



The Complete Recorder Resource: Level 1 All About the Recorder

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All About the Recorder

The recorder is a very old instrument. The recorder was popular during the 16th and 17th centuries. Many famous composers of that time, including **Bach**, **Handel**, and **Telemann**, wrote music for the recorder.



Bach



Handel



Telemann

Types of Recorders

The recorder is made in five different sizes. The smallest is a **descant** or **sopranino** recorder. The recorder that beginners usually play is the **soprano** recorder.



Soprano Recorder

There is also an **alto**, **tenor**, and a **bass** recorder. These five recorders can play five part music, just like a choir can sing in four or five parts. A recorder choir is called a **consort**.



Sopranino



Soprano



Alto



Tenor



Bass

Getting Started

All the recorders have eight holes. The LEFT hand covers the thumb hole at the back of the recorder and the first three holes. The RIGHT hand covers the four holes at the bottom of the recorder. (Some recorders have divided holes at the bottom.)



Think of covering the holes with your “fingerprint”. Use the pads of your fingers to cover the holes, not the tips.



Making a Sound

Sound is made by blowing softly into the recorder mouthpiece. It is very easy to overblow the recorder and make a harsh sound. Blowing softly and steadily, as if you were blowing bubbles, makes the best sound.





Each note should be started with the syllable ‘doo’ or ‘too’. This is called **tonguing** the note. The air should be continuous, interrupted only briefly by the tongue when a new note is begun.

How to Care for the Recorder

1. Recorders all look alike. Put your name on your recorder and on your case with a permanent marker. If you forget your recorder in the music room, your teacher will know it is yours.



How to Care for the Recorder

2. Be careful not to bang the recorder against anything. Plastic can chip or crack.
3. Keep the mouthpiece clean. You can use a small brush or a pipe cleaner and water to wash out your mouthpiece.



How to Care for the Recorder

4. Plastic recorders can be washed once in a while in warm, soapy water and can often be washed in the top rack of the dishwasher. Never blow someone else's recorder or let someone blow yours unless it has been sterilized.



How to Care for the Recorder

5. If your recorder is hard to put together, you can put a little Vaseline or the cork grease that comes with the recorder on the joints. If the joints are clean, they shouldn't need anything at all.



How to Care for the Recorder

6. Keep your recorder in its case when you are not using it.

