

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** and **Handel** wrote music for the recorder. The recorder is made in 5 different sizes. The smallest is a **descant** or **sopranino** recorder. The recorder that beginners usually play is the **soprano** recorder. There is also an **alto**, **tenor** and a **bass** recorder. These 5 recorders can play 5 part music, just like a choir can sing in 4 or 5 parts. A recorder choir is called a **consort**.

All the recorders have 8 holes. The **LEFT** hand covers the thumb hole at the back of the recorder and the first 3 holes. The **RIGHT** hand covers the 4 holes at the bottom of the recorder. (Some recorders have divided holes at the bottom) The first three notes are shown in the diagram below. When the circle is black, cover that hole with a finger.

Sound is made by blowing softly into the recorder mouthpiece. It is very easy to overblow the recorder and make a harsh ugly sound. Blowing softly and steadily 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.
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.
4. Plastic recorders can be washed once in a while in warm, soapy water.
5. If your recorder is hard to put together you can put a little Vaseline on the joints. If the joints are clean, they shouldn't need anything.
6. Keep your recorder in it's case when you are not using it.
7. After playing, clean out the inside of your recorder with a narrow piece of cloth wound around the cleaning rod.

Supplies needed to Care for the Recorder:

- * A cleaning rod and a narrow piece of cloth
- * A small mouthpiece brush or a pipe cleaner