

Recorder

for beginners

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**An Easy
Beginning
Method**

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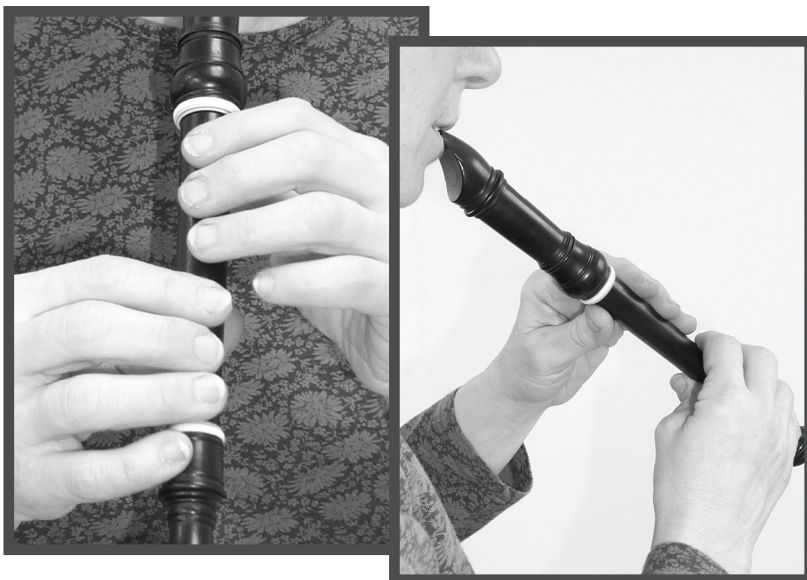
On the front cover, the recorder player is using an antiquated playing position, which reverses the left and right hands from the correct modern position as used in this book.

SUSAN LOWENKRON

Beginning to Play

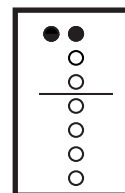
1. Pick up your recorder with your right hand near the bottom of the instrument.
2. Cover the thumbhole in the back with your left thumb, still holding the recorder near the bottom.
3. Now put the 1st finger of your left hand on the 1st hole at the top. (Your thumb is still covering the back thumbhole.)
4. Let the recorder rest gently on your right thumb. It should be behind hole 5, while the other right-hand fingers stay slightly above, but not covering, holes 5, 6 and 7.

Correct Hand Position



These photographs show how your fingers should look when all of the holes are covered. Notice that we use the pads of the fingers and the fingers not being used, the left-hand pinky in this case, are kept in a loose, curled position.

The diagram below shows your current fingering. The thumbhole and hole 1 are covered.



5. Place the recorder on the dry part of your lower lip in *front* of your teeth. Gently close your mouth on the mouthpiece. It is important that your teeth and your tongue do not touch this part of the recorder.
6. Take a breath without raising your shoulders, and breathe gently into the recorder, starting the air with a silent "tu" (if you think of a "t" word such as "tuna," you'll find that the tip of your tongue starts a "tu" on the roof of your mouth). Think "blow light, hold tight." Your first tone! It should be a low sound, if you follow the "blow light, hold tight" idea. Feel the rims of the holes with the pads of your fingers. Every note has a letter name. The note you are playing is called B.
7. Try playing several Bs in a row. Remember to *tongue* ("tu") each note gently. Blowing too hard can cause high squeaks; so can finger leaks (not covering a hole completely).

You're ready to play!




Correct Mouth Position

On this page, you'll learn your first recorder exercises. One of the most important aspects of playing music is keeping time. Musical time, or *rhythm*, is measured in beats, which are like a musical heartbeat. We strive to keep the beats pulsing evenly.

In written music, we organize beats into groups called *measures*, which are separated by *bar lines*. In all of the exercises below, there are four beats in each measure. A *double bar* shows the end of the exercise.

Try these exercises.

Practice whispering "tu" on each note (not playing the recorder yet).

 = Quarter note. One beat (count).

1
Track 1

Whisper: Tu tu tu tu Tu tu tu tu

Count: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Bar line
Separates measures

Double bar
Indicates the end of a section or exercise.

Now clap once for each note and count aloud ("1-2-3-4"), trying to keep the beat as steady as a ticking clock.

2
Track 2

Clap each note:

Count: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

In the next exercise, tongue ("tu") and play the quarter-note Bs on your recorder.

3
Track 3

Play each note:

Count: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Try counting aloud and clapping the next pattern of notes and rests (the rhythm), holding your hands apart for the rests. A rest is a symbol that indicates silence. Each quarter rest receives one beat, same as each quarter note. Say: "1-2-3-rest, 1-2-3-rest, 1-2-3-rest, 1-2-3-rest."


4
Track 4

Say: 1 2 3 rest 1 2 3 rest 1 2 3 rest 1 2 3 rest

Count: 1 2 3 (4) 1 2 3 (4) 1 2 3 (4) 1 2 3 (4)

Practice this exercise two different ways:

1. Finger the note while you name it and the rests, saying "B-B-B-rest," etc.
2. Play it on the recorder.

 = Quarter rest. One beat of silence.

5
Track 5

Say: B B B rest B B B rest B B B rest B B B rest

Count: 1 2 3 (4) 1 2 3 (4) 1 2 3 (4) 1 2 3 (4)

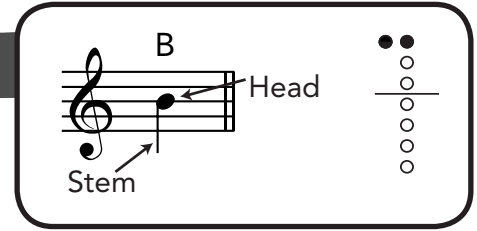
Things to Remember

In $\frac{4}{4}$ time:

- There are four beats in each measure.
- A quarter note (♩ or ♪) gets one beat. Notes lower than B (the middle staff line) have their stems going up on the right.
- A quarter rest (♩) indicates one beat of silence.

Introducing B

Here is the note B on the staff. It is on the third line. Notice that the note has two parts: the *head* and the *stem*.



Play these exercises.

10  Track 6.1

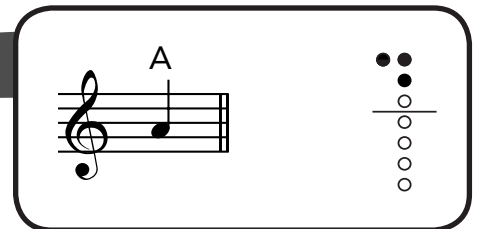
Count: 1 2 3 (4) 1 2 3 (4) 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 (4)

11  Track 6.2

Count: 1 (2) 3 (4) 1 2 3 (4) 1 (2) 3 (4) (1) 2 3 (4)

Introducing A

The note A is written one place lower on the staff than B, on the second space. Add a finger to the next hole down to create this lower-sounding pitch.




Second-Space A

12  Track 7.1

Count: 1 2 3 4 1 (2) 3 (4) 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 (4)

Bs and As

13  Track 7.2

Count: 1 (2) 3 (4) 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 (4) 1 (2) 3 (4)

Faster Bs and As

Try to finger and name the notes aloud before playing this one.

14  Track 7.3

Count: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 (1) 2 3 4 (1) 2 3 4