an eighth note gets half a beat (or a very quick beat).

Now, try to match the notes in this score to the way you know the melody goes. This should make the meaning conveyed by the musical notation clear.

This song is a soulful melody. Once you've mastered its fingering, try to play it expressively. Make your recorder "sing" this song in all its beauty. Breathe only during the rests so you don't disrupt its beautiful flow.

Song: London Bridge is Falling Down

Here's another song that includes a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note. This is a very common construct in many songs, so take a look and see how it's written and played in this song. You want to make sure that when you run across this construct in other songs you know how the timing of the notes works.

This rhyming sing-song dates back to the 17th century and has often been the basis of various children's games. For generations, kids "skipped rope" to this tune.



As always, get started by playing this song as slowly as you need to. After a few times through, you'll be familiar enough with the fingering to speed it up a bit. Never feel embarrassed to start a new song by slowly picking your way through it. That's one of the best learning strategies.

Again, match the timing of how you know this melody goes with its dotted-quarter-eighth-note combination. Look back at the sheet music for *Michael, Row the Boat Ashore* if you need another example of how this combination should be played in a melody.

How to Practice

Before we leave this lesson, let's talk about how you can practice most effectively.

First off, don't just practice a song until you finally get it right once and then quit. **Play the score several times correctly**, after you've learned to play it without errors. This ensures you're learning proper muscle memory for the tune, and memorizing accurate fingering for each note you see in the score.

Second, once you've played a score correctly, don't assume you've mastered it and then abandon it forever after. Return to it in a later session. Play it without error again. This is how learning really sinks in.

Remember, the old saying "practice makes perfect" is true when learning a musical instrument. **Musicianship is an acquired skill**. It is a skill that you learn, improve, and remember by exercising.

Fourth, don't give up on a score. We'll try to present them in order of difficulty in this book, but if one proves too troublesome for you, don't entirely ignore it. Just skip it and then come back to it later when you're fresh. Or postpone it until your skills reach a higher level.

In many scores, you'll be able to play the tune but you'll encounter one or two difficult passages. Drill down on these. Play them very slowly until you get them right. Then go back and play the entire piece with the difficult passages now under your control.

Lastly, **listen to yourself play**. Only by listening to your play will you recognize areas for improvement. Perhaps you play a song flawlessly from a technical perspective. But it might not sound as lovely it might if imbued with feeling or beauty. Playing recorder is the kind of thing you can improve upon if you hear yourself play.

Many find recording themselves useful. That way you can listen to yourself by playing back the recording -- while you're not distracted by playing.

Use your mobile phone, a digital recorder, or your computer as your recording and playback device. No need to buy anything as you undoubtedly already have one of these at hand. This is one of those situations where one of these devices could prove incredibly useful.

What If My Recorder Suddenly Sounds Bad?

After you play for a while, you might notice that your recorder suddenly sounds garbled, or muffled, or waffling, or out of tune.

This is because moisture from your breath collects in the instrument. Take apart your flute and wipe out the moisture with a swab or cleaning rod and cloth (nearly all instruments come with one of these when you purchase them).

Be sure to get moisture out of the mouthpiece by shaking it or sharply blowing it out.

Once your instrument is dry, you're ready to play again.

Lesson 10 further discusses how to maintain your instrument in top playing condition. But for now, I didn't want you to be mystified if your recorder's voice suddenly degraded during play. Moisture is the reason why. To fix it, just dry out your flute.

Congratulations!

Do you realize that you have now learned to play the entire scale on your recorder?

The scale consists of 7 notes, and you've learned them all. By convention, they're normally written in ascending fashion, like this:

low C → D → E → F → G → A → B

The recorder can play two full octaves, and you've already learned how to play the lower octave.

Not only that, you've also learned the rudiments of how to read standard sheet music. That's a great start… you're off and running.

The next lesson consolidates and expands your knowledge, as together we work through a number of popular tunes.

The tunes are all ones you know. So you can focus on learning how to finger notes and transition between them. We'll also learn more about how to read music.

Lesson 7 -- More Songs, More Practice

In this lesson, you'll consolidate your gains with more hands-on practice. Don't feel you have to make your practice sessions conform to our lesson boundaries. Often it's more fun and more effective to play when you most feel like it or when you're fresh. If you get tired, come back later when you feel ready for more.

How to Improve Your Play

You've played a dozen songs to this point. How do you sound?

Listen to yourself while you play. Or, record yourself with your phone, computer, or a digital recorder, and then play it back. Are you satisfied with how you sound?

Let's review a few key techniques you can apply in this lesson to dramatically improve your play:

1. Cover holes **completely**
2. Don't shade open holes
3. Start each note by gently tonguing it (not solely with your breath)
4. Blow at the proper consistent pressure
5. Use proper breath control to **phrase notes into groups**, rather than spitting out each note individually. Don't hesitate between notes, flow from one note to the next.
6. Play notes in tune
7. Keep your instrument dry and clean (Lesson 10 covers this)

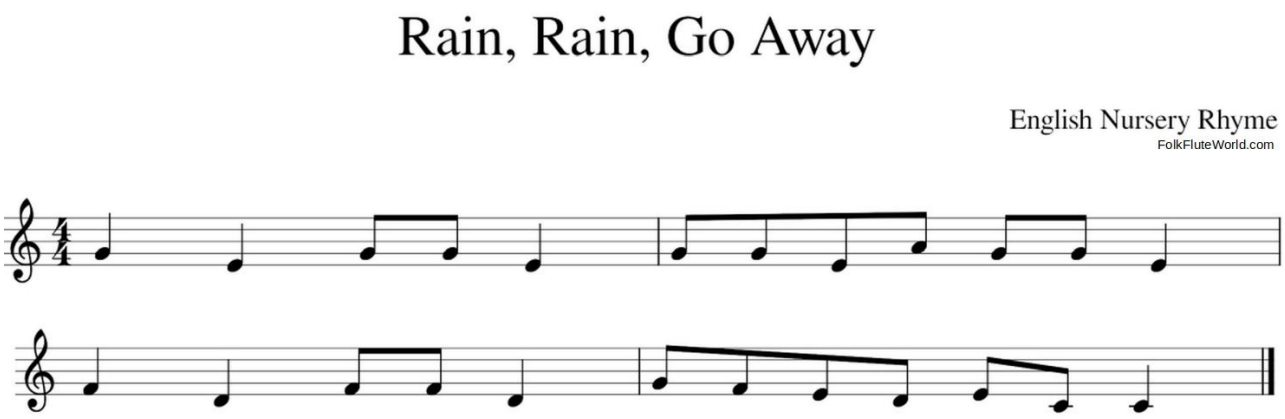
Song: Rain, Rain, Go Away

Here's an English nursery rhyme set to song that dates back to at least the 17th century.

We present it here so that you can get a better feel for eighth notes. Remember, two eighth notes fit into the time allotted to play one quarter note. So eighth notes are relatively quick.

Try the song out very slowly. Then practice to where you can play it more quickly, as if it were a sing-song playground chant. This score is a good demonstration of how eighth notes are used in compositions.

Be sure to finger those F notes appropriately to your recorder, either baroque or German.



Song: Lightly Row

Here's a German folk song from the early 19th century. In German it's known as *Hänschen klein*, or *Little Hans*.

Many cultures have adapted it as a children's song with their own lyrics.



Hopefully at this point, you're able to "sight read" the notes on the score and finger the proper notes on your recorder in response. Don't be shy about going back to earlier songs to learn this, or by playing a song as many times as you need to to get it right.

The goal isn't to complete lessons as quickly as possible. The goal is for you to become comfortable playing true sounds for all the notes. And to learn to associate notes in sheet music with their corresponding fingerings on your recorder.

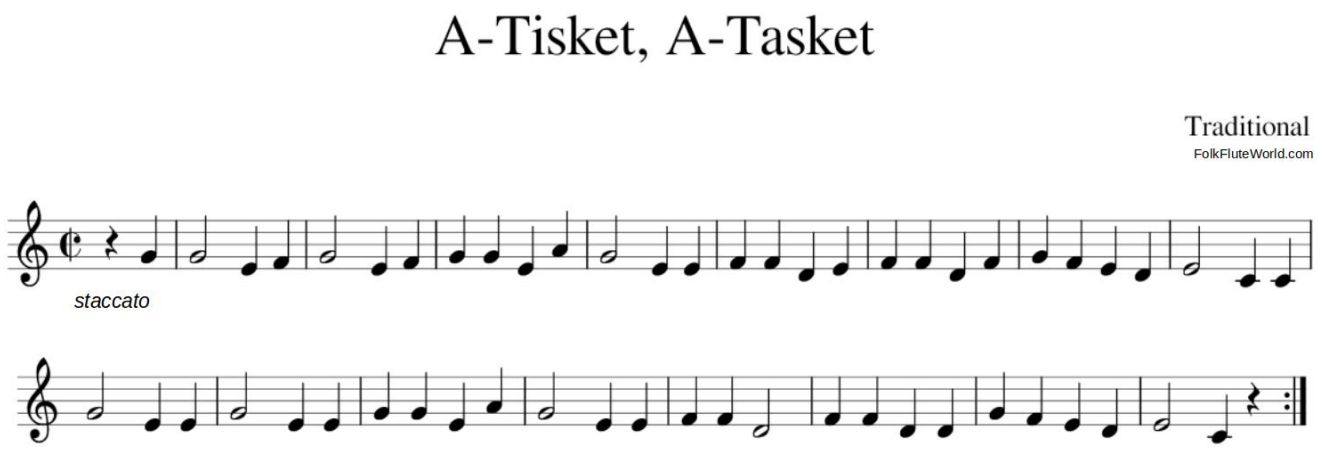
Song: A-Tisket, A-Tasket

Here's another popular children's song from the 19th century.

The "Queen of Jazz," Ella Fitzgerald, became famous for her rendition of this tune. The version she sang with the *Chick Webb Orchestra* became one of the best selling records of the late 1930's.

This is a great example of a piece you want to play very slowly at first, to sound it out and to get used to the fingering. Then, after you've familiarized yourself with it, you can pick up the pace (or **tempo**) and play it at "playground speed". Or, jazz it up a bit and play it like Ella would sing it.

This song is excellent practice to work yourself up to quick fingering in a fast-paced song. Take enough time with it that you achieve that.

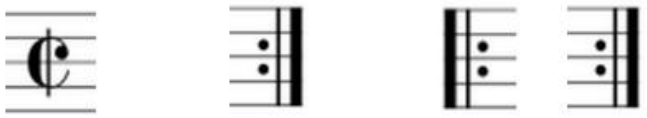


There are several new notational elements in this piece. First, notice how the word **staccato** appears at the start. This means to play the notes in crisp, short style. Play the notes with your tongue as "dit-dit-dit-dit" rather than "daah-daah-daah-daah" or "laah-laah-laah-laah".

It's common to find stylistic advice in a word or two at the start of a piece. Often these words are Italian. For example, the opposite of staccato is **tenuto**, which means to play notes to their full length and gently transition between them.

Musicians formally refer to these playing instructions **directives** or **performance marks**. Most of us just call them **playing instructions**.

There are dozens of these stylistic instructions you might see. We'll explain more of them in upcoming lessons.



Here are a few new symbols that occur in this piece. The C with a slash in it is called **cut time**. That means to play the song at a fast pace, i.e., double-time. We'll discuss this more in the next lesson.

The double bar with the two dots that appears at the very end of piece means to repeat the tune from the start. So, you would play this entire score twice.

Often you'll see a portion of a score enclosed in inverse double bars (as in the right side of the above figure). That means to repeat the enclosed measures. This greatly reduces the length of many scores that contain repeating sections.

For example, it's useful for a song that has repeating verses in the chorus. You wouldn't want the score to write out, over and over, the notes for each of twenty verses! Instead, composers use these **repeat brackets** to enclose the repeated sections. It's a useful shorthand device.

Song: For He's a Jolly Good Fellow

Are you still with me? Remember, the goal isn't to "swallow" this entire lesson all at once. Instead, practice these songs over several sessions when you're fresh. You want to pace yourself, repeat the songs, and grow in your skills with your recorder. "Practice makes perfect" is certainly true when it comes to learning how to play a musical instrument.

Let's wrap up this lesson with one last song.

This tune was composed in 1709. Marie Antoinette popularized it after she heard one of her maids singing it. Eventually it immigrated to the UK and the USA, where it's become one of the most popular celebratory songs ever.

The lyrics vary a bit depending where you live. The British sing *"For he's a jolly good fellow, and so say all of us!"* while Americans yodel *"For he's a jolly good fellow, which nobody can deny!"*.

Here's the song ...

For He's a Jolly Good Fellow



This song is scored very simply. That makes it highly readable and easy to figure out.

But notice the advice to play "Fast!". That tells you that once you've decoded the song and have gotten familiar with it, you need to speed it up a bit. You know how the song goes.

There are several new elements in this score. First, see the "eye" over the note A in the middle of the second line? That means "hold the note extra long." Play the song with this note elongated and you'll see how this makes sense.

The technical term for holding a note like this is a **fermata**. Most people just call it a **hold**.

Another new feature occurs in the third line. You can see that two notes are tied together with a curving underscore. This is called a **tie** or a **slur**. Ties simply bond two notes together. That means you play them as if they were a single note. **Don't separately tongue the second note.**

So the tied notes in this piece each consume 5 beats -- 3 beats for the dotted half note, and 2 extra beats for the slurred half note that follows it.

You see two kinds of rests in this song. A **rest** is simply a period of time where you play no note at all (you just "rest" in silence). That squiggly vertical symbol you see at the ends of lines two and four is a **quarter note rest**. It tells you to rest (or stay silent) for the same amount of time it would take you to play a quarter note. You've seen the quarter note rest before.

At the start of lines two and three, you see a short little horizontal bar. That's a **half note rest**. So you would not play anything for two beats, the amount of time in which you would otherwise play a half note.

Since you don't play anything during a rest, they make the perfect time to take a breath. It never disrupts a melody to take a breath during a rest!

One other item of note in this score. At the very start of the score you see a "3" over a "4". That's a **time signature**. It tells how many beats are in each measure. In a song like this with a 3/4 time signature, you have three beats per measure. So the numerator of the time signature tells you how many beats are in each measure.

That differs from the songs we've seen thus far, which were in 4/4 time. In 4/4 time, there are four beats per measure instead of three.

In both 3/4 and 4/4 time, a quarter note gets one beat. The denominator of the time signature tells what kind of note gets one beat, and a "4" tells you that the quarter note receives one beat.

It's not important to remember all these details right now. What you want to start doing is mapping the way you know a tune goes -- its timing -- to how that's represented in a musical score.

An Alternative Score

Did you know that it's possible to write sheet music for the same song in several different ways?

It's true. And you'll find that some ways are **much** easier for you to play on your recorder than others!

We'll explore this in detail later -- specifically, we'll tell you the secrets of how to find the most easily playable versions of many songs.

For now, let's demonstrate by showing you another score for the song you just played:

For He's a Jolly Good Fellow

Traditional

FolkFluteWorld.com



This score is in **6/8 time** (as shown in the **time signature** at its start). The 6 means there are 6 beats per measure. The 8 means that each eighth note gets one beat.

Hmmm.... So each eighth note gets one beat -- instead of each quarter note -- and there are 6 beats per measure.

The first version of this song that we showed you used **3/4 time**. That's three beats per measure, with each quarter note getting one beat.

The fact is that scores can be written in all sorts of different time signatures. The most important to learn and remember are **3/4** and **4/4** time. Both of these give each quarter note one beat.

The only difference between them is the number of beats per measure. 3/4 has three beats per measure, while 4/4 contains four beats per measure.

You see several more examples of **ties** in this score. Remember, these tie two notes together so that you play them as if they were a single note.

Finally, look at this piece and you see your first sixteenth notes. These are the notes with double bars on their stems. You can see them in lines two and three in the score.

Sixteenth notes have half the length of an eighth note (and only a quarter of the time consumed by a quarter note). So play them very quickly.

Very often, sixteenth notes are used as a quick lead-in to a melodic line. That's how they're employed in this song. Take a look at the score again and you'll see that these sixteenth notes comprise a quick little lead-in to the melody.

So, now that we've discussed this score for *He's a Jolly Good Fellow*, try playing the song from it. You know the tune, so this will give you another idea of how that tune can be mapped into a musical score.

Be sure to map how you know this tune goes to its musical representation in the score.

Which score did you like best, the first one or the second one? Most of us find that first version easier to understand. You'll often encounter this. You'll see two or more scores, and one of them will be easier to read and play than the others.

It's very helpful to be able to find the easiest version of a song you wish to play. We'll tell you how to do this in future lessons.

Summary

That wraps it up for this lesson. Remember, the goal is to improve through practice. Return to the tunes in this lesson later and practice them until you feel you've mastered them.

We suggest you record yourself playing the songs. Then play them back, and learn how you can improve your playing to make it sound smooth and professional.

I hope I haven't overwhelmed you with too much about how to read musical notation. That's strictly secondary for now. Your goal is to practice the songs in this chapter until you can finger them and play them properly!

You want your playing to sound as natural as possible, not plodding or forced. Try to breathe only when it doesn't disturb the melody. Let the notes flow, and don't breathe or hesitate after each one.

The next lesson gives a fuller explanation of how to read music. After you finish it, you should be able to read the sheet music for most popular tunes. Then we'll return to more hands-on practice.

You're well on your way to being able to play any song you want!

Lesson 8 -- How to Read Music

Whew! That last lesson was pretty intense. There were enough tunes to keep you practicing for a good while, if you truly want to master them.

Don't feel that you have to conquer them all at once. Instead, go back to those songs now and then. Replay them to solidify your knowledge. In learning to play a musical instrument, remember that "practice makes perfect."

In this lesson we'll discuss a different topic. We'll introduce you to the basics of how to read music. Complete this lesson and you should be able to read the melodies of most popular songs.

You will learn how to read melody lines written for voice or woodwinds like the recorder. (We won't cover advanced topics like chords and multipart piano music.)

Let's get started.

The Staff and Measures



The **staff** are the five horizontal lines on which music is written or **scored**.

Notes on the staff are grouped into equal sized units called **measures**. A measure is a collection of notes that comprises a unit of time. Vertical bars in the staff separate measures.

This diagram shows a single measure, as defined by the space between the two vertical bars.

A **musical phrase** is a group of measures that make sense as a unit. Kind of like a line in a poem, or a sentence in a paragraph.

The **time signature** at the start of every score tells you how many beats each measure contains.

Clefs



The **clef symbol** you see at the start of every score defines what the notes are by their positions on the staff.

All songs in this lesson -- and probably all you will ever play on your recorder -- are in **treble clef**.

The **bass clef** applies only to bass instruments. You'll only encounter it if you play bass recorder. All other recorder music is scored in treble clef.

Time Signatures

After the clef symbol, the next item you see in the score is its **time signature**. It tells you how the timing of the piece works.

As the figure below shows, a time signature has a numerator and a denominator.

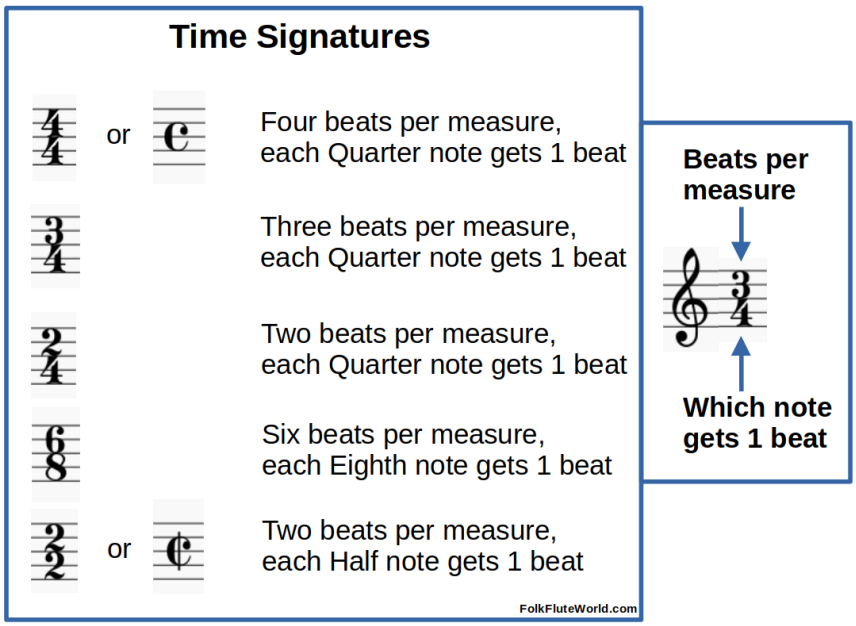
The **numerator** of the time signature tells you how many beats there are in each measure.

The **dominator** tells you which kind of note gets 1 beat.

For example, most our songs so far were in 4/4 time. That means there are 4 beats per measure, and each quarter note gets 1 beat.

In the previous lesson, the tune *For He's a Jolly Good Fellow* was in 3/4 time. That means 3 beats per measure with each quarter note getting 1 beat.

The second score for that same song was in 6/8 time. That's 6 beats per measure with each eighth note getting 1 beat.



There are other time signatures, but these are by far the most common.

All follow the same rule --

- **Numerator tells how many beats per measure**
- **Denominator tells which kind of note gets 1 beat**

How Scores Begin

To review, here are a few examples of how scores typically begin.



The **clef** symbol starts a score. For all recorder music except for the bass, this will always be the **treble clef**.

Next comes the **time signature**. That tells you what kind of note gets 1 beat, and how many beats are in each **measure**.

4/4 time tells you each quarter note gets 1 beat, and there are four of them per measure.

If the piece has **flats** or **sharps**, these precede the time signature. We'll discuss their meaning soon.

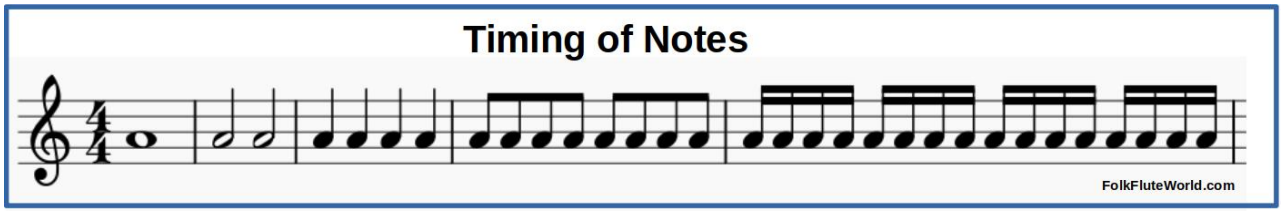
Timing the Notes

Key to the timing of music is the relationship between the various kinds of notes.

This diagram shows their relationship. One whole note consumes the same amount of time as two half notes, which is equal to four quarter notes, etc. Just like this:

1 whole note = 2 half notes = 4 quarter notes = 8 eighth notes = 16 sixteenth notes.

This score illustrates these timings. Each measure consists of 4 beats:

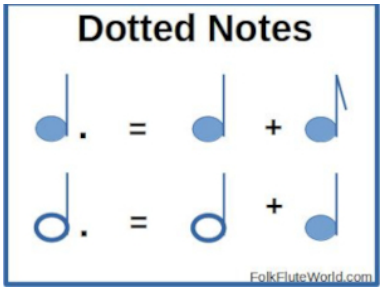


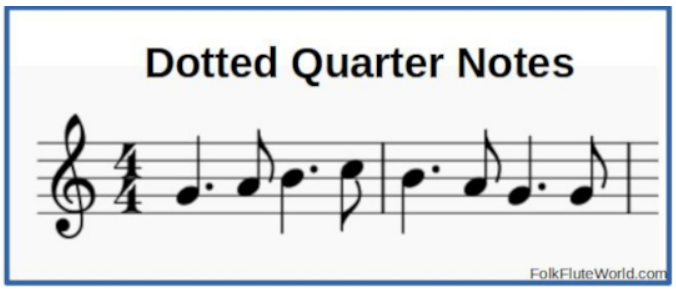
For each note, there is a corresponding **rest**. A rest is a period of silence in which you do not play any note. Here are all the kinds of rests. The timing of each rest directly corresponds to the notes in the prior figure.



In the previous lesson you saw quarter note rests in two songs, *Michael, Row the Boat Ashore* and *A-Tisket, A-Tasket*. Rests are easy. They're just like notes except that you don't have to play anything!

Dotted Notes





Remember dotted notes from the previous lesson? Any note can be immediately followed by a period. **The period extends the length of the note by half**.

So a dotted quarter note would be the equivalent of a quarter note plus an eighth note. And a dotted half note would consume the time of a half note plus a quarter note.

A dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note is extremely common. So you want to be certain you understand how it works. The example above shows how this looks in the score. Remember that it sounds like "daaah-dit-daaah-dit-daaah-dit-daaah-dit".

The songs *Michael, Row the Boat Ashore* and *London Bridge is Falling Down* in the previous lesson illustrated how this pattern of notes sounds in songs.

If this isn't clear right now, don't worry. We'll play more songs soon that will make this easy to understand.

Sharps, Flats, and Keys

As well as a time signature, every piece also has a **key signature**. This is the information at the start of a score that tells you what **key** the song is written in. This tells you whether the piece contains **sharps** or **flats**, the half tones that exist between **whole notes**.

Whole notes are the white keys on the piano. Sharps and flats correspond to the black keys.

There are 7 whole notes in the standard scale. In ascending order, from lowest to highest, they are:

C → D → E →F → G → A → B

Sharps and flats are the half tones that fit in between those whole notes. Recorders play all of them within their range.

Recorders can play a range of over two full octaves. Here are all the whole notes, in ascending sequence:

C5 - D5 - E5 - F5 - G5 - A5 - B5 - C6 - D6 - E6 - F6 - G6 - A6 - B6 - C7 - D7

Remember, the number after each note refers to its **octave**. A higher number means a higher octave. So, **C6** sounds exactly one octave higher than **C5**.

In this book, we'll often refer to the lower octave as "low" and the higher octave as "high". So **low C** is **C5** and **high C** is **C6**. (**C7** would be called **highest C** or **C above the staff**.)

Similarly, **low D** refers to **D5** and **high D** means **D6**. These terms are the informal way most musicians refer to these notes.

Sometimes you'll hear the lower octave informally referred to as the **lower register**, and the higher octave, as the **higher** or **upper register**.

Most recorder fingering charts display from C5 up to D7. Typical recorder players can play up to about C7 or maybe D7. Excellent musicians with professional instruments can reach all the way up to G7 or so. It all depends on the skill of the musician and the quality of his or her instrument.

Summary

To summarize, this lesson covers only the basics of how to read music. But it's enough for you to read most music scored for recorder, as well as much written for voice, tin whistle, Irish flute, concert flute, ocarina, and other instruments.

Don't worry if everything in this lesson is not yet clear. Much of this music notation becomes obvious as you play more songs.

In fact, one of the best ways to learn how to read scores is to see how they encode songs for which you already know the melodies. That will help you better understand the timing of notes in scores.

So, in the next lesson we'll introduce new songs to learn and practice. Very soon you'll be at the point where you'll be able to read and play most popular melodies on your recorder!

Lesson 9 -- More Songs

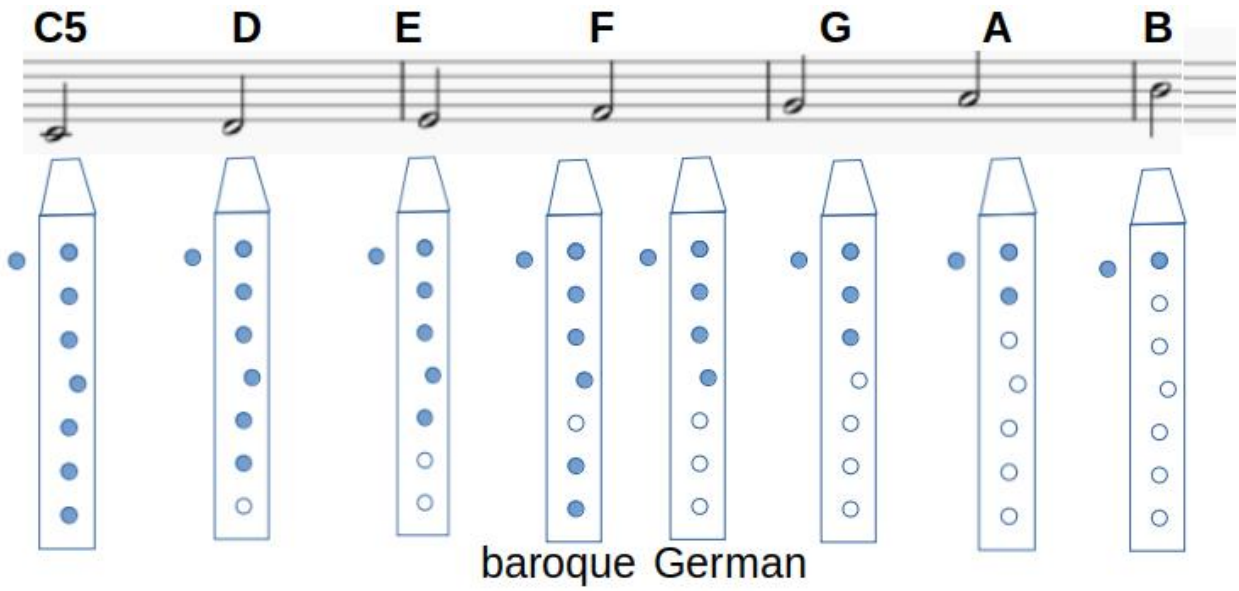
This lesson is all about consolidating your gains as you practice new songs.

We won't introduce much new musical notation. What you've already learned means you can read most scores. But as we introduce each new song, be sure to match up the elements of the score with how you know the tunes go. That will vastly improve your ability to read sheet music.

As before, we present simple songs you already know, so that you can focus on fingering and playing your recorder, rather than deciphering scores with complicated timing.

Before we start, here's a review of the notes you've learned so far.

This time, we've arranged the notes in ascending order, which is how you'll normally see them. It's an informal convention. Also observe that we've labeled the lowest note, **low C**, with its numerical pitch. The lowest note on the soprano recorder is **C5**, to distinguish it from **middle C** on the piano, which is **C4**.



Practice ascending and descending these notes in sequence a few times to refresh your memory of them.

Song: Jolly Old Saint Nick

This isn't the best known of Christmas songs, but you'll surely recognize the tune. The melody is generally attributed to James R. Murray, and was first published in 1874.

Alvin and the Chipmunks memorably recorded the song in 1963. Andy Williams, Anne Murray, and Carole King have since included it on their albums.

This is one of those tunes you'll want to play slowly a few times through to learn how it goes. But after that, set a jaunty pace and enjoy its quick snappy rhythm.



Song: Beethoven's Ode to Joy

This next piece is an adaptation of Ludwig van Beethoven's *Ode to Joy*. It's from the fourth movement of Beethoven's famous *Symphony No. 9 in D Minor*. Even if you don't recognize these song titles, you'll probably recognize the melody.

The timing of this song is simple: it has only quarter and half notes, plus a couple quicker eighth notes. And the tune ranges over only five notes -- from low C to G. That's a good test to ensure you cover all the fingering holes **completely** for the lowest notes.

Hopefully, you're getting to the point where this song is easy for you to play, once you've familiarized yourself with it.

Listen to yourself as you play this song. As you practice it, try to imbue it with beauty. Sing through your recorder.

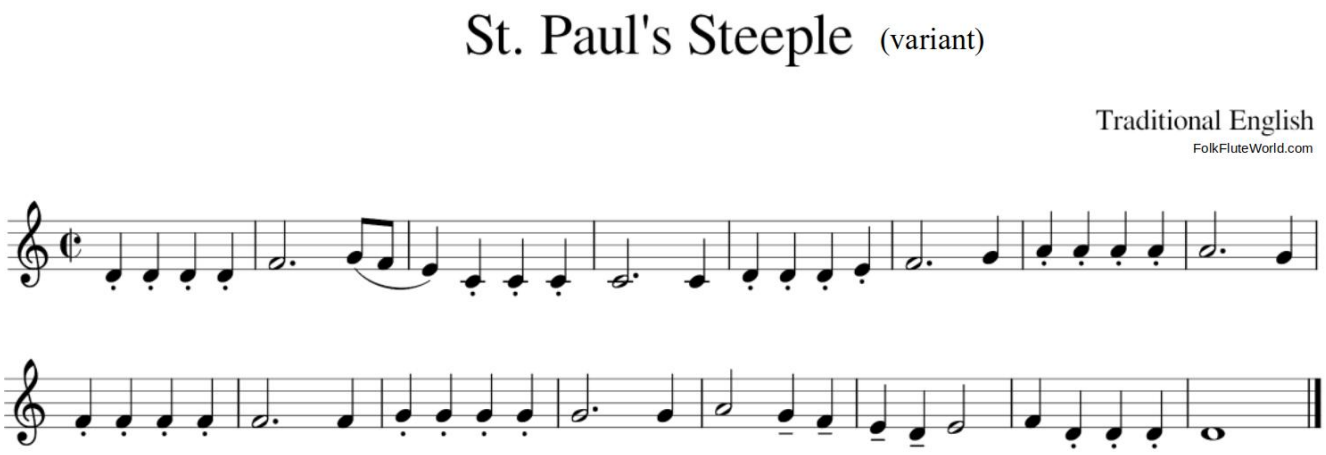
Don't just pedantically blow each note. Phrase the notes in such a way that it expresses how you feel playing it, and what you think the composer intended that you feel.

These are the first steps to getting beyond mechanically playing notes and evolving into a musician who interprets the song in meaningful fashion.



Song: St Paul's Steeple

Several hundred years old, this song comes in several variants with different choruses. It's often considered a nursery rhyme. Here is one version:



The dots underneath the quarter notes mean to play them **staccato**. That is, short and punchy.

The opposite of staccato for an individual note is **tenuto**. Underscores beneath notes dictate tenuto. Play the tenuto notes as long and continuous.

Play staccato notes as "dit-dit-dit". Play tenuto notes as "laah-laah-laah".

You see staccato notes throughout this tune, and a few tenuto notes towards the end. Many songs rely on this contrast between staccato and tenuto to form interesting contrasts within their melodies.

Be aware that the dots and lines for staccato and tenuto can also appear **above** notes, instead of beneath them. Where they appear is simply a matter of which is easier for the musician to read.

Song: Frère Jacques

Here's a fun song for which many American schoolchildren learn the French words. It's thought that the song dates back to the 17th century.

The original French words are humorous. They tell of a monk who has overslept and forgotten to ring the church bells. The lyrics implore him to arise and do his duty and ring them:

Brother Jacques, Brother Jacques,
Are you sleeping? Are you sleeping?
Ring the bells for matins! Ring the bells for matins!
Ding, ding, dong. Ding, ding, dong.

Here is the sheet music. Like the previous tune, it uses dots below notes to indicate staccato.

If you practice to where you can play the song quickly, you'll find the two sequences or **runs** of eighth notes good practice for your manual dexterity.

One skill you'll develop as you become a better player is the ability to accurately play fast runs of eighth (or sixteenth) notes.



In a later lesson, we'll show you how to play this song as a **round** -- a tune where players play different parts of the same song at the same time. *Frère Jacques* is one of the most famous (and fun) rounds of all.

Song: My Bonnie

This next song is a traditional Scottish tune you'll undoubtedly recognize. *The Beatles* recorded a rock n' roll version of it in 1961. It's generally regarded as their first recording session and their first single record.

Their rendition charted to number 5 in Germany, but failed to crack the UK or USA lists.

This song presents a nice solo tune for recorder, with its combination of movement and extended notes.

Try to play the **tied** (or **slurred**) notes with as beautiful a tone as you can, to see how sonorous recorders can be. Remember that the ties combine two notes into one. You don't separately tongue the second note.

So, the dotted half note followed by a tied half note gets: 3 beats plus 2 beats, or a total of 5 beats.

You'll notice that the time signature is 6/4. Don't let that throw you.

It's 6 beats per measure, with each quarter note getting one beat. So you just play with each quarter note getting one beat, the same as in most the scores you've played thus far. Remember that dotted half notes each get 3 beats.

And you see the common dotted-quarter-note-eighth-note combination in this score.

As always, given that you already know how the tune goes, you really don't have to worry about the musical notation. We're just discussing it here to solidify your knowledge of it.



Song: Buffalo Gals

Here's a fast, snappy song from the early 19th century. Once you get comfortable with it, you'll want to play it at a lively pace. You might recall that this song was featured in the film classic *It's a Wonderful Life* from 1946. George Bailey sings it to his sweetheart, Mary, as they fall in love.

It's a bit off topic, but you might wonder how the film *It's a Wonderful Life* became so popular. What happened was that the owning studio failed to renew its copyright when it came due in 1974.

That put the film into the public domain and made its use free. As a result, television stations started broadcasting the movie every Christmas, and it quickly became a familiar holiday classic. What was a win for some TV stations became a win for the public as the film gained popularity.



The big "**C**" at the very start of the score is a synonym for the 4/4 time signature. So just as in 4/4 time, each measure contains 4 beats, and the quarter note gets 1 beat.

Play this score very slowly the first few times through, to get used to the timing. Remember that eighth notes consume half the time of quarter notes. So if a quarter note gets 1 beat, an eighth note gets 1/2 of a beat.

Given its mix of quarter and eighth notes, this is a pretty fast-paced song. It's an exercise in tonguing eighth notes.

You'll notice the instruction **D.C. al Fine** at the end of the piece. That means to return to the start of the score, and to play until you encounter the word **Fine**, which means "End". Thus, you play through the entire piece, return to the start, and play until you reach **Fine** at the end of the first line.

You may see **d.c. al fine** either capitalized or not. It has the same meaning in either case.

Tired Hands?

Do your hands get fatigued while playing?

Fingering your recorder is similar to other activities requiring manual pressure and dexterity. Liken it to typing on a computer keyboard, for example.

If you touch type when you're tired or tense, or you apply too much pressure when hitting the keys, your hands might feel tired afterward. In the worst case, you could even develop carpal tunnel syndrome.

Playing a recorder is similar. Relax when you play. Don't tense up or grip your flute too tightly.

When you're first learning to play, it's natural to cover the tone holes with definite strokes. After all, you can't leave any portion of a closed tone hole uncovered.

You might even "punch" the holes to cover them, and curl your fingers above them when you do. That's really not necessary. Gently cover the tone holes with the pads of your fingers and leave your fingers largely flat and only slightly curved. The photos in Lessons 3 and 4 show how your fingers should look above the instrument.

Over time, you'll become more skilled in fingering and won't feel the need to apply so much pressure. Relax… cradle your recorder. Caress the tone holes. Listen to its soothing sounds. Don't force it.

You should also sit up straight. Good posture will keep you from tiring. And remember to take deep breaths rather than shallow ones. Together, these habits will keep you comfortable while you play.

Summary

That wraps it up for now. This is a good practice lesson, so return to it in future sessions until you feel you've thoroughly mastered it. That's the best way to build up your skills.

In the next lesson, we'll take a break from hands-on practice and discuss how to care for your recorder. Whether it's plastic or wood, a little bit of care goes a long way in ensuring that your instrument will last a lifetime.

Lesson 10 -- Caring for Your Recorder

Plastic recorders need little care. But they do require some minimal care, or otherwise they may become unplayable.

Wood instruments require much more care. This is as you might expect when a crafted wood implement is continually exposed to handling and the moisture in your breath.

Follow the manufacturer's care instructions for a wood recorder. If you don't have them at hand, you may be able to download them from the manufacturer's website.

Otherwise, we provide generic advice in this lesson. **Instructions from your recorder's manufacturer should always take precedence.**

Let's discuss how to maintain your recorder in top playing condition.

Preparing for Play

Always let your recorder adjust to room temperature before you play. This is especially important with wood instruments. For example, don't bring a recorder inside from a freezing cold winter's day and play it immediately. Let it warm up to room temperature first.

Brushing your teeth and gargling before a session ensures you won't introduce bacteria into the instrument. That could encourage mold growth in the mouthpiece.

Clean hands ensure you won't darken the key holes with your fingers. Dirty fingertips show up on the tone holes of unfinished wood recorders rather quickly.

We recommend against sharing your recorder with anyone. Medical research has shown that harmful microbes can survive inside a recorder even if it hasn't been played for some time. Share a recorder with someone, and you share their germs.

How to Break In a New Wood Recorder

Plastic recorders do not require any special treatment. They're ready for sustained play the moment you obtain them.

New wood recorders need to be broken in gradually -- or **conditioned**. If you play a brand new recorder for a long session right off, the instrument might swell through water absorption from your moist breath. This could alter, warp, or even crack the instrument.

So limit your first session to ten minutes. Swab out the recorder carefully afterward. Don't play the recorder again until you know it's fully dried out.

Increase the length of each playing session by several minutes. Remember that the purpose of this conditioning is to get the recorder used to the moisture of your breath. You can judge how long to play it before it gets "tired."

After several weeks of this regimen, the instrument should be fully conditioned and ready for regular play.

Some musicians offer very specific guidance for a conditioning regimen. They say to start by playing 10 or 15 minutes maximum for the first week. Then, increase by 5 minutes per week until you get up to a full hour of play. When you reach this point, you're done with the break-in period.

Recorder Suddenly Sounds Muffled?



Swab and Cleaning Rod



Here's a problem that affects both plastic and wood recorders. After you've played your flute in session for a while, you might notice that notes suddenly sound muffled, wobbly, subdued, or garbled. If so, your recorder is **wetting out**.

This is due to the moisture in your breath and how it collects in the narrow windway of the mouthpiece.

After some play, this windway can become obstructed with the moisture from your breath. So you don't get a clear tone.

If you're performing and can't stop playing, give the instrument a quick, hard suck on the mouthpiece to remove moisture.

If you can stop, disassemble your recorder. Give a hard blow on the detached mouthpiece to blow out moisture. Clean out the instrument with a cleaning swab or rod with attached cloth. Ensure you've eliminated all the moisture.

You'll need to use a swab or rod of the proper size for your recorder's bore (a swab for a tenor will be bigger than one for a soprano). Most recorders come with a swab when you purchase them, but if not they're only a few dollars at Amazon or any music store.

Dry the windway with a Q-tip, microfiber cloth, folded piece of paper, or a delicate swab narrow enough to fit the passageway.

Plastic recorders accumulate moisture more quickly than wood ones. This is because plastic is completely impervious to water and has zero absorption ability. In contrast, most woods have at least some absorptive capability. How much varies by the type of wood and its specific finish.

Avoid Wetting Out

You can reduce or prevent wetting out by these techniques:

- Try to blow a dry breath
- Don't point the instrument directly downward when you play, so that your saliva won't run into it
- Don't "swallow" the mouthpiece, only place your lips on the edge of it

Deep Cleaning Plastic

You want to keep your recorder clean because a clean instrument:

- Ensures the best tone
- Prolongs the useful life of the instrument
- Prevents germs, bacteria, or mold from building up inside the instrument

To deep clean a plastic recorder, dissemble the instrument, then submerge it in warm water and swish it about. Some like to use a very mild detergent like dishwashing liquid. In this case be sure to rinse in clean water afterwards. Rinse after removal. Then dry and reassemble.

If the joints are tight, you may want to lubricate them with a tiny bit of joint cream. But not too much, or that could slop into the bore and become detrimental.

If you have a larger instrument that has keys, keep the keys dry and do not submerge them in water. Instead clean your keyed flute more like a wood instrument. Use a cleaning swab or rod for the bore, and carefully clean the windway and beak.

Never put your plastic recorder in a kitchen dishwasher.

Maintaining Wood

Wood recorders are more delicate and take more effort to clean than plastic. **If you don't maintain them regularly, you risk warping or cracking.**

Wood recorders feature different kinds of woods and finishes. Some are unfinished. Others are impregnated with paraffin wax. **So always follow the manufacturer's instructions for how to maintain them.** They know best.

If you don't have the instructions, here is some generic advice. First off, clean out all moisture after every use.

Don't ever submerge a wood recorder in water like you might with a plastic one. Instead, disassemble, then swab out the instrument with a swab or cleaning rod with attached cloth.

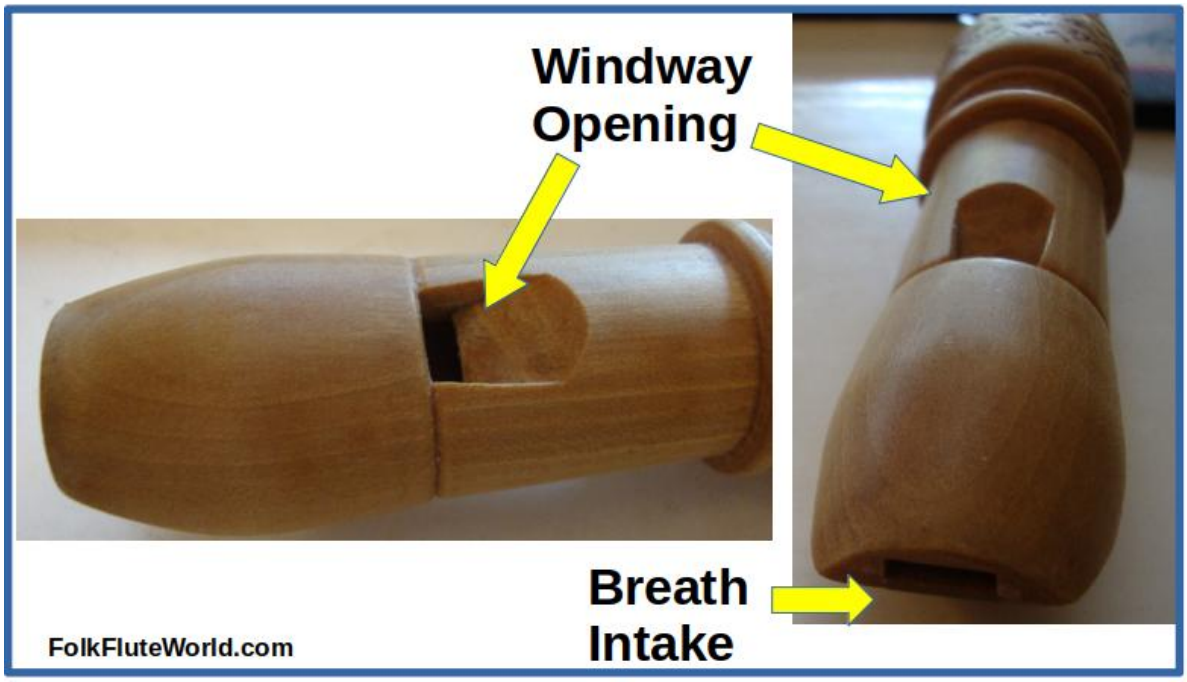
Carefully clean the windway and beak. You can use moist Q-tips, a narrow swab, folded paper, or thin microfiber cloth to carefully clean the breath and windway slits (see the photo below).

Some like to remove the interior **block** -- the distinctively colored interior piece -- from within the mouthpiece when they clean their instrument. This allows for more thorough inspection and cleaning (see the diagram of the mouthpiece and its block in Lesson 1).

Don't use alcohol or chemical cleaners unless you specifically know they won't harm your instrument.

Use a microfiber cloth to gently clean the outside. Or wipe it gently with a moistened lint-free cloth.

The photo below shows the areas you need to pay special attention to when drying or cleaning the mouthpiece.



Joints

You want to keep your instrument's connecting joints at the right tension: snug but not too tight.

For plastic, apply **joint cream**. For wood, use **cork grease**. Apply only a little dab -- enough to lubricate the joints but not so much that it slops into the bore.

If joints become stuck, rock them back and forth instead of giving a full twist. A pair of latex gloves will give you better leverage when rocking or twisting. (See Lesson 26 for more on how to fix stuck joints.)

You can put a plastic instrument under running warm water to expand it, just like opening a stuck glass jar. (Don't do this with a wood recorder!)

Oiling Wood Recorders

Always follow your recorder manufacturer's instructions on whether, how, and with what to oil your recorder. That said, our generic advice follows...

Oiling only applies to wood recorders, not plastic ones. And it only applies to certain wood recorders, at that.

Among wood recorders, some are impregnated with paraffin. These do not need to be oiled -- although it won't hurt them if you do oil them. Instruments made of either maple or pearwood tend to be paraffin-infused. Interior varnished wood also does not require oiling.

Other woods -- rosewood, boxwood, olive, ebony, grenadilla, plumwood -- are typically unprotected, so they will need to be oiled.

The purpose of oiling is to protect the wood. Recorders are subject to the moisture from your breath when you play, and wood reacts to that. You don't want your recorder absorbing all that moisture. It swells the wood and ultimately can distort the sound.

You typically oil a recorder a few times per year. A rule of thumb is that the inside bore of the recorder should always look just the slightest bit greasy. If it ever appears dull or gray, the instrument requires oiling. Be sure to oil the instrument if it will be placed into storage and not used for some time. Otherwise it could dry out too much.

Sweet canola oil or sweet almond oil work well. They tend to absorb well and do not leave any sticky residue. Or you can buy special "recorder oil" from many shops. Professionals often use linseed oil, but it can be tricky to apply and leave a residue on the wood that is difficult to remove.

Always make sure that your instrument is fully dry before oiling. Use just a few drops of oil and swab it through the bore with your oiling swab. Your "oiling swab" should be different from your normal moisture-cleaning swab, and it should be dedicated to this role.

Do **not** oil the block inside the mouthpiece. This is because the block is intended to absorb moisture from your breath, and it can't perform this function if it's been oiled. So when you oil the bore of the mouthpiece, hold the head joint vertically -- beak up top -- so you don't accidentally get oil on the block.

Keep the oil off your keys (if any). Wood oil can hinder their operation.

After oiling the inside, many like to give a quick swipe to the outside of the instrument as well. This leaves an attractive shine.

Then give the recorder some time before play to allow it some time to absorb the oil. Leave the parts standing vertically for a couple hours to allow oil to soak in and any excess to drip out.

Transport

Many recorders come with a carrying case or pouch to keep them safe during transport.

If your instrument arrived in a shipping box, it's a good idea to keep to keep it. Whether that's a nice carrying case or just the rough outer box, it makes the perfectly sized container for safely and securely transporting your instrument. It's also makes a useful storage box.

Be sure to retain any molded plastic holder, padding, or bubble wrap that came with the original box.

Always keep the fingering chart and any care instructions that come with your recorder. Given that there are occasionally very minor fingering discrepancies among recorders, the vendor's fingering chart is the ultimate authority. Vendor instructions are also the authoritative guide on how to maintain your instrument in top playing condition.

Storage

Try not to store your recorder in variable temperature or humidity. Don't expose it to temperature extremes. For example, don't leave it in your car on a hot summer's day. And don't store it in your unheated attic over the winter (or in the summer either, if your attic gets hot).

The rule of thumb is: **if you wouldn't like sitting in some environment for an extended time, neither will your recorder.**

Plastic recorders are largely unaffected by water (but their keys, if any, will be). Wood instruments are a different matter. Keep them out of the rain. Don't store them in moist or high humidity environments like a damp basement.

Wood recorders should be stored protected from humidity and temperature extremes the same as any other finely crafted wooden object.

When you store your flute, be sure to disassemble it first. Otherwise, you may discover that the joints become tightly stuck together over time. Lesson 26 explains how to fix stuck or loose joints.

Summary

Beginners sometimes become confused as to why their recorder suddenly stops working. Now you know: it's wetting out. Just eliminate the moisture, and you're ready to play again.

Or maybe your recorder no longer sounds pure and true. Time for a deep cleaning.

This lesson explained all there is to keeping your recorder in top shape. Follow this simple advice and your instrument will last a lifetime. Recorders cost little yet can last indefinitely with proper care.

I own a wood recorder crafted by hand in 1970. Due to proper care, it still plays as well as it did over half a century ago.

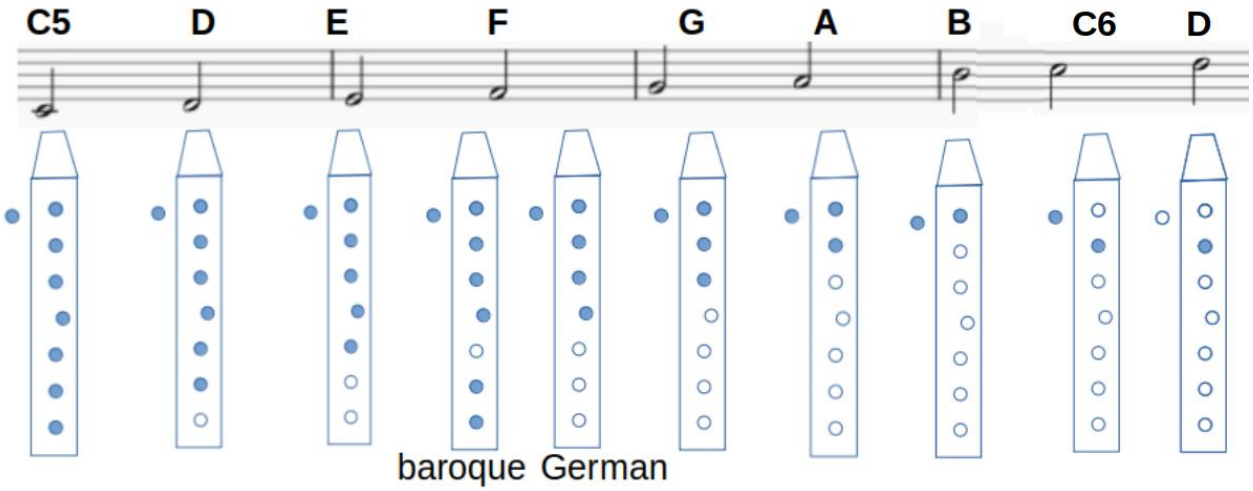
In an upcoming lesson, we'll explain how to perform the most common recorder repairs.

For the next lesson we'll introduce a few more new notes. Of course, the lesson comes with several songs to practice them.

Lesson 11 -- Extending the Scale... and More Songs

Let's get back to hands-on practice.

To review, here are fingerings for the lower whole note scale, from low C to B. We've introduced two new notes on the high end. One is **high C**, also known as **C6**. That's one octave above the soprano recorder's lowest note, low C. Above that is **high D**, or **D6**.



Linear fingering is the rule here-- you progressively raise one finger after another to climb the scale. But there are a couple exceptions to this rule: most notably F on baroque instruments.

For all the lower register notes, you always fully cover the thumb hole. The first note that alters this rule is high D, where you leave it completely open.

Practice ascending and descending these notes in sequence a few times to refresh your memory of them.

All recorders can play another complete octave of notes above high C (that is, from C6 up to C7). Depending on the instrument and the skill of the musician, some can play all the way up to G7 (the G above C7).

What this means is that recorders have sufficient range to play almost any tune. That's a big advantage that many kinds of simple flutes can't match. That capability is one reason the recorder has become such a popular instrument.

We'll cover the remaining high notes in upcoming lessons.

Song: Little Brown Jug

Here's a song for practicing up to high C. It's a classic tune from the American Civil War era, written by Joseph Eastburn Winner. He intended it as a drinking song -- so many of the catchiest classics are -- but it ended up slipping into mainstream America as a perennially popular folk song.

Glenn Miller and his Orchestra had one of their earlier hits with a jazzed-up version of this song in 1939. Miller went on to a phenomenal career as "the king of swing" until his untimely death in 1944 at age 40.

Miller's plane went down somewhere over the English Channel in World War II. To this day, it's a mystery as to the cause. Some believe he was shot down by either enemy or friendly fire. Others suggest the most likely explanation is mechanical failure of some kind, such as engine failure. And still others advance weather-related causes, such as the icing of the wings or a frozen carburetor.



There's nothing new in this song in terms of musical notation. But it gives you a good initial work out up to high C. Practice it several times to become familiar with all the notes.

Part of your initiation into the high notes is learning how to hold the recorder. You'll discover right away it's a tad different when you must leave most of the fingering holes open. But that's the point here.

Most players rest their instrument on their two thumbs (whether the left thumb is covering the thumb hole or just resting on the instrument. Some use their right smallest finger (the pinky finger) to cradle the end of the instrument when it's not covering the last tone hole.

If you play a large recorder -- like a bass -- it probably has an attachable neck strap you can use to provide extra security from dropping it. If so, now is a good time to use it.

Here's a little test for the quality of your recorder. Play a low C whole note, then flip up to high C. Do they sound exactly an octave apart? On a lower quality recorder the high C may sound slightly flat.

Try that test a second time with low D and high D. You want to ensure you play in tune across the entire octave.

Song: Over the Mountaintop

Here's a simple but beautiful tune. It's from the booklet *Songs of the Ocarina*, an open source compilation of original tunes from The Ocarina Network.

When playing it, concentrate on those high C's. Make them sound clean and pure, not too airy or raspy.



Remember how we talked about **repeat signs** earlier? In this score you see the first two lines in the score grouped as a unit by the enclosing repeat signs. You play through these two lines twice due to the repeat signs.

Following that, you go on to the third and fourth lines. They, too, are enclosed in matching repeat signs. So you play them through twice as well. At that point you stop playing.

Song: Amazing Grace

Next up is a hymn composed by Anglican churchman and poet John Newton in 1779. Mr. Newton was, by his own admission, a "drunkard and petty sinner." He intended the lyrics of this song to serve as the spiritual autobiography of his conversion.

This classic tune also spans the scale from low C to high C. Really let your flute sing on that high C at the end of the score's first line.

To play this song expressively, pace your breaths. Don't disrupt the melody by breathing at a disruptive point! Breathe after the half note in the 5th measure, during the rest that starts the second line, after the half note in the 5th measure of the second line.



Song: On Top of Old Smokey

This next song is good exercise in holding notes and making them sound lovely. Listen to how those long holds sound when you play them. Are you able to make them sing? Don't just mechanically plod through the notes but instead communicate feeling and emotion using your recorder.

As with the previous score, good breath control is an important part of making this song sound natural and flowing.

Everyone knows the tune of *Old Smokey*, so it's trivial to decode the timing of the music. Remember that slurs connect two -- or more -- notes as if they were one long note.

See the **triplets** in lines 3 and 4? Those are three eighth notes connected together with a "3" appearing above (or below).

That means to play the three eighth notes within a single beat. So in this song the triplets represent three quick eighth notes sounded within the time in which you'd normally play two of them.

Sing or hum the tune to yourself, and you'll quickly understand how to play those triplets. They sound together as a quick "tat-tat-tat". In this tune they naturally lead into the musical phrase that follows them.



One other feature of this score deserves mention. Remember the rule that every measure in a score is required to have the same number of beats? And that the **time signature** at the start dictates how many beats are in each measure?

You might have noticed that the first measure in this song has only 1 beat! It's a single quarter note, that low C that starts the song.

You'll run across many songs in which the first measure has fewer beats than all other measures in the score. Very often what you'll see is one or two notes that naturally lead into the melody. They're often called **pick up** notes. Or you may hear them called the **lead in**. (Technically, they're termed the **anacrusis**, but no one really calls them that.)

So while every measure in a score is required to have the same number of beats as the time signature requires, you will find that many composers violate this rule in their first measure. A few also ignore the rule in their last measure.

Of course, a composer could pad his first or last measure by including a rest to fulfill the time signature requirements. But in practice, many don't bother. And so you have this odd phenomenon where all measures in a score are required to have the same number of beats per measure as shown in the time signature -- except for possibly the first and last!

While the number of beats may vary in the first or last measure, **the kind of note assigned a single beat never varies**. In *Old Smokey*, for example, the first measure still assumes that a quarter note gets 1 beat.

The only way the kind of note that gets one beat can vary is if the time signature changes. In later lessons, we'll see an example or two where the time signature changes right in the middle of a song. It's an easy situation to handle and we'll tell you how.

Song: The Ballad of Captain Kidd

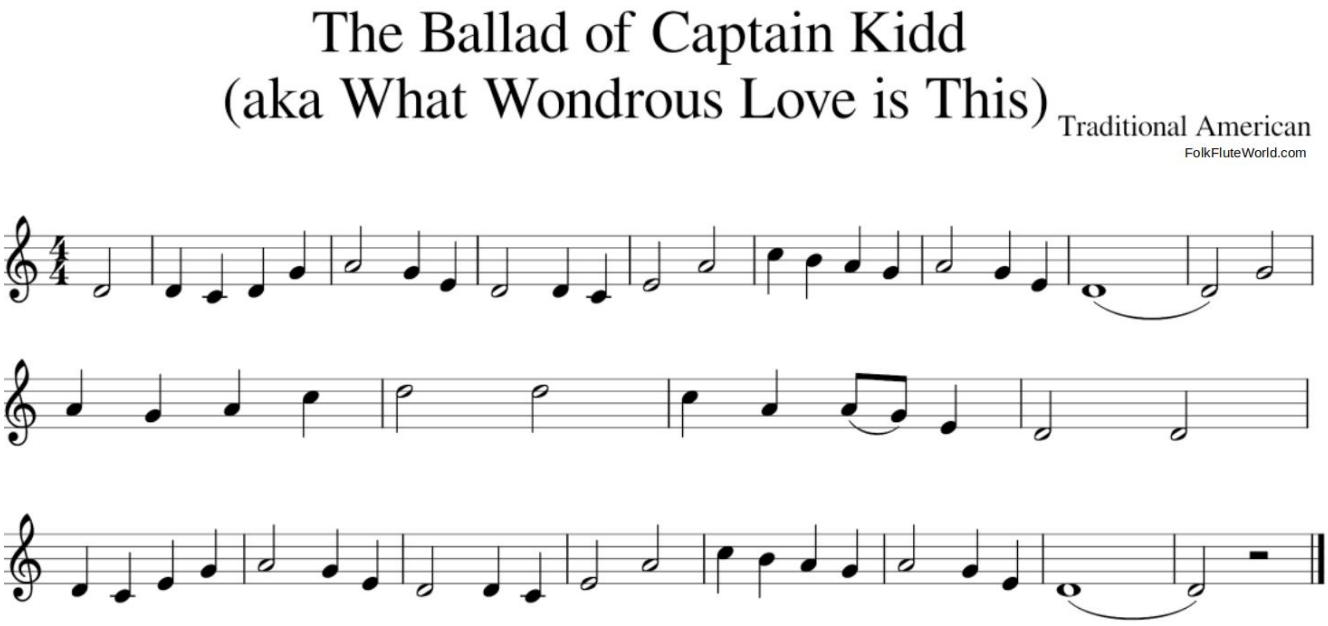
Captain William Kidd was a Scottish pirate who looted ships from many nations until his capture and hanging in 1701. This ballad was written on handbills spread in London at the time.

The lyrics tell of a man who "buried his Bible in the sand", and then "looted ships and ran". The song was so popular it instantly spread from England to the American colonies.

During the religious Great Awakening in America in the early 1800's, the song was co-opted and adapted into the Christian hymn, *What a Wondrous Love is This*.

Today it's included in the hymnals of several denominations -- minus the original bawdy lyrics, of course!

This song presents a good exercise in climbing and descending the scale, with several high C's and D's included. The timing is pretty easy to decipher, even if you don't know how the tune goes. It's a lovely old melody.



Song: Arran Boat Song

Here's a traditional Scottish folk song. You'll find it in almost any collection of songs from the British Isles.

The song was named after the Isle of Arran in the Firth of Clyde, off the west Scottish coast. It first appeared in published form in 1875 in the book *Merry Melodies*.

This score ranges from low C to high C so it's good practice across the lower whole note scale.

The song's timing relies on the dotted-quarter-note-eighth-note combination. That repeats over and over, throughout the melody. Remember how that goes? It's daaaah-dit-daah, daaaah-dit-daah, etc.

If you have difficulty recalling this timing, refer back to two songs in Lesson 7 that employ it. *London Bridge is Falling Down* and *Michael, Row the Boat Ashore* both rely on it.



Summary

Having reached this point in this course, you now know all the whole notes of the lower octave.

In future lessons, we'll introduce the remaining notes of the upper scale. And we'll work through many more practice songs.

In this lesson, we urged that you express yourself and your feelings through your instrument. In the next lesson, we'll discuss specifics of how to do this with techniques that will help.

Lesson 12 --Express Yourself!

To this point, you've learned how to play the lower scale on your recorder. You can recognize notes in sheet music and finger them properly. And you can decipher the timing of sheet music well enough to figure out many popular melodies.

Gaining those skills has likely required your full attention.

Now let's shift our focus. How does your recorder sound when you play? Are the notes beautiful and full? Are they in tune across the scale? When you play a song does it sound natural and melodic, or forced, with plodding tread to keep it in proper timing?

This lesson explores **technique** -- the many aspects of making your recorder sound as lovely as possible. You want your instrument to become the song itself when you play.

And you want to do that while accurately representing the score.

Let's explore ways to improve your performance through playing tips and techniques.

Blowing Technique

One part of making your recorder sound optimally is your blowing technique. As you've learned, you need the proper breath pressure to make the instrument sound up to its potential.

The optimal pressure varies by the recorder. It also varies by the instrument's size, with lower pitched flutes requiring greater breath than higher ones.

And on many recorders, breath pressure also varies slightly by the pitch. Some recorders require sharp, directed air pressure to play the top note (or two) in tune. Others require a soft breath to play low C.

Mastering breath pressure for your particular recorder and how it performs across the scale can help you become a better player.

The goal is to voice pure notes and project appealing sound, while staying in tune across the entire scale.

Intonation

Intonation basically means: are you playing in tune? Are you playing the notes at accurate pitches?

There are two parts to this. First off, you need a quality instrument that will play in tune.

As we explained in Lesson 2, cheap recorders are often substandard. Many are made for school children, where cost is the paramount concern. Some are produced as decorative collectibles. Recorders with these design goals often don't play in tune.

This is why you need a quality recorder. **You can't fix an ill-tuned or substandard instrument through your play.**

Assuming you're playing a quality recorder, here are some tips...

Before you play your instrument, ensure that it's at room temperature. A cold instrument may play sharp, while a hot one could sound flat.

And then there is your playing. You can adjust the pitch higher (make it sharper) by pushing in the mouthpiece or increasing breath pressure. Lower it (make it flatter) by pulling the mouthpiece out or by blowing more softly. Mastering your instrument means knowing how to produce tonally accurate pitches.

How do you know if you're playing in tune? Listen carefully, and you can often tell by ear. If one note sounds out of tune relative to others, you'll probably recognize that.

Another method is to use **online tuners** to measure your pitch when you sound notes. Lesson 23 lists online tuners you can use. Or you can download an Android or Apple tuner app for your mobile phone.

You can practice **scales** and **arpeggios** to improve your ability to play in tune. Arpeggios are simply a set of complementary notes played in sequence -- just as if you played each note in a chord one after the other. Playing different arpeggios and scales helps you judge the intonation of each note relative to the others. It helps you ensure each note tunes to or "matches" the others in the sequence.

The Scales and Arpeggios Appendix at the end of this book lists useful ones for you to practice.

Here's another way to learn how to play notes in tune. Play a low register note, for example, low C, then play the note an octave higher (eg, high C). Do they sound precisely an octave apart? Play across the scale alternating lower and upper register notes.

Tuning With Others

When you play by yourself, the absolute pitches of your notes aren't critical. What is important is that the pitches of all notes are accurate **relative to one another**.

Your goal should be to develop the ability to play this way instinctively. As long as you play notes that are in tune relative to one another, your playing will sound fine.

When you play with other musicians, you face a completely different situation. Now your recorder can't just be in tune with itself -- it must also sound in tune with the other musicians' instruments. All must sound in tune with one another. If not, cacophony may ensue.

Have you ever watched an opera, or play, or musical that has a live orchestra? Remember how you heard the musicians play what sounded like a few random notes prior to the performance? Well, they were tuning their instruments. Every musician plays a few notes and compares it to his fellows to ensure that all the instruments play compatibly in tune.

You can do this with your fellow recorder players, too. Play the entire scale, and see if your pitches match theirs.

Push your mouthpiece in to raise the pitch and sharpen your notes, or pull it out to lower the pitch and flatten your notes.

In group play, you want all instruments to have been manufactured to the same **tuning standard**. The note A (above middle C) set to **440 Hz** or **442 Hz** are the two most common standards. Plus, there are some less common standards as well.

A = 440 Hz is most popular in English speaking countries. Always look to see to what standard a flute is set before purchasing it if you play with others. Lesson 22 discusses tuning standards in more detail.

Serious ensembles sometimes prefer to play recorders all from the same manufacturer. Pick a maker with a strong reputation for professionally tuned instruments, and this makes it easier to form a perfectly in-tune ensemble.

Tempo

In Lesson 7, you played the song *For He's a Jolly Good Fellow* from two different scores. I suggested you first play it slowly, then speed up the tempo until you turned it into a rousing celebratory song.

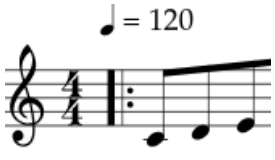
Thus you learned that the speed at which you play a score -- its **tempo** -- can alter the entire character of a tune.

Play *For He's a Jolly Good Fellow* slowly, and it's a pleasant melody. Play it "up tempo" and you turn it into a boisterous group sing-along.

Many composers provide a **musical directive** or instructions right at the start of their score to indicate the speed at which it should be played. Usually in italics, you might see English instructions such as ***fast***, ***slow***, or ***lively***.

Or you might see Italian instructions such as ***lento*** (slowly), ***andante*** (moderately slow), **moderato** (moderately paced), ***allegro*** (fast), or ***presto*** (very fast).

Another way composers indicate tempo is by **beats per minute** (or **BPM**). Relatively slow BPMs are under 60, while fast are over 120. This example indicates 120 beats per minute, where each quarter note gets 1 beat:



Quarter notes at 120 Beats Per Minute

In the absence of direction, it's up to you to determine how slowly or quickly to play a song. If the song is familiar, you'll instinctively know how to play it.

If not, you might experiment with several different tempos to discover which best fits the tune.

Phrasing

Measures group notes into equal-sized units of time. A **musical phrase** is harder to define. It's a set of measures that fit together in such a way as to create a meaningful group.

Musical phrases result from the interplay between melody, rhythm, harmony, dynamics, and other characteristics.

Phrasing refers to how you group measures into musical phrases.

Oftentimes the phrasing of a song is obvious. At other times, phrasing may be more subtle or even open to interpretation.

Remember how we discussed the topic *"When Do You Breathe?"* in Lesson 7? Breath control is one important aspect of phrasing.

We offered scores for the song *Long, Long Ago* both without and with breath marks. The latter is the composer's effort to make the song's phrasing explicit.

Here is the version with the breath marks:



What would happen if you were to breathe at the end of every measure, instead of every four? Try it. You'll find that the melody becomes choppy. So you see how important breath control can be to good phrasing.

When composers include breath marks in their compositions, they have given you important direction in how they view the phrasing of their song. You can often interpret the breath marks as **phrase marks**.

Other musical symbols can indicate phrasing as well. For example, the double line or **bar lines** at the end of scores indicate the end of the score. They can also occur within the score to indicate the end of a phrase or a phrase grouping called a **cadence**.

Slurs and ties can indicate phrasing, too, as can **dynamics** (changes in volume or loudness).

The bottom line is that some scores give you explicit direction in phrasing through such indicators as breath marks, bar lines, slurring, dynamics, and other features.

At other times, you'll be on your own. Often this is because the composer considers the phrasing self-evident. If it's not, it often pays to experiment and see what sounds best, just as you might with the tempo.

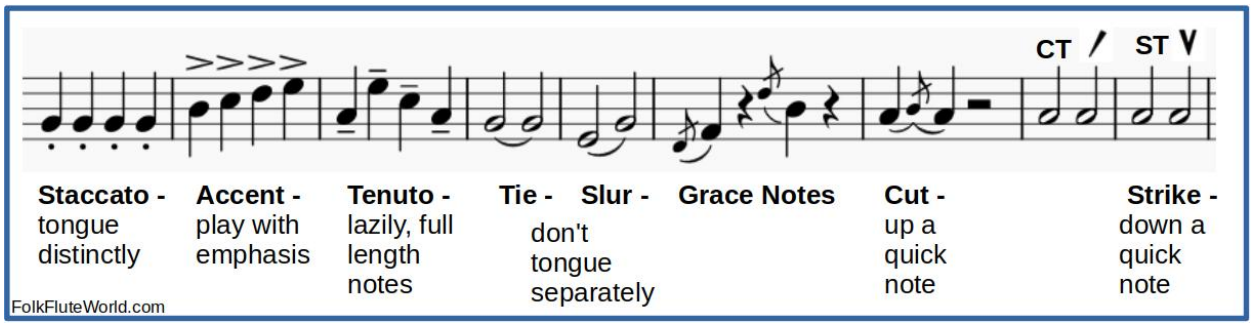
Articulation and Ornamental Effects

Articulation refers to how your start and terminate a note.

You could lead gently into a note by tonguing it delicately with a "lu". Or you could sound the note more definitely with a "du". Or give it a noticeable start with a "tu", or really attack it with a sharp "tee". There's quite a range of possibilities and each gives your sound a different quality.

Ending a note similarly presents a range of possibilities. They range from very sharply terminating a note to ending it gently, all the way to slurring notes together such that they sound as one.

Here are a few musical symbols you'll encounter that are intended to direct your articulation.



Staccato: A dot above (or below) a note means to very distinctly tongue it.

Tenuto: A line in the same position means to extend a note for its full value. **Tenuto** is the opposite of staccato.

Legato: You might also see a composer's note to play **legato.** That means to play notes smoothly and extended. Legato blends notes into one another while tenuto gently but separately articulates them. Some composers indicate legato by slurring the notes together.

Accent Marks: An accent mark indicates emphasis. Attack the note. Like staccato and tenuto, the indicators may appear either above or below the affected note.

Ties and Slurs: A curved line linking two notes -- a **tie** or **slur** -- means to play the notes as if they were combined together into one. If the notes are different, seamlessly glide from the first tone into the second. Don't separately tongue the second note.

Often you'll see slurs that tie two notes together. Other times you'll see them tie entire sequences of notes together. (This is one way composers can indicate phrasing.)

Some musicians distinguish between ties and slurs, with **ties** being between two notes of the same pitch, and **slurs** being between notes of different pitches. Others use these two terms interchangeably.

Grace Notes: A grace note is a very quick first note leading into a more sustained second note. The grace note is often one note higher or lower than the dominant or target note. Grace notes are presented in smaller typeface to indicate their very quick nature.

A grace note is typically a single note, but sometimes you'll see two together.

Cuts and Strikes: You may also hear the terms **cut** and **strike** (or **tap**). These involve playing a sustained note, then playing a very quick note that is either higher (a cut) or lower (a strike or tap), and going back to the original note. The cut or strike note is played as quickly as possible. You can even combine a cut and strike into a **roll**.

Cuts, strikes, and rolls are especially popular in folk music from the British Isles. You frequently encounter them in tin whistle and Irish flute scores.

Unfortunately, there is no standardized way to represent them in scores. The figure shows several.

Glissando: This is also known as a **slide**. It's where you slide from one note to another with a constant change in pitch. You can accomplish this by gradually sliding your finger on to or off of a tone hole, usually while increasing or decreasing your breath pressure at the same time.

Bending Notes: Sometimes you may hear about **bending** notes. That simply means changing your breath pressure and/or fingering to gradually alter a pitch in order to "bend" it.

Fading: You can **fade** notes, too. That's where your breath falls off until the note disappears. As with bending, the intent is to gradually and subtly change a note's pitch.

Tonguing: Simple flutes like the recorder are amenable to several special effects. Examples include rapidly tonguing the mouthpiece, and tongue clicking for percussive effects. You can even lick the fipple -- play a single long note while softly lapping the mouthpiece.

Humming: Try humming while you play. Hum the same note you play, or hum harmony in thirds. Play a single long note and treat your recorder as a drone while your humming moves up or down. Or, try the opposite. Sing a drone note while you play movement with your recorder.

Experiment with what some call **humming** or **buzzing** and you'll discover all sorts of interesting uses and effects.

If you want to learn buzzing, you'll have to practice at it. It requires the optimal balance in volume between your humming and your play -- and this balance varies by pitch.

To sum up, there's a whole world of **ornamental effects** available with the recorder. Some of them you can't easily duplicate with other instruments.

We've only introduced a few of the most common effects in this lesson.

Musical Expression

So far we've discussed the **tempo** of a piece -- the pace or speed at which you play it.

We also discussed **articulation**, and how you start and terminate individual notes. Staccato, tenuto, legato, and accent marks all affect how you play notes.

And then there are **ties** and **slurs**, which bind notes together without individual tonguing.

What all this adds up to is this: **music is interpretive**.

If you mechanistically plod through a score, you may technically play it accurately. But you might miss the emotions the composer meant to convey. The result is likely to sound pedantic rather than beautiful or inspiring.

To achieve a high level of play -- to really emote a score -- you must interpret it.

When you first play a piece, concentrate on playing the proper notes with the proper timing. Ensure you accurately play what is written.

But as you start to really understand the composition, try altering it ever so slightly to express the emotions the composer intends. That can elevate your play to a whole new level.

If someone hears you play, they'll immediately notice whether you're playing mechanistically or with true feeling.

You might try recording your playing, and then playing it back and listening to it. You can identify areas for improvement, or learn about aspects of your performance that you can't while playing.

Dynamics

Dynamics refers to the relative loudness with which you play notes and musical phrases.

In a score, you may see English or Italian instructions to play a passage loudly or softly.

You may also see these abbreviations. As listed here, they range from "play extremely softly" to "play REALLY loud":

ppp → ***pp*** → ***mp*** → ***mf*** → ***f*** → ***ff*** → ***fff***

The instruction **Crescendo** means to increase volume while playing a passage. **Decrescendo** and **diminuendo** mean to play a passage more and more softly.

Crescendo is often indicated by an elongated sign to increase volume (<) above or below notes, while decrescendo is denoted by the opposite sign (>).

This diagram instructs the musician to increase volume to loud (***f***), then to taper off to the volume at which he started the phrase.



Crescendo to loud, then decrescendo

The physical design of recorders limits the dynamics available to you. Play too loudly, and you'll sound sharp or overblown. Play too softly, and it sounds flat or underblown. This forces you to master the art of responsive dynamics within a constrained range.

In upcoming practice songs we'll point out when we encounter these dynamics in the sheet music.

Vibrato



Vibrato

Ever heard how a professional singer puts in a tiny bit of waver when they sing a long note? That's called **vibrato**. Opera singers are famous for it. A minute bit of wobble or pulsation makes a long-held note sound more appealing.

The above diagram shows a couple ways to indicate vibrato in a score. Most scores leave it up to the musician as to when and whether to apply vibrato.

To become a really good recorder player you need to learn vibrato. One proven way to learn is to play an exaggerated vibrato by holding a note and consciously varying air pressure into your flute. Then as you get used to this, you can tone down the vibrato to a more natural sounding level.

Aim for a pulsating sound, not a flutter or a series of slightly separate notes. You might try tapping your foot at a steady pace to time the pulsation.

You'll find that learning vibrato takes a bit of practice. But if you put in the effort, you'll be rewarded with a more expressive, interesting sound. Long notes assume new character with a fine vibrato.

Try playing vibrato on the half notes and whole notes of upcoming scores.

Remember that you can vary both the **speed** and **depth** of your vibrato. As you learn, experiment a bit to discover what sounds best. Most players start with an exaggerated vibrato, and then enhance the effect by toning it down as they become more skilled. The result is a very pretty extended note.

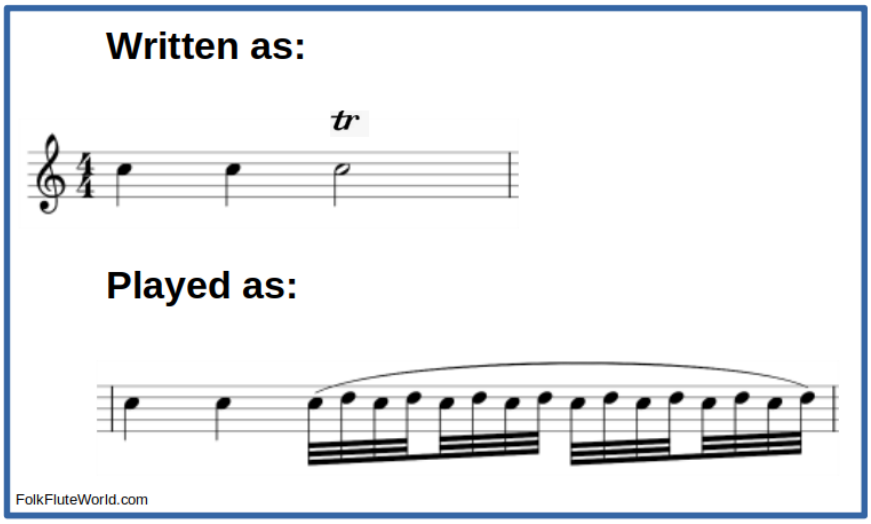
If you need help learning vibrato, just search on the web for how to play vibrato with a concert flute. (You do it the same way with a concert flute as you do with a recorder.) Several websites will give you detailed advice, including exercises you can practice.

Trills

A **trill** is where a player goes back and forth between two notes as quickly as possible. It's indicated by the letters ***tr*** above a note.

The first line in this diagram shows how a trill is indicated in a score.

The second line shows how it is played by the musician.



Trilled notes are not separately tongued. They're too rapid to tongue. That's what the slur indicates in the figure.

There's an entire science behind trilling that goes into what the two notes in the trill should be, how rapid the alternation should be, and more.

For most of us, a trill is like the diagram shows -- a quick, simple alternation between two notes either a half or whole tone apart. By default, trill to one note above the note in the score.

Overblowing

With some instruments, you can play higher notes by **overblowing.** That means you blow hard into the mouthpiece to play a higher note without changing your fingering. For example, when playing the tin whistle, you overblow to flip a note from the lower octave to the upper octave. You achieve that higher note simply by blowing harder -- you don't change your fingering.

The recorder is not designed for overblowing and is not generally amenable to it.

How to Play Quietly

This lesson is all about how to best express yourself through your recorder.

But what if expressing yourself bothers housemates, roommates, or neighbors? Some recorders can be pretty loud -- especially the higher pitched instruments, like sopranos and sopraninos. That's doubly true when you play in the higher octaves with these instruments.

Beyond playing when and where others are not present, here are several solutions:

1. Blow more softly. Some recorders allow you to tone it down a bit.

2. For high pitched instruments like the soprano and the higher sopranino, play in the lower octave. Those notes are less piercing than higher notes.

3. Often you'll find that German fingered recorders are more soft-spoken than their baroque counterparts. And some wood instruments may be quieter than their plastic equivalents.

4. Opt for a lower pitched instrument. Altos, tenors, and especially basses are quite soft-spoken compared to sopranos and sopraninos. Simply switching to an alto or tenor at times when your play might bother others could solve your problem.

4. Place a piece of tape or stiff paper just slightly over the edge of the windway. You'll have to position this precisely, but experiment and you might find it works for you. This dampens the sound.

5. Buy a commercial product that mutes the windway, such as MuteFlute. These are little plastic rings that fit over the windway. They're effective at dampening the sound but they often change the tone or pitch. Be sure to buy a product that fits your size of recorder.

6. Go electronic. As Lesson 22 explains, new electronic recorders allow you to play silently by plugging in headphones. Then you can hear your play, but no one else can.

What if your recorder is too loud for your own ears?

Some of the same solutions apply. Try a softer-spoken or lower-pitched instrument. Blow more softly.

Or, cover your ears. Your best bet might be a set of high quality earplugs or snugly fitting, sound canceling headphones. Or, play an electronic recorder and turn the volume down low.

Listen to Yourself!

The most important action you can take to improve your playing is simply this:

Listen to yourself as you play!

That sounds obvious, but many of us forget to do it.

When you first play a new song, it's natural that you focus all your attention on the notes in the score, their timing, and how you finger them on your recorder.

Practice the piece sufficiently to get beyond that. Get comfortable enough with the score that you can actually listen to yourself as you play. This is the best route to improving how you sound.

Or try recording your play. You can use either a digital recording device, your mobile phone, or your computer. Then you can play back the recording and listen to yourself without the distraction of playing. You can really concentrate on how you sound.

Based on what you hear, you can make minor adjustments in blowing technique, intonation, tempo, phrasing, articulation, dynamics, vibrato, or ornamental effects.

You especially want to make sure that you're not hesitating between each note you play. Let the notes flow together in a continuous stream and they'll sound much better.

Remember that you're singing through your recorder. It's your form of personal expression. Let your emotions emerge and express them through the beautiful melodies and sounds you create.

Summary

There is much more to expressing yourself through your recorder than this short lesson can convey. Nevertheless, we discussed key aspects of how you can improve your performance. We described specific techniques you can employ to enhance your play.

In the next lesson, we'll practice more tunes that utilize the full range of notes you can play on the instrument. The goal is for you to become fully fluent across the scale.

You can also use upcoming songs as vehicles to experiment with and practice some of the musical techniques we've discussed in this lesson.

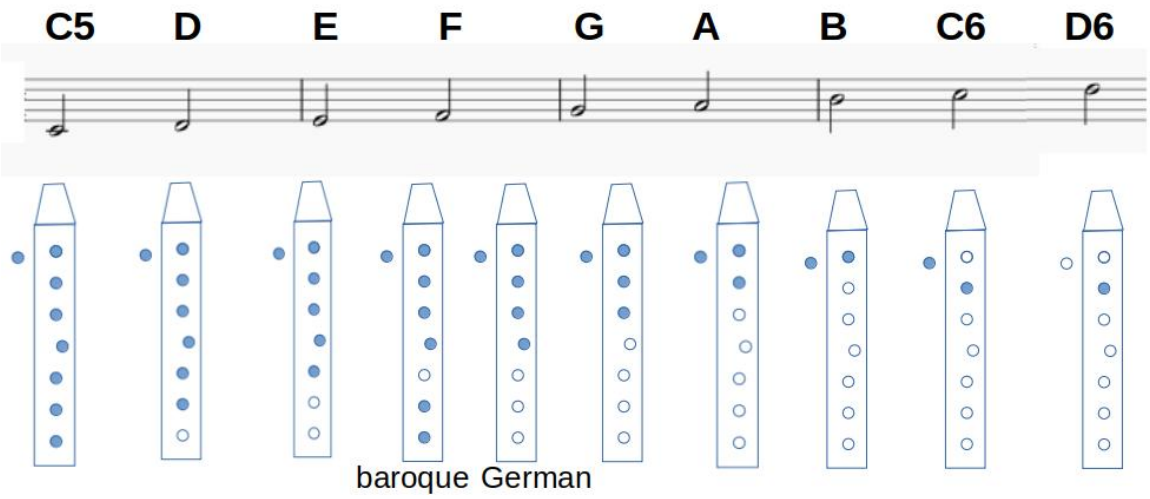
Lesson 13 -- Practicing the Lower Scale

In this lesson we'll practice more tunes that range across the basic scale, from low C to high D.

The goal is simply to give you more playing practice. Later we'll learn the notes in the octave above this low scale, as well as all the sharps and flats between them.

We'll continue to learn musical notation along the way.

Before we start, you might want to refresh your memory of all the notes you've learned thus far. Play up and down the scale several times to refresh your memory:



Song: Just As I Am

Let's start with a melodic hymn that has been successfully recorded by many artists, most memorably by country singer Johnny Cash.

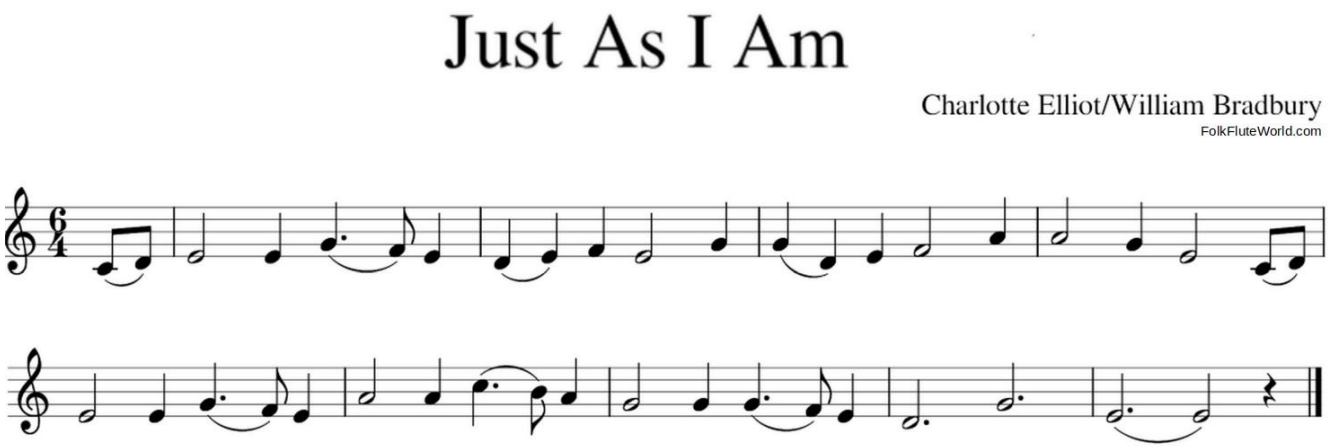
It's a good warm-up for your timing. It presents eighth, quarter, and half notes. Remember that when notes are slurred together, you play them without separately tonguing them.

The piece also contains dotted quarter and dotted half notes. **The rule is that any dotted note is equal to its normal length plus half of its normal length.** So if we assume that a quarter note gets 1 beat, that means that a dotted quarter note gets 1 and 1/2 beats. A dotted half note would consume 3 beats in the 4/4 time signature.

How about that last measure in this song? It tells you to play a dotted half note plus a half note, slurred together. Assuming each quarter note gets 1 beat, a dotted half note consumes 3 beats, and a regular half note is 2 beats. So you end the song on an E that extends for 3 + 2, or 5 beats in total.

The time signature of 6/4 means that you have 6 beats per measure, and each quarter note gets one beat. That's no different from all the 4/4 time songs we've been playing... except that each measure contains 6 beats instead of 4.

This different time signature has no effect on the speed -- or **tempo** -- at which you play this score.



Song: Barbara Allen

This famous dance tune goes back four hundred years. In the 1950s film version of *The Christmas Carol* they used the song for the 1840s English party scene.

It's good practice for eighth notes. It also gets you more used to the common "dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note" combination. Recall that it's played as "daah-dit", with the quarter note extending to one-and-a-half beats, and the immediately following eighth note being quick.

This song also gives you more exercise with B and high C notes:



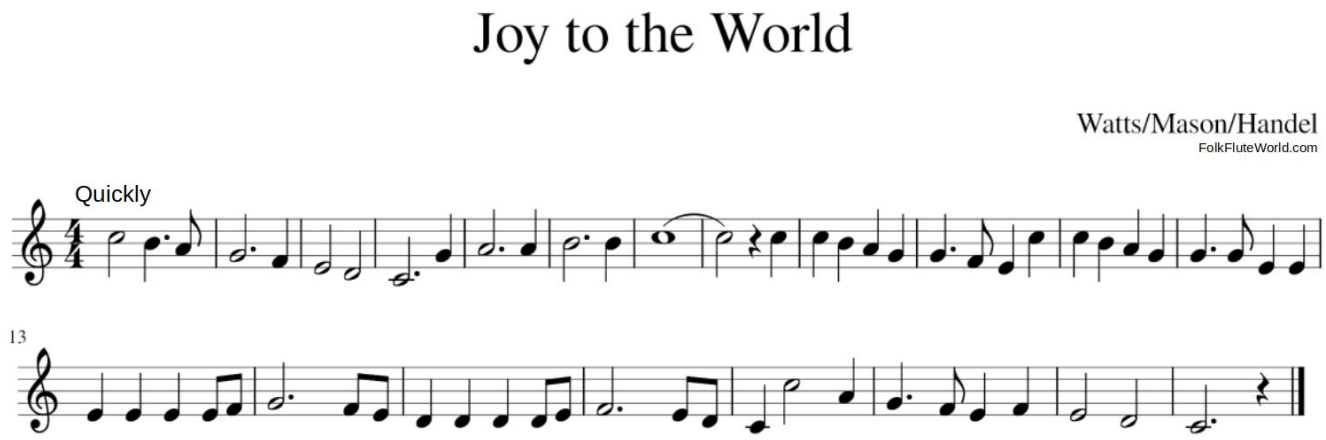
Song: Joy to the World

This song is probably the most widely published Christmas carol in the world. The score is an arrangement of a melody attributed to George Frideric Handel.

Like many Christmas songs, it originally started life as a hymn. Through the efforts of three contributors, it was eventually polished into its present form to universal acclaim.

This song spans the range of an entire octave, from high C to low C. So it's a great way to practice the scale. Try playing it slowly at first. Then speed it up as you get comfortable with the fingering.

In a later lesson we'll show you how to play this song with a recorder partner in a duet.



Song: Assam

Here's a world-renowned folk melody from Assam state in eastern India. Though you may not recognize the title, you'll certainly recognize the tune. The score exercises your fingering across the scale.

It also gives you a chance to figure out new timing. For example, you see **eighth note rests** in measures 1, 3, 5, and 7. These brief rests last only the length of an eighth note. They make ideal points in which to take a quick breath without disturbing the song's melodic flow.

You also see several ties in this song. Remember that ties bind two notes together as if they were one. When the notes are the same pitch, it's as if you play one long note consuming the timed duration of both.

If the slurred notes are different pitches, you want to seamlessly move from one into the other. Don't use your tongue to transition between slurred notes.

All the ties in this piece connect but two notes. But slurs can include a whole series of notes.

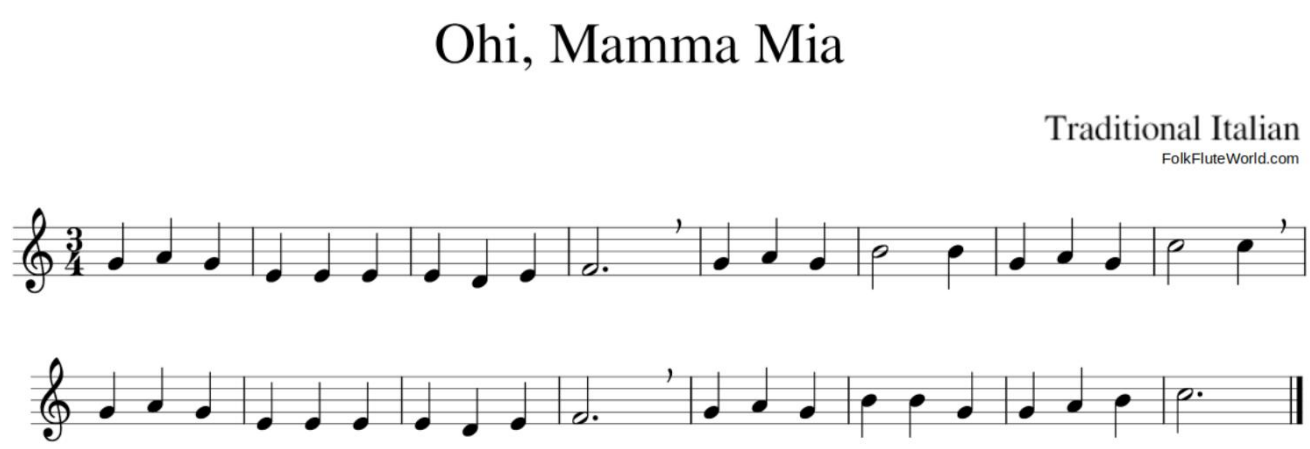


Song: Mamma Mia

This a traditional Italian folk dancing song. It's played in quite a variety of styles and arrangements.

(It's not to be confused with an ABBA song by the same name, written in 1975 by members of that popular singing group.)

You should be able to handle this one pretty easily. The timing is simple and straightforward. Make those high C's sing. And be sure to follow the breath marks for proper phrasing.



Song: Down By the Sally Gardens

Here's a traditional Irish melody that's widely played in pubs. If you like Irish and Celtic tunes, there are huge libraries of free sheet music for them on the web. We'll show you where to access them in a later lesson.



There is an important feature to explain in this song. Notice the **double stemmed note** that occurs in the last measure of the third line.

A single stem contains two notes, both high D and A. What's the meaning of this?

If you're playing an instrument that can play **chords** -- groups of notes that are played at the same time -- then double notes like this mean to play both notes at once. Instruments that can play chords include pianos, guitars, and ukuleles.

But what if you're playing a recorder, an instrument that can only play one note at a time? In this case, two notes on one staff mean "pick one to play".

In this specific case, the two notes on the same staff are A and high D. You can play either.

Try playing the score one time using each of the alternative notes. Which sounds best to your ear? Most folks believe the high D sounds better in the context of this tune.

A few songs in this book were scored with double notes because they were originally written for the ocarina, a kind of flute that doesn't offer the same range as the recorder. In most cases, just play the higher note, as you do here.

It's good to get used to double stemmed notes because you'll frequently see them if you download musical scores from the internet.

Summary

Whew! You made it to the end.

Be sure to go back and replay these songs until you feel you've mastered them. It will take a few sessions, but it will pay off as you become ever more skilled.

Remember, it's not a race to get to the end of this book. This book is only a learning device. Use it at whatever pace makes you feel comfortable, and helps you learn best.

Let's take a break from practicing by taking a brief quiz. This self test will help you judge how well you're absorbing the material. Plus it gives you a chance to identify and fill in any gaps in your knowledge.

Self Test #1

You've learned quite a lot up to this point in this course. How about taking this brief self-test?

It's a quick, fun way to see how well you're absorbing the material. For any questions you miss, you'll be able to learn more by reading the explanations for the correct answers.

The answers and explanations appear in the appendices near the end of this book.

For each question, select the **best** answer. Record your answers on a piece of paper or in a digital notepad.

1. What is the base note or fundamental of the soprano recorder?

A. High C
B. C4
C. C5
D. C6
E. None of the above

2. What is the range of the soprano recorder?

A. 13 notes
B. From C5 through C6
C. Two octaves plus maybe a couple extra low notes
D. Two octaves plus maybe a couple extra high notes
E. 12 notes

3. Which statement correctly expresses the pitch of recorders, from the lowest pitched to the highest pitched?

A. Garklein, Sopranino, Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass
B. Bass, Tenor, Alto, Soprano, Sopranino, Garklein
C. Bass, Contrabass, Tenor, Alto, Soprano, Sopranino, Garklein
D. Bass, Tenor, Alto, Soprano, Garklein, Sopranino

4. What does a dot directly above (or directly below) a note mean?

A. Play it loudly
B. Play it sharp
C. Extend its duration by half
D. Play it short and distinctly

5. Why do schools often introduce musicianship to students with recorders instead of some other instrument?

A. Recorders are inexpensive
B. They're relatively easy to learn
C. They're portable and can fit small hands
D. They play a wide range plus all sharps and flats
E. All the above

6. What's the proper order of these notes, from highest to lowest?

A. low C, D, E, F, G, A
B. A, G, F, E, C, low C
C. A, G, F, E, D, low C
D. low C, D, E, F, A

7. How many eighth notes could be played in the time of one half note?

A. 1
B. 2
C. 4
D. 6

8. What's the difference between 3/4 and 4/4 time?

A. 3/4 time has three notes per measure
B. 3/4 time has three beats per measure
C. 3/4 time is 3/4 faster than 4/4 time
D. 4/4 time is faster

9. Which of the following is **not** an advantage to a plastic recorder over a wood one?

A. Plastic recorders are usually less expensive (assuming the same size)
B. Plastic recorders are easier to care for and maintain
C. Plastic recorders sound better than wood ones

10. One whole note consumes the same amount of time as how many sixteenth notes?

A. 4
B. 8
C. 12
D. 16

11. Which note is this on the C soprano recorder?



A. G5
B. G6
C. A5
D. A6

12. For how long do you play a note immediately followed by a dot?

A. For 2 beats
B. For double its normal length
C. For 1 and 1/2 times its normal length
D. For the same amount of time as two quarter notes

13. If you blow a note too hard, what happens?

A. The note sounds flat
B. The note sounds sharp
C. The note sounds exactly one note above its normal pitch
D. The note sounds exactly one note below its normal pitch

14. You've been playing awhile, and suddenly your recorder starts sounding muffled or garbled. What should you do?

A. Blow harder
B. Blow softer
C. Submerge your recorder in cold water
D. Remove any moisture from within the recorder

15. Why might you keep the box in which your recorder was shipped to you?

A. It makes a nice keepsake
B. It could be useful to store or transport the recorder later
C. You can't play it without the box
D. Boxes are collectible

16. Why might the first measure in a score contain fewer beats than all the other measures?

A. It can't. All measures in a score including the first one are required to have the same number of beats.
B. Because the first measure establishes the speed of the tune
C. Because the first measure establishes the key of the tune
D. It contains pick up notes or constitutes a lead-in to the melody

17. What is vibrato and why should you learn how to do it?

A. Vibrato is where you play a note very short and distinctly
B. Vibrato can't be played on recorders because it makes notes go flat
C. Vibrato is where a note pulsates a bit and it makes long notes sound more pleasant
D. Vibrato is where you play a note very softly, and it makes long notes sound more pleasant

18. Which statement is true?

A. Dynamics are about how loudly you play, and intonation is about how fast you play
B. Vibrato is about how loudly you play, and intonation is about how fast you play
C. Dynamics are about how loudly you play, and vibrato is about playing in tune
D. Dynamics are about how loudly you play, and intonation is about playing in tune

19. You find an old end-blown flute in your attic that has 6 fingering holes on top, none underneath, and is made out of wood. What is it?

A. A very old recorder
B. A tin whistle (or "penny whistle")
C. An ocarina
D. An Irish flute

20. Which statement is **not** true?

A. Slurs tie two or more notes together
B. A grace note is a very quick lead-in to another note
C. Glissando means to slide seamlessly between notes
D. Trill means to quickly shift back and forth between two notes exactly one octave apart

21. The fingerings for which note differs for baroque versus German fingered recorders?

A. G
B. high D
C. low C
D. D6
F. F

22. Which statement is **not** true?

A. ***pp*** means to play very softly
B. Crescendo means to increase loudness
C. An underscore beneath a note means to play it very short with hard tonguing
D. ***f*** means to play loudly

23. What is a fipple?

A. A recorder keyed to D Major
B. The mouthpiece you blow into that directs your breath to the splitting edge
C. The place where you thread a neck strap into the recorder
D. A recorder with a base note of C6
E. Another name for the tenor recorder's thumb rest

24. How many notes are in the standard western scale?

A. 5
B. 6
C. 7
D. 8

25. Why does nearly everybody urge a beginner to start with a soprano recorder instead of some other size or key?

A. Soprano recorders are inexpensive
B. Much music is written in the key of C
C. Most recorder tutorials and lessons assume you're playing a soprano
D. All of the above

26. Why do most experts urge a beginner to start with a baroque fingered recorder instead of a German one?

A. Baroque recorders always sound better
B. Baroque recorders can play more notes
C. Baroque recorders sound more tonally accurate accidentals
D. All of the above

Summary

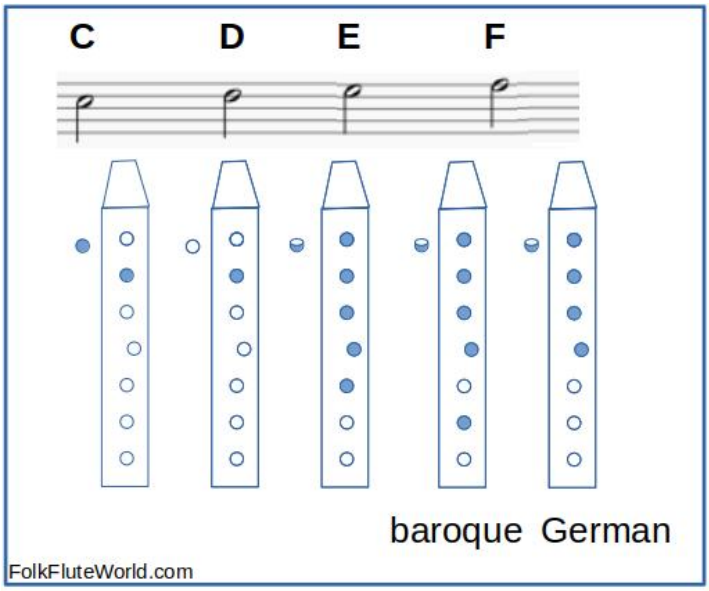
Answers with explanations are in the appendices. Please review the rationale underlying the correct answers for any questions you missed.

In the next lesson we'll start playing some of the higher notes playable on your recorder. We'll practice a number of new songs to learn how to play them.

Lesson 14 -- Some Higher Notes

Thus far you have learned the basic whole note scale, from low C to high C. Now let's explore some higher notes, those in the **upper scale** or **second register**. We'll start with these four: high C, D, E, and F. (Also known as C6, D6, E6, and F6).

As with low F, high F fingers differently in the baroque/English versus German systems:



Look closely at that chart, and you'll notice something about the thumb hole. For E and above in the upper octave, you cover the lower half of the thumb hole with your thumb. Some call it "pinching the hole".

Play these notes several times in sequence: high C → D → E → F.

As you play E and F, you'll start to get a feel as to how much of the thumb hole you need to cover on your instrument to achieve the best tone (it can vary by the note and by the instrument). Start by covering about half the thumb hole and experiment from there.

With some instruments you may find that higher notes require slightly different breath pressure than lower ones. Others play notes in both lower and upper octaves without alteration. Experiment with yours, if you need to, to voice strong pure tones across both octaves.

To grip your recorder when you're covering few of the fingering holes, rest your right hand thumb beneath the instrument. Some also place their right hand smallest (pinky) finger on the top end of the instrument. Try this and you'll find it easy to balance your instrument. It's instinctive to most people.

Song: Ríu Ríu Chíu

Here's a Spanish chant from the 1500's. Sung in a style that reminds listeners of medieval monks in chorus, it's become a popular Christmas carol.

In 1967 a pop group called *The Monkees* performed it on their Christmas special. This led to renewed interest. The tune has since been included on many artists' Christmas albums including *The King's Singers* and *Sixpence None the Richer*.

This score provides a good workout on the notes, high C, D, and E. Try to sound them in tune and cleanly transition between them.

Whatever grip you figure out is best for these high notes, once you discover it, be sure to stick with it. That way you'll develop your muscle memory for these notes. Consistency is the key to success.



Song: Russian-Hungarian Folk Dance

Let's try something a little snappier. Sound out this tune slowly, so you get the feel of its fingering patterns.

When you're ready, take it at a faster tempo. It will challenge you as it continually reaches for high C and D. Be sure to respect the breath marks so that you phrase the song correctly.

Remember, one of your goals in this piece is to develop a grip you can use for those high notes. Once you've figured out your hold, use it consistently to develop your muscle memory.



This piece offers a good opportunity to review repeating sections of a score.



Repeat Sign

In the fourth measure of the first line, you see this **repeat sign**. That tells you to repeat that section of measures from the beginning.

So you play the first four measures of this song, encounter the repeat sign, and play them again. Then you continue through to measure five and play to the end of the score.

At that point, you see the instruction **d.c. al fine**. That means "when you hit these words, go back to the start of the piece and play until you see the word **fine**. **Fine** means "end" in Italian, so that's where you stop playing.

The words **d.c. al fine** and **fine** could appear in either lower or upper case letters, depending on the music publisher. They require the same action from you in either case.

Here's another common construct you'll encounter. It simply means to repeat the measures enclosed between the repeat signs one time.





You'll see this last construct all the time. The first time through the score, you play the **first ending**, indicated by the **1.** and the bar indicating the measure(s) to play.

You encounter the repeat sign, so you go back to the start and play the whole thing again.

When you come upon the ending for the second time, you play the **second ending**, the measure(s) indicated by the **2.**. And then you stop playing, as indicated by the double bar at the end of the very last measure.

We should note that what almost everybody calls the **first and second endings** are technically termed **volta brackets**, or the **volta**.

Song: In the Good Old Summertime

This next tune emerged from Tin Pan Alley at the turn of the 20th century. Tin Pan Alley was a section of New York City from which music composers and publishers dominated the American music scene from the 1880s until the mid-20th century.

Composer George Evans couldn't interest any of the big Tin Pan Alley publishers in this song. But it was picked up for a musical comedy review in 1902 and promptly became a classic that endures to this day.

From the musical standpoint, the song is pretty simple to play, with a nice melody. It will certainly give you a work out for learning the notes on the top end of the scale, high C through high F.



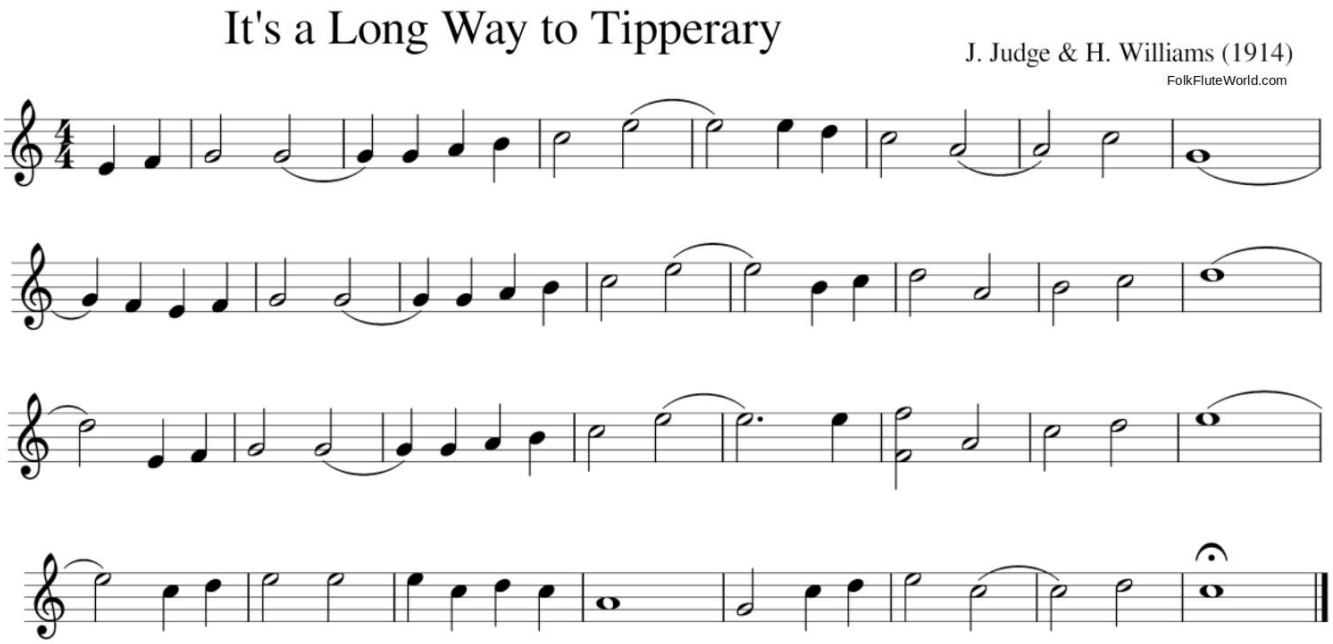
Song: It's a Long Way to Tipperary

This marching song from the first world war relates a sense of gaiety. It reflects the fact that the public wildly cheered the advent of World War I in Germany, the UK, and the United States.

Contrast this with the mood in those same countries at the start of World War II. This time the populace had "wised up" to what war entailed and the atmosphere was somber and grim in all participant nations.

This song is easy and fun. After you suss out how it goes, try playing it at a snappy, happy tempo. Be sure to go for the high F in the third line.

Use this score to develop your ability to hit and hold high E.



Song: Yellow Rose of Texas

This American folk tune dates back to at least the 1850s. Ask many Texans what they're state song is, and they'll often reply *The Yellow Rose of Texas*. It's played everywhere from sports events to state functions.

But in reality the state song is *Texas, Our Texas* -- which many people -- including Texans -- have never heard of!

You'll want to practice this score slowly, to get a good feel for the fingering. But try to take it up to full speed before you leave it. You want to get it up to the tempo you might hear at a football game or in a parade.

There's nothing in this score you haven't seen before, but make sure you understand how those dotted-quarter-note-eighth-note combinations express the song's timing.

Yellow Rose of Texas

Traditional American

FolkFluteWorld.com



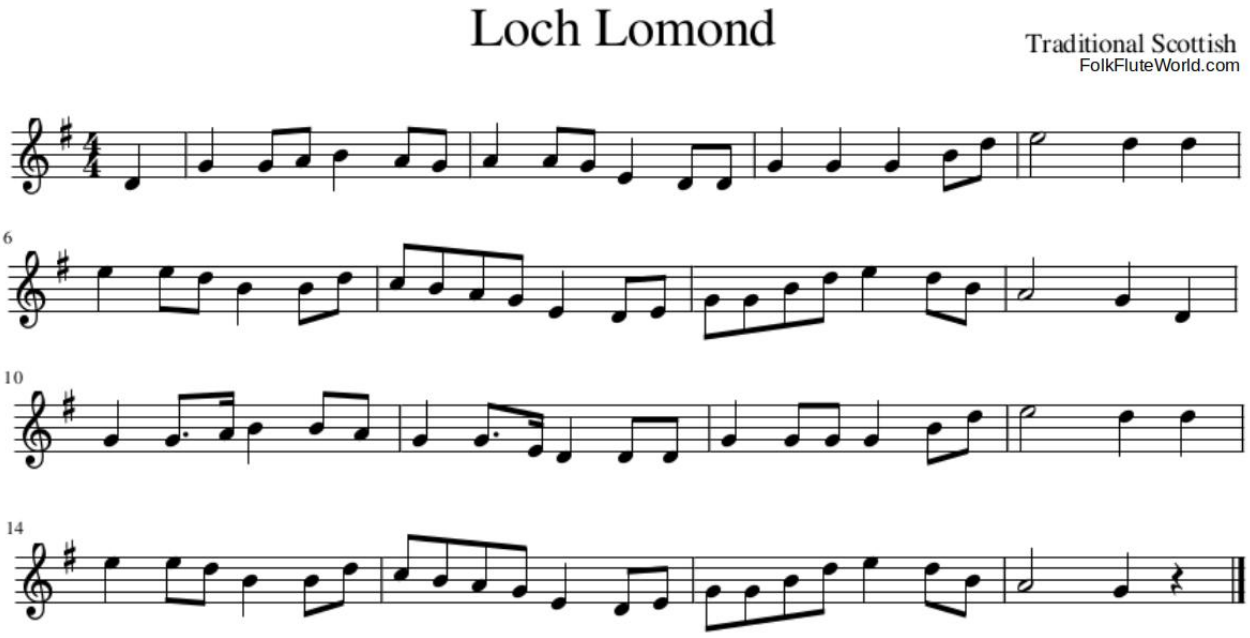
Song: Loch Lomond

Here's a fine old tune from Scotland. It dates back to the Jacobite Uprising in 1745 when the Stuarts launched an ultimately unsuccessful rebellion to break from England.

It's been identified as a Scottish national tune ever since.

This G Major version is peppered with high D's and E's. While we think of this as a fast, spirited tune, in fact the lyrics identify it as a lament. Try playing it slowly and accurately the first few times through. That not only reflects the nature of a lament but it will also give you time to manipulate your grip when you transition into the high notes.

After a few times through, speed it up to the tempo you've heard in films and parades. Now you should be able to express the confident stride the public identifies with the tune today. Playing this tune quickly will get you some experience in rapidly shifting between high C, D, and E.



Song: Irish Rover

Here's an old Irish tune whose origins are shrouded in mystery. Its lyrics tell of a magnificent sailing ship that meets an unfortunate end. The only survivor is the narrator, and very conveniently, no one else is left to contradict his fabulous tale.

The time signature for this score is 2/2. That's two beats per measure with each half note getting one beat. So it's "double time" or "cut time", depending on how you prefer to phrase it.

The 2/2 time signature suits the lilting melody that progresses across the scale in simple quarter and half notes.

You'll also see this tune scored in 4/4 time. Compare this first line in 4/4 time to the 2/2 score that follows and be sure you understand how both describe the same melody.





Song: Going Home

Here's a piece from Czech composer Antonín Dvořák. Dvořák incorporated ethnic music from parts of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire in his varied compositions. He gained worldwide recognition in the latter part of the 19th century.

By the 1890s Dvořák was living in the United States. There he wrote what is perhaps his most famous symphony, *From the New World*. Dvořák worked as the Director of the National Conservatory of Music in America, which remained an important institution through the 1920s. He died in 1904 at age 62.



Alternate Fingerings

Some recorders support more than one fingering for a specific note. We refer to these as **alternate fingerings.**

Start with the fingering chart distributed with your instrument. **That's what you really need to learn.** We only mention alternate fingerings here so that you're aware they exist.

Alternate fingerings have several possible uses. First, you might find them useful in playing a fast-fingered passage in a specific tune. An alternate fingering might make that easier to play.

They can also be used for achieving specific ornamental effects. This is because most of us are more adept at quickly manipulating some of our fingers than others.

Lastly, they give you the ability to play **microtones** outside of the standard western musical scale. These could be useful in certain kinds of experimental music, or for playing melodies from cultures that don't use the standard western scale.

Some manufacturer's fingering charts will include all possible alternate fingerings. Others don't list any and you may have to discover on your own. A lesson later in this book discusses alternate fingerings and lists the most common ones you'll encounter.

For now, just concentrate on those fingerings provided in the fingering chart that came with your instrument.

Fingering Chart Discrepancies

Because alternate fingerings exist for some notes, you may well find that your instrument's fingering chart for a note or two differs from those we present in this book. These discrepancies exist due to alternate fingering among different manufacturers.

The fingerings in this book were based on a dozen manufacturers' charts for soprano recorder. Where differences occur, we chose Yamaha's charts as our ultimate authority because that company produces more plastic sopranos than any other manufacturer.

You should choose the fingering chart that came with your instrument as the ultimate authority for that instrument.

Exercises

For more practice in "shading the thumb hole" to the proper degree for your instrument, practice exercises such as up-and-down scales: C6 → D → E → F → E → D → C6

And try "octave jumping": C5→C6 ... D5→D6 ... E5→E6 ... F5→F6

Try to make sure that your notes sound in tune one octave apart. You can also practice the suggestions in the Scales and Arpeggios Appendix.

Summary

In this lesson, you learned the middle notes for your recorder.

Hopefully you've learned how much to cover the thumb hole when you pinch it. Optimal coverage can vary by the recorder and note you play. With many instruments, you progressively cover a tiny bit more of the thumb hole as you ascend ever higher in the scale.

The next lesson discusses several related topics. Among them are **sharps** and **flats**, those half tones that exist between the whole notes. Learning how to recognize and finger them greatly expands the universe of songs you can play.

Lesson 15 -- Keys, Sharps and Flats, and More

In this lesson, we'll take a break from practicing. Instead, we'll discuss several important topics.

First we'll describe the keys, sizes, and pitches of recorders available. Then we'll talk about baroque versus German fingering. Finally we'll delve into sharps and flats, what they are, how they appear in sheet music, and how you play them.

Keys

The **tonic pitch** of a musical instrument forms the basis of its set of playable notes. It comprises the **key** of that instrument.

The tonic or key of a recorder is the note it plays with all fingering holes closed. Sometimes this is called the instrument's **base note** or its **fundamental**.

One might think of it as the "home note" for the instrument. All the other notes rest on top of this home note.

For example, for a soprano, the fundamental is C. This is denoted by **C5** to distinguish exactly which pitch of C it is. That's one octave above **middle C** on the piano, which is **C4**.

In contrast, the tenor recorder is pitched one octave lower than the soprano. So its fundamental is **C4**.

As mentioned in Lesson 1, the **recorder family** consists of several instruments having different pitches and different base notes. While other recorders exist, these are by far the most common:

Name:	Also Called:	Base Note:	Key:	Length (apx):
Garklein	Sopranissimo	C6	C Major	6"
Sopranino		F5	F Major	9 - 10"
Soprano	Descant	C5	C Major	12 - 13"
Alto	Treble	F4	F Major	18 - 19"
Tenor		C4	C Major	24 - 26"
Bass	Basset	F3	F Major	36" (varies)

Recorders play a range of two full octaves plus a couple extra notes on the high end. (The precise range is determined by the instrument and the musician's skill). All recorders play all sharps and flats within their range. All finger the same (either baroque or German), although you may encounter the rare exception, due to the alternate fingerings we've mentioned.

Common recorders come in one of two keys, either C or F. The garklein, soprano, and tenor are keyed to C, while the sopranino, alto, and bass are in F key.

While the base note of an C key recorder is C, the fundamental of any F key recorder is F. That is as shown in the chart above.



The Recorder Family

Using Recorders as Transposing Instruments

You can play all the songs in this book on **any** recorder. You can read the scores and finger the notes as if you were playing a soprano -- even if you're playing another member of the recorder family -- and even if it's an F key flute. The tunes will all sound fine, regardless of your recorder's size and key.

Ever wonder why that works?

It's because you can treat your recorder as a **transposing instrument**. Transposing instruments can play from the same musical score … but they voice it with their own set of pitches.

So if you play a score on a soprano with its base note of C, it sounds at one set of pitches. And if you play the same score on an alto as if it were also a soprano -- even though the alto has a base note of F -- it sounds fine. The alto voices the same song with its own set of pitches. Both melodies sound fine, but obviously when you play the song on the alto, it all comes out several tones lower.

So you can play any score on any recorder as if it were a soprano recorder, but the key and pitch of that flute means that it will play it at its own set of pitches.

This ability to play a score with any recorder of any size is a huge advantage! You can play any score on any of them solo and not worry about whether the song was scored for your specific instrument.

And you can play all sorts of songs originally scored for concert flute, tin whistle, Irish flute, voice, ocarina, and other instruments as well.

You don't have to learn how to read F key scores or bass clef to have fun playing an alto or bass recorder.

However -- if you want to read and play scores specifically written for a sopranino, alto, or bass recorder, then you would need to learn how to read their notations. The scores for the first two would be written for an F key treble clef instrument, while the bass is an F key bass clef instrument.

Playing with Others

When you play with others, you face a fundamentally different situation. Now you need scores specific to the key of each instrument, to ensure all the instruments sound good together.

For example, an upcoming lesson introduces **duets** -- tunes that two flutists play together. All our duet scores assume that you play two recorders of the same key together. For example, two sopranos. Or, a soprano and a tenor. Or two tenors.

You can't mix the two different keys together when playing from the same score. A soprano playing one part and an alto playing the other won't work. In that case, you would require a score that supplies one part written for the soprano and the other part written in the proper key for the alto.

Here's another way to understand this. If you play the note with all fingering holes closed on a C Major recorder -- a garklein, soprano, or tenor -- it sounds a low C (C6, C5, or C4, respectively).

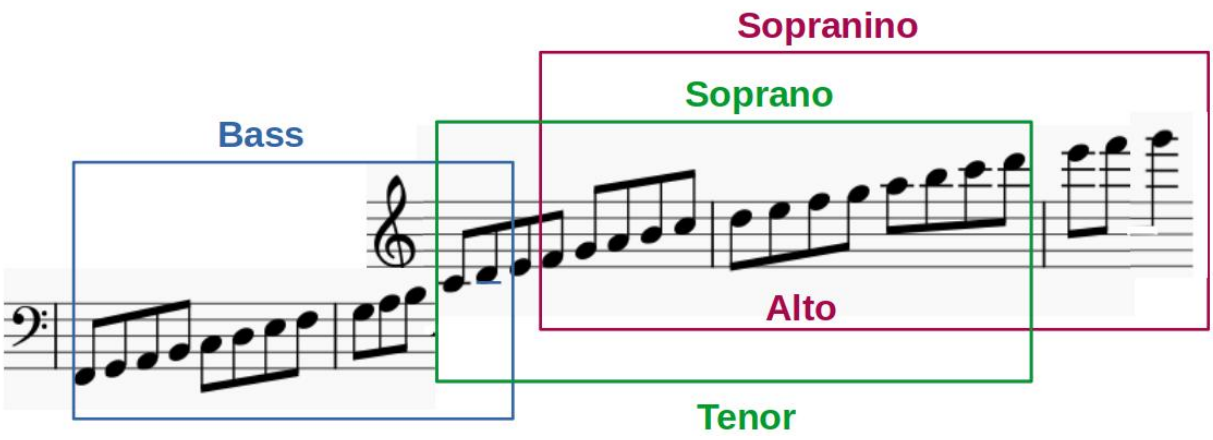
But if you play the note with all holes closed on an F key recorder -- a sopranino, an alto, or a bass -- it sounds a low F (F5, F4, or F3, respectively).

So if you mix the two keys of recorder together in a single performance, the scores you play from need to respect this difference. And you must read the score and finger it as specific to a C key or F key instrument.

To summarize: you can play any score solo on any recorder and it will sound fine. That's because you can treat the recorder as a transposing instrument. But if you play in concert with other instruments of different keys, you need scores specific to the keys of those instruments, and you must read those scores appropriately.

How Recorders Are Scored

This chart shows the how music is written (or "scored") for the different sizes of recorder.



For the sopranino, soprano, and bass, the notes sound one octave higher than written.

The tiny garklein is scored the same as the soprano, but it sounds two octaves higher than written. (Its range is slightly less than that of the soprano and tenor, so for clarity I've left it off this chart.)

For the alto and tenor, notes sound the same as they're written.

This chart provides only a rough visual representation of the range of recorders. Keep in mind that varies a bit by the instrument and the musician's skill.

Music specifically scored for the bass recorder is written in bass clef. (Most bass can play a couple notes more on the higher end than shown in this figure.) Sheet music for all recorders higher pitched than the bass is scored in treble clef.

Baroque Versus German Fingering

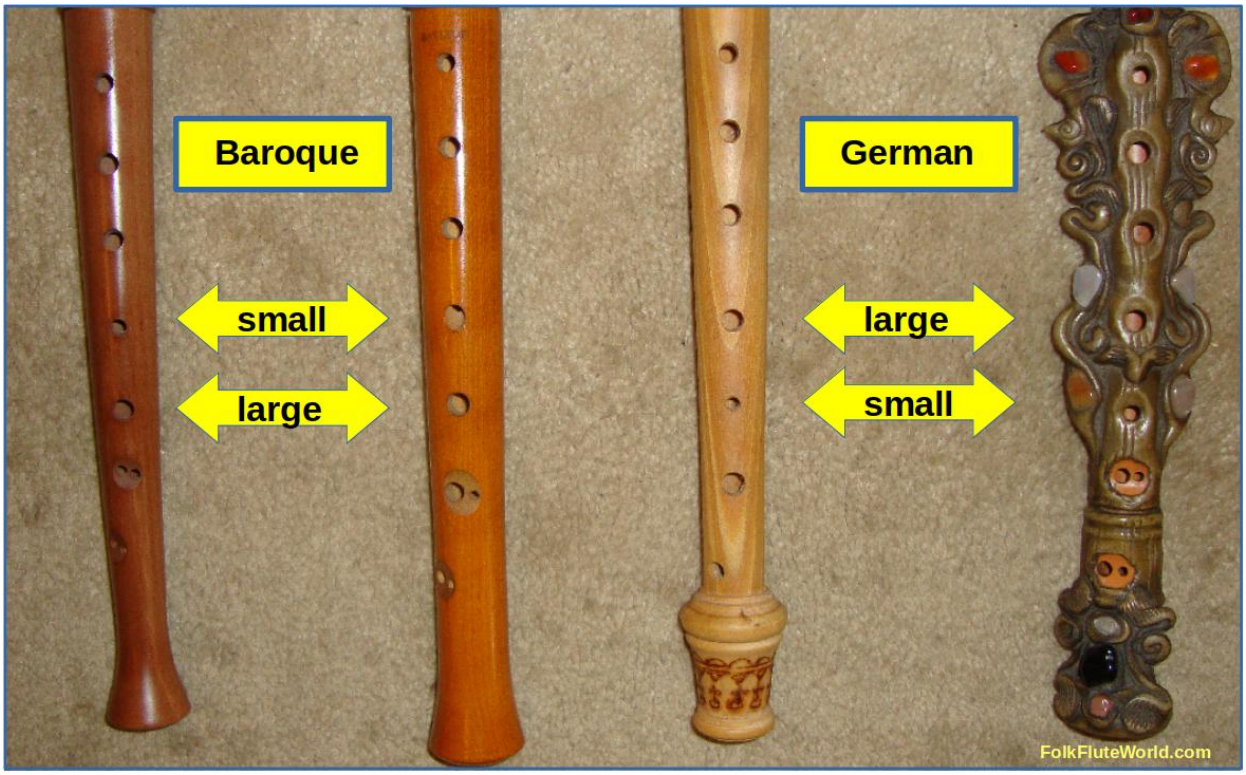
In Lesson 2, we recommended you use a baroque recorder for this course. That's the conventional wisdom. More tutorials and classes focus on baroque/English fingering than German. And many more baroque instruments are sold.

Professionals always play baroque flutes. But for many students and hobbyists, as we'll explain, the differences between baroque and German systems may not be particularly important.

How do you know if your instrument is baroque or German? If you don't have the fingering chart that came with the instrument, just play these notes in sequence: Low C → D → E → F → G.

Finger the F as baroque. Then play it again and finger F as German. The sequence that sounds in tune will immediately tell you which system your instrument uses.

You can also tell by looking at the recorder's tone holes. Baroque flutes have a relatively small 4th hole, and a relatively large 5th hole. German flutes are just the opposite. As this photo illustrates, their 4th hole is larger than their 5th hole:



Baroque versus German Recorders

Now, here's a little secret. Baroque and German system sopranos actually differ in the fingering of only a handful of notes. So it's pretty easy to transition from one to the other, should you want to or need to.

The sole whole note that differs is F (both low F and high F). Beyond that are a couple sharps. The entire set of differing notes is:

low F, low F#, high F, high F#, high G#, highest C# (or F5, F5#, F6, F6#, G6#, C7#)

(This list may vary slightly if your recorder fingering chart favors any alternate fingerings, which are common with the sharps. Our list is based on Yamaha's fingering charts for soprano recorders.)

The main reason that baroque is better than German is because it voices some of the sharps and flats at more accurate pitch. That's why all the professionals of whom I'm aware use only baroque fingering.

As we've said, baroque fingering is much more popular in both sales volume and training materials. You won't find certain less common recorders sold with German fingering at all (for example, bass and lower instruments, or Renaissance recorders).

Nevertheless, some consider German fingering useful in educational settings. It eliminates the forked fingering for low and high F, which may benefit children.

Also, many German flutes are relatively soft-spoken compared to their baroque counterparts. Some judge their voice as more subdued and a little more breathy or airy sounding. That could be advantageous when you have a roomful of grade-schoolers blasting away. A German-fingered wood instrument might also be useful if you need a quieter flute that won't disturb roommates or neighbors.

The bottom line is that all professional musicians use baroque. But for the rest of us either system could work just fine. If you're an adult just starting out and buying your first recorder, baroque is the recommended choice.

Plastic or Wood?

Recorders can be made from a variety of materials. Plastic and wood predominate. On very rare occasions you might run across a carbon fiber, metal, or ceramic (baked clay) recorder.

Not surprisingly, enthusiasts endlessly debate whether they prefer plastic or wood. And which wood is best. Different musicians have their own preferences.

Regardless of the debates, I believe that whichever you prefer, you should play. If possible, try various plastic and wood instruments so you can make an informed choice. Ultimately, it comes down to your personal preference.

Like most tutorials, this book recommends plastic for beginners. It's less expensive, easier to maintain, and more durable. And a quality plastic recorder sounds fantastic, with accurate intonation and strong tones across the range. It's the obvious place to start.

Once you become an accomplished player, you may wish to acquire a quality wood instrument. That opens up possibilities for a more resonant, refined, sophisticated tone, and other possible advantages for the skilled musician.

Both plastic and wood have their advantages, as we list here:

Wood:	**Plastic:**
Capable of a more sophisticated, resonant, fuller tone	Often a simpler but bright tone
Traditional	Less expensive
Slightly less subject to condensation	More resistant to rain, water, humidity, and temperature extremes and changes
The choice of most serious musicians and professionals	Easier to clean and maintain
	Consistency in production is easier
	Popular with the general public, including hobbyists, beginners, and schools

You'll find that different woods have slightly different playability and tonal qualities. The most popular and least expensive woods are softwoods like maple and pear. These produce a warm tone.

Harder woods like grenadilla, ebony, and rosewood typically cost more and in general project a brighter, more forthright sound. Many cite their voices as more nuanced or layered.

Another factor to consider is a wood instrument's type of finish (or lack of one). This not only affects appearance and tonal quality but it also impacts durability and maintenance.

There is much more to the debate as to "which wood is best" than we can analyze here. Suffice it to say that you should **always** try any instrument to ensure that it suits you before you buy it. That's especially true if you're purchasing an expensive wood piece. Your choice ultimately comes down to your own personal preference.

Woods

Let's discuss woods in a little more detail.

First off, understand that design factors like shape, style, and the mouthpiece and windway design are often more determinant of a recorder's unique sound. The kind of wood is important, too, but it is far from the only factor -- and it may not even be the most important.

Also, understand that an expensive wood recorder won't suddenly make you a much better player. Skills typically count for more than the flute you play.

Least expensive are the softwood flutes made from maple and pearwood. These typically produce warm tones at slightly less volume than denser hardwoods. As the photo below shows, their appearance can vary radically by the kind of finish applied and whether the wood has been paraffin-impregnated for moisture protection.

Unfinished maple and pearwood are beautiful but poorly protected. You may find that they absorb your fingerprints if you aren't careful. Some prefer finishes because of the protection they offer. Appropriate finishes can also bring out the grain, a look some favor.

Maple and pearwood are both less expensive than other woods because they're easy to work and come from common trees. Their warm tones result from their relative lack of overtones.



Top to Bottom: one in cherry, two in maple, three in pearwood

Maple and pearwood are lightweight, an advantage for larger instruments like the tenor and bass.

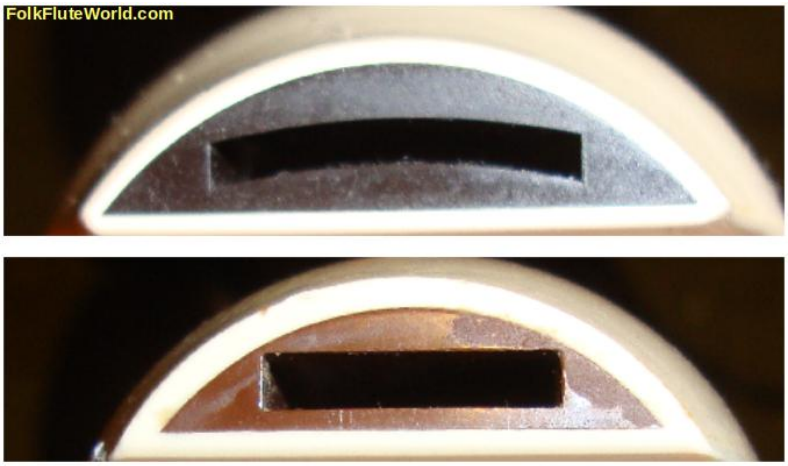
Harder woods such as boxwood, grenadilla, African ebony, and rosewood typically cost more and generally project a brighter, more forthright sound.

European boxwood was historically popular. It has a pale yellow appearance when unstained. Boxwood is a slow-growing tree that often has imperfections, and it's difficult to work. Boxwood recorders tend to be very expensive.

Rosewood refers to several related trees that make for beautiful reddish-brown instruments. Ebony results in black pieces. Both are hardwoods that are relatively rich in overtones and project a strong, bright sound. Professionals who play with background orchestras tend to favor the more forthright yet sophisticated voices of quality hardwoods. Such instruments can be among the most expensive recorders.

Headpiece Designs

In the preceding discussion we mentioned that different designs greatly affect sound. The size, shape, dimensions, and design of the breath intake, the labium opening, and the block are all factors. For example, some recorders have rectangular openings for your breath while others feature curved or arch design:



Arch Versus Straight Breath Intake

Fine wood instruments tend to feature curved design. According to Yamaha, the greater breath resistance of the arch allows skilled players broader tonal expression. The simpler straight design requires less air and creates a "soft and pure" tone. Opinions on this topic differ: whichever design you prefer is up to you. You may not even notice much difference between the two.

Sharps and Flats

At this point, you know the whole note lower octave scale. It's time to discuss the "semitones" that lie between these whole notes.

As you know, the standard western musical scale contains 7 notes. From low to high, they are:

C → D → E → F → G → A → B → (high C)

These are the **whole notes**. Those pitches or notes halfway between the whole notes are called **sharps** and **flats**.

Familiar with the piano? The whole notes are the white keys, and the sharps and flats are the black keys between them.

Collectively, sharps and flats go by many names: **accidentals**, **chromatics**, **semitones**, **half tones**, and more. We'll use these terms interchangeably (though technically we're simplifying a bit by doing that).

This symbol represents sharps (#) and this one indicates flats (♭). A sharp is a half tone higher than its associated whole note, while a flat sounds a half tone lower. For example, A# is one half tone higher than A, while A♭ is a half tone lower.

An instrument that plays whole notes **only** -- no sharps or flats -- is termed **diatonic**. Instruments that play all the semitones as well are called **chromatic**. Many keyless flutes are diatonic.

Recorders are fully chromatic instruments. That's one reason they're more popular than other kinds of simple flutes that are diatonic or can't easily play all the semitones. For example, you can play sharps and flats on tin whistles, but it can be difficult to finger them and hit accurate semitone pitches.

Here are the notes of the low chromatic scale, from low C to high C, complete with all semitones between them.



To list the sharps, they are: C#, D#, F#, G#, A#, and high C#. **Notice that there is no such note as E# (F♭) or B# (C♭) in the standard western musical scale.**

Every accidental can go by either of two names: its name as a sharp, or its equivalent moniker as a flat. For example, you could consider D# as E♭, or vice versa. Tones that are identical in pitch but written in two different ways are termed **enharmonic**.

Here is the same scale as above, but with notes labeled by their names as flats instead of sharps:



Eventually we'll learn to play all the accidentals. To start, we'll learn the two you'll most commonly encounter (by far): **F#** and **B♭**.

The appendices provide fingering charts for the full range of playable notes. For most of us, that means two full octaves plus a couple more notes on the high end, plus all chromatics within that range.

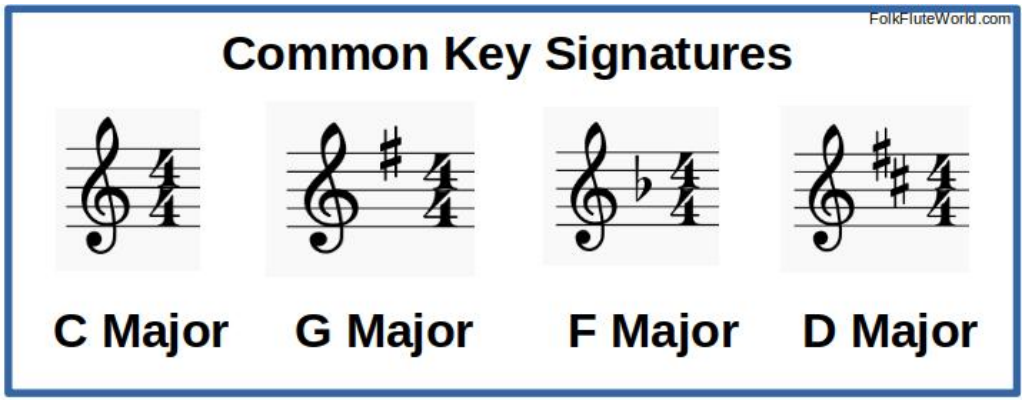
Notation for Sharps and Flats

Sheet music notation indicates accidentals in two ways:

1. At the start of the piece
2. By the symbols **#** or ♭ right before the notes

stands for "sharp", and ♭ means "flat".

Here's how sharps or flats appear at the start of a piece:



The start of every line in a score includes this **key signature** information.

It occurs immediately after the clef emblem and prior to the time signature.

Whatever key signature is declared, it applies to every note in the entire piece.

In other words, if you see B♭ in the key signature -- as in the example above labeled "F Major" -- that means that every time you see a B in the piece (either low B or high B), you should play it as B♭. That's called the key of **F Major**.

And if you see F# in the key signature, that means every F you see in the score must be played as F#. That applies to both low F and high F. That's the key of **G Major**.

The figure shows the four most common key signatures: C Major, G Major, F Major, and D Major. For short, musicians often just refer to them as "the keys of C, G, F, and D".

You can see that the key of C Major has no sharps or flats at all. G Major has one accidental: F#. And the key of F Major includes one flat, B♭. D Major has two sharps, C# and F#.

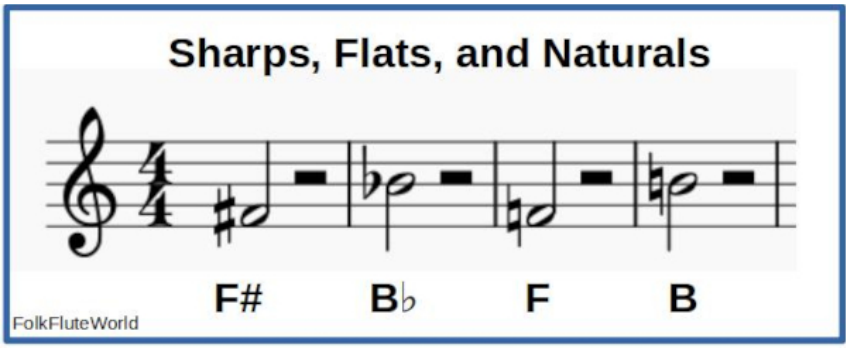
So far in these lessons, nearly all the songs you have played have ostensibly been scored in C Major. This lesson expands your reach into new keys that contain half tones. (Keys are more complicated than this discussion, we are simplifying a bit here.)

The diagram below shows the other way you might learn that a note is to be played as sharp or flat. You'll see an indicator immediately before the note in the score.

This instruction overrides whatever the key signature may be.

For example, say you're playing a score in C Major. The C Major key signature has no sharps or flats.

Then, in the midst of the score, you run across an F immediately preceded by the sharp symbol. This means that you should play that note as F#. But in later measures, you play any F as a **natural** -- without the sharp -- as per the key signature.



The last two examples in the above diagram show the **natural sign** (♮). That tells you to play the note as a whole note, not sharp or flat.

You'll sometimes see composers use the natural symbol when they want to ensure you know the proper note to play (it can get confusing in a piece with many accidentals).

Other Keys

There are a couple dozen keys in western music. We focus only on the four most common in this book. Those are what you really need to learn. You can find scores for most melodies written in these keys.

For completeness, we mention that each **major key** -- such as C, G, F, and D -- has a corresponding **relative minor key**. Both share the same key signature. The difference is the starting note (or **tonic**) for the scale in that key.

How can you tell whether a score is in a major or minor key? With the brief scores in this book, often you can't just by looking. **We've blithely labeled all scores in this book as if they were written in major keys**, when in fact some might actually be in minor keys.

The big difference between major and minor keys is how they sound. Tunes scored in major keys sound bright, cheerful, and happy to our ears. Minor key melodies sound sad, melancholy, or depressive.

Whether a piece is in a major or minor key, you read and play its score in the same way. The only change is your sense of expression or the mood you're trying to create. That should be evident from the score you play.

Summary

In this lesson, we covered the keys, sizes, and ranges of recorders.

We discussed how you can employ any recorder as a transposing instrument, to play soprano scores solo. But if you mix flutes of different keys in an ensemble, you require scores specific to those keys. And, you have to read and interpret those scores as appropriate to a C key or F key instrument.

We also introduced accidentals and described how they appear in musical notation.

Don't worry if everything about half tones isn't clear. They are easy to understand when you see them in scores. So let's do that. In the next lesson, we'll practice some new songs featuring the two most common semitones, F# and B♭.

Lesson 16 -- Introducing Accidentals

In this lesson you'll learn how to recognize and play sharps and flats.

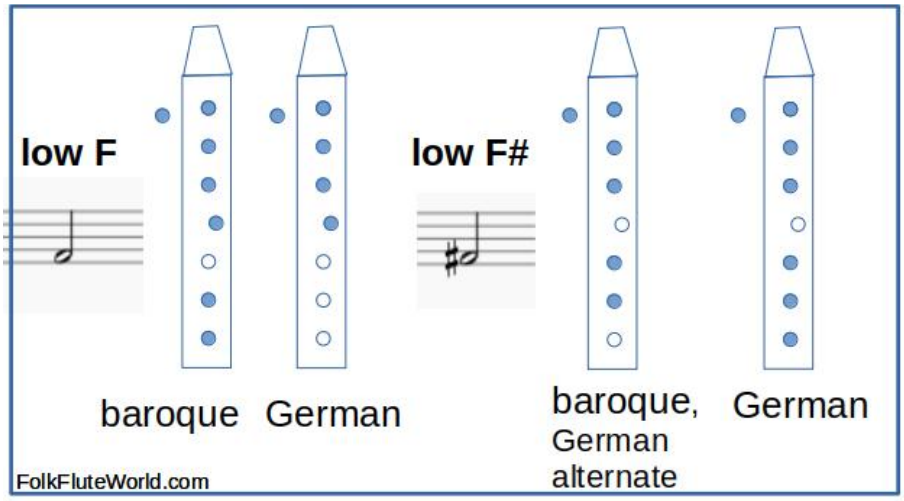
Thus far, all the songs you've played have ostensibly been written in the key of C Major. That's the key that has no sharps or flats.

Now we'll greatly expand the universe of songs you can play by learning G Major and F Major. Their semitones are, respectively, F# and B♭.

Learning F#

Let's start with a song that has but a single sharp note. The sharp is denoted by the sharp symbol (#) that occurs right in front of the note.

Here's how to finger F#:



You'll notice that, while the fingering of low F (F5) varies between baroque and German systems, F# need not. (It depends on which way you finger F# on your German flute.)

Now, here's something very important to mention. When dealing with **split fingered** (or **forked** or **cross fingered**) notes, many recorders support alternate fingerings for the same note. That is to say, you can often finger an accidental in more than one way on many instruments.

Which way is best? Only the fingering chart for your recorder can tell you that. (Or you can use our Alternate Fingerings Chart in the appendices to try the fingerings to see which sounds better, and decide for yourself.)

Always refer to your recorder's fingering chart to see what fingering it recommends for your specific instrument. Due to alternate fingerings, there's always a small chance it could differ from what we present in this book.

We'll discuss alternate fingerings in detail in a later lesson.

For now, **once you've determined the fingering to use, stick with it!** Your goal here is simply to memorize how to play F# on your recorder. (Don't get sidetracked into alternate fingerings at this time.)

Now, let's try a tune with an F# in it. It's a Scottish folk song composed by actress and author Dora Jordan in 1801.



You can see that there's only a single occurrence of F# in this piece. It's in the last measure of line 3.

The sharp sign that occurs right before the note tells you to play F#, rather than F. The sharp sign only applies to the note it's adjacent to. All occurrences of F in other measures of the score are played **natural** (not as sharp or flat) as per the key signature at the start of the score.

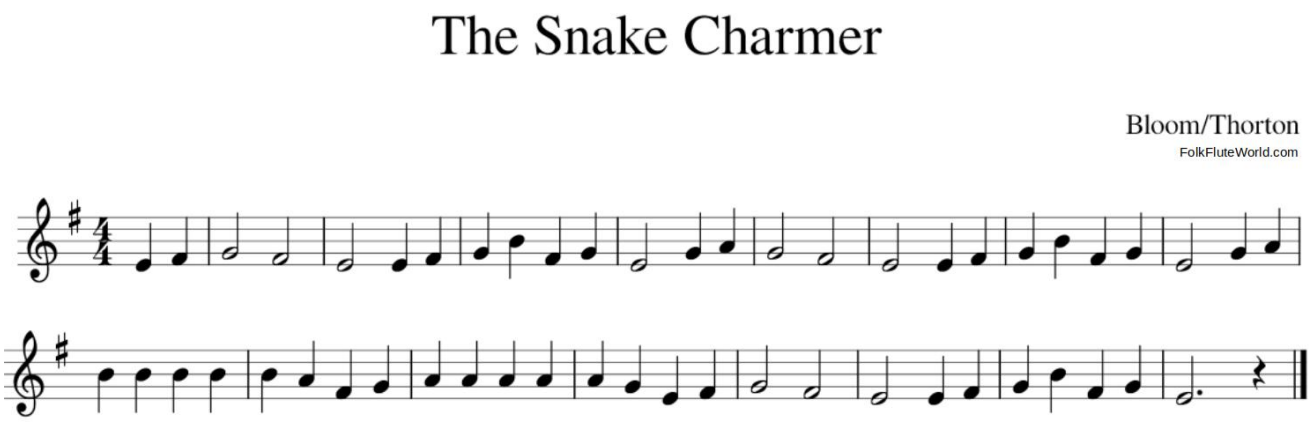
A score can have individual accidentals like this scattered throughout the piece, wherever the composer wants us to play a sharp or flat instead of a "natural" note. These always override the key signature.

It's often useful to quickly scan through a score to see if it contains any embedded accidentals **before** you play it. That way you won't be surprised when you encounter one!

Song: The Snake Charmer (aka Arabian Riff)

Now, here's a different situation. In this case, the key signature indicates that **all** F notes in the piece are to be played as F#. This applies equally to both low and high F's.

The key signature that dictates F# throughout the song -- and no other sharps or flats -- is the key of G Major. You'll probably recognize this tune once you start playing it.



Did you play every F note in the song as F#? If you missed one, I'm sure it sounded terribly wrong. It's pretty easy to recognize when we incorrectly play a sharp as a natural note, or vice versa. It grates on your ears.

Here's how to avoid this error. Before you start playing any piece, look carefully at its key signature. Memorize it. Then keep in mind whatever sharps or flats it requires you to apply throughout the score.

By the way, did you recognize this melody? The tune goes by many names and features many variations. It's been popular in one form or another since the 19th century. You'll often hear it as background music in films, as directors feel it establishes a certain mood.

Song: The Star of County Down

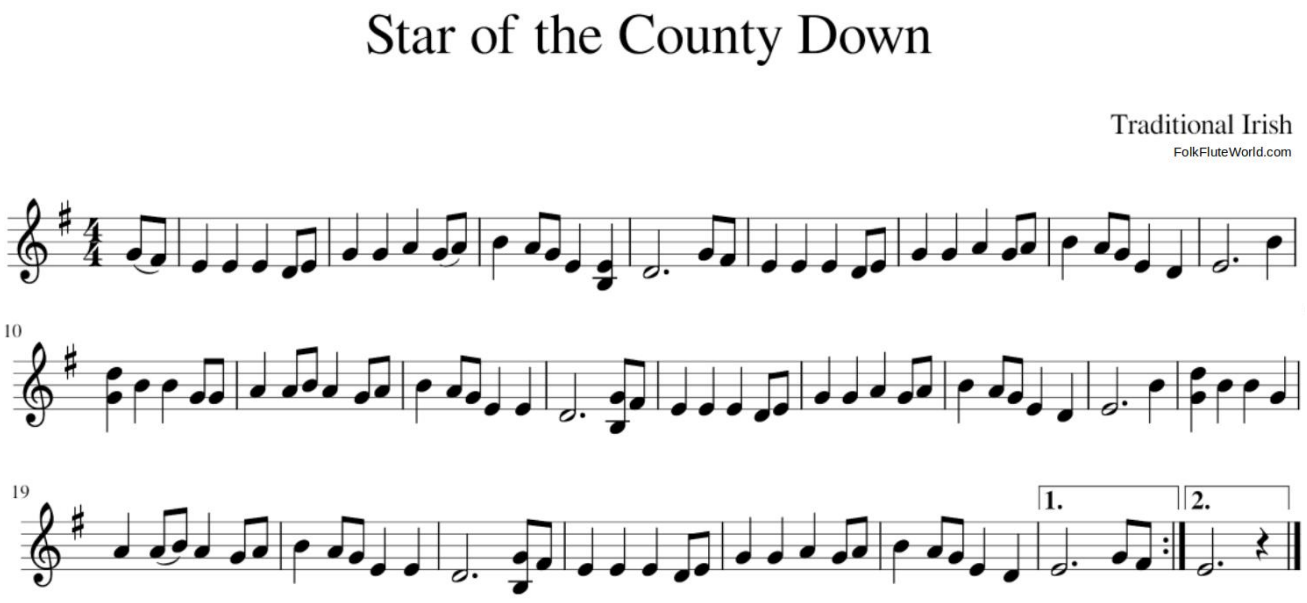
One of the benefits of playing the recorder is all the free sheet music you can find on the web. There are absolutely tons of traditional Irish and Celtic tunes. These are public domain and owned by no one, and they've been collected in gigantic free song libraries for your enjoyment. An appendix to this book tells you where to access these music libraries.

Here's a popular Celtic song in G Major. You'll hear it at pubs throughout the British isles. It's a romantic ballad about a young man's passion for a woman named Rose McCann.

Before you play it, notice the last two measures in the score. The first time you play up to these two measures, you play the **first ending** denoted by the **1.** and its bracket.

Then you follow the repeat sign, and start playing the entire melody from the very beginning.

The second time you approach the end of the score, you play the **second ending** denoted by the **2.** and its bracket. Then, you've reached the end of the piece -- as shown by the final double bar at the end of the score.



This song can be challenging if you play it at speed. But as always, the trick is to start out as slowly as you need to. Then increase the tempo as you learn the song.

As you noticed in our previous G Major tune, if you play any F# as F♮ (F natural) by accident, it sticks out like a sore thumb. So, always look at the key signature very carefully before you start playing any piece. Fix in your mind what sharps or flats carry throughout the score, and that way you'll remember them when you encounter them in the tune.

This score contains several **double-stemmed notes**. That's where you have two notes written on a single vertical stem. As you recall from an earlier lesson, you can play either note on the stem.

In this score the double-stemmed notes are low E and lowest B, G and lowest B, and high D and G.

In general we recommend you play the higher note on the stem. In this score you must because that lowest B is out of the recorder's range (though in a future lesson, we'll disclose a trick you can use to play that very low B on some recorders).

Song: Sweet Carnloch Bay

Here's a fine old Celtic tune. If it sounds a little odd to modern ears, that's a result of its ancient heritage. I really like this weird old tune.

Like many old melodies, its origins are lost to history. It goes by several different titles.

This score gives you some practice with F# and high D. Remember that "eyes" (or fermatas) over the low C's in the last measures of lines one and two mean to hold those notes for an extended time.



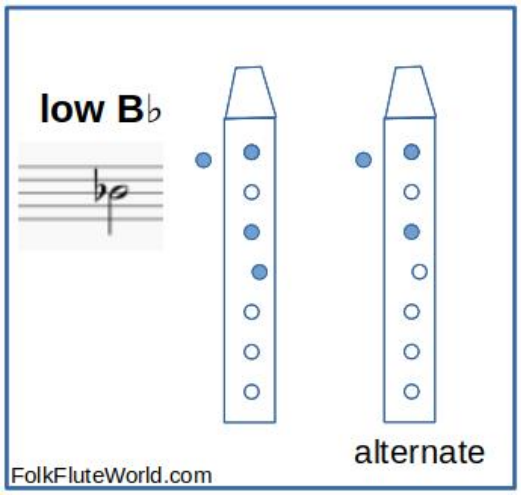
Learning B♭

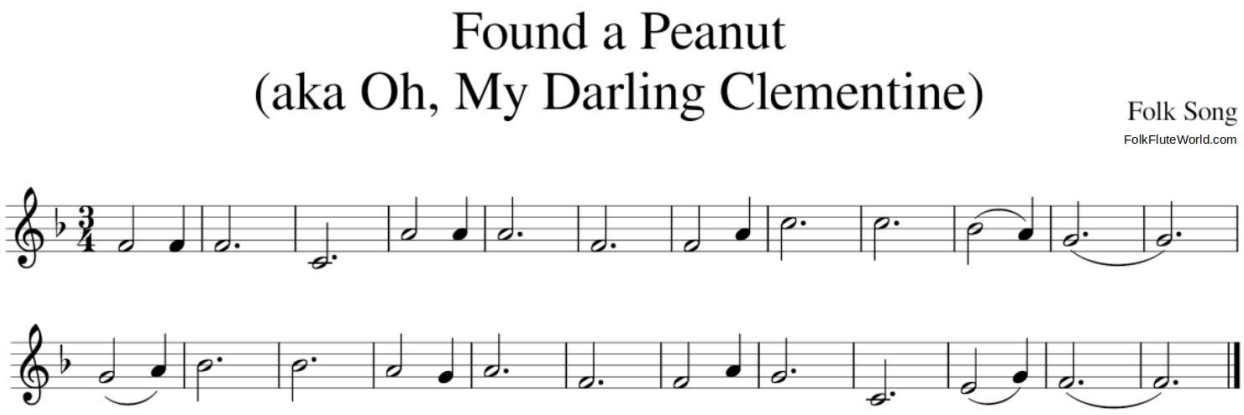
The other accidental you really need to know is B♭. Songs written in the very common key of F Major contain B♭ in their key signature.

Let's start with a simple tune everyone knows. It's popular among kids and campers and is called *Found a Peanut*. You may also recognize it with different lyrics as the song *Oh, My Darling Clementine*.

Several recording artists have enjoyed mild success with this tune including Bobby Darin, Tom Lehrer, and Jan and Dean (!).

Here's how to finger B♭. Use the first fingering unless your instrument's fingering chart tells you to use the alternate. The score follows.





Since the key signature indicates B♭, all B notes in this tune -- low or high -- must be played as B♭.

The score is in 3/4 time. That's three beats per measure with each quarter note getting one beat.

Waltzes are often written in 3/4 time. Some are scored in its multiple, 6/8 time.

Marches are often written in 2/4 time, while 4/4 is by far the most common time signature because it's adaptable to almost all musical styles.

Song: Aura Lee

Here's a song that became widely popular during the American Civil War. Both sides of the conflict adopted it as their own.

The melody was composed by George Polton with lyrics written by my distant relative, William Fosdick. It probably appealed to the soldiers because the words are a sentimental ballad to a sweetheart from whom the singer is separated.

The song went on to inclusion in several early 20th century films, but it's Big Boom came courtesy of Elvis. Presley recorded the tune a cappella in 1956 as *Love Me Tender* and it hogged the number 1 spot on the popular charts for five weeks. Its sweet solo contrasted with other, more raucous Elvis hits of the day, such as *Hound Dog* and *Jail House Rock*.

Here's the song in F Major. There's only a single appearance of a B♭ in this tune, but don't forget the key signature and misplay it as natural, or you'll spoil this sweet melody!



Song: All Through the Night

This next F Major song is a Welsh melody from 1784. It's still popular today in Wales and is sung at festivals and by choirs.

The Welsh name of the song is *Ar Hyd y Nos*. Recording artists like Olivia Newton-John and Michael McDonald have included it in their Christmas albums, though it has no real association with that holiday. It's just a lovely traditional lullaby.



This song can also be played as a round by two recorder players. A **round** is where two or more musicians play the same song, but they start at different times.

To play this tune as a round, have one musician start playing the song. When he reaches the start of the second line, the second musician starts playing the song from the beginning.

Rounds can be lots of fun in group situations. We'll discuss them in an upcoming lesson and provide a flock of them for your practice and enjoyment.

In another lesson we'll also explore **duets**, where two recorder players simultaneously play complementary parts.

Song: My Country 'Tis of Thee

Two countries represent themselves through this song. In the UK, it's called *God Save the King*. In the USA, it's official title is *America*, but it's probably better known to the public as *My Country 'Tis of Thee*.

We've provided the sheet music for this song in two different keys. The first version is in the key of F. Played slowly, it sounds stately and serious.

The second version is in G Major. Played at a slightly faster pace or **tempo** it almost sounds sprightly.

The point here is that the same song can sound significantly different to our ears, depending on the key in which it's written. Different keys evoke different emotions in the listener.

Composers know this well. Writing a score for a monster movie? Create something in a minor key, or with lots of accidentals. Sad scenes require the same techniques, perhaps paired with a slow melody. Descending notes convey somber, sad, or scary feelings. For excellent results, play it on a soft-spoken, spooky sounding bass recorder.

Writing for a happy or celebratory scene? Create an upbeat song in a quick tempo in C major or other simple key. Play it on a sprightly sounding soprano or sopranino.

So here are the two versions of the song. First up is the F Major version. It's followed by the same tune in G Major.





Song: Let Me Call You Sweetheart

Here's a classic tune that was a huge hit for a vocal group popular at the turn of the 20th century named *The Peerless Quartet*. The song has since been recorded by a wide range of prominent artists, and has made numerous appearances in films and television shows.

In the popular mind, it's a romantic ballad associated with the good times of the early 20th century. Here are the well-known lyrics for the chorus:

> *Let me call you "Sweetheart," I'm in love with you*
> *Let me hear you whisper that you love me too*
> *Keep the love-light glowing in your eyes so true*
> *Let me call you "Sweetheart," I'm in love with you*

From the musical perspective, this song offers a good opportunity to practice the high notes and two accidentals: F# and A#. You might wonder: A# ? What's up with that?

Recall that every accidental can be considered either by its name as a sharp, or by its name as a flat. A# is simply another name for B♭, with which you're already familiar. Finger it as B♭.

Get ready to reach for that high F near the end of the score. Then try playing the song a second time, with that note as a low F#. Which do you think better fits the melody?

Let Me Call You Sweetheart

Leo Friedman (1910)

FolkFluteWorld.com



Summary

That wraps it up for this lesson. You've learned about sharps and flats, and how to finger the two most common: F# and B♭. You'll see many more scores with these notes and get more practice with them in upcoming lessons.

Ever wonder where recorders came from? We'll answer that question in the next lesson.

Lesson 17 -- History of the Recorder

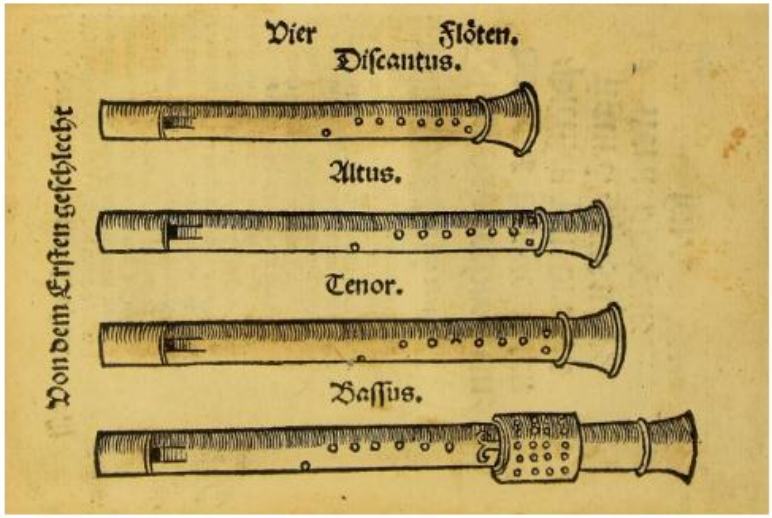
Let's take a breather from practice to discuss where recorders came from. How have they been used, and when did they reach their present form?

Primitive kinds of flutes made from animal bones stretch back into antiquity. The Divje Babe bone flute discovered in Slovenia was carved from a cave bear femur over 50,000 years ago. Various kinds of bone flutes followed in China and elsewhere.

By these standards, the recorder is a modern development. The earliest references to recorders date to Europe in the Middle Ages, to about the 14th century.

Recorders attained wide popularity during the Renaissance and Baroque musical periods (about 1400 to 1750). Refinements like the **conical bore** boosted their use. (**Conical** means the bore is slightly tapered rather than straight.) Conical bores enhance sound quality by producing more harmonics and a richer, fuller tone.

A key invention underlying the recorder's popularity was the windway that automatically directs the player's breath to the splitting edge to produce sound waves. Many other simple flutes (and even the modern concert flute) require precisely directing your breath against the splitting edge yourself. That makes them more difficult to learn to play.



From *Musica instrumentalis deudsch* (1529).
(Courtesy: Wikipedia, Public Domain)

Early recorders were made from wood, or rarely ivory or other materials. Plastic was not invented until the 20th century. Tuning for classic recorders was not standardized, but many were tuned slightly higher than modern ones, and some from the Baroque period were tuned lower. (Most of today's instruments are tuned to the note A at 440 Hz or possibly at 442 Hz -- Lesson 22 explains this in detail.)

Recorders were used for courtly dances, chamber music, in formal compositions, and in public ensembles for dancing and popular entertainment. Recorder ensembles were called **consorts**.

By the time of the Classical and Romantic musical periods (1750 to 1900) their use had faded.



From ***Opera Intitulata Fontegara (1535)***
(Courtesy: Wikipedia, Public Domain)

Decline

Some of the famous historic composers who wrote for recorder include Bach, Berio, Handel, Hindemith, Telemann, Lully, Moteverdi, Purcell, van Eyck, and Vivaldi. (Henry the VIII was typical of royalty of the era: he owned dozens of recorders.)

Such eminent tradition is the reason many current recorder enthusiasts like to play classical music. But how, given such prominence, did the recorder fall out of popularity?

There are several reasons. Perhaps the biggest two are that instruments became mechanized and their composition shifted from wood to metal.

These innovations allowed for much louder play in an era before modern electronic microphones and amplification. What came to be known as **concert instruments** like modern brass and woodwinds could entertain much larger audiences and support larger public performances.

Inventors also added keys. This mechanization made playing sharps and flats easier and more accurate, and extended the range of instruments beyond that of the recorder. For example, the concert flute's three and one-half octave range dwarfs that of keyless flutes like the recorder.

So it was that the world evolved away from the concept of the keyless **simple flute.** While some were still made, played, and appreciated by the cognoscente, the recorder drifted into obscurity.

Revival

The recorder's 20th century revival came about due to several convergent factors.

Interest in recorders grew due to a desire to play historic music on the instruments for which it was composed. Many came to view recorders with pride as an integral part of their cultural history.

In the United Kingdom, the Dolmetsches, a father and son team, started making and teaching historical instruments. They promoted early music and specifically the recorder.

Edgar Hunt took up the baton in the UK in the 1930's. He furthered interest in early music, promoted the recorder's role in music education, and introduced inexpensive recorders to the UK.

In Germany, instrument maker Peter Harlan invented German fingering in the 1920s. Together with composer and music educator Carl Orff, he contributed to a continental recorder revival.

Adolf Hitler's Nazi Party seized upon recorders as a totem of superior national culture. The Hitler Youth memorably played Orff's compositions on recorders at the 1936 Summer Olympics in Berlin.

Yoshitaka Sakamoto from Japan attended that Olympiad. He was so impressed by that recorder concert that he introduced the recorder to the far east and asked Yamaha to start manufacturing them.

The invention of the plastic recorder in 1938 represents a key turning point. By the 1970s, mass production of plastic recorders was booming. This made them attractive as very inexpensive yet capable instruments for music education. Recorders are easier for youngsters to get started with than reeded woodwinds or flutes that require precise embouchure.

Yet their ease of use does not mean that recorders are not serious musical instruments. They are fully capable of playing any musical genre. And properly played, they sound absolutely lovely.

Today, market research firms estimate the global recorder market is worth between $100 and $150 million USD per year.

Hobbyists, students, musicians, and enthusiasts enjoy recorders worldwide. They form the basis of music education in many countries, including the United States.

The Future?

This century has seen intense innovation in musical instruments. This includes improving existing acoustic instruments, like the recorder, and mutating them into new kinds of electronic wind instruments. Could these become a significant part of future recorder tradition? Lesson 22 briefly overviews these exciting innovations.

Summary

This lesson imparted a brief history of the recorder.

You can find more information on all kinds of flutes, their evolution, and how to play them at FolkFluteWorld.com. In addition to recorders, the website discusses related instruments like tin whistles, flageolets, Native American flutes, xun, sopilkas, and many others. You can download -- for free -- the two companion books to this one that explain all about ocarinas and how to play them.



Left: From ***Principes de la Flute Traversiere, de la Flute a Bec, et du Haut-bois(1707)***

Right: From ***Church of St. George in Staro Nagoričane*** (Courtesy: Wikipedia, Public Domain)

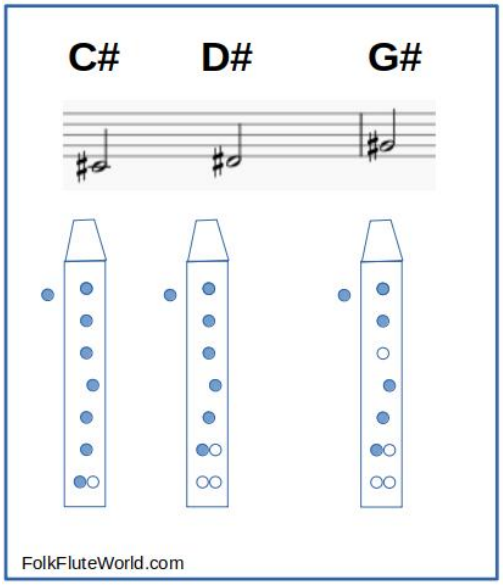
Lesson 18 -- The Low Accidentals

Five semitones sit between the notes in the standard seven note scale. They are:

C# / D♭ **D# / E♭** **F# / G♭** **G# / A♭** **A# / B♭**

As shown by this list, you'll recall that each accidental can go by either of two monikers: its name as a sharp, or its name as a flat.

We've shown you how to finger F# and B♭. Below are the remaining fingerings for the lower octave chromatics. As always, take your specific instrument's fingering chart as the final authority.

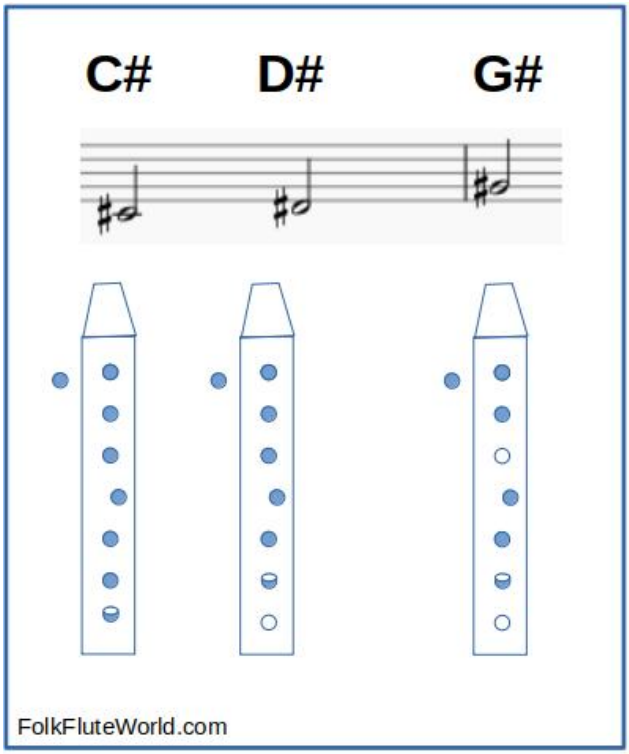


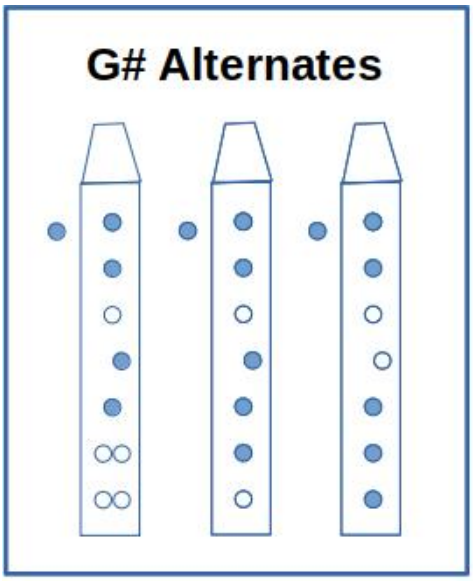
Look closely and you'll notice that, for the first time, we refer individually to the two double holes at the end of your flute. This is when you use them. Low C# requires you to cover only one of the double holes, as does D#. You cover the part of the double hole on the right side, and leave the little left side hole open.

G# also employs the second to last double hole (like D#). But on many instruments you can get by with an easier alternate fingering if you want to or need to (as we'll show below). Particularly in a fast passage, no one will notice if you employ an easier alternate fingering.

What if your instrument has no double holes? Or only the one double hole for C# (and not D#)?

In this case you must **half hole** -- that is, cover half the single hole with your finger. This diagram shows how:





You cover half the single hole for C to play C#, and half the hole for D to play D# and G#.

Try it. At first, you'll find that it's not easy to accurately repeat. But practice makes perfect, and you can learn to do this if you practice.

You want to practice this on the instrument you play the most because half holing does have a different feel on different instruments.

It's much easier to half hole on instruments that have larger holes. For example, you'll find half holing easier on a tenor than a soprano because its holes are bigger.

Now that we've shown you how half holing works, and that it can be difficult on some instruments, you can see why most modern recorders include double holes.

You also see why alternate fingerings can sometimes be useful. The diagram to the right above shows alternates for low G#. These may not work for professionals but one of them may suit the typical hobbyist just fine. These alternatives sound "close enough" and they're much easier to finger.

Song: Coventry Carol

This classic dates from 16th century England. It's a slow, somber tune with two sharps, perfect for learning accidentals.

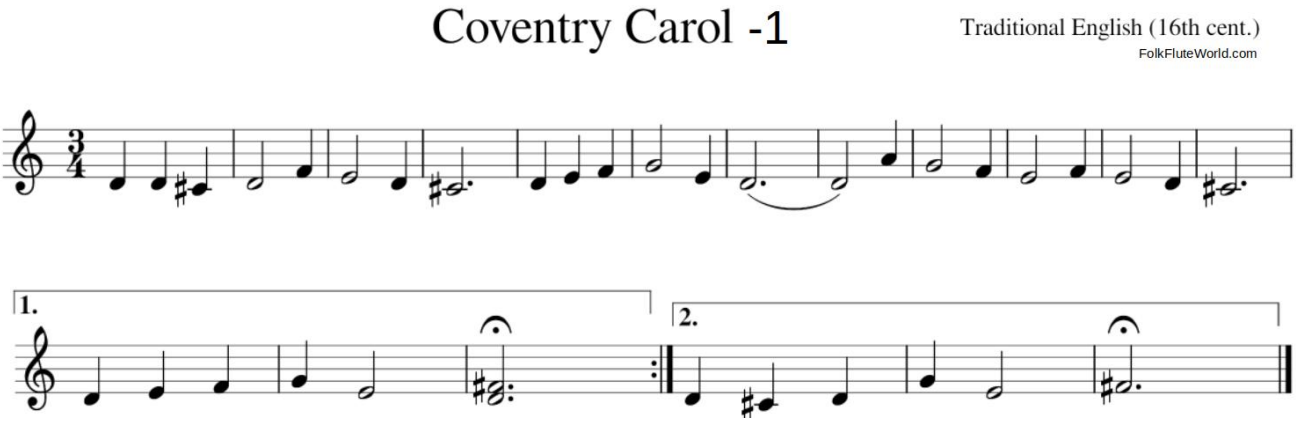
The carol refers to the "Massacre of the Innocents," whereby King Herod ordered all male infants in Bethlehem killed. Herod did this to forestall the prophecy that one of them would grow up to challenge his rule.

This first version in G Major gives you practice with low D#, F#, and G#. Play the tune slowly so that you hit these notes correctly, and try to voice them with somber beauty.



Now, here's another version of the song. This one's in C Major. It prompts you to practice low C# and F#.

If your recorder doesn't have double holes, this score will be difficult because those low C#'s require half holing. You may have to practice a good bit to develop consistent "half hole" dexterity.



Were you able to play the semitones in these two scores correctly? Here's a hint ...

Always inspect the key signature before you play any tune and memorize the key.

Then scan the score to see if any accidentals will pop up during play.

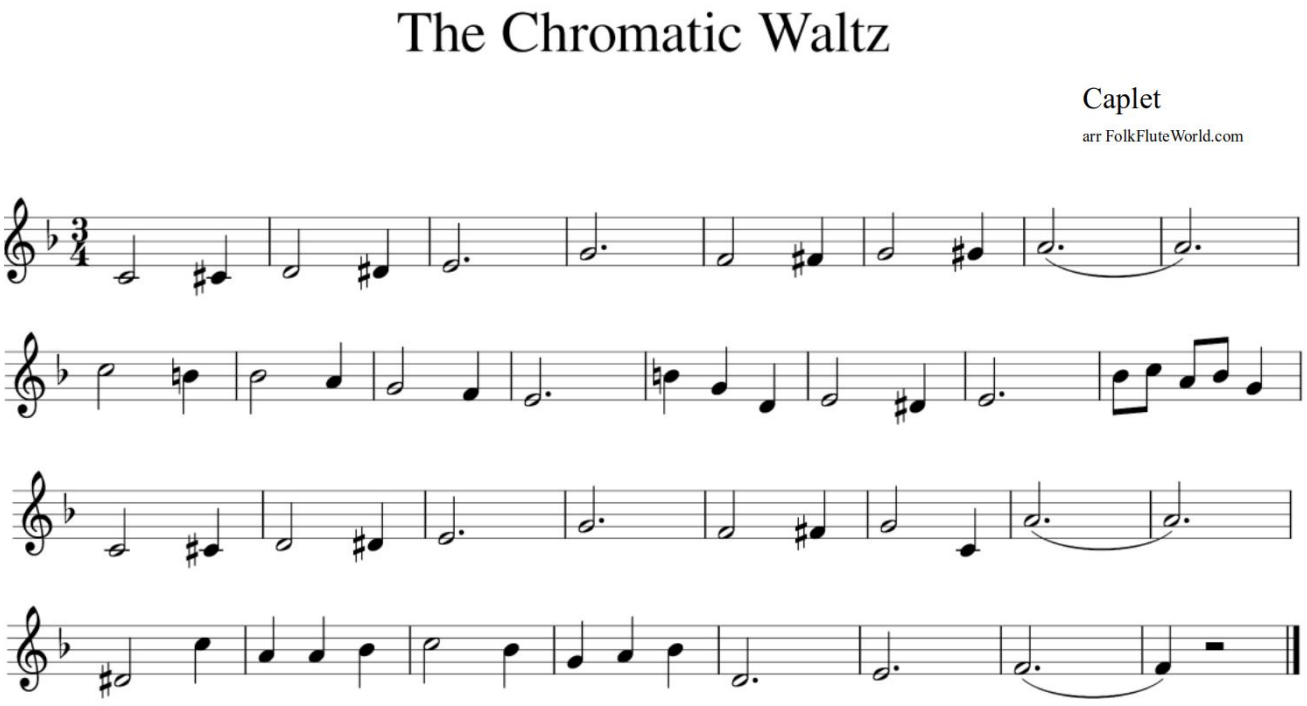
By doing this you'll be ready when you get to the accidentals in the score. It takes a pretty adept musician to successfully navigate accidentals on the fly. The best approach for sharps and flats is this: **Be prepared**. If you know what's coming, you'll be more successful.

Song: The Chromatic Waltz

Some consider this song the ultimate chromatic challenge. No surprise that it's called *The Chromatic Waltz*. It contains most of the accidentals in the scale. That concept is apparently so appealing that there are at least two entirely different songs that use the same title.

This score requires you to play low C#, D#, F#, G#, and B♭. Whew!

Notice the use of the natural sign (♮ **)** to ensure the you play B as a whole note in the second line of the score. That natural sign is required to override the key signature's dictate of B♭**.**



Were you able to get through this score? It's a tough one. Try playing it slowly to pick your way through all those chromatics. Then once you're comfortable with it, play it a little faster.

You may want to circle back to this score later to ensure you can play it correctly. It's a great vehicle for refreshing your memory of the most common accidentals.

If you play a recorder without double holes, this score forces you to half hole low C#, D#, and G#. Try to place your fingers halfway over the holes in the exact same manner every time. That way you'll develop muscle memory that will make it much easier for you to become consistent in your approach to these notes.

Song: Beautiful Ohio

This song was written in 1918 and is the state song of Ohio. That confuses many people who have heard that the state song is *Hang On, Sloopy*, a rock hit from the 1960s. In fact, *Sloopy* is Ohio's official rock song while *Beautiful Ohio* remains its official state song. Both enjoy formal recognition.

This song is in the key of D Major, which has two sharps, C# and F#. D is a key you'll see in many free songs on the internet, because it's the natural key for the Irish flute and the tin whistle. Many folk tunes from the British Isles are scored in D.

G# and A# also appear in the song as accidentals. So this score is challenging. Fortunately, it's played as a waltz in 3/4 time, so the slow melody gives you plenty of time to handle those sharps.

Notice how, in the first measure of the score, the composer includes the natural symbol. This ensures that you play the measure as A - G# - G♮ - F#. This is a good example of how scores indicate accidentals and whole notes in the same measure.

If you can manage this song, you can be proud that you're getting fluent in chromatics!



Song: Down by the Old Mill Stream

This song is a old standard for barbershop quartets. It was one of the most popular songs of the early 20th century and sold some four million copies in sheet music. Today few recognize the title, but you will likely recognize the tune.

F# is in the key signature, so it applies all the way through.

Be prepared for when accidentals A#, G#, and D# pop up! Altogether you face the challenge of four sharps in this score. This is a useful but melodic piece to help you master the accidentals.



Song: You're a Grand Old Flag

This patriotic song dates from 1906 when it was penned by George Cohan. It's in the tradition of marching bands and John Philip Sousa.

From the musical standpoint, this score is a bit tricky. You'll notice it's in the key of G Major, with F# all the way through. But look more closely and you'll see F natural sprinkled in as well.

Given the accidentals that pop up unheralded, this is one of those songs that proves how useful it is to inspect a score before playing it. Otherwise you take a good chance of missing one.

Once you get the hang of it, see if you can play this melody up to speed. Project it as a proud, snappy march.



Song: Still Still Still

Here's a traditional Austrian Christmas lullaby. It offers you yet another chance to train on low C#.

If you play a recorder without double holes, are you getting the hang of low C# yet? It's difficult, I know. But it is possible to learn it with practice.

The song's enchanting lyrics include these …

Still, Still, Still,
One can hear the falling snow.
For all is hushed,
The world is sleeping.
. . .
Dream, dream, dream
Of the joyous day to come
While guardian angels without number
Watch you as you sweetly slumber
Dream, dream, dream
Of the joyous day to come.



Song: Early One Morning

This old English folk song was first published in 1787.

It was the theme song to the popular Canadian television show for children, *The Friendly Giant.* Bob Homme played it on recorder for the show. The series ran from 1958 to 1985.

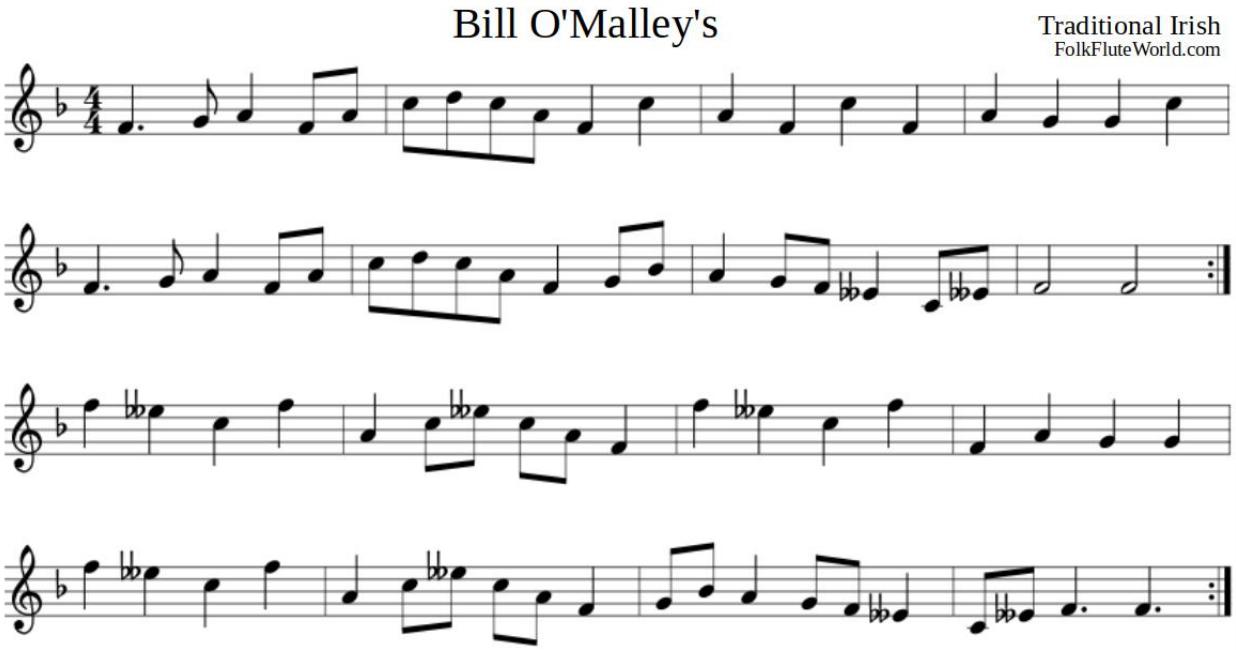
Its opening measures were also played as the sign-on for BBC Radio 4 from 1978 to 2006.

Remember that E♭ is D#, D♭ is C#, and A♭ is G#. Try this score in A♭ Major:



Song: Bill O'Malley's Barn Dance

Here's a popular Irish dance tune. It illustrates how you can run across some oddities in the accidentals. Play E𝄫 as two half tones lower than E -- in other words, as D natural (D♮).



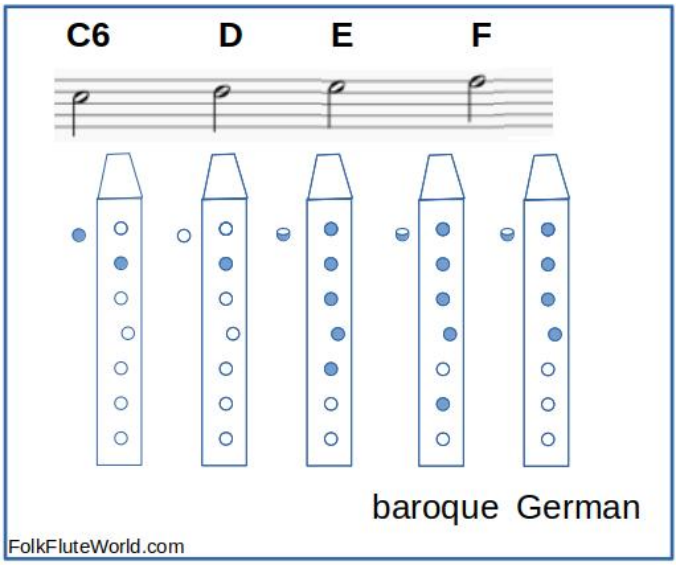
Summary

That wraps it up for this lesson. You might want to return to it when you need a refresher on accidentals. You'll find many more practice songs featuring these notes in the Songs Appendix.

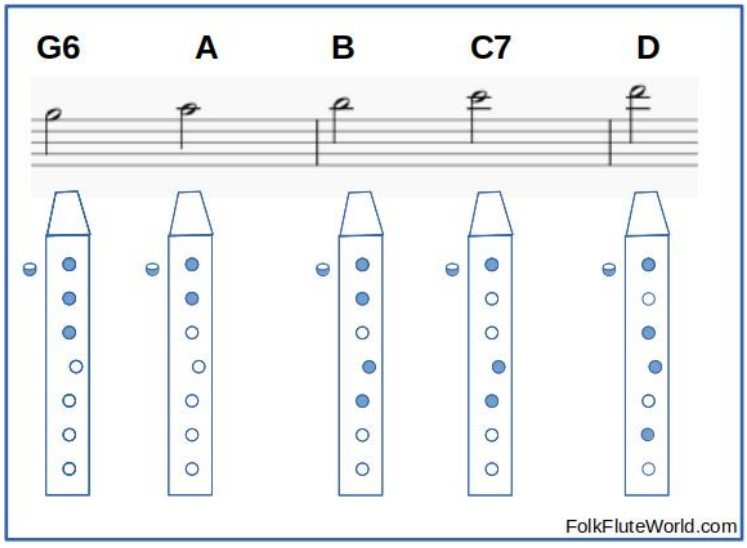
Lesson 19 -- The Highest Notes

So far we've covered the whole notes from low C5 to high F6. This lesson addresses the remaining highest whole notes, G6, A6, B6, C7, and D7.

First, here's a review of how to finger C6 through F6:



And here are the remaining high whole notes:

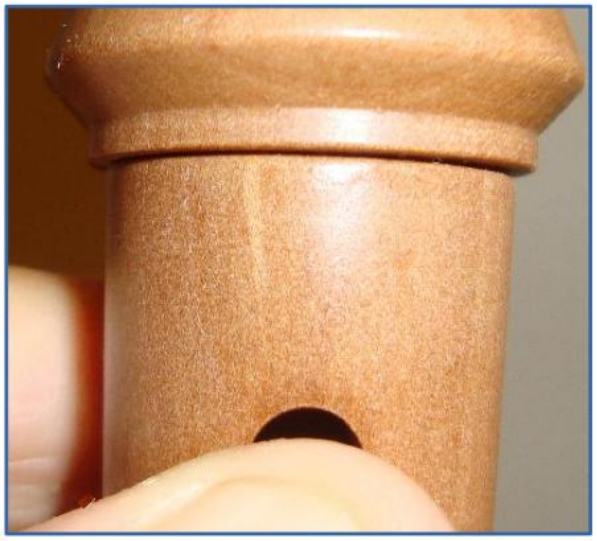


Notice that all high notes from E6 and above require you to partially cover (or **half hole**) the thumb hole. The exact portion of the thumb hole you cover for the best sound depends on your instrument. Start by covering half, then experiment a bit to discover what works best for your recorder.

Typically, you progressively cover a tiny bit more of the thumb hole as you play ever higher notes. For the very highest notes, you leave but the tiniest air gap. You very nearly cover the entire thumb hole to play the absolute highest notes.

The photos below show an example. To the left I'm playing high E (E6), and to the right I'm playing highest C (C7). Notice how you cover a bit more of the thumb hole as you ascend the scale. **Exactly how much of the thumb hole you cover will vary by your specific instrument.**

It helps not to have a long thumbnail, which could compromise your play. Also, you want to position your thumb so that you can quickly and comfortably cover a tiny bit more of the thumb hole as you ascend to the highest notes. You need to develop a dexterous thumb to manage the thumb hole.



High E (E6)



Highest C (C7)

With some instruments, it helps to blow sharply directed breath to hit the highest note or two. You may have to experiment a bit to attain highest C and D (C7 and D7).

How high can you play? It depends primarily on two factors:

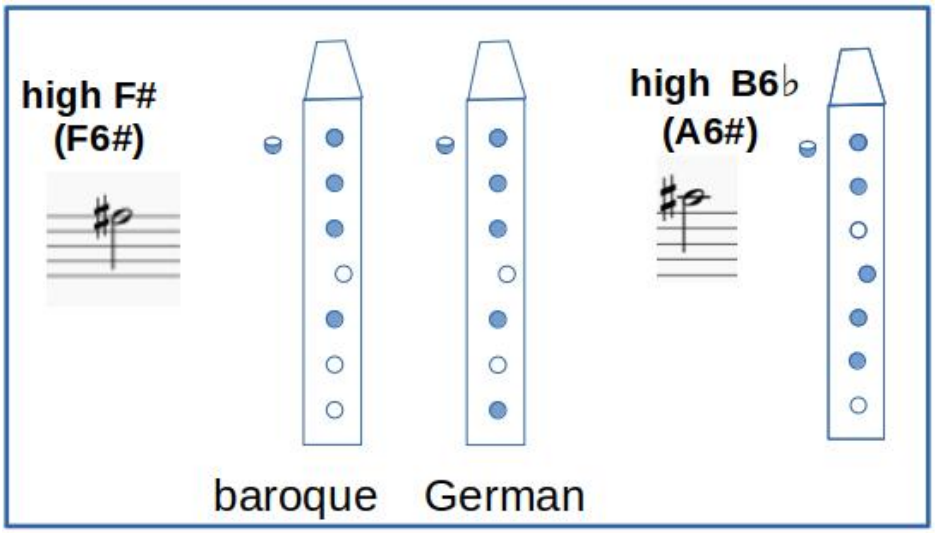
- Your specific instrument
- Your skill level

All quality soprano recorders can attain C7. If you can hit D7, consider yourself pretty capable. That's as high as many fingering charts go. But highly skilled musicians with premier instruments can sometimes go as high as G7 or even higher.

Some cheap recorders simply can't play the highest notes, B6, C7 and D7. That's why we recommended you start with a quality instrument in Lesson 2. (Whether a flute can play these highest notes is a good test of its quality.)

For practice hitting the high notes accurately, practice "popping the octave". Play low E, then high E; then low F and then high F; then low G and then high G, etc. The high notes should sound exactly one octave higher than the low ones.

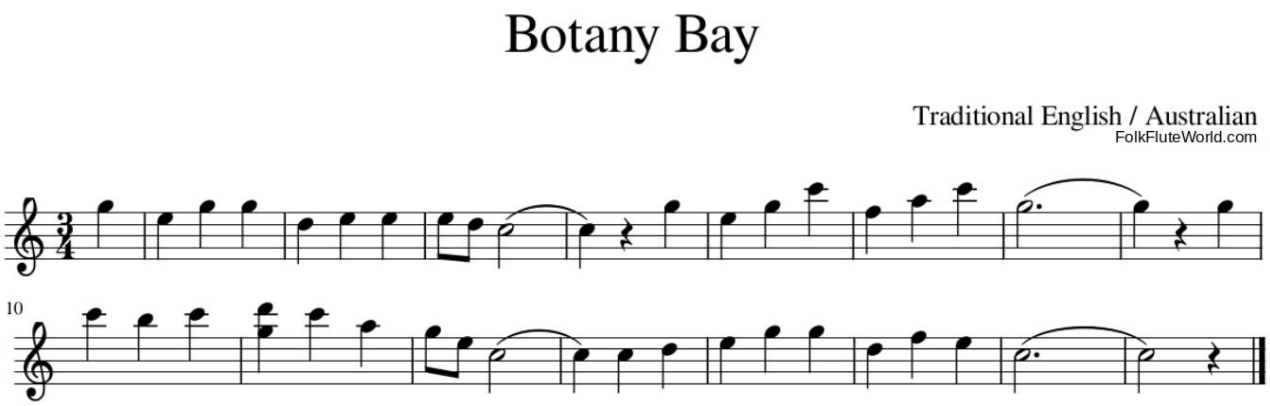
You'll also need the two most common accidentals to play our upcoming practice scores, high F# and B♭:



Song: Botany Bay

Here's an old tune that dates back to the 18th century. It rose to prominence when staged in Melbourne in the musical *Little Jack Sheppard* in 1886.

There are several versions of this traditional melody. Some are more peppy than ours, but this slow simple version is a useful place to start for practicing high notes up to "highest C", C7. Reach for the highest D in the 2nd measure of the 2nd line.



Song: The Shady Grove

Here's another simple tune for learning the upper register and developing fluency in the highest notes.

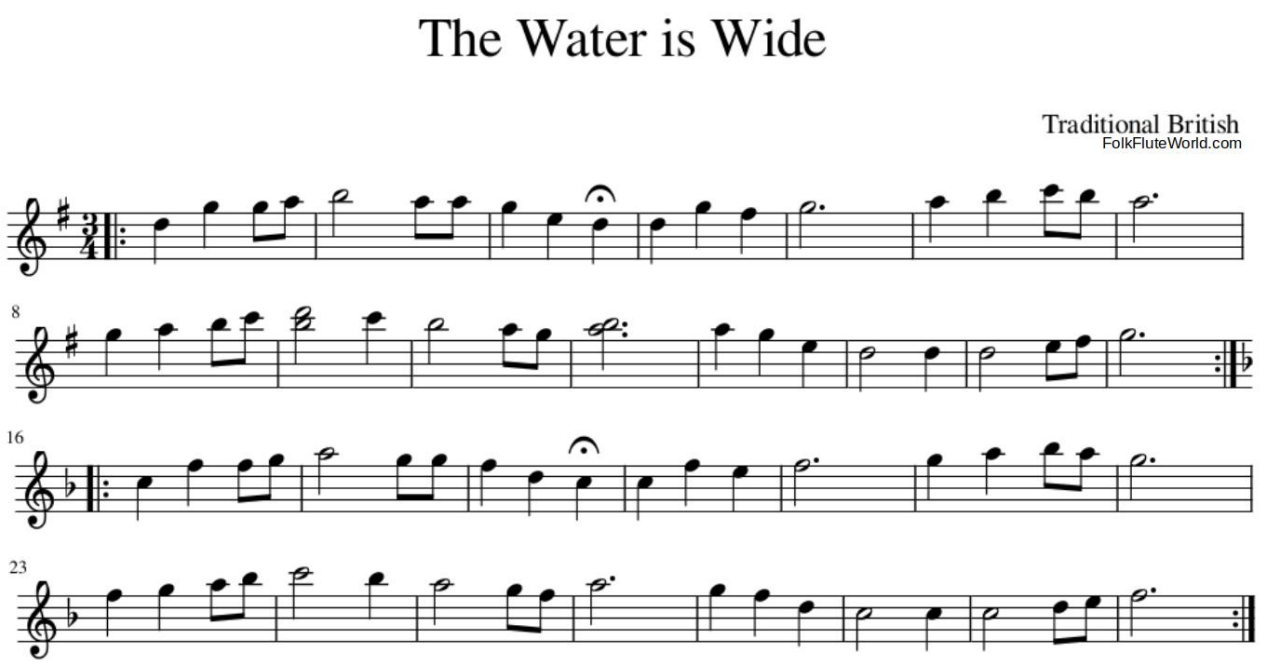
This folk song from the American Appalachian mountains is thought to date from the first years of the 20th century. In its faster incarnation it's become a popular bluegrass tune. Nearly everyone has recorded it, from Bill Monroe and Ricky Skaggs to Patty Loveless and Quicksilver Messenger Service.



Song: The Water is Wide

This simple folk song hails from the British Isles, probably Scotland. It was first published in 1906 but predates that by many years.

Play the higher of any double stemmed notes, if you can. The holds in this melody give you a chance to develop and sustain beautiful high notes.



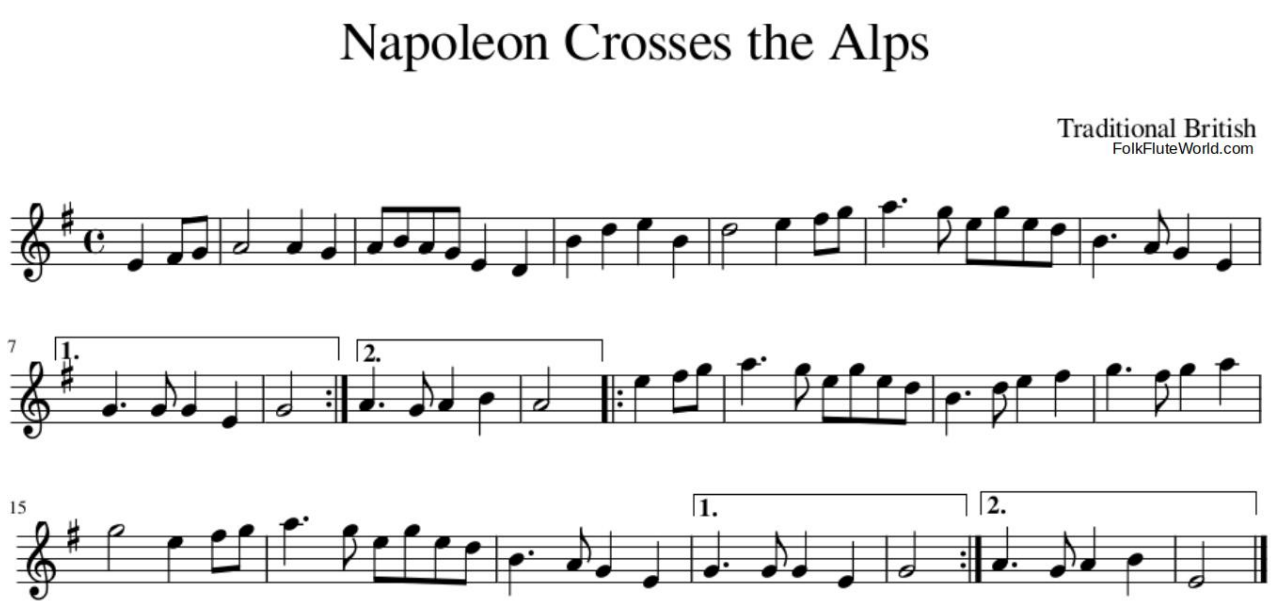
In the above, we provide two scores: in G Major and F Major. These give you the chance to practice high F# and high B♭ above the staff (B6♭).

For the best workout, play all the double-stemmed notes high.

Song: Napoleon Crosses the Alps

This fine old tune goes by a variety of names. It's thought to commemorate Napoleon's crossing of the Alps through the Great St. Bernard Pass in May, 1800. It certainly does seem to describe a marching army.

Note that several measures don't conform to the time signature! That's not unusual in old scores. Don't let it throw you. Just continue playing with each quarter note getting one beat.



Song: Swedish Song (FallingWater)

This song is unusual in that the number of beats per measure varies. Each beat remains a quarter note throughout, but instead of measures, notes are grouped into logical sections called **phrases**. As long as you play with the timing of each quarter note getting one beat, you'll play the song correctly.

The challenge in this piece is the extended slurs. They're vital to the melody. Try to develop a way to slur seamlessly across the notes in each grouping.

The last two notes in the score are dotted whole notes. They get 6 beats each. Since the final note is out of the recorder's range, just extend your hold of the previous note. Try to fade the note to a very quiet ***ppp*** without falling flat.


Swedish Song
(Falling Water)
Howard Fosdick
© 2025
ppp

Song: Deslumbrante

This lovely traditional tune hails from Portugal. The title translates as "Dazzling". Hit those high C7's in the second and fourth lines and make them sing!



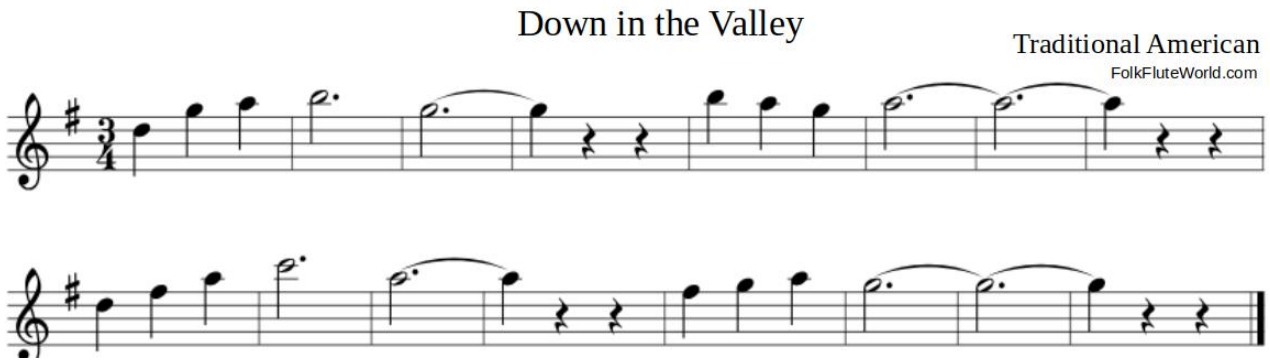
Song: Down in the Valley

Let's end with an easy one. This traditional American folk song became especially popular in the 1920's, when many early recording artists produced their own versions. One was released as the *Ballad of Birmingham Jail*, with lyrics said to have been written while their author awaited trial for moonshining.

This tune has appeared frequently in films, television shows, plays, and even an opera. You'll surely recognize the melody. We offer another version of this score in the Songs Appendix.

This version gives you a chance to play and hold melodic notes well above the staff. Mind the ties to hold them across measures, as indicated.

This score is a good test of your soprano's quality. A good instrument will allow you to play the highest notes pleasingly, while a poorer flute may require you to push them out shrilly or loudly or harshly with forceful breath.



Exercises

For more practice in "shading the thumb hole" to the proper degree for your instrument, practice exercises such as up-and-down scales for the upper octave:

C6 → D → E → F → G → A → B → C7 → D7 → C7 → B6 → A → G → F → E → D → C6

And try "octave jumping": C5 → C6 … D5 → D6 … E5 → E6 … F5 → F6 … etc

Try to make sure your notes sound in tune one octave apart. You can also practice the suggestions in the Scales and Arpeggios Appendix.

Summary

With this lesson, you now have command of the full range of whole notes playable on the recorder. All that's left to tackle are a few of the accidentals in the upper octave.

If you're still uncertain of any of the notes in this lesson, come back to it later and practice the songs again.

You'll get much more practice on these upper octave notes in the lessons on Rounds, Duets, and in the Songs Appendix.

In the next lesson we'll tell how and where to find tons of free sheet music you can play on your recorder.

Lesson 20 -- How to Find Free Sheet Music

In this lesson we'll take a break from practicing to talk about where to get free sheet music to play.

There's a myriad of free scores that available on the internet. We'll tell you where to get them and everything else you need to know about that in this lesson.

We'll also explain how to alter scores so that they're easier to play on your recorder.

Lead Sheets

When seeking suitable sheet music, it's helpful to know the term **lead sheet**.

A lead sheet is a score that contains only the melody. It dispenses with all harmonic and bass parts, as well as the chords one often finds in piano or guitar music. Lead sheets provide an easy-to-read melodic line, so they're often readily playable.

You could consider all the scores in this course lead sheets (except for those for rounds and duets).

Where to Find Free Sheet Music

One easy way to get free sheet music that is readily playable on recorders is to find music specifically scored for them. That assures that all notes are playable on your instrument and in playable keys.

Near the end of this book an appendix provides an extensive list of websites that offer scores that are free for download. The websites contain more than one million free scores.

This list is kept updated online at the non-commercial website FolkFluteWorld.com. Go there for links to several dozen repositories of recorder music. It's all free and contains tons of songs.

FolkFluteWorld also provides links to music libraries of public domain lead sheets, including free scores for similar instruments like tin whistles, Irish flute, concert flute, ocarinas, and voice.

For most people, the one million plus free songs are enough that they never need buy sheet music. The exceptions would be if you want to play specific copyrighted works: those you have to pay for.

Let's talk about how that works.

Copyright

When you seek scores, it is important to understand about copyright. Copyright law is complicated. Different countries have different laws. Here are the simplified basics for the United States.

In the U.S., most sheet music is either:

- Public domain
- Copyrighted
- Open source licensed

Public domain -- A song in the public domain means that you have free, unrestricted use of the score. You can download the song, send copies to your friends, play it in public, etc. (But be aware that specific arrangements of public domain songs can be copyrighted.)

In the United States, works published or registered prior to 1978 automatically enter the public domain **95 years** after they are published. So you have free access to works that are at least 95 years old.

Most works newer than that are copyrighted.

Copyright -- Copyright means that you must pay the copyright owner for the sheet music. So you buy a copy of the sheet music from a reputable dealer, and they or the music publisher handle the required payment to the copyright holder.

Be sure you buy from a vendor that respects copyright law. Some internet scammers sell copyrighted scores online and don't pay the required copyright fees.

Be clear on what you're buying. Rights for personal use, for example, differ from performance rights. And those differ from rights to distribute the sheet music.

Finally, be aware that websites that sell copyrighted songs typically mix in public domain pieces in their inventories. Those you don't have to buy! You can get them for free through the internet links in this book's appendices, FolkFluteWorld.com, or public domain music repositories.

Open source licenses -- These licenses provide a way for composers to give you free access to their sheet music while still protecting their authorship. The most common open source licenses are those defined by Creative Commons, an international non-profit organization.

Generally speaking, you can download and play open source music for free. But you should read the license for any restrictions if you intend other uses.

This Course

An example of open source licensing is the digital ebook (PDF version) of this course.

Its Creative Commons license (BY-NC-ND) with **AI Restriction** states that you may --

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This course is free because I developed it for the satisfaction of creating something worthwhile, and I wanted to share the fun of playing music with as many people as possible. An open source license accomplishes this -- while retaining the integrity of the material and my credit as author.

But the course can't include current sheet music because that's all copyrighted. And the license fees required to reproduce sheet music cost far more that than those you pay to download a score for your personal use. Those fees would be sky high for this course.

The result is that you get this free course with sheet music for over 220 songs. All songs have all been verified as at least 95 years old. If you want to play current songs, most are under copyright, so you would have to purchase them.

Making Melodies Recorder-Friendly

The recorder has a range of a note or two beyond two full octaves. Plus it can play all sharps and flats within its range. With such a capable instrument, you can play many of the free scores you download "as is".

But not all of them. After all, some were scored for instruments that have different capabilities.

The constraints that get in the way of playing tunes on recorders are songs that:

1. Stray out of range for a few notes
2. Contain large out of range sections
3. Contain many accidentals
4. Are scored in unsuitable keys
5. Are too densely written to easily read

Let's talk about these problems and how to solve them.

Out of Range Notes

Let's say you chance upon a melody you'd really like to play that's not scored for recorder. Perhaps it's scored for the concert flute, which has greater range than a recorder.

You carefully inspect all the notes in the song and find a couple that are out of your recorder's range.

In most cases, you can replace the unplayable note with a compatible playable one. You've seen us do the equivalent in several of our tunes in these lessons.

One example was in Lesson 16, with the song *Star of County Down*:



Altering a Note to Playable

The penultimate note was originally written as a low B. That's not playable on most recorders (unless you can shade the bell a slight bit to play one note below low C). Recorder fingering charts don't include such a note.

So we added a playable alternative to the same staff -- in this case, a low E. Now you have a fully playable score.

This technique works well if you only need to change a couple notes in the tune. You probably won't even notice the change when you play the song. However, on rare occasions it won't work because the musical context doesn't allow it... the original note is too critical to the tune to replace.

To what new note should you alter the original? The best way to find out is to try a few alternatives and see what sounds best.

Often you'll find that two notes above or below the original sounds good. Change a low B up to a low D, or a very high C7 down to a more comfortable high E6.

Ultimately, it all depends on the context. The surrounding notes dictate what sounds best.

A Block of Notes Out of Range

Here's a related situation you might run into. A song is all within range except the notes within one section of the melody. Or perhaps those measures are too challenging to quickly play.

One solution is rather like providing an alternative note -- just rewrite those measures.

This sample portion of a score for the song *Deck the Halls* does just that.

This section of the score shows several high notes in a quick sequence that a beginner might find challenging. One solution is simply to rewrite those measures an octave lower. Play it and you'll see that it doesn't detract from the song.



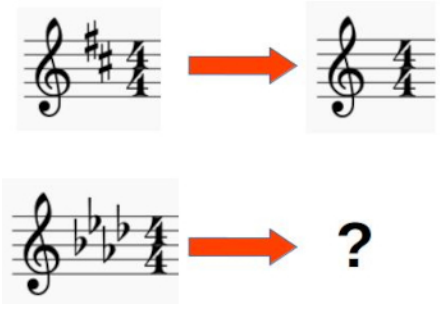
Transposing a Section

Sometimes you'll hear this technique called **folding**. That means that a block of measures -- or even an entire score -- has been dropped a specific pitch interval (often an octave).

Too Many Sharps or Flats

Here's another problem you might run into. Maybe you find a tune you'd like to play but the score is just cluttered with sharps or flats. That's difficult for most of us to play.

What to do?



Transposing Keys

One answer would be to change **all** the notes in the score to a different key. That's called **transposing**.

For example, you could rewrite a tune from the key of D Major to C Major, thereby eliminating D Major's low C#. That's a difficult note to play on a recorder that doesn't have double holes and therefore requires half-holing.

The above diagram shows how this change looks. D Major is a very popular key for Irish flute and tin whistle songs. You'll find huge libraries of free D Major scores on the web. Transposing can make these songs more accessible to recorders without double holes.

The second example suggests transposing a melody from A♭ Major to some easier key. You can see how that could make such tunes easier to play. Unless you're a skilled player A♭ Major just requires too many flats.

There are a couple dozen different musical keys. While you'll almost never see some of them, others are popular -- and not always easy to play on recorders. Transposing is a great way to simplify them.

The other benefit to transposing is that you can move **all** the notes in a score either up or down on the staff. You can sometimes use this to eliminate out of range notes while preserving the melody.

How do you transpose a score? It can be very simple if you have the song in appropriate musical notation for computer transposing tools. On the other hand, it can be pretty tedious if you have to do it by hand.

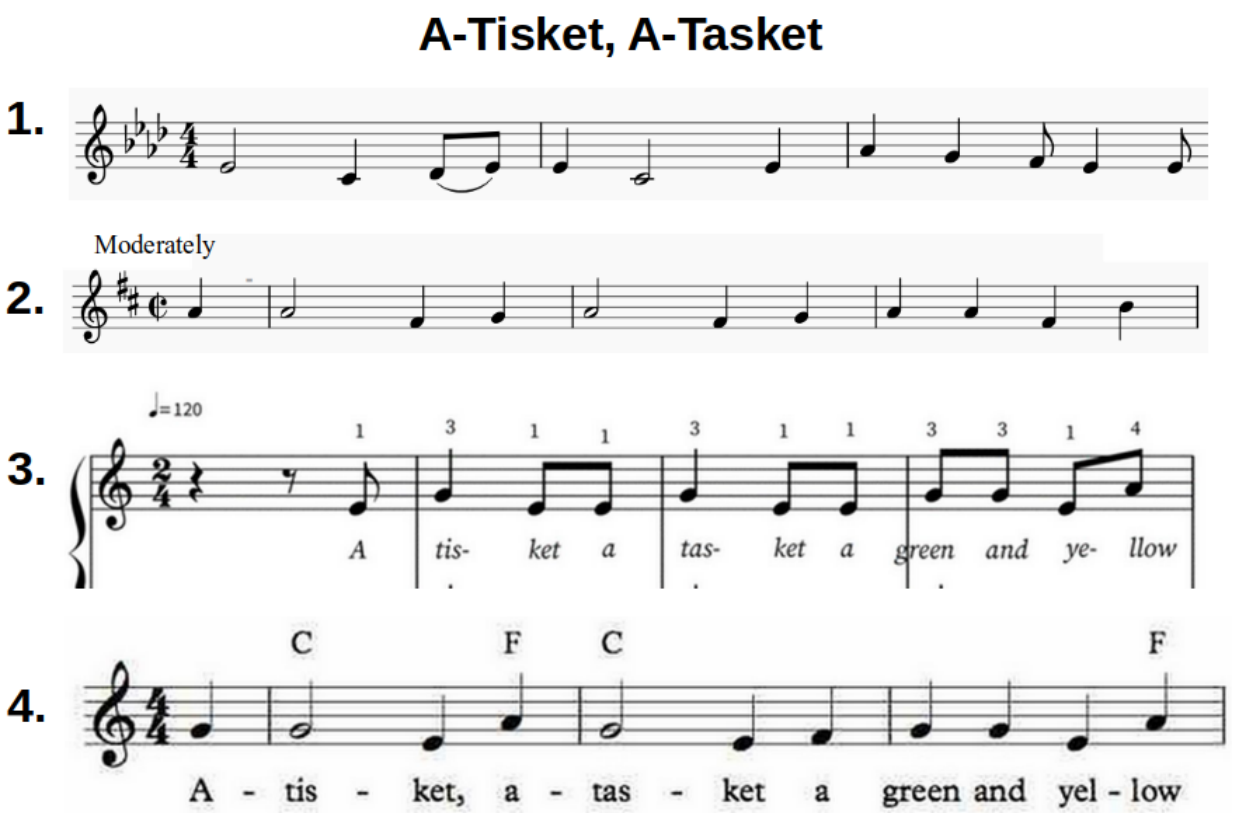
In Lesson 24 we'll explain how to easily transpose scores.

Use the Web to Find a More Suitable Score

Here's another way to avoid tough scores littered with accidentals or scored in difficult keys. Let the web do the work for you.

There are multiple variants of almost any popular song out on the internet. You just need to search diligently to find the best one.

Here's an example. For the traditional tune *A-Tisket, A-Tasket*, we found four different scores on the internet. Here is the first line of each version:



Look at the first line of each score. Which would you rather play?

Example 1 has four flats. That's something with which most of us don't have much experience. It looks pretty tough. (If you feel like taking on a challenge and practicing your accidentals, enjoy!)

Example 2 looks clean and easy to play. But low C#? That calls for half-holing if you play a recorder lacking double holes. A quick C# or two in the song may not be an obstacle. But if there are many of them, that could be problematic.

Example 3 is better. It's in C Major and so has no sharps or flats.

Example 4 is even better than example 3. It's clearly written to help you figure out the timing of the song. That's why the timing is a standard, slow 4/4. You can easily figure out the timing in this simple, common time signature, then speed up the song later to suit.

My conclusion is that example 4 looks best. It's in a simple key and easy time signature.

The lesson is that a diligent web search will often unearth a score that is much easier to play than alternatives.

The Closing of the Web

Unfortunately, the web is closing. By that we mean that more and more websites are eliminating free access. They're erecting paywalls. That public domain song you used to be able to download for free? Now, many websites charge a monthly subscription or purchase fee to access it.

That's fine if you seek specific songs. But what if you want to play hundreds of songs? What if you like to try out lots of songs just to learn how to play them? Sheet music fees can really add up.

This is why this book's appendices and my website, FolkFluteWorld.com, list dozens of free, public domain music libraries. There's still an absolute ton of legally-free music out there. But you have to spend the time and energy to find it. I've spent the time so you don't have to.

(If you're reading this course years after it was written and FolkFluteWorld.com has disappeared, you can access it through The Internet Archive's Wayback Machine at https://archive.org/. Or search the internet for libraries of public domain sheet music).

Summary

We briefly explained how the concepts of public domain, copyright, and open source apply to sheet music. This information is specific to the United States, as different countries have different copyright laws. It is provided with the legal disclaimer below.

We told you how and where to find tons of free sheet music on the web. But some of it is ill suited for the average recorder player. We explained a few ways to adjust scores so that you can more easily play them.

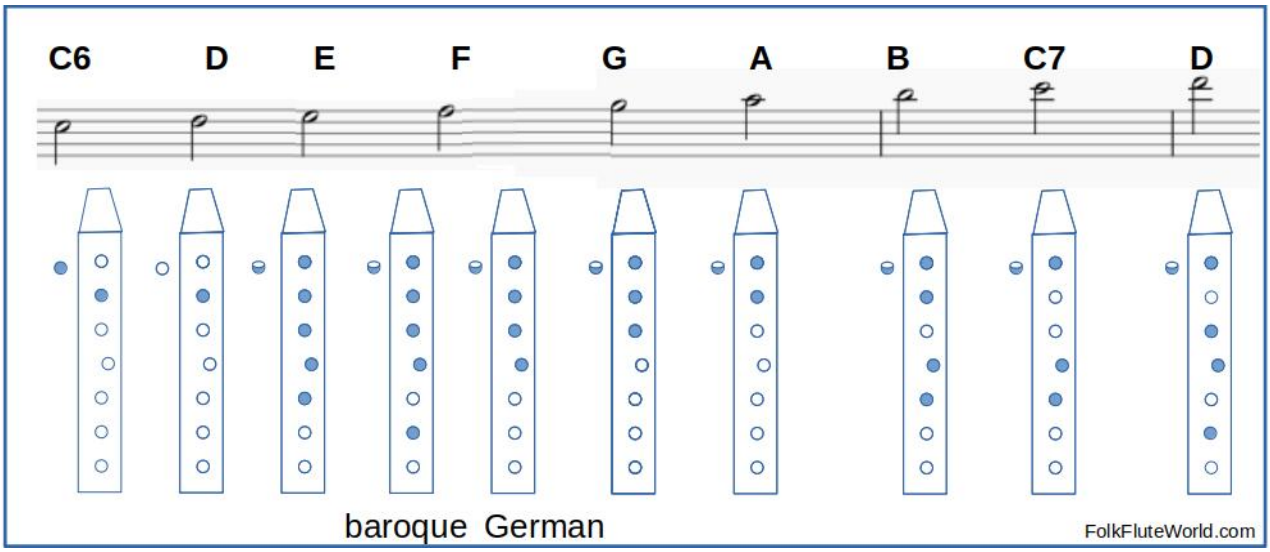
In the next lesson, we'll get some more hands-on practice with the upper octave high notes.

Disclaimer

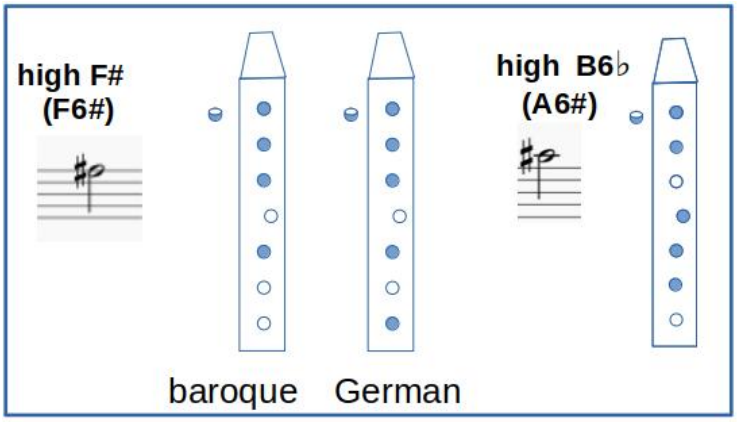
The information provided in this course and on website FolkFluteWorld.com is for general informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice. If you require legal advice about copyright or other matters, please consult a qualified legal professional.

Lesson 21 -- More Upper Octave Practice

In this lesson you'll gain more practice with the recorder's highest notes. For your review:



And here are the two most common accidentals:



For German flutes, low F and high F (F5 and F6), are fingered the in same way -- except that you partially cover the thumb hole for the higher notes.

With baroque recorders, fingerings differ between low and high F, and also between low and high F#.

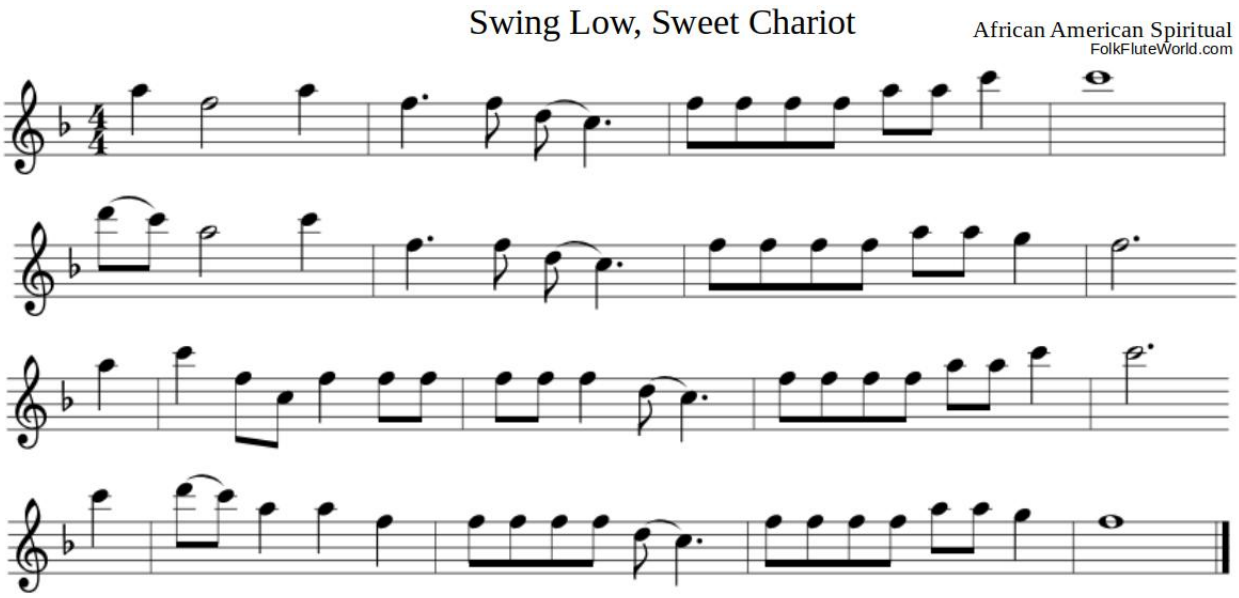
Okay, let's practice a few more upper octave songs.

Song: Swing Low, Sweet Chariot

This song is among the best known African-American spirituals and has taken its place among the most important Christian hymns. It's thought to have been composed by Chocktaw freeman Wallace Willis and his daughter, Minerva Willis in the 1860s. Singing groups like the *Fisk Jubilee Singers* popularized the tune in the late 19th century.

The score challenges you to hold C7, as well as your ability to sound D7 in a couple eighth notes. You may find that it helps to "attack" the highest notes with a sharply directed breath to hit them.

You must cover the proper portion of the thumb hole. Experiment a bit if you must to discover exactly how much thumb to use. Your goal is tonally accurate, pure sounding notes. If your instrument "squawks" or is out-of-tune you probably need to cover a little more of the thumb hole.

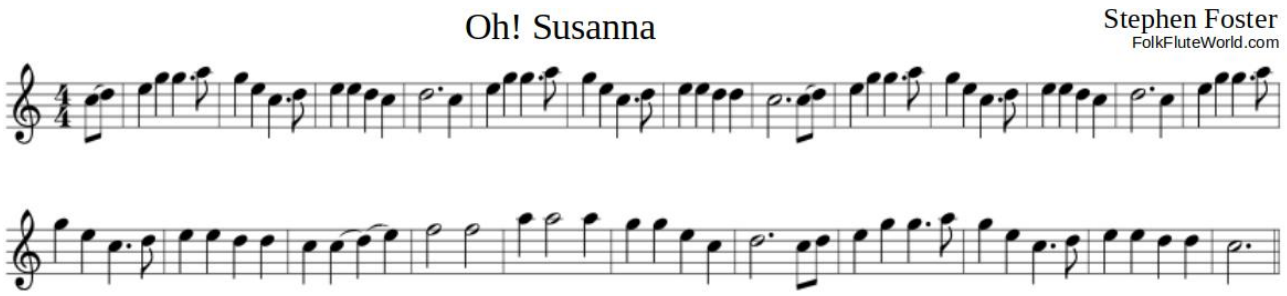


Song: Oh! Susanna

Here's another composition by Stephen Foster (1826-1864). Sometimes called "The Father of American Music", Foster's compositions include *Camptown Races*, *Old Folks at Home (Swanee River)*, *Beautiful Dreamer*, *Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair*, and *My Old Kentucky Home*.

Although his songs were often associated with the antebellum South, Foster was born and lived in Pennsylvania for most of his life. He died at age 37 of disputed causes; some think suicide.

Foster published this song for royalties with Firth, Pond, and Company. The payments convinced him to become one of the United States' first professional songwriters.



Played high on the soprano recorder, this tune almost makes the instrument sound like a fife. Once you get the fingering down you'll want to play it at a quick, jaunty pace. What a fun tune!

Song: She'll Be Coming 'Round the Mountain

This American folk song is thought to have been derived from an African-American spiritual. With new lyrics it became an anthem of the American west. The song was first published in 1899 in the songbook *Old Plantation Hymns*. This score is a good test of whether you can hit those D7's.

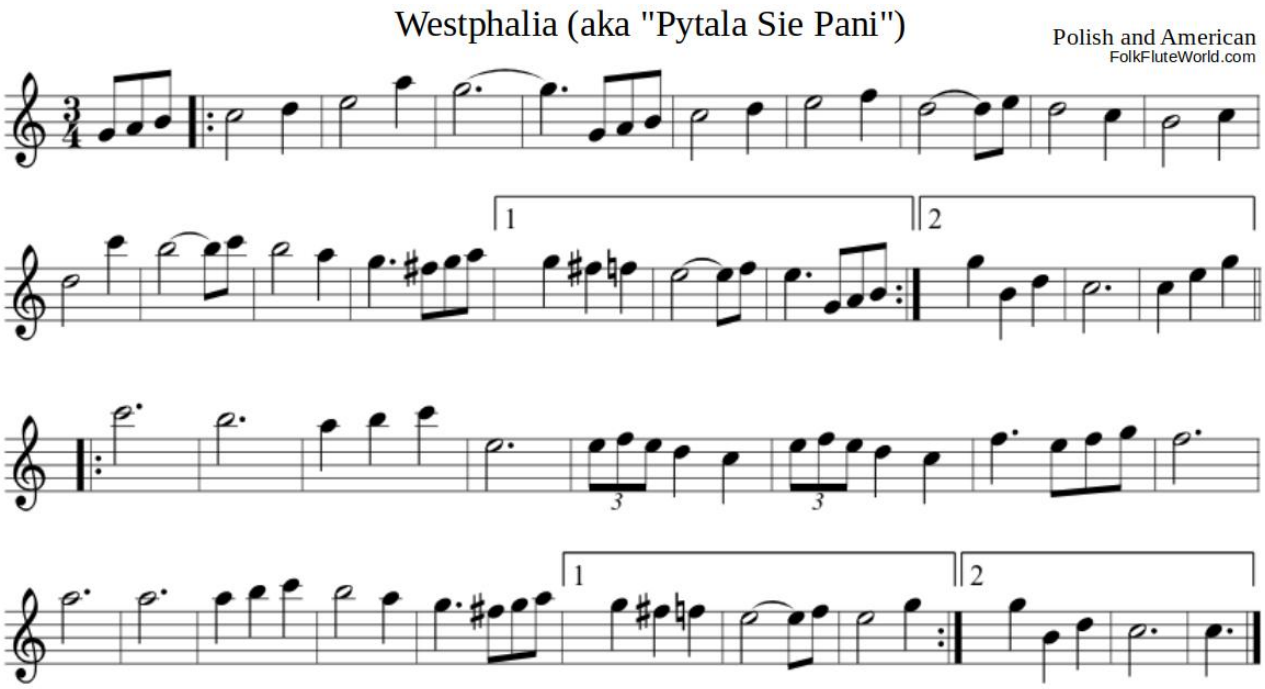


Song: Westphalia

This song is variously known as either *Westphalia* or the *Westphalia Waltz*. In fact, it's an old Polish tune known by several names including *Pytala Sie Pani* and *Wszystkie Rybki*.

In Country and Western music, it's often identified with Cotton Collins, lead fiddler of the *Lone Star Playboys*. They renamed the tune after their hometown of Westphalia, Texas. Westphalia is an unincorporated community of less than 200 people in central Texas.

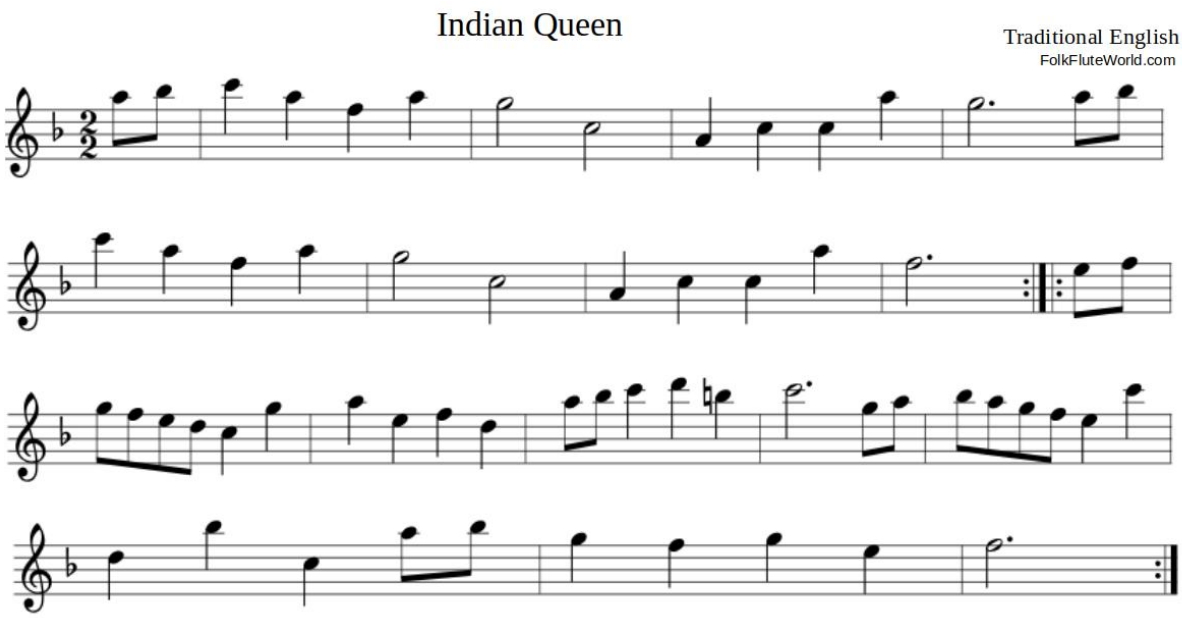
This score challenges you with flipping between F# and F natural, both in the upper register.



Song: Indian Queen

Let's try the song *Indian Queen*. This tune was part of an opera composed by famous songwriter Henry Purcell (1659-1695). Purcell is widely considered one of the greatest English composers of all time, having written hundreds of songs… and fine ones, at that!

This song formed background to the play *Indian Queen*, first performed at the Royal Drury Lane Theatre in 1664.



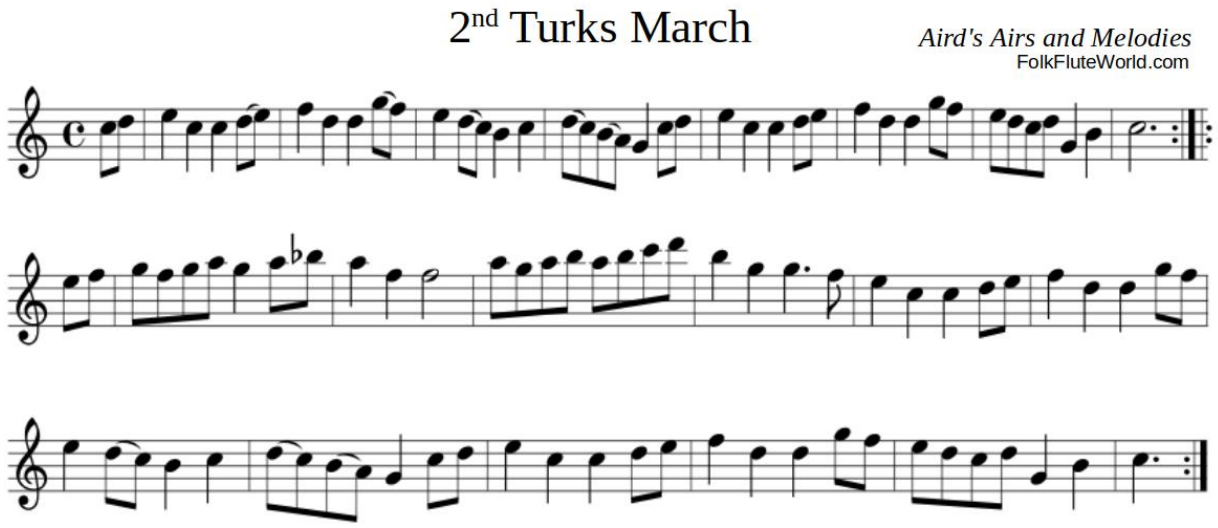
Song: Early One Morning

You saw this tune before, back in Lesson 18 on the accidentals. There, it challenged you with four flats in the key of A-flat Major. Here it is again, but this time as a workout for the high notes in C Major.



Song: 2nd Turks March

This song comes from *Aird's Airs and Melodies*, a six-volume compilation of Scottish and English traditional tunes.



Summary

That concludes this lesson. You'll find many more good practice songs for the upper octave and highest notes in the Songs Appendix.

Next up: let's explore the diverse and varied universe of recorders in more depth.

Lesson 22 -- Playing Different Recorders

While the lessons in this book pertain to any recorder, I've assumed you've been playing a soprano. What about the other members of the recorder family? Each has its own unique personality.

Part of the fun of playing recorder is trying out the different sizes and kinds and exploring the special character of each. That's what we'll discuss in this lesson.

Remember, the playing skills you've been learning directly apply to any size of recorder. The recorder features (very nearly) common fingering across all sizes.



Sopranino

The next higher pitched recorder above the soprano is the sopranino. Its lowest note (or **base note**), played with all holes closed, is F5. That's three whole notes above the C5 fundamental of the soprano. So if you were to play a score on a soprano, and then play it the exact same way on a sopranino, the sopranino will voice that tune several pitches higher.

The sopranino sounds bright and cheerful. Many are a tad louder than sopranos, given that higher pitches tend to carry further. That could be useful if you want your sound to carry over ambient outside noises, or to be heard above other competing instruments in an ensemble or orchestra.

Sometimes the highest notes of the sopranino can be rather piercing.

You'll notice that even very fast **passages** (or sequences of notes) articulate well on the sopranino. That's because its small size facilitates rapid changes in air pressure. It's a simple matter of physics. As fast as you can finger, the notes will voice, crisply and distinctly.

That makes sopraninos well suited to playing fast Celtic songs, quick marches, fife and piccolo tunes, and other fast-paced melodies. Sopraninos offer a great vehicle to improve your fingering and show off what you can do in rapid runs and ornamentation like trills and grace notes.

Garklein

Above the sopranino is the smallest member of the recorder family, the garklein. It's keyed to C and its base note, C6, is one full octave above that of the soprano.

The garklein fingers whole notes in the same manner as other recorders. **But it fingers nearly all the accidentals in its own unique ways.** Most garklein don't have double holes because your fingers would be too large to manage them. These requirements, plus its small size, mean the garklein takes some effort to get used to.

Garklein also support a lesser range than standard recorders. Most reach from their base note of C6 only up to A7.

The garklein is tiny. The photo below compares it to a 13" soprano and a 10" sopranino. The garklein measures only about 6 ½".

Here's the important measurement. The garklein's **finger spread**, or distance between the first and last tone hole, is small, though it varies by the instrument. For many, it is only about 3 ¼". That means you have to cram all seven of your fingers into that space to play the notes. Those with large hands may not be able to finger this instrument at all!

The best way to see if you can fit your hands on a garklein is to try one. But if you can't access one, try this approximate test. Place your left hand on a table with your first three fingers touching. Immediately next to that, cram the four fingers of your right hand. If together they measure across more than about 3 ½", your hands may be too large for many garkleins.

Be sure your hands fit a garklein before buying one.



Soprano vs Sopranino vs Garklein

If it fits you, the garklein is great fun. It features a high, happy, bird-like voice. Listeners who hear it but cannot see it sometimes mistake it for a bird singing or a person whistling. Or a piccolo or fife.

Few composers have ever taken the garklein seriously enough to write music for it. Its tiny size has relegated it to the realm of a novelty in important composition.

But there is one role in which the garklein excels. That's its use as a **bird flute**. A few hundred years ago in England and France people used to play small flutes like this to teach their pet birds to sing. It was a popular hobby among the educated classes.

If you own a pet bird, it's a fun hobby even today. Try it with your pet and see how he reacts.

If you can't teach your pet bird to sing along, play your garklein outside and you'll see that wild birds often respond to its song with curiosity. It gets their attention, that's for certain.

You won't see any recorder smaller than a garklein (other than as a novelty). The garklein reaches the physical limit of how many fingers a person can cram together on a tiny flute.

Alto

The alto recorder is keyed to F Major. Its pitch is several notes below the soprano and one full octave below the sopranino.

The alto offers a special voice. It's often recognized as the sweetest sounding member of the recorder family. Its dulcet tones are more mellow than those you'll produce with your soprano.

Many classical composers wrote with the alto in mind. Its lower voice is most pleasant, and for this reason many adopt an alto as their next instrument after they gain some facility with their soprano.

If you want to read music scored specifically for the alto (or a sopranino), it will be written for an F key instrument. The note it plays with all holes closed is F. Its scale is scored in F Major like this:



So you'd have to learn how to read music for the alto (or sopranino), which differs from how you read music with C Major recorders like the soprano and tenor. (Alternatively, you could use your F key flute as a solo instrument to play music scored for the soprano as if you were playing a soprano, and let it transpose for you. This works fine… as long as you're playing solo.)

Tenor

The tenor is keyed to C, one full octave below the soprano. Its base note is C4, the same pitch that is "middle C" on the piano.

Many like the tenor's deep, mellifluous voice. It doesn't carry as far as the soprano's and so tends to play background parts in ensembles, rather than the lead part or the melody. If you don't have a bass recorder in your ensemble, the tenor can admirably fulfill that role.

If you play in an environment where your loud soprano might bother roommates or neighbors, the more subdued tenor might solve your problem.

The tenor's larger physical size means it requires more breath to play. That makes good breath control essential.

It also means that the tenor tends to "swallow" notes during very fast fingered passages. Not every note may articulate distinctly because the larger bore takes more time to react to changes in pressure and pitch. And some find the tenor awkward to quickly finger because the tone holes are so far apart.

Most tenors dissemble into three parts rather than two. Their total length measures about 24 to 25". As this next photo of three tenors shows, most -- but not all -- tenors have a key to help you reach the furthest tone hole.

Some tenors have a mechanical **double key** that enables both low C and low C#, while others have a **single key** that supports low C but not low C#. A few have no key at all.

In the photo below, the top tenor has a double key and the two below it both have single keys.



Three Tenors with Keys

Some low C keys have a downside: they make a clicking noise when you press them. Some click so quietly you won't notice, but others click pretty loudly.

You probably won't notice those soft clicks when playing, but you may well recognize them when listening to a recording of yourself. When recording, you can use audio editors like Audacity, Ocenaudio, or Wavosaur afterwards to remove or minimize the clicking sounds.

If the clicking noise bothers you, you might be able to train yourself to minimize them with a light touch on your instrument. Or, you might want to see if your hands are big enough to manage a keyless tenor. These are less expensive than the keyed versions from the same vendors.

Given their weight, most tenor recorder players prefer a thumb rest on the back side of the instrument for their right hand. This makes it much easier to hold the instrument while playing.

Many tenors don't come with one. You may have to buy it for a few dollars from a music store or online. Or make your own with a solidifying putty. The next photo shows where you place it.

Some thumb rests attach tightly enough just by pressure. Others may require a dab of glue to hold them in place. Just be sure you're happy you've positioned it in the most comfortable place for your playing style before you glue it!



Here's an important consideration. The topmost recorder in the photo of the three tenors requires a finger reach of about 9 ½" inches from the top finger hole for the left hand, to the bottom key for the right hand.

The bottom two recorders require a tad less finger spread of about 9 inches.

If you have small hands that finger spread might be too great for you to handle. **Before buying any tenor, always test to ensure you can comfortably reach all the holes and that bottommost key.**

If you have small hands, try a number of tenors and you'll eventually find one that fits you.

This chart summarizes similarities and differences between the soprano and tenor:



	Tenor	Soprano
Base note	C4	C5
Range	2+ octaves	2+ octaves
Fingering	Same	Same
Loudness	Soft-spoken	Louder
Breath	Requires more	Requires less
Fast fingering	May swallow notes	Articulates well
Sheet music	Anything for C flutes	Anything for C flutes
Physical keys	Often for low C/C#	None
Physical sections	3	2 (sometimes 3)
Thumb rest	Yes, usually	No

FolkFluteWorld.com



Bass

You'll find a greater variety among bass instruments than any other member of the recorder family.

Since bass require a long bore, most have keys to help you reach all the tone holes. Whereas a tenor might have one key for the furthest fingering hole, bass often have keys for other notes, too.

When you select a bass, how loudly the keys click is something to check. Some can be quite loud. Though you can easily edit these clicks out of any recording, in person they remain audible.

Playing techniques can reduce **key distraction**. Test a noisy key to see whether it clicks when it is depressed, or when it's released. Then you'll know if you need to depress a key gently instead of slapping it down. Or maybe you need to release a key in a fluid motion rather than "popping it" all at once. (These techniques also apply to tenor recorder keys.)

Lesson 26 on "How to Repair Recorders" tells how to minimize the sound of key clicks. Recorder keys are delicate and easily broken unless handled with great care. That lesson also explains in detail how to repair tenor and bass keys.

Given that you must fill such a large instrument with your breath, breath control becomes very important in playing the bass. Deep diaphragm-based breaths at proper intervals are how you get optimal sound and pleasure from this instrument.



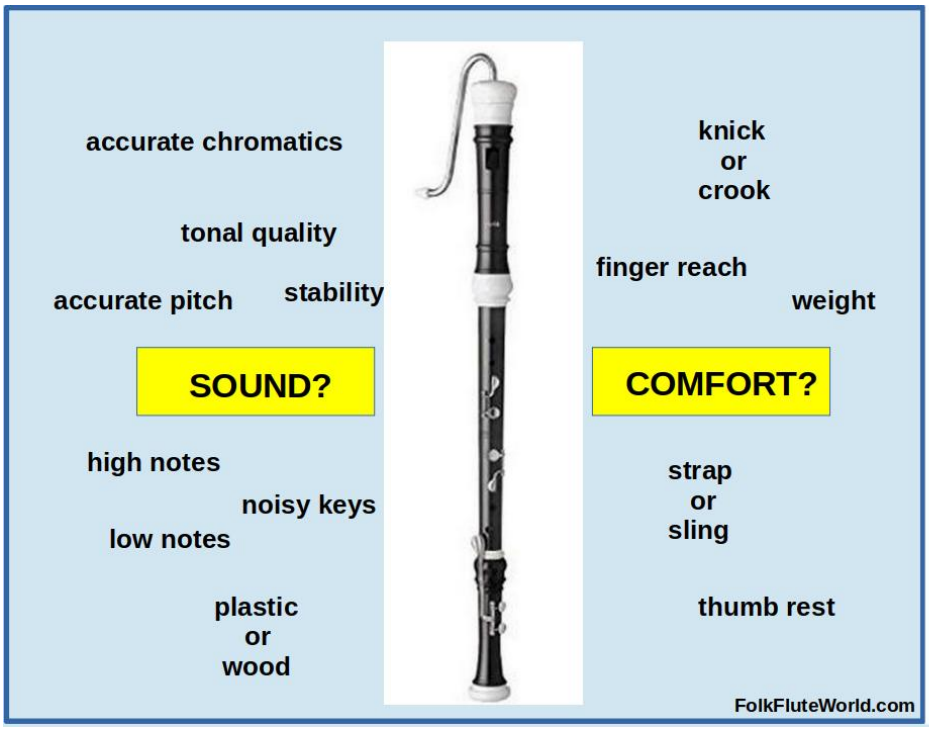
Bass with Crook and Two Keys

To shorten their lengths and render them manageable, some bass have a bent top (the so-called **knick** design). Others have a curved tube, called the **bocal** or **crook**, that you blow into. Both designs enable the musician to hold and blow into an otherwise too-long bore.

Some bass have a neck strap to help you hold them if you play standing up. This is similar to the kind of neck strap you use to play most saxophones, for instance.

Another bass challenge: fingering. Assuming you can easily and comfortably reach all the fingering holes and keys, you may notice that your bass has one or two small variations in fingering. If you frequently switch between sizes of recorder, keeping these minute fingering differences in mind is an important part of adapting to the instrument you're playing.

Bass project a soft, low sound. They support the **bass part** in ensemble play. I enjoy the unique voice of mine in a stairwell, where natural resonance lends it a spooky, ethereal air. I find the bass an unusual and intriguing solo instrument.



If you decide to buy a bass, you have many important factors to weigh in your decision. This figure lists several of them.

Lower Recorders

On rare occasion, you might run across recorders lower pitched than the common ones we've discussed here.

For example, below the bass are these:

Name:	**Base Note:**
Great Bass	C3
Contrabass	F2
Sub-great Bass	C2
Sub-contrabass	F1

Handling these lowest recorders takes some getting used to. Their large sizes makes them challenging. Blowing and playing them requires different techniques because they require more breath. Large recorders feature many keys so that musicians can reach and manage all the tone holes.

Scores for bass and lower pitched recorders are typically written in **bass clef.** So to read their sheet music, you need to learn bass clef. (As you know, all recorders pitched above the bass use treble clef. Of course, you can still play treble clef recorder music with your bass solo, by employing it as a transposing instrument.)

Renaissance Recorders

Another kind of recorder you might hear about is the **Renaissance recorder.** These are modeled on historic instruments from the period 1400 to 1600 AD. Often single-piece, they're made from various woods.

Renaissance recorders have larger, wider bores that produce a fuller tone suited to the consort music of the period. Thus they require more breath to play than modern recorders. They lack double holes, and are often limited to playing in specific keys. Fingering varies a bit from modern recorders.

Many Renaissance recorders are tuned to A = 466 Hz, whereas many modern recorders are tuned to A = 440 Hz. That makes many Renaissance recorders sound about a half step higher than their modern equivalents. But in tuning, as in many other respects, you'll see lots of variation in historic recorders: they were much less standardized than today's.

Renaissance recorders are a specialty instrument popular among those who seek to reproduce historic music. They give you a chance to accurately recreate the sounds and songs of hundreds of years ago.

Tuning Standards

Not all recorders are made to the same **tuning standard**. Modern recorder makers in English speaking countries tend to standardize their tuning with the note A sounding at 440 Hz. Some parts of the world prefer a tuning pitch of A = 442 Hz. Many large manufacturers offer both standards. These two tuning standards are very close but not identical. In a blind test, many people can tell the difference -- but others can't. **If you play in duets or ensembles you want to have all recorders manufactured to the same tuning standard!**

We've already mentioned how many Renaissance recorders are tuned to A = 466 Hz. Another variation: **Baroque tuned recorders** are at A = 415 Hz. They're made specifically to play Baroque

Period music (1600 to 1750). And, there exist other less well known tuning standards beyond those we mention here.

One Hand Recorders

One-handed recorders allow those with physical limitations to play the instrument. These have keys that allow playing notes that otherwise require two hands. The ranges for some are about the same as typical two-handed instruments. Single hand recorders tend to be expensive.

Pentatonic Recorders

Several companies produce recorders based on a five note **pentatonic scale**. These typically have five top holes instead of the traditional seven, plus one thumb hole. An example scale covers these notes: D → E → G → A → B → D → E.

The beauty of the pentatonic scale is that all notes sound harmonious with one another. Playing alone, you can't play a "wrong note". That's great for improvisation. It makes it easy.

Pentatonic recorders are also uniquely well suited to playing Asian music based on five-note scales. They've also found some popularity for young children who can play random notes that all sound pleasant together.

Medieval Double Recorders

Double recorders were played during the Middle Ages. They consist of two pipes that extend from your mouth in a "V" shape. Each hand plays one of the two pipes. You either play the pipes in two-part harmony, or you use one as a drone while the other leads the melody.

Designs were not standardized, but a typical one might offer four fingering holes and one thumb hole for each pipe. This yields a chromatic range of over an octave. A typical design would offer notes from C to A on the right hand pipe, and higher notes from F to D on the left hand pipe.

Today, several makers handcraft double recorders. They're made from various woods and are typically somewhat expensive.

Lucia Mense offers a free tutorial on how to play the double recorder. See livirghi.com.

Other Recorders

At various times inventors have created metal recorders and have festooned recorders with keys, but none have garnered much popularity. Some claim to provide greater volume, or more pitch accuracy, or easier play for the accidentals.

There are many more kinds of unusual or obscure recorders than we have space to cover in this lesson. As demonstrated by websites like RecorderHomePage.net, *"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy"* (*Hamlet*).

New Developments in Acoustical Recorders

In this century, companies and inventors have become very focused on developing new kinds of instruments. Recorders and recorder variants are big participants in this musical revolution.

There are too many new developments to cover them all here -- and it's not clear which will survive the test of time. Many have keys and there are even 3D printed recorders.

To mention a few of the innovations, they include new kinds of recorder by Kunath (Sigo), Nuvo Instrumental, Yamaha, Moeck, Mollenhauer, and Suzuki.



Instruments not to scale (photos courtesy of the vendors)

Sigo Bass, Nuvo DooD, Yamaha Ecodear, Mollenhauer Helder & Modern, Suzuki Precorder

To understand how innovative some of these new products are, take a look at the Sigo bass. This bass recorder is so compact that its finger spread is equivalent to that of most altos. And, it's *much* lighter than any wood bass. (It's made of a new material called RESONA.) The Sigo's exceptional manageability brings the bass recorder to a whole new set of enthusiasts.

Electronic Recorders and Electronic Wind Instruments

Among the developments in new recorders are those that use electrical power. This area is very rapidly evolving so we just provide a general outline here.

Electronic instruments use sensors to monitor and react to changes in the player's finger movements and breath. A processing unit then translates this information and fabricates sound based on it.

These electronic instruments group into two categories: those that are marketed specifically as **electronic recorders (ER)**, and those that are more broadly classed as **electronic wind instruments** (or **EWI**).

There is large overlap between the two. While many offer similar features, it is probably safe to say that electronic recorders focus specifically on expanding and improving recorder characteristics, while EWI offer recorder features, sound, and fingering as merely one playing option among many.

Examples of electronic recorders include:

- **Re.corder** Hybrid Acoustic and Electronic Recorder from ARTinoise (at www.artinoiselunatica.com/en/).
- **eCorder** developed by Michael Shonle and available from Cantux Research (at www.ecorder.io/).
- **Elody** by Mollenhauer (at www.mollenhauer.com).

The ER and EWI landscape is so varied and fast-changing that we can't do more than summarize them here. If they interest you, you'll need to go on the internet to get details on specific instruments.

While every instrument varies, here are a few potential advantages to EWI:

- Wider range -- many span the range from garklein to bass, and can play in any octave or key

- Many instruments -- many can sound like a wide range of different instruments
- Multiple fingerings -- some can switch between different fingerings, such as baroque or German, or saxophone or clarinet.
- Special effects -- electronics lends itself to all sorts of special effects not possible with traditional acoustic instruments. Examples are reverb, automatic vibrato, automatic slides, and more.
- Software support -- software can do potentially anything from notate what you're playing to providing real-time tutorial help, as well as many other features
- Chords -- some can automatically generate chords or even a harmony part
- MIDI interface -- standard interfaces allow you to connect a wide variety of devices and software and drive them with your play
- Silent Play -- with headphones you can play completely silently to others
- Portability -- you can more readily play large instruments such as bass recorders with a much smaller and lighter EWI
- Low maintenance -- EWIs don't require the same maintenance effort as quality wood recorders
- Optional Electronics -- some EWIs can be used in either acoustical or electrical mode, while others solely function electronically

Here are a few potential downsides:

- Expense -- some are quite costly compared to traditional recorders
- Software/hardware dependencies -- some depend on a specific app or tool for support
- Subpar design -- some have issues with key or breath latency, irreplaceable batteries, etc.
- Obsolescence -- fast-moving technology always presents the risk of obsolescence
- Traditional recorder sound -- ER and EWI offer all sorts of new sounds, but their plastic/electric combination cannot precisely duplicate that of the best wood recorders

Given the wide variations among ERs and EWIs, and also in view of their often high prices, you'll want to carefully research any product before you buy.

Hands-on testing is ideal. Perhaps you have a friend whose instrument you can try, or perhaps the local music shop can help. "Try before you buy" is the operative word here.



ARTinoise Re.corder, Elody by Mollenhauer, AP 300 EWI, and Roland Aerophone EWI

Summary

In this lesson, we described members of the recorder family beyond the soprano. Perhaps it's piqued your interest in experimenting with a tiny bird flute, enjoying the alto's dulcet tones, or exploring the deep voice of the mysterious bass.

Or maybe you'd like to discover your favorite electronic recorder and join the vanguard in testing new kinds of electronic wind instruments. Part of the fun of recorder playing is that it's so easy to jump between these varied instruments and experience the unique appeal of each.

Lesson 23 -- Rounds

Let's have some fun playing your recorder with others.

A **round** is a song that can be played by two or more musicians who play the same song, but start it at different times. They stagger their starts to the tune. Of course, each musician also ends playing at a different time. That's the traditional approach.

Alternatively, the musicians can all start playing at once, but they start at different points in the song.

In either case, indicators in the score show the points at which new musicians start playing.

Some rounds are for up to four musicians. But if you have only two or three on hand, they work fine with that number of players as well. We'll start with a few of those. Play them with a partner … or three!

Other rounds are for designed two players. They offer an alternative to traditional duets. We include them in this lesson following those for up to four musicians.

The scores in this lesson are all written for recorders of the same key. For example, for two, three, or four C Major recorders (soprano and tenor).

They won't sound right if you mix recorders of different keys together, such as a C soprano and an F Alto.

What if you don't have a partner? All these rounds play well for a single musician. They will be good practice for you if you solo. **So don't skip this lesson if you don't have companions available.**

Before we start, let's talk a bit about tuning. It's an important topic when you play your recorder with others.

Tuning

Whenever you play your recorder with someone else, you want to be sure your flutes are "in tune" with each other. For example, if you play the same note on two sopranos, they should sound the same pitch.

Nearly every recorder is tunable. All that is required is a separate mouthpiece. You push it in to raise the pitches of all your notes (to **sharpen** them). You pull it out a bit to lower all your pitches (to **flatten** them).

There are a couple ways to tune. The easiest is simply to go through the scale with your partner to ensure your pitches are duplicate for each note.

Another option is to employ a tuning app on your mobile phone, or any of these online instrument tuners:

- Tuner Ninja (tuner.ninja/)
- Mussica (musicca.com/tuner)
- Band Mate Tuner (www.bandmatetuner.com/web)
- The Online Metronome (theonlinemetronome.com/instrument-tuner)
- Online Tuner (onlinetuner.org/)

Most modern recorders are tuned on the basis of **A440** (the audio frequency of 440 Hz for the note A). Some are tuned at **A442**, while specialty recorders for specific historical periods are sometimes tuned differently. **In any group situation, you want all instruments to share the same tuning.**

Serious players who play together may even employ a set of recorders made by one manufacturer. A good maker will craft them all perfectly in tune with one another.

Lastly, remember that you can raise or lower the pitch of your recorder a tiny bit by how hard (or softly) you blow. This gives you some small degree of dynamic tuning while you play.

How to Play Rounds

In a round, each musician plays a different part of a song at the same time.

The first time you try this, you might find it a bit disorienting. It can be difficult to keep your place in the music and uphold your part. You may find yourself listening intently to your own playing. You might even unintentionally play louder to try to drown out the others.

But practice a piece a few times, and you'll become more secure in your role. No need to overcome "competing" parts. It's all part of a whole.

The trick to rounds, duets, and ensembles is learning how to fit parts together. Coherence and harmony are the goals. Initially you may find yourself playing your part mechanically. Over time you'll learn how to play your part in concert with your partner(s).

Play with the same musicians for some time, and you'll develop a true partnership. You'll develop "ensemble instincts" and play more as a group, than as a set of individuals playing from the same score at the same time.

Key to this is that accurate timing is more important in group play than when you solo. Soloists have some leeway with timing. In ensembles you can't take the same liberties with timing and still have the tune sound coherent.

Song: Three Blind Mice

Many rounds are simple songs, which makes them easy to play as a group and doesn't reduce the fun they provide one iota.

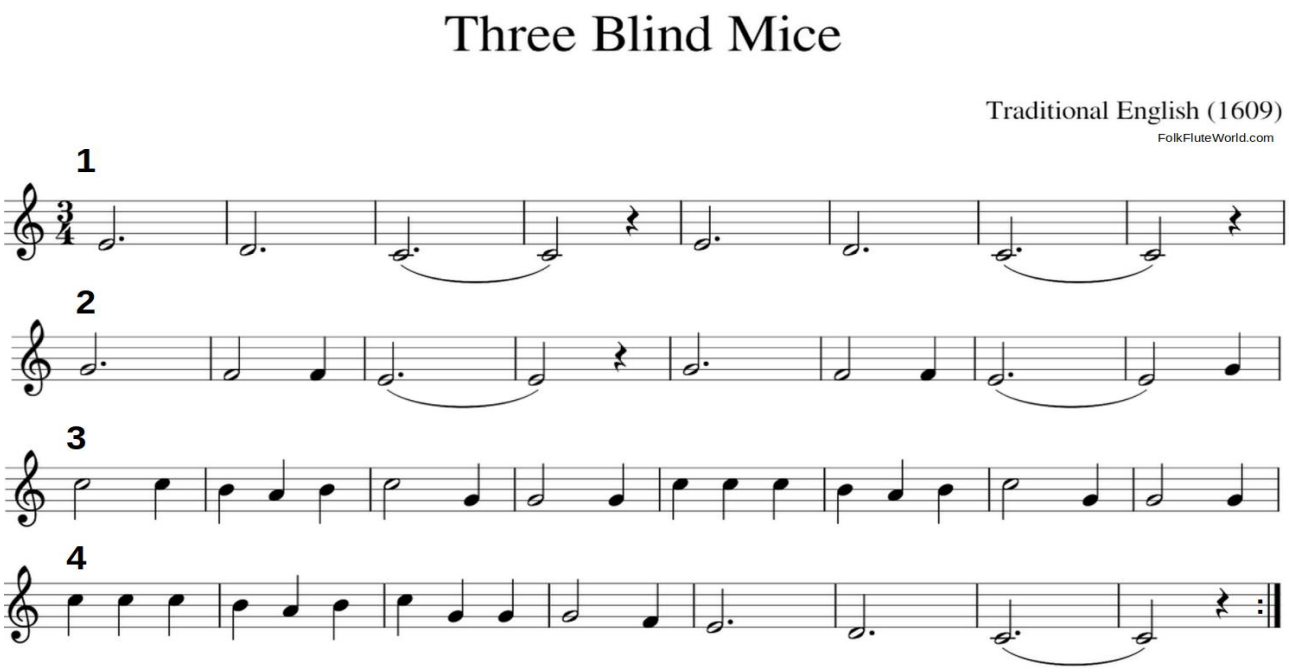
Like many simple rounds, this song is popular as a nursery tune. Yet it's fantastic fun for adults to play as a round.

It's a good place to start this lesson because you'll be able to uphold your part even if you're not used to playing in rounds. Everyone knows the tune.

So rustle up a friend or two or three and try it.

The large numbers above lines in the score tell when each player should start. One musician starts playing. The second starts when the first hits line two (signified by the big **2** above the staff). The third player starts when the first attains line **3**, and the fourth starts when the first player gets to the part labeled **4**.

If you only have yourself and a partner, you start the song, and your partner starts it when you reach the second line (that labeled **2**).



This score is scripted in the 3/4 time signature. Remember that means that there are three beats per measure, and that a quarter note gets one beat. It's more fun if you play this song fairly quickly, much faster than it's written.

Part of what makes a round work is that each section has the same number of measures. In this song, each section consists of 8 measures.

The **repeat** symbol at the very end of the piece is optional to keep the round going. You may want to have a group chat before playing to agree on when the song will end.

And mind the slurs. Those tie two notes together as one.

Song: Row, Row, Row Your Boat

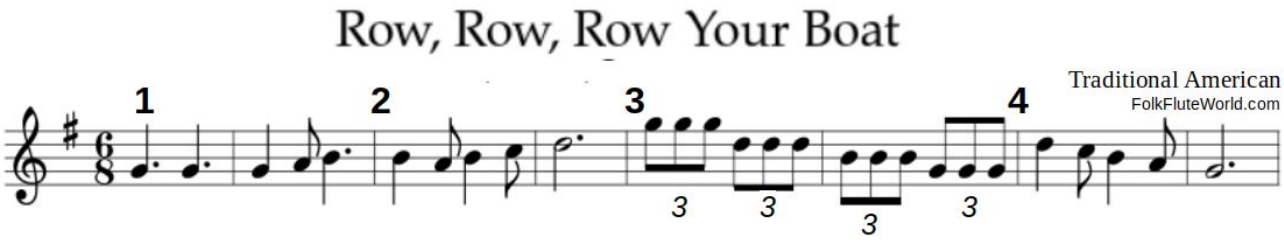
Here's another simple, fun tune everyone knows.

Like the previous round, this one can give you some practice even if you play it alone.

The song dates from 1852 and was composed by Eliphalet Oram Lyte. He was an American teacher and composer active in the 19th century.

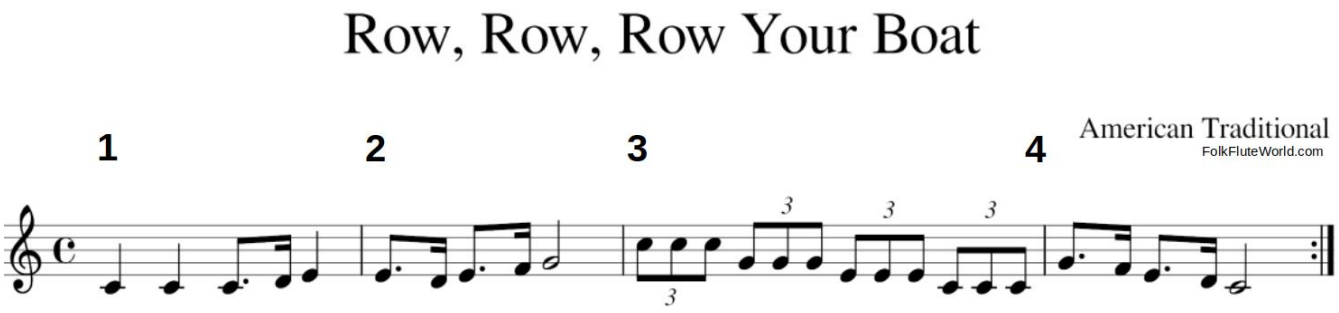
To familiarize you with reading music, we'll provide two versions of this song. The first is in 6/8 time, where each eighth note gets one beat, and there are six eighth notes per measure. The second version is in 4/4 time. Each features triplets, three eighth notes played in the time of two.

Both versions define the parts in the round by a number above the staff at the proper locations.



The next version we will show you is in 4/4 time -- indicated by the **C** time signature -- instead of 6/8 time.

Notice the dotted eighth notes followed by sixteenth notes. You know the timing of this song from your childhood. So now, match up that timing with the way the score represents it. This is a common musical construct. You'll want to make sure you understand it and recognize how to play it when you encounter it in future scores.



Another common device you see in this score are the sets of three eighth notes that have a number **3** superimposed above them. These are **triplets**.

These triplets tell you to play three notes in the timing space of a single beat. So in this 4/4 score, a set of three eighth notes consumes the same amount of time as a single quarter note.

You'll see triplets in lots in scores. Be sure to look at them in this song and match the way you know the tune goes with how these triplets are used to express that. Then you'll be able to play them properly next time you run across them.

Song: Frère Jacques

Here's a song you practiced back in Lesson 9. That should make it easy to maintain your part when you now play it as a round.



An important part of playing with other musicians is being in sync with them. In other words, your timing of the notes has to match theirs precisely. The staccato notes in this piece -- denoted by the dots above the notes -- require your timing to be spot on to make this piece sound harmonious when played as a round.

Unlike the previous three songs, this one does not have a repeat sign at the end of the score. Some rounds are written without it. They assume you know to repeat the tune. It's often wise to agree amongst yourselves beforehand as to how many times you'll play through the score.

Of course, just as one musician starts the song solo, the flutist who starts playing last will also solo as he finishes his role.

Song: Ah, Poor Bird

Here's another simple but enjoyable round. It's an old folk song from England with these lyrics:

> *Ah, Poor Bird, take your flight, up above the sorrow of this dark night.*
>
> *Come to rest in my hand, may we fly together to a foreign land.*

The first version is in simple 4/4 time in the key of C. The second version alters the tune to 2/4 time in F Major. Note the relationship between these two timing systems.



Rounds for Two Players

Song: Make New Friends

Let's turn our attention to rounds for two. Even if you don't have a partner available, you will still want to practice these songs by yourself.

This first song is popular for camping and other group activities for youngsters. Those who grew up as Girl Scouts may remember it.

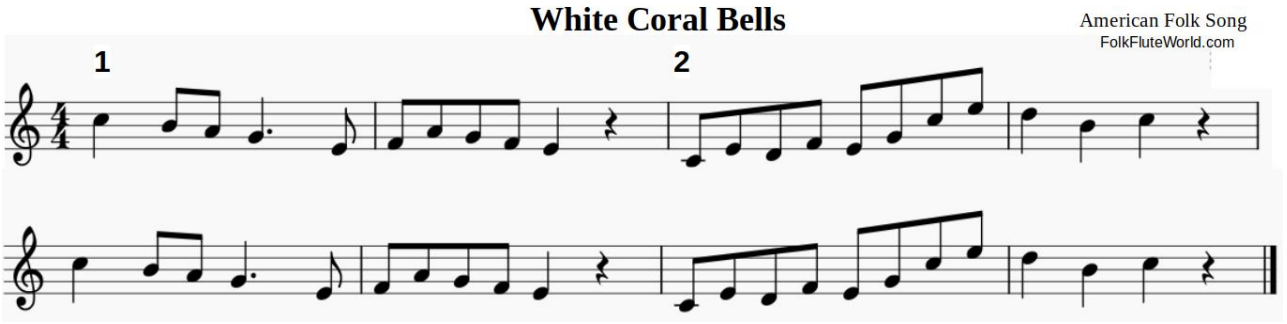


Song: White Coral Bells

Here's another campground favorite. It has appealing lyrics:

White coral bells upon a slender stalk,
Lilies of the valley dress my garden walk.
Oh, don't you wish that you could hear them ring?
That will happen only when the fairies sing.

(Lyrics courtesy of ScoutSongs.com)



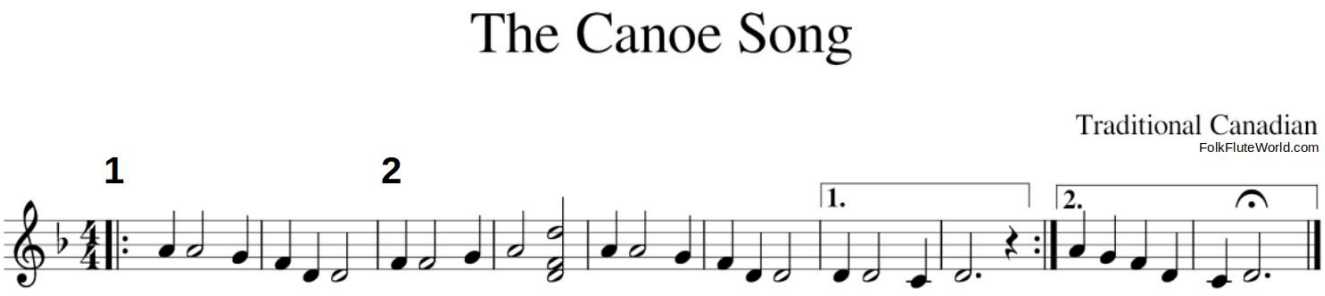
Song: The Canoe Song

Here's a traditional Canadian folk song. It also features captivating lyrics:

My paddle keen and bright,
Flashing with silver
Follow the wild goose flight
Dip, dip, and swing.

(Lyrics courtesy of ScoutSongs.com)

The triple-stemmed note at the end of the fourth measure can be played as high D. Or, have each musician play a different one of the alternatives.



A Round for Three

Song: White Sand and Grey Sand

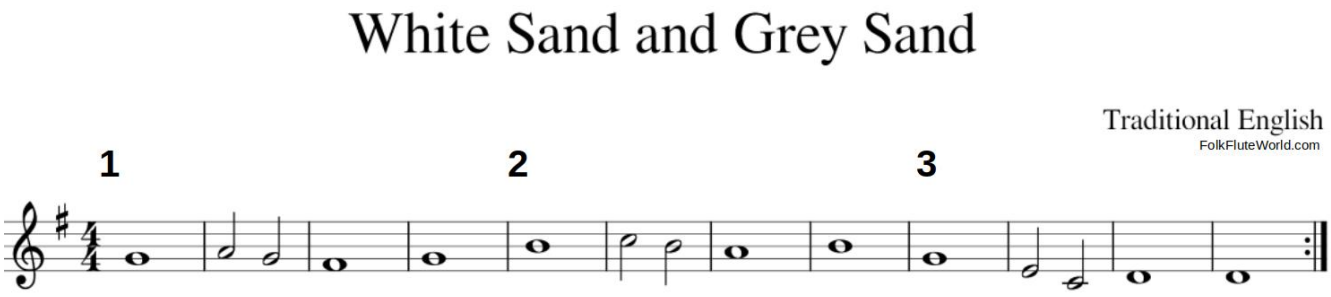
Here's an oddity... a round designed for three. Of course, you can also play it with two. (Or even alone, if need be.)

It's a simple, slow melody, but it's beautiful in its harmony.

This is a street vendors' sales cry from the 18th century when writers used quill pens. People bought sand to dip their pens in to remove excess ink. White sand could absorb more ink and was therefore more expensive, while gray sand was less useful but also less expensive.

This round is slow and melodic. It relies on harmony between the three parts for its effectiveness.

Each flutist should endeavor to sing their part through the instrument. Render it melodic and expressive, and you'll be amazed how such a simple song could sound so beautifully. A touch of subtle vibrato might help.



Summary

We hope you enjoyed playing these rounds with friends. Or, if you played them solo, that you found them worthwhile to further develop your skills.

In a future lesson we'll offer duets for you to play with a single partner. In duets, both partners simultaneously play the score from the start.

In the next lesson, we delve into another kind of musical notation. It's used for computer processing of music. For example, it allows you to effortlessly transpose songs into new keys. You can also use it to let your computer sound out how a tune goes, thereby saving yourself the effort of interpreting it.

Lesson 24 -- ABC Notation

In Lesson 6 we introduced musical notation. Lesson 8 offered a more complete explanation of how to read and understand standard western musical notation.

In this lesson we'll learn another notation. This one was developed for computer processing. Using it, computer programs can read songs, transpose them to different keys, help you edit them, and output standard sheet music notation.

They can even play the songs for you.

And while they do, they show where they are in the score, so that you can follow along. This is an excellent way to improve your ability to read scores.

So while it may at first seem like a burden to hear about yet another musical notation, you can see that this one is very useful.

Our explanation here will be simple and brief. We offer more detail with a few of the songs in the Songs Appendix.

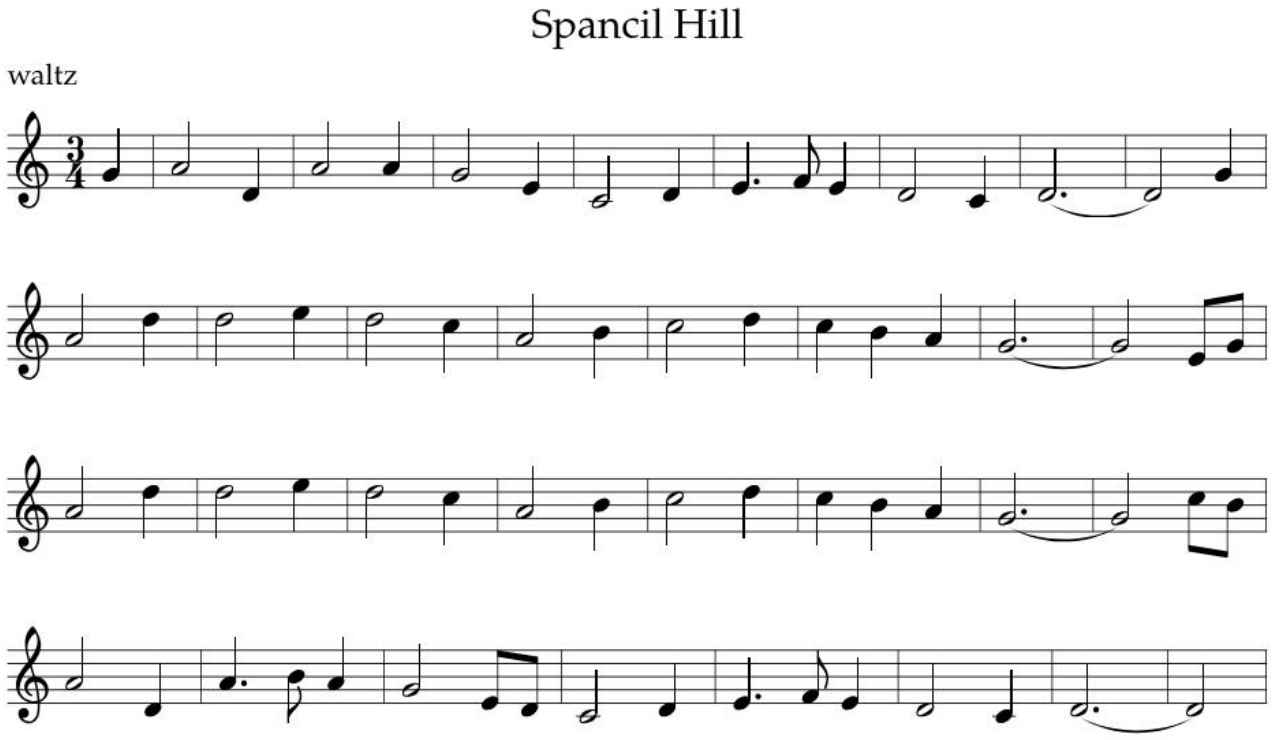
ABC Notation

ABC notation is an alternative to standard sheet music notation that was developed specifically for computer processing.

Computer programs can take songs written in ABC notation and:

- Convert them to standard sheet music
- Play them for you
- Show where they are in the sheet music while they play so that you can follow along
- Enable you to edit songs, then play back the changed version to you
- Instantly transpose a song to any key
- Analyze songs to recommend others that have similar musical characteristics

Here's an example of sheet music for a song called *Spancil Hill*.



(Courtesy of ABCNotation.com and MichaelEskin.com/abc)

Here's that exact same song in ABC notation:

```
X: 7
T: Spancil Hill
R: waltz
M: 3/4
L: 1/8
K: C
G2|A4D2|A4A2|G4E2|C4D2|E3FE2|D4C2|D6-|D4G2|
A4d2|d4e2|d4c2|A4B2|c4d2|c2B2A2|G6-|G4EG|
A4d2|d4e2|d4c2|A4B2|c4d2|c2B2A2|G6-|G4cB|
A4D2|A3BA2|G4ED|C4D2|E3FE2|D4C2|D6-|D4|
```

Without delving into coding details, you can see that ABC is pretty simple. There are a few lines of heading information that contain the song title, key signature, time signature, and so forth.

Then, each line of the standard sheet music corresponds to one line of ABC notation. In this example, the sheet music score contains four lines, and so the ABC also contains four corresponding lines.

Each line names the notes in the order they appear in the score. Uppercase letters represent lower notes, and lowercase letters represent high notes. Numbers right after the notes tell about their timing. Vertical bars (|) separate each measure.

Reading ABC Notation

Let's take a closer look at this sample of ABC notation and decode its meaning. It's pretty simple, which is one of the reasons that ABC is so popular.

Some musicians even teach themselves to read and play directly from ABC notation, as an alternative to traditional scores.

Every ABC file starts with a series of lines that each have a single letter followed by a colon. These describe basic aspects of the melody. The notes to the right show what each of those lines mean:

```
X: 7                Reference Number: This is song #7
T: Spancil Hill     Title: Spancil Hill
R: waltz            Rhythm (aka type of song): waltz
M: 3/4              Meter (aka time signature): 3/4 time signature
L: 1/8              Unit Note Length (which note gets 1 timing unit):
                    1/8 means that each 8th note gets 1 beat
K: C                Key: C
```

Now look at the four long lines that follow this introductory material. Each corresponds to one line of the standard sheet music. So with four lines in the score, we get four lines of ABC notation:

```
G2|A4D2|A4A2|G4E2|C4D2|E3FE2|D4C2|D6-|D4G2|
A4d2|d4e2|d4c2|A4B2|c4d2|c2B2A2|G6-|G4EG|
A4d2|d4e2|d4c2|A4B2|c4d2|c2B2A2|G6-|G4cB|
A4D2|A3BA2|G4ED|C4D2|E3FE2|D4C2|D6-|D4|
```

Let's decode the first few notes.

Measures are separated from one another by vertical bars (|). So the first line of the score consists of 9 measures.

Look at the first measure. It contains just the single pick-up note into the song: **G2**. That's the note G, and we know it's low G because it's a capital letter (high G would be in lower case, encoded as **g2**).

The **2** following the note says that it gets two timing units according to the meter **L: 1/8**. That is, it's a quarter note because it gets two units in terms of the meter **L: 1/8,** where each 8th note gets one timing unit.

How about the next measure?

A4D2 means low A as a half note, then low D as a quarter note. The **4** indicates a half note, and the **2** means a quarter note (as defined by the meter of **L: 1/8**).

A dash following a note means to tie (slur) it into the next note. **|D6-|D4G2|** means to connect the D in the prior measure to the D that follows it in the next measure by a tie. This code snippet describes the final two measures of the piece.

That's about all there is to basic ABC notation! At this point you should be able to work through the rest of the ABC score if you care to.

Benefits

The benefit of ABC is that now computer programs can understand and manipulate this song for us.

What if we'd like to try it in a different key? We could compare versions and see which we like best.

With the song in ABC notation, it just takes a click of the mouse to transpose the song to any other key you want. You can just keep clicking and transposing between keys until you see a version you like.

Another click, and a computer program outputs the song in standard sheet music notation for you to play. Or, you can tell the computer to play the song for you.

Here's another option. We could edit the song and alter whatever notes we want. Then, a click of the mouse will play our changes back for us.

Don't like the result? Change those notes again and play the song back again. You can see how useful these tools can be. You can edit the score, and get instant feedback on your changes. What a boon for composers!

Here's another benefit: instead of busting your brain trying to figure out how the tune goes, you could just direct that a computer program play the song. It will ouptut sound to your computer speakers or headphones. You can see how the score matches the song as it's played.

This is a great way to improve your ability to read scores.

Besides your computer speakers or headphones, ABC tools can ship your songs to any number of electronically capable instruments for automatic play or analysis.

Most computer programs use the so-called **MIDI interface** for compatibility. MIDI stands for **Musical Instrument Digital Interface**. It's the standard protocol used to connect a wide variety of digital devices for music playback and manipulation. ABC supports the MIDI interface standard.

A Transposing Example

Here's an example of how ABC notation and its transposing tools can help.

On the website **ABCNotation.com**, we used its **Search For Songs** feature to search its 750,000 tune public domain library for a song called *Shenandoah*. We retrieved about a dozen results. Some are different versions of the song, while others are the same version in different keys.

Let's say we find the example score below. It's in an easy key (no sharps or flats), and an easy time signature (4/4 time). Perfect.

But perhaps we'd prefer this tune scored in the lower register, which might sound a little more melodic to our ears.



(Courtesy of ABCNotation.com and MichaelEskin.com/abc)

One solution is to transpose the song to a more amenable key.

We copy the ABC notation provided with that sheet music, and paste it into any ABC transposing tool. There are several available.

We like the one over at MichaelEskin.com/abc. The website has a complete and easy-to-use set of automated tools, as well as offering a huge collection of free music. It comes with better documentation than competing tools. So you can easily teach yourself about ABC and how to use it.

We paste the ABC notation in the tool. Then we click the on-screen **Transpose** button a few times. Each time you click the tool transposes the entire score to another key (either higher or lower, as per your direction).

We want to lower those high somewhat loud notes. So we transpose the entire score downwards.

After several clicks, *voilà!* We get a version of the tune more to our liking.

The version we select is also in C Major, but all the notes are one full octave lower. Here it is:



(Courtesy of MichaelEskin.com/abc)

That first low note in the tune is unnecessary, so you can just exclude it. The result is a nicely melodic score a full octave lower, without any challenging sharps or flats.

Resources

We've given you the barest introduction to ABC notation here. In the Songs Appendix, I'll walk you through several more ABC scores. You can learn more about ABC notation and its features there.

To access huge libraries of free ABC tunes, use automated tools, and learn more about ABC notation, visit these websites:

- ABCNotation.com
- FolktuneFinder.com
- MichaelEskin.com/abc
- FolkFluteWorld.com

A quick internet search also returns several other useful ABC websites.

Summary

ABC notation applies computer power to your songs. You can edit them, play them back, transpose them, listen to them on your computer, and more.

About the only task current ABC computer programs cannot perform is to read traditional scores -- such as those in this book -- and automatically translate them into ABC notation.

Some tools claim they can do this today in 2027, but their results often fall short. It's likely that computer programs will gain this capability someday very soon as they improve and become ever more capable.

When this happens, we'll have automatic two-way translation capability between ABC notation and traditional sheet music. What a boon that will be.

ABC notation libraries are a fantastic source of free songs. Over a million free tunes exist in ABC -- and therefore in traditional musical scores, which ABC can output. Our appendices point you to them.

In our next lesson, we'll get back to hands-on practice with several duets.

Lesson 25 -- Duets

In this lesson we offer several duets you can try with a fellow recorder enthusiast.

We'll start with some very simple songs so you can get used to playing duets. Then we serve up some more challenging ones. Along the way we'll offer advice and some playing tips.

Like the rounds of a prior lesson, the scores in this one are all written for recorders of the same key. For example, for two sopranos; or, a soprano and a tenor. They won't sound right if you mix two of different keys, as in a soprano and and alto.

If you don't happen to have a partner available, don't skip this lesson! You can still benefit from practicing these songs on your own.

How to Play Duets

Let's start with a few tips for playing duets.

One concern is whether the two players are both at the same or different skill levels. Duets can work well either way, but it's best if you know what you're getting into.

Equally skilled players can learn and grow together. With partners at different levels, one can mentor the other.

Attitudes and expectations count, too. My own are to have fun, learn a bit, and increase my skills. That fit perfectly with several partners. But one prospect was very serious about practicing to performance level perfection, which to me isn't fun, so we amicably agreed to seek other partners. Duets work best when both players have similar expectations.

It's often helpful to practice the tunes solo prior to getting together as a duet. That way you've got the basics down in advance. Play both parts, even if you already know that you'll just play one in the duo. That gives you a 360 degree understanding of the song, and it's more likely you'll be a successful partner.

When starting out with your partner, try playing songs slowly at first. This not only ensures playing accuracy but also gives you a chance to "jell" as a team.

You can pick up the tempo after a few iterations. Better to start out slowly and develop your teamwork than to assume you'll have that without practice.

Balance your parts. If you have a solo, project it and shine. If your part is secondary, the bass line, or a harmony part, hold back and let your partner lead. You're trying to create a cohesive whole, not

compete with one another. You don't want to sound like two recorder players who happen to be playing from the same score at the same time. You want to sound like a compatible pair.

Duets are about perfect harmony. It's more than just synchronizing your timing, you ultimately want to sound like one person with two voices. Some of the most beautiful duets are simple tunes rendered as one.

Your timing has to be spot-on when playing a duet. Play solo and you have more leeway. Play together and poor timing immediately becomes apparent.

Sometimes a **metronome** -- a music clock -- will help in the early stages of learning a new piece or developing your partnership. Metronomes audibly tick off the timing of the beats. They help both partners keep in proper time.

As the old saying goes: *In duets, there's no prize for finishing first!*

You can buy a metronome at Amazon or any music shop. Or access an online metronome or download a metronome app for your mobile phone or computer.

Another useful app is for tuning. Be sure all recorders are at room temperature before starting. And check to ensure they're in tune with one another.

Also, ensure that they're made to the same tuning standard, whether that is A at 440 Hz or A at 442 Hz.

We recommend swapping parts during a session. That way both players get the chance to play both lead and harmony. It's fun and improves your skills to play both roles.

Lastly... have fun!

Song: Little Brown Jug

Let's start with a song from an earlier lesson. That way you'll know both the tune and the lead part.

This song is pretty simple in that the timing across both parts match 100%. That should make it easy to sync your timing with your partner.

You can see that the score is divided into paired lines. The "lead" flutist plays the top line while their accompanist plays the lower line. Duet parts are always scored in parallel in this manner.

So, now with each of you assigned to one of the two parts, try playing the duet version of *Little Brown Jug*.



Were you both able to play at the same tempo? Did you keep "in sync" with one another? Often it helps to "count off" prior to starting play: *"One, two, three, four..."*. That sets the pace in advance.

As we've mentioned, another timing trick is to use a metronome to audibly tick off the beats. Just access a metronome website, or download the metronome app for your mobile phone or laptop computer.

Once you've got this tune down pat, switch roles. Have the lead play the second part, and vice versa. This gives each partner a chance to learn from both roles in the score.

Song: Farewell to Summer

This classic folk song shares with the previous duet common timing between the two staves. Songs with common timing for both musicians are easier to play than those that separate the two participants into entirely different timing sequences.



Did you keep in sync with one another during those eighth note runs? If your timing is just the smallest bit off between the two of you, anyone who listens to you will notice it. Practice the song as many times as you need to to achieve perfect synchronization.

If you play a lot with a particular partner, eventually you'll develop an intuitive "partnership understanding" that keeps you synchronized.

How Harmony Works

Harmony refers to how two (or more) notes fit together in a way that sounds pleasing.

In our first two duets, you undoubtedly noticed that the **interval** or distance between the notes in the two parts often follows a pattern.

Here's how the intervals between the notes of the C Major scale look:

C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
unison	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	octave

In C Major, an interval of **thirds** usually sounds harmonious to our ears. That's why when the upper player plays a C, the second musician plays either a E (two notes up), or an A (two notes down). Thirds sound naturally **harmonic** to our ears.

You can read the intervals chart to identify other pairings of notes in thirds.

Though thirds often predominate, other pairings can also sound good too. For example, one musician might play a C, while the other plays a G above it. That's harmony in the "perfect fifth".

Beyond intervals, another feature of appealing harmonies is **movement**. In some duets you witness instances where the top line melody moves up the scale while the secondary part remains static. Or perhaps the opposite occurs.

Or perhaps both the top and bottom lines move together in the same direction up the scale, or simultaneously they diverge in opposite directions across the staff.

Various modes of motion and their coincidence or contrast is another facet of intriguing harmonies.

Lastly, you might encounter duets where the lead plays the melody, while the secondary part provides background with sweeping whole notes or sustained tones. In this case, the secondary part would normally be played softer to allow the lead to shine through. You might call it a "drone" part.

There are many, many other aspects to harmony in duets than what we've mentioned here, but this is at least a bit of an introduction.

Song: Joy to the World

This Christmas classic makes a fine duet.

The lyrics were written in 1791 by English minister Isaac Watts, while the melody is thought to be an arrangement of a composition by George Frideric Handel. The words were originally intended as celebratory but ultimately came to be identified with the Christmas holiday.



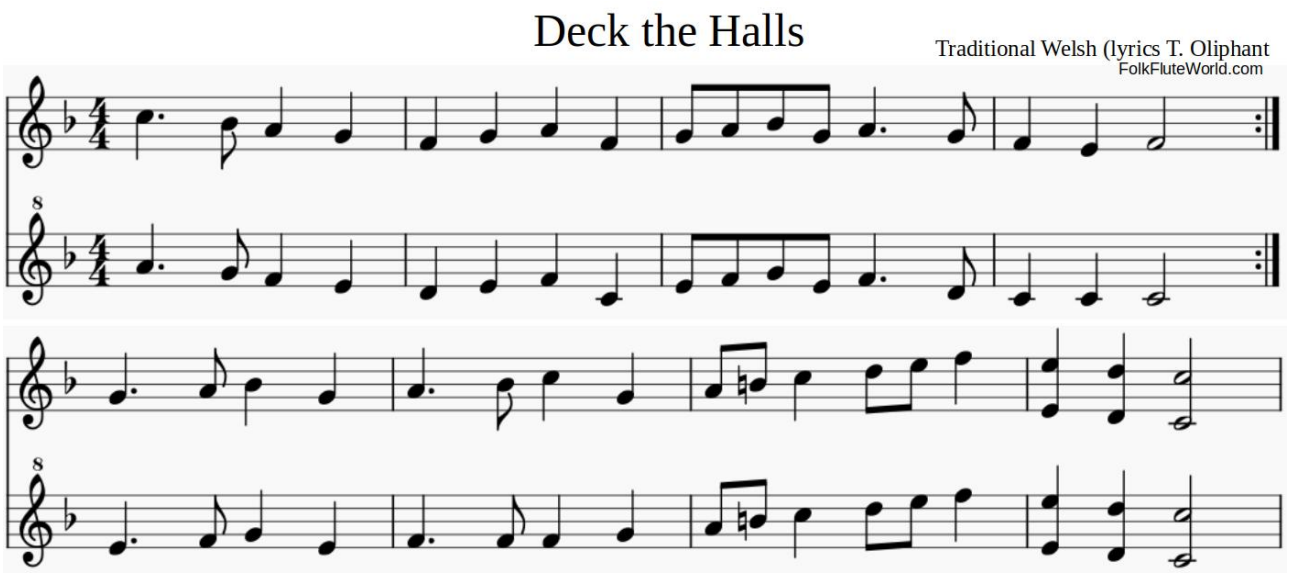
This song is a good example of the dotted-quarter-note-followed-by-an-eighth note construct. You can refer to this song to ensure you remember this timing sequence, as you'll frequently encounter it in other scores.

Song: Deck the Halls

This fun duet is today identified as a popular Christmas carol. In fact, the melody dates back to 16th century Wales.

Lyrics were written by Thomas Oliphant in 1862, which put it on track to its present day status as a Christmas classic.

Several prominent singers have had holiday hits with this classic including Nat King Cole.



Song: Chopsticks

Time for a goofy fun one. *Chopsticks* was composed in 1877 in the UK by British composer Euphemia Alla. (He used the pen name of Arthur de Lulli.)

It has since become the one song that *everyone* thinks they can play on the piano, regardless of how bereft they may be of musical ability. This piece makes a fun duet as shown in this rendition.

Many people aren't familiar with the song's intermediate chorus -- a swinging, catchy melody that neatly counterbalances the simplistic repetition of the main theme.

The musician who plays the upper line in the score is called the **lead player.** The other part is often referred to as the **harmony part** or the **secondary part**. If scored for a low pitched instrument, it may be called the **bass part**.

Obviously, the lead should dominate in any performance, with the secondary part acting as the accompaniment.

If a score has a bass part, that's best played with a low pitched recorder like a bass or tenor. Recall that music scored specifically for bass recorder would normally be written in bass clef, while a tenor part would be scored in treble clef for a C key instrument.



Do you recall how to follow the repeat signs in this composition? You play from the start to the 5th measure in the middle line. There you follow the repeat sign back to the beginning.

From the start, you now play all the way to the end. This time through you ignore that repeat sign in the middle of the piece, because you already followed its instruction previously.

When you arrive at the end of the piece you see the instruction, **d.c. al fine**. That means to return to the start and play until you hit the end sign, **fine**. Get to that point and you're done.

Song: Auld Lang Syne

Auld Lang Syne makes a powerful duet. Everyone knows the tune yet the second part adds the depth needed to convert it into something more interesting.

Many people don't realize that Scottish poet Robert Burns wrote the lyrics. They're set to an old Scottish tune whose origins are lost to history.

The Scottish title of the song roughly translates to modern English as "Days gone by", or "Long long ago". Everyone associates the song with New Year's celebrations, but you'll also hear it at other occasions of farewell, such as graduations and funerals.

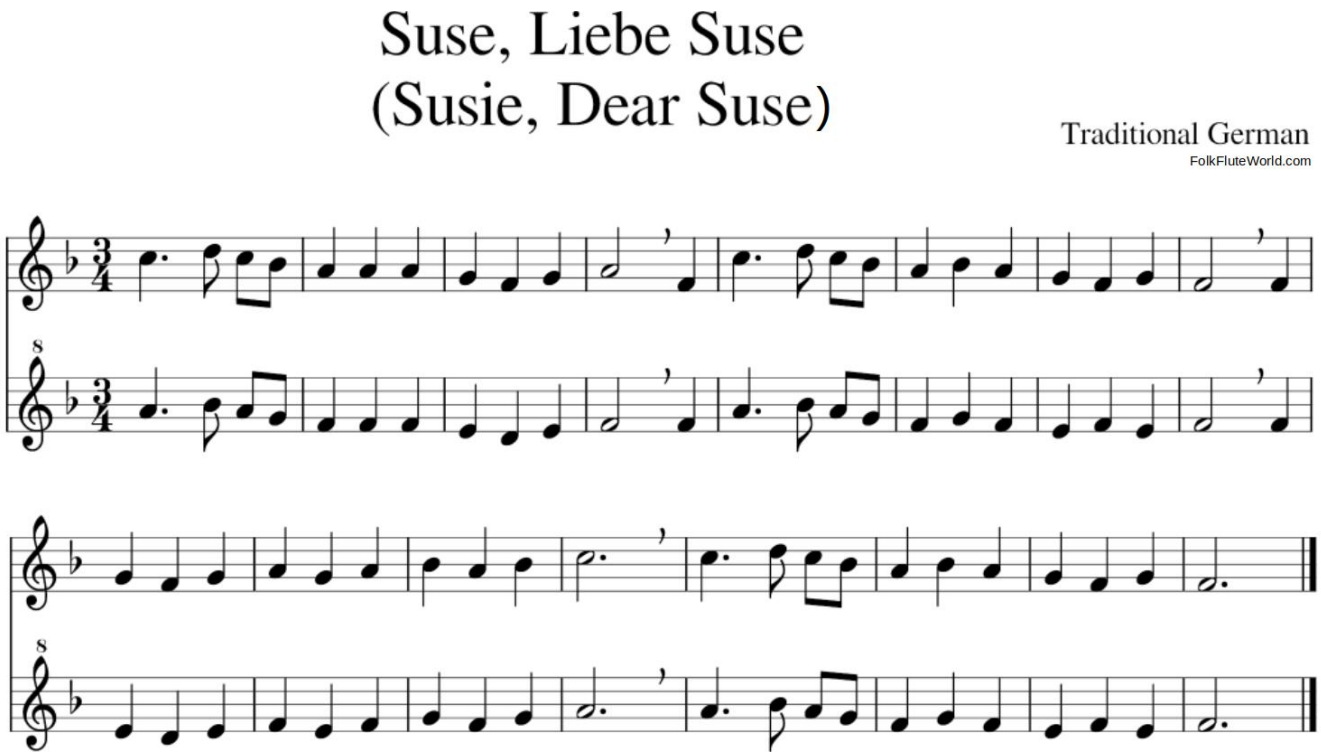


Song: Suse, Liebe Suse

The title of this song roughly translates to *Suzy, Dear Suzy*. It's an old German folk song brought to America by immigrants.

This version is in F Major (one flat, B♭). The Songs Appendix includes a solo version in C Major.

Hopefully, you'll find this a simple but fun duet. Like many tunes, this duet relies heavily on thirds for its harmony.



Summary

We hope you've enjoyed playing a few duets with a friend. Duets combine partnership and friendship with a mutual interest in recorders. They're a great way to learn from others and acquire a few good tips.

You might also learn about their instruments firsthand.

Even if you play the songs in this lesson alone, they're a good opportunity to improve your playing skills.

In the next lesson, we'll discuss how to repair recorders. What do you do if the recorder's joints get stuck together, or if you scratch your instrument? Read on for the answers...

Lesson 26 -- How to Repair Recorders

In this lesson we'll explain how to perform basic recorder repairs.

How to Fix Scratches

It's inevitable: you have a favorite recorder and no matter how carefully you handle it, it gets scratched. What to do?

If your recorder is plastic, you can apply a very small amount of a mild abrasive like toothpaste or a plastic polish like Meguires Plast-X to a soft cotton cloth. Gently rub the scratch with a circular motion. Stop at intervals to see when the scratch diminishes. When done, wash off and dry.

Polishing a scratch out of a wood recorder varies by the kind of wood you have and its finish. You can use the same techniques you would use to minimize a scratch in fine wood furniture.

Furniture wax or gentle polish sometimes work for surface issues, as does a touch-up marker or wax pencil. For deeper gouges, you need basic woodworking skills. Wood filler or wood putty, sanding, and refinishing may be required.

Fingerprints show up rather quickly on unfinished wood if you haven't washed your hands before playing. Wash your hands before you play! To remove fingerprints, use a dry soft cloth to gently rub them away. For difficult cases, slightly moisten the cloth. Dry off your instrument when done.

How to Fix Loose Joints

The male part of two pieces of a recorder that fit together is called the **tenon**. On a wood recorder, this is the piece that has the cork. Or, on a very old wood recorder, it might consist of wrapped string.

Plastic recorders are bare: they don't have cork or string. The pieces fit together by precise fit. Often they have a bit of recorder cream on them to make them easier to slide apart and reconnect.

To fix a loose joint, your goal is to thicken the tenon, thereby creating a snugger fit. Don't overdo it by making the fit too tight. Otherwise, it will be difficult to disassemble your recorder.

First, wipe off any recorder cream or cork grease to ensure you're working with a perfectly clean joint.



Then, one simple solution to a loose fit is to cut paper to suit, wrap it around the tenon, and secure it with scotch tape. You can select a thickness of paper to match your needs. Be sure to leave some room for the tape to contact the tenon itself to secure it.

The photo shows how to do this. It's simple, quick, cheap, and it works. But you'll have to redo it now and then. This solution doesn't last forever, but it's easy to repeat as needed.

A more permanent solution is to thicken the tenon solely with tape -- no paper. Any of several kinds of tape could work, including plastic tape, plumber's tape, or a thin electrical tape. Experiment a little to see what might work best for you before applying it in final form.

Careful if you use glue to adhere a thickening layer. Be sure it's dry before use. If you don't, you could stick your joints together permanently!

For a permanent solution for wood recorders, you can simply acquire a thin sheet of cork. Strip off the existing cork with a penknife, and apply your new cork. The key to success is to use the proper thickness of your new cork. Attach with a mild glue.

How to Take Apart a Recorder with Stuck Joints

I got a great deal on a used recorder from the web. But I discovered that I couldn't disassemble it!

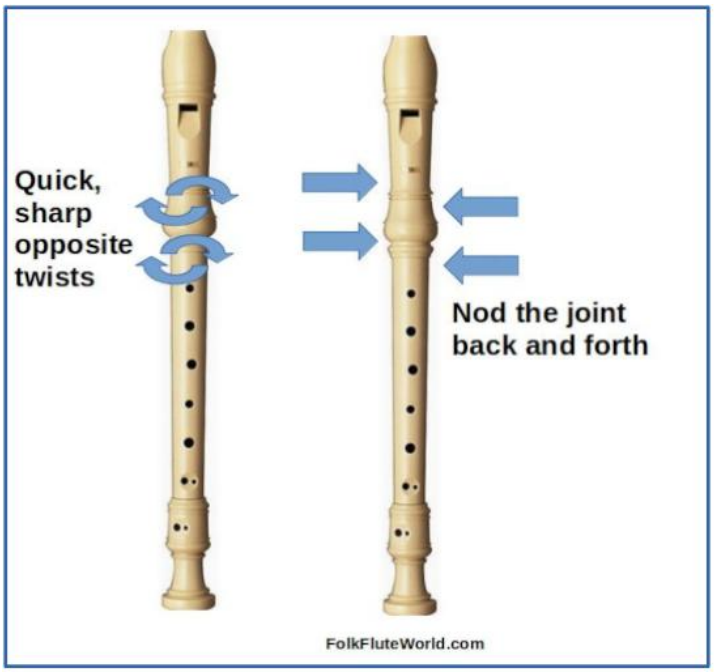
Maybe it hadn't been played for a long time. Maybe it was stored in an attic. Maybe it was exposed to widely varying temperatures and humidity, or maybe it had never been cleaned.

Ultimately, the cause doesn't matter. If you can't get the parts unstuck, you can't clean the insides or keep it free of moisture. And, you definitely want to be able to swab your instrument out after a long session.

Here are some solutions:

1. Put on some inexpensive latex or nitrile gloves. These are the thin disposable gloves that they use in hospitals. These give you much better grip on the instrument, especially if it's plastic. Now try twisting.

2. Instead of twisting in one direction, try a series of short, quick, snap twists in opposite directions. Repeated back-and-forth attempts may loosen the joint.



3. You may need to try to break the seal that is adhering the joint. The sealant could be solidified spit or cork grease mixed with dirt or dust, or some other adhering material. Or it could be a vacuum seal.

4. Nod the joint. Instead of twisting, hold one piece of the recorder steady while you try to nod the other piece back and forth. Don't twist it, nod it gently just like you nod your head to indicate "yes". This will sometimes break the seal, then you can twist apart the pieces.

5. Sit down and place the instrument over your thigh. Now apply very gentle pressure to break the seal. A very slight amount of pressure is all you want, just enough to break the seal.

6. For a plastic recorder only, try placing it under warm running water. Not too hot! This could expand the outer part of the material faster than the inner. Then, try to twist apart the joint. This is the exact same technique you've used to open stuck jars from the grocery.

7. Another trick for a plastic recorder: pop it in the refrigerator for awhile. Cold shrinks the material and also may reduce the adhesiveness of the grease.

Once you've fixed the problem and have taken your recorder apart, be sure to clean it thoroughly. Then lubricate the joints properly before re-assembling it. Use **recorder cream** for plastic recorders and **cork grease** for wood ones.

Going forward, keep the instrument in a clean environment with stable temperature and humidity. Don't expose it to environmental extremes. Keep it clean and lubricated, so the joints don't get stuck.

How to Fix Cracks

Cracking is not normally a concern with plastic recorders. If one should crack, plastics glue should allow you to fix it.

It's difficult to fix a cracked wood recorder. How you proceed all depends on the location and size of the crack. If you have an expensive wood recorder, your best bet may be to send your instrument to a professional repairer.

Sometimes you can sand down and glue very small cracks to fix them. Glue can sometimes fix larger cracks but it may not adhere well to a recorder that has a history of being oiled. In this case it functions more as a sealant than an adhesive.

Wood putty functions the same way. It can't stop a crack from widening, but it can improve the aesthetic look of the instrument.

Since cracks can be hard to fix, the best solution is to prevent them from happening. Avoid these situations that cause cracking:

- Wood totally dries out in heat
- Exposure to extremes in temperature or humidity
- Exposure to quick, drastic changes in temperature
- Storage in an inappropriate environment (like a hot attic or wet basement, or inside your car in summer)

How to Fix Keys

Soprano recorders don't have keys. But tenors and basses often do, and they sometimes break because they stick out and are quite delicate. Here's how to fix them.

Bad Pads

The pads beneath keys harden as they age. Sometimes this causes them to become noisy when they hit the tone hole. They may even become brittle and deteriorate so they don't fully cover the hole.

The solution is simply to replace the pads. If you can buy new keys from the manufacturer, they will include the pads. Otherwise check at an instrument repair or recorder repair shop. Pads for other instruments will sometimes fit recorder keys.

Replacing a pad is easy. Most pry off with a pen knife. Secure the new pad with a tiny drop of glue.

If you can't locate recorder or other suitable instrument pads, you can fashion your own.

Foam sheets are sold by many crafts and hardware stores, including Amazon. You can look around and judge which foam sheets are most similar to your pad in terms of hardness, springiness, etc. Measure the thickness of your pad, then buy a foam sheet of the same thickness.

Cut the other dimensions to fit with a sharp, small knife, such as those commonly referred to as "exacto" or (X-Acto) knives. You must be very precise because you're cutting a round pad that must fit the key and also fully cover the tone hole.

To ensure good fit, place your new pad into position by pressure. Test it out. If it works well, carefully glue it in for permanent use.

How to Fix Broken Keys

The keys on tenor and bass recorders are at risk because they're fragile and stick out. There may come a time when you need to fix a broken key.

If it's a plastic key that's snapped, "super glue" (cyanoacrylate adhesive) works miracles. Since super glue actually melts plastic parts together, it can bind broken keys with the strength required for use.

Regular "plastics glue" may not be strong enough to work, because when you depress a key, you're applying direct pressure to a very small plastic part. Use super glue instead.

Be **very careful** that you only apply super glue where it's needed! You don't want to permanently seal a key in position, or mar the finish of your instrument.

(If you do end up in a situation where you need to remove glue, hot water can unbind many kinds of glues. We recommend thoroughly researching the problem on the web before you try anything.)

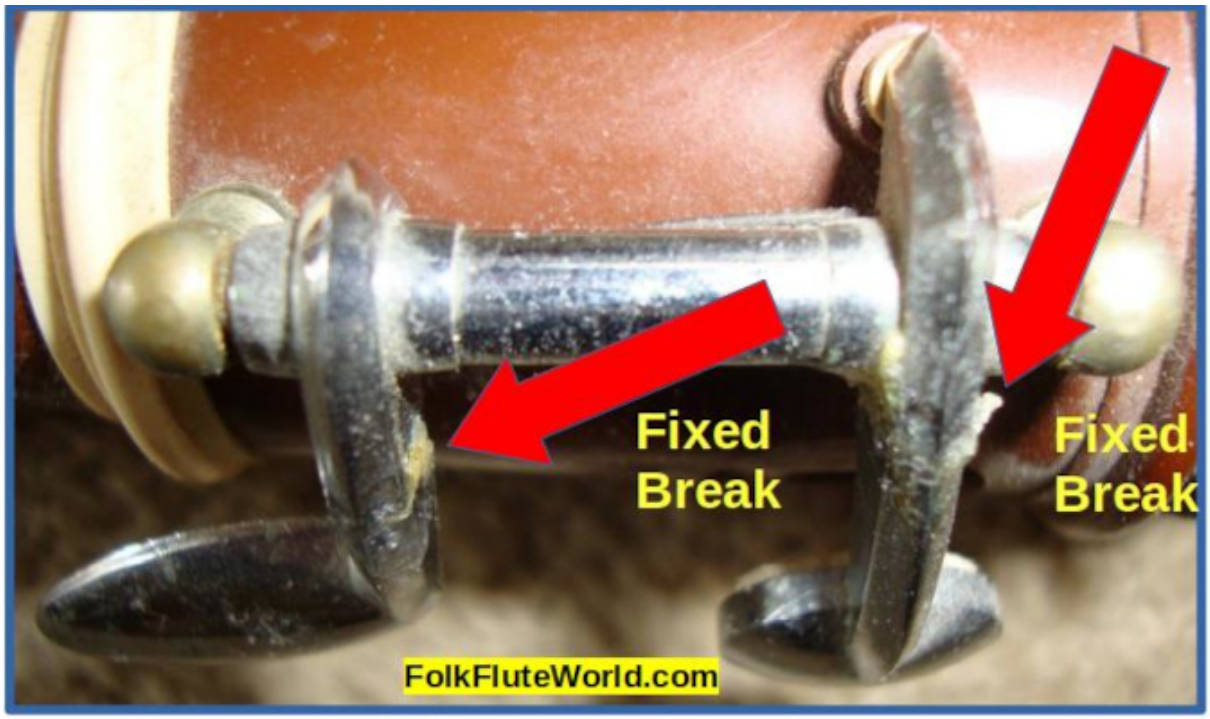
The photo below shows a vintage 1970s plastic tenor restored by super glue. The key was broken in two places. The instrument was unusable. Now it works like new.

You can see why super glue is required. These parts are so small there is not enough surface area to apply much glue, so only a glue that actually melts the plastic parts together will give you sufficient bonding strength.

The fix is visible in close up, but it's not noticeable at a distance.

No replacement keys were available for this vintage instrument, so without this fix it would be in the trash.

Fixing Keys and Reducing Key Noise



When playing tenor or bass, you might notice that your keys click when they are either depressed or released. Whether this noise is bothersome depends on two factors: your instrument's design and the manner in which you play it.

If you're bothered by audible keys, one solution may be to learn how to develop a "touch" that results in quieter keys.

Test a noisy key to see whether it ticks when it is depressed, or when it's released. Now you'll know if you need to depress a key gently instead of "slapping" it down. Or maybe you need to release a key in a fluid motion rather than "popping it" all at once. Good playing technique can often reduce or eliminate key noises.

If the problem is key clicks that show up in recordings, use audio editing software to reduce or eliminate them. Free programs like Audacity or Ocenaudio make it pretty easy to reduce errant ticks.

Different instruments and keys produce different levels of clicking. Some simply can't be played without causing **key distraction**. That can happen with instruments where the vendor hasn't bothered about key noise, or with older instruments where the keys have degraded over time.

In the next sections we'll show you how to replace, tune, or fix keys. The approach you use depends on their design. There are several different types of key action. Often it's best to replace keys with new ones rather than attempting the delicate task of adjusting the existing key(s).

But first, a warning. Key operation is very delicate and you don't want to make it worse. Only attempt these changes after you've read this entire section and are confident you will succeed.

!!! You make any changes at your own risk !!!

1. Exposed Needle Spring Design

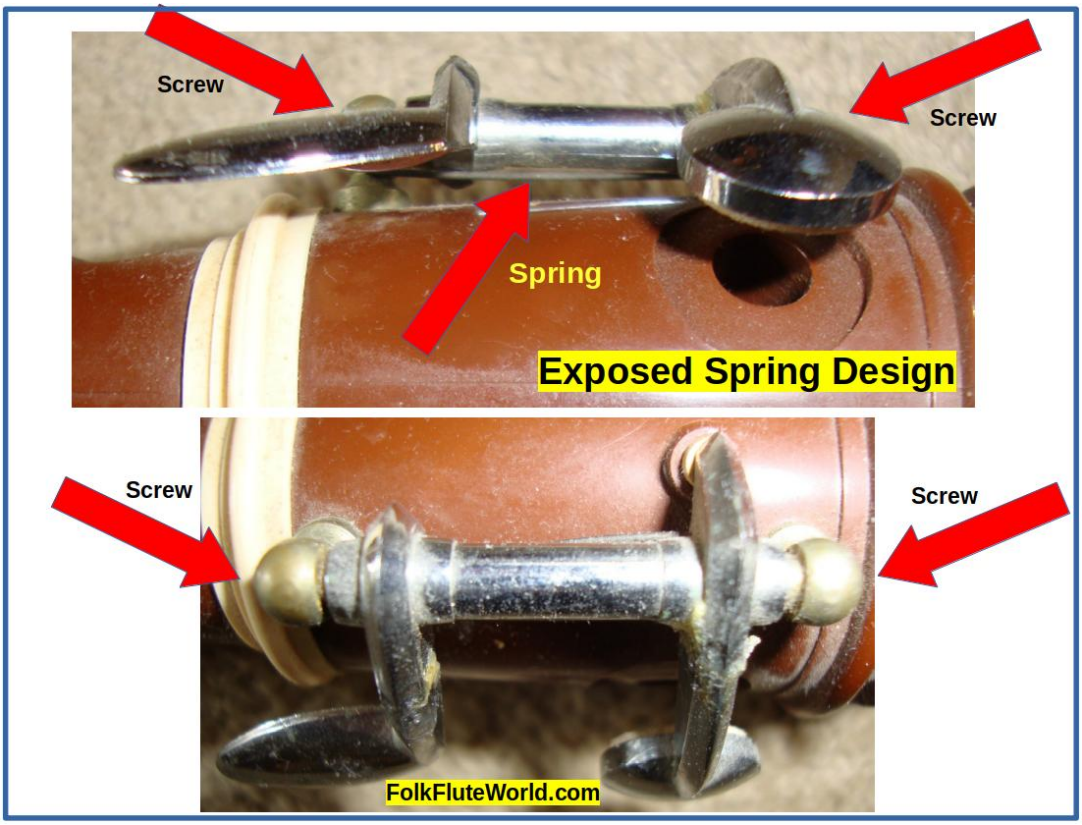
This first photo shows an old style key with a metal **needle spring** (the thin rod pointed to by the arrow). This key design is popular on wood recorders and older instruments.

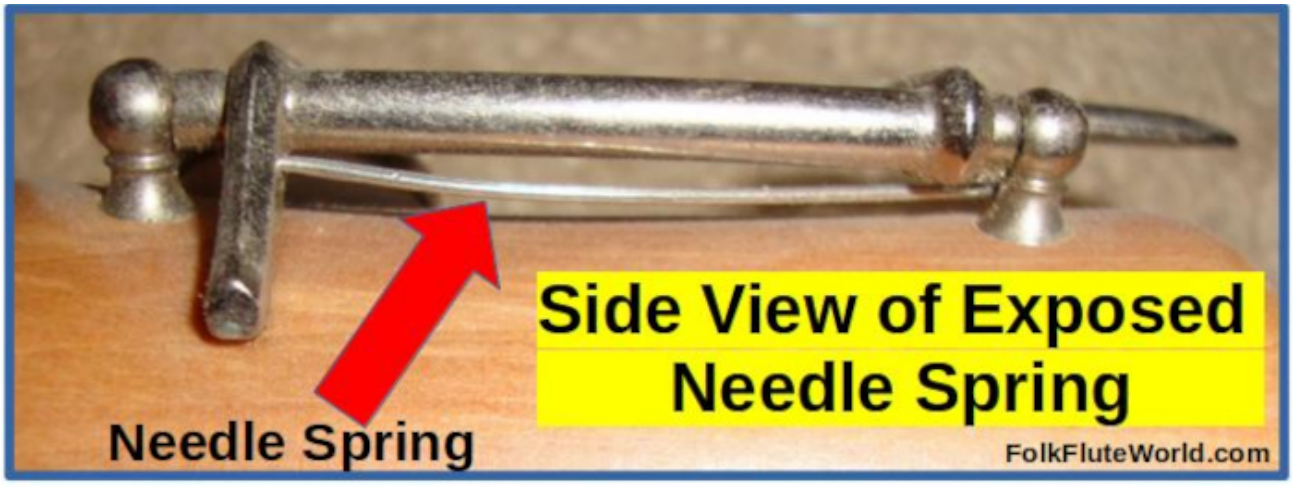
Bending or straightening a needle spring affects the force of "pop" in key action. You can do this with a set of pliers. Be very careful: a minute alteration causes big changes in key action.

Sometimes removing the **screw** and cleaning it out will help restore key action on an older instrument. **Use only a tool that fits your screw head to remove it**, otherwise you could damage it.

If resetting the screw and key don't do the job, you can apply an incredibly small amount of **plastic-safe** lubricant for plastic recorders. This fixes the case of a squeaky key.

The two arrows at the top point to where the screw attaches the key to the instrument. The bottom photo points it out more clearly.

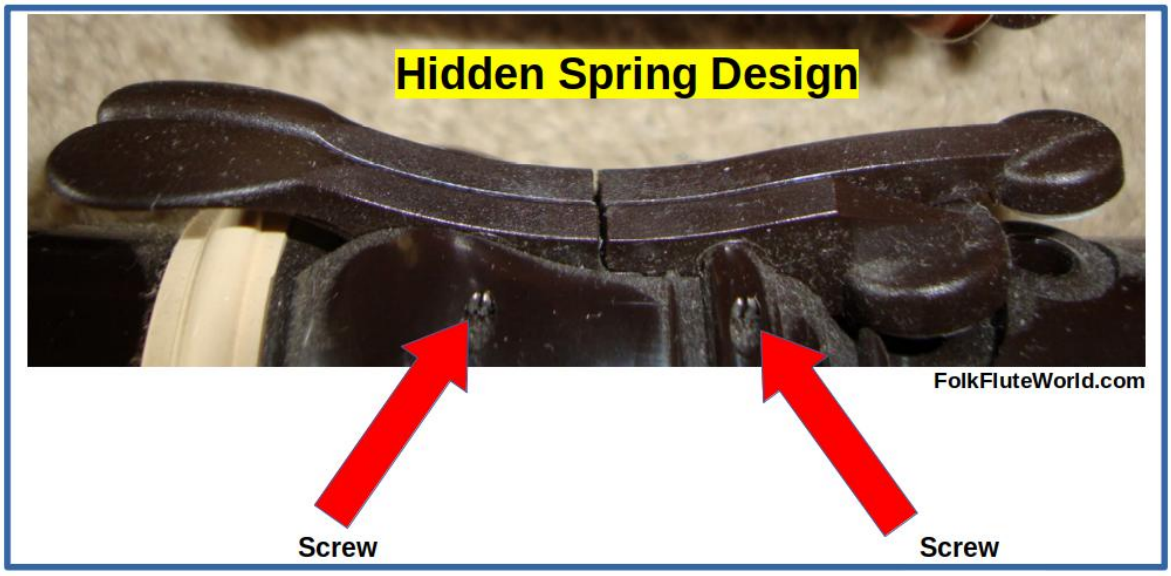




This last photo gives you a better view of the exposed needle spring on a wood instrument.

2. Hidden Flat Spring or Compressed Spring Design

This next photo shows the "hidden spring" design popular with many plastic recorders. The two arrows at the sides point to where the two screws attach the keys to the instrument. You must remove these to dismantle the keys and replace them, or to rebuild them to alter the key action.



Inside, the spring differs from the needle spring of the above example. It might be a **flat spring**, a very thin bendable metal piece, located directly beneath the key. Sometimes these become fatigued and can benefit from adjustment by bending a very slight bit, or by replacement.

Alternatively, you might see a traditional **coil compression spring** used for this purpose. Sometimes they become warped or misaligned. You can either fix or replace them.

These next two photos provide more detail. They're key replacement sets for Yamaha bass recorders. They're typical of the plastic keys with hidden springs used by most vendors.

You can see that each key consists of two parts that connect in the middle. One side of the key is the part you press with your finger.

The other side covers the tone hole on the instrument. The side that covers the tone hole includes the very thin, bendable flat metal spring. It's that spring that pops the key off the tone hole when you release the key from your finger.



Bass Replacement Keys - Left: F / F#, Right: C or Bb (Courtesy: Yamaha)

If replacement key sets are available for your instrument, it often makes more sense to replace the keys and their springs rather than fiddling around trying to adjust them. But replacement parts may be unavailable. Hence, we've given you the whole story here so that you can either adjust or replace keys, as needed.

Replacement key sets such as these from Yamaha usually cost somewhere around $10 to $20 USD.

Recorder Sounds Bad

Poor sound could be due to any number of causes. We've covered many of them in prior lessons:

- **Sounds like a cheap plastic flute** -- buy a quality recorder made of ABS resin plastic
- **Sounds muffled or garbled** -- get the moisture out of your flute
- **Not clean or pure tone** -- deep clean your instrument (see Lesson 10)
- **Squeaks or squawks** -- completely cover all holes you intend to cover. Don't accidentally "shade" holes that are supposed to be open.
- **High note squawks** -- check that you're covering enough of the thumb hole
- **Can't play highest notes** -- review our advice in Lesson 19, and verify that you have a quality instrument capable of playing the highest notes
- **Out of tune** -- measure against a tuning app, push mouthpiece in or out to adjust tuning
- **Out of tune in groups** -- tune against one another, push mouthpiece in or out to adjust tuning, verify that all flutes are at the same tuning standard (either all at A = 440 or all at A = 442 Hz)
- **Sounds sharp** -- ensure your flute is at room temperature, then perform tuning as per above
- **Noisy key action** -- learn to play to minimize key distraction, or adjust keys as explained in this lesson
- **New recorder sounds bad** -- check inside bore for wood shavings or errant bits of plastic, verify mouthpiece windway is clear, break in or "condition" a new wood recorder gradually

Summary

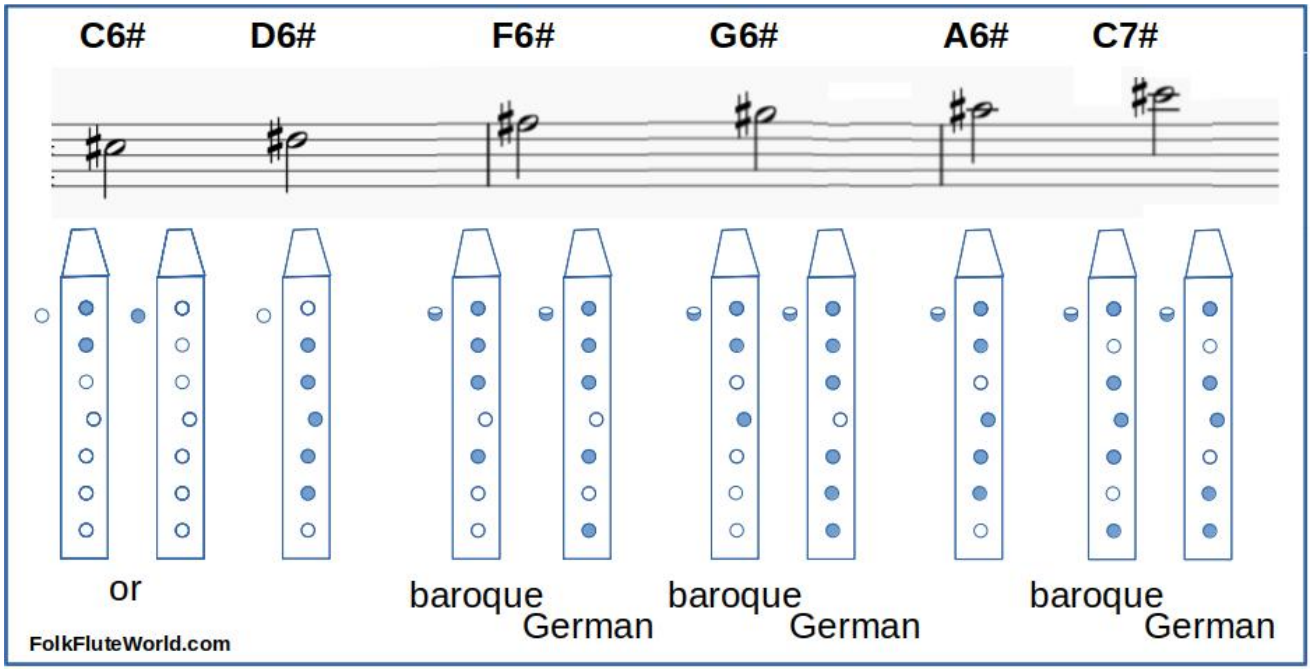
This lesson described common recorder repairs. You can do them yourself, as long as you exercise due care.

The wisest approach is prevention. By careful handling and proper maintenance, you can avoid scratching your recorder, suffering stuck or loose joints, and breaking delicate keys.

In the next lesson we'll cover the highest playable accidentals. Complete that lesson and you'll know how to play the full range of notes available with your recorder!

Lesson 27 -- The Highest Accidentals

This lesson covers the final notes that comprise the full chromatic range of the recorder. Here are the highest sharps and flats:



All accidentals higher than D6# require you to cover a small portion of the thumb hole. How much exactly? Not much. It depends on your instrument. In general, you cover more of the thumb hole the higher you go. You'll have to experiment and practice to discover how to best play these notes. Your goal should be to play them in tune and with good tone.

If your flute squawks, try covering a bit more of the thumb hole and blowing sharply. Some inferior instruments simply can't play the highest notes, which is why Lesson 2 recommended selecting a quality recorder.

Let's try a few songs that employ some of these notes. All were sourced from the public domain songs in *Jack Campin's Tunebooks*, a large collection of melodies primarily from the British Isles (see www.campin.me.uk/).

Song: The Steward's Lodge Song

This first song is a Scottish air dating from the late 18th century. It might refer to either the Steward's Freemason lodge in London, or a lodge house on the Farmleigh estate in Dublin.

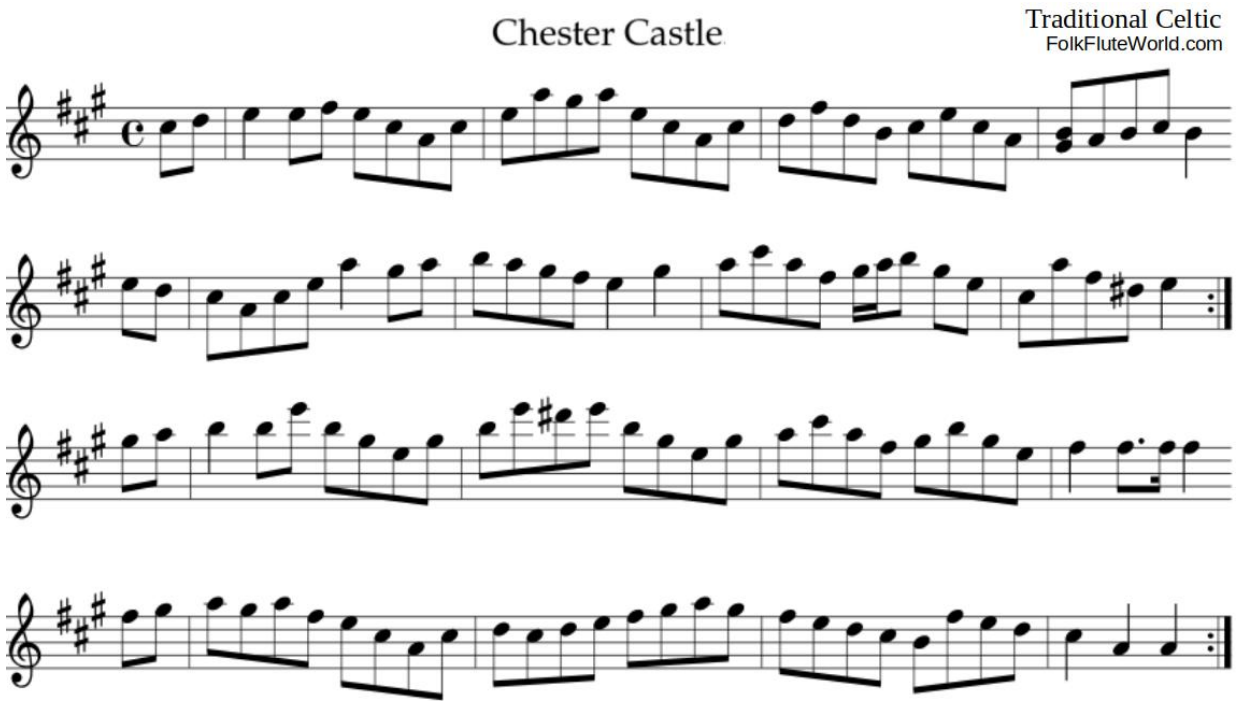
The melody is scored in E Major, the key with four sharps. This song is great practice for the high octave sharps. The tempo notation specifies Beats Per Minute with a half note at 104 BPM.



Song: Chester Castle

Chester Castle stands in the city of Chester, Cheshire, England. The castle dates from 1070 AD and this song honors it. The castle underwent updates and expansion around 1800. Today it's an important tourist destination.

The score is written in the key with three sharps, A Major.



Song: 1st Turks March

The *1st Turks March* is from *Aird's Airs and Melodies vol 2.* That is a collection of some 1,200 tunes published in Scotland in six volumes between 1778 and 1801. The tunes include reels, jigs, marches, strathspeys, hornpipes, waltzes, and slow airs.

These books are the earliest known source for many Scottish tunes and were used throughout the British Isles for decades. The appendix entitled *One Million Free Scores* tells where you can download these scores and many others to play on your recorder.

This score is also in the key with three sharps, A Major. If you play popular and folk songs on your flute, you can probably avoid keys like A Major and E Major by selecting scores in easier keys. Or, simply transpose a score to an easier key (see Lesson 24).

Where strong fluency in chromatics could be important is if you develop an interest in classical music. With classical compositions you'll want to play scores as written. You'll often confront challenging keys beyond the four we've concentrated on in this book (C, G, F, and D Major).



Song: Pop Goes the Weasel

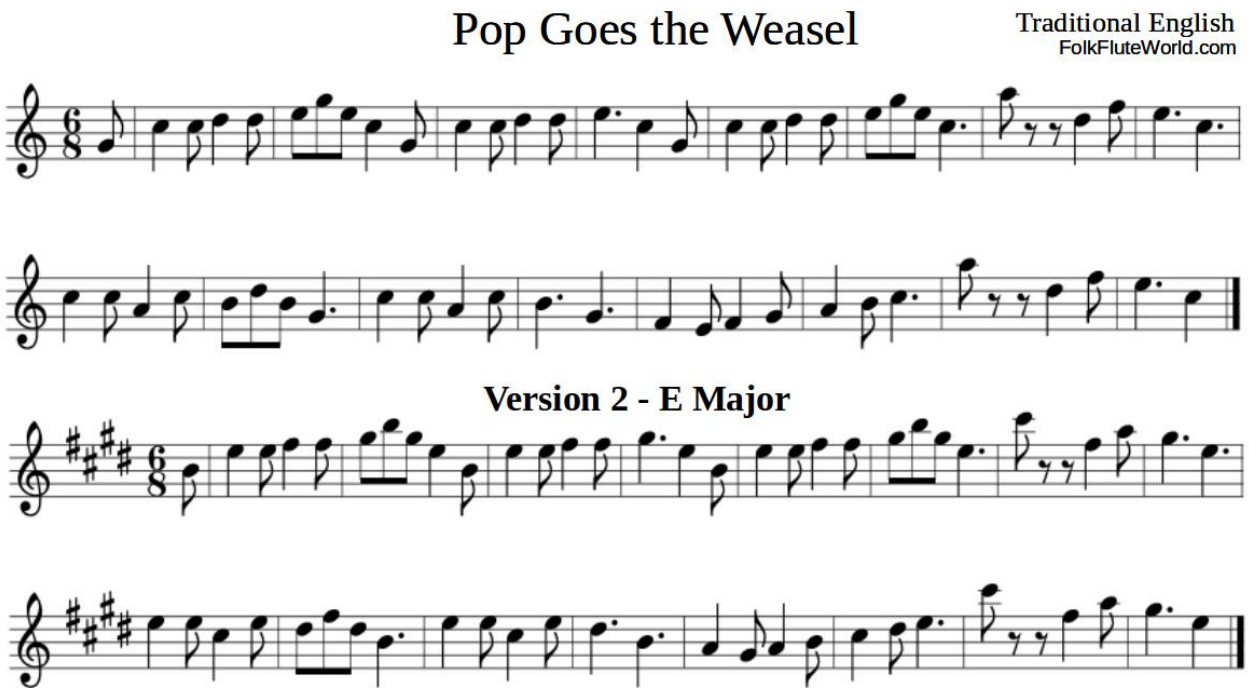
This traditional English song dates from the mid 19th century. At various times, it's served as a nursery rhyme, a popular dance hall favorite, and a children's singing game.

Today, in the United States, it's the preferred anthem for ice cream trucks as they prowl city and suburban streets during hot summer days.

This multiple verse tune features differing lyrics depending on the venue. Both Britain and America have had their own favorites depending on the time and place.

Below we provide two different scores. The first gives you a taste of the melody drifting into higher octave whole notes.

The second is in E Major, the key with four sharps: C#, D#, F#, and G#. If you can successfully navigate this version you can rest assured you know your higher sharps.



Summary

Were you able to pick your way through these tunes? Many good recorder players don't keep those highest sharps in memory unless they consistently play ambitious scores.

Like many musicians who are not professionals, I tend to avoid challenging keys like A Major and E Major. I either seek a score in an easier key or transpose the score to a more friendly key (as shown in Lesson 24).

But if you develop an interest in classical music or in formal compositions, fluency in the full range of chromatics available on your recorder can become very important.

You may also prefer to play original scores "as written", meaning you must be ready with the full range of chromatics at your disposal.

As always, you can sound out the songs and decode their fingering at a very slow pace. After you've got them down pat, then speed them up and play at a faster pace.

We've mentioned alternate fingerings several times in this book. The next lesson covers them in detail.

Lesson 28 -- Alternate Fingerings

Many recorders allow more than one fingering for a specific note. We refer to these as **alternate fingerings.**

Start with the fingering chart distributed with your instrument. **That's what you really need to learn.**

Beyond that, you may discover that your recorder supports more than a single way to finger some notes. This is especially true with the accidentals. Since many are split fingered (or fork fingered), this naturally lends itself to alternate fingering patterns.

Why Use Them?

Alternate fingerings can be useful for several reasons:

1. They can be helpful when you switch between recorders. An alternate fingering for one may function as the primary on another.

2. You can use alternate fingerings to minimize the fingering differences between baroque and German recorders. For example, you can play low F# the same way across recorders if you abandon the fingering chart's suggestion and employ an alternate fingering instead.

3. Sometimes you'll find one fingering superior to another for a fast passage or for playing a specific sequence of notes. This is because it's easier for us humans to move our fingers in some ways than others.

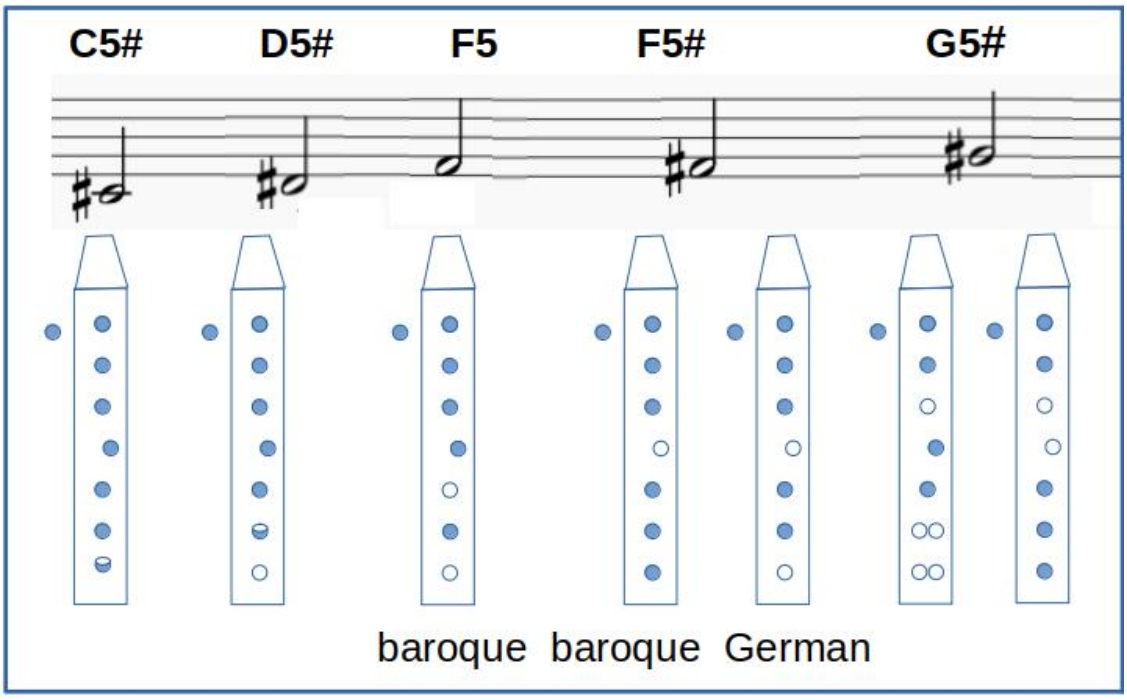
4. Pitches often vary just the tiniest bit between the different fingerings. You may find that one pitch suits you better than another (either in general, or just for a specific recorder or a particular score).

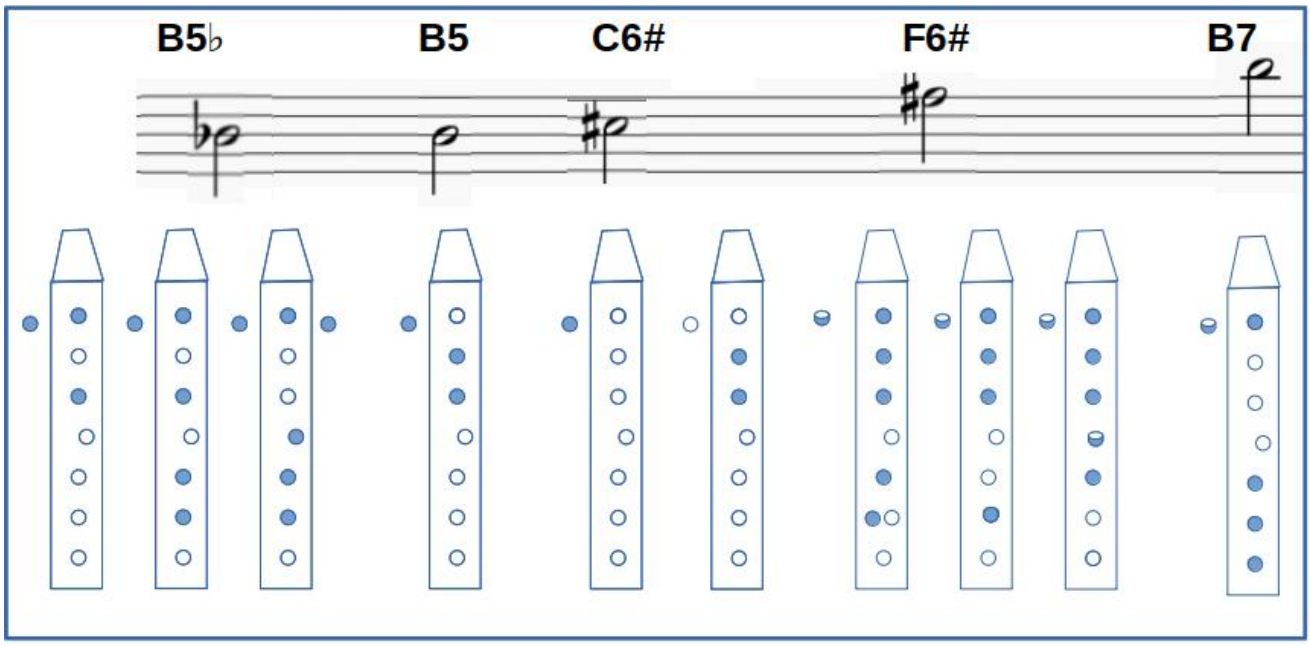
5. You may find minor tonal differences between fingerings, and discover that one is more pleasing to the ear than the other.

6. Because pitches vary slightly between different fingerings, alternate fingerings are useful for playing the **microtones** that exist between the whole notes and accidentals in western music. You might find these useful for playing music that is based on scales other than the standard western scale, or for experimental musical forms.

The charts below list common alternate fingerings. You'll find some of them useful for your recorder. Others won't work at all. The only way to know is to experiment with your instrument and test them.

Results are specific to each instrument. You may also discover alternate fingerings not included in these charts, as they display only the most common.





Next up we offer a couple scores for which you can try alternate fingerings. The goal is to learn some fingerings that will give you greater flexibility in how you approach a score.

I would suggest only testing alternate fingerings if you feel quite secure with the standard fingerings presented thus far. You don't want to confuse yourself by challenging the fingering you already know.

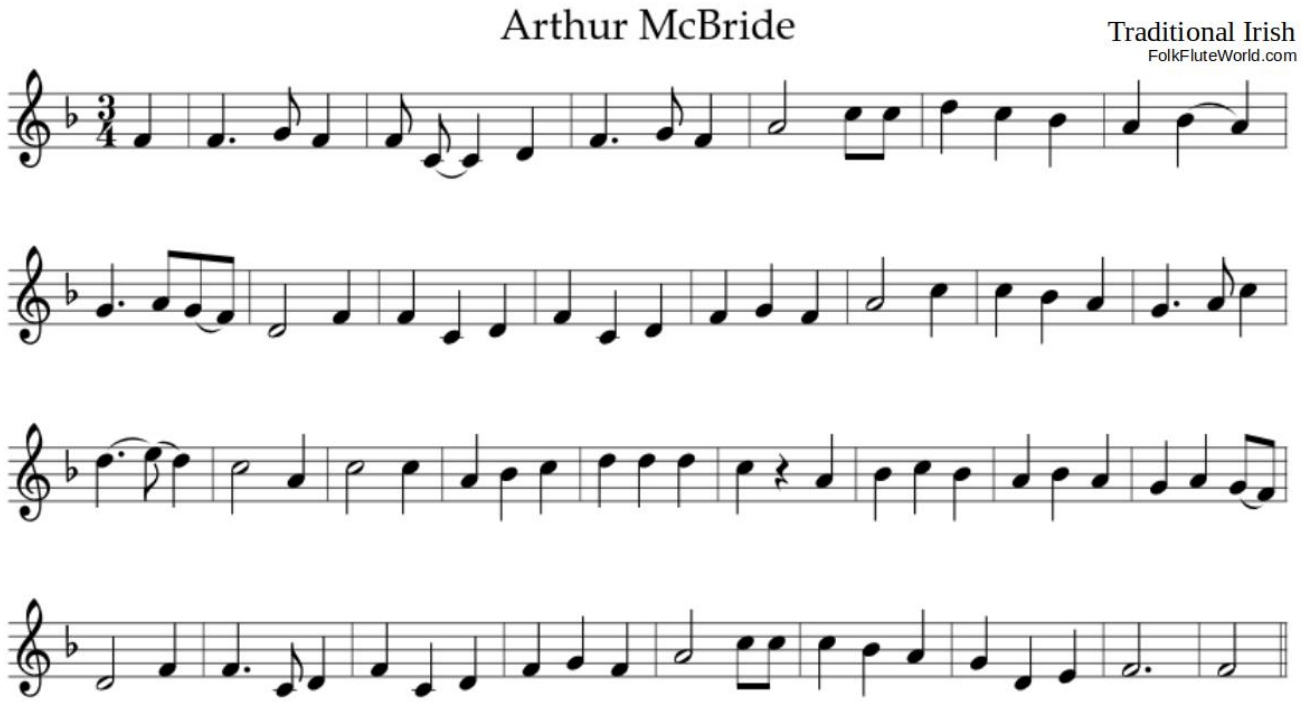
If you don't wish to test alternate fingerings, just play these scores with the standard fingerings. They'll provide some good practice however you choose to play them.

Song: Arthur McBride

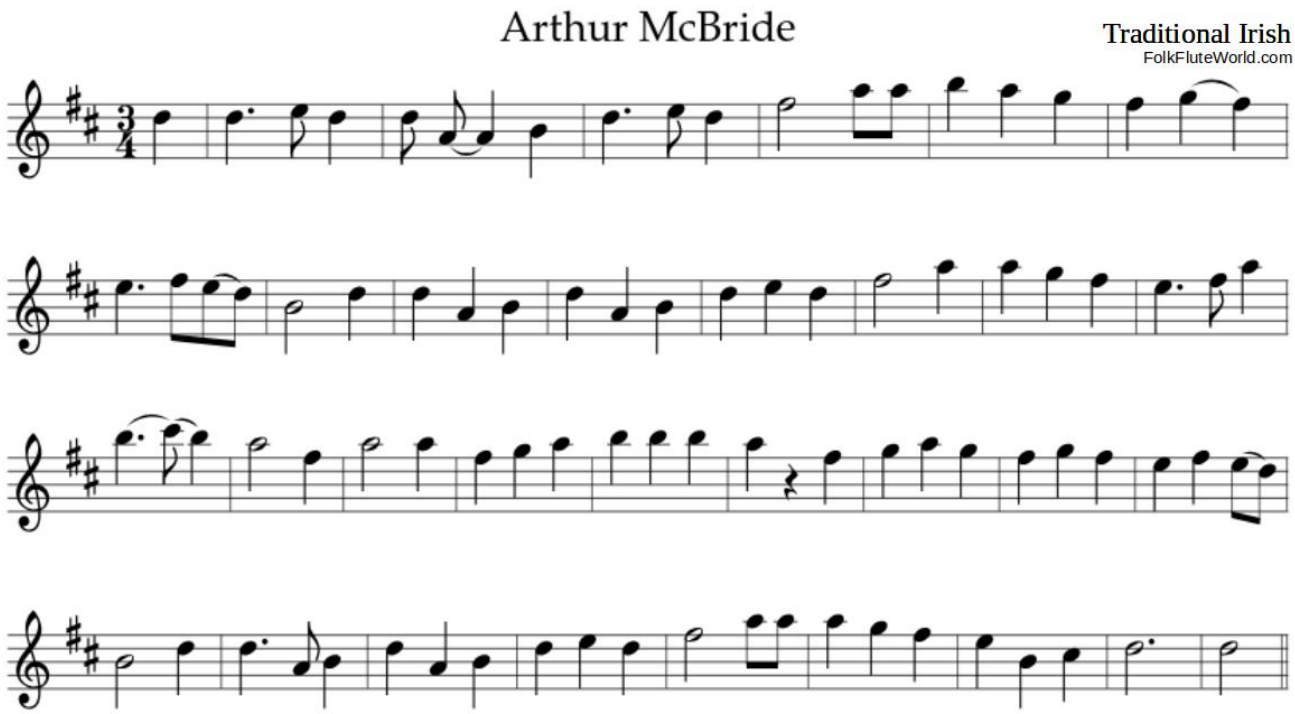
This old Irish tune tells the story of how two Irishmen were approached by recruiters for the British army. The recruiters don't like the Irishmen's tone in their response and draw their swords. In response, the Irish attack the British with their shillelaghs and throw the British arms into the sea.

The song is sometimes interpreted as an expression of Irish nationalism, or at other times taken as an anti-war anthem.

In this F Major version, test alternate fingerings for B♭ and F.



This D Major version of the score gives you a chance to try alternates for B5, C6#, and F6#.



Bonnie Ship: The Diamond

The Diamond was a Scottish whaling ship based in Aberdeen in the days when men harpooned Right whales for burnable oil. The whaler typically traveled north through the Davis Strait to Baffin Bay.

In 1819 the Diamond was trapped in pack ice and frozen in. As their ship was crushed, the sailors survived in tents made from the ship's sails and burned the ship's timbers for warmth. Remarkably, after struggling for many months they were rescued and made it home.

This tune memorializes the ship that gave brave men sustenance through the long hard months in the far north.

Use this score to test alternate fingerings for B, high C# and low F#.



Another Note?

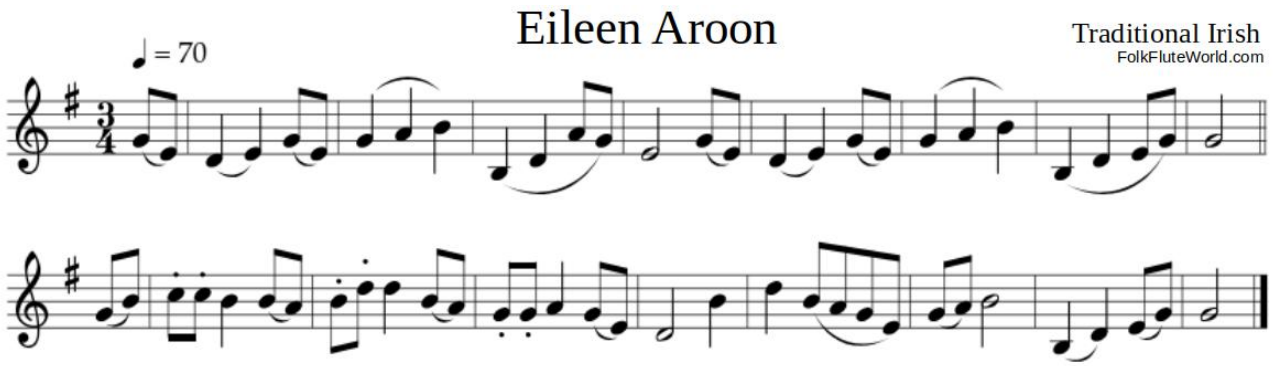
The lowest note on recorders keyed to C Major, such as the soprano, is low C. (For the soprano specifically it is C5.) With some recorders you can partially cover (or **shade**) the bell against your thigh while fingering low C. Then blow softly to voice one note lower, low B.

This shading technique works best with a recorder with a big bell, such as an alto or tenor. Often it won't work with sopranos or higher instruments because their ends are too small to easily or precisely shade.

Just as with half-holing to play low C# and low D#, if a note is quick, your low B doesn’t have to be tonally precise to be acceptable. However, in scores where you must hold the note, you'll find much less forgiveness for approximation.

Lowest B -- "B below the staff" -- is a common note in many scores. If you can play it, it usefully extends your range. Try shading to see if it works with your flute in this next score.

This song is an old Irish tune some believe may date back to 1386, written by Carrol mor O'Daly.



Another score you can practice for lowest B is in Lesson 16. *The Star of County Down* presents several double notes, the lower of which is B below the staff. Go back now and play that song now with low B.

Summary

Alternate fingerings are an advanced topic that will only be of interest to you once you've thoroughly mastered the standard fingering for your recorder.

When you're ready for them, though, they can enhance your play for certain difficult passages. They can also expand your musical horizons to new kinds of music.

To that end, we'll discuss musical scales outside the western tradition in the next lesson.

Lesson 29 -- Scales

The recorder is a truly international instrument. It's played throughout the world.

Thus it's not surprising that you can play music from an incredibly wide range of cultures on the instrument.

This lesson briefly discusses how recorders relate to these different musical traditions.

What's a Scale?

An **octave** is the interval between two notes, where one has twice the frequency of the other.

For example, high C is exactly one octave higher than low C. It sounds at twice the frequency of low C.

A **scale** is an ordered set of notes that span one octave.

As you have learned, the standard western scale consists of these 7 notes:

C → D → E → F → G → A → B → (high C)

The western scale also contains 5 semitones situated between these whole notes. These are the notes:

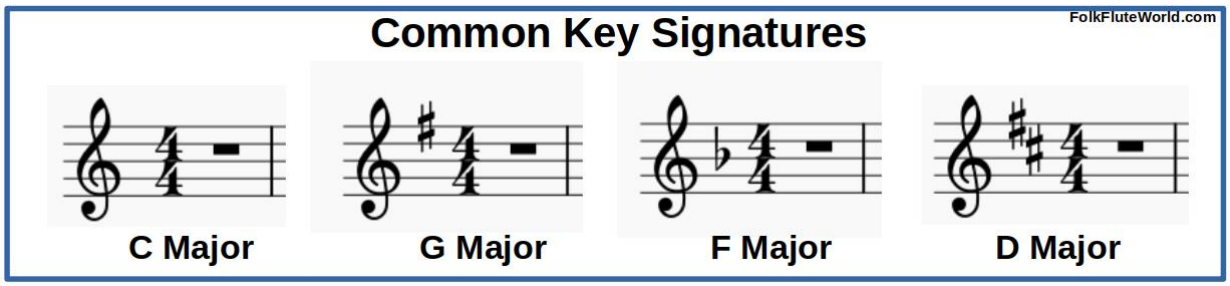
C# / D♭, D# / E♭, F# / G♭, G# / A♭, A# / B♭

You can view a scale as a musical palette from which notes are selected to create songs.

Common Scales

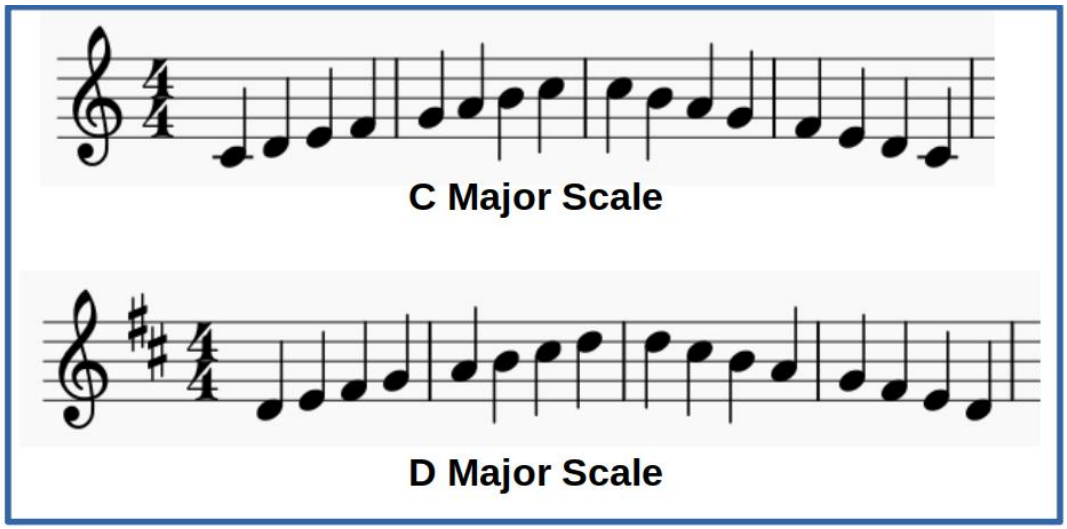
Remember how in Lesson 15 we discussed **key signatures**?

We explained that each key signature has its own set of sharps or flats that persist throughout the score, as assigned at the start of the score. Here are the four very common key signatures we discussed:



Another way to look at key signatures is in terms of the scales they define.

Each scale starts with the base note of its name, and contains the accidentals of its key signature. Here are a couple examples:



As you've learned, an easy way to ensure you can play songs scored in scales that are difficult to play is to transpose them to different keys. Computer programs make it as simple as a click of a button to transpose scores. This can:

1. Eliminate out-of-range notes
2. Convert difficult accidentals into easier-to-play whole notes
3. Change unusual or difficult time and key signatures into those with which you are more familiar

Non-western Scales

Many cultures around the world use scales other than our standard western scale. These may employ different frequency intervals between the notes other than what we are accustomed to in western music. They may contain a different number of pitches in their scales.

The result is music that features its own unique flavor or sensibility. In this way, cultures have evolved their own musical traditions. Examples include various Asian, Middle Eastern, and eastern European scales.

With your chromatic recorder, you can play these non-western scales and the melodies based on them. This opens up an entire universe of songs and scores from various cultures, countries, and musical traditions.

For example, you'll notice that the song *The Snake Charmer* in Lesson 16 contains only 5 different whole notes. The melody is thought to have derived from an Algerian folk song that used a Middle Eastern scale.

The melody came from a different musical palette than our standard western scale. That's why it sounds unusual or exotic to our western-trained ears.

Another example is the Japanese song *Sakura* in the Songs Appendix. It, too, contains only five different whole notes. Though provided here in western music notation, the melody is actually based on one of the five note -- or **pentatonic** -- Asian scales.

Should you choose to explore the music of other cultures, we provide some common non-western scales below.

Be aware that there are many other scales (and variants) beyond the few we list here.

Scale:	Notes:
Pentatonic -1	C - D - F - G - A - C
Pentatonic -2	C - D - E - G - A - C
Middle Eastern	E - F - G# - A - B - C - E
Native American	E - F - G - A - C - E
Minor	D - E - F - G - A - B - C - D
Blues scale	C - D - E♭ - E♮ - G - A
Minor Blues scale	C - E♭ - F - G♭ - G - B♭

You might also find that **microtones** -- pitches that sit between the notes of the standard western scale -- can be useful in playing music from other traditions. The alternate fingerings of the previous lesson might be useful in this respect because they enable you to play various microtones.

Summary

In this lesson we briefly described how different cultures have evolved their own musical sounds and styles, and the way in which different scales underlie these unique traditions. You can have a lot of fun and learn much by pursuing music from cultures outside of the western European musical tradition.

You can find more information on international scales and ethnic flutes at FolkFluteWorld.com.

The website includes a tutorial on how to read Asian musical notation. That opens up an entire new world of free scores that feature traditional Chinese and Asian songs for your recorder.

Next up, let's take the second and final self test in this course. This self test ensures you're absorbing the material, and it can help you identify anything you missed or need to review.

Self Test #2

Here's a final quiz to see how well you're absorbing the material. For any questions you miss, you'll be able to learn more by reading the explanations of the correct answers in the appendices.

For each question, select the **best** answer. Record your answers on a piece of paper or in a digital notepad.

1. If you intend to store your recorder over the winter, what should you do?

    A. Store it in its assembled state so the joints don't become incompatible
    B. Store it in its disassembled state so the joints don't become stuck
    C. Store it vertically
    D. Store it horizontally

2. Why are alternate fingerings useful?

    A. You might prefer using one in a fast-fingered passage
    B. On your recorder one might provide a more accurate pitch or clearer tone
    C. An alternate fingering on one recorder might be the preferred fingering on another
    D. All the above

3. Which statement is true?

    A. Sopranos require less breath than bass recorders, and bass usually cost more
    B. Sopranos are smaller than bass recorders, and bass usually cost less
    C. Sopranos finger more simply than any other recorders, and bass usually cost more
    D. Sopranos are harder to finger than any other recorders, and bass usually cost more

4. D# is the same note as?

    A. E♭
    B. F♭
    C. C#
    D. None of the above

5. A friend hands you a recorder that has no double holes. How can you play low C#?

A. Play D very softly
B. Play D very loudly
C. Use your right hand pinky finger to half hole for the last tone hole (the 7th hole)
D. You can't play C# on a recorder that doesn't have double holes

6. Which key has two sharps?

A. C Major
B. F Major
C. E♭ Major
D. D Major

7. What does it mean to play a note "natural"?

A. Play it as a flat
B. Play it as a sharp
C. Play it as a whole note (neither sharp nor flat)
D. Play it as a rest (no note at all, just silence)
E. Playing the note however seems most natural to you

8. If a note has a sharp sign immediately in front of it, what do you do?

A. Play the note as sharp
B. Play the note as dictated by the key signature
C. Play the note as natural
D. Play the note as a whole note

9. Which is another name for the alto recorder?

A. Descant
B. Treble
C. the C recorder
D. Sopranino

10. For which member of the recorder family might you encounter sheet music that is not scored in treble clef?

A. Garklein
B. Alto
C. Tenor
D. Bass

11. If you have a score that is very difficult to play because of its accidentals, what are two possible solutions? (Select two answers)

A. Transpose the score to a better key
B. Play all the chromatics as natural whole notes
C. Change every accidental to its closest whole note
D. Find a score in a more suitable key on the internet

12. Which statement is true about rounds and duets?

A. In a round, musicians all play the same melody but starting at different times
B. In a duet, musicians all play the same melody but starting at different times
C. In rounds, it doesn't matter if the musicians' timing gets off relative to each other
D. In duets, it doesn't matter if the musicians' timing gets off relative to each other

13. Which of the following is NOT a capability of current ABC based computer tools?

A. They can transpose the score to a better key
B. They can play the score for you
C. They allow you to edit a score and play back the changes to you
D. They can output a traditional score from ABC notation
E. They can convert a traditional score into ABC notation

14. What's a metronome?

A. A device or app that automatically transposes scores
B. A device or app that audibly ticks to a set time signature
C. A device or app that can tell you if your playing is sharp or flat
D. None of the above

15. Which notes are harmonic thirds to E?

A. D and F
B. G and B
C. C and G
D. C and B

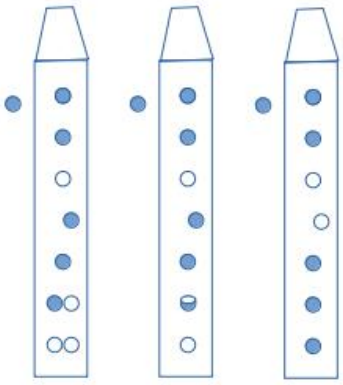
16. You see a maple wood soprano offered at $20 USD on Amazon. What do you do?

A. Buy it quickly before someone else snaps up the deal
B. Don't buy it, very cheap wood recorders never play well or in tune
C. Research it extensively before buying -- listen to sound samples of that instrument on Youtube or elsewhere and read all reviews

17. What's the fundamental of a treble recorder?

A. C4
B. C5
C. F5
D. F4

18. These fingerings are for which note?



A. G
B. low F#

C. high F#
D. G#
E. F natural

19. If you play a long run of quick sixteenth notes on a bass recorder, what can happen?

A. The bass might "swallow" some notes or poorly articulate them
B. The bass will brightly pop out the notes in a noticeable way
C. The bass will squeak
D. The bass will wet out

20. Grace notes, cuts, strikes, flips, are examples of what?

A. Decrescendos
B. Dynamics
C. Ornamentation
D. Intonation

21. What is one reason the recorder fell out of popularity between 1750 and 1920?

A. They were not as loud as modern metal instruments
B. They can't play certain styles of music
C. They're diatonic
D. They're too hard to play
E. They're only a training instrument

22. What's one difference between wood and plastic recorders?

A. Wood plays louder so the audience can hear better
B. Wood plays a wider range of notes
C. Wood requires more care and maintenance
D. Quality wood recorders are usually less expensive than quality plastic ones
E. Wood recorders are always baroque (never German)

23. Which strategy can help you to half hole better?

A. Get a lower pitched recorder with larger tone holes
B. Get really familiar with the specific recorder you want to half hole

C. Practice half-holing a lot
D. All of the above

24. Which notes finger differently between baroque and German recorders?

A. low F and high F
B. G6# and C7#
C. F5 and F6
D. none of the above
E. all the above

25. How many semitones are in the standard western scale, and what are they?

A. There are 7. They are C, D, E, F, G, A, and B
B. There are 5. They are C#, D#, F#, G#, and A#
C. There are 4. They are C#, D#, F#, and B♭
D. There are 4. They are D♭, E♭, G♭, and B♭

26. Which of these notations might prove useful when playing recorder?

A. Music scored for F key treble instruments
B. Music scored for C key treble instruments
C. Music scored for F key bass clef instruments
D. ABC notation
E. All the above

Answers with explanations are in the appendices.

Summary

We hope you found this self test useful. Answers are in the appendices. Please review the rationale underlying the correct answers for any questions you missed.

Next up is the final lesson in this course.

Following that is an appendix full of new songs for you to learn and enjoy, sources for over a million freely downloadable scores, topic and song indexes, and comprehensive fingering charts.

Lesson 30 -- Where to Go From Here

Congratulations! You stuck with it and have reached the end of this course.

You are now a true recorder player. You can play slow songs and imbue them with feeling. You know how to sound out fast songs to get started, and later to play them up to speed.

You can read and understand basic sheet music. You also learned about ABC notation and how useful it can be with its computer-based tools, and you know how and why to transpose songs.

That's quite a lot to be proud of! I hope you feel it's been a fun and worthwhile journey.

So, where do you go from here?

More Songs To Play

We've provided some 125 more scores for you to play in the Songs Appendix that immediately follows this lesson. Songs are listed alphabetically by title.

Each song comes with an explanation of its background, along with playing tips. Just like the songs in our lessons, these were selected as good vehicles for self-improvement. And for enjoying yourself, too!

You already know you can access over one million free scores through the websites listed in the appendices and by visiting FolkFluteWorld.com. These provide links to libraries that offer sheet music specifically for recorder.

You'll also find links to huge libraries of scores for other instruments. For those tunes that are difficult to play on your flute, you now know how to adjust or transpose them as necessary.

You'll find all kinds of songs. Some of the categories include:

- Celtic and Irish tunes
- American folk songs
- Folk melodies from many nations
- Classical music
- Christmas songs
- Waltzes and dance melodies
- Marches and military and college anthems
- Tunes from the Renaissance and middle ages
- Morris dances
- Asian melodies from Japan and China

- Children's songs and nursery rhymes
- Songs scored for recorder, tin whistle, concert flute, and voice

The one category you won't find are songs under copyright. Those scores you must purchase.

Possibilities

So where do you go from here? There is so much more to enjoy.

You've learned how to play any recorder. What a universe that opens up!

There's so much more to explore. Here are just a few suggestions …

Try Wood

We urged you to take this course with a quality plastic soprano. That's the best place to start. But now that you've got some experience, you might like to see if you prefer the sound or personality of wood. You know enough now to make a smart purchase of a wood instrument if it interests you.

You might try one of the less expensive softwoods like maple or pear. Or perhaps you'll like to opt for a high quality hardwood. You'll quickly discover that different brands offer varied appeal and drawbacks. There's much to learn and evaluate. The choice is yours.

Try Different Sizes, Pitches, and Keys

Another option is to explore different sizes of instruments. Each has its own personality. The sopranino has a brighter, louder voice than the soprano. Its carries well outside and it pushes itself to the fore in any ensemble. The sopranino shows off your fast-fingered virtuosity to advantage.

The tiny garklein offers a special challenge. Refer to Lesson 22 to ensure it will fit your hands before you buy one. Its high tones make it unique among recorders.

Perhaps you'll take up **bird fluting**, teaching your pet bird to sing by fluting to him. This hobby was quite fashionable a few hundred years ago in France and England. Your playing can inspire certain birds to sing along!

Below the soprano, the alto (or treble) is the recorder for which many famous composers wrote their scores. Its voice is sweet and mellow, making it the favored solo instrument of many musicians.

You can either learn to read scores written in the alto's native key of F, or you can employ the alto solo as a transposing instrument. Either way you'll enjoy the pleasures of its dulcet tones.

I really enjoy my tenor recorders. They're low pitched and quiet enough that they don't bother roommates or neighbors as a louder soprano might. The tenor offers a mellifluous low voice without taking on some of the challenges of the bass.

And what about the bass? Its quiet voice sounds positively spooky in a stairwell or resonant basement. Just like the other F Major members of the recorder family, you don't have to learn to read sheet music scored specifically for it if you don't care to. (Remember, it normally plays bass clef scores.) Instead, use it as a transposing instrument with the same scores you play on your soprano.

You might even try a German fingered recorder. Some feature softer, more demure voices than their baroque counterparts. As long as you accept their limits as folk instruments, they provide lots of fun.





Different Brands

Besides different sizes of recorder made of different materials, you'll find that individual manufacturers vary. For example, you might assume that my Yamaha and Aulos tenors duplicate each other. In fact, they present very different personalities, and each appeals in its own way.

Manufacturers must make choices on materials, finishes, and a hundred small design details that imbue their instruments with their own personalities.

Every one of my six sopranos offers its own sound and playing characteristics. It's fun to test and compare instruments. Perhaps you'll discover your personal "dream flute" in the process.

Go Electronic

Lesson 22 talked briefly about new developments in traditional acoustic recorders, as well as the new developments in electronic wind instruments. Perhaps you'd like to become part of the vanguard yourself? A world of discovery and fun awaits if you to choose to explore these developments. You can produce some unique sounds with ERs and EWIs. Let your imagination run wild and have a great time on the musical frontier.

Collecting

Perhaps you'll be so drawn into the different sizes, makes, and compositions of the recorder that you'll develop a recorder collection. While I've emphasized different materials, tones, and playabilties, some flutes present beautiful designs.

To stimulate your imagination, here are two unusual ones in my collection:



The top piece is crafted in unfinished cherry. It was handmade by Egil Storbekken (1911-2002) in 1970. Storbekken almost single-handedly revived interest in traditional Scandinavian folk music in

the mid-20th century. He called this Norwegian folk flute his *tussefløyte*, or "troll flute". He woodburned the leather ornate case that accompanies this flute.

The lower recorder is a handmade ceramic piece, decorated with various inexpensive gemstones. Its terracotta voice is unique among all the recorders I've played.

It was handcast by Peruvian Indians. Ceramic recorders are extremely rare, but Latin American native peoples have a tradition of thousands of years of crafting all sorts of flutes in earthenware. Like the Scandinavian folk flute, this German-fingered recorder presents a breathy, soft, soothing voice. Its clay sound is unique. You won't find many terracotta recorders.

Historic Reenactment

Given the recorder's dominance in the Renaissance and Baroque musical periods, many musicians enjoy reenacting that music with their recorders and other authentic instruments from those eras. They play original pieces by the great historic composers with the instruments for which they were written.

Many of us use modern recorders for this. But the most serious buy Renaissance recorders with their wider bores and strikingly authentic sound.

Those with an interest in classical music often enjoy this pursuit.

Become a Virtuoso

Thus far we've emphasized the adventure of exploring the variety of the recorder universe. But some opt for a very different path.

They prefer to focus solely on one instrument. That is the best route to fully mastering it and becoming an expert musician. You may discover true enjoyment in becoming a virtuoso. Perhaps you'll give a public performance. That often requires concentrating solely on your "performance" recorder. Perhaps you'll post your performances on Youtube or social media for others to enjoy.

Make Your Own Recorder

Some enthusiasts take on the challenge of creating their own recorder. It's fun to develop your own instrument in exactly the way you prefer.

If you research this topic on the internet, you'll find a wealth of easy to follow how-to information. Both textual guides and Youtube videos are available.

You'll encounter two approaches. You can make a plastic recorder from **PVC pipe**, hollow plastic plumbing tubes that are inexpensively available at any hardware store or through Amazon. The advantage here is that piping provides you a ready-made bore. You'll still have to make the block (mouthpiece) and drill the tone holes. You'll only need a small set of tools for the project.

The second approach is to make your own wood recorder. This requires some woodworking skill. You'll need a lathe and a way to drill the bore. Some woodworking experience may prove helpful.

An experienced individual with proper tools can make a recorder in a matter of hours. For those new to the project count on several days spanning a week or so.

Duets and Ensembles

Playing in groups offers another avenue to explore.

Most recorder players start out solo as they learn the rudiments of the instrument. But at a certain point you might like to play duets, rounds, or ensembles with others. We've provided a few scores to get you started on this path in the lessons on rounds and duets. The Songs Appendix offers a few more.

You get the pleasures of music and the joys of companionship all in one. You might also learn a lot and find a good opportunity to exchange playing tips.

If you and your companions are at different points in your musical journeys, you might gain a mentor. Or, you might enjoy mentoring a more junior partner.

Playing with others offers a great opportunity to learn about other brands, sizes, and makes of recorders. You can learn much about fellow musicians' instruments before you purchase them.

If you don't know companions with whom to play, you can find some online through websites designed to match people with similar interests for local meetings. The classic website is called Meetup.com, but if you search for these websites, you'll find many more. Some are free while others require paid membership.

Some musicians just use general-purpose social media websites to arrange their sessions. Options include Facebook, Instagram, Discord, Bumble, Nextdoor, Classmates, TikTok, and many others.

Play with Background Tracks

Don't have a partner for a duet? Want to play lead in your own ensemble?

Another option is **backing tracks.** These enable you to play the lead to prerecorded background accompaniment created by others. So you can enjoy playing with a band simply by downloading some background recordings.

Search the internet for a term like "download background tracks" and you'll find many royalty-free recordings created for just this purpose. Or, you can pay for individual tracks or a subscription service.

In either case, you can download background for almost any kind of music and then play it back while you play the lead part on your recorder.

Recording

Try recording yourself as you play your recorder. Computers and laptops with inexpensive microphones, speakers, and headphones make it all very easy. Or use your mobile phone.

If you prefer, you can invest in sophisticated, specialized equipment, such as a high quality computer microphone. These are better for recording music than computers and phones, which are designed for the less rigid acoustical requirements of the human voice.

Play back how you sound, and you'll quickly identify where you need to improve. Make adjustments, record the same song again, and see if you've enhanced your play.

Recording also allows you to play duets by yourself. Record one part, then play it back while you play the other. You can even record and mix several parts to create your own ensemble or "one-man band."

Music editing computer programs -- **audio editors** and **digital audio workstations** (DAW) -- allow you to alter your original recordings. You can "clean up" background noise, edit out disruptive breaths, merge parts, add reverberation, and perform all sorts of audio feats.

Both free and commercial products are available. Just search the internet for "audio editors" or "digital audio workstations".

Recording also gives you an easy way to capture any melodies you compose.

Composing and Improvisation

Ever tried your hand at writing your own songs? Many find it enjoyable and satisfying.

A simple instrument like the recorder enables you to become instinctive with fingering. As you gain this proficiency you'll discover that this intimacy with your instrument helps you concentrate on the creative aspects of pitches, timing, rhythms, and their interrelationships, rather than on the mechanics of playing. The recorder's simplicity makes it an ideal composing companion.

The simple recorder is also perfect for improvising your own melodies on the fly.

In a previous lesson we mentioned the five note or pentatonic scale. That's an excellent place to start improvising because all the notes sound good together. In other words, you can't play a wrong note! Try it and you'll see. You might enjoy composing your first pentatonic tunes.

Some even take on the challenge of composing their own multipart songs. You can use higher recorders like the soprano or sopranino for melodies, while you record background parts on the alto or tenor.

Modern technologies enable you to record several individual parts and combine them. You can "be your own band."

Some like to use different instruments for background and rhythmic parts. Keyboards and guitar are popular.

The ukulele has gained some prominence in this role on Youtube. Its 4 strings render it simpler than the 6-stringed guitar. Many don't realize that ukes come in soprano, concert, tenor, and baritone pitches… which give the instrument true versatility in backgrounding.

Search on Youtube or similar video websites and you'll find many examples of how individuals have created multipart ensembles with recorder lead.

Course Summary

Whichever way you choose to go in your future exploration of recorders, a world of fun, discovery, and enjoyable music awaits you.

I hope you've enjoyed this course and found it useful. I developed it for the love of creation, and to share the fascinating world of recorders with others. That's why it's free.

If you found the course worthwhile, please tell your friends about it on social media. Spread the word!

A positive Amazon review would be especially helpful. Without reviews, a book like this gets buried beneath all the AI generated slop -- which their creators often don't even bother to proofread for errors.

You can learn lots more about recorders at FolkFluteWorld.com. That website contains all free resources including articles, sheet music, videos, product reviews, fingering charts, and more.

With your newfound musicianship, you might even want to explore the many other kinds of simple flutes that website covers. They include ocarinas, tin whistles, Native American flutes, xuns, flageolets, bone flutes, and ethnic flutes of all sorts from around the world.

Your Feedback, Please

My goal is to make this book as useful as possible. I'd be very interested in any comments, corrections, or suggestions you may have for improvement. You can find my current contact information at the website FolkFluteWorld.com. Thank you for your help.

Your Next Steps

Next up, we offer a Songs Appendix with some 125 more songs for you to play. Accompanying each tune is a few words about its origins, as well as playing tips. Scores are arranged alphabetically.

After that are the answers to the two self-tests.

Then you'll find an extensive list of websites that offer free scores you can play on your recorder. These lists provide access to over one million free tunes.

Next come two indexes. The first is a traditional topical index, while the second alphabetically lists all the songs.

The last pages of this book contain a series of fingering charts:

- Whole Note Fingering Chart
- Accidentals Fingering Chart
- Alternate Fingerings Chart
- Scales and Arpeggios

You might want to print the fingering charts for your recorder and keep the copies with it. Then you'll have them wherever you go.

So, don't stop now. Keep on learning, playing, and enjoying!

Print Copies

Order a print copy of this book at Amazon.

Nice large format -- 8 ½" by 11" -- so the scores are easy to read.

Free Ocarina Books!

To download my **two** free ebooks on ocarinas, go to **FolkFluteWorld.com**

Or order a hard copy from Amazon.com. The titles are --

Ocarina Course: Transverse and Inline Ocarinas. **Click here.**
(400 pages, 180 songs, 32 lessons)

Ocarina Course: 6 and 4 Hole Pendants. **Click here.**
(300 pages, 140 songs, 24 lessons)

By the music expert who runs FolkFluteWorld.com -- **not** AI written.

Nice large format -- 8 ½" by 11" -- so the scores are easy to read.
Full color illustrations.

Songs For Practice

This appendix provides over 125 more practice scores of all levels of difficulty. All are playable with any recorder.

For many songs, we offer two versions in different keys. That gives you a chance to exercise your skills across the recorder's full range. You'll also learn how keys affect the emotions in a song.

For each song we'll give a little background and suggest what to concentrate on when you practice.

Songs are listed alphabetically by title.

Aiken Drum

This is an old Scottish tune dating back to the early 1700's. We offer two versions. The first is in C Major at 4/4 time, while the second is in G Major at 2/4 time. Which version do you prefer? And why?

Practice: In the C Major version, low B occurs in lines two and four. So pick a note two above low B, and you have low D. Try it, and you'll see it fits the tune. Or, try shading the bell to hit low B.

Notice the small numbers above each line in the score. These indicate with what measure number each line starts. Measure numbers can be useful for referring to specific parts of a score.

The second version below features faster timing. The sixteenth notes at the start of the score act as **lead-in** or **pick-up notes**, as do those in the last measure of the first line.

Aiken Drum

Traditional Scottish
FolkFluteWorld.com



Aiken Drum

Traditional Scottish
FolkFluteWorld.com



Ain't She Sweet

Many consider this the theme song for the Roaring Twenties. It emerged from that song-writing complex called Tin Pan Alley in New York City in 1927, penned by the team of Milton Ager and Jack Yellen.

Ager and Yellen wrote many other popular songs of the era including *Happy Days Are Here Again*, *I'm Nobody's Baby*, and *Hard Hearted Hannah*. Both were inducted into the Songwriters Hall Of Fame.

Practice: The timing in this score is a little tricky, but since you probably know how the tune goes, it shouldn't present a problem.

Note the A♭'s in the third line. A♭ is the same note as G#. The flat symbol applies to the note to which it's adjacent, and also to all subsequent A's in the same measure.

That's a general rule: **a sharp or flat symbol immediately next to a note applies to that note and all following occurrences of the same note in the same measure.**

Once you get to the next measure, the key signature again applies.

In all cases, a sharp, flat, or natural sign that immediately precedes a note should be applied to that note.

If a composer wants the same note to occur twice in a measure, first as a sharp, and then as a natural, he will normally place the natural symbol in front of the second note.



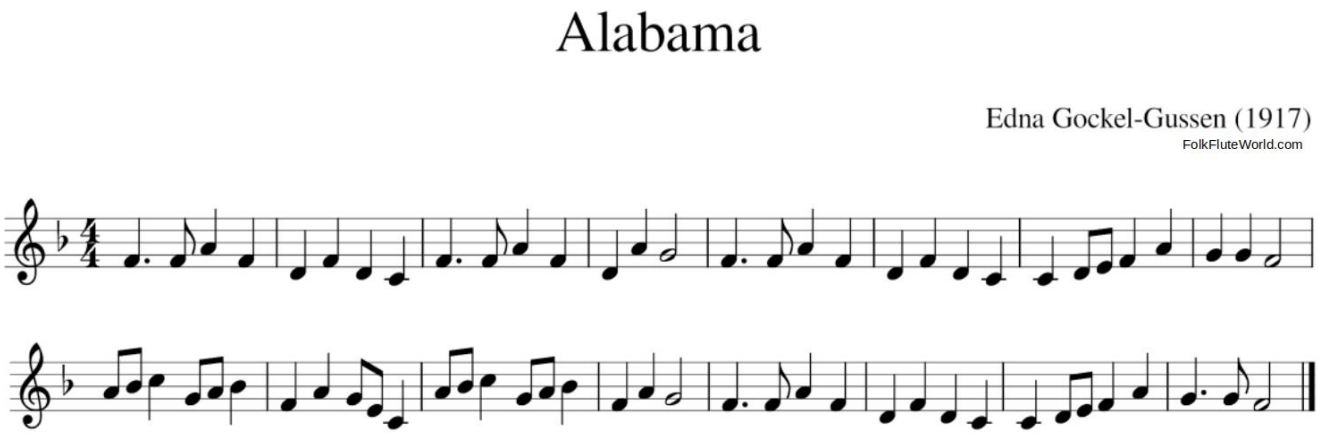
Alabama

This is the official song of the state of Alabama.

The lyrics were written by Julia Tutwiler, a 19th century advocate for education and prison reform.

Organist Edna Gockel Gussen scored the tune in 1931. Shortly thereafter, the legislature approved it as the Alabama state anthem.

Practice: As always, carefully inspect the score's key signature *before* you start playing. In this case you'll note the B♭ and remember to play it correctly when it pops up several times late in the score.



All Things Bright and Beautiful

This Anglican hymn from 1887 was composed by William Henry Monk and is set to lyrics from 1848.

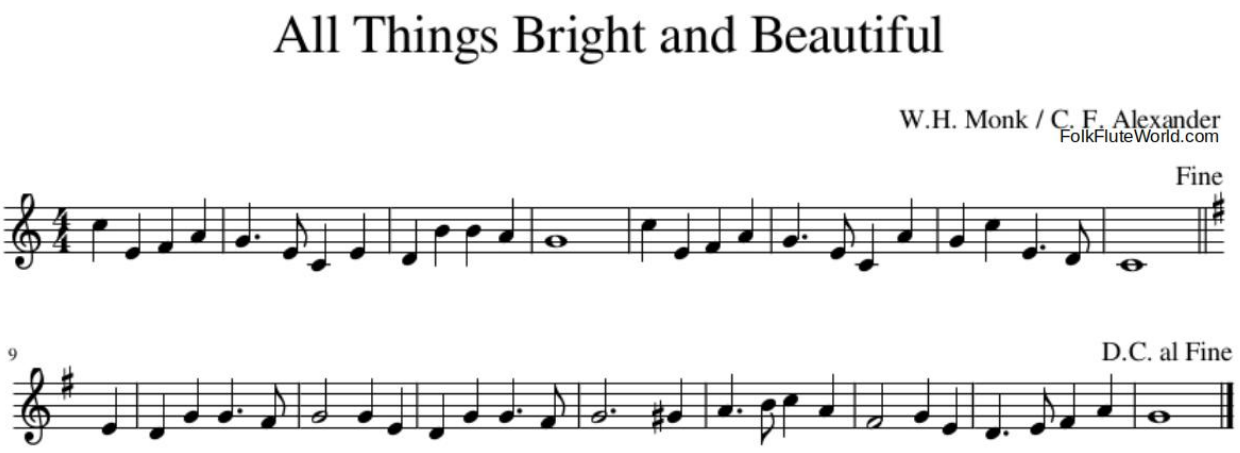
In the 1970's, English author James Herriot used the lyrics to entitle his series of autobiographical books on his veterinary practice in the Yorkshire hills.

Practice: This simple 4/4 melody changes key going into the second line. Be sure you play F natural throughout the first line, then pick up F# in the second line.

When the **D.C. al Fine** notation sends you back to the start of score, you again play F natural in the first line.

This simple tune is a good opportunity to project strong, pure notes from your recorder.

Though the score lacks breath marks, appropriate points are likely after measures 4 and 8 in the first line, and 5 and 9 in the second line. Of course, if you have the wind capacity to breathe only after the ends of the two lines, that's preferable. Any time you can minimize the number of times you interrupt a melody to breathe, it enhances the effect.



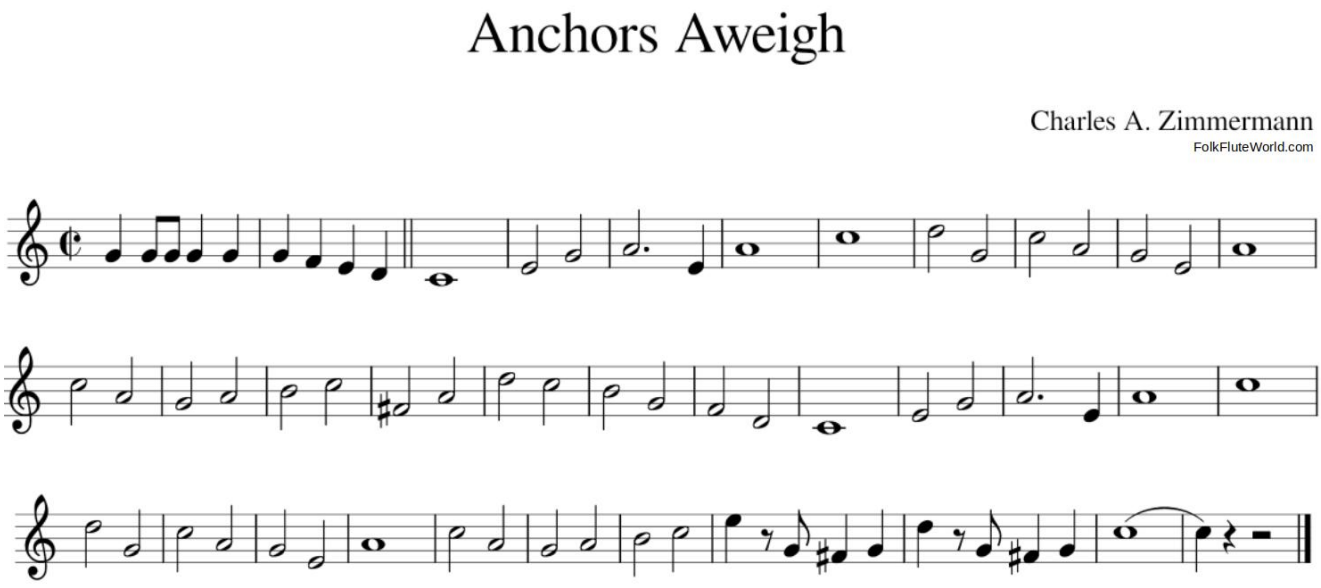
Anchors Aweigh

A young naval lieutenant named Charles Zimmermann wrote this song in 1906. Its first public performance was at the Army-Navy football game in December of that year.

Today, it's the fight song of the U.S. Naval Academy, and the unofficial anthem of the U.S. Navy.

Practice: This song is scored in **cut time**. That's denoted in the time signature by a capital "C" with a vertical line drawn through it. It's the same as the 2/2 time signature. It means two beats per measure, with each half note getting one beat. In practical terms, that usually means to play the song at a fast clip.

Cut time is formally called ***alla breve***.



The Arkansas Traveler

This tune dates from 1863. It's since become the state song of Arkansas.

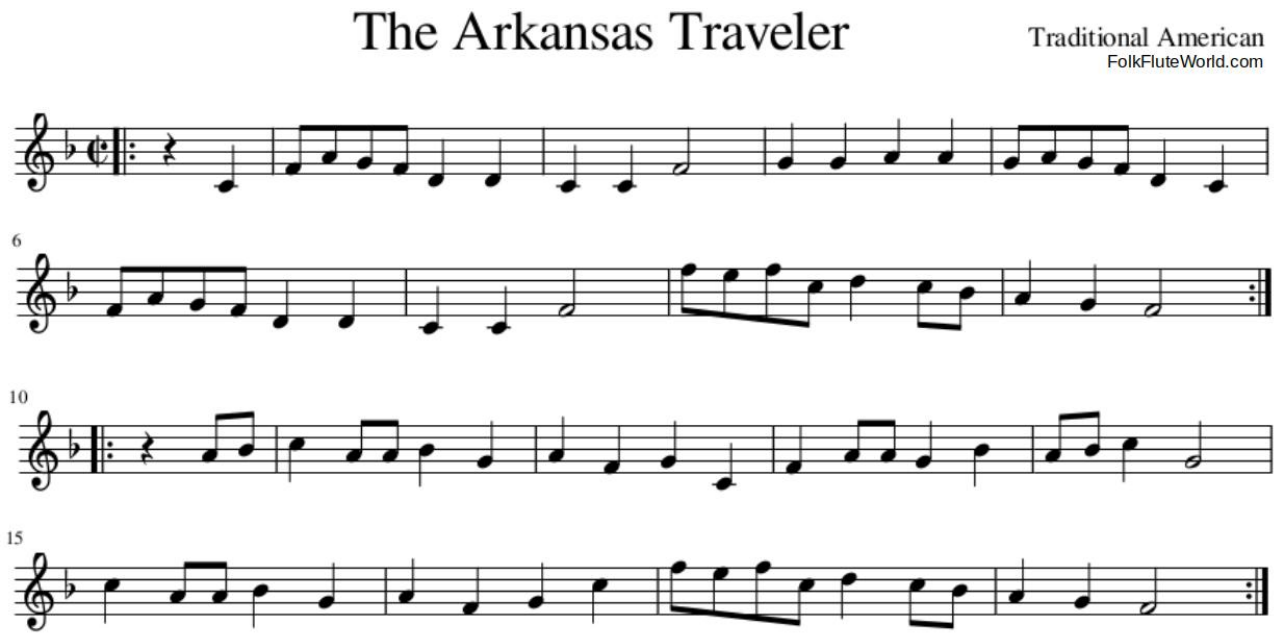
It tells the story of a weary traveler who asks for assistance at the home of a suspicious man. The homeowner is trying to play his broken fiddle without much luck. The traveler grabs the fiddle and flawlessly plays this tune. In response, the homesteader becomes friendly and bids the traveler to stay the night.

This peppy tune makes a fantastic fast march for a high-pitched soprano or sopranino.

Practice: Play this song slowly to figure it out. Then get it up to speed, which is a quick 2/2 time. Be prepared for all the B♭'s along the way.

You may wonder what those little numbers are above the start of each line of the score. Those number the measures. They can be handy when referring to a specific measure within the score.

The second version gives you a good workout with the very highest notes.



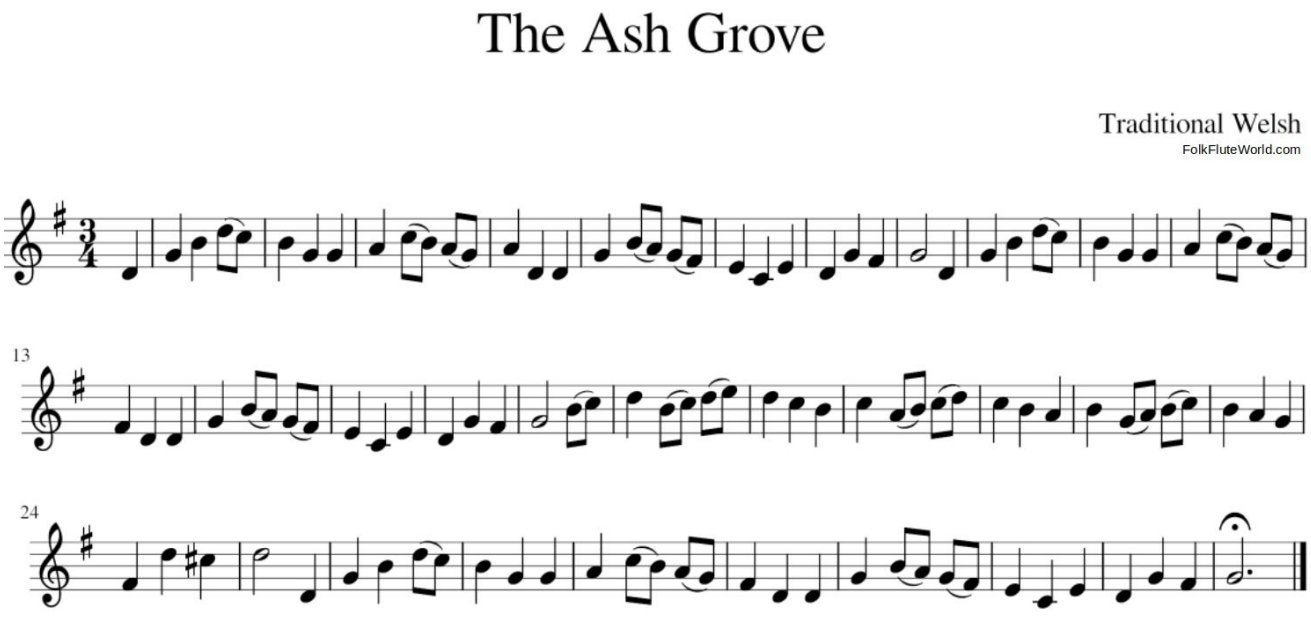

Version 2
Traditional American
FolkFluteWorld.com

The Ash Grove

This Welsh tune is several hundred years old. Its best-known lyrics were written by Thomas Oliphant, a 19th century Scottish musician, artist, and author.

Practice: The timing of this song is consistent and thus pretty easy. But with its eighth note runs, the tune will certainly keep your fingers busy.

Take heed of the high C# in the first measure of the last line.



Avalon

Al Jolson wrote this tune in 1920.

Jolson was one of most popular and highest paid singer/actors of his era. He starred in the first ever talking film, *The Jazz Singer*, and was featured in many musicals up until World War II. His career was on the wane by that time, but he perked up and spent much time and effort entertaining the troops in the war and also in the subsequent Korean War.

Practice: This song requires that you play the slurs correctly. Playing tied notes as one is critical to the correct melody. For the double-stemmed notes in the last line, play the high notes.

This is a very pretty song to emote through your recorder.

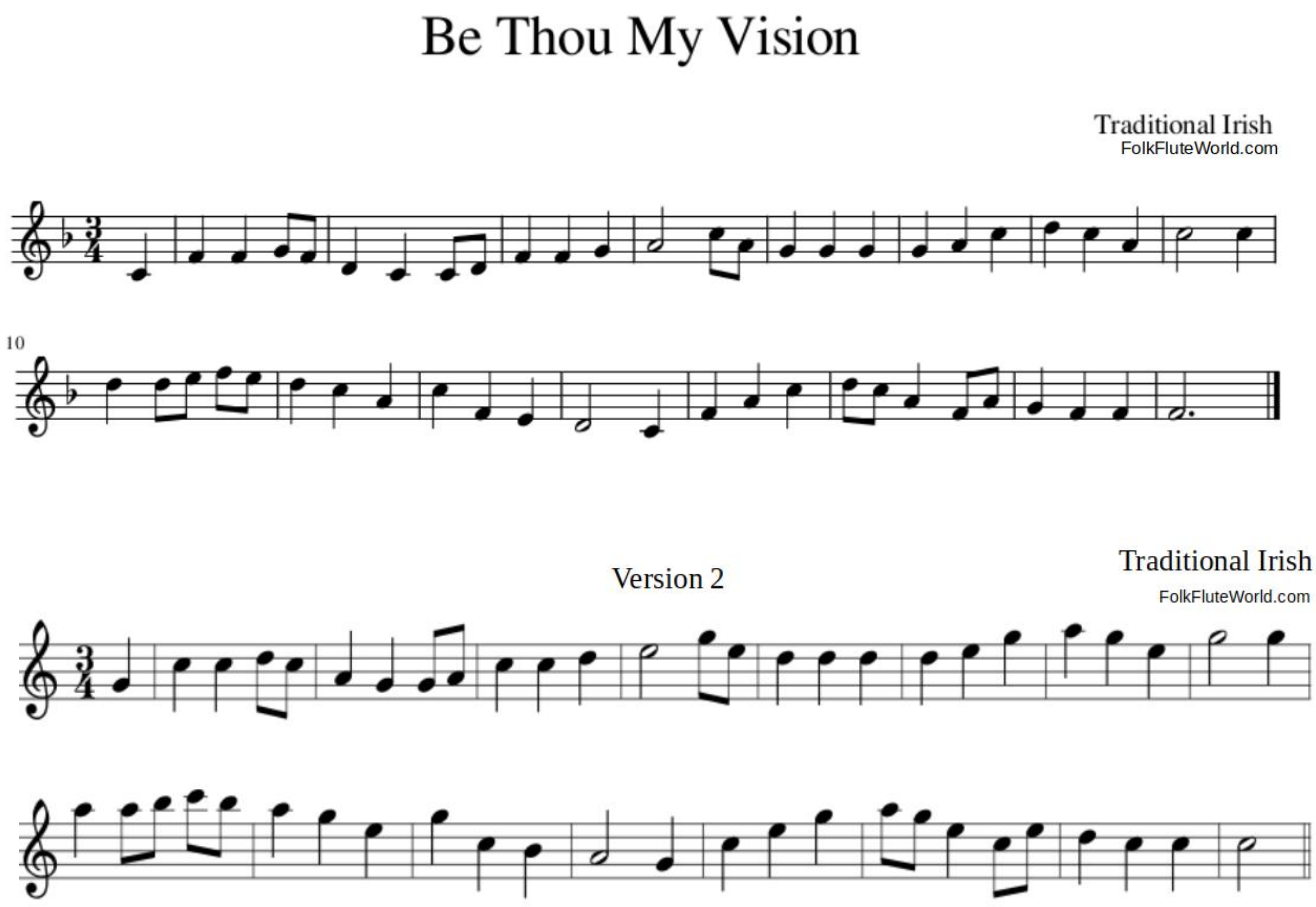


Be Thou My Vision

This is a traditional Irish tune thought to go back several hundred years. It was converted to a church hymn in the early 1900's with lyrics that trace their origins to the 1500's, and possibly much earlier.

Practice: This is an easy one, consisting of only eighth, quarter, and half notes. It's in F Major with 3/4 timing. The second version is in C Major, without sharps or flats.

Concentrate on projecting this pretty melody in your best "flute voice." Make it truly sing, so that if anyone overhears you, they will remark what a lovely tune it is.



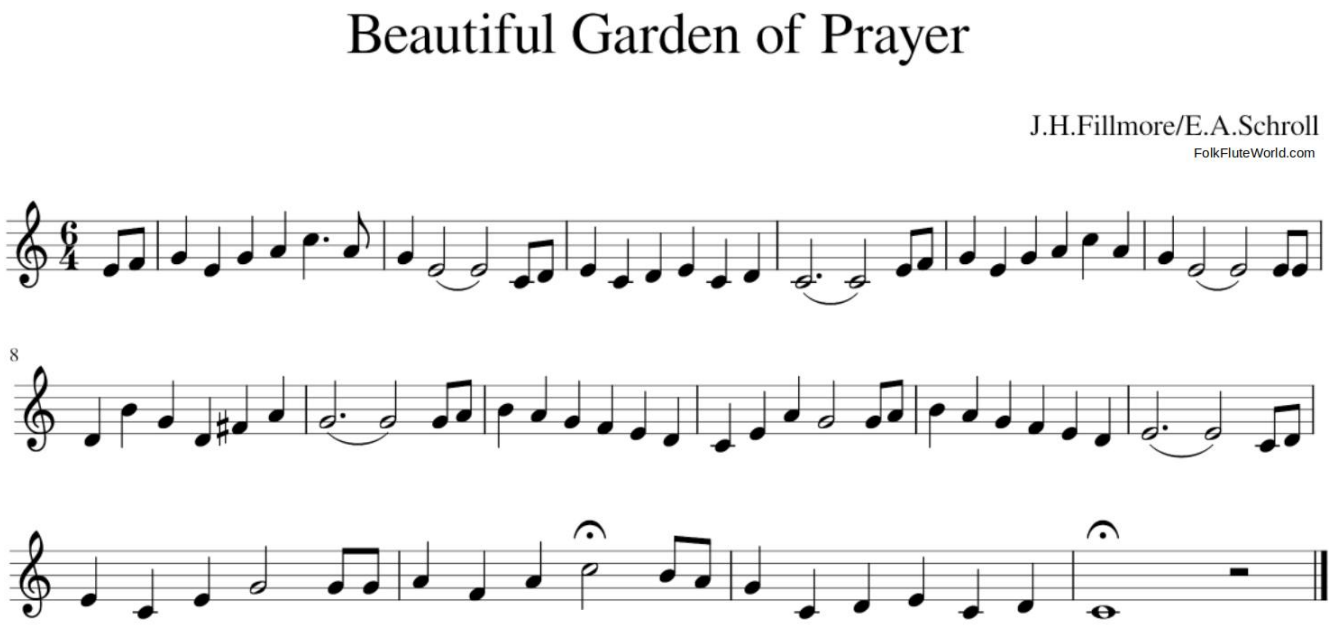
Beautiful Garden of Prayer

Christian hymns are an excellent source of free scores that feature beautiful melodies that are often very easy to play. Most are in the public domain. This one is typical.

This melody is also known under the title *There's a Garden Where Jesus is Waiting*. Eleanor Allen Schroll wrote the most popular lyrics for the tune in 1920.

Practice: There are two **fermata** or **holds** in this song, both in the last line. In an orchestra, the conductor indicates to the musicians how long to hold the note. In your solo play, it's up to your own best judgment.

Try to imbue this simple yet lovely melody with true expression.



Beautiful Isle of Somewhere

This song depicts an imaginary paradise somewhere beyond this earth. It gained great popularity when played at President McKinley's funeral after his assassination in 1901. It's still played at funerals today.

McKinley had been shot by an anarchist, a follower of what was then a minor political movement. It's alleged that the President died due to the unhygienic practices of his physicians. Today he undoubtedly would have survived.

Practice: Musically speaking, this is an easy song. Play it for a beautiful tone and try to make it live up to its title.

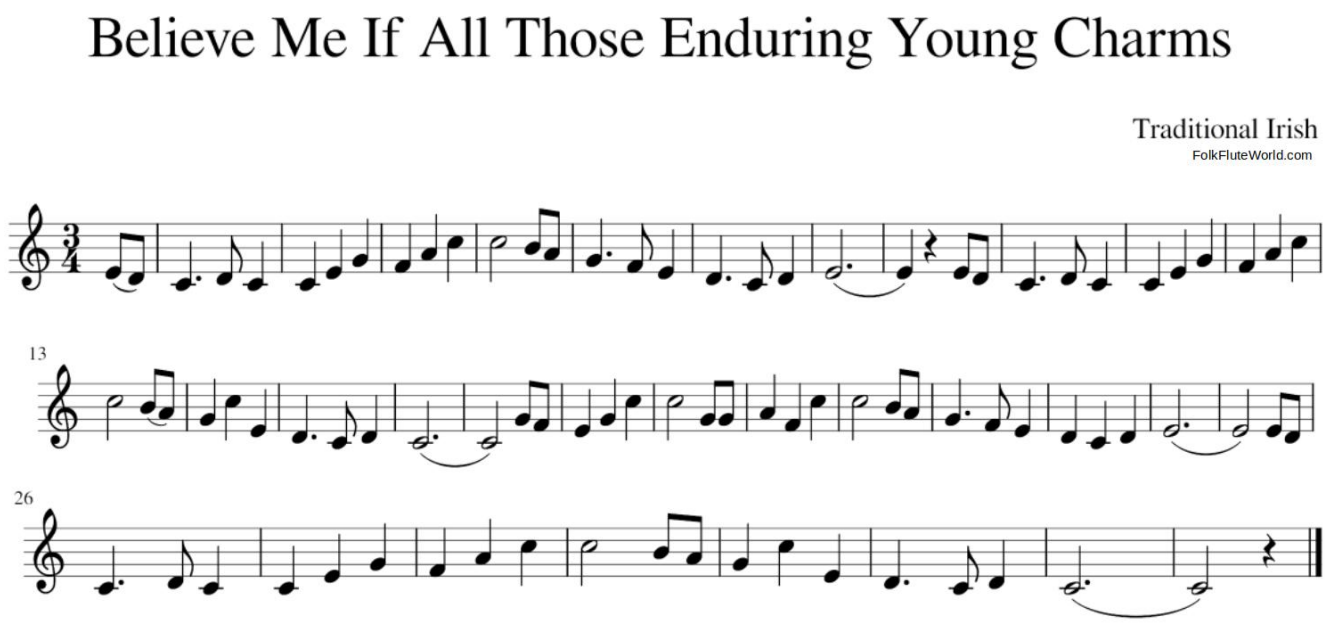


Believe Me If All Those Enduring Young Charms

This Irish tune can be traced all the way back to the 17th century. Poet, composer, and writer Thomas Moore famously wrote lyrics for it.

The melody was also adopted for the Harvard University alma mater theme by Reverend Samuel Gilman (class of 1811). With new lyrics it bids the university a fond farewell.

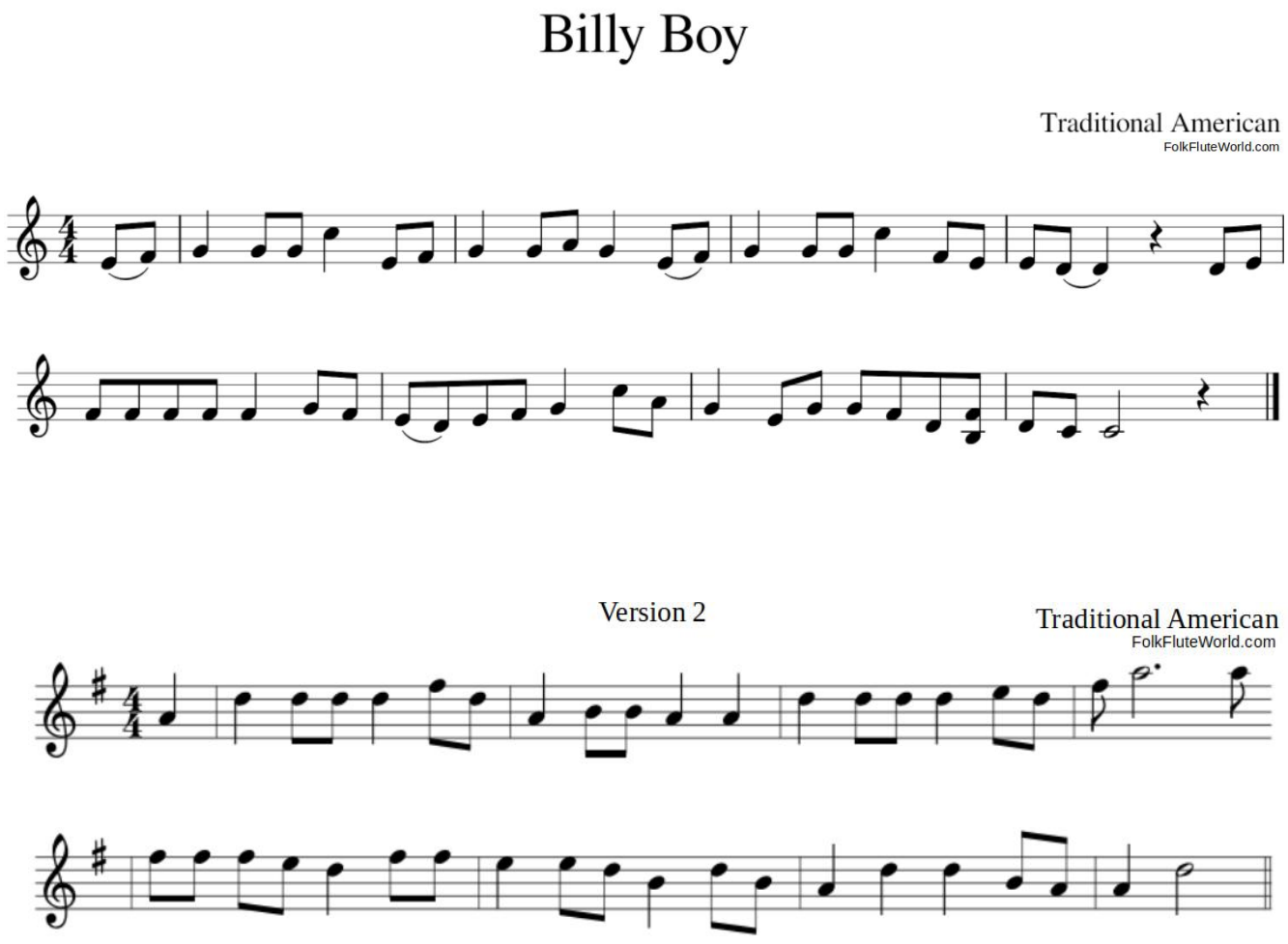
Practice: This song ranges from low C to high C, and mixes all kinds of notes and timing. While there's not some specific item you should focus on in practice, if you can play this song well, you can feel confident that you're well on your way to being able to play most of the popular songs you'll encounter.



Billy Boy

The lyrics of this American folk song question young Billy about why he should be allowed to marry his intended. Both suitors are considered too young for marriage -- although legal age limits were in the early teens when the song was current in the 1800's.

Practice: This score presents you with mostly eighth notes. You'll want to articulate them clearly, but don't overdo the tonguing.



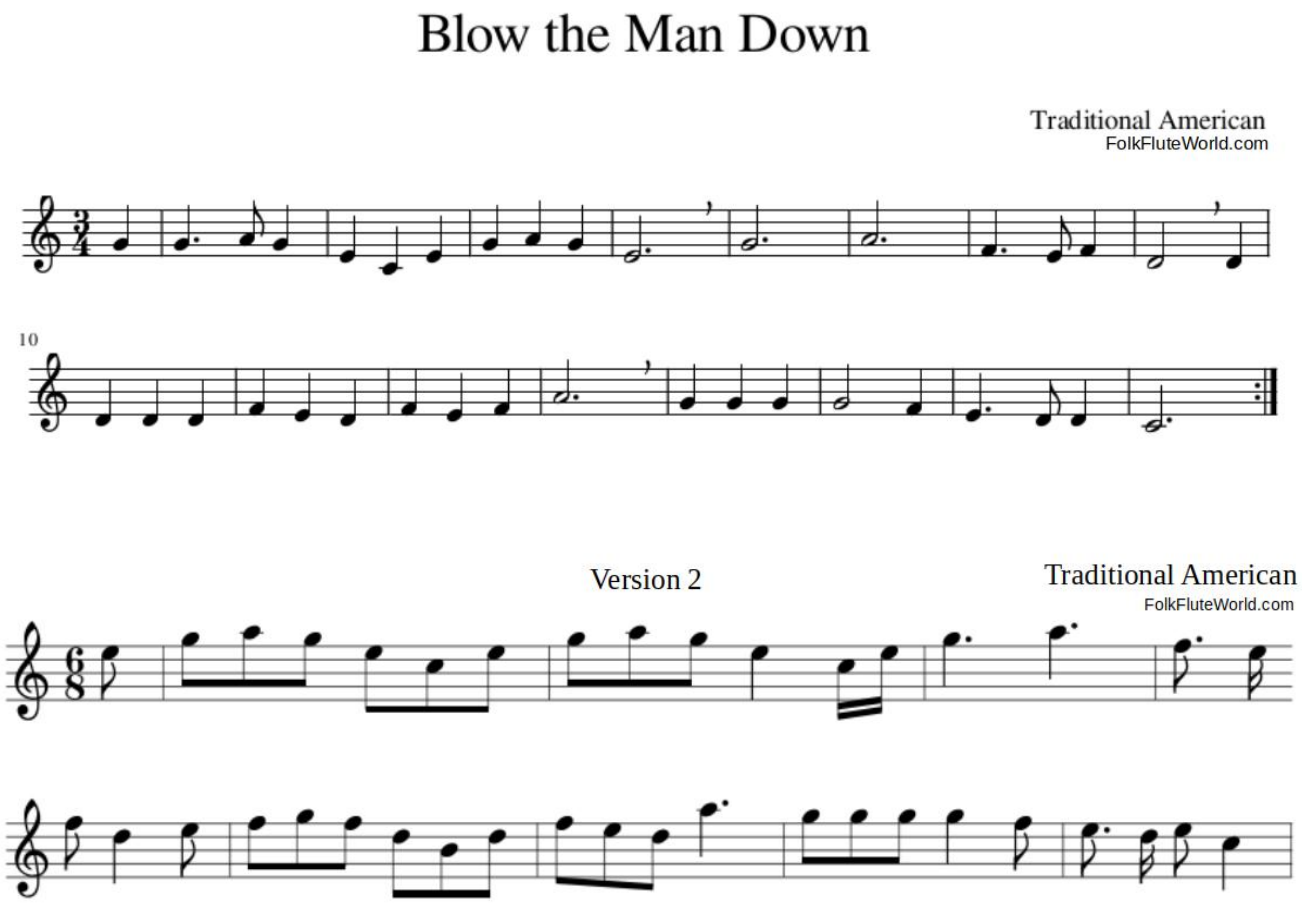
Blow the Man Down

Here's a **sea shanty**, a song sung by sailors while they work. Shanties are typically highly repetitious simple melodies. A lead singer shouts out the words to each new verse, then the rest of the sailors chant the refrain. Take all the verses together -- and there are often many -- and they create a story in song.

This particular shanty dates to the 1860's and is thought to be American in origin.

Practice: This simple song needs little explanation. Note the breath marks in the first version. They indicate the phrasing of the song. Once you've mastered this tune, play it at a jaunty tempo, reflecting how sailors would likely sing it.

Perhaps you can play this lusty tune at a party while your friends sing along.



Blue Rhine Waltz

Though you might assume it German, this popular waltz had its origins in 1890's England.

People often confuse it with the *Blue Danube (Waltz)*, from composer Johann Strauss II in 1866. The two songs are unrelated.

Practice: The outstanding feature of this score is all the slurs (or ties) between notes. They must be played correctly to properly render the tune. Remember that a slur between notes of different pitches means you shift from one to another without separately tonguing the latter note(s) in the tie.



British Grenadiers

You've undoubtedly heard this marching song in the background of historic and military movies. The tune dates from the 17th century and was used by the British military… and the American film industry.

Practice: This is a simple tune, but to play it up to lively speed you'll need to have your fingering down pat. We offer two different versions. The repeat symbols in the first version show that you repeat the first line of the score, but not the second.



Camptown Races

Stephen Foster wrote this song in 1850. The Camptown, Pennsylvania horse races were his inspiration. The tune became widely popular within just a few years.

Although Foster died young -- at age 37 in 1864 -- he was the first truly prominent American composer. He's sometimes called "the father of American music."

His other famous tunes include *My Old Kentucky Home*, *Old Folks at Home* (better known as *Swanee River*), *Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair*, and *Nelly Bly*.

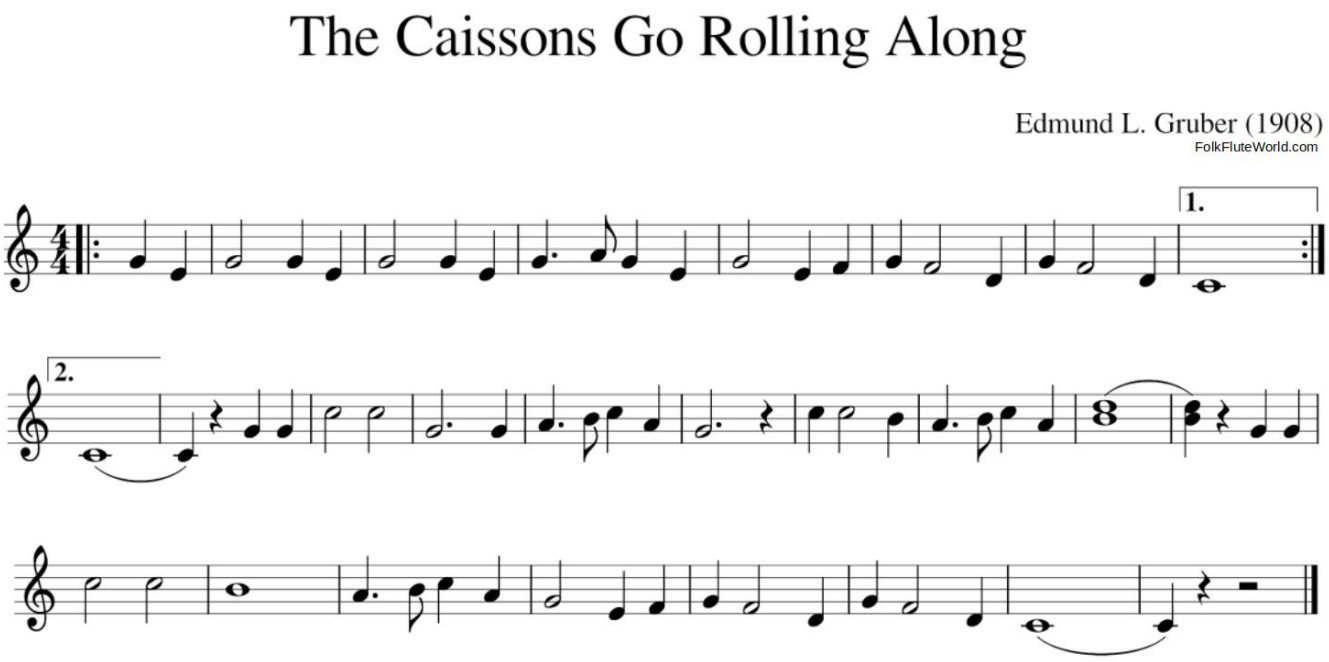
Practice: This score should be an easy one if you first practice it slowly before picking up the tempo. When you master it, you'll want to play it at a jaunty tempo.



The Cassions Go Rolling Along

This song was penned in 1908 by Edmund Gruber. "March Master" John Philip Sousa transformed it into a march called the *US Field Artillery March* in 1917. At that time it became the unofficial theme song for the US Army. It will surprise many Army veterans to hear that it wasn't until 1956 that it became official, with new lyrics by Harold Arberg.

Practice: This is a confident, upbeat song, usually played at a fast clip. Favor the high D in the double-stemmed notes.

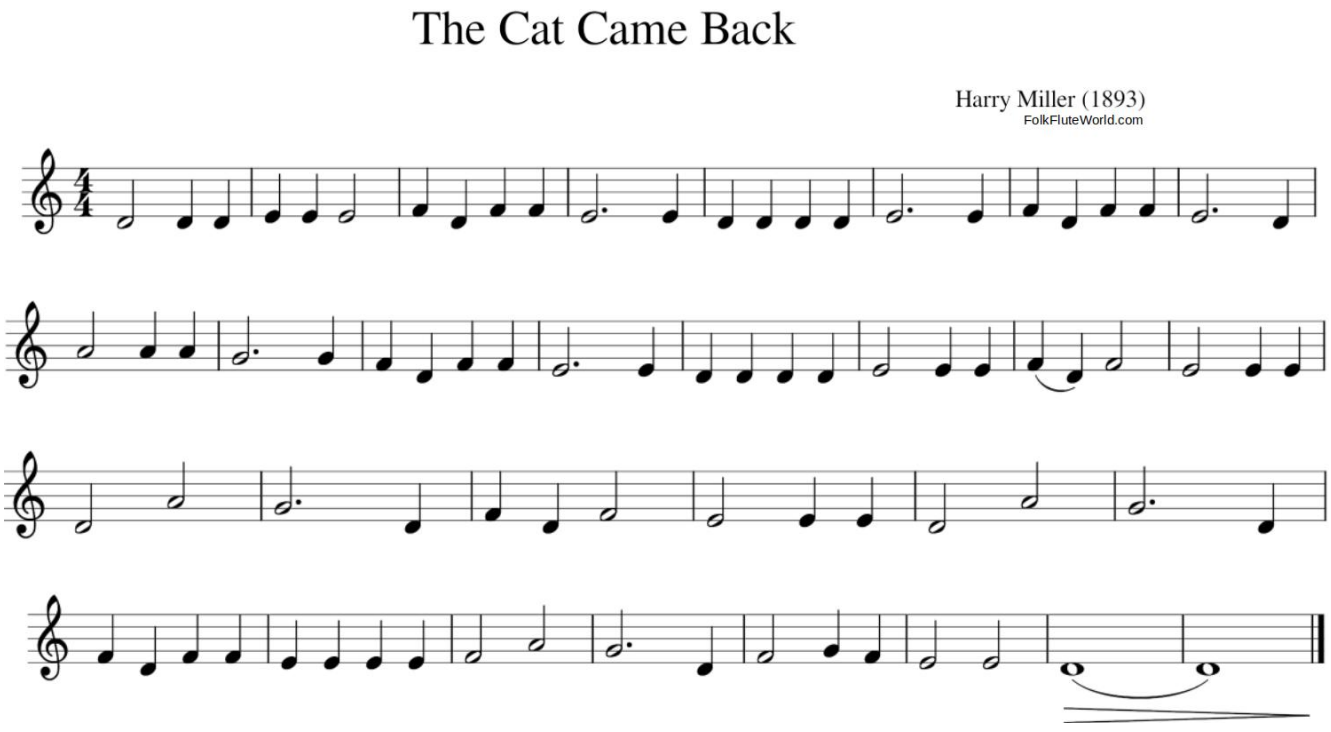


The Cat Came Back

Harry Miller wrote this song about ol' Mr. Johnson who had a cat that came back to haunt him after he tried to get rid of it. It's since become a popular children's song with that scary edge that youngsters enjoy -- a tad frightful but not too serious.

Practice: This is a simple tune, good for repetitive practice with the notes in the low range of the scale. A key goal should be to intersperse your breaths at optimal points in the song. You don't want to disrupt the ominous mood by taking breaths at inappropriate times. You might experiment a bit to see where breathing is least intrusive. Then write in your own breath marks to improve this score.

The last two measures of the song require you to hold a note and slowly decrease its loudness, as indicated by the **decrescendo** symbol. Doing this requires some skill because you don't want to soften the note such that it goes flat. You'll have to have enough breath to hold that last note for 8 beats.



Chevaliers de la table rounde

This is a popular drinking song in the French speaking areas of Europe in France, Belgium, and Switzerland.

It's rather bawdy and encourages unhealthy drinking with its last lines stating that *"The moral of this story is to drink before you die"*.

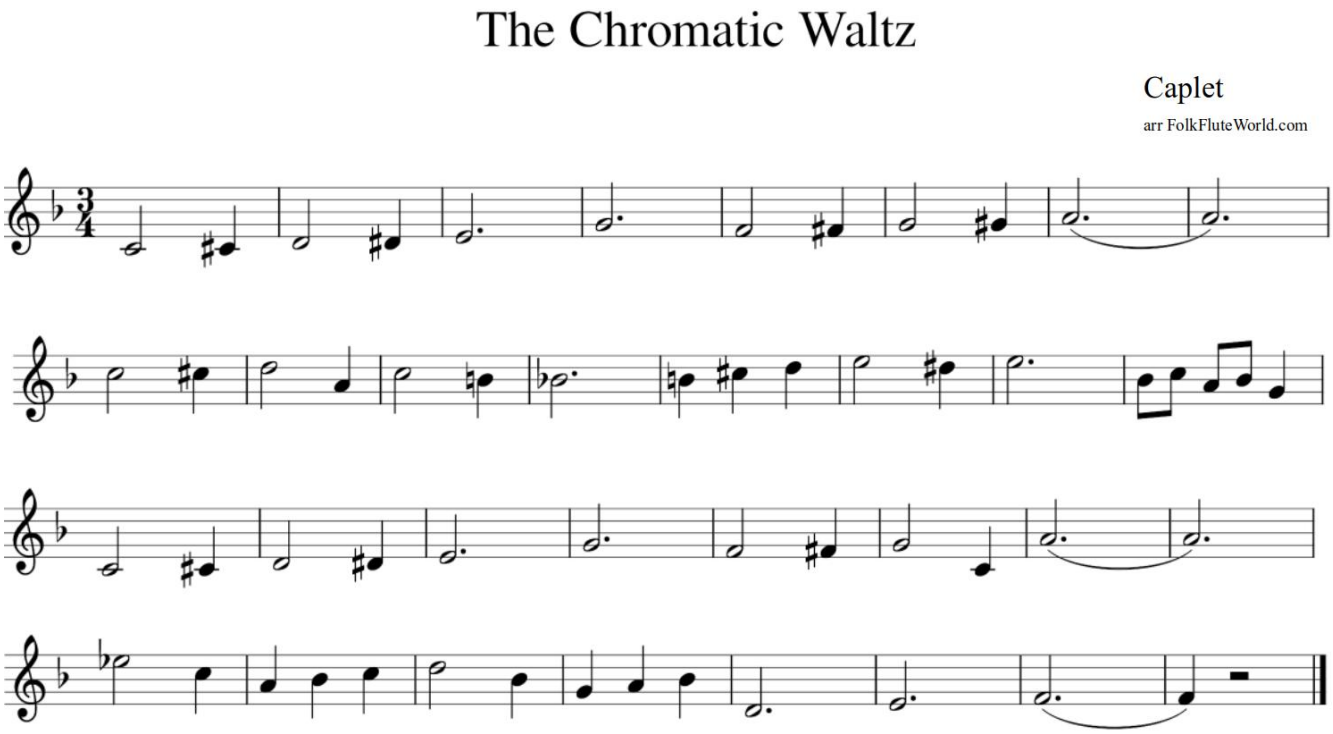
Practice: The song shifts back and forth between the 3/4 and 2/4 time signatures. But this shouldn't cause difficulty as the quarter note retains one beat throughout. Just stick to one beat per quarter note and play right through those time signature changes.



The Chromatic Waltz

Here's another appearance of the *Chromatic Waltz*, the perfect exercise to learn semitones.

Practice: This time you have to play some upper octave sharps in the second line of the score. If you need a refresher on how to finger these notes, refer to the fingering charts in the appendices at the end of this book.



Cinco Lobitos

The title of this song translates as "five little wolves." It's a Spanish folk song that is popular among children, and is sometimes used to teach counting.

Practice: This G Major tune should be fairly easy to play. It's in 2/4 time -- 2 beats per measure, with each quarter note getting 1 beat. 2/4 time is often used in upbeat scores and marches. It's well suited to a happy little children's song.



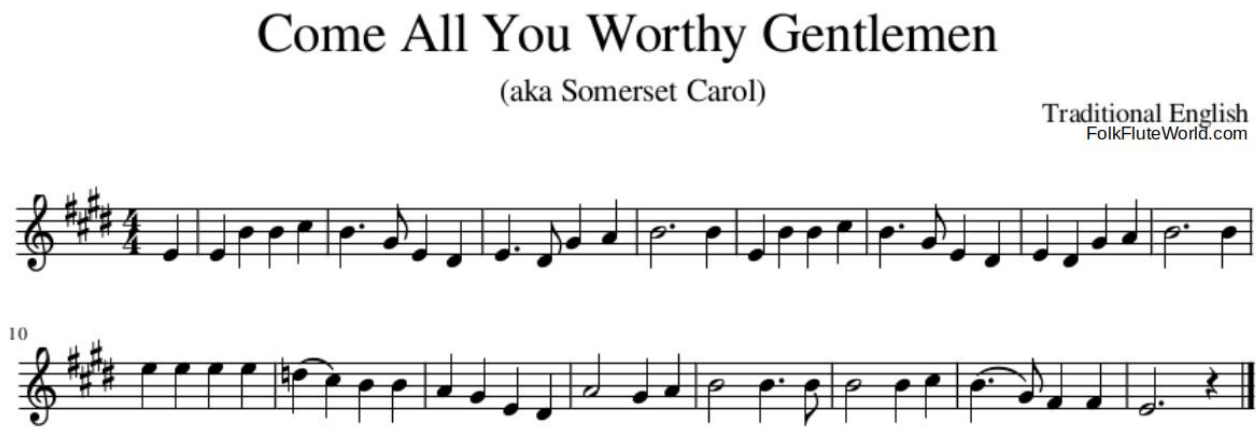
Come All You Worthy Gentlemen

Here's an English Christmas carol of unknown provenance. It's at least a couple hundred years old. It's also known as the *Somerset Carol*.

This score demonstrates the importance of noting the key signature before you play, and then scanning through the score itself. By doing that you greatly increase the chances you'll play it correctly.

The major key with four sharps is E Major. You'll rarely see it in music scored specifically for recorder, but if you source scores for other instruments you might run across it on occasion.

This score is good practice for your most common sharps.



Comin' Thru' the Rye

Common' Frae The Town is an ancient Scottish tune. Scottish Poet Robert Burns (1759–1796) wrote new words for it in 1784 and it became better known as *Comin' Thro' the Rye*.

No one really knows what "coming through the rye" refers to. Some think it means walking through a field of rye, while others believe it means wading across the river Rye. Still others claim that the phrase refers to walking across a cobblestone road prone to puddling.

Practice: The rhythm of this song relies heavily on the dotted-quarter-note-followed-by-an-eighth-note combination. Get that down and you've got this song mastered.

The time signature either calls for **cut time** or **2/4** timing. That means fast. So once you've mastered the fingering, play this song at a quick tempo.



Country Gardens

Here's a lively tune often associated with Morris dancing and May Day festivals. It's also been titled *Echoes of the Trees*.

Country Gardens can be traced back to at least 1728. Cecil Sharp famously collected it along with hundreds of other English folk songs to formally preserve them. He was central to the revival of traditional music in the British isles in the Edwardian period.

Practice: Be sure to properly interpret the repeat signs. You play the first four measures, then you repeat them one time. Then you play the next four measures, and repeat them one time. Only after all that have you played the first line to its conclusion.

For the double-stemmed notes, play the higher of the alternatives.



Coventry Carol

Next up, another version of the *Coventry Carol.*

Previous versions were in the keys of C and G (one sharp, F#). This one is also in G Major, but it starts on a higher note.

The two sharps you'll encounter in this version are G# and high C#. Try to develop a hold you can use all the time when hitting that extended high C#. It should be the same grip you use for other high notes. That will make it easier to hit it consistently every time you encounter it.

If you need a refresher on how to finger any of the accidentals, a complete chromatic fingering chart appears in the appendices of this book.



The Crawdad Song

This is an American folk song thought to have originated among African Americans in the tradition of singing while working. Many believe it evolved among railway workers in the South.

Practice: Be sure to catch the A♭ near the end of the song. Its presence -- and its importance -- show why you should always scan a score prior to playing it for the first time. Play it incorrectly and you'll ruin the tune.

That unexpected slide into the last two measures give the song a jazzy aura.

For some extra practice in the high registry, try playing this song one octave higher.



The Cuckoo

The cuckoo bird symbolizes the arrival of spring in the English countryside. That's what this song is about. It has since become a popular folk song in all Anglophone countries under a variety of titles.

Practice: The challenge in this song is the timing of the measures containing the dotted eighth -- sixteenth note combination. Once you've got that deciphered, you can readily play the song.

If you need a refresher, look ahead to the score for *Tip-Toe Thru' the Tulips.* You surely know how that song goes and its score will help you understand the timing in this one.

Here's another song you can play an octave higher for some upper register practice. Try playing it an octave higher for a fun challenge.



Daisy Bell (aka "A Bicycle Built for Two")

In the popular mind, this song from 1892 represents the "gay nineties". When it was penned, bicycles were all the rage. And for good reason. For the first time in human history, people could move quickly about without horses.

The irony, of course, is that the hoopla about bicycles quickly faded as automobiles took center stage just a few years later.

Practice: Both the timing and fingering of this song are pretty easy. Try to give the song the feel of a lilting waltz.

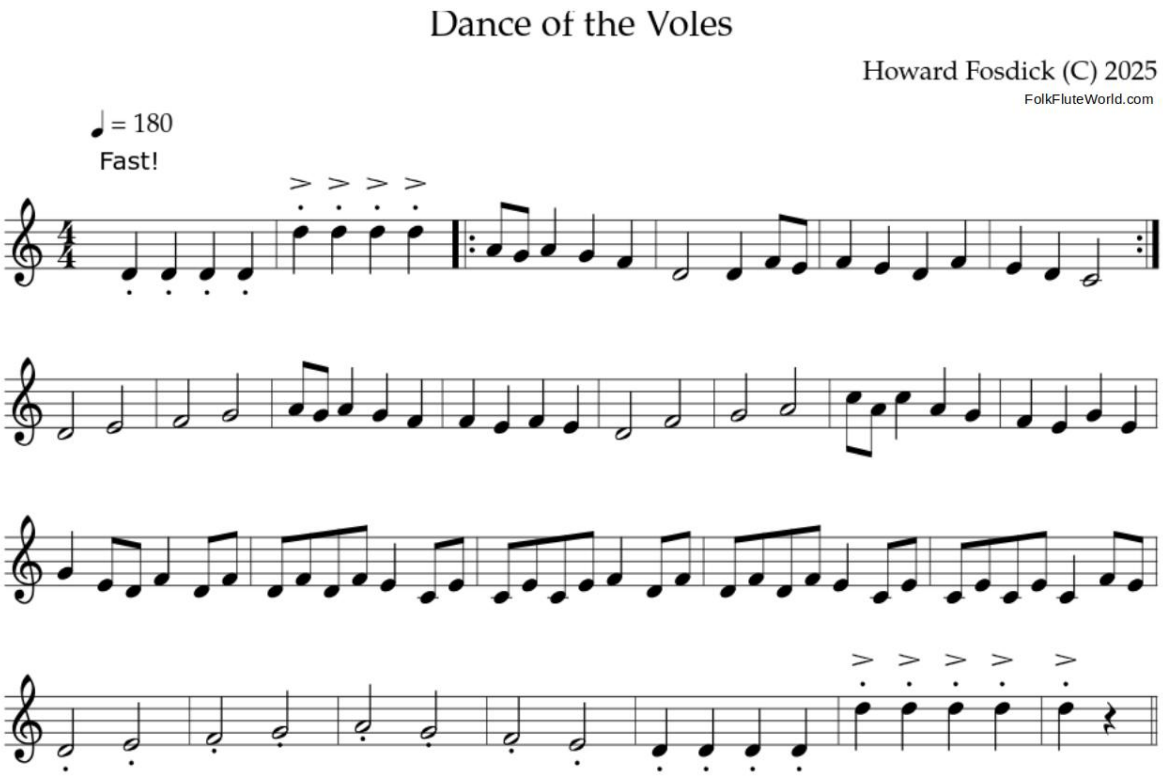


Dance of the Voles

This is a dancing tune for the voles from the novel *The Moon and Remembrance*.

Practice: The first four notes are staccato, and the next four are to be "attacked". They're the lead-in for a quick dance tune. This is one of those songs you may have to practice slowly before trying at its intended speed.

The notation at the start of the score indicates that it should be played at 180 beats per minute, with each quarter note representing a beat.



Danny Boy

Danny Boy is a traditional Irish-American anthem. It's a classic. This first version is in F Major and ranges up to high A. The second version in G Major ranges a little higher.



Version 2



This version of Danny Boy requires you to play the low B that occurs below low C.

Though technically out of the recorder's range, you may be able to approximate low B by shielding the bell of your instrument at an angle against your leg. Then, blow softly. Try it, and see if partially covering the bell will yield a low B. If so, you've just extended your instrument's range by an additional note. This technique works best with recorders that have large ends (ie, big bells) such as the alto and tenor.



Days of Summer Glory

The first lines of this German folk song voice a universal hope:

Days of summer glory
Days I love to see
All your scenes so brilliant
They are so dear to me.

Practice: Be sure you understand the timing of the sixteenth notes in the second line. In this 6/8 score, each eighth note gets 1 beat. So the sixteenth notes each get 1/2 of a beat (just the same as an eighth note in 4/4 time).



Deslumbrante

This pretty song celebrates the arrival of the bright light of Christ. Its name translates from the Portuguese as "dazzling".

Practice: The score is in straightforward 4/4 timing in C Major. It's an easy tune to play but it exercises you across the entire lower octave. Try to imbue it with the feeling it deserves.



Die Nachtigall

Here's a snippet of one of Franz Schubert's famous pieces called *The Nightingale*. Schubert was the amazingly productive Austrian composer of the early 19th century who left behind thousands of master works -- even though he died at the early age of 31.

The melody is written in the key of B♭ Major. That key has two flats: B♭ and E♭. Of course, recall that E♭ is the same note as D#.

Note the 3/8 time signature. That's three beats per measure where each eighth note gets one beat. Rather unusual, but you know how to handle it.



Ding Dong Merrily On High (aka *Branle de l'Official*)

This traditional French tune dates back to the 1500's. Like many ancient melodies, it's since been put to many uses. Perhaps it's best known as a Christmas carol, after Englishman George Radcliffe Woodward added appropriate lyrics in 1924.

Many recording artists have since included the song on their Christmas albums. They include Roger Whittaker, *Celtic Woman*, and too many church choirs to name.

Christmas pageants often present this tune as an instrumental featuring chimes (aka bells). It's a perennial favorite that provides a change of pace in any holiday program.

Practice: The outstanding feature -- and challenge -- to this score is the single long slur that starts in the second line and extends all the way into the first two measures of the third line.

Take a big breath at the end of the first line to ensure you'll make it through. The slur is integral to the melody so it really must be played correctly to express the song.

Another challenge are the runs of eighth notes in that slur. You'll want to play them fairly quickly and that might take practicing at a slower speed before you master them.

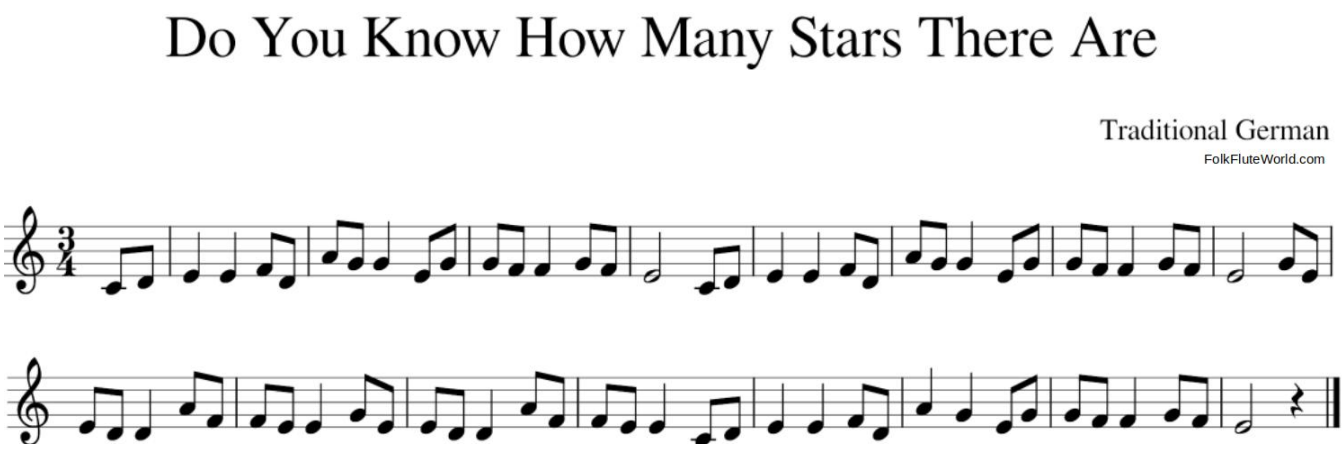


Do You Know How Many Stars There Are

Here's a German folk song whose original title is *Weißt Du, Wieviel Sternlein Stehen*. Its melody was first published in 1818, while the most popular lyrics were printed by pastor Johann Wilhelm Hey in 1837.

Practice: The first measure in the score illustrates how "pick up" notes can start a song off in a measure that doesn't conform to the time signature. That measure contains only 1 beat instead of the 3 called for by the 3/4 time signature.

You might also see this song in scores that lack the final rest at the end. Thus, the first and last measures of scores sometimes break the rule that all measures should conform to the number of beats dictated by the time signature.



Don Juan Periquito

This traditional Puerto Rican folk song is the basis for a children's dance. The lyrics are pretty much nonsensical. My my favorite line translates as *"Little sea snail, you left without dancing!"*

Practice: If you play the measures after the 2/4 time change quickly, it will give you a good workout ranging between high C, B♭, A, and G.

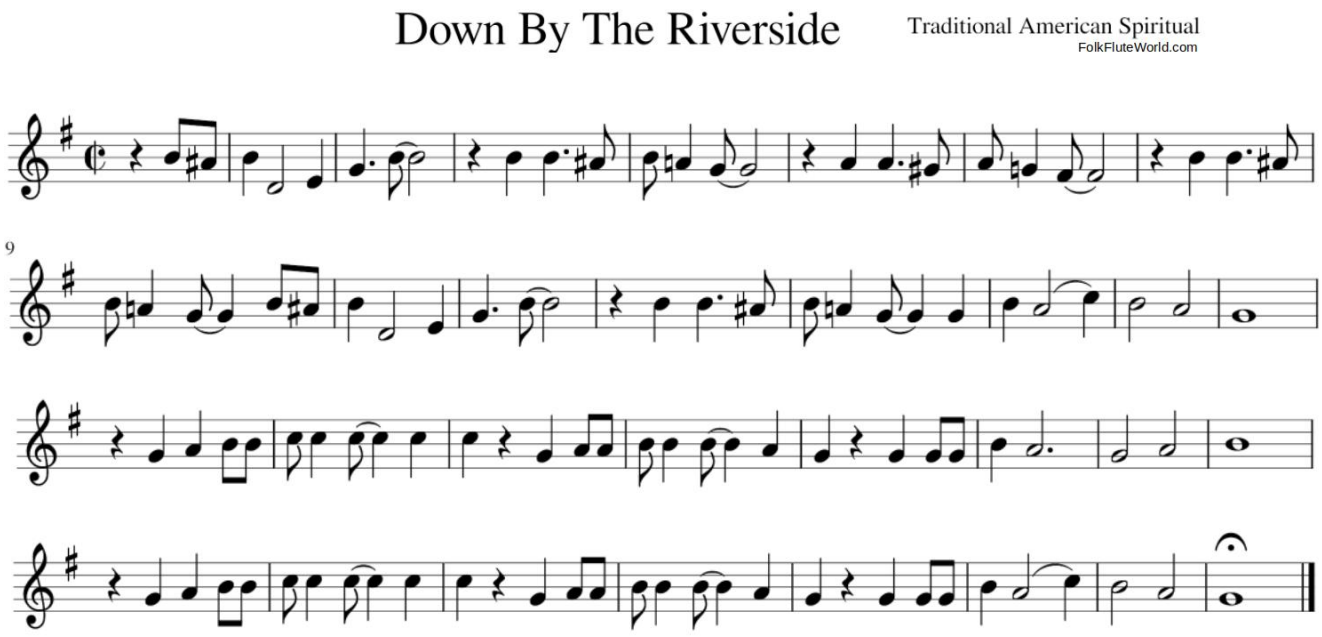


Down By the Riverside

This American spiritual dates from before the Civil War. It's also been adapted as an anti-war protest song, due to its pacifist imagery.

Practice: You see several occurrences of A# in this song. Remember that each halftone can be labeled in either of two ways: as a sharp, or its equivalent name as a flat. A# is actually B♭, so you're well familiar with this note.

After you play an A#, the score helpfully employs the natural sign to show that subsequent occurrences of A are to be played as natural, rather than sharp.

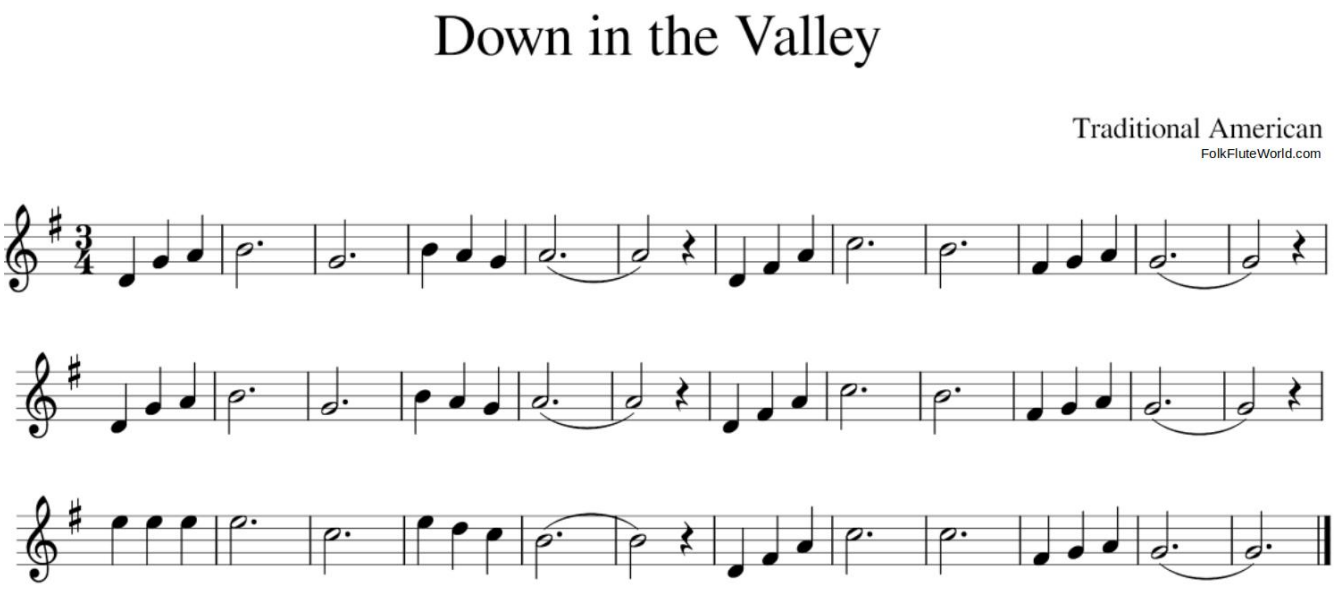


Down in the Valley

This traditional American folk song became especially popular in the 1920's, when many early recording artists produced their own versions. One was released as the *Ballad of Birmingham Jail*, with lyrics said to have been written while their author awaited trial for moonshining.

This tune has appeared frequently in films, television shows, plays, and even an opera.

Practice: This score is fairly easy and repetitive, just the sort of song that demands the pure tone of the recorder for its beauty to emerge.



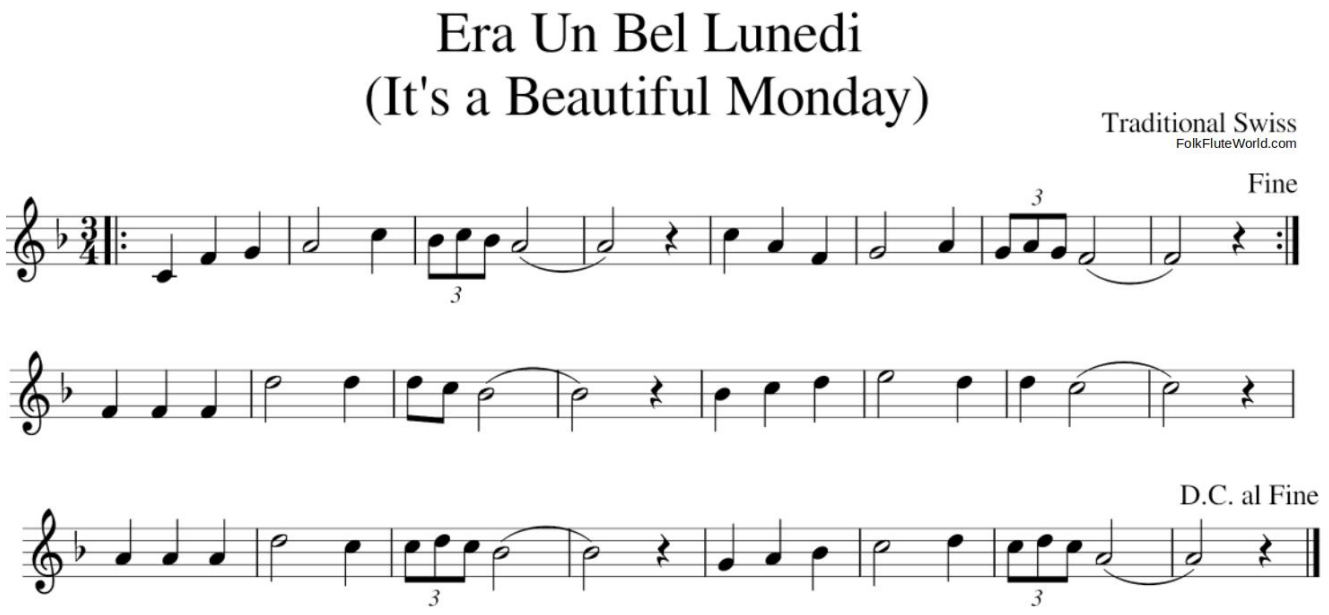
Era un Bel Lunedi

This traditional Swiss folk song reminds one of clear vistas and alpine valleys. It's a happy song... a waltz of the type one associates with the mountains and the outdoors.

The title translates as "It's a Beautiful Monday."

Practice: Remember that those eighth notes grouped in three's and labeled **3** are **triplets**. You play the three eighth notes within a single beat. So those three eighth notes fit into the time duration otherwise consumed by two.

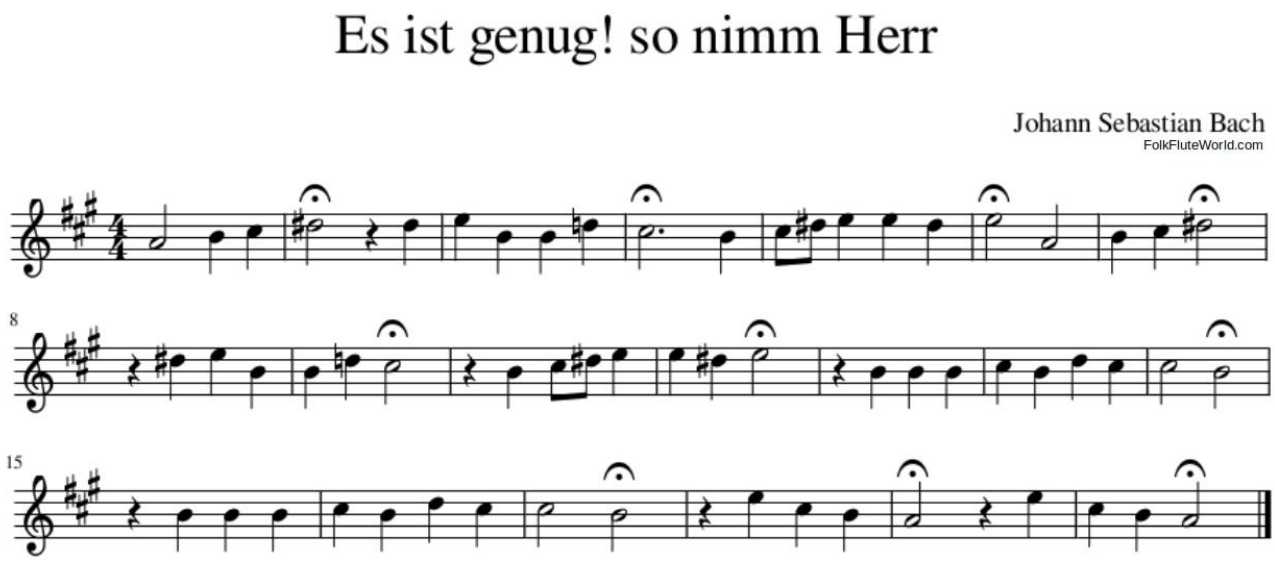
Mind the repeat signs. The way you progress through this song is to play the measures of the first line and repeat them one time. The second time through you play right past the repeat sign to the end of the score. Now you encounter **D.C. al Fine**. That tells you to return to the beginning of the score and play until you see the word telling you to stop, **Fine**.



Es ist genug! so nimm Herr

Though often attributed to Johann Sebastian Bach, this melody was written by German Johann Rudolph Ahle in 1662. Bach famously used the hymn's last stanza to conclude one of his cantatas.

Bach, of course, is one of the most recognizable composers of all time. He was a German musical genius of the late Baroque period of the early 18th century. He's noted for his success in working with many different musical forms.



Ev'ry Night When the Sun Goes In

Here's an old Appalachian mountain tune that likely traces its roots back to early British immigrants.

It's a weeper. Though like many old melodies several sets of competing lyrics exist, those most widely known emphasize the loss of a deep love.

In some older versions, it's a mother weeping for her dead child. In more modern lyrics, it's often a lover mourning her beloved.

In every case, it's what one could call a "Died for Love" theme, where the narrator pleads to pass away to join a loved one, or perhaps asks that she should have died in place of the departed.

Here's a sample set of lyrics:

> *I wish to the Lord my babe was born,*
> *A-sitting upon his pappy's knee,*
> *And me, poor girl, was dead and gone,*
> *And the green grass growing over me.*
> *True love, don't weep, ...*

This song has been widely recorded by bluegrass, country, and folk performers. Perhaps best known is the version by folk balladeer Joni Mitchell, recorded in the 1960's.

Practice: We provide this song in two keys, D Major and F Major, in order to show how vital the key is in setting the tone of a song.

The D Major version seems happier or at least less somber. The score in F imparts a more mournful feeling to the melody that better matches its sad lyrics. Would you agree?

Look for the quarter note triplets in the second lines of the scores. Just as an eighth note triplet consumes the time of two eighth notes, so does a quarter note triplet fit into the time required by two quarter notes.

Ev'ry Night When the Sun Goes In

Appalachian Folk Song
FolkFluteWorld.com

D Major Version





F Major Version

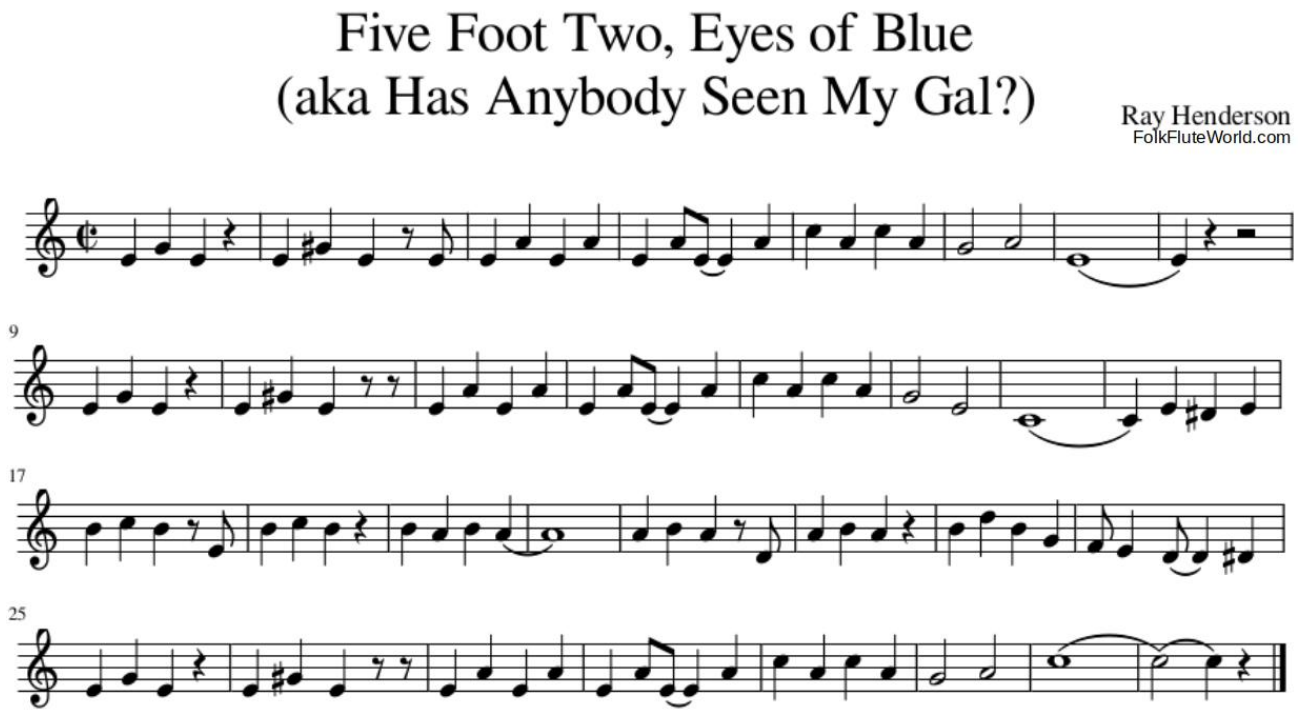




Five Foot Two, Eyes of Blue (Has Anybody Seen My Gal?)

This became a popular hit song in the mid 1920's. It's been recorded by dozens of artists since, a virtual who's-who of the music world up until the 1960's.

Practice: You know how this melody goes, so you probably won't have to worry about figuring out the timing. Be prepared for the G#'s and D#'s along the way. Practice the score until you get it up to the quick speed demanded by cut time.



Foggy Dew

Here's an Irish national tune. It commemorates the Easter Rising of 1916. Written during the first world war, it urges Irishmen to fight for Irish independence rather than for Britain in the world war.

Practice: We provide two versions of this famous tune, one in F Major and the other in C Major that gives you practice in the higher register. The second version includes a very high D (D7). See if you can hit it, if not substitute in another appropriate-sounding note.

This song is a lament. It's meant to be played slowly in spite of the fact that it contains mostly eighth notes.



Foggy Dew

Traditional Irish

FolkFluteWorld.com



Hail Columbia

This song was written by Phillip Phile for the first inauguration of George Washington in 1790. He titled it *The President's March*. It was retitled *Hail Columbia* when Joseph Hopkinson added lyrics in 1798 -- "Columbia" being a now-forgotten symbolic name for the United States.

Most Americans don't know that the *Star Spangled Banner* -- though composed in 1814 -- did not became the official anthem of their country until 1931. Until that time, *Hail Columbia* often served as the country's unofficial theme.

Today, *Hail Columbia* is the official song of the Vice President of the United States. It is played for him or her at times when *Hail to the Chief* would be played for the President.

Practice: The timing of this melody is a bit tricky. It contains dotted-quarter-eighth-note combinations, as well as dotted-eighth-sixteenth-note combinations. Note also the triplets in lines 2 and 4. Recall that this requires three eighth notes to be played within the normal duration of two.



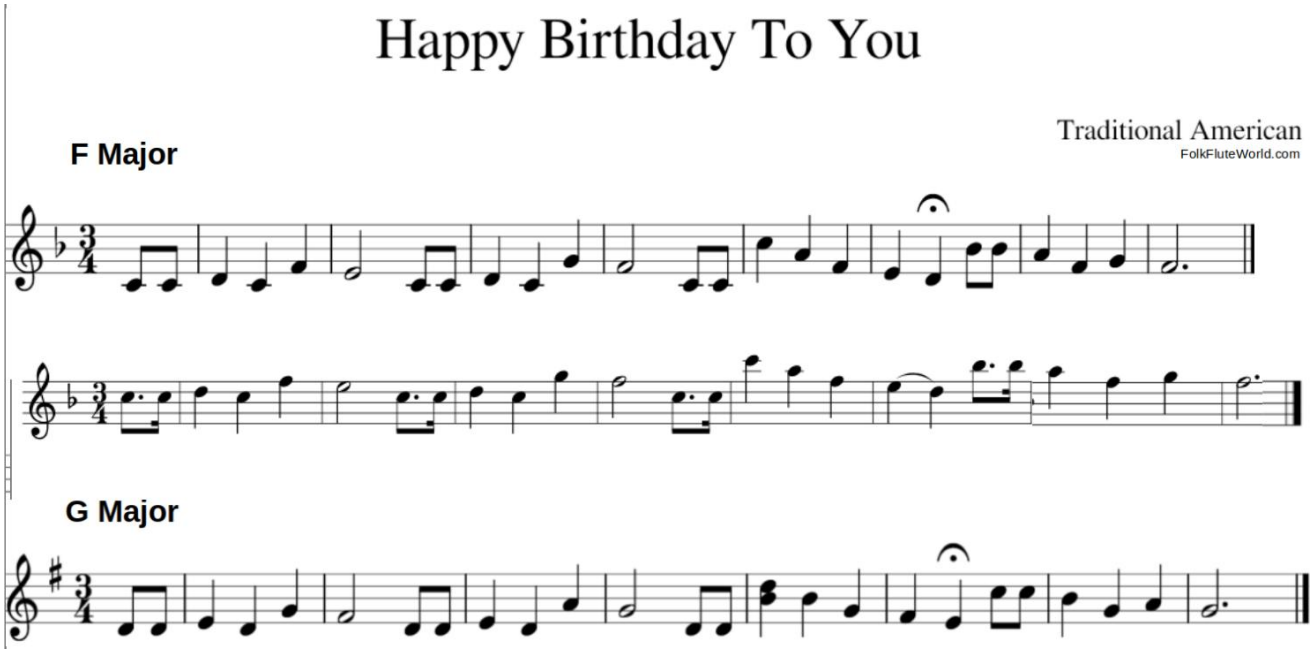
Happy Birthday To You

Well, here's an easy one! Everyone knows the tune, and it's not difficult to play. Many attribute the melody to sisters Patty and Mildred J. Hill back in the 1890's, but others dispute this. The *Guinness Book of World Records* claims that this is one of the most recognized of all songs among English speakers.

Although the tune dates to the 1890's, a company called Warren Chappell claimed its copyright in the early 2000's and collected fees from television and film producers for its use. The company charged up to $5,000 for each use by a television program, and up to $50,000 for use in a film.

The courts ruled against Warren Chappell in 2013 and forced them to pay back $14 million they had collected. Today the song is considered to be in the public domain.

Practice: We provide the song in two different keys. For the first version, mind the B flats and the hold in the third to last measure. In the second version, choose the high D for the double-stemmed note.



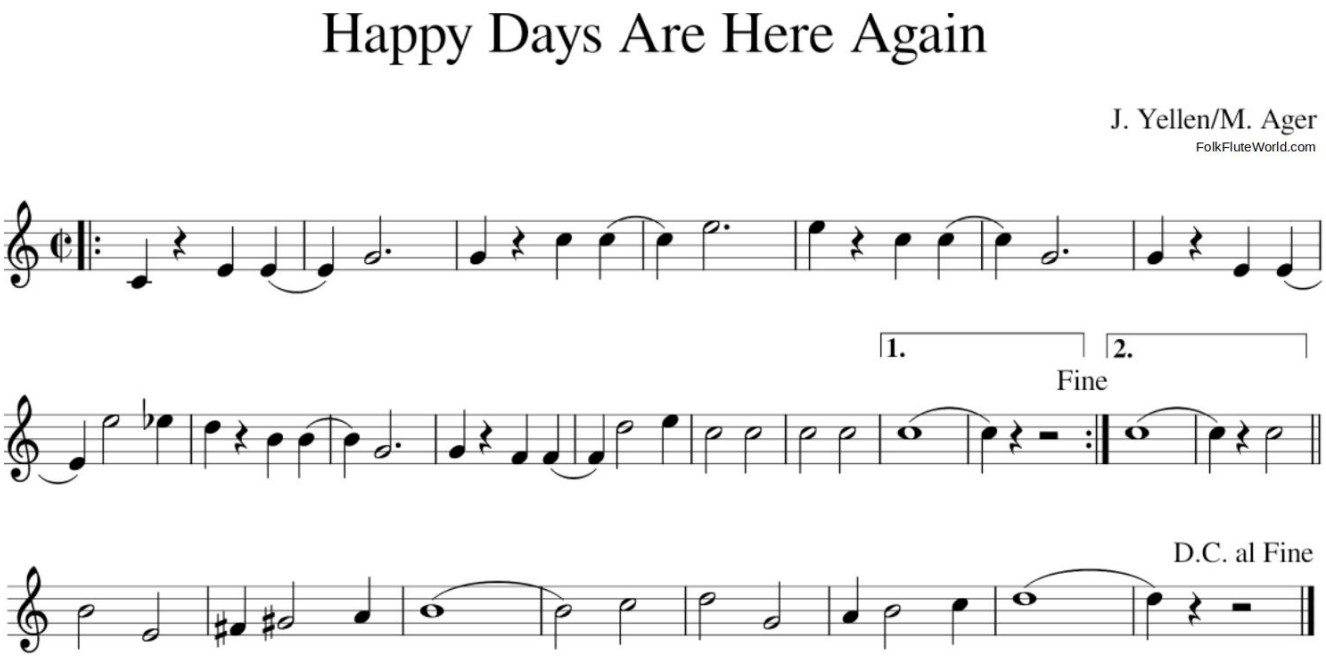
Happy Days Are Here Again

Here's another Tin Pan Alley song by the composer-lyricist team of Milton Ager and Jack Yellen. They composed the piece in 1929 and it made its debut the next year in the film, *Chasing Rainbows*.

When the tune really came into its own was at the 1932 Democratic National Convention. The story is that the orchestra kept playing a somber, plodding version of *Anchors Aweigh*, over and over. (Candidate Franklin Roosevelt had been Assistant Secretary of the Navy.)

Somebody on the floor finally shouted, "For God's sake, have them play something else!" The band struck up this boppy tune to instant applause. A campaign song phenomenon was born. Today many of us associate the song with attempts at false cheer during the Great Depression.

Practice: Watch for the high E♭ (aka D#) in the first measure of the second line, and the sharps in the second measure of the third line.



Havah Nagila

The *Havah Nagila* (or *Havah Nagilah*) was composed in 1918 to celebrate the Balfour Declaration and a British victory over the Ottoman Turks. It was based on an old Hasidic religious chant.

Today it's sung at various celebrations including weddings, bar and bat mitzvahs, and Jewish holidays.

Practice: Notice how the repeat brackets tell you to repeat each line one time. For each line, play the first ending the first time through, and the second ending the second time through. The volta notation shows which ending to play.

See the triplets in this tune? They occur just before the 1st and 2nd endings. These triplets consist of three quarter notes. That means that you play three equal notes within the time otherwise required to play two quarter notes.

Be prepared for all those G#'s!



Home on the Range

Everyone knows this western ballad. Some call it the "anthem of the west". Few also know that it is the state song of Kansas. The origins of both the melody and its lyrics are disputed, but its popularity remains unchallenged.

Many artists have recorded the song, most notably Bing Crosby, who laid its tracks three times in the 1930's. Others include Frank Sinatra, Gene Autry, Pete Seeger, and of course, Boxcar Willie.

Practice: Have fun with this simple but classic tune.



Home Sweet Home

This song was written by Englishman Henry Bishop but found its greatest popularity in the United States. During the American Civil War, it was banned from Union army camps as likely to incite desertion. Its paean to "home sweet home" was thought too enticing to play around the campfires.

The tune has appeared in many films, but is probably most closely associated with *The Wizard of Oz* from 1939. It was quite popular among recording artists from the turn of the century to the second world war.

Practice: This pretty tune doesn't present any new obstacles. Play it with longing.



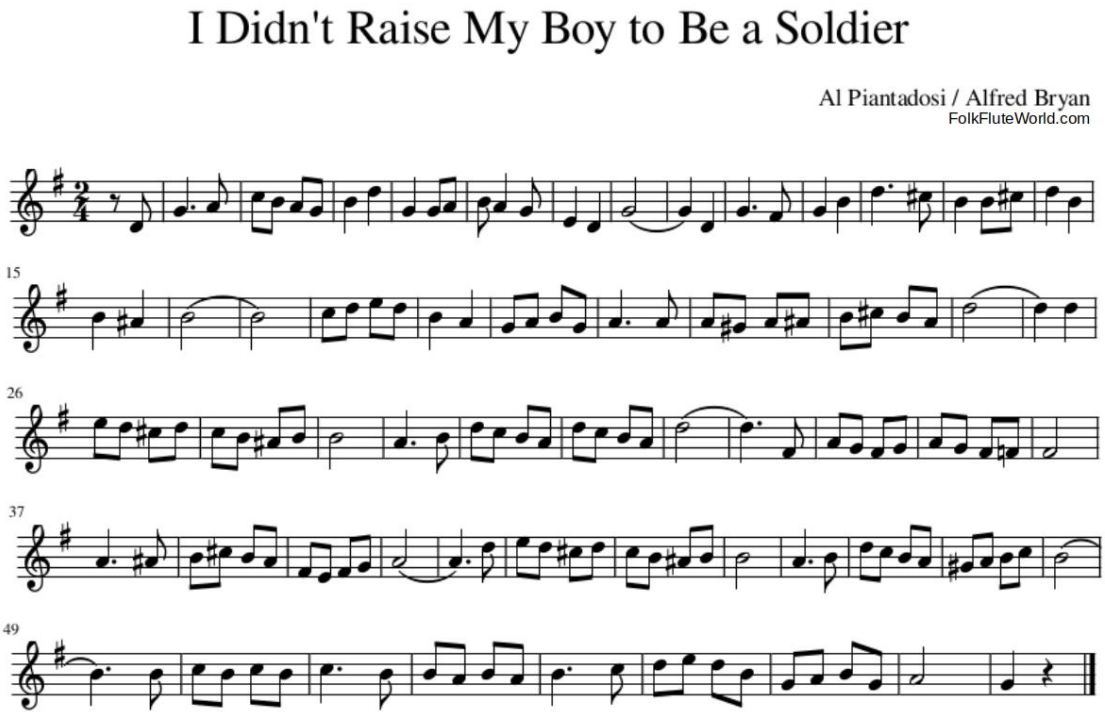
I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier

This tune became a popular anti-war song prior to American entry into the first World War. It was sung by *The Peerless Quartet*, a popular group that also recorded such hits as *Let Me Call You Sweetheart, By the Light of the Silvery Moon*, and *I Want a Girl Just Like the Girl Who Married Dear Old Dad*.

The song's anti-war lyrics stirred up quite a controversy in its day. War hawk and former President Theodore Roosevelt opined that *"The foolish people who applaud a song entitled 'I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier' are just the people who would also in their hearts applaud a song entitled 'I Didn't Raise My Girl to Be a Mother'."* One wonders if Roosevelt still felt the same way after the heartbreaking loss of his youngest son, Quentin, during the war.

The melody features tricky timing because it's not as consistently repetitious as many melodies. That makes it musically interesting but difficult to get the hang of. Sound it out and play it slowly until you figure it out.

You'll encounter a flurry of sharps in the eighth note runs including high C#, G#, A#, and F#. Take a careful look at the score before you attempt it.



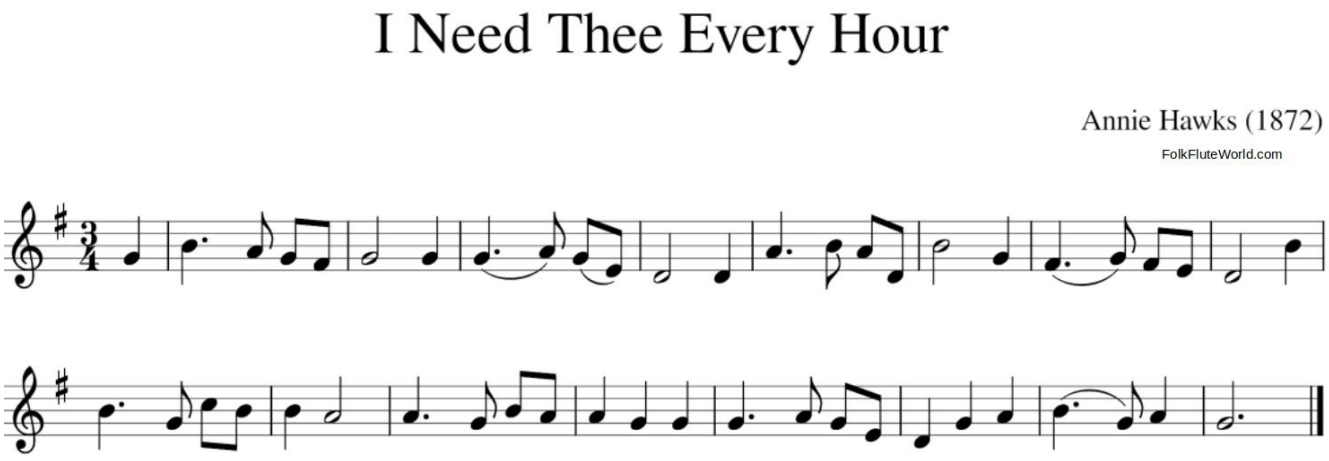
I Need Thee Every Hour

This is probably the best-known composition by hymnist and poet Annie Hawks. The song dates from 1872 and is included in many church hymnals.

Hymnals are an abundant source of free public domain scores, many of which feature beautiful melodies. Interestingly, a large percent of them start their lives in other contexts before settling down with new lyrics in church hymnbooks.

Practice: It's important to get the slurs right to make this song sound the way it's intended. Remember, a slur between two notes of equal pitch really means to play one long note. A slur between two notes of different pitches means that you seamlessly glide from one to the next, without using your tongue.

Some musicians like to distinguish between ties and slurs, where a **tie** connects notes of the same pitch, and a **slur** connects notes of differing pitches. Others use these two terms interchangeably.



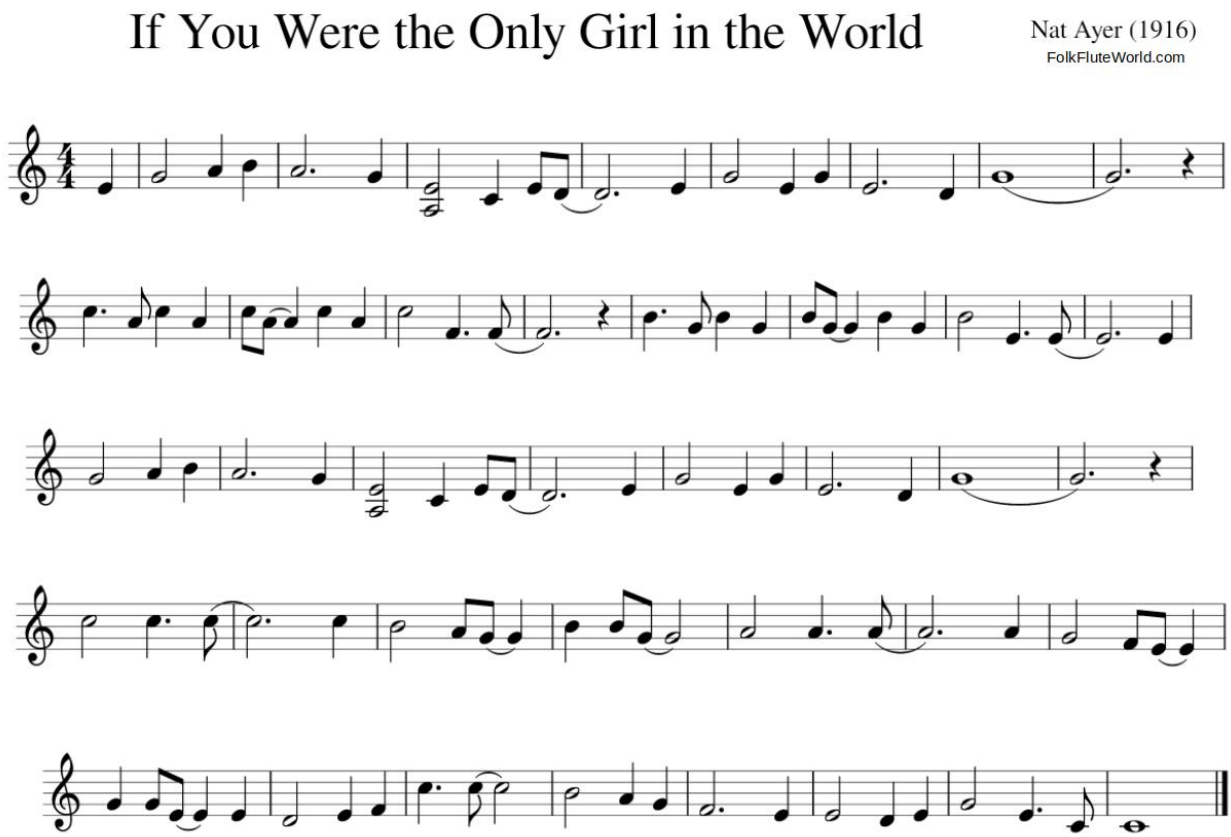
If You Were the Only Girl

This song epitomizes the style of popular songs between the turn of the twentieth century and the 1920's. It was written during the first world war and performed in London as part of the musical *The Bing Boys are Here*.

The tune has great staying power: it titled one episode of *Upstairs, Downstairs* in the 1970's and was famously sung on *Downton Abbey* upon the return of Matthew Crawley from the first world war.

Crooners recording it have included Perry Como, Peggy Lee, Doris Day, Bing Crosby, Dean Martin, and more.

Practice: This is a beautiful song. Your goal with your recorder is to bring that beauty into every note. Don't just pedantically follow the timing but imbue it with emotion to which any listener would respond.

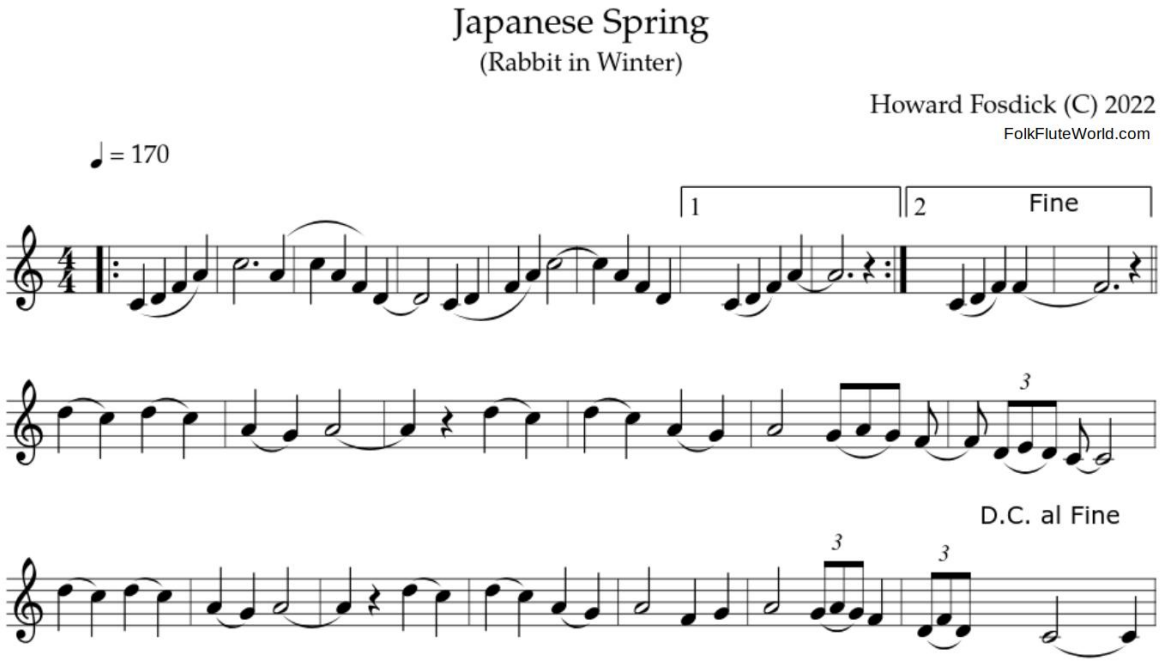


Japanese Spring (Rabbit in Winter)

The first line of this simple tune is based on a **pentatonic** -- five note -- scale. Traditionally, scales for Japanese, Chinese, and other Asian cultures are pentatonic.

Practice: Once you sound out this song, try playing the quarter notes quickly and extending the dotted half notes for as long as you like. See if you can develop your own expressive style for the melody.

Note the difference between the eighth notes in the penultimate measure of the 2nd line, versus the triplets that occur in the next measure, and also in the last two measures of the score.



ABC Notation: Here is the exact same score as above written in ABC notation:

```
X:1
T:Japanese Spring
T:(Rabbit in Winter)
C:Howard Fosdick (C) 2022
M:4/4
L:1/4
K: C
Q: 1/4=170
|: (CDFA) | c3 (A | c AF) D- | D2(CD | FA) c2- | c  AFD | [1(CDF) A- | A3 z :|  [2 (CDF) F-  "Fine"
| F3 z||
(dc) (dc) | (AG) A2- | Az (dc) | (dc) (AG) | A2  (G/A/G/) F/- | F/ (3(D/E/D/) C/- C2 |
(dc)(dc) | (AG) A2- | Az(dc) | (dc) (AG) | A2  FG | A2  (3(G/A/G/) F | (3(D/F/D/)
"D.C. al Fine" C2-C |
```

You see the same conventions we imparted in Lesson 23:

- **T:** for the Title
- **C:** for the Composer
- **M**: for the Meter (or time signature). The time signature here is **4/4**
- **L:** is for which kind of note gets one beat. **L:1/4** means a quarter note gets 1 beat
- **K:** for the Key of **C**

Then you see one line of ABC notation for each line in the score. Capital letters mean low notes, while lower case letters indicate high notes. Notes are grouped into measures by vertical bars (|).

This score introduces several ABC features that will be new to you:

- **Q:** sets the tempo in terms of beats per minute (BPM). It's 170 in this score.
- **|:** and **:|** are **repeat brackets**. These group measures in the score that are to be repeated
- **[1** and **[2** indicate the first and second endings in the first line of the score.
- **(** and **)** group two or more notes into ties or slurs. Dashes (**-**) can tie notes together.
- **(3** indicates triplets. (Three eighth notes to be played within the time of two).
- **||** These two vertical bars together make a double bar appear in the score.
- **z** indicates a rest.
- "D.C. al Fine" and "Fine" are indicated simply by inserting these text strings .

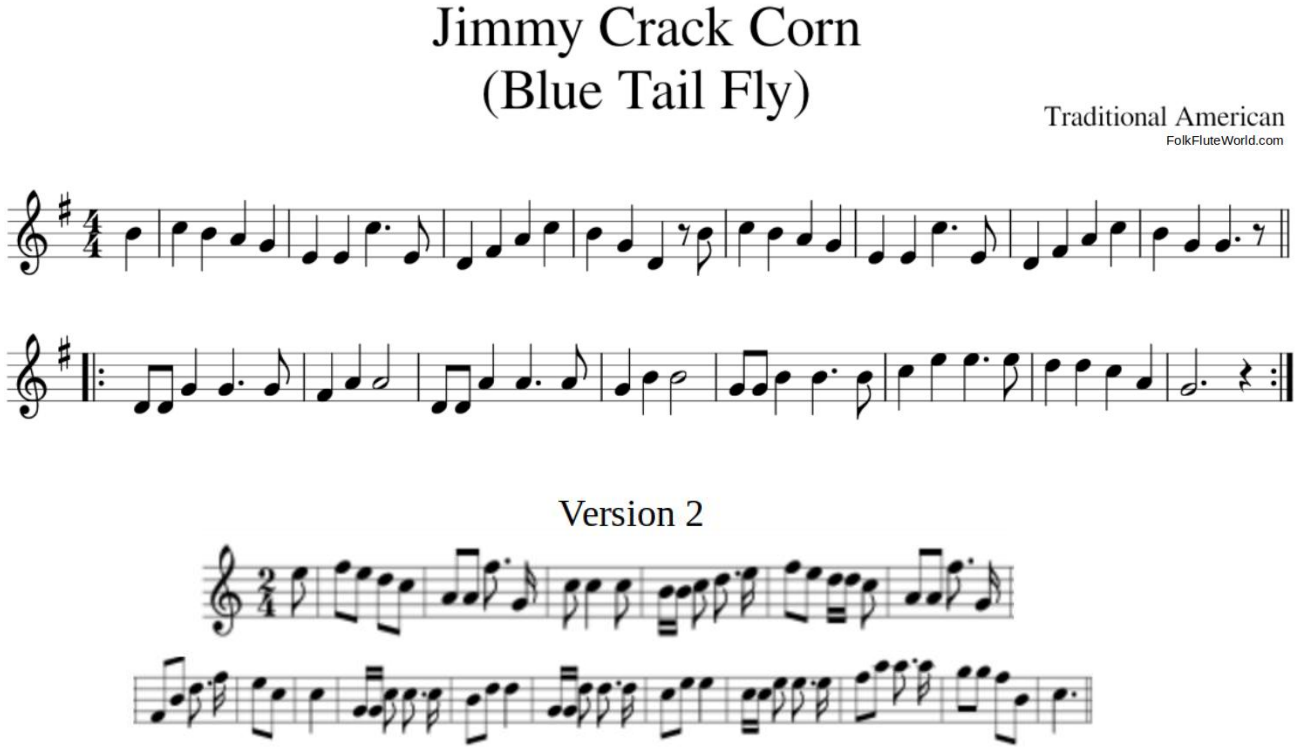
Jimmy Crack Corn

This is a minstrel show song from the 1840's in the United States. It became popular about one hundred years later during the folk revival of the 1940's.

The original words were a lament by a slave over his master's death. But many believe they had a hidden subtext that the enslaved person was pleased over that death and may have even contributed to it.

Practice: Eighth note rests appear in every fourth measure in the first line in first version of the score. These are always good, non-disruptive points at which to take breaths. The quarter note rest at the end of the second line can serve the same function. Always view rests as potential breathing spots.

The second version is a little harder to decipher, being scored in quick 2/4 timing. When you download free tunes from the internet, remember to look for a version you prefer.



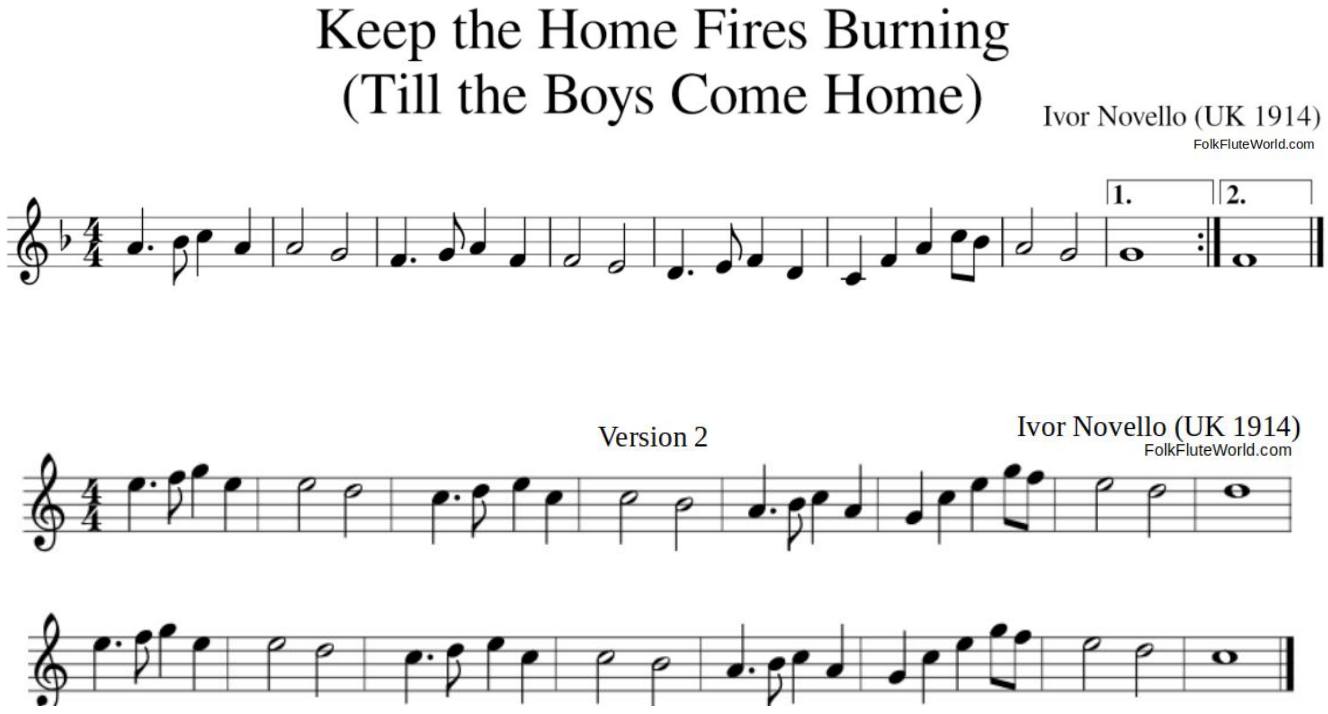
Keep the Home Fires Burning

Here's another popular tune from the first world war. It's a patriotic exhortation to "keep the home fires burning" until the return of the King's men from the Great War.

Its composer, Ivor Novello (1893-1951) was a multi-talented singer, composer, actor, and playwright. This was his first widely popular composition.

Ironically, the song's lyricist, Lena Guilbert Ford, was killed in 1918 by a German air raid on her town of Warrington Crescent, UK.

Practice: Hopefully you feel this is an easy tune at this point.



L'inverno è passato (Duet)

This simple, happy duet is easily played by any two recorders of the same key. It's an Italian folk song that celebrates the passing of winter.

Practice: You'll want to follow the timing closely so that you stay synchronized with your partner. That's especially important because of the rests (it won't do to have either musician violate them).

The score helpfully includes breath marks as a means to ensure the musicians remain synchronized.

Even if you don't have a partner with whom to play, you'll still enjoy this song.



La Cucaracha

The origins of this Mexican song are uncertain. It had become popular by the time of the 1910 Revolution. Today it's intimately associated with Mexican culture.

American films stereotypically employ this tune for every Mexican festival and party.

Practice: This is one of those songs you'll want to play very slowly at first. If you're ambitious, step it up to full throttle after you learn it.

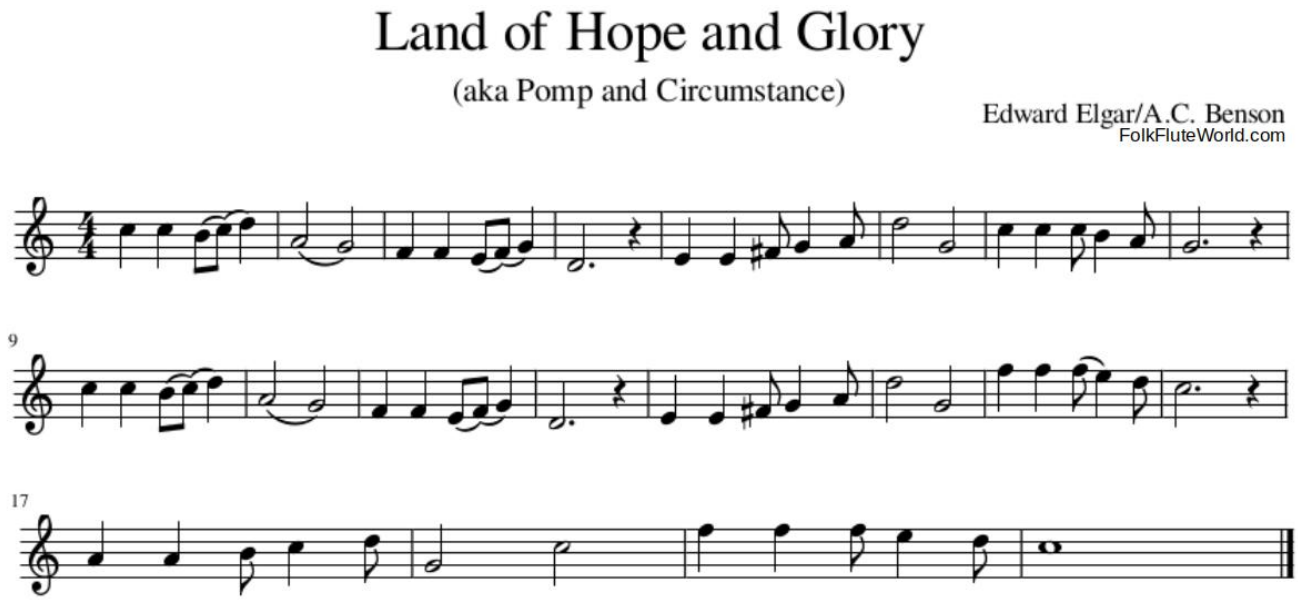


Land of Hope and Glory (aka Pomp and Circumstance)

This is an English patriotic song written by Edward Elgar in 1901. A.C. Benson added lyrics in 1902.

In the U.S., the song is known as *Pomp and Circumstance*. It's played ad nauseam at graduation ceremonies as endless troops of graduates slog by.

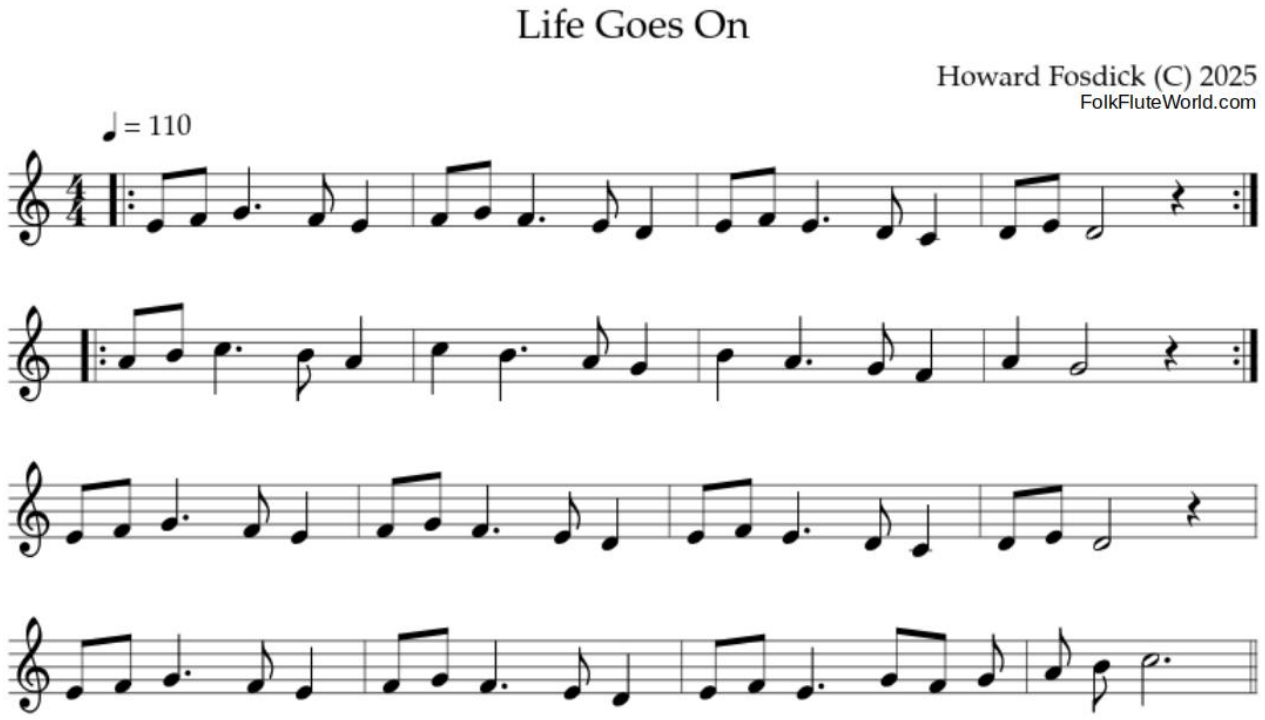
Practice: This version avoids the lowest notes and sounds more upbeat to most listeners.



Life Goes On

Here's a simple song that musically expresses its title.

Practice: There's not much new in this score. Be sure to play the dotted-quarter-note-eighth-note combination in the correct timing. That feature dominates this score.

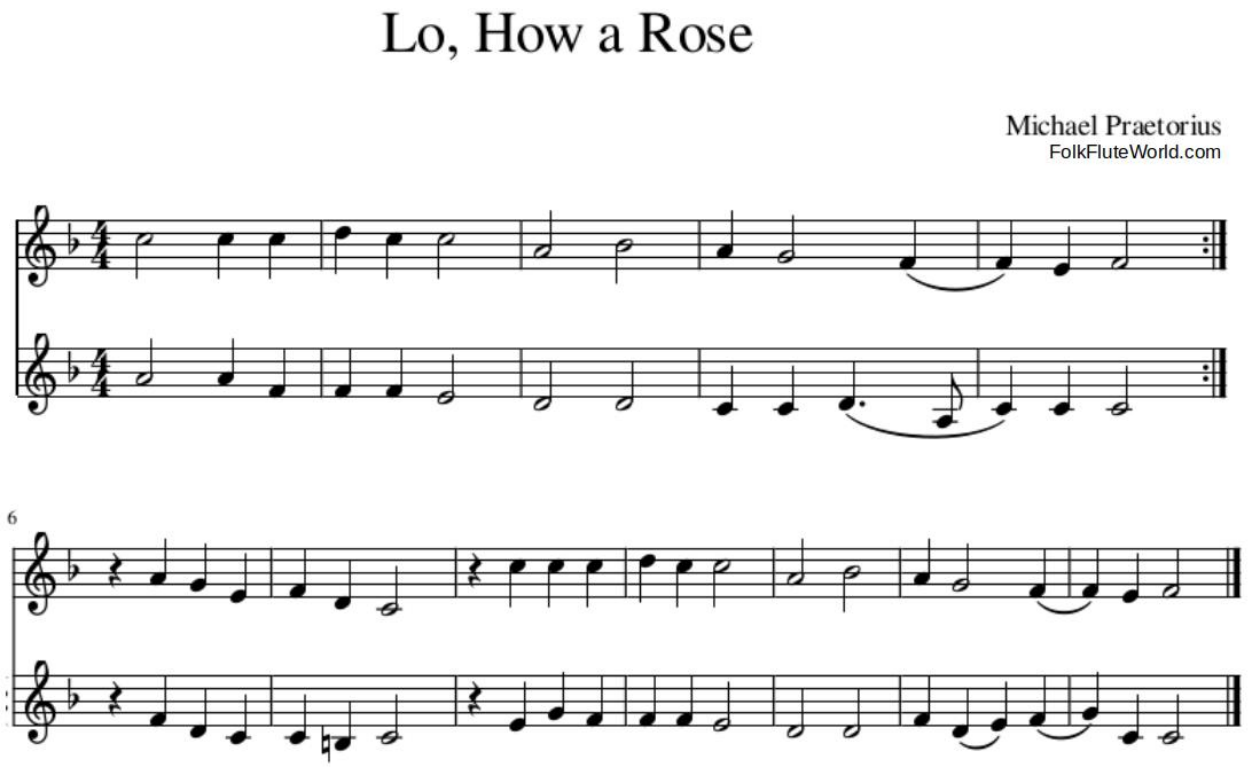


Lo, How a Rose (Duet)

Here's a duet composed by Michael Praetorius (1571-1621). Praetorius was a very prolific German composer of hymns and choral compositions. He was also an organist, music theorist, and academic.

Many would consider this score a **madrigal**, a composition for unaccompanied choral voice. Madrigals originated in Italy and spread throughout Europe in the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries.

Practice: As a duet, the emphasis here is on the two musicians being perfectly synchronized in their play. This extends to when they take breaths. Ideally that would be at the conclusion of each line in the score.



Lyke Wake Dirge

Let's slow it down... way, way, down. This somber tune is a **dirge**, a song for funeral processions. Sonorous and rather odd, it perfectly captures grief and the unknowns of our existence. "Lyke" is a now-obsolete term for a corpse.

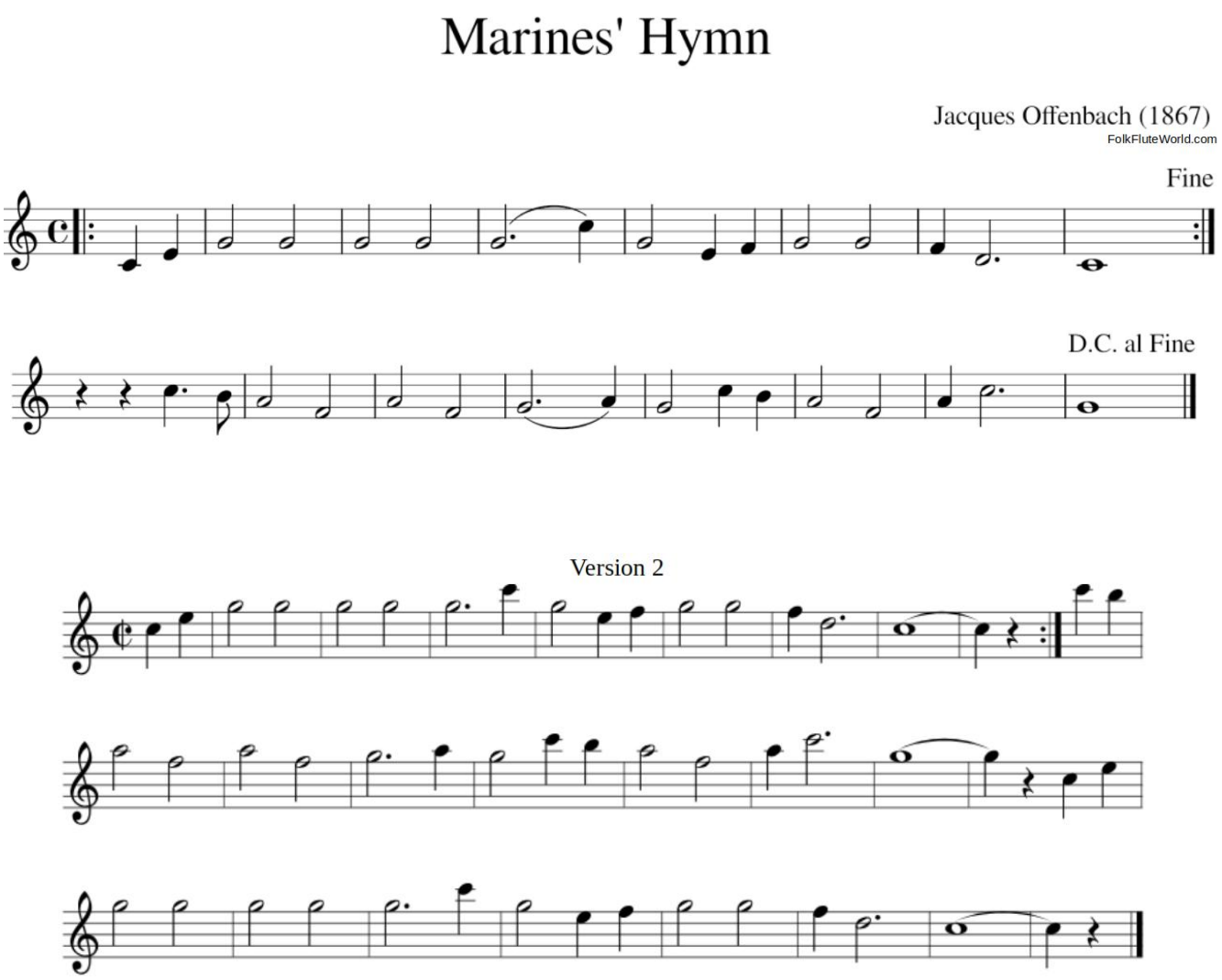
Practice: Notice how this song shifts -- right in the middle! -- between 4/4 and 6/4 time signatures. Don't let that throw you. Since both time signatures give a quarter note one beat, you can seamlessly transition between the two without difficulty.



Marines' Hymn

This tune was written by German-French composer Jacques Offenbach in 1867. Lyrics were later updated and it became the official anthem of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Practice: This song should be pretty easy. It's a bouncy melody that expresses a can-do optimism. Try to express that jaunty, confident mood in your play. The second version gives you some practice in the higher octave.



McPherson's Farewell

James McPherson was a Scottish outlaw who was caught and executed in 1700. This lament was penned by famous poet Robert Burns.

Practice: We provide this song in two keys, C and G Major. Both scores should be pretty easy. If you'd like to advance your fingering skills, take this song on at cut time to test yourself on those runs.





Morning Has Broken

This song is a traditional Scot-Gaelic melody. Màiri Dhòmhnallach wrote lyrics for it in the early 1800's that popularized the tune.

In 1981, Yusuf Islam released a version with English lyrics that became a bestselling pop record. At the time, the singer was better known by his stage name, Cat Stevens.

Practice: This C Major version of the score ranges from low C to high D.

When we talked about expressing yourself in Lesson 12 (aka **espressivo**), this is the kind of song we had in mind. It's easy to play, slow, and melodic... a great place to apply your developing abilities to bring out all the beauty of the song.

Make that high D sing .. and voice those low C's and D's as lovely low tones. Try to play them clear and pure, not muffled or too softly. A subdued vibrato makes those notes sound lovely.



My Singing Bird

This Irish folk song is a homage to the beautiful song of the lark. The melody hails from Munster, while the most popular lyrics are those written by poet Edith Wheeler in the early 1900's.

Practice: We provide two different scores for this song.

The first shows how densely notation can be compressed by use of repeating sections.

You play the first line twice, then the second line, and then the first line once again (by following the *D.C. al Fine* to *Fine* directions).

Thus the score expresses this entire song in a mere two lines. If the repeating sections weren't used, it would instead require four lines.

The downside to this compressed notation is that repeating sections are all played exactly the same.

The second score shows how forgoing a compact score in favor of very slight alterations in the song can increase interest in the melody.

The small changes you'll notice in the expanded version are:

- The introduction of more slurs in the final line of the score
- The last note in the score is held for an extra beat versus the prior lines
- The *dotted quarter note / eighth note* pattern in the 3rd measure of the first line is altered to straight quarter notes in the corresponding measure in the 2nd line
- The pick-up notes going into the last line vary from those in lines 1 and 2

Such small changes have subtle but important impact on how the song sounds. Thus, the expanded version takes more space on the page but provides more variation on the basic tune.

You'll find that many folk scores from the British Isles don't use compression because they vary the tune in small ways such as those we've mentioned. That makes them more musically engaging.

My Singing Bird

Traditional Irish
FolkFluteWorld.com



My Singing Bird (Expanded Version)

Traditional Irish
FolkFluteWorld.com



Now Westlin' Winds

Famed Scottish poet Robert Burns composed this song and its lyrics. It frequently appears in compilations of tunes from the British Isles.

Practice: The notation introduces several new features. First, notice the symbol ***tr*** above certain notes. This means to **trill**. A trill is where you very quickly shift back and forth between two notes. The "dominant" or base note is shown in the score.

The very quick trill note is usually either one note higher or lower than the base note. By default, you should assume it's one note higher.

So in the third line, you would trill between A and B, and in the fourth line, you would trill between G and A.

Since trills are quick waffling between two notes, they could alternatively be written as a series of 32nd notes going back and forth between the two notes. But that would look awkward in the score, so instead composers employ the ***tr*** convention.

Another new feature: those tiny little notes that you see slurred into dominant notes. Whether you play the song with or without these **grace notes**, the measures should add up to their required four beats. These very quick grace notes lead into other notes and shouldn't disturb the timing of the piece. That's why grace notes are always shown in very small typeface.



Old Folks at Home

This is one of many famous Stephen Foster tunes. Among others, he composed *Oh! Susanna*, *Camptown Races*, *Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair*, *My Old Kentucky Home*, and *Beautiful Dreamer*. It's an amazing output for a man who died at the early age of 37. No wonder Foster is sometimes called the "father of American music."

This particular song is better known as *Swanee River*, than under it's true title, *The Old Folks at Home*.

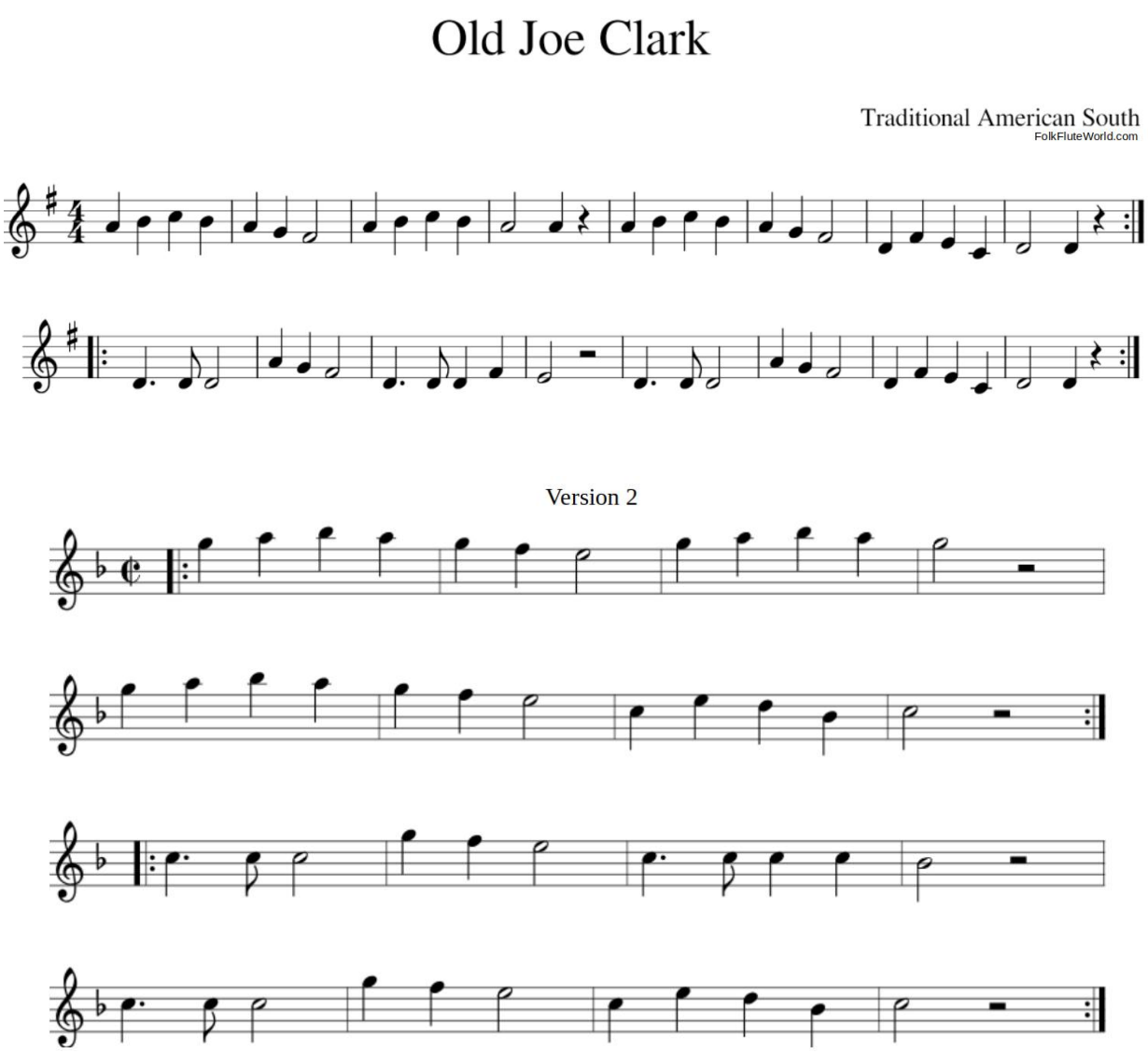
Practice: This is a beautiful melody that should be played at a leisurely pace. It's a good opportunity to really make your recorder sing and enjoy a pleasant tune.



Old Joe Clark

Here's a classic from the hill folk of Appalachia. Probably from the late 1800's, it gained popularity during the first world war among southern troops. Today it's often heard at bluegrass festivals and country fairs. It's an surprisingly jazzy song that always gets a rousing reception from the crowds.

Practice: Don't be afraid to take liberties with the timing to jazz this song up a bit. Convert those strings of placid quarter notes into the dotted-quarter-eighth-note combination you know well by now. That will give it some swing. Converting from quarter notes to dotted-quarter-eighth-note combinations is a common device to enliven otherwise staid melodies.



Omsi Gomsi

This quick, fun song with the goofy title is a **Morris dance**. Morris dancing is a form of English folk dance performed at various local festivals and May Day celebrations. Dancers wear period costumes and parade through the streets while stepping to lively tunes that date back to the middle ages.

Morris tunes tend to be quick and repetitive. Nearly always you'll see multiple "repeat signs" in their scores.

Practice: Morris dances should be played at fast tempo. After you give it some practice, you should step this one up to the pace of a slappy, happy dance tune.



Over the Sea to Skye

Also known as the *Skye Boat Song*, this tune has had several sets of lyrics since it emerged in the 1700's. Robert Louis Stevenson famously tried his hand at writing some lyrics in 1885.

Stevenson, incidentally, played the **flageolet**. This was a small end-blown woodwind that had either few or no keys. It eventually faded out of use, losing out in competition to modern tin whistles, metal flutes, clarinets, and the recorder. Flageolets are an interesting close relative to the recorder. You can learn more about flageolets at FolkFluteWorld.com.

You'll find this tune in nearly every compilation of folk songs from the British isles.

Practice: This song is usually played as a leisurely lullaby or waltz. This score illustrates how using repeat signs and the volta with their different endings can greatly compress the space required to score a song.

Once you've mastered this song, try playing it one octave higher. Seeing if you can translate an octave "on the fly" is a good test of your music reading ability.



Parson's Farewell

This is a traditional English dance tune from the 1600's. One often hears it at Morris Festivals and in Renaissance recitals.

Like all Morris tunes, it's usually played at a lively pace, with several repetitions of each refrain.

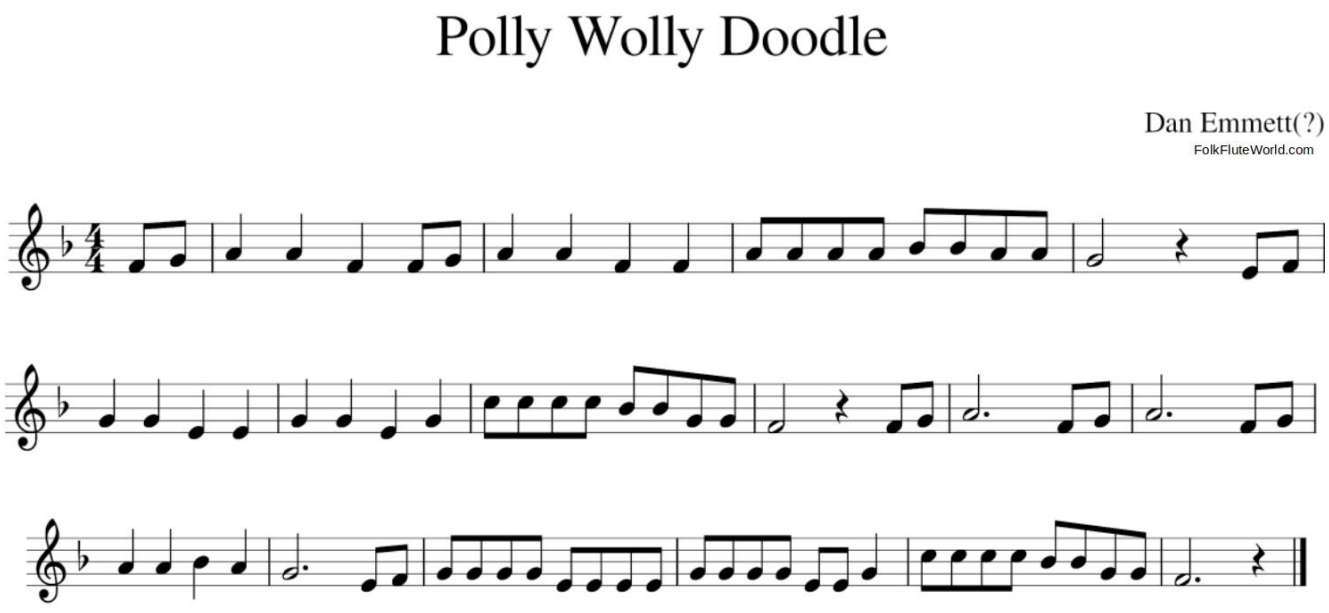
Practice: We provide two versions. See whether you like the lower or higher notes for this tune.



Polly Wolly Doodle

This tune first appeared in the 1840's. It rapidly gained popularity and has been reworked with many lyrics for varied uses. Today one often hears it in children's shows.

Practice: Here's a tonguing challenge, with long strings of eighth notes. You want to distinctly tongue these notes but not so hard that they detract from the melody.



Pour Danser le Marin-Congo

This tune accompanies dancers of the "Marine Congo". It's thought to be a congo dance brought to France by sailors, hence the word "marine".

Practice: This song confronts you with a blizzard of sixteenth notes. But you know what to do.

Play the song very slowly at first, as if the sixteenth notes were quarter notes. Once you get used to the timing and the relationship in the score between the sixteenth and eighth notes, you can speed up the tempo and play this song with alacrity.



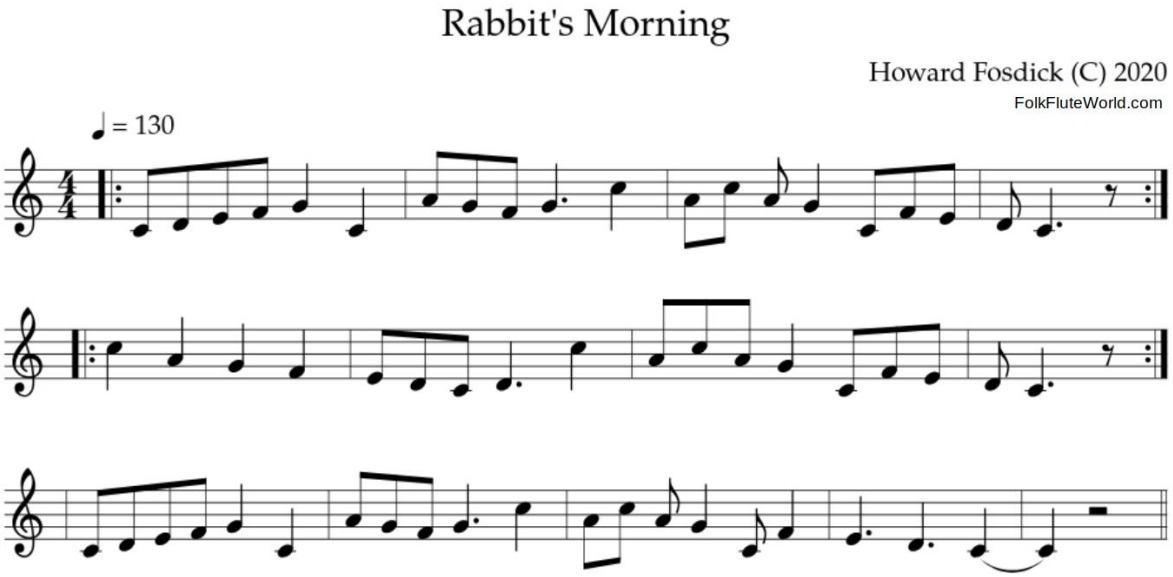
Rabbit's Morning

Here's a simple tune that expresses rabbit's joy during his morning silflay.

Practice: The start of the score indicates the tempo in terms of beats per minute (BPM). For this score, 1 quarter note gets 1 beat and there are 130 beats per minute. That's a fairly fast pace.

Notice how the last measure in each line does not conform to the time signature's declaration of four beats per measure. It's not unusual to encounter discrepancies like this, especially when working with older scores. Just play through such measures by maintaining one beat per quarter note.

The ABC notation follows the score. You can see that the keyword **Q:** sets the tempo for the piece, the symbols **|:** and **:|** indicate repetition, and the dash (-) dictates a tie of two notes.



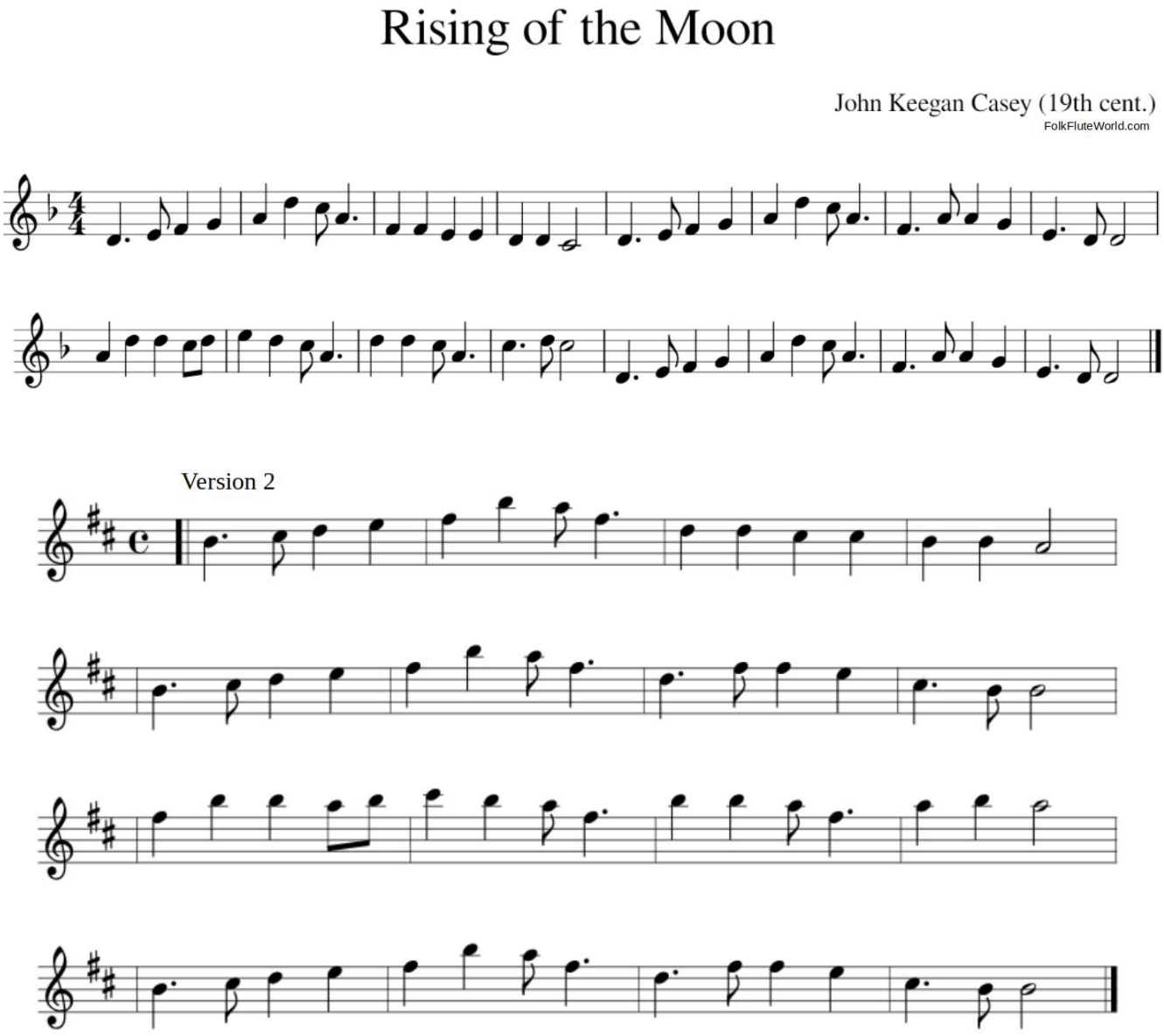

```
X:1
T:Rabbit's Morning
C:Howard Fosdick (C) 2020
M:4/4
L:1/8
K: C
Q: 1/4=130
|: CDEF G2 C2|  AGF G3 c2| Ac AG2 CFE| DC3 z :|
|: c2 A2G2F2|  EDC D3 c2| AcAG2 CFE| D C3 z  :|
| CDEF G2 C2|  AGF G3 c2| Ac AG2 CF2| E3D3 C2-| C2z4 ||
```

The Rising of the Moon

This song commemorates the unsuccessful Irish Rebellion of 1798 against the British.

It remains a popular tune in Ireland to this day. You'll often hear it in schools, and at festivals and sporting events.

Practice: Here are two versions of this tune, in F Major and D Major. Try those high notes in the 2nd version.



Sakura

"Sakura" means "Cherry Blossoms" in English. This traditional folk song has been popular in Japan since the Meiji period of the late 19th century. The song was originally written in an Asian five-note pentatonic scale.

While many assume this melody is ancient, it likely dates from the Edo period (1600's to 1800's).

Practice: For the two double-stemmed notes, play higher. Then, play it again. This time, try playing the low B by slightly shielding the bell of your recorder partway against your leg, and blowing very softly. This trick often only works with tenors or altos because they have larger ends than the soprano.



Santa Lucia

Santa Lucia is the classic song from Neapolitan Italy. It's appeared in countless films and television shows to evoke the feeling of southern Italy.

The melody is versatile. You might hear it crooned in slow, dramatic "opera style" or in faster, happier cadence.

Singer Dean Martin became known for his rendition of this Italian song, as well as *That's Amore*.

Practice: Notice how this song repeats. You play the first line of the score twice, as indicated by its enclosure in repeat brackets.

Next, play the second line one time along with its first ending (**1.**). Then, repeat the second line and conclude playing its second ending (**2.**)



Scarborough Fair

Scarborough Fair is a traditional English ballad that dates back several hundred years. The popular folk singers Simon and Garfunkel made it known to modern listeners when they recorded their version in 1966.

Practice: Here it is in three versions. You'll often find that the timing on this melody varies a bit in different scores, so play it how you best enjoy it.

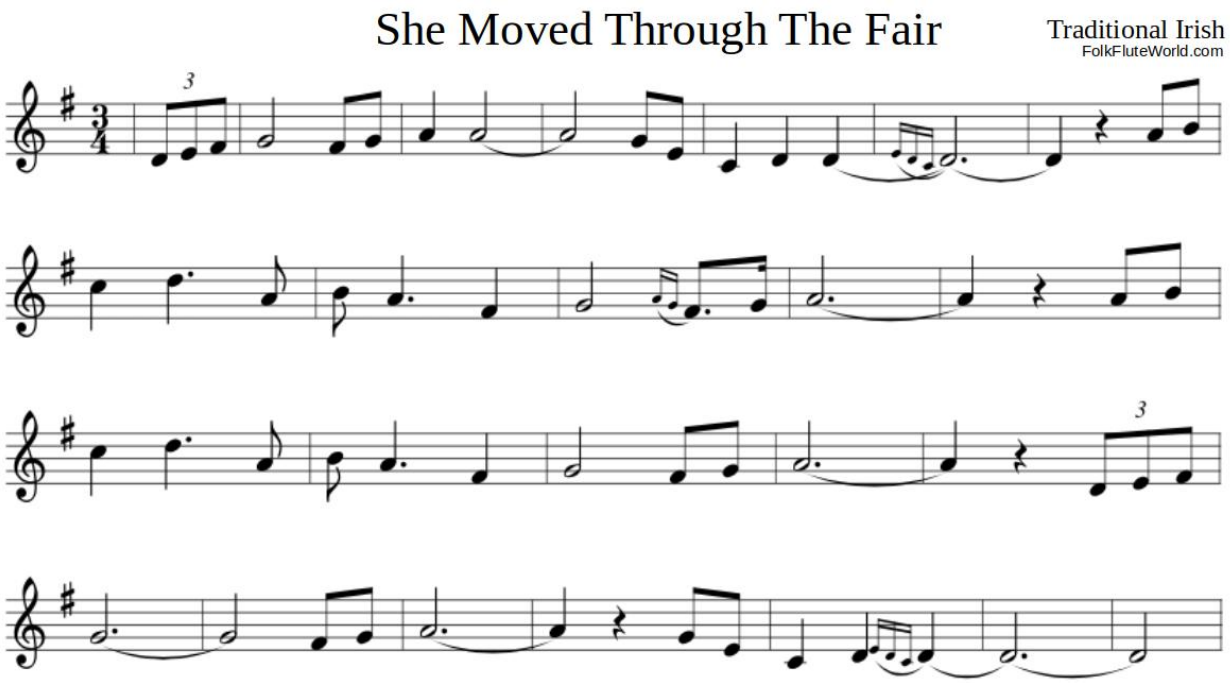


She Moved Through the Fair

This old Irish folk song goes by a number of names including *The Wedding Day*.

Practice: Two easy versions are provided here. Enjoy this pretty melody.



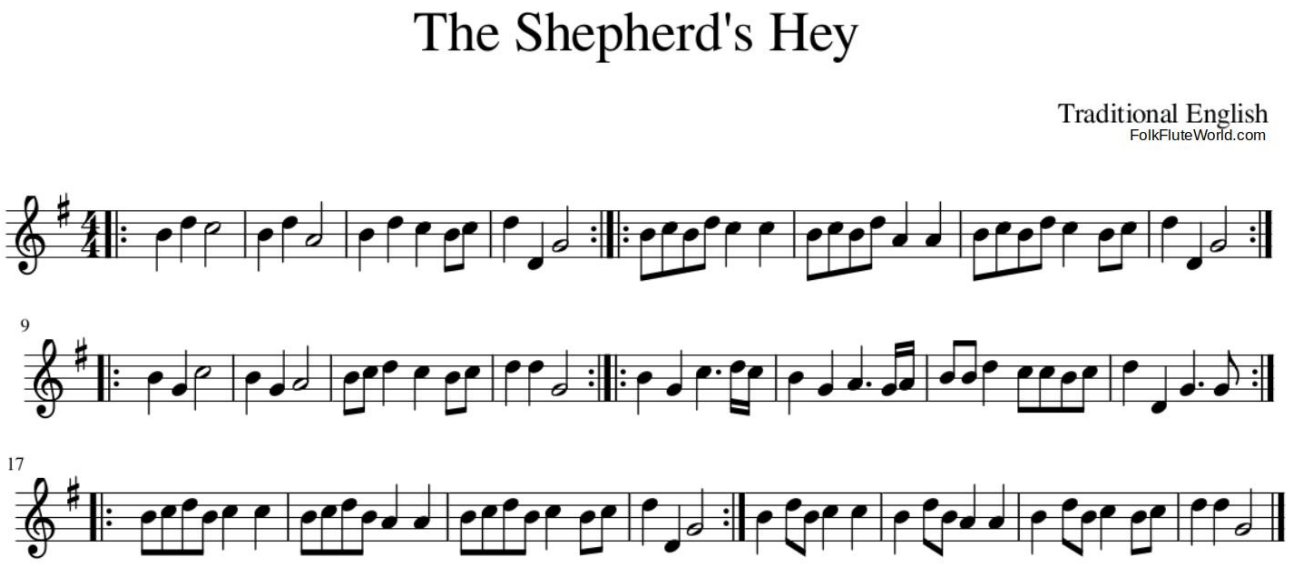


The Shepherd's Hey

This is a Morris tune, one of those happy-go-lucky dance songs that trace their lineage back to 15th century England. Morris dances are choreographed street dances performed by costumed enthusiasts.

The songs are typically fast and repetitious. This score is typical: repeats occur every fourth measure.

Practice: The score is simple. Yet it offers a good opportunity to play your recorder at speed. Try playing it all slowly at first, then speed up the tempo for dancing.

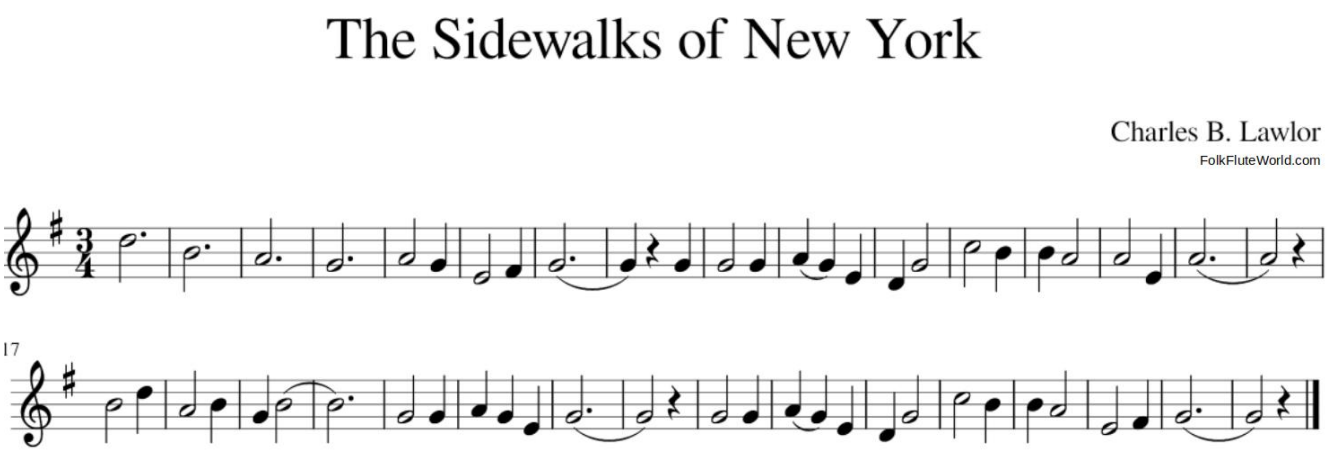


The Sidewalks of New York

Sometimes you'll find this tune titled *East Side, West Side*. It's been popular since it was composed in the 1890's.

Along with Frank Sinitra's rendition of *New York, New York,* it's identified as a theme song for the city.

Practice: Played at a leisurely to moderate pace, this score doesn't present any unusual challenges.



Silesian Folk Melody

This is a folk melody from Silesia, a western region of Poland with its capital of Wrocław. Like many traditional folk songs, it has been put to many uses including the melody for the Christian hymn *Fairest Lord Jesus*.

Practice: This song is in the key of D Major. That key has two sharps, C# and F#. In this score you'll see many occurrences of F#, but only one of C#. If you're playing a flute without double holes, see if you can manage to half hole your way past that single low C#.

You'll find many free D Major tunes on the web. It's the primary key for songs scored for the Irish flute and the tin whistle (aka the "penny whistle").

If you find a D Major tune in ABC Notation, it becomes a simple matter to feed it into an automatic transposing tool. Often that will result in a score that you'll find easier to play.



Skip to My Lou (Duet)

This song was a popular dance tune in the 1840's. It mandated partner-swapping and was said to be young Abraham Lincoln's favorite party tune. Today it's usually identified as a children's song.

Practice: We've provided this lively duet in two keys, D Major and F Major. Both versions feature simple but appealing harmony in thirds.





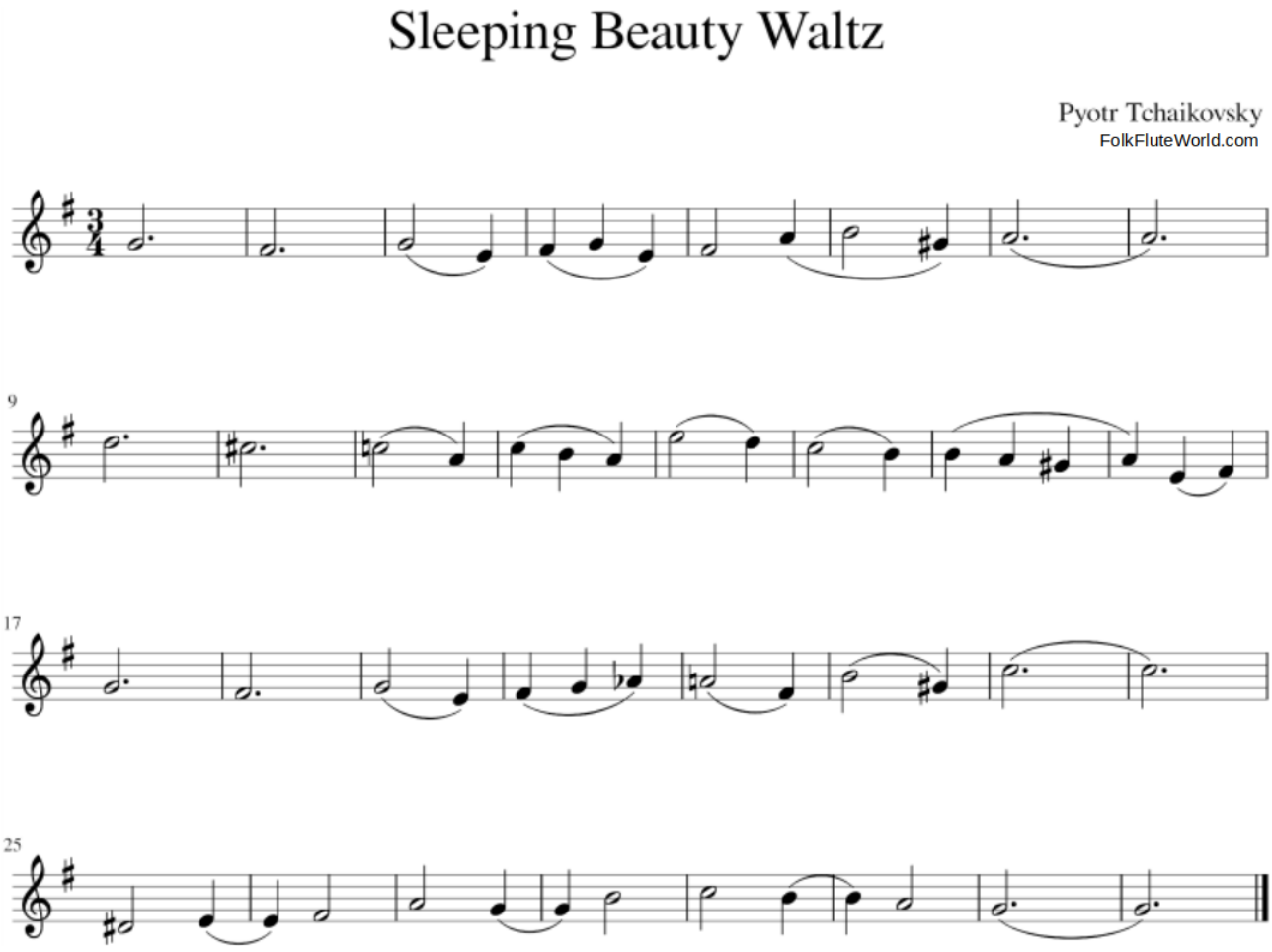
The Sleeping Beauty Waltz

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky was one of the world's great composers. He was probably the first Russian to achieve international acclaim for his music. He's usually considered representative of the Romantic period of the mid to late 19th century.

Even those who know little of orchestral music will recognize his compositions such as *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker*, and the *1812 Overture*.

Here's a portion of his *Sleeping Beauty Ballet*.

Practice: This score is pretty simple, though its several chromatics introduce some complexity. Try to give it the lilting feel of a sweeping ballet.



Song of Seikilos

Here's a thrill! You can play the world's oldest song.

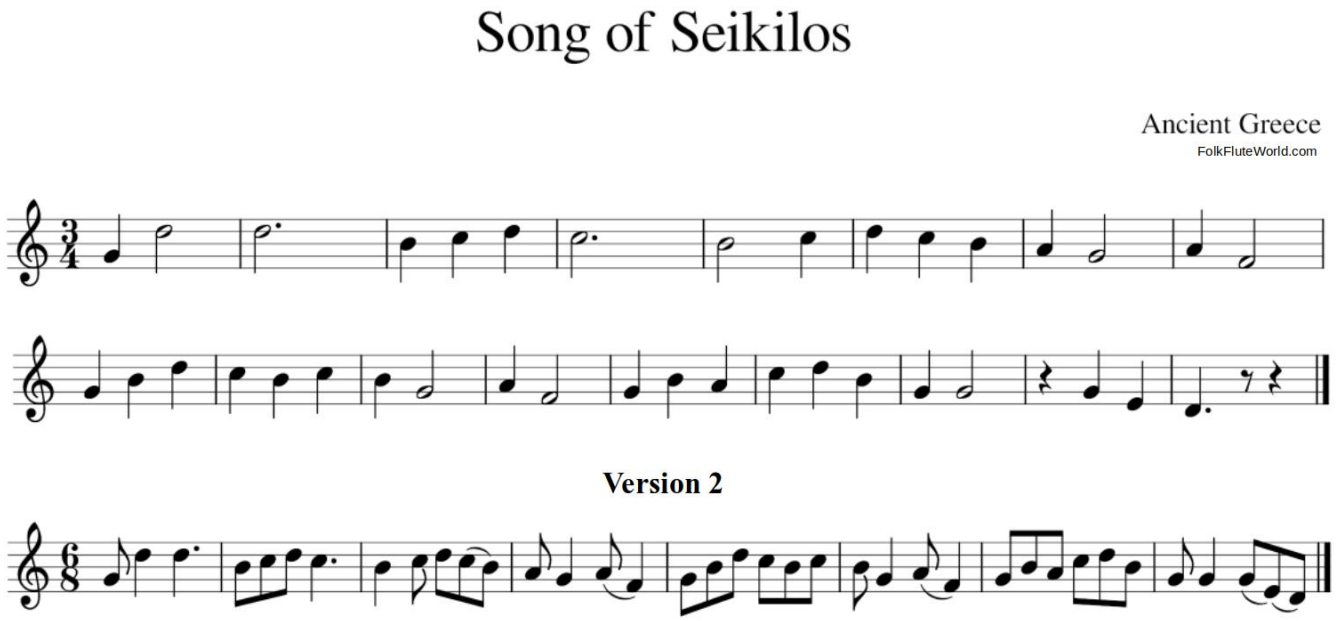
This song is the world's oldest that is known in its entirety. It was found on a stone pillar engraved in ancient Greek. It dates from between the 1st and 2nd centuries AD.

The carved stone is thought to be a memorial from a man named Seikilos to his wife Euterpe, after her death. If Seikilos meant it as a timeless memorial, he certainly achieved his purpose.

These plaintive lyrics accompany this melody:

> *While you live, shine*
> *dance and sing, be joyful*
> *Life is but a short while*
> *And time will take its toll.*

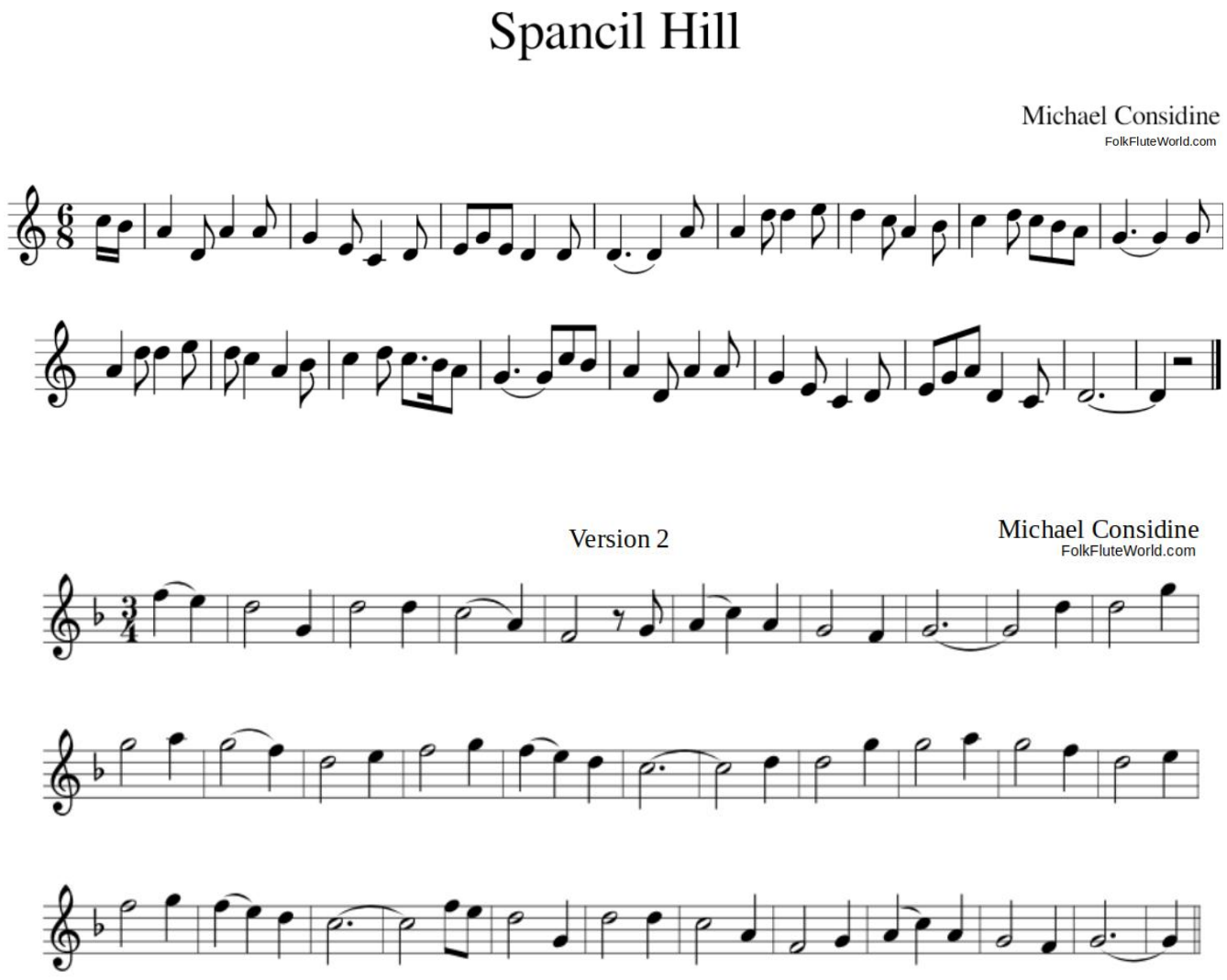
Practice: We've provided two different scores for this song, one in 3/4 time, the other in 6/8 time. Try playing both. Does the melody differ between the scores?



Spancil Hill

Spancil Hill was composed by Michael Considine in remembrance of his Irish hometown. Due to the poverty of the region, Considine immigrated to United States. Only in his early twenties, he penned the song and sent it to his nephew back in Ireland. He died shortly thereafter, at the age of 23.

Practice: Contrast the first version with the second. The first is scored in 6/8 time instead of 3/4 time. Play them one after the other and you'll notice many minor differences in how the tune is rendered, as well. This is pretty common with folk songs. You'll often find minor differences in the melody between different scores.

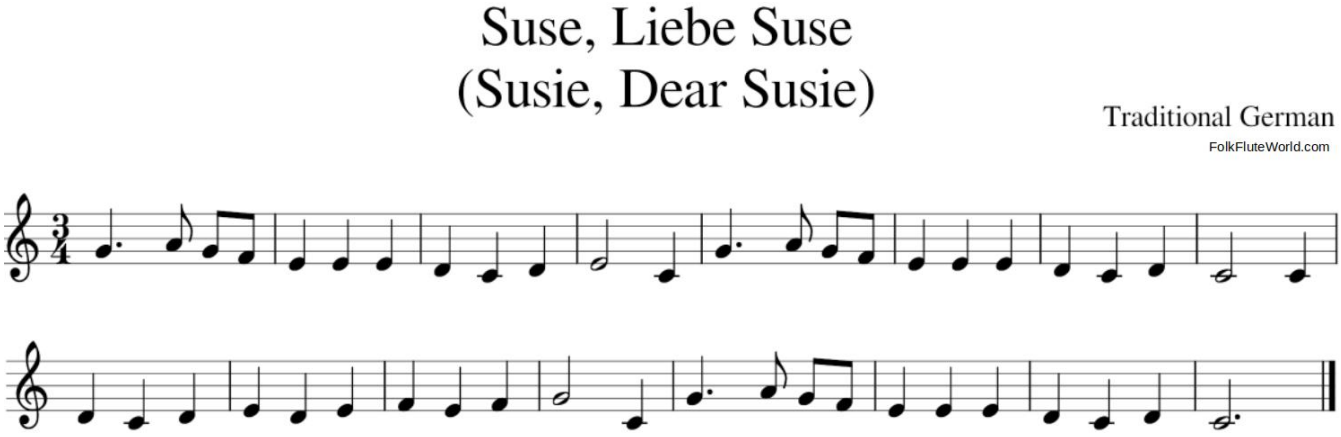


Susie, Dear Susie

This is a traditional German cradle song popular from the 17th century. It was probably brought to the United States by German immigrants. 19th century composer Engelbert Humperdinck included it in his famous opera, *Hansel and Gretel*.

Practice: Be sure to play the dotted-quarter-note-followed-by-eighth-note combination with the correct timing. If you need a refresher, refer back to Lesson 7 and the way this construct sounds in songs like *Michael, Row the Boat Ashore* and *London Bridge Is Falling Down*.

The *Arran Boat Song* near the top of this appendix relies almost completely on this timing construct.

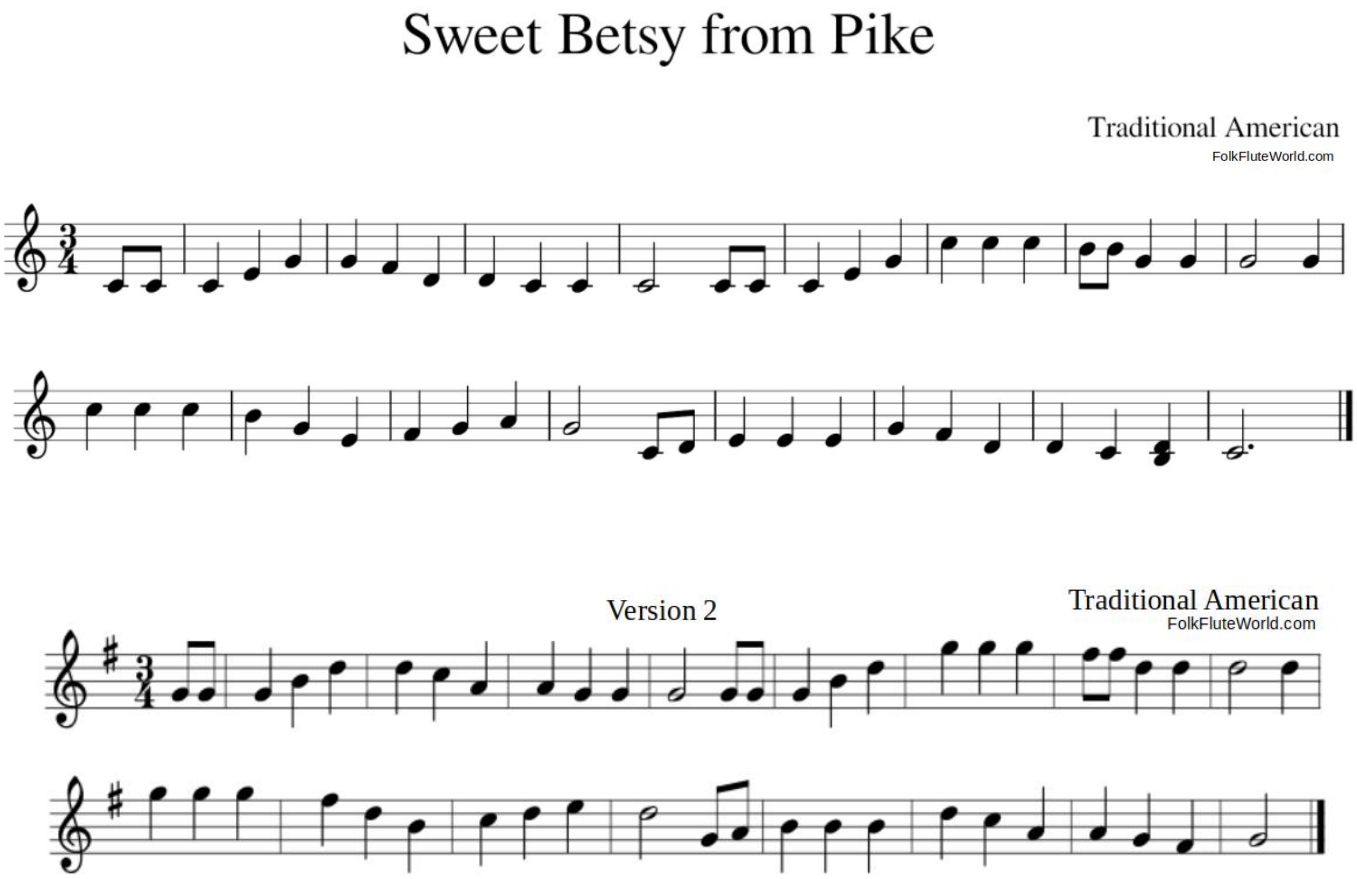


Sweet Betsy From Pike

This American folk ballad dates from the days of the California gold rush. It relates the trials of a pioneer named Betsy and her lover Ike who migrate from Pike County, Missouri to California. Each verse relates a different adventure they endure.

The song was first published in 1858 and is often cited as a representative western folk tune.

Practice: This is one of those classic songs everybody knows, so it makes for a good sing-along session. Play it on your recorder while your friends sing along.



Szla dzieweczka

The title translates to *The Girl Was Walking*. The simple lyrics follow a girl as she wanders through the forest and greets a hunter.

This is a popular Polish folk song from the early 19th century. It's often sung at celebratory occasions like weddings and festivals.

Practice: Be sure to repeat the first line, as indicated by its enclosure inside repeat brackets.

The ending for the first time through -- the **first ending** -- is marked by the **1.** and its extended line. So you play those four measures as the ending the first time you play the first line of the score.

After you've repeated that first line, you play the **second ending** denoted by the **2.**. After you play those four measures, you play the remainder of the song to the end.

Note that the key signature shifts from C Major (no sharps) to G Major (one sharp) after the second ending. The lead-in to this key change is three descending **fermatas** or "holds".



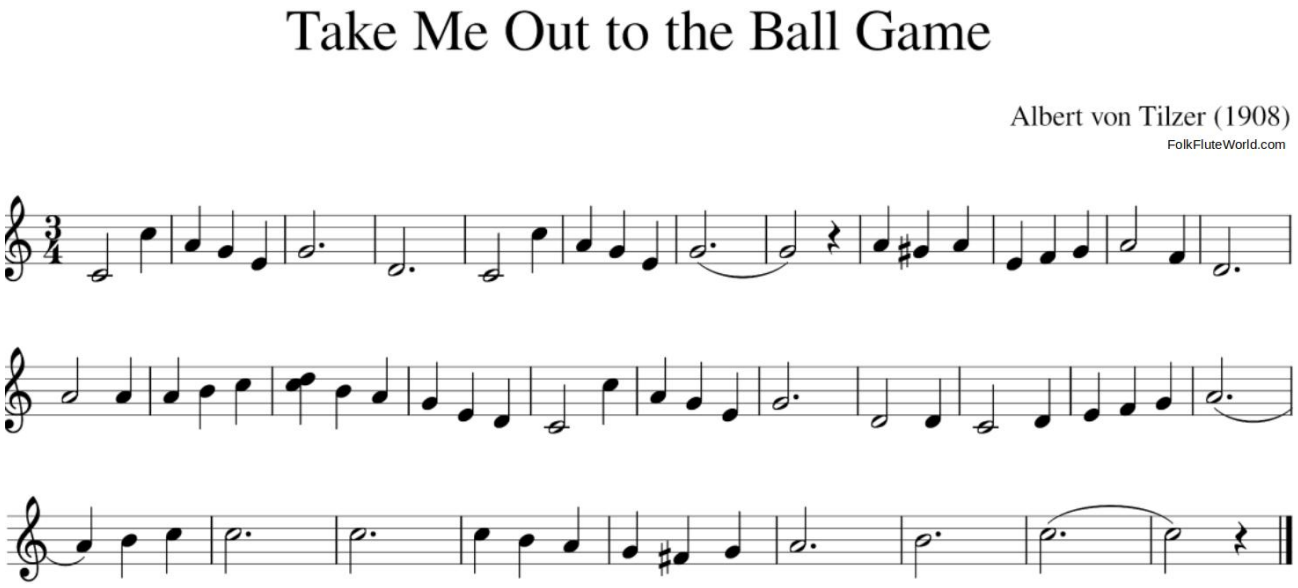
Take Me Out to the Ball Game

Here's one of those few songs to which nearly all Americans know the words.

Composer Jack Norworth was inspired to compose it when he saw a sign reading "Baseball Today -- Polo Grounds" while riding the New York subway.

Baseball may no longer be "America's game" in the way it was back when he wrote this song in the early 1900's, but the tune remains a timeless classic.

Practice: Be prepared for when accidentals G# and F# appear. These embedded sharps remind you that it's a good idea to scan a score prior to playing it. Beyond that, this is an easy tune with no tricky timing and an easy key signature.



Tarantelle

This traditional melody is one of several used for tarantella or "spider" dances in southern Italy. Most of the dances are quick 3/4 or 6/8 tunes accompanied by tambourines.

Practice: This is a simple tune, and a good opportunity for trying to convey the happiness and joy of dance. Once you become familiar with it, play it at a quick pace.

If you're lucky, maybe you can find someone to play tambourine while you play the melody and your friends dance to the tune. Try it at your next backyard barbecue or on-the-road campfire party.



This Old Man

This vintage tune is a nursery rhyme sometimes used to teach children how to count. Like many ancient melodies, this one has been widely adapted for commercial use. It was employed in modified form in the 1958 film *The Inn of the Sixth Happiness*.

Rocker Ritchie Valens released it as *The Paddi-Wack Song* in 1959, and *The Snowmen* had a minor popular hit with it under the name *Nik Nak Paddy Wak* in 1986.

Practice: The second score in 2/4 time asks you to speed up this tune.



Ticinesi son bravi soldati

The title of this song translates roughly as *The Ticinesi are Brave Soldiers*. It's a folk song from the Swiss province of Ticino. That's the predominantly Italian-speaking province that geographically juts into north-central Italy. The song is used as the military anthem for the region's soldiers.

Practice: Notice that the first four measures are enclosed within repeat brackets. So you play them twice before continuing with the remainder of the score.

You'll have to take care to keep proper time in this song. It intermixes quarter notes, dotted quarter notes, eighth notes, and half notes in a unique way. It's not difficult … but you must stay alert and count the timing to perform it properly.

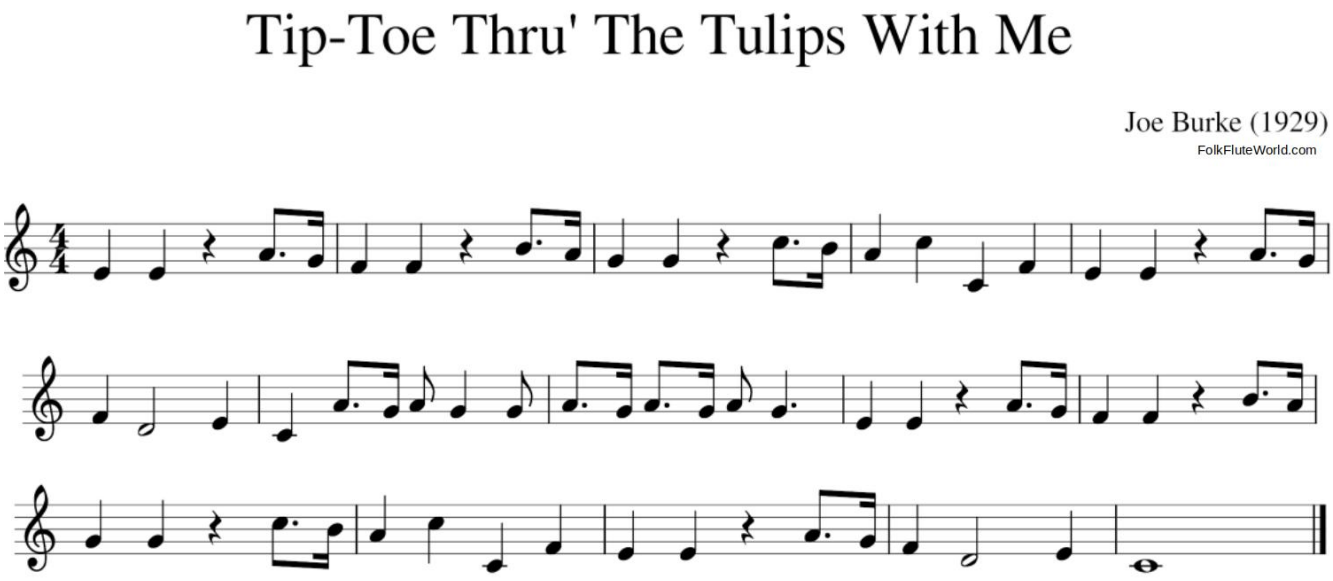


Tip-toe Thru the Tulips With Me

This song was composed for a 1929 film entitled *Gold Diggers of Broadway*. That movie was among the earliest "talkies."

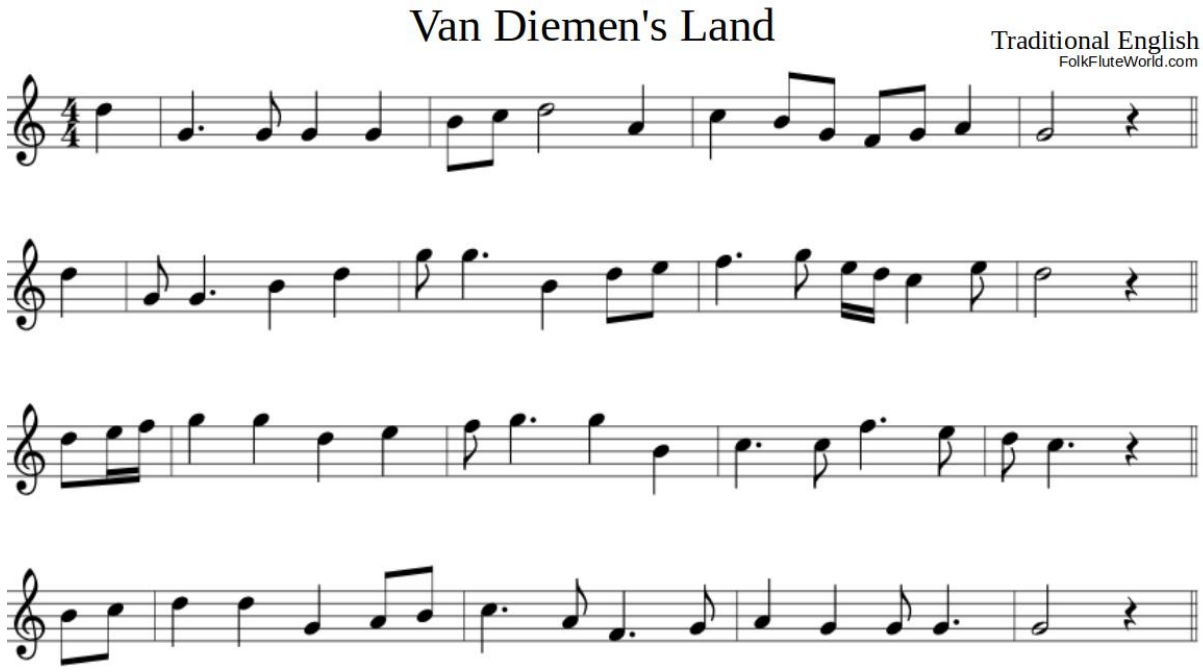
The song found renewed fame when pop singer Tiny Tim crooned it on the television show *Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In* in 1968. Tim went on to star in the most-widely viewed TV event in the 1960's (after the moon landing) -- his on-screen marriage to Miss Vicki. The marriage lasted eight years, about as long as Tim's fame. But he truly loved performing and continued even as his audiences dwindled, until his passing at age 64 in 1996.

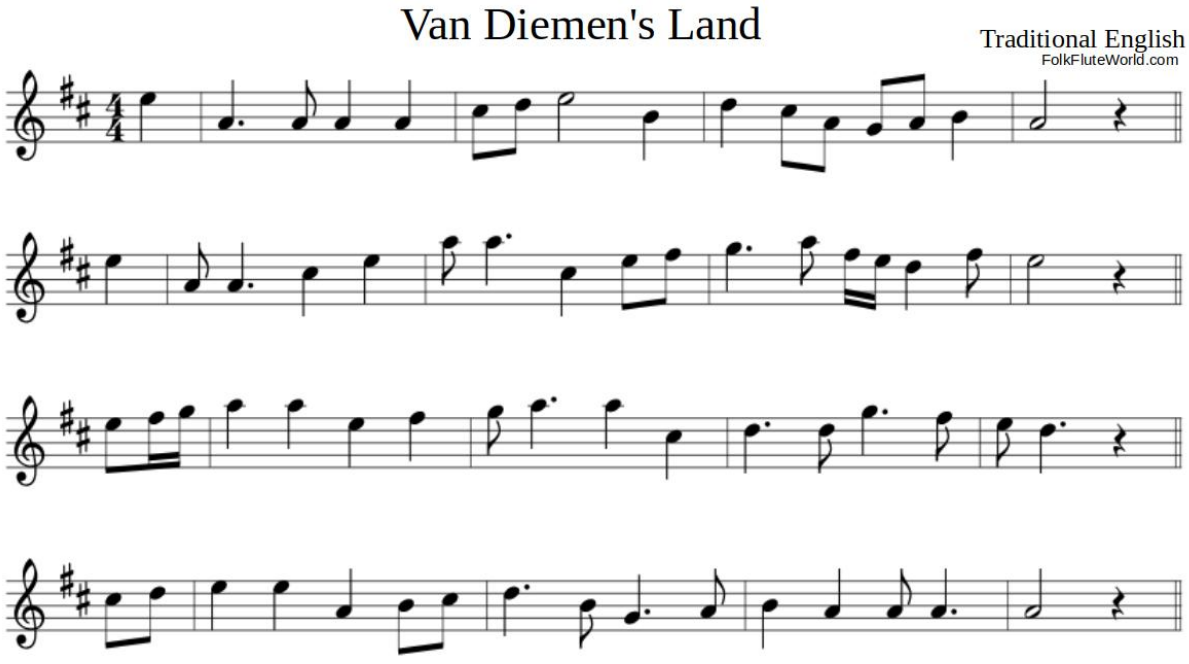
Practice: A prominent feature in this song is the dotted-eighth-note-followed-by-a-sixteenth-note combination. This is similar to a combination with which you're already familiar, the dotted-quarter-note-followed-by-an-eighth-note. The difference is that this new combination is faster.



Van Diemen's Land

Also known as *Henry The Poacher,* this old folk song tells the story of a young man caught poaching. For punishment, he was sent to the penal colony of Van Diemen's Land, today known as Tasmania.



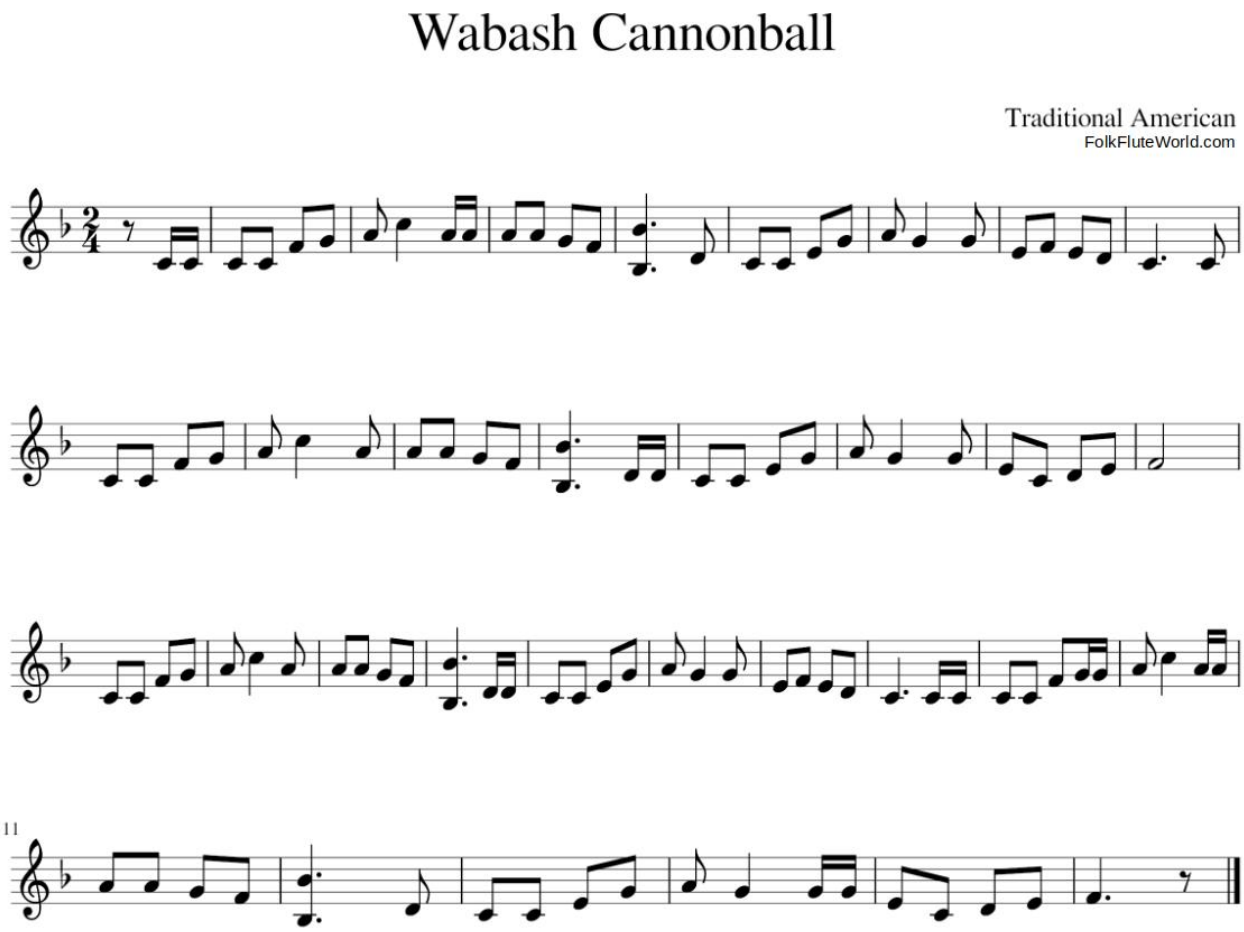


Wabash Cannonball

This traditional folk song became a country music staple after it was recorded by the Carter Family in the 1920's and then by Roy Acuff in 1936. Acuff had a major hit with it and it became his theme song.

Acuff was a central figure in country music in the 1930's and 1940's. His appearances at the Grand Ole Opry spanned four decades. Fans frequently hollered for him to perform *Wabash Cannonball*.

Practice: The song is in 2/4 time. That's two beats per measure, with each quarter note getting one beat. This is one of the few songs we've seen that contains sixteenth notes. Two of those would comprise one eighth note, so they're very quick. The sixteenth notes as used as **pick up** notes to start the main tune. Try to match how you know this melody goes with its representation in this score.



Wayfaring Stranger

This song is a classic American folk tune. Like many, its origins are obscure. It was popular prior to the American Civil War.

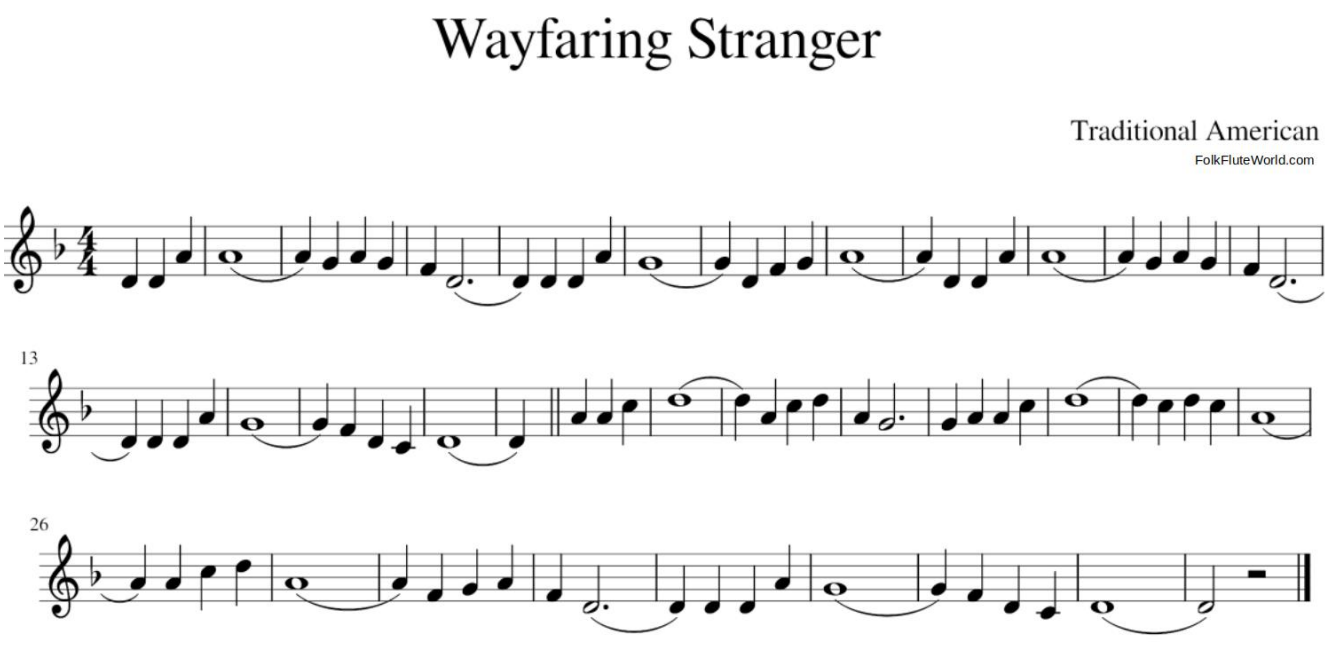
You'll find many versions of this tune on the web, and they significantly differ from one another.

Practice: Try to imbue this song with the longing it represents. It's a good opportunity to try for a mild vibrato on the extended notes.

You'll recall that vibrato is a very slight wavering or pulsation during a whole note. You've heard opera singers do it.

You can learn vibrato by exaggerating how you make your breath pulse. Vary your breath slightly at a constant, rhythmic pace. Then gradually reduce the degree of the differential in the pulses.

If you have difficulty, look up "how to vibrato on flute" on the internet and you'll find lots of advice and exercises on how to achieve a good vibrato. The technique takes a bit of practice to learn but is well worth your time -- its effects in a song like this are dramatic.



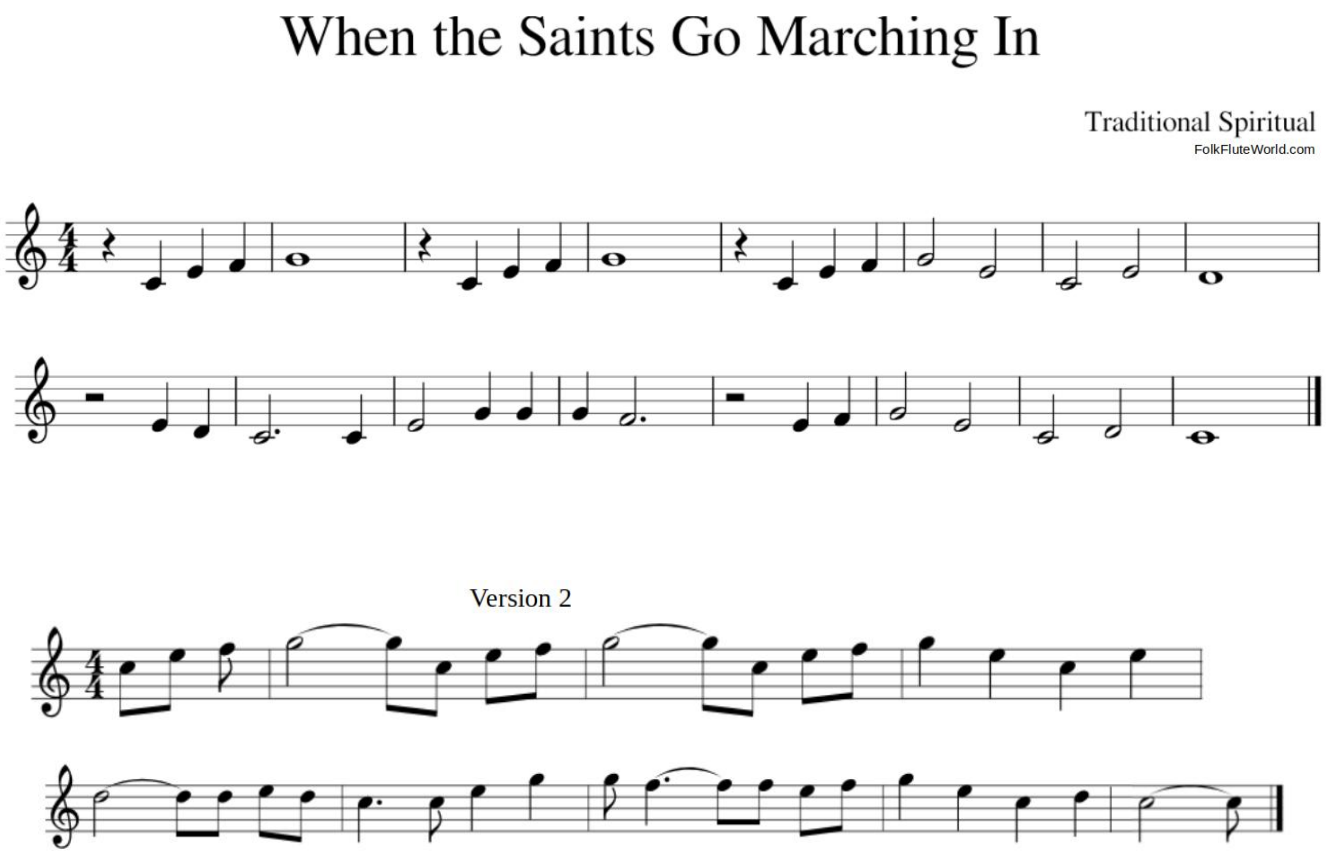
When the Saints Go Marching In

This song likely evolved from African-American gospel songs in the late 1800's. It's often played up tempo as a jazz standard and is considered the classic New Orleans anthem.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the song was typically played slow and stately, often as a funeral dirge. It evolved into the snappy jazz rhythm we know today by the time of the second world war.

Practice: The song plays easily and is repetitious. It's best played at accelerated tempo. Jazz it up by altering the timing however feels right to you. Take some liberty and "make that swing your thing".

As you can imagine, you can find scores for this song on the internet that are much more complicated than these. This demonstrates the benefits of web searching for the easiest to play. Once you've got the song down pat you can always enliven it with greater complexity.



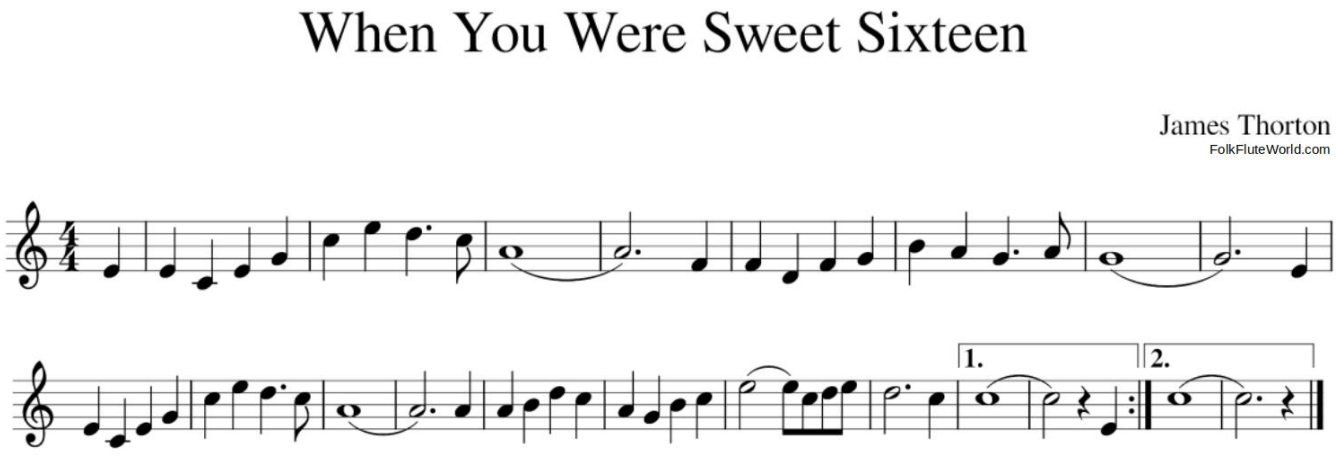
When You Were Sweet Sixteen

When composer Jim Thornton's wife asked if he still loved her, he replied, *"I love you like I did when you were sweet sixteen."*

The exchange inspired this song, which -- sung by Mrs. Thornton -- quickly became a vaudeville hit.

Practice: The repeat sign in the "first ending" tells you to repeat the entire song. The second time through, play the "second ending", then stop.

This is a love song, so try to make it sound as melodic and appealing as possible.



The Wild Rover

Numerous claims have been made regarding the origins of this tune. About all one can say for certain is that it's from the British Isles and is several hundred years old. It's quite popular.

Practice: The timing of this song is a little tricky. It's a good test of how well you can follow a mix of quarter, eighth, and half notes, plus their dotted equivalents. Sound it out slowly first if you need to.



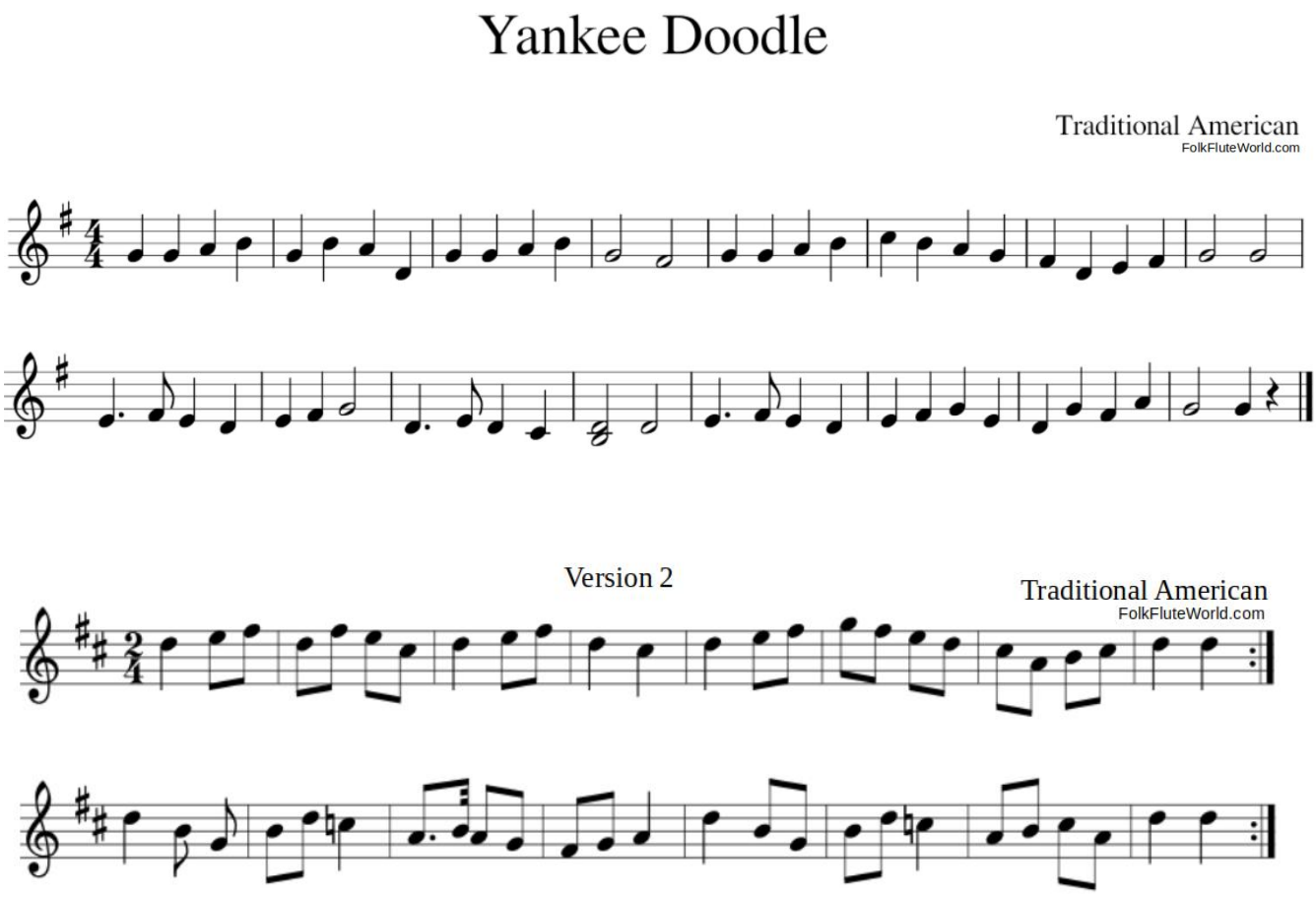
Yankee Doodle

The origins of this old tune are lost to time. Most likely it's Irish. It was brought to America during the colonial era and promptly became a favorite.

Today most Americans think of *Yankee Doodle* as a patriotic folk song. They associate it with the American Revolutionary War of 1775 to 1783. It's a popular tune in patriotic parades.

Practice: This is an easy song to play, unless you play it at challenging speed. It contains a single low B in the second line. If you can shield your recorder's bell a bit (called **shading**), go for it.

Otherwise, play the higher note. The second version is higher pitched in the key of D Major.



Self Tests -- Answers

Here are the answers to the two self tests.

If you get any wrong, make sure you understand why the given answer is correct. Or, go back to the relevant lesson and refresh your memory on the correct answer.

******** Self Test #1 ********

1. What is the base note or fundamental of the soprano recorder?

ANSWER: C is correct. The **base note** or **fundamental** of the soprano recorder is that note it plays with all holes covered. That note is C5, sometimes called "low C".

A and C are incorrect because C6 or high C is one octave above the soprano recorder's base note. That's the garklein's fundamental.

B is incorrect because C4 is one octave below the soprano recorder's base note. That's the base note of the tenor.

2. What is the range of the soprano recorder?

ANSWER: D is correct. Many people can play two full octaves plus a possible note or two on the high end beyond that on their soprano.

A and E are incorrect because the soprano recorder can play two full octaves or more. That's more than 13 notes.

B is incorrect because C5 through C6 is a range of only 8 whole notes.

C is incorrect because the recorder notes you can play beyond two octaves are high notes, not additional low notes.

3. Which statement correctly expresses the pitch of recorders, from the lowest pitched to the highest pitched?

ANSWER: B is the correct answer. It lists recorder sizes from lowest to highest pitched.

A is incorrect because it lists recorder sizes from highest to lowest pitched. C is incorrect because a contrabass is lower pitched than a bass. D is incorrect because it has the positions of the sopranino and garklein reversed.

4. What does a dot over (or below) a note mean?

ANSWER: D is correct. A dot above or below a note means to play it *staccato*, short and distinct.

Answer C is incorrect because it's a dot **after** a note that extends its duration by half, not a dot above or below the note. Answers A and B are incorrect because loudness has nothing to do with *staccato*.

5. Why do schools often introduce musicianship to students with recorders instead of some other instrument?

ANSWER: E is correct. Recorders offer all the advantages listed in the other answers.

6. What's the proper order of these notes, from highest to lowest?

ANSWER: C is the correct order of these notes from hightest to lowest.

A and D are incorrect because they list the notes from lowest to highest. B is incorrect because it repeats C twice.

7. How many eighth notes could be played in the time of one half note?

ANSWER: C is correct, there are 4 eighth notes per half note. Remember, there are two eighth notes per quarter note, and two quarter notes per half note, thus there are four eighth notes per half note.

8. What's the difference between 3/4 and 4/4 time?

ANSWER: B is correct. 3/4 time has three beats per measure, as shown by its numerator.

A is incorrect because the time signature doesn't tell you how many **notes** there are per measure, it tells you how many **beats** there are per measure. The two could be different. C and D are incorrect because neither of these two time signatures tell you how fast to play a tune.

9. Which of the following is not an advantage to a plastic recorder over a wood one?

ANSWER: C is correct. Plastic recorders do not necessarily sound better than wood ones.

A is incorrect because it is true that a plastic recorder of a certain size is usually less expensive than its wood equivalent. B is incorrect because it is true that plastic recorders require less maintenance effort than wood ones.

10. One whole note consumes the same amount of time as how many sixteenth notes?

ANSWER: D is correct, there are 16 sixteenth notes per whole note note.

A is incorrect because 4 sixteenth notes equal 1 quarter note. B is incorrect because 8 sixteenth notes equal 1 half note. C is incorrect because 12 sixteenth notes equal 1 half note plus 1 quarter note (or 1 dotted half note).

11. Which note is this on the C soprano recorder?

ANSWER: C is correct, this is the fingering for the note A5.

A and B are incorrect because this note is not G. D is incorrect because A6 is one full octave higher than that indicated by the diagram. You would not fully cover the thumb hole when playing A6.

12. For how long do you play a note immediately followed by a dot?

ANSWER: C is correct. The rule is that you play a dotted note for its normal time plus half of its normal time. For example, in 4/4 time, you would play a dotted half note for its time (2 beats), plus half that value (1 beat). So in 4/4 time a dotted half note gets 3 beats.

All other answers are incorrect because they violate the rule that a dotted note consumes its normal time plus half of its normal time.

13. If you blow a note too hard, what happens?

ANSWER: B is correct, blowing a note too hard causes it to go sharp.

A is incorrect because blowing too little causes a note to go flat. C and D are incorrect because blowing too hard does not necessarily alter a note by exactly one tone.

14. You've been playing awhile, and suddenly your recorder starts sounding muffled or garbled. What should you do?

ANSWER: D is correct. Your instrument is "wetting out". Its windway is blocked by moisture from your breath. You need to remove that moisture to continue playing.

A is incorrect. Blowing harder won't remove the accumulated moisture (though a very sharp blow could help). Answers B and C are incorrect because they also do not solve the moisture issue.

15. Why might you keep the box in which your recorder was shipped to you?

ANSWER: B is correct. The box could be very handy for safely transporting or storing your recorder in the future.

Answers A and D are incorrect because the box might make a nice keepsake and it might be a collectible, but the real reason you want to save it is to have a safe, secure place to store and transport your recorder. Answer C is incorrect because you can certainly play your recorder without its box.

16. Why might the first measure in a score contain fewer beats than all the other measures?

ANSWER: D is correct. The first measure often contains a note or two that lead into the main melody. These are often called "pickup notes" or "the lead-in".

Answer A is incorrect because it's not unusual to see the first (and possibly the last) measures of a score have a different number of beats than directed by the time signature. B and C are incorrect because the first measure neither establishes the speed of the tune nor its key.

17. What is vibrato and why should you learn how to do it?

ANSWER: C is correct. Vibrato is where you hold a note and make it wobble or pulsate the tiniest bit. It makes long notes sound more pleasant.

Answer A is incorrect because it better describes staccato. Answer B is incorrect because you can play vibrato on any recorder. Answer D is incorrect because vibrato is about pulsating a note, not playing it softly.

18. Which statement is true?

ANSWER: D is correct. D. Dynamics are about how loudly you play, and intonation is about playing in tune (your pitch accuracy).

Answers A and B are incorrect because intonation has nothing to do with how fast you play, it's about whether you play in tune. C is incorrect because vibrato is not about playing in tune, it's a technique to make a long note sound better by introducing a very slight waver or pitch waffle into the note.

19. You find an old flute in your attic that has 6 fingering holes on top and is made out of wood. What is it?

ANSWER: B is correct. It's a tin whistle, a totally different instrument from the recorder. This book only teaches you how to play recorders, not penny whistles. Tin whistles have 6 top holes and no thumb holes. None of their holes are double holes.

Answer A is incorrect because a recorder must have 7 top holes (this assumes any double holes count as one). B is incorrect because ocarinas do not typically have 6 top holes, and few are made from wood. D is incorrect because Irish flutes are not end-blown, they are transverse flutes.

20. Which statement is not true?

ANSWER: D is the correct answer. A trill involves very fast movement between two notes either one whole note or one semitone apart. The notes would **not** be one octave apart.

All the other possible answers are true statements, so none of them is a correct answer to the question.

21. The fingerings for which note differ for baroque versus German fingered recorders?

ANSWER: F is correct.

All other answers are incorrect because those notes are all fingered the same way for baroque and German fingered recorders.

22. Which statement is not true?

ANSWER: C is the correct answer. An underscore beneath or above a note means to play it **tenuto**, maximum length with very gentle tongue. It does **not** mean to play it short with hard tonguing. That would be staccato.

Answers A, B, and D are all incorrect because they are true statements, and the question asks for the statement that is not correct.

23. What is a fipple?

ANSWER: B is correct. The fipple is the mouthpiece of a woodwind that automatically directs your breath to a sharp splitting edge where it is split to create sound waves.

Answer A is incorrect because a fipple has nothing to do with the key of the recorder. C is incorrect because the term "fipple" has nothing to do with a neck strap. D is incorrect because it defines the base note of a sopranino. E is incorrect because a fipple has nothing to do with thumb rests.

24. How many notes are the in the standard western scale?

ANSWER: C is correct. There are 7 notes in the scale. From lowest to highest they are: C, D, E, F, G, A, B

Answer A is incorrect because there are 5 notes in many Asian scales, but there are 7 in the standard western scale. B and D are just incorrect numbers.

25. Why does nearly everybody urge a beginner to start with a soprano recorder instead of some other size or key?

ANSWER: D is correct because all the other answers are true.

26. Why do most experts urge a beginner to start with a baroque fingered recorder instead of a German one?

ANSWER: C is correct. Accidentals on German instruments may not sound quite as tonally accurate.

Answer B is incorrect because there is no general rule that baroque recorders sound better than German ones. C is incorrect because both play the same range of notes for the typical player.

******** Self Test #2 ********

1. If you intend to store your recorder over the winter, what should you do?

ANSWER: b is correct. You should store it in its disassembled state so the joints don't become stuck. Be sure to box and seal up the instrument to protect it from moisture and temperature extremes.

A is incorrect because that could lead to stuck joints. C and D are incorrect because whether you store a recorder vertically or horizontally does not affect how well it survives storage.

2. Why are alternate fingerings useful?

ANSWER: D is correct because all the other statements are true.

3. Which statement is true?

ANSWER: A is correct. Sopranos require less breath than bass and bass usually cost more.

B is incorrect because it makes the untrue claim that "bass usually cost less". C and D are not true because sopranos and bass finger the same.

4. D# is the same note as?

ANSWER: A is correct. D# and E♭ are the same note. Both are ½ tone above D and ½ tone below E. Remember that every accidental can be called by either its name as a sharp, or by its name as a flat.

5. A friend hands you a recorder that has no double holes. How can you play low C#?

ANSWER: C is correct. Use your right hand pinky finger to half hole the last tone hole (the 7th hole).

A and B are incorrect because you can't blow more softly or loudly to attain low C#. D is incorrect because you can play low C# by half-holing.

6. Which key has two sharps?

ANSWER: D is correct. D Major has two accidentals, F# and C#.

A is incorrect because C Major has no sharps or flats. B is incorrect because F Major has one flat, B♭. E♭ Major is incorrect because it has three flats.

You'll often see tin whistle and Irish flute music scored in D Major. So it's a common key and important to be aware of.

7. What does it mean to play a note "natural"?

ANSWER: C is correct. When you play a note as a natural, that means it is a whole note, not a sharp or flat.

A and B are incorrect because a natural note is neither sharp nor flat. Answer D is incorrect because this has nothing to do with rests. Answer E is incorrect because this is a specific instruction on how to play a note.

8. If a note has a sharp sign immediately in front of it, what do you do?

ANSWER: A is correct. Regardless of the key signature, when a note has a sharp sign right in front of it, you play it as sharp. In other words, a sharp symbol adjacent to a note overrides whatever the key signature might call for.

B is incorrect because the immediate sharp sign takes precedence over the key signature. C is incorrect because the sharp sign tells you not to play the note as a natural. D is incorrect because the sharp sign tells you to play an accidental, not a whole note.

9. Which is another name for the alto recorder?

ANSWER: B is the correct answer. You'll sometimes hear the alto recorder referred as the **treble recorder**.

A is incorrect because **descant** is another name for the soprano. C is incorrect because the alto is an F recorder, not an C recorder. D is incorrect because the sopranino is the next smaller instrument in the recorder family that is higher pitched than the soprano.

10. For which member of the recorder family might you encounter sheet music that is not scored in treble clef?

ANSWER: D is correct. Bass parts are scored in the **bass clef**. All other answers are incorrect because parts for those instruments will normally be scored in the treble clef.

11. If you have a score that is very difficult to play because of its accidentals, what are two possible solutions? (Select two answers)

ANSWER: A and D are correct. You can either transpose the score or find a more playable version on the internet.

B and C are incorrect because these change the score in ways that will make it sound incorrectly.

12. Which statement is true about rounds and duets?

ANSWER: A is correct. In a round, musicians all play the same melody but starting at different times. Or, they all start playing at the same time but at different places in the score.

B is incorrect because it's true for rounds, not for duets. C and D are incorrect because musicians playing together must all be in proper timing to sound correctly. Synchronized timing is required for both rounds and duets.

13. Which of the following is NOT a capability of current ABC based computer tools?

ANSWER: E is correct. Computer tools that work with ABC Notation can perform all the tasks listed except for converting a traditional score into ABC Notation. (Note that some such tools do exist but don't work very well at the time of writing. Perhaps this will change in the future).

All the other answers are incorrect because computer tools can perform all those tasks for you.

14. What's a metronome?

ANSWER: B is correct. Metronomes audibly tick off the beats for you. This can help musicians stay in proper timing. To get a metronome, you can either buy a physical box called a metronome, or you can download a metronome app for your mobile phone or computer. Or, use an online metronome.

B and C are incorrect because these are not functions of metronomes. D is not the answer because A is.

15. Which notes are harmonic thirds to E?

ANSWER: C is correct. Harmony in thirds requires notes that are either two notes above or two notes below the melodic note. G is two notes above E, and C is two notes below it.

The other answers are all incorrect because they are not two notes above or below E.

16. You see a maple wood soprano offered at $20 USD on Amazon. What do you do?

ANSWER: C is correct. China and some developing nations produce very inexpensive wood recorders. Most play poorly, out of tune, or won't play all notes. But it's possible that a good one is offered cheaply. **Check it out thoroughly.** Listen to sound samples that cover the entire range of the instrument, including all sharps and flats. Carefully read all reviews.

A is a poor choice. You might well be unhappy with your purchase. Many believe B is a good approach, and won't even look at it. That's true if you have the cash to avoid deals and can just pay more for guaranteed quality.

17. What's the fundamental of a treble recorder?

ANSWER: D is correct. Remember that "treble recorder" is just another name for the alto. The fundamental or the lowest note of an alto is F4, so that is the correct answer.

A is incorrect because that's middle C on the piano. It's the fundamental of the tenor recorder. B is incorrect because that's the base note of the soprano. C is incorrect because that's the base note of the sopranino.

18. These fingerings are for which note?

ANSWER: D is correct. These are all possible fingerings for G# (low G# or G5#).

All other answers are wrong because this is low G#.

19. If you play a long run of quick sixteenth notes on a bass recorder, what can happen?

ANSWER: A is correct. Given the large size of the bass and the large amount of air held in its enclosed chamber, it doesn't respond very quickly to changes in air pressure. Thus it is possible that it can "swallow up" notes that are played very quickly, such as sixteenth notes.

B is incorrect because it's the opposite of what might happen. C and D are incorrect because the size of a recorder is not relevant to these two events.

20. Grace notes, cuts, strikes, flips, are examples of what?

ANSWER: C is correct. These are all examples of ornamentation.

A is incorrect because **decrescendo** means to reduce loudness over some period of time. B is incorrect because **dynamics** describes how loudly one plays. D is incorrect because **intonation** refers to playing in tune.

21. What is one reason the recorder fell out of popularity between 1750 and 1920?

ANSWER: A is correct. The louder instruments invented in the 1800s (flute, saxophone, etc) are more amenable for large audiences and public performance than the relatively soft voiced recorder.

B is incorrect because recorders can play all musical styles. C is incorrect because recorders are chromatic, not diatonic. D is incorrect because recorders are generally considered easy to play, or at least to learn. E is incorrect because recorders are much more than mere training instruments.

22. What's one difference between wood and plastic recorders?

ANSWER: C is correct. Wood recorders require more care and maintenance than plastic ones.

A is incorrect because wood is not necessarily louder than plastic; often it's the opposite. B is incorrect because both materials support the same range. D is incorrect because quality wood typically costs more than quality plastic. E is incorrect because wood recorders are available in both baroque and German fingering.

23. Which strategy can help you to half hole better?

ANSWER: D is correct because all the strategies listed may help.

Answers A, B, and C are all true statements, so the best answer is D, "all of the above".

24. Which notes finger differently between baroque and German recorders?

ANSWER: E is correct. According to most fingering charts, all these notes finger differently between these two kinds of recorder.

25. How many semitones are in the standard western scale, and what are they?

ANSWER: B is correct. There are 5 semitones in the standard western scale. This answer correctly lists them.

Answer A is incorrect. It lists the 7 whole notes of the scale, but the question is asking about semitones. C and D are incorrect because there are 5 semitones, not 4.

26. Which of these notations might prove useful when playing recorder?

ANSWER: E is correct. All of these notations could apply to playing recorder. Music scored for F key treble instruments applies to the sopranino and alto. Music scored for C key treble instruments applies to the garklein, soprano, and tenor. Music scored for F key bass clef instruments applies to the bass recorder. ABC notation could apply to all recorders, as it's just a computer-friendly notation.

One Million Free Scores

Over a million free scores are available from a variety of websites. We list some of them here.

If you're reading a digital copy of this book, just click on the website name in the left column.

If you're reading a print copy, the website name is spelled out in full in the right column. Copy and paste it into your web browser. (On a few browsers, you may need to add **www.** or **http://** before the website name.)

Websites come and go, so we can't guarantee which are still active when you read this book. Visit website **FolkFluteWorld.com** for the current, updated list.

If a website has disappeared, you can often find it by using the Internet Archive's **Wayback Machine** at **Archive.org**. Just enter the website name in the Search Box and you'll see a copy of the website and all its material at the time it was last archived.

Free Tune Libraries (Lead Sheets)

FolkFluteWorld	FolkFluteWorld.com
ABC Notations HUGE library	ABCnotation.com/tunes
IMSLP HUGE tune library	imslp.org
Public Domain Sherpa	Publicdomainsherpa.com/free-sheet-music.html
Free-scores.com	Free-scores.com/index_uk.php
Public Domain Music Project	PDinfo.com
Michael Eskin -- Many libraries	MichaelEskin.com/tunebooks.html
Michael Eskin -- Tune websites	MichaelEskin.com
Jack Campin -- ABC Scores	Campin.me.uk
Jack Campin's 9 Note Tune Book	Pureocarinas.com/music_books/9_note_tune_book.html
Morris Tunes - ABC Library	https://www.ucolick.org/~sla/morris/music/abclib.html
FolkInfo.org Huge Tune Library	joe-offer.com/folkinfo/index.html
FolkTune Finder Library	FolkTuneFinder.com
Trad Music UK 10k Tunes	TraditionalMusic.co.uk
Mandolin 10k Tunes	Mandolintab.net/index.html
Flageolet Tunes	Flageolets.com/music
Bainbridge's 40 Flageolet Tunes	FolkFluteWorld.com/free_sheet_music/Bainbridges_Flageolet_40_Tunes.pdf
Christmas Songs (Catalonia)	FolkFluteWorld.com/free_sheet_music/Nadal_web_Catalonia_Xmas_songs.pdf
Christmas Tunebook-Paul Hardy	FolkFluteWorld.com/free_sheet_music/pgh_xmas_tunebook.pdf

Capotastomusic library	Capotastomusic.com
XmasMusicSongs	Christmasmusicsongs.com/index.html
Celtic Music Archives	Tinwhistler.com/Sheet
Morris Dance Tunes -- C. Sharp	FolkFluteWorld.com/free_sheet_music/Morris_Dance_Tunes_Sharp.pdf
The Session -- traditional songs	TheSession.org
The Bird Fancyer's Delight	FolkFluteWorld.com/free_sheet_music/bird_fancyers_delight.pdf
Free Lead Sheets (M Kruvchuk)	MichaelKravchuk.com
Christian Hymns library	SongsAndHymns.org
Family Radio Library	FamilyRadio.org/fr-library/hymns
NameThatHymn.com	Namethathymn.com/christian-hymns/come-thou-fount-lyrics.html
SacredSheetMusic.org	SacredSheetMusic.org
Public Domain Hymns	PDhymns.com
Hymn Charts	HymnCharts.com
Hymnary.org	Hymnary.org
RiffSpot collection	riffspot.com
Mama Lisa's Music World	MamaLisa.com
Mutopia Project library	ibiblio.org/mutopia
Johns Hopkins Music Library	levysheetmusic.mse.jhu.edu
Song Society Tune Books	efdss.org/vwml-digitised-resources/historic-dance-and-tune-books
River of Song website	RiverOfSong.uk
Singing Games for Children	SingingGamesForChildren.com
Miriam Berg Folk Songs	FolkSongCollector.com

Free Tunes Scored for Recorder

These scores are specifically written for recorder, usually the soprano.

8Notes for Recorder	8notes.com/recorder
Capostasto Music	CapotastoMusic.com/soprano-recorder-sheet-music/easy.htm
Solo Recorder	SoloRecorder.wordpress.com/about
Philadelphia Recorder Society	PhiladelphiaRecorderSociety.org/links2.php
Recorder music at Pinterest	Pinterest.com/search/pins/?q=recorder%20sheet%20music&rs=typed
Free-Scores.com Recorder music	Free-scores.com/free-sheet-music.php?CATEGORIE=130
Making Music Fun	Makingmusicfun.net/htm/soprano_recorder_sheet_music_index
Virtual Sheet Music / Recorder	VirtualSheetMusic.com/recorder
MuseScore for Recorder	Musescore.com/sheetmusic/recorder
Choral Public Domain Library	cpdl.org/wiki
Serpent Publications	SerpentPublications.org/drupal7
IMSLP for Recorder	imslp.org/wiki/Category:For_recorder
MuseOpen	musopen.org/music/instrument/recorder
Music All the Time	MusicAllTheTime.com/recorder/sheet-music-and-educational-materials-for-recorder.html
Music Notes	Musicnotes.com/sheet-music/instrument/woodwinds/flute-family/recorder
English Folk Songs by C. Sharp	FolkFluteWorld.com/free_sheet_music/english_folk_songs_sharp.pdf
Recorder Homepage Scores	RecorderHomePage.net/repertoire/scores-on-line
Dolmetsch Sheet Music	Dolmetsch.com/sheetmusic.htm
Blokfluit.org huge database	BlokFluit.org
American Recorder Society	AmericanRecorder.org/
Society of Recorder Players	www.srp.org.uk

Free Tunes Scored for Tin Whistle (aka Penny Whistle)

Tin whistle and Irish flute libraries contain many good scores for recorder. Since the most popular key of whistle is the D Whistle, many songs are scored in D Major. Recall that D key has two sharps: F# and C#.

Some D Major scores you can play "as is". Others are best transposed to a more recorder-friendly key, especially if your instrument does not have a double hole to support low C#. Lessons 20 and 23 explained how to automatically transpose D Major scores to more easily playable keys.

Irish-Folk-Songs.com	Irish-folk-songs.com/tin-whistle.html
FluteTunes.com	Flutetunes.com/composers.php?id=6
WhistleTabs	Whistletabs.com
TinWhistler	Tinwhistler.com
8Notes for Tin Whistle	8notes.com/tin_whistle/all
8Notes for Irish Flute	8notes.com/school/search_fsm.asp?keyword=irish+flute
Learn Tin Whistle	LearnTinWhistle.com/tabs
The Session -- Irish songs	TheSession.org
Tin Whistle music at Pinterest	https://www.pinterest.com/lucent62/tin-whistle-music/
Irish Flute music at Pinterest	Pinterest.com/liselov/irish-flute
Riffspot for Tin Whistle	Riffspot.com/music/tin-whistle
TradSchool Tunes	TradSchool.com/en/10-tin-whistle-tunes-sheet-music-and-tabs
Whistle Away	WhistleAway.com/tin-whistle-notes-sheet-music
Whistle Away Christmas Songs	WhistleAway.com/tin-whistle-christmas-songs
Tin Whistle Tabs	TinWhistleTabs.wordpress.com/author/cutiepietinwhistle
Funky Whistle	FunkyWhistle.com
Irish Tunes	FreeSheetMusic.net/music/most-recorded-irish-tunes
More Irish Tunes	FreeSheetMusic.net/music/worldfolk/popular.html
Free Sheet Music.net	FreeSheetMusic.net
Celtic Scores.com	CelticScores.com/instrument/Flute
Free-Scores	Free-scores.com/free-sheet-music.php?CATEGORIE=120&genre=Celtic
Jack Campin's ABC Scores	Campin.me.uk
Morris Tunes - Dartington	Dartingtonmorris.uk/tunes
Morris Tunes - ABC Library	https://www.ucolick.org/~sla/morris/music/abclib.html
O'Carolan Collection	FolkFluteWorld.com/free_sheet_music/carolan_collection.pdf
16th Century Songs Collection	FolkFluteWorld.com/free_sheet_music/16th_century_songs_collection.pdf
Tipple's Irish Tunes	TippleFlutes.com/tunebook-with-sheet-music-and-mp3-audio
Montreal ABC Tunebook	MontrealSession.ca/index.html

Free Ocarina Scores

All ocarina scores are playable on recorder. Most are written in easy styles for hobbyists.

FolkFluteWorld	FolkFluteWorld.com
12HoleOcarina	12holeocarina.com
Ocarina music at Pinterest	Pinterest.com/reba5brown16/12-hole-ocarina-sheet-music
STL Ocarina	STLOcarina.com
Ocarina Songbook	OcarinaSongbook.com/12-hole
OcarinaTabs	OcarinaTabs.org
Japanese folk songs	codaedc.com/japanese-folk-songs
Christmas carols	codaedc.com/coda-carols
8Notes for Ocarina	8notes.com/school/search_fsm.asp?keyword=ocarina
IMSLIP library	imslp.org/wiki/Category:Scores_featuring_the_ocarina
Riffspot for Ocarina	riffspot.com/music/12-hole-ocarina
Legend of Zelda Music	ninsheetmusic.org/browse/series/TheLegendofZelda
Mixing a Band	Mixingaband.com/12-hole-ocarina-tabs-sheet-music-scales-and-lessons
4 Hole Ocarina Tabs	OcarinaTabs.org/category/4-hole
Easy Music	Easymusic.altervista.org/easymusic-home
TON Songbook	FolkFluteWorld.com/free_sheet_music/TON_Songbook.pdf
BBC/UK Schools	Ocarina.co.uk/inclusive-and-accessible-ocarinas/bbc-ten-pieces
Michael Eskin's tunes & tools	MichaelEskin.com
Pure Ocarinas Tune References	pureocarinas.com/forum/category/scores

Summary

There are over a million free scores you can download to play on your recorder. This appendix lists many of the websites that host them.

Since books are not as easy to keep updated as websites, we urge you to visit FolkFluteWorld.com for the current lists.

Videos and Other Learning Resources

Here are several Youtube channels that focus on recorder tutorials and music. If you're reading a print copy of this book, simply go to Youtube.com and enter the search terms "how to play recorder".

Popular recorder channels include those by Sarah Jeffery, YouCanPlayIt.com, Richard Lindesay, Lauren Thompson, RPESrecorder, Kasey's Music Method, Ghazal Music, and Mr Row's Music. These feature a mix of product reviews, tutorials, and performances.

There are several organizations for recorder players. Among them are:

American Recorder Society	AmericanRecorder.org
Society of Recorder Players (UK)	SRP.ORG.UK

For free online lessons, we recommend LearnToPlayRecorder.com.

Here are two good online discussion forums:

TheSession.org ChiffAndFipple.com

You can also find recorder groups at Reddit.com and on social media, such as Facebook.

Several websites cover recorder history and types, including RecorderHomePage.net.

FolkFluteWorld.com has many articles on recorders and similar kinds of keyless flutes. It includes all fingering charts and libraries of free songs.

Summary

As websites frequently come and go, we urge you to visit FolkFluteWorld.com for the most current information and links.

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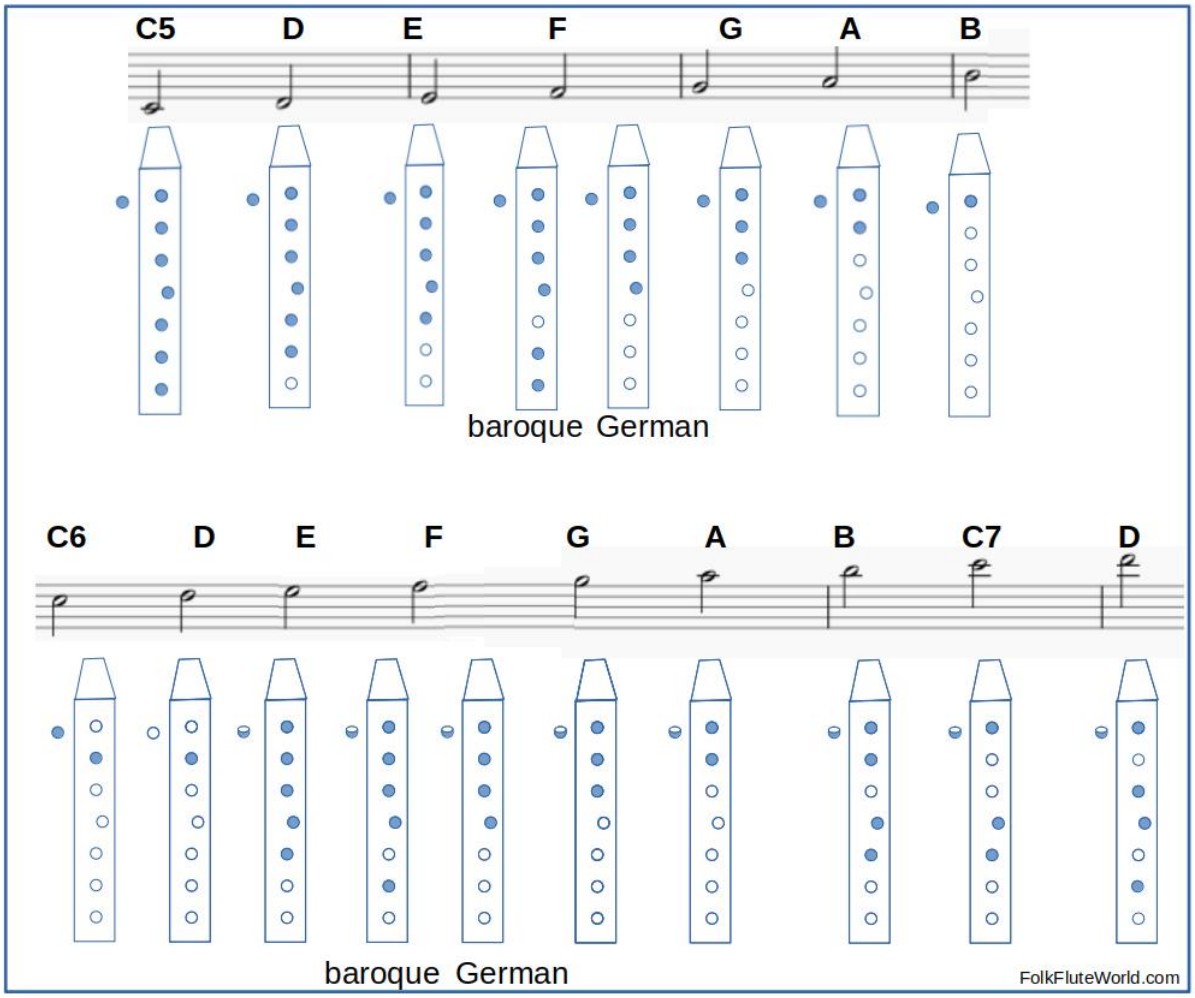
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Fingering Chart - Whole Notes

This chart shows baroque/English and German fingering for all the whole notes playable by the typical C Major recorder.

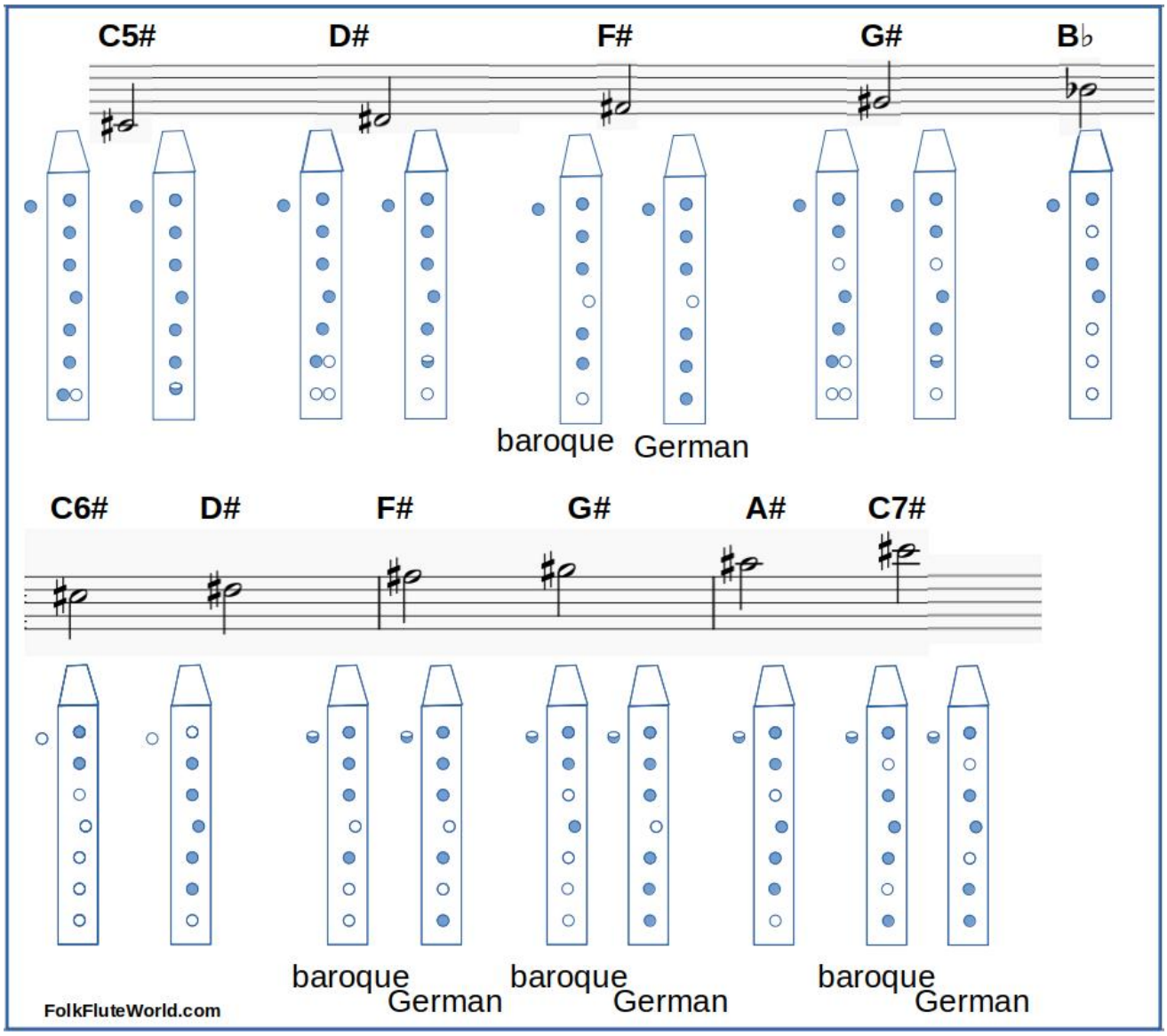


F Key Recorders: Fingering is the same for F key recorders, except that the note with all holes closed is low F (and so on up the scale). So the mapping of notes to fingering shifts.

Sources: Fingering charts were compiled based on a dozen charts from major vendors. Those from Yamaha Corporation were accepted as the final authority, as they are the world's biggest seller of plastic soprano recorders.

Fingering Chart - Accidentals

This chart shows baroque/English and German fingering for all the sharps and flats playable by the typical C Major recorder.

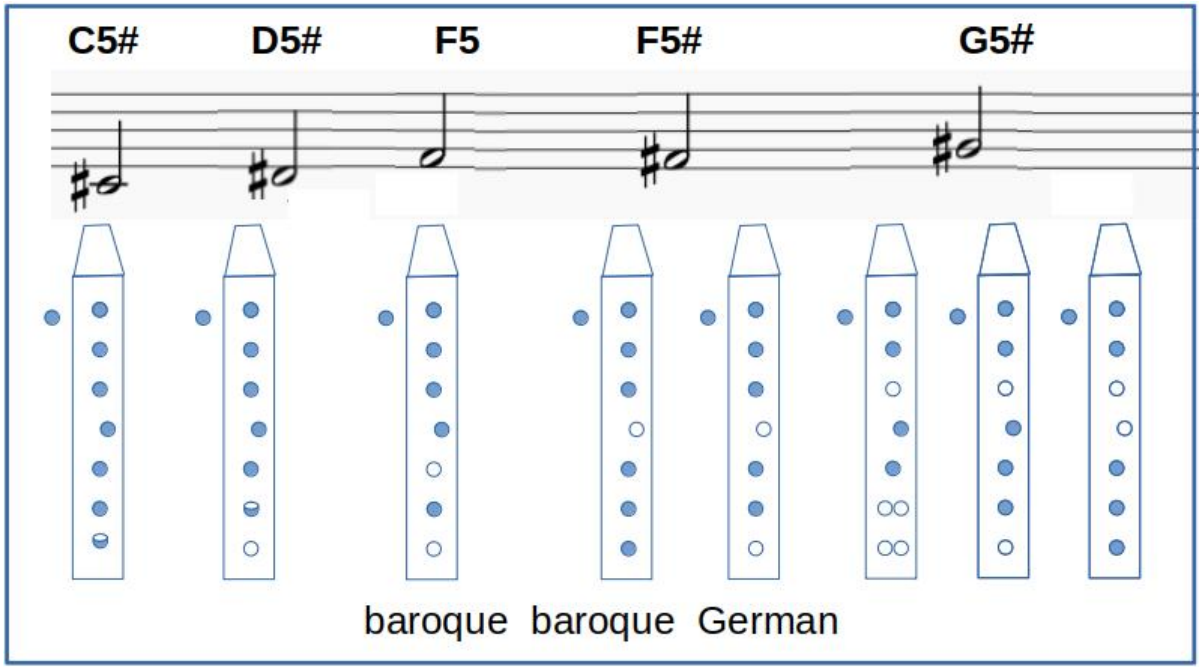


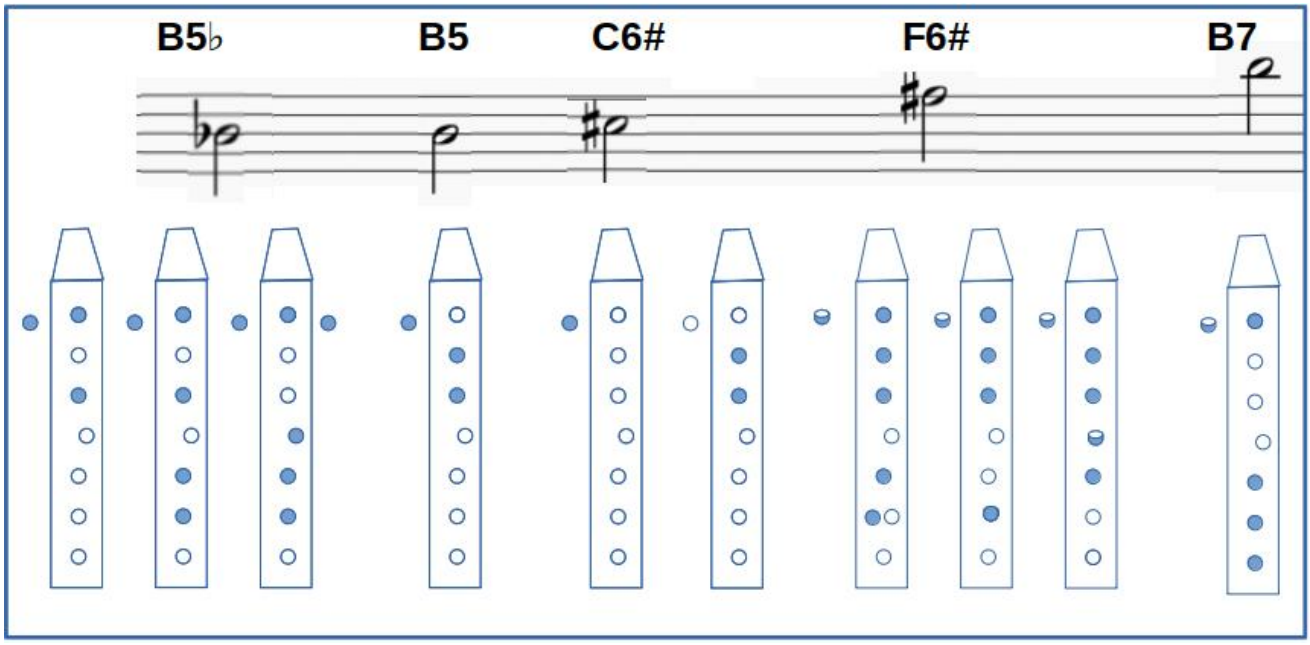
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Sources: Fingering charts were compiled based on a dozen charts from major vendors. Those from Yamaha Corporation were accepted as the final authority, as they are the world's biggest seller of plastic soprano recorders.

Fingering Chart - Alternate Fingerings

This chart lists common alternate fingerings for baroque and German C Major recorders. The only way to know whether they're of use to you with your instrument is to try them. Note that there may be other alternate fingerings not listed here.





Scales and Arpeggios

Scales are a set of notes in sequence by key. **Arpeggios** are chords played note-by-note instead of simultaneously. Practicing scales and arpeggios can be very helpful to learning to play in tune and with proper fingering. Here we list common scales and arpeggios.

Major Scale:	**Notes:**
C	C → D → E → F → G → A → B → C
G	G → A → B → C → D → E → F♯ → G
D	D → E → F♯ → G → A → B → C♯ → D
A	A → B → C♯ → D → E → F♯ → G♯ → A
E	E → F♯ → G♯ → A → B → C♯ → D♯ → E

Key:	**Arpeggio:**
C	C → E → G → C
D	D → F# → A → D
E	E → G# → B → E
F	F → A → C → F
G	G → B → D → G
A	A → C# → E → A
B	B → D# → F# → B
C#/Db	C# → F → G# → C# / Db → F → Ab → Db
D#/Eb	D# → F## → A# → D# / Eb → G → Bb → Eb
F#/Gb	F# → A# → C# → F# / Gb → Bb → Db → Gb
G#/Ab	G# → B# → D# → G# / Ab → C → Eb → Ab
A#/Bb	A# → C## → E# → A# / Bb → D → F → Bb

Notes: F## (or **F double-sharp**) means two half steps above F. Enharmonically it is G. Similarly, C## is the same as D.

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