

What Would YOU Like to Play?

As a beginning band student, you are entering a new, exciting world! The first step in your new adventure will be choosing the instrument you'd like to play. We can help you with this decision — there are many factors involved, including the shape of your mouth and teeth, the size of your hands, even whether or not you have braces or expect to get braces soon. We want to help you find the instrument that will give you the best band experience possible. Your personal preference is always our first consideration, but your band director may want to give you some input. Your parents may want to give you some input also, since the cost of instruments varies greatly. In any case, we want you to be happy with your chosen instrument, and we wish you the very best in your new endeavor!

Woodwinds

The woodwind family includes flute, clarinet, saxophone, oboe and bassoon. All of these instruments read treble clef, and all involve keys that you press to change the pitch of the notes.

Flute



The flute is the only woodwind you blow across, instead of through a mouthpiece. If you play flute for several years, you may get to play the *piccolo*, a smaller version of the flute whose name means "tiny."

The clarinet is the foundational woodwind instrument, and there's no such thing as "too many" in a band. The clarinet is a single reed instrument; if you play clarinet, you can easily later pick up saxophone, oboe or bassoon!

Clarinet



Saxophone



The saxophone is a single-reed instrument with a mouthpiece and reed just like the clarinet's, only larger. There are actually 8 saxes in the saxophone family, all with the same fingering, but only the alto & tenor are considered "beginning" instruments.

Double reed instruments like the oboe and bassoon, are sometimes not considered beginner instruments, but are usually played by those who have a year or two experience on clarinet or sax.



Brass

The brass family includes trumpet, trombone, French horn, baritone and tuba. All of these instruments have a cup-shaped mouthpiece that you buzz into to make the sound.

Trumpet

The trumpet is the highest voice in the brass family. Most beginners start with a lacquer (brass) trumpet, but by 8th or 9th grade, it's time for a silver-plated one!



Trombone



The trombone is unique, because it has a slide that you move in & out to change the pitch of the notes. It has a wide range, and can play a wide variety of music. Every band director hopes for a big trombone section!

Euphonium

The euphonium (baritone) looks like a small tuba, and with the tubas, provides the foundation of the band's sound. While the mouthpiece of a baritone is the same as a trombone's, this instrument has 3 or 4 valves to press instead of a slide.



French Horn



The French horn is an important part of every band. You will do best on French horn if you have a great ear, and love doing things that are a little more unique!

Percussion

The percussion family includes a wide variety of rhythm instruments—it's not "just drums!" Most beginners start with bells, and a practice pad; and will eventually get to play snare, bass drum, cymbals, and much more!



Percussionists have "rudiments," which are like scales — certain rhythmic patterns that are best practiced on a practice pad. Your band director will tell you exactly what percussion equipment you need for class. Some band directors may also require that you have a year or two of piano lessons, or that you audition before choosing to play percussion.



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