

# MEET THE WOODWIND INSTRUMENTS!

## Recorder



## Find out more

The recorder was probably the most popular instrument around 400 years ago, with famous composers such as Vivaldi and Bach writing concertos for it. Although it is now more associated with classroom musical lessons, it is still the most popular instrument, with most households owning at least one recorder. If you think 'squeak' when you imagine a recorder go and have a listen to professionals playing on YouTube. Prepare to be amazed! You can start learning the recorder from Year 1 or 2. An amazing instrument in its own right, it also teaches you all the techniques needed to transfer to other woodwind instruments. Learning the recorder improves memory and concentration and as it demands great skill on both hands, it will also develop coordination and strength. There are opportunities to join ensembles when playing a recorder, and it is an instrument that encourages creativity.

## Have a listen!



## Flute



## Find out more

Thousands of years ago flutes were made from animal bones, with the oldest known example found dating back 43,000 years. Modern flutes tend to be made out of metal and definitely not bone! The modern flute makes a beautiful rich sound that floats across the top of an orchestra. The flute produces sound when a stream of air is directed across the top of a hole on the mouthpiece. If you have ever made a sound by blowing across the top of a bottle then you will probably be able to make a sound on a flute. Learning the flute improves memory and concentration and as it demands great skill on both hands, it will also develop coordination and strength. The flute is an instrument that encourages creativity, and offers opportunities to make music with others in groups and ensembles.

## Have a listen!



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## Oboe



## Find out more

The oboe is the highest pitched member of the double reed instruments within the woodwind family. It is officially one of the most difficult instruments to play! But don't be put off by that, see it as a challenge. In an orchestra everyone has to tune to the oboe, so you are very important. The oboe is a double reed instrument, which means you have two pieces of cane tied together, which vibrate to make a sound. When you start out, it will be difficult to make a good sound, but once you master the reed you will hear why the oboe is often given the most beautiful tunes in an orchestra. Learning the oboe improves memory and concentration, as it demands great skill on both hands it will also develop coordination and strength. The oboe encourages creativity, and offers opportunities to make music with others in groups and ensembles.

## Have a listen!



## Clarinet



## Find out more

The clarinet is a single reed instrument within the woodwind family. It has an enormous range of notes, is extremely versatile and is found in a variety of ensembles. There are eight members of the clarinet family. The mouthpiece and reed on a clarinet are very similar to those on a saxophone. Making a sound on the clarinet is quite simple once you have mastered the embouchure (mouth position). It is often used for very expressive playing because it can transition very easily from soft, relaxing sounds to loud and exciting ones. Learning the clarinet is a good way to improve memory and concentration. It demands great skill on both hands so will develop coordination and strength. There are lots of opportunities to play in different groups and ensembles if you are a clarinet player.

## Have a listen!



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## Saxophone



## Find out more

The saxophone is a single reed instrument within the woodwind family. It is the most modern woodwind instrument, invented in the 1840s. There are nine members of the saxophone family, but you would start on the alto saxophone (or occasionally tenor). The mouthpiece and reed on a saxophone are very similar to those on a clarinet. Making a sound on the saxophone is quite simple once you have mastered the embouchure (mouth position). Because it is very modern by musical instrument standards it is found more often in modern ensembles, such as jazz bands, wind bands and pop bands. But some orchestral composers do include them too. Learning the saxophone will help to improve memory and concentration. It demands great skill on both hands so will develop coordination and strength. There are lots of opportunities for saxophonists to play in groups and ensembles.

## Have a listen!



## Bassoon



## Find out more

The bassoon is the lowest pitched member of the double reed instruments within the woodwind family. If you are drawn to rich, deep sounds this is the one for you. However, it is very versatile and can also play extremely high tunes. The bassoon is a double reed instrument, which means you have two pieces of cane tied together, which vibrate to make a sound. Making a sound on the bassoon is quite easy and you will immediately be rewarded by sounding good. But the fingering is tricky, and you will need to practise regularly to make progress. Learning the bassoon will help to improve memory and concentration. It will develop coordination and strength as it demands great skill on both hands. Playing the bassoon offers opportunities to make music with others in a range of ensembles.

## Have a listen!

