

Flute and Piccolo--Addressing Unique Challenges

BODY

Balance on feet and/or sit-bones is crucial for comfort, resonance and optimal breathing.

- Weight distribution
- Affected by the flute/piccolo. "Bring the instrument to you; not the other way around!"
- Helped by individual, well-adjusted stands
- Helped by angled chairs (no twisting or leaning!)
- Insist on chins 'up' (not tucked) and eyes looking down

A balanced body allows more breath control.

- Inward "HOW" breath
- "Barrel of power"

FLUTE/PICCOLO ASSEMBLY, HANDS, JAW, THROAT

Instrument assembly

- Avoid gripping the mechanism.
- Tone hole roughly aligns with keys
- Foot joint varies. But Eb should slide naturally to C. C#=more curve; B=less.

Hand position on the flute is the NUMBER ONE problem I see in young flutists!

- Good posture (as discussed above) fixes many issues.
- **The right thumb** must be back far enough for fingers to move from the large joint. Look for a "Backward 'C'".
- Minimal bend in both wrists

Jaw and throat may be problematic because it's more open than when we speak.

- Sprayed air vs. Directed air
- Open jaw allows easier access to throat and resonant spaces in head/chest
- "Biting an apple" or yawning

INSTRUMENT CARE AND MODEL/FEATURE RECOMMENDATIONS

Instrument Care

- Overhauls unnecessary, but even the slightest leak is greatly detrimental.
- Don't grip mechanism when assembling/disassembling
- No pencils or swabs stored in case, especially "caterpillars"
- No silver polishing rags
- Powder paper great for sticky pads. No "close and drag" cleaning!

Recommended beginner/intermediate brands and ballpark cost:

Flute-

- Azumi 2000 = \$1200, Jupiter 600 = \$1000, Pearl "Quantz 500s" = \$650, Pearl "Quantz 600s" = \$1500, Powell "Sonare" = \$1400, **Trevor James 10x = \$600, Yamaha 300s = \$1000, Yamaha 400s = \$1600**

Piccolo-

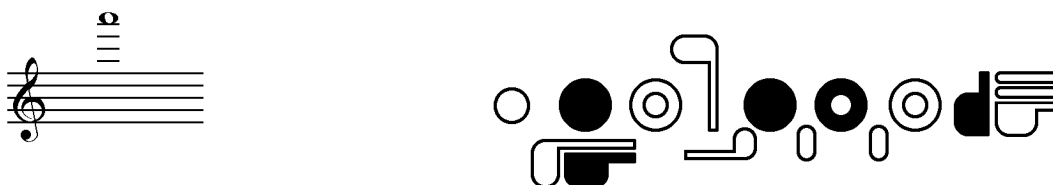
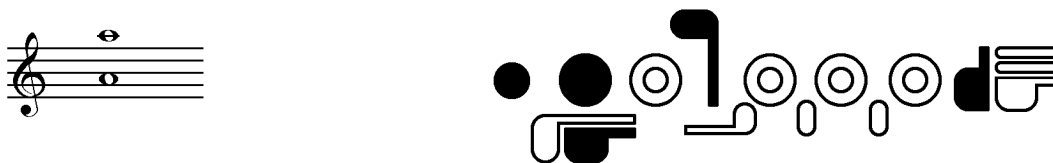
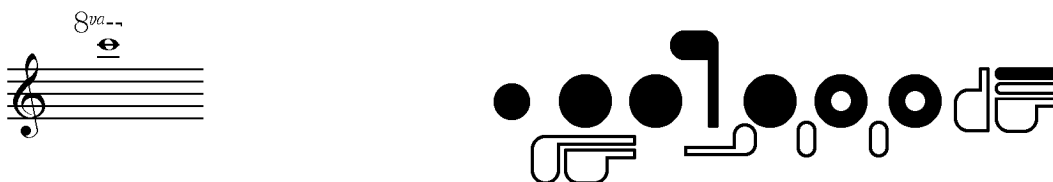
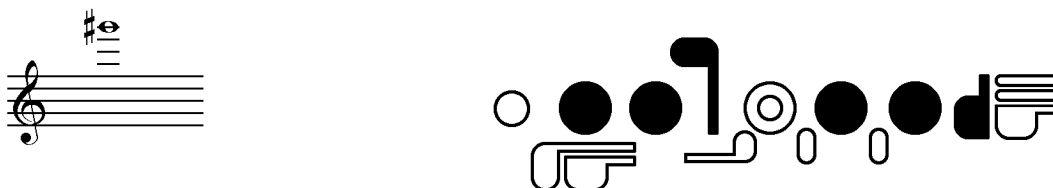
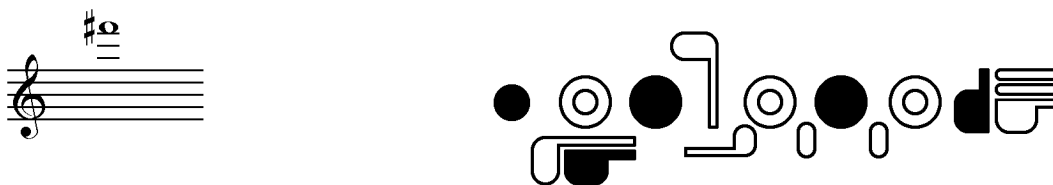
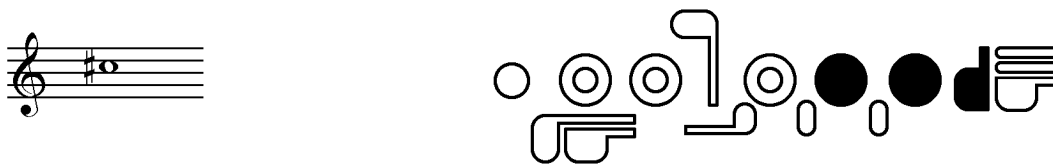
- No metal piccolos, please! If needed for outdoors, even resin is better.
- Best deal for piccolos is to buy a used piccolo of a higher-quality brand/model like: Burkhardt = \$2900, Hamig = \$2900, Yamaha = \$1000, **Zentner = \$1500**
- Best new student piccolos: Seaman \$1200, Yamaha \$2000

TUNING THE FLUTE AND PICCOLO

- Blow with approximate performance intensity and volume
- Tune more than the singular tuning pitch
- Correct assembly alignment
- 3 ways to adjust pitch while playing :
 1. Angle
 2. Throat/Mouth/Tongue
 3. Alternative Fingerings (see following page)

"ALTERNATIVE" FINGERINGS

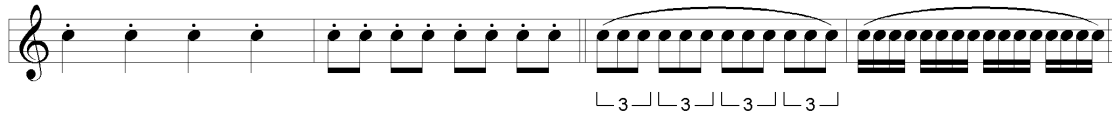
Graphic shows flute, but these work equally well on the piccolo, with the exception of high-C and high-A, which require open holes



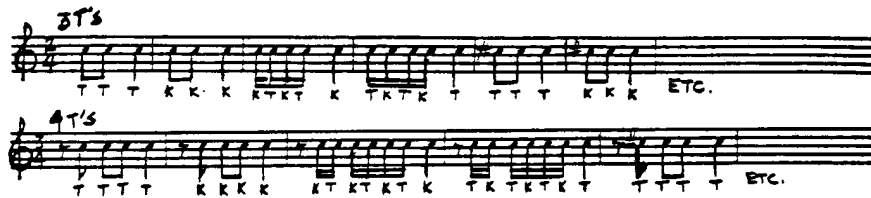
Courtesy of "Alternative Fingerings for the Flute" - Nestor Herszbaum - www.herszbaum.com

TONGUING AND VIBRATO

- Tonguing is equally the tongue and the breathing muscles
- Same muscles are used to begin vibrato. For this reason, I use the following exercise for both articulation and vibrato:



- Double-tonguing can be taught nearly from the beginning. Favorite exercise:



- Important to get the tongue out of the way after striking to maintain resonance
- When vibrating (or playing, in general) be aware of any vocalizing, as this indicates tension

A JUDGE'S PERSPECTIVE AND REPERTOIRE IDEAS

It's all about the basics.

- Good sound, Good pitch, Good dynamics, Good rhythm
- Poised presence and stand/body position also make an impression
- Musicality wins over flash

Repertoire

- Favorite collection is 24 Short Concert Pieces, ed. Robert Cavally (Southern)
- Suggested solos : Copland – “Duo”; Busser – “Prelude et Scherzo”; Goddard – “Suite” (or Mvts); Boehm – “Nel cor Piu” Op.4; Harty - “In Ireland”; Bolling – “Jazz Suite” (Irlandaise); Bizet – “Entr’acte from Carmen”; B. Lees -“Soliloquy Music from King Lear”; JS Bach – “Partita”