Ocarina Course

6 & 4 Hole Pendants



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140 songs





by Howard Fosdick (not AI)







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* Play songs
* Read music
* Duets and rounds
* Easy to read 8 ½" by 11", full color
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ISBN 979-8-9861191-4-4



The Ocarina Course:

6 and 4 Hole Pendants

Howard Fosdick



The Ocarina Course: 6 and 4 Hole Pendants

Published by FCI
PO Box 6779
Villa Park, IL 60181 USA

ISBN 979-8-9861191-4-4 Edition 1.05

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Acknowledgments: Thank you to my proofreaders who prefer to remain anonymous. Thank you to Michael Eskin for his excellent ABC tools and tune library at MichaelEskin.com. Thank you to Dr Chris Walshaw, inventor of ABC notation and webmaster of ABCNotation.com, and to all those everywhere who have contributed public domain ABC scores.

Special thanks to those who helped along the way including Zack Shih of Stein Ocarina, Eric at Songbird Ocarina, Dr Dennis Yeh and Katherine of STL Ocarina, Elizabeth Robinson, PhD, James Gregory, Charlie Hind, Kate Robinson, Josie Hodkinson, Priscilla Polk, Theresa Stewart, and the "local group" musicians. Kudos for the open source software used in producing this book including Linux, MuseScore, Audacity, LibreOffice, Calibre, Artha, L3afpad, Filezilla, GIMP, Firefox, QPDF, Minuimus, ABC Notation tools, and the Bash and Rexx scripting languages.

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About the Author (None of this book was written by AI)

Howard Fosdick is a computer consultant who has written many articles and half a dozen books on computer software. Music has been his hobby since childhood. He started on saxophone as a youth, then graduated into flutes including recorders, ocarinas, xuns, tin whistles, ethnic flutes, and others. His website FolkFluteWorld.com covers all these and more, and from there you can download his free ebooks on ocarinas and recorders.

Why I Wrote This Book

I enjoy studying and researching a topic that intrigues me. Writing is a fun, challenging way to summarize and share what I've learned.

Some say it's foolish to hand write a book when AI companies will steal it, and then use it to generate competing products. As a computer scientist myself, I understand what that means. I also know that their intellectual pillaging will occur regardless of the fact that this book's license expressly forbids it.

I believe there will always be a few people who appreciate having a guide written for them by someone who cares, freely given in a spirit of sharing. If you agree, please share this book!

Don't die with a song in your heart
Nor with wishes buried in bone
Sing of a beauty all your own.

Print Copies

Printed copies of this book and all our flute books are available at Amazon.
Easy to read scores -- 8 ½" by 11" in full color.

FREE Transverse Ocarina Book

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* 400 pages -- the most complete ocarina book
* Written by an expert musician (**not** AI)
* 32 lessons
* 180 songs
* Access to 1 million more!
* Also available at Amazon in easy to read 8 ½" by 11" format
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* 400 pages -- the most complete recorder book
* Written by an expert musician (**not** AI)
* 30 lessons
* 220 songs
* Access to 1 million more!
* Also available at Amazon in easy to read 8 ½" by 11" format

Introduction

Ever want to play a musical instrument?

Here's your chance! The ocarina is just about the simplest instrument around. Yet it plays any kind of music, and it sounds… well, lovely.

You can learn it in days. This book will teach you how. It's your complete guide.

You don't need any prior musical background.

I'll tell you --

* What ocarinas are and how they work
* The different kinds available
* How to select a good ocarina
* How to play it in easy lessons
* How to read music
* With 140 practice songs included
* And access to 1 million more free songs!

This course teaches you how to play the **pendant** (or **seedpod**) style ocarina.

Pendants come in hundreds of shapes and designs -- animals, fantasy figures, artworks, fruits and vegetables… even a playable tea cup!

You can buy a top-notch pendant for less than dinner. It will provide a lifetime of enjoyment, and can play any kind of music you like.

Your introduction to the fabulous world of pendant ocarinas awaits. Turn the page and let's learn together.

Howard

FolkFluteWorld.com
-- free fluting resources

The Ocarina Course: 6 and 4 Hole Pendants

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Lesson 1 -- About Ocarinas



Ocarinas are among the easiest musical instruments to learn.

Take this brief course, and you'll be playing songs in days. You don't need any musical background.

And ocarinas are fun!

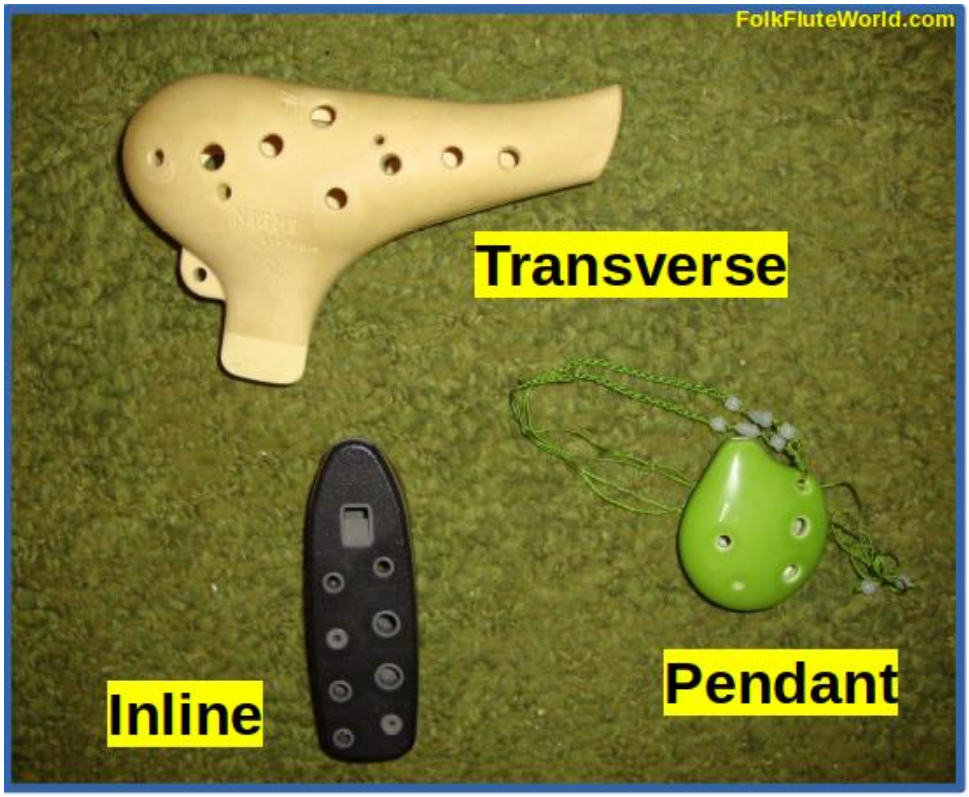
They come in all shapes and sizes -- seedpods, wine bottles, dolphins, turtles, strawberries, pumpkins, fantasy figures, figurines, tea cups, and many more. You name it, and you can buy an ocarina that looks like it.

They can play any style of music you like. You can buy a good one for the price of a meal.

And they're portable. Carry yours anywhere. It will last for a lifetime with proper care.

What's not to love?

So, let's get started. In this first lesson, we'll introduce the kinds of ocarinas available and explain how they produce sound.



3 Kinds of Ocarina

3 Kinds of Ocarinas

You might wonder how to pronounce "ocarina." Some say "ah-car-reena" while others say "oh-car-reena." Either is correct. We'll call ocarinas "ocs" for short.

Antecedents to the modern ocarina date back some 10,000 years to ancient China and stone age Europe. They were popular in the Americas prior to the arrival of Europeans.

Today, ocarinas come in three different kinds.

Top left in the photo is a **transverse oc**. It's called "transverse" because its body extends crosswise to the musician. Given its shape, you can see why it's also called a **submarine** or a **sweet potato**.

Below that is a black **inline ocarina**. They're shaped like TV remotes. They extend straight out from your mouth when you play them.

The green oc is a **pendant**. They're called pendants because many have a hole to attach a necklace. Some enthusiasts enjoy wearing the smaller pendants around their necks like jewelry.

Pendants are also called **seedpods**. We'll use both names interchangeably.

Transverses and inlines both employ the same fingering system.

Pendants have their own fingering system. It was invented by British mathematician John Taylor in 1964.

This course teaches you how play pendants. You'll learn how to play **any** pendant or seedpod.

The Amazing Pendant Universe

Pendants are made in all sorts of shapes and sizes. Animals, plants, artworks, fantasy themes, tea cups... there are hundreds of intriguing designs.

They're fun collectibles, and you can wear many as jewelry. **Yet they are fully capable musical instruments.**

What all pendants have in common is their fingering system.

If you learn to play one pendant, you can play them all!



You'll Play Any of These

(Photos courtesy of Stein Ocarina, Songbird Ocarina, and STL Ocarina)

4 and 6 Hole Pendants

Pendants come in two types.

4 hole pendants have 4 fingering holes on top. **6 hole pendants** have the exact same 4 top holes plus they add 2 thumb holes beneath.

Both 4 and 6 hole pendants finger exactly the same. The only difference is that the 6 hole variety gives you two more high notes you can play by removing either one or both of your thumbs from the thumb holes.

4 hole seedpods have a range of 8 whole notes. 6 holers have a wider 10 note range. Both play all sharps and flats within their range.

The 6 hole variety is more musically capable because it can play two more whole notes. But 4 holers often make sense for the sorts of fun shapes pendants come in, where thumb holes may not fit into the design.

This course teaches you to play both 4 and 6 holers.

All our songs are playable on either. (The only exceptions are the lesson that specifically addresses 6 hole pendants and a few of the songs in the appendices.)

These photos show how 4 and 6 hole pendants have the same top holes, but that the 6 holer adds 2 holes on the instrument's underside:



4 Hole Ocarina 6 Hole Ocarina

How Ocarinas Work

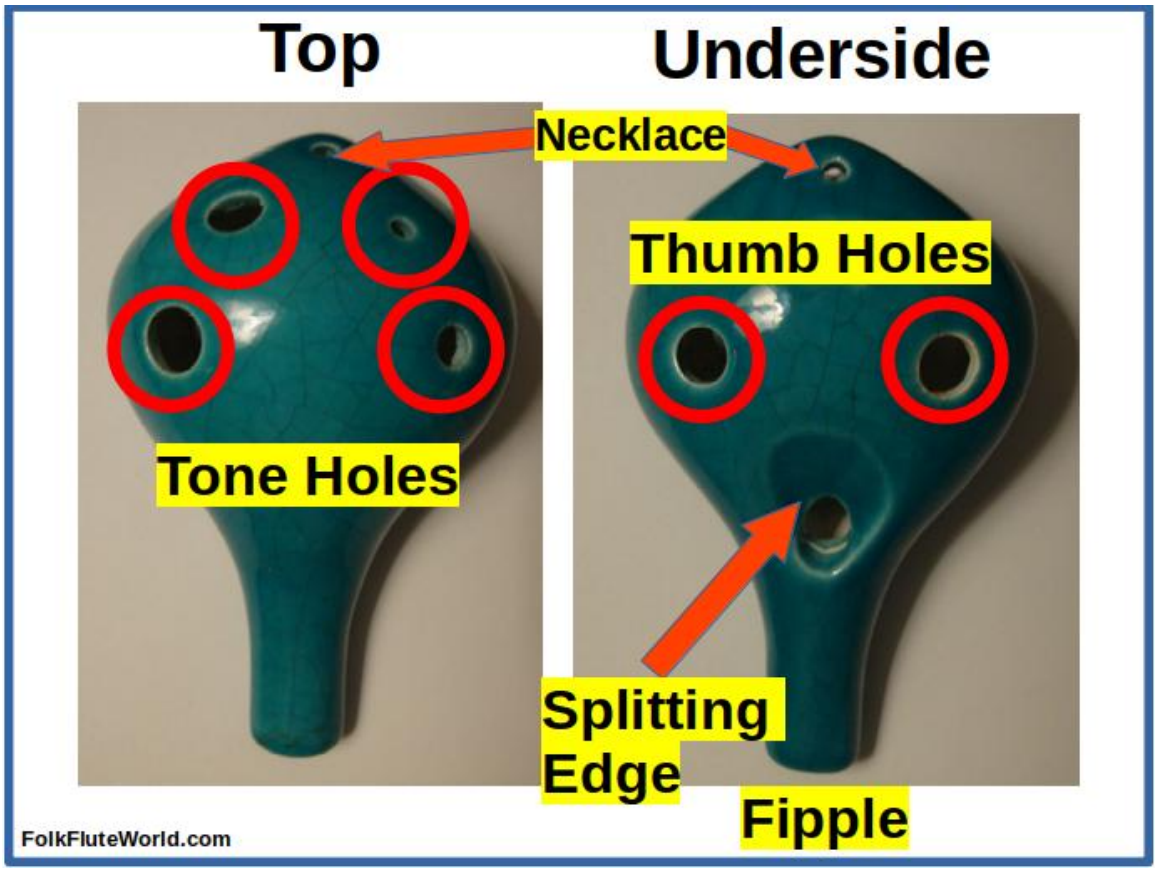
Ocarinas are flutes in which sound waves resonate inside an enclosed chamber. The body of the ocarina comprises this closed chamber.

It's just like when you blow across the opening of a pop bottle. If you blow at the right angle across the lip of the bottle, this splits your breath into sound waves. Those resonate inside the bottle.

As these photos show, with an ocarina, you blow into a mouthpiece or **fipple**.

The fipple automatically directs your breath to a sharp **splitting edge** that breaks your breath into sound waves.

Then the sound waves resonate inside the chamber.



The left-hand photo shows the top side of an ocarina. You can see four fingering holes or **tone holes** there. The underside photo shows two thumb holes.

By covering various combinations of tone holes with your fingers, you alter the dynamics of the sound chamber. This produces the different pitches we call **musical notes**.

At the top of the instrument you'll notice a tiny hole. This is for attaching a necklace. Many ocarinas can be worn on a necklace. This hole does not penetrate the ocarina's enclosed sound chamber so it does not affect the sound.

All Those Designs?

You may be wondering: how can pendants be made into so many different shapes and designs? Now that you know how ocarinas work, we can answer this question.

The pendant fingering system produces pitches depending on the **size of the enclosed chamber**, and the **sizes and number of open tone holes**. It has little to do with the outer shape of the instrument.

So as long as the chamber and tone holes are of the right sizes, the ocarina can be of any shape. Of course, the musician must still be able to reach the fingering holes and blow into the mouthpiece!

Summary

In this lesson, we learned about the three different types of ocarinas. This course teaches you how to play so-called **pendant** or **seedpod** ocarinas.

Pendants have either 4 or 6 fingering holes. All finger the same way, even though they come in a staggering variety of shapes, sizes, and designs.

To learn more about the kinds of ocarinas, comparisons between them, and their history and evolution, visit FolkFluteWorld.com.

In the next couple lessons, we'll tell where to get a quality ocarina, how to hold it, and how to play notes. Then we'll teach you your first song.

And bam! In just a few lessons, you'll be playing music.

Lesson 2 -- Selecting a Pendant



Basic 6 Hole Alto C Pendants

If you already own a pendant ocarina, that's great. You can use it for this course. It doesn't matter what size or shape it is, or whether it has 6 or 4 holes. You can use it for this course if you want to.

But ... is your oc really the best choice for you to learn with? Please continue reading to find out.

If you don't own a pendant, you'll need to acquire one.

Which pendant should you buy?

While any pendant could work, my advice would be to start with a simple design like those shown in the above photo. Once you gain a little experience, then you'll be more able to play whatever cool or cute or fancy design you like.

Buy the most popular size. Its lowest note is **C5**, the exact same as the soprano recorder's.

Nearly everyone calls this the **Alto C** pendant. (But a few don't use this term, most notably vendor STL Ocarina. They call it a **C Major ocarina**, or even a "tenor ocarina.")

We'll follow generally accepted usage and call it the **Alto C**. The benefits to the Alto C are that anyone can easily reach and cover all its fingering holes. And its tones are pleasant.

Get a 6 hole oc rather than one with 4 holes. This course covers both, but you'll learn more with a 6 holer.

Don't buy a **C Soprano** pendant for your first ocarina. Those are the cute but tiny little pendants that come with matching necklaces. C Sopranos play an octave higher than the Alto C, so their lowest note is **C6**. (Make sure the oc you buy has **C5** as its lowest note.)

Some C Sopranos have piercing high notes that will tire your ears out. Others are so small they cramp your fingers together. C Sopranos are fantastic fun, but you have to select them carefully.

Leave them for later along with the fancy designs, until you've gained some playing experience.

Get a Quality Oc!

Ocarinas are often considered "folk instruments". Some don't play well. Their high notes sound airy or harsh. Some can't voice their highest note at all.

And there are lots of cheap ocs -- many designed for schoolchildren -- that are playable but ill-tuned.

Some "ocarinas" don't play music at all! They are intended as collectibles. They just toot some random sounds, and are better described as **whistles** rather than ocarinas.

You need to start out with a quality oc that plays well. **Otherwise if notes sound poorly you won't know whether it's you or the oc causing the problem.**

One way to get a quality oc is to buy from a vendor that selects only true musical instruments for its inventory. Experience shows that a simple ceramic or plastic pendant from these vendors will play well:

- **Stein Ocarina** (SteinOcarina.com)
- **Songbird Ocarina** (SongBirdOcarina.com)
- **STL Ocarina** (STLOcarina.com)

Always listen to sound samples if they're available. That way you can ensure the ocarina has a tone you like. Pay special attention to the highest notes. Are they true and clear?

Listen to verify that all notes sound in tune with one another. And that the lowest notes sound pure rather than muffled.

What about buying from Amazon? Amazon offers some excellent ocarinas... but also many mediocre ones. The star ratings are sometimes misleading.

Many reviews are posted by beginners rather than qualified musicians. Others are posted by those who collect interesting whistles and don't intend to play them. We recommend that you not buy from Amazon unless you are already pretty savvy about ocarinas.

Make sure you buy a pendant that has C5 as its base note -- not C6! It's easier to learn with a regular-sized Alto C oc than a tiny little C Soprano.

You'll find that some ocarinas are made from ceramics (baked clay), while others are plastic. Which should you chose?

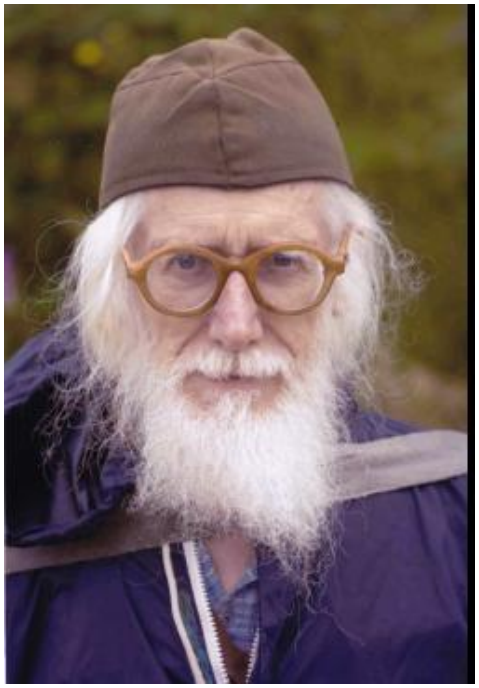
Some prefer ceramic because it's traditional and they feel it sounds just a tiny bit more "like an ocarina should." Others prefer plastic. It's less expensive, easier to clean, and less likely to chip or break. Either works for this course, so pick whichever appeals to you.

In any case, listen to sound samples before you buy to ensure you get an ocarina you like.

At the time of writing, a quality plastic oc costs between $10 or $20 USD, while ceramic may set you back $25 to $50. **If you're concerned about cost, shop around.** Most ocs are imported. This means that prices vary a lot due to transport costs, import fees, tariffs, and currency conversions.

In this course we'll assume you're playing an Alto C pendant. But don't worry... if you're playing any other kind of 6 or 4 hole ocarina, all the lessons in this course will work just fine for it.

I receive no compensation for recommendations. They are solely based on product merit and are intended as helpful advice.



John Taylor (1941-2011), instrument maker, mathematician, and musician.

He invented the pendant fingering system in 1964.

Barry Jennings (1940-2004) added the two thumb holes to Taylor's original four hole design.

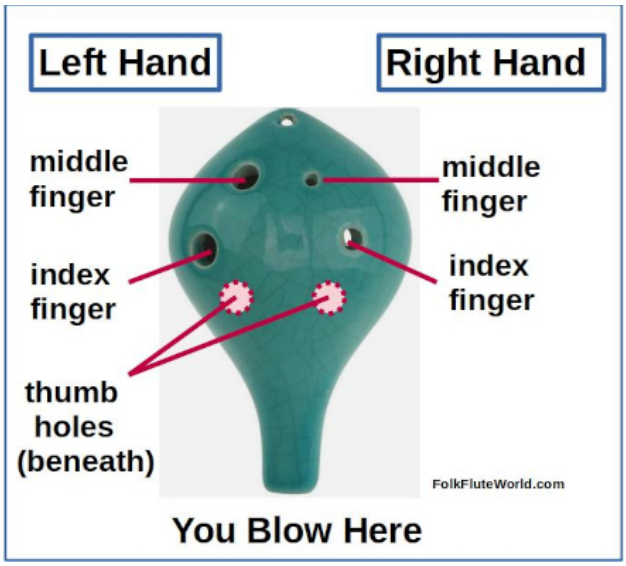
(Courtesy: Blake Anderson, Peter & Josie Hodkinson, and James Gregory)

Lesson 3 -- How to Hold a Pendant

Holding a pendant is simple. Place your first two fingers of each hand over the top holes of the instrument.

Your remaining fingers have no role in playing the oc. You can use them to steady your hold, or just let them dangle.

These photos show you how to hold your pendant. While your instrument may have a different shape than this one, the pattern of its fingering holes will be the same:





Your thumbs go underneath the instrument to help you hold it.

If you have a 6 hole pendant, you'll cover the thumb holes beneath the instrument with your two thumbs. **When you play, always keep those two thumb holes covered for now.**

If you have a 4 hole pendant, it has no thumb holes. So place your thumbs beneath the instrument however feels comfortable to hold the ocarina.

Here's how it looks when you play an oc. In these examples, the musician is covering three of the four top holes, while leaving the hole under his left hand middle finger open:





"Doc Sweet" Caresses the Clay

Summary

Practice holding your ocarina and covering the holes. Get comfortable with it. Your fingers should be flat across the ocarina, as the photos illustrate, not curled above the holes.

Don't grip the oc too hard. Let it rest easy and securely in your hands.

If you wonder if you might drop the oc, wear the neckstrap with it. Nearly all pendants come with one, and they're designed for just this purpose.

Now, move your fingers on and off the fingering holes, and see if you can cover them fully each time. You'll need to develop this ability to play.

In the next lesson we'll blow our first notes.

Lesson 4 -- Playing Your First Notes

Let's try playing a couple notes.





Hold the ocarina as shown.

Place your first two fingers of each hand over the top holes on the ocarina.

If your oc has thumb holes underneath, cover them with your thumbs.

Be sure that you have covered each hole completely!

Now put your mouth on the mouthpiece and blow a steady tone. You want to blow in directed fashion, like how you would blow out a candle. Direct your airstream into the fipple (mouthpiece).

Did you get a nice sounding note at a steady pitch?

If not, the most likely problem is that you are not covering one of the holes **completely**. Make sure you're covering each hole in its entirety and try blowing again.

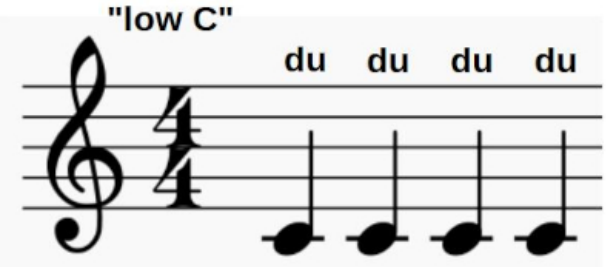
You may have to look at your fingers a couple times to get this right, and it may feel strange. But believe me, after some small amount of practice, you'll develop **muscle memory** as to where the holes are. It will become second nature to cover them completely when you need to.

The other possible problem is that you're blowing either too softly or too loudly to get a good tone. Experiment a bit. Blow loudly, until the instrument tells you it's too loud. And try blowing softer and softer, until the tone goes flat or falls away.

Just like covering the holes at first, you may have to learn how much pressure you need to blow true notes. But this also quickly becomes very easy. You want to blow at a constant pressure to sound a nice steady tone.

Practice playing the note with all fingering holes closed several times. You can tongue each note with a "du" or "too" sound to articulate it.

Here's how playing that note four times looks in musical notation. The vertical position of the note on the horizontal lines or **staff** indicates the pitch of the note.



Notes that appear higher on the staff would sound higher.

The note you're playing with all holes closed is the lowest note you can play on any pendant. For the Alto C oc, it's called **low C**. (It's called low C on any C Major ocarina.)

You can see that low C is indicated by its location one line below the regular staff.

Here's an alternative way to represent musical notes for pendants. It's called **tabbed notation**. Most people call them **tabs** for short.

This figure shows three different ways to portray a tabbed note.



You Blow From This Side

Tabs visually show which fingering holes to cover and which to leave open. Covered holes are depicted by filled in circles or boxes, while open holes are empty circles or boxes.

The tabs here all represent low C -- the note we just played with all fingering holes closed.

You always read tabs in the same way. **The mouthpiece is assumed to be at the bottom of the figure.**

So the two bottom-most holes represent the fingering holes for your first two fingers (your index fingers). The two topmost holes are those you would cover with your middle fingers.

The rightmost diagram additionally shows the thumb holes outside the circle. This tab represents fingering low C on a 6 hole pendant.

If you have a 6 hole pendant and see a tab that does not include the thumb holes, that means you should always cover both thumb holes.

Another Note

Let's try another note. Here's its tab notation:



You Blow From This Side

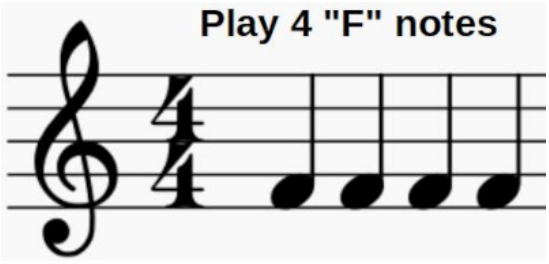
The tabs show that for this note, you cover the two left holes of the oc with the first two fingers of your left hand.

Leave the two right hand holes open.

(As always, if your ocarina has thumb holes, cover them as well.)

Try playing the note several times, each time articulating it by softly tonguing the mouthpiece.

This is the note called F. It appears in sheet music notation like this.



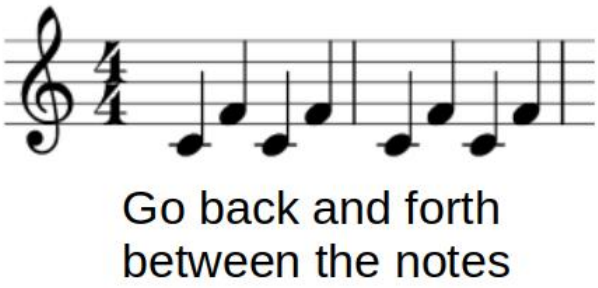
That F appears higher (vertically) in sheet music notation than low C tells you that it's higher pitched.

The rule is: **the higher a note appears in the notation, the higher its pitch.**

As with low C, if you don't get a pure, true tone, check that you have covered each hole **completely**.

Also, blow with the proper breath pressure. Too little breath will sound a flat note, while too much breath will sound sharp or forced or overblown.

Experiment a bit with different breath pressures, and it will quickly become evident what pressure you need to voice nice-sounding notes on your ocarina.



Try blowing four F notes, then cover all the holes and blow four low C notes. Then, go back and forth between the two notes quite a few times, just as the diagram indicates.

Are you starting to get a feel for how to grasp your ocarina?

Always remember, to play any note, you must **completely** cover all the holes you're supposed to, without exposing even the tiniest air gap!

Summary

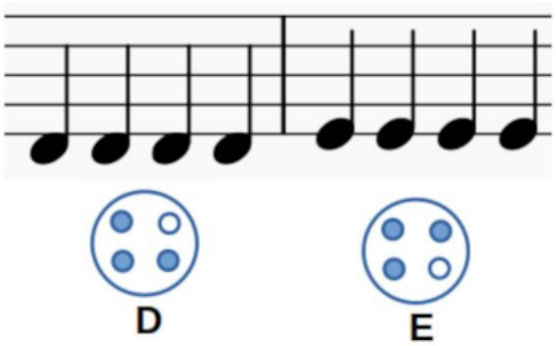
In this lesson you learned how to hold your oc and how to sound two notes. Experiment a bit and practice so that you feel comfortable playing these two notes. It will feel awkward at first, but very quickly you'll find it becomes natural to hold your pendant and play pretty tones.

In the next lesson we'll learn two more notes. And you'll play your first song!

Lesson 5 -- More Notes... and Your First Song

So far you've played two notes, low C and F. Let's learn a couple more.

Then we'll learn the basics of musical notation, and play your first song.



This figure shows that the first new note is D. You play it with three holes closed, and your right middle finger off the hole. D sounds one note higher than low C.

Try playing D four times, as the sheet music indicates.

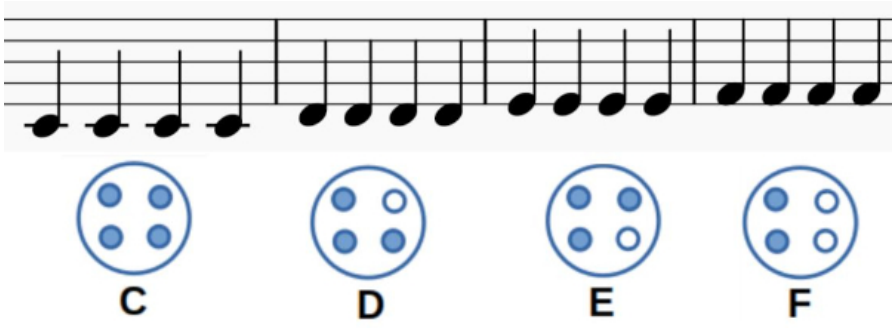
The next note higher in the scale is E. Put your right middle finger back down to cover its hole, and raise your right index finger.

Did these notes sound right? Remember -- you must always **completely cover** any hole that is supposed to be closed. If you didn't sound true tones for these notes, leaving any hole even the least bit uncovered is the most likely cause.

Also remember -- **if you have a 6 hole ocarina, you should always cover both thumb holes**. Since the tabs do not include thumb indicators, that means you keep those thumb holes closed.

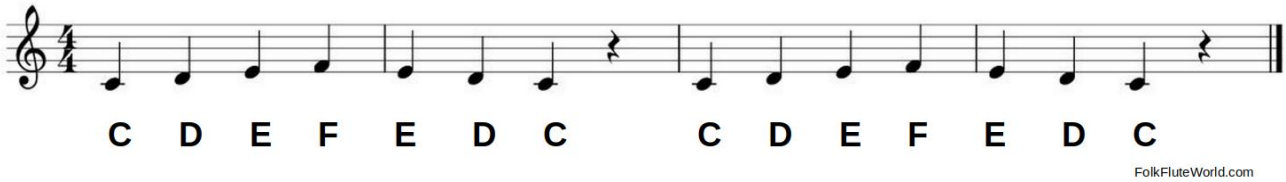
(We'll show you how to use the thumb holes later in the course.)

Here's a review of the four notes we've learned so far. Try playing them each four times, just as the music shows:



Practice

Okay, let's try playing the four notes we know back-to-back:



Play these four notes correctly and you'll hear that you're climbing several notes up a scale, and then descending back again.

Each note gets one beat (as in the "beat" of a song). You can play them at any speed you feel comfortable.

Notice how vertical lines in the staff separate each group of four notes into units called **measures**. Each measure contains four beats.

Don't worry about the symbols at the start of the staff. We'll get to that later.

That squiggly symbol at the end of the 2nd and 4th measures -- 𝄽 -- means to "rest" for one beat. In other words, be silent for one beat.

If the musical notation isn't clear, don't worry, we'll discuss it more later.

Right now the goal is to learn to play four notes on your pendant. Practice them a bit... get comfortable changing your fingering as you move between them... and be sure you're sounding strong, true notes for each. That's what's really important at this point.
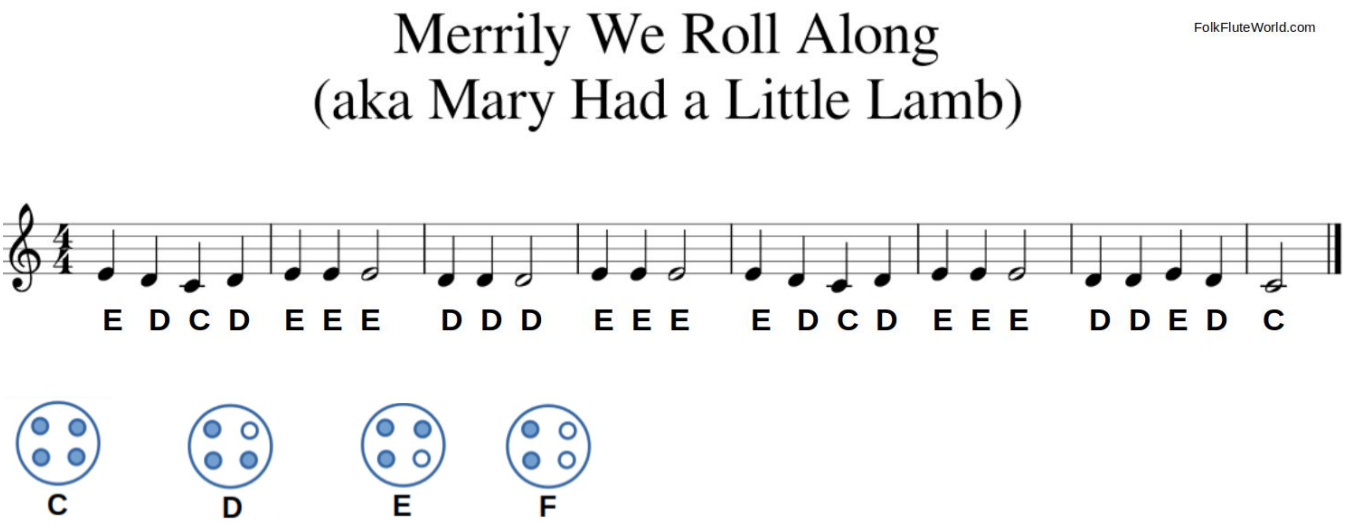
You want to get a feel for how to cover holes completely for these notes, and how to switch between the notes.

A First Song

Time for a first song. It's a tune you know, so you won't have to worry about the timing of the notes. You want to be able to finger the notes correctly, shift between them, and blow each correctly and in tune.

Some people know this tune as *Merrily We Roll Along*, while others call it *Mary Had a Little Lamb*. Still others know it as the chorus of the 19th century folk song *Good-night Ladies*. Warner Brother's famously transformed it into the theme song of their *Looney Tunes* cartoon series in the 1930s.

For quick reference, we've placed the fingering chart for the four notes you're learning right beneath the score. Try to memorize the fingering for each of these notes. You want to be able to associate each with its representation in the score.



So far all the notes we've seen are filled-in circles with attached vertical lines or **stems**. Those are called **quarter notes**. In this piece, you'll notice there's a new kind of note as well.

It's the **half note**, represented by an empty circle with an attached vertical stem.

Whereas a quarter note gets one beat, a half note gets two beats. You play a half note for double the length of time as a quarter note. Thus, the half note consumes the same amount of time as two quarter notes.

You know how this tune goes, so you can see how the sheet music expresses the difference between the shorter notes in the tune (the quarter notes), and the notes that you hold longer (the half notes).

If you think about it, you can see that sheet music notation tells you two things:

- The notes to play
- How long to play each note

It's up to you to have memorized how to finger each note correctly on your ocarina. That will be a big part of what you'll learn in upcoming lessons.

Summary

Now you're cooking. You've learned how to play a few notes, transition between them, and play a first song. Practice the song until you feel you know these four notes, and how to get a decent sound from your ocarina.

It may take a little practice to fully cover the holes as you move from one note to another, but don't get discouraged. Just practice a bit and you'll get it right.

In the next lesson, we'll play *Jingle Bells*.

We start with easy songs like these because everyone knows the tunes. That way you only have to concentrate on fingering and blowing the notes.

We'll show you how *Jingle Bells* is written in sheet music. If you've never read music before, you'll find that it's not at all hard with simple songs.

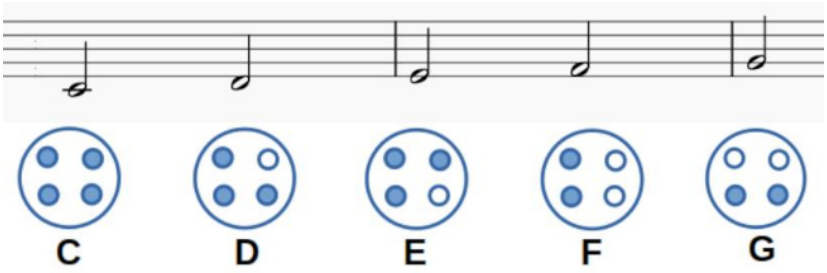
Just a few lessons more, and you'll be able to read and play many popular songs!

Lesson 6 -- Playing Jingle Bells... and Reading Music

Now, let's try *Jingle Bells*.

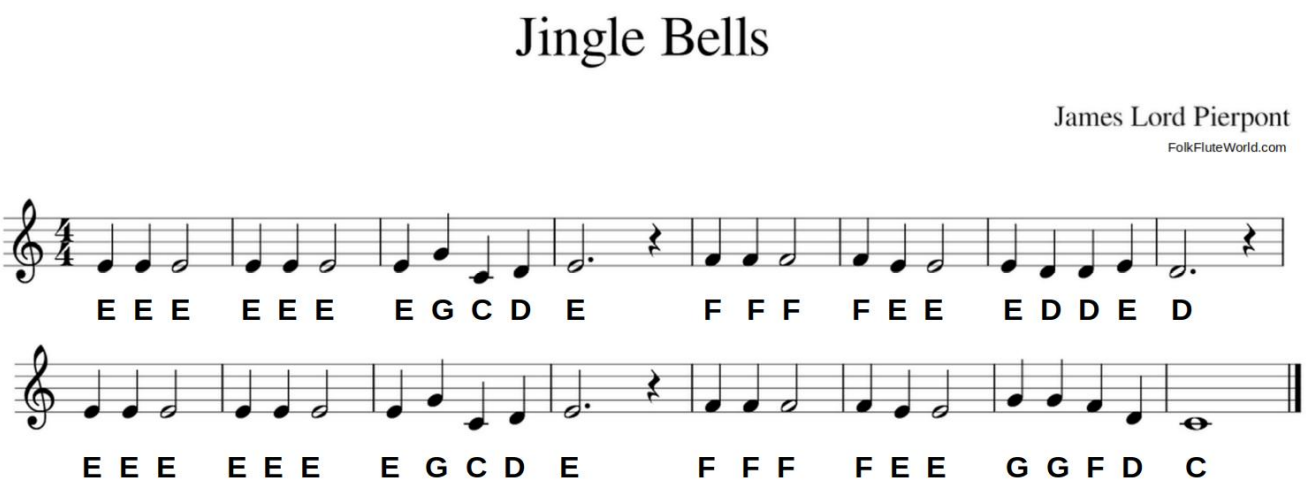
Jingle Bells was composed in the 1850's. Many believe that this song -- likely the most popular Christmas song ever -- was originally intended as a drinking song for a tavern in Massachusetts. Who knew?

We need one more note to play this song: G. Here's the fingering for all the notes we've played so far, and we've added G on the far right.



Try playing these notes in sequence a few times so that you'll remember them. Play up and down the scale until it feels comfortable.

Now, give our simple version of *Jingle Bells* a go.



This song consists of quarter and half notes, just like you're used to. But you'll notice that several half notes have a dot immediately after them.

A dot that appears immediately after any note extends the length of that note by half. Since a half note consumes two beats, this adds one extra beat to the half note. Therefore we hold this note for three beats.

Another new convention: the last note of the piece appears as a half note -- but without a vertical stem. This is a **whole note**. You hold a whole note for four beats.

This makes sense. If you think about it, many songs end on an extended note. In this piece, you hold the final note for four beats.

To summarize: sheet music tells you the timing of how to play the song by the length of its notes. A quarter note gets one beat, a half note gets two beats, a dotted half note gets three, and a whole note gets four.
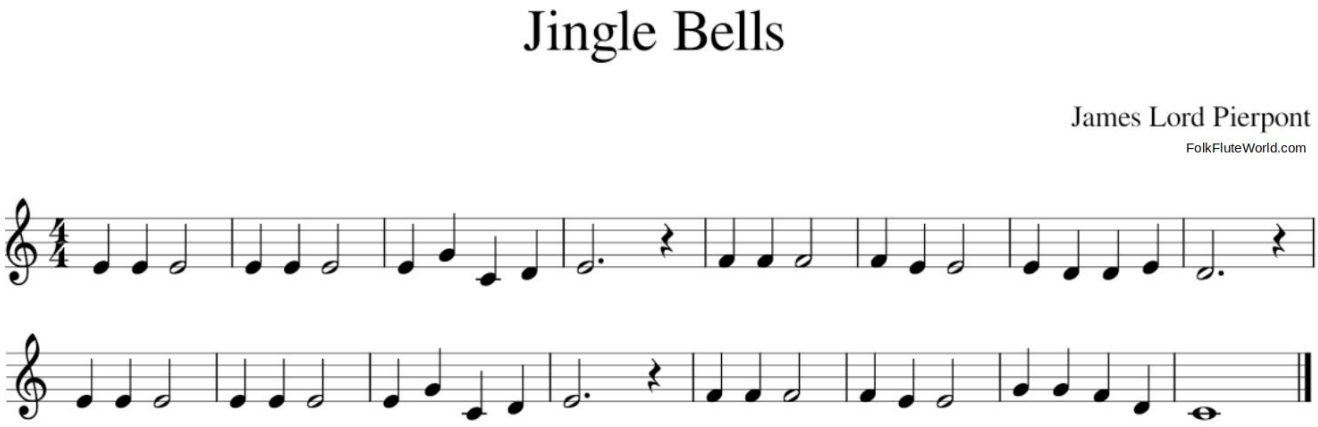
That sounds like a lot to remember. But it's really not. Since you already know how the timing of *Jingle Bells* goes, all you have to do is match up the timing of the song as you know it with the appearance of the notes in the sheet music.

Standard Sheet Music

Let's take a look at how *Jingle Bells* might be written as a **score** -- as standard sheet music.

You can see that playing this piece as you would normally see it written is a little tougher because the score doesn't name the notes for you. You have to have memorized which notes are C, D, E, F, and G. And also you have to have memorized how to finger each note on your ocarina.

Try playing the song again to see if you can do this.



Practice

So here's what we've discovered about sheet music. To play it correctly, you must:

1. Be able to read the notes on the staff
2. Be able to finger the corresponding notes on your ocarina from memory
3. Understand how many beats each note consumes (their timing)

To improve your play, you'll want to keep practicing *Jingle Bells* until you've achieved this level of skill.

If you're like me, you'll play the piece very slowly several times. This is called **sounding it out**. Once you've figured out the piece, you can speed it up and play it faster.

This is a great technique for learning how to play ocarina. Never be afraid to play a song as slowly as you need to in order to interpret it and suss it out. Once you've got a grip on how it goes, then you can speed it up and play it at the correct tempo.

Being able to read sheet music is a vitally important skill. It's the means by which you gain access to millions of free songs to play. We'll practice reading music a lot more, so don't worry if it's not yet all clear.

At the end of this course, we'll provide links to TONS of free sheet music for songs you can play on your pendant.

How cool is that? You can play almost any popular song! This is the fun of learning a musical instrument.

Tabbed Notation

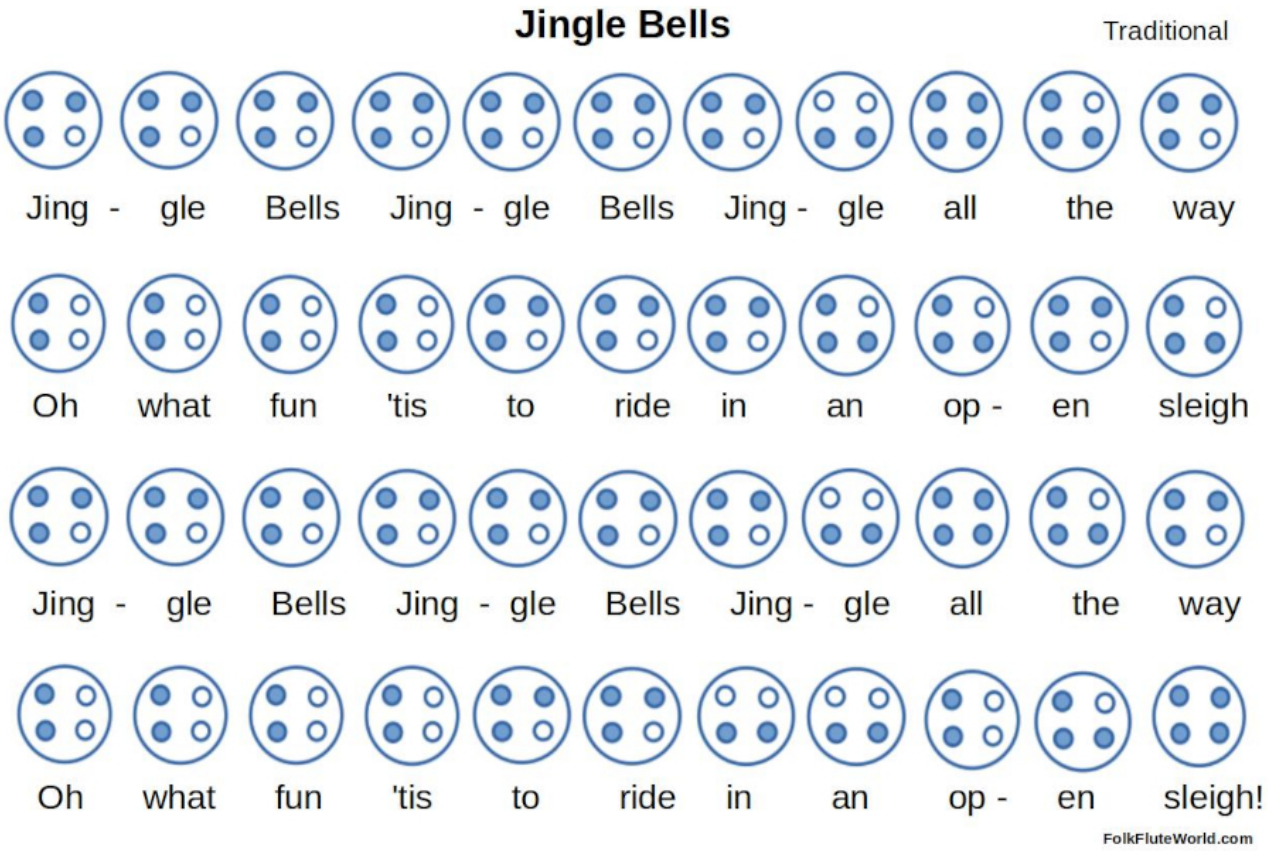
Remember that tabs are an alternative notation to standard sheet music.

The big advantage to tab notation is that it visually shows you how to finger each note.

The big disadvantage is that it gives you no idea of the timing of those notes. So it works best for popular songs where you already know how the tune goes.

It **really** helps if the tabs include the words. That makes it much easier to understand the timing of the piece, and how the notes match up with the timing. Many tabbed scores include words, but not all.

So, how does *Jingle Bells* -- the entire song -- look in **tabbed notation**? You might see any of several slightly different tab representations, but here's one that matches the above sheet music. Try playing it:



With tabs, remember that if the fingering diagrams show only four fingering holes, you must always keep the two thumb holes covered if you're playing a 6 hole pendant.

So you could play our tabbed version of *Jingle Bells* on either a 4 or 6 hole ocarina. Just always keep the thumb holes closed if you play a 6 hole oc.

Going forward, these lessons will always give you standard sheet music notation for the songs we introduce. That's because standard notation is nearly universal. It gives you access to the most songs.

And it's not particularly difficult to understand, as you'll soon find.

In contrast, tabs are **only** used to score tunes for pendant ocarinas. They are a seedpod-specific notation.

Nevertheless, being familiar with tabbed notation is useful. There are lots of free ocarina songs available as tabs.

At the end of the course, we'll give you links to libraries that contain many thousands of songs, both in standard musical notation and tabs.

How to Practice

Before leaving this lesson, a few words about how to practice may be helpful.

First off, don't just practice a song until you finally get it right and then quit. **Play the score several times correctly**, after you've learned to play it without errors. This ensures you're learning proper muscle memory for the tune, and memorizing accurate fingering for each note you see in the score.

If you encounter a difficult passage in a score, drill down on it. Play it slowly until you get it right. Then go back and play the entire piece with the difficult passage now under your control.

Finally, **listen to yourself play**. Only by listening to your performance will you recognize areas for improvement. Perhaps you play a song flawlessly from a technical perspective. But it might not sound as melodic or as lovely as it might. You can improve if you listen to how you sound.

Try recording your play with your mobile phone, digital recorder, or computer. That way you can listen to yourself by playing back the recording -- while you're not distracted by playing.

Summary

Now you've learned five notes and know the rudiments of reading music. The next lesson consolidates and expands your knowledge, as together we work through a number of popular tunes.

The tunes are all ones you know. So you can focus on learning how to finger notes and transition between them.

You'll also learn more about reading sheet music.

Lesson 7 -- More Notes & New Songs

You're at a point now where you know enough to play simple songs. But you need some practice to get more secure and agile in reading and playing the notes.

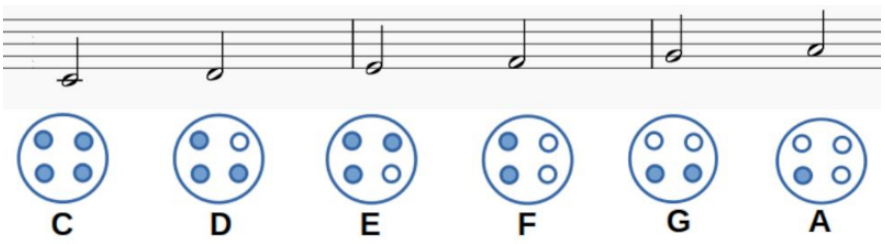
You want to get to the point where when you see a note on the staff, you can accurately finger it and sound that tone on your pendant. So this lesson is all about consolidating what you've learned so far. The best way to do that is by playing some new songs and practicing.

You'll get better every session you spend playing your ocarina. That's how one learns to play a musical instrument. This lesson gives you the songs to work with.

Don't feel you have to master everything in this lesson all at once. Instead, play some of the songs in a session. In subsequent sessions, go back and play them again until you feel you've finally mastered them.

We've selected simple songs everyone knows so that you don't have to worry about figuring out the melodies. (Don't worry, we'll get to more advanced songs in later lessons.)

There's nothing you haven't already learned in any of these songs, except that we introduce the next higher note in the scale: A. Here's how to finger A, and a review of the notes we've covered so far:



Practice ascending and descending these notes in sequence a few times to refresh your memory of them.
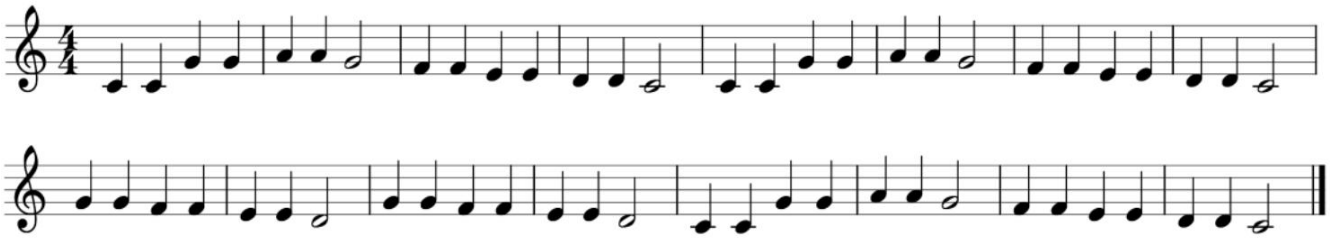
Song: Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star

Here's a traditional English lullaby everyone knows. The melody is from an 18th-century French song, while the lyrics derive from an 1806 poem by Jane Taylor.

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

Traditional English Lullaby

FolkFluteWorld.com



There's nothing new in this song but the note A. But it practices your ability to ascend and descend the scale using all the notes you know. Try to get to the point where it becomes easy for you to connect the notes you see in the score with where you place your fingers on your ocarina.

You're developing your **muscle memory**, your instinctive feel for where each of the fingering holes are located on your ocarina. Very soon you'll cover each tone hole completely without ever having to worry about misplaying a note.
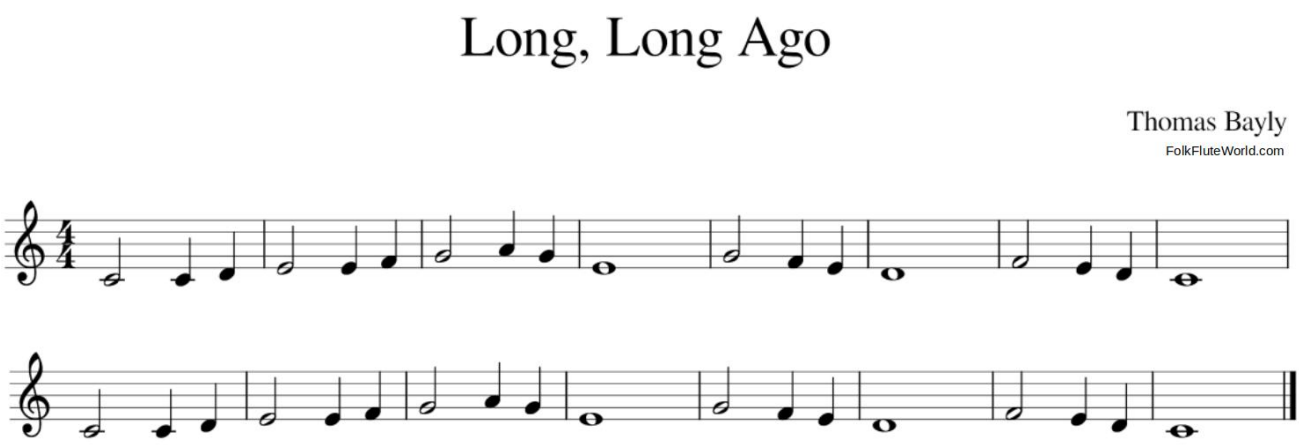
If you play a note and it doesn't sound right, remember to check to see that you've **completely** covered all holes that should be covered.

In terms of reading sheet music, this song consists of but two kinds of notes: quarter notes and half notes. Quarter notes get one beat each, while half notes are twice as long -- each gets two beats. Look at the music so that you understand how these two kinds of notes tell you how the timing of the melody goes.

Song: Long, Long Ago

Here's a nostalgic song written by English composer Thomas Bayly in the 1830s.

In 1940, the Glenn Miller Orchestra updated the lyrics and hyped the tempo. With the Andrews Sisters on lead, result was the hit song *Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree (with Anyone Else but Me)*. You'd be amazed at how many popular songs are actually based on old melodies that have been updated to the style of the moment. We'll encounter many more in this course.



If you need help with the timing of this piece, remember that each quarter note gets 1 beat. Each half note gets 2 beats. And the whole notes -- those notes that do not have vertical stems -- each get 4 beats.

When Do You Breathe?

So far we've been concentrating on learning notes and stringing them together into songs. But have you wondered: when should I take a breath while I play?

Listen carefully to a professional singer or musician, and you'll find that they control themselves so as to breathe at times that least disturb the melody.

And that makes sense, right? With the songs you've been playing, as you gain some facility, you may have noticed that taking a breath at some points in a song disturbs the entire feeling of the song, while breathing at other times is minimally disruptive.
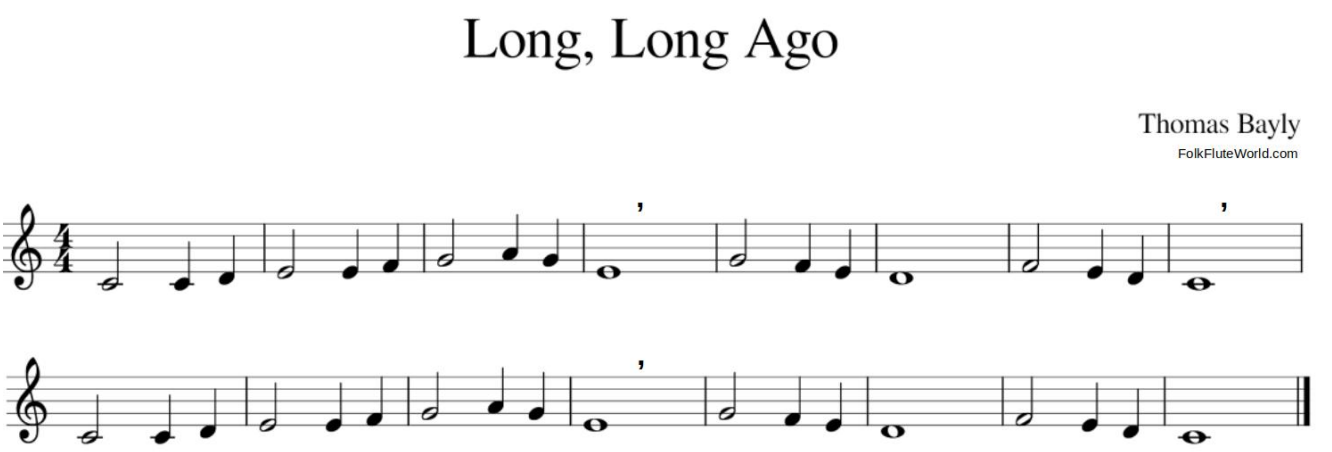
Let's take another look at the song you just played. We've reproduced it below, but this time notice the presence of "flying commas" after every fourth measure.

These commas are **breath marks**. They indicate the optimal times to take breaths without disrupting the song's flow.

Most sheet music doesn't include breath marks. The reason is that we instinctively know when to breathe. This will be after you complete a **musical phrase**, a group of measures that naturally fit together.

On the other hand, some composers consider breath marks useful to musicians and include them in their scores.

Now that you know about breath marks, try playing *Long, Long Ago* again. This time follow the breath marks to see if they enhance your performance.



Here's a general rule about ocarinas: **the larger the oc, the more breath it requires**. Play a bass oc, and you have to breath more frequently than if you play a tiny soprano. So the larger your ocarina, the more important good **breath control** becomes.

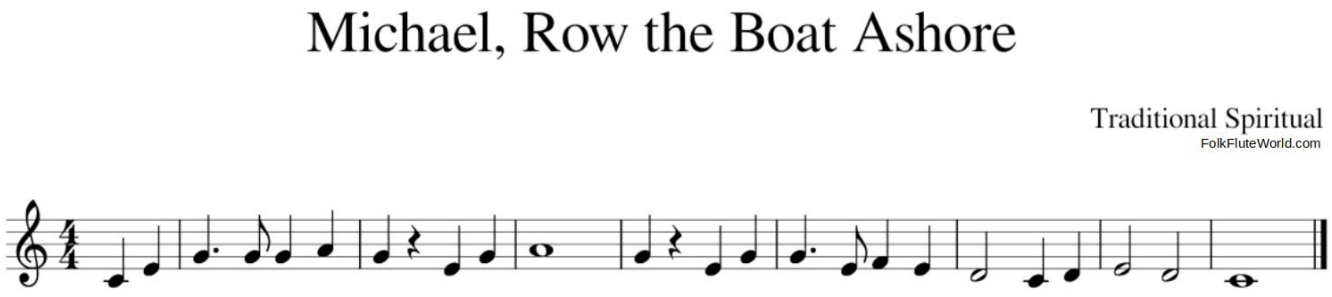
You don't want to disrupt a melody by breathing at an inopportune time. Taking deep breaths is the secret to managing your breathing.

Note that instead of flying commas, some composers will use a checkmark to indicate a breath. Or you might even see a vertical tick ('). These are placed in the exact same position relative to the staff as are flying commas.

Song: Michael, Row the Boat Ashore

Here's another song you undoubtedly know. It evolved with African Americans in the mid-1800s in the sea islands of South Carolina.

Like many traditional songs, it became a popular hit in 1960 when it was recorded by the Highwaymen, a folk group.



Notice the quarter notes with a dot appearing right after them. **The rule is: a dot that immediately follows any note extends the length of the note by half.** So a dotted quarter note consumes the same amount of time as quarter note plus an **eighth note**.

In this tune, eighth notes appear right after the dotted quarter notes. You identify eighth notes by the curved line attached to their stems.

An eighth note takes half the time of a quarter note. So if a quarter note gets one beat, an eighth note gets half a beat (or a very quick beat).
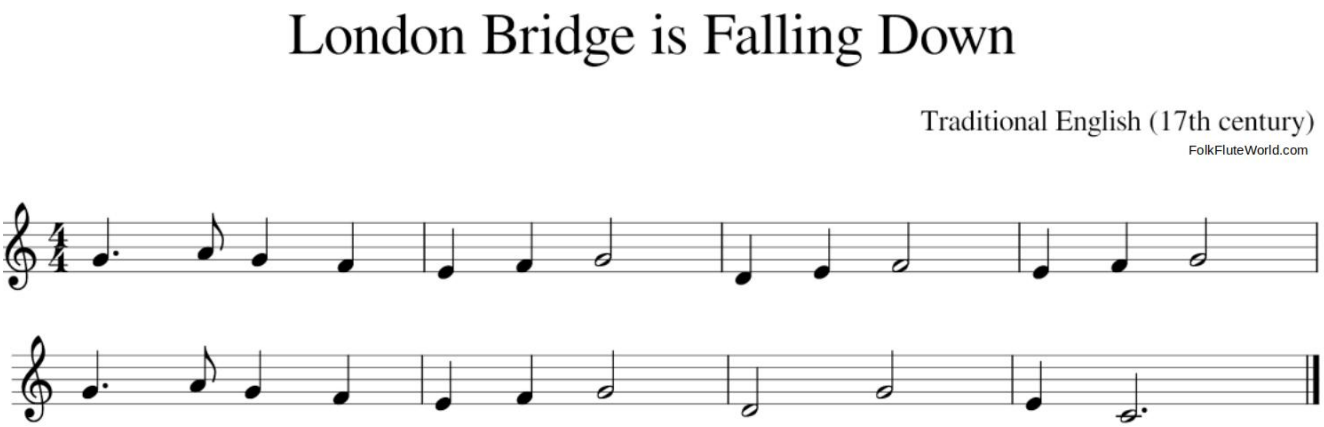
Now, try to match the notes in this score to the way you know the melody goes. This should make the meaning conveyed by the musical notation clear.

This song is a soulful melody. Once you've mastered its fingering, try to play it more expressively. Make your ocarina "sing" this song in all its beauty.

Song: London Bridge is Falling Down

Here's another song that includes a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note. This is a very common construct in many songs, so take a look and see how it's written and played in this song. You want to make sure that when you run across this construct in other songs you know how the timing of the notes works.

This rhyming sing-song dates back to the 17th century and has often been the basis of various children's games. For generations, kids "skipped rope" to this tune.



As always, get started by playing this song as slowly as you need to. After a few times through, you'll be familiar enough with the fingering to speed it up a bit. Never feel embarrassed to start a new song by slowly picking your way through it. That's one of the best learning strategies.

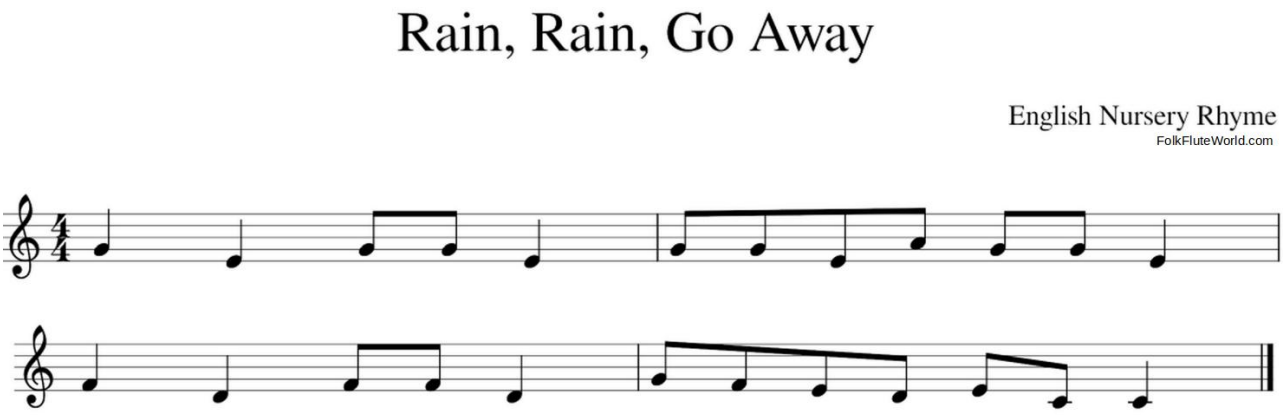
And again, match the timing of how you know this melody goes with its dotted-quarter-eighth-note combination. Look back again at the sheet music for *Michael, Row the Boat Ashore* if you need another example of how this combination should sound in a melody.

Song: Rain, Rain, Go Away

Here's an English nursery rhyme set to song that dates back to at least the 17th century.

We present it here so that you can get a better feel for eighth notes. Remember, two eighth notes fit into the time allotted to play one quarter note.
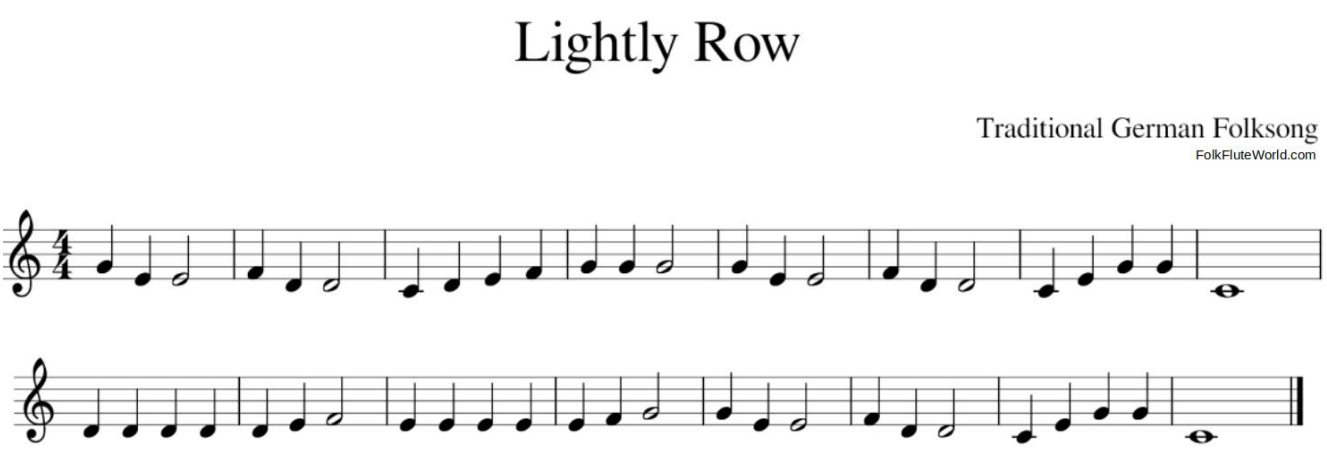
Try the song out very slowly. Then practice to where you can play it more quickly as if it were a sing-song playground chant. It's a good demonstration for how eighth notes are used in compositions.



Song: Lightly Row

Are you still with me? Remember, the goal isn't to "swallow" this entire lesson all at once. Instead, practice these songs over several sessions when you're fresh. You want to pace yourself, repeat the lessons, and grow in your skills with your ocarina.

Here's a German folk song from the early 19th century. In German it's known as *Hänschen klein*, or *Little Hans*.



Hopefully at this point, you're able to "sight read" the notes on the score and finger the proper notes on your ocarina in response. Don't be shy about going back to earlier songs to learn this, or by playing a song as many times as you need to to get it right.

The goal isn't to complete lessons as quickly as possible. The goal is for you to become comfortable playing true sounds for all the notes. And to learn to associate notes in sheet music with their fingerings on your ocarina.

Song: A-Tisket, A-Tasket

Here's another popular children's song from the 19th century.
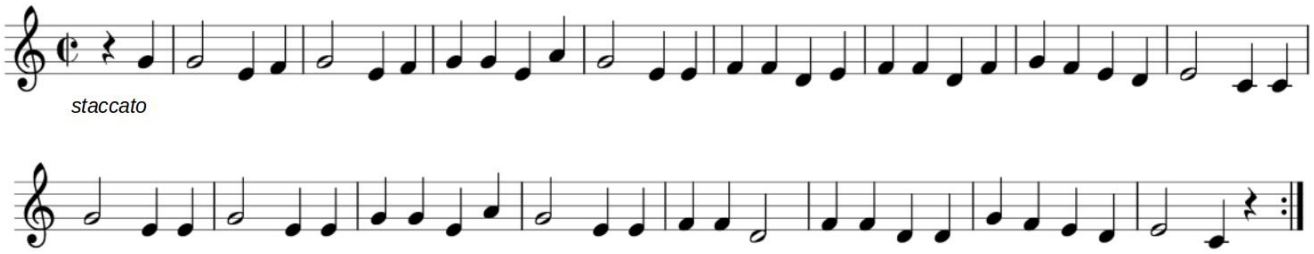
This is a great example of a piece you want to play very slowly at first, to sound it out and to get used to the fingering. Then, after you've familiarized yourself with it, you can pick up the pace (or **tempo**) and play it at "playground speed."

This song is excellent practice to work yourself up to quick fingering in a fast-paced song.

A-Tisket, A-Tasket

Traditional

FolkFluteWorld.com

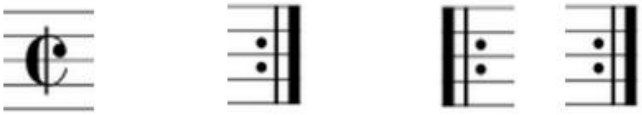


There are several new notational elements in this piece. First, notice how the word **staccato** appears at the start. This means to play the notes in crisp, short style. Play the notes with your tongue as "dit-dit-dit-dit" rather than "daah-daah-daah-daah" or "laah-laah-laah-laah".

It's common to find stylistic advice in a word or two at the start of a piece. Often these words are Italian. For example, the opposite of staccato is **tenuto**, which means to play notes to their full length and gently transition between them.

Musicians formally refer to these playing instructions **directives** or **performance marks**. Most of us just call them **playing instructions**.

There are dozens of these stylistic instructions you might see. We'll explain more of them in upcoming lessons.



Here are a few more new symbols in this piece. The C with a slash in it is called **cut time**. That means to play the song at a fast pace, ie, double-time.

The double bar with the two dots that appears at the very end of piece means to repeat the tune from the start. So, you would play this entire score twice.

Often you'll see a portion of a score enclosed in inverse double bars (as in the right side of the figure). That means to repeat the enclosed measures. This greatly reduces the length of many scores that contain repeating sections. For example, it's useful for a song that has repeating verses.
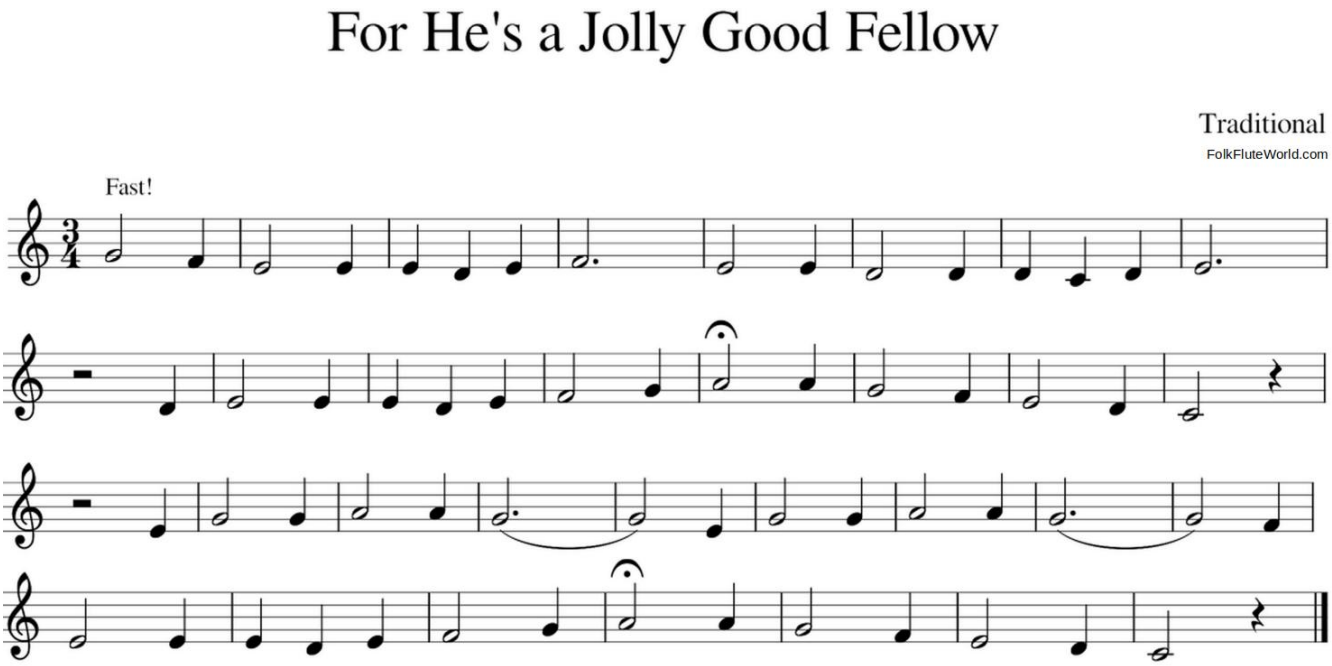
Song: For He's a Jolly Good Fellow

Let's wrap up this lesson with one last song.

This song was composed in 1709. Marie Antoinette popularized it after she heard one of her maids singing it. Eventually it immigrated to the UK and USA, where it's become one of the most popular celebratory songs ever.

The lyrics vary a bit depending where you live. The British sing *"For he's a jolly good fellow, and so say all of us!"* while Americans yodel *"For he's a jolly good fellow, which nobody can deny!"*.

Here's the song ...



This song is scored very simply. That makes it highly readable and easy to figure out.

But notice the advice to play "Fast!". That tells you that once you've decoded the song and have gotten familiar with it, you need to speed it up a bit. You know how the song goes.

There are several new elements in this score. First, see the "eye" over the note A in the middle of the second line? That means "hold the note extra long." Play the song with this note elongated and you'll see how this makes sense.

The technical term for holding a note like this is a **fermata**. Most people just call it a **hold**.

Another new feature occurs in the third line. You can see that two notes are tied together with a curving underscore. This is called a **tie** or a **slur**. Ties simply bond two notes together. That means you play them as if they were a single note. Don't separately tongue the second note.

So the tied notes in this piece each consume 5 beats -- 3 beats for the dotted half note, and 2 extra beats for the slurred half note that follows it.

You see two kinds of rests in this song. Remember that a **rest** is simply a period of time where you play no note at all (you just "rest" in silence). That squiggly vertical symbol you see at the ends of lines two and four is a **quarter note rest**. It tells you to rest for the same amount of time it would take you to play a quarter note.

At the start of lines two and three, you see a short little horizontal bar. That's a **half note rest**. So you would not play anything for two beats, the amount of time in which you would otherwise play a half note.

Since you don't play anything during a rest, they make the perfect time to take a breath. It doesn't disrupt the song to take a breath during a rest.

One other item of note in this score. At the very start of the score you see a "3" over a "4". That's a **time signature**. It tells how many beats are in each measure. In a song like this with a 3/4 time signature, you have three beats per measure. So the numerator of the time signature tells you how many beats are in each measure.

That differs from the songs we've seen thus far, which were in 4/4 time. In 4/4 time, there are four beats per measure instead of three.

In both 3/4 and 4/4 time, a quarter note gets one beat. The denominator of that time signature tells what kind of note gets one beat, and a "4" tells you that the quarter note receives one beat.

It's not important to remember all these details right now. What you want to start doing is mapping the way you know a tune goes -- its timing -- to how that's represented in a musical score.
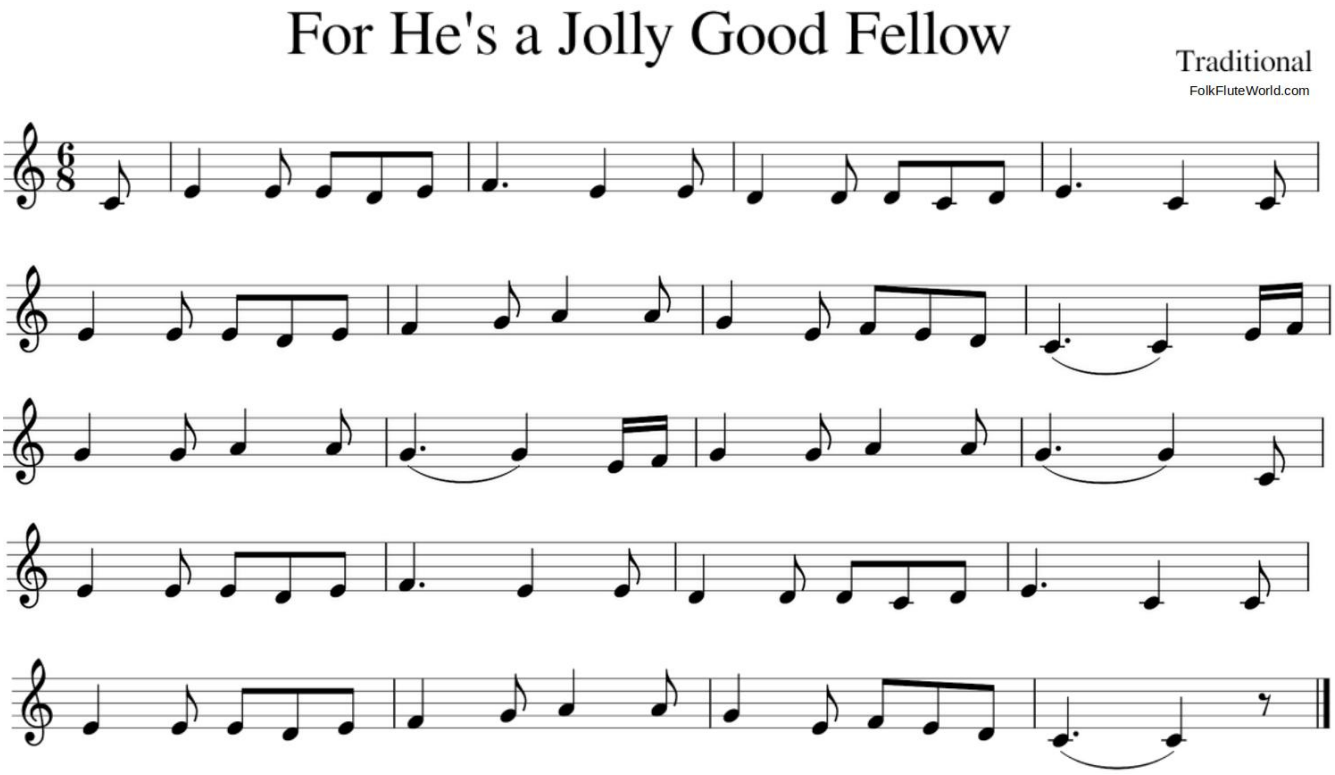
An Alternative Score

Did you know that it's possible to write sheet music for the same song in several different ways?

It's true. And you'll find that some ways are **much** easier for you to play on your ocarina than others!

We'll explore this in detail later -- specifically, we'll tell you the secrets of how to find the most playable versions of many songs.

For now, let's demonstrate by showing you another score for the song you just played:



This score is in **6/8 time** (as shown in the **time signature** at its start). The 6 means there are 6 beats per measure. The 8 means that each eighth note gets one beat.

Hmmm.... So each eighth note gets one beat -- instead of each quarter note -- and there are 6 beats per measure.

The first version of this song that we showed you used **3/4 time**. That's three beats per measure, with each quarter note getting one beat.

The fact is that scores can be written in all sorts of different time signatures. The most important to learn and remember are **3/4** and **4/4** time. Both of these give each quarter note one beat.

The only difference between them is the number of beats per measure. 3/4 has three beats per measure, while 4/4 contains four beats per measure.

You see several more examples of ties in this score. Remember, these tie two notes together so that you play them as if they were a single note.

Finally, look at this piece and you see your first sixteenth notes. These are the notes with double bars on their stems. You can see them on lines two and three in the score.

Sixteenth notes have half the length of an eighth note (and only a quarter of the time consumed by a quarter note). So play them very quickly.

Very often, sixteenth notes are used as a quick lead-in to a melodic line. That's how they're employed in this song. Take a look at the score again and you'll see that these sixteenth notes comprise a quick little lead-in to the melody.

So, now that we've discussed this score for *He's a Jolly Good Fellow*, try playing the song from it. You know the tune, so this will give you another idea of how that tune can be mapped into a musical score.

Which score did you like best, the first one or the second one? Most of us find that first version easier to understand. You'll often encounter this. You'll see two or more scores, and one of them will be much easier to read and play than the others.

It's very helpful to be able to find the easiest version of a song you wish to play. We'll tell you how to do this in future lessons.

Summary

That wraps it up for this lesson. Remember, the goal is to improve your playing through practice. So return to the tunes in this lesson later and practice them until you feel you've mastered them.

I hope I haven't overwhelmed you with too much about how to read musical notation. That's strictly secondary for now. Your goal is to practice the songs in this chapter until you can finger them and play them properly!

The next lesson gives a fuller explanation of how to read music. After you finish it, you should be able to read the sheet music for most popular tunes.

In the lesson after that, we'll return to learning new tunes. You'll get a chance to play more sophisticated songs and greatly improve your playing.

You're well on your way to being able to play any song you want!

Lesson 8 -- How to Read Music

Whew! That last lesson was pretty intense. There were enough tunes to keep you practicing for a good while, if you truly want to master them.
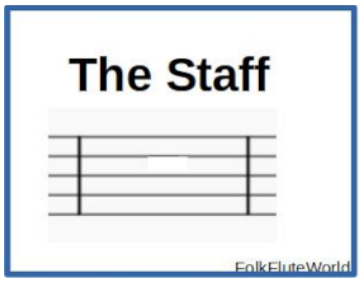
Don't feel that you have to conquer them all at once. Instead, go back to those songs now and then and replay them to solidify your knowledge. In learning to play a musical instrument, it is quite true that "practice makes perfect."

In this lesson we'll discuss a different topic. We'll introduce you to the basics of how to read music. Complete this lesson and you should be able to read the melodies of most popular songs.

You will learn how to read melody lines written for voice or woodwinds like the ocarina. (We won't cover advanced topics like chords and multipart piano music.)

Let's get started.

The Staff and Measures



The **staff** are the five horizontal lines on which music is written or **scored**.
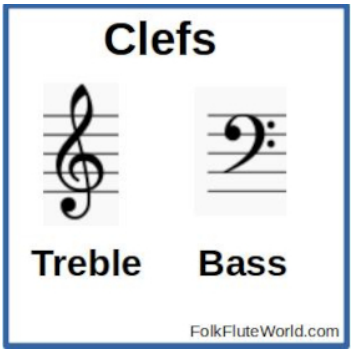
Notes on the staff are grouped into equal sized units called **measures**. A measure is a collection of notes that comprises a unit of time. Vertical bars in the staff separate measures.

This diagram shows a single measure, as defined by the space between the two vertical bars.

A **musical phrase** is a group of measures that make sense as a unit. Kind of like a line in a poem, or a sentence in a paragraph.

The **time signature** at the start of every score tells you how many beats each measure contains.

Clefs



The **clef symbol** you see at the start of every score defines what the notes are by their positions on the staff.

All songs in this lesson -- and probably all you will ever play on your ocarina -- are in **treble clef**.

The **bass clef** applies only to bass instruments. So you can pretty much ignore it!

Time Signatures

After the clef symbol, the next item you see in the score is its **time signature**. It tells you how the timing of the piece works.

As the figure below shows, a time signature has a numerator and a denominator.

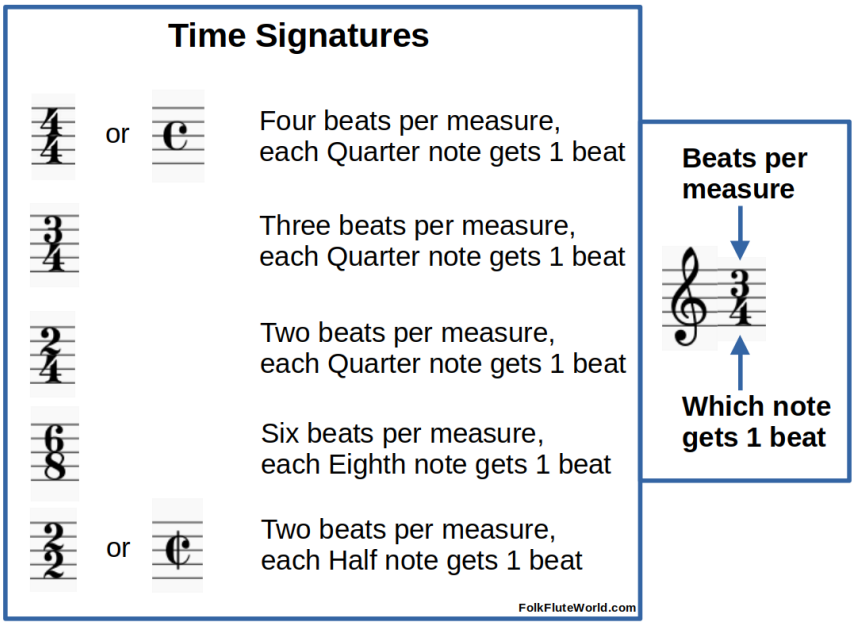
The **numerator** of the time signature tells you how many beats there are in each measure.

The **dominator** tells you which kind of note gets 1 beat.

For example, most our songs so far were in 4/4 time. That means there are 4 beats per measure, and each quarter note gets 1 beat.

In the previous lesson, the tune *For He's a Jolly Good Fellow* was in 3/4 time. That means 3 beats per measure with each quarter note getting 1 beat.

The second score for that same song was in 6/8 time. That's 6 beats per measure with each eighth note getting 1 beat.



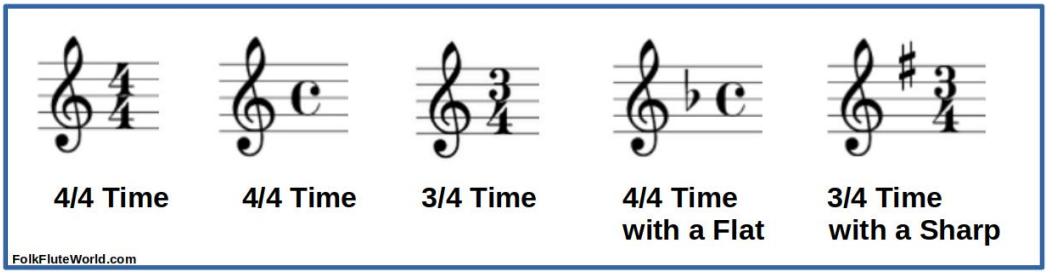
There are other time signatures, but these are by far the most common.

All follow the same rule --

- **Numerator tells how many beats per measure**
- **Denominator tells which kind of note gets 1 beat**

How Scores Begin

To review, here are a few examples of how scores typically begin.



The **clef** symbol starts a score. For ocarina music, this will nearly always be the **treble clef**.

Next comes the **time signature**. That tells you what kind of note gets 1 beat, and how many beats occur in each **measure**.

4/4 time tells you each quarter note gets 1 beat, and there are four of them per measure.

If the piece has **flats** or **sharps**, these precede the time signature. We'll discuss their meaning soon.

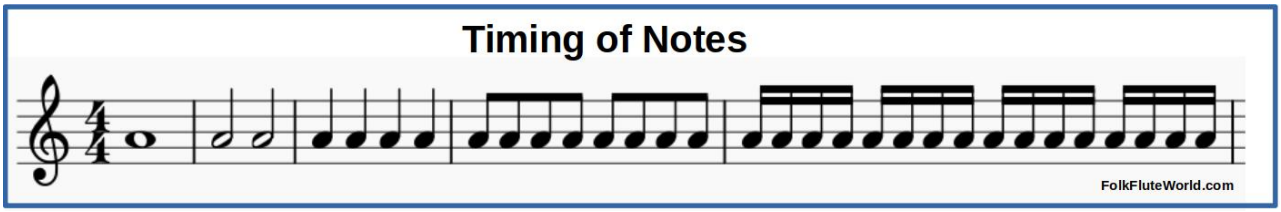
Timing the Notes

Key to the timing of music is the relationship between the various kinds of notes.
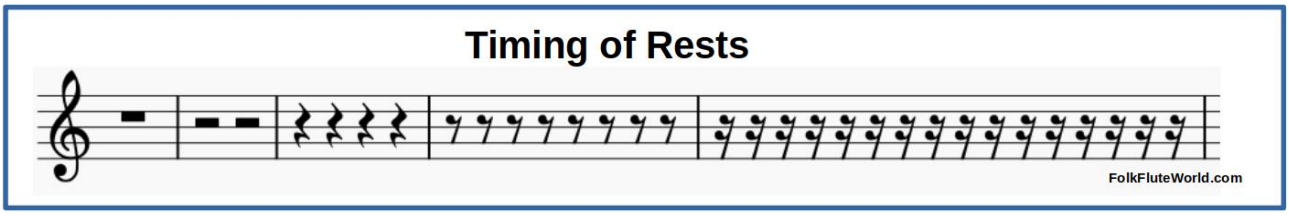
This diagram shows their relationship. One whole note consumes the same amount of time as two half notes, etc. Just like this:

1 whole note = 2 half notes = 4 quarter notes = 8 eighth notes = 16 sixteenth notes.

This score illustrates these timings. Each measure consists of 4 beats:

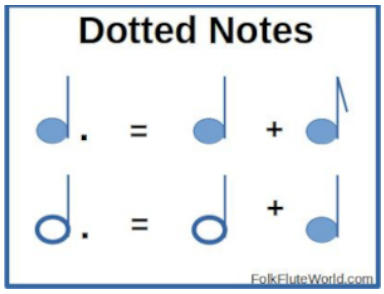


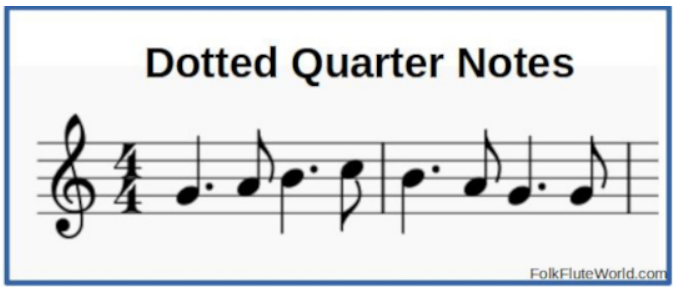
For each note, there is a corresponding **rest**. A rest is a period of silence in which you do not play any note. Here are the all the kinds of rests. The timing of each rest directly corresponds to the notes in the prior figure.



In the previous lesson you saw quarter note rests in two songs, *Michael, Row the Boat Ashore* and *A-Tisket, A-Tasket*. Rests are easy. They're just like notes except that you don't have to play anything!

Dotted Notes





Remember dotted notes from the previous lesson? Any note can be immediately followed by a period. **The period extends the length of the note by half**.

So a dotted quarter note would be the equivalent of a quarter note plus an eighth note. And a dotted half note would consume the time of a half note plus a quarter note.

A dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note is extremely common. So you want to be certain you understand how it works. The example above shows how this looks in the score. Remember that it sounds like "daaah-dit-daaah-dit-daaah-dit-daaah-dit".

The songs *Michael, Row the Boat Ashore* and *London Bridge is Falling Down* in the previous lesson illustrated how this pattern of notes sounds in songs.

If this isn't clear right now, don't worry. We'll play more songs soon that will make this easy to understand.

Sharps, Flats, and Keys

As well as a time signature, every piece also has a **key signature**. This is the information at the start of a score that tells you what **key** the song is written in. This tells you whether the piece contains **sharps** or **flats**, the half tones that exist between **whole notes**.

Whole notes are the white keys on the piano, while sharps and flats correspond to the black keys.

There are 7 whole notes in the standard scale. In ascending order, from lowest to highest, they are:

C - D - E - F - G - A - B

Sharps and flats are the half tones that fit in between those whole notes.

Right now we're concentrating on learning all the whole notes on your ocarina. We'll address sharps and flats in a future lesson.

Summary

To summarize, this lesson covers only the basics of how to read music. But it's enough for you to read most music scored for ocarina, as well as much written for voice and other instruments.

Don't worry if everything in this lesson is not yet clear. Much of this music notation becomes obvious as you play more songs.

In fact, one of the best ways to learn how to read scores is to see how they encode songs for which you already know the melodies.

So, in the next lesson we'll introduce new songs to learn and practice. Very soon you'll be at the point where you'll be able to read and play most popular melodies on your oc!

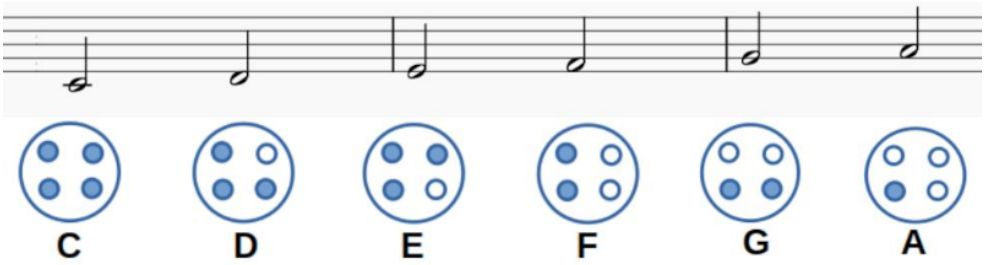
Lesson 9 -- More Songs

This lesson is all about consolidating your gains as you practice new songs.

We won't introduce much new musical notation. What you've already learned means you can read most simple songs. But as we introduce each new song, be sure to match up the elements of the score with how you know the tunes go. That will vastly improve your ability to read sheet music.

As before, we present simple songs you already know, so that you can focus on fingering and playing your ocarina, rather than deciphering complicated scores.

Before we start, here's a review of the notes you've learned so far.
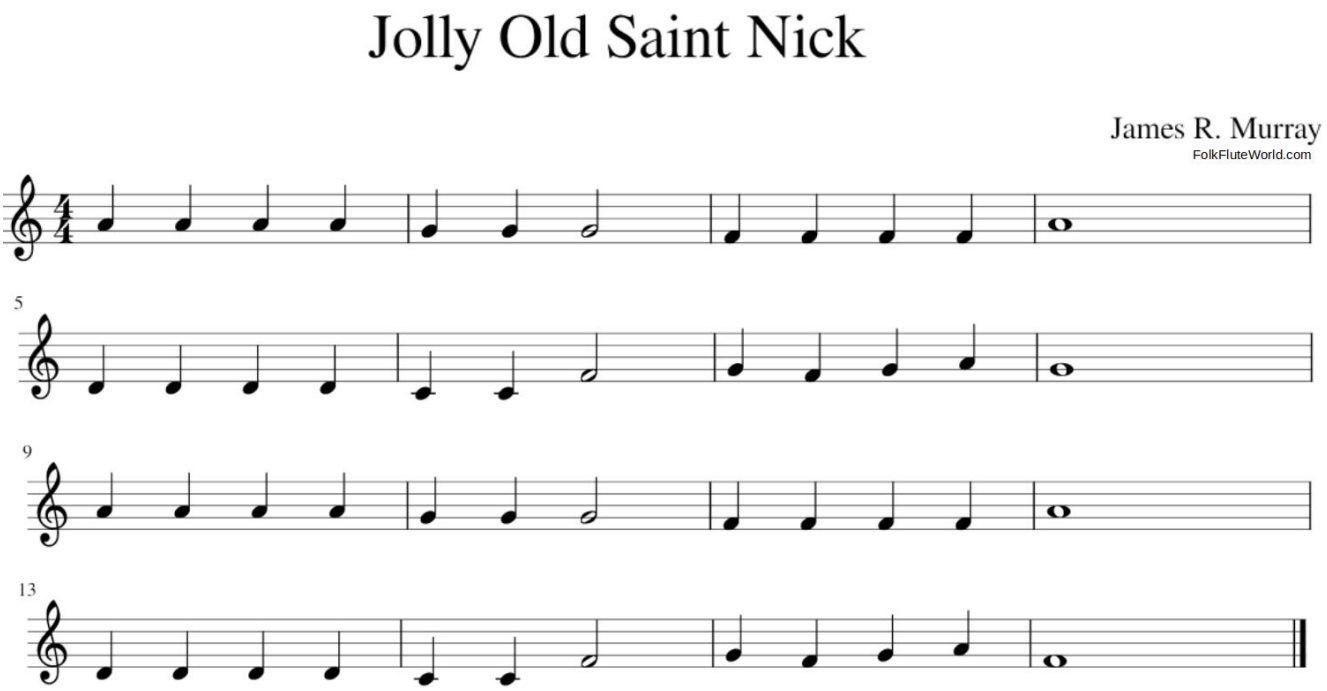


Practice ascending and descending these notes in sequence a few times to refresh your memory of them.

Song: Jolly Old Saint Nick
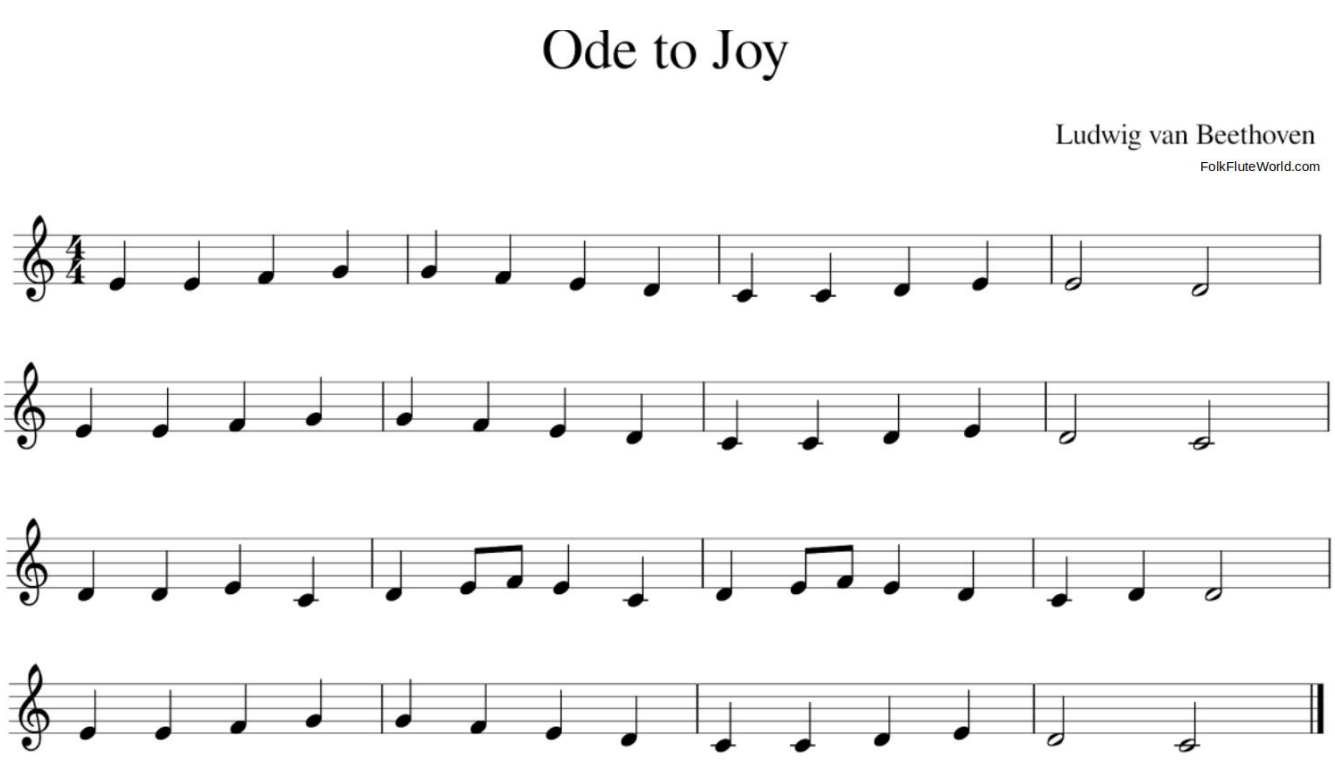
This isn't the best known of Christmas songs, but you'll surely recognize the tune.

It dates from right after the American Civil War. It's one of those tunes you'll want to play slowly to learn how it goes. But after that, set a jaunty pace and enjoy its quick snappy rhythm.



Song: Beethoven's Ode to Joy

This next piece is an adaptation of Ludwig van Beethoven's *Ode to Joy*. It's from the fourth movement of Beethoven's famous *Symphony No. 9 in D Minor*. Even if you don't recognize these song titles, you'll probably recognize the melody.



The timing of this song is simple: it has only quarter and half notes, plus a couple quicker eighth notes. And the tune ranges over only five notes -- from low C to G. Hopefully, you're getting to the point where this song is easy for you to play, once you've familiarized yourself with it.

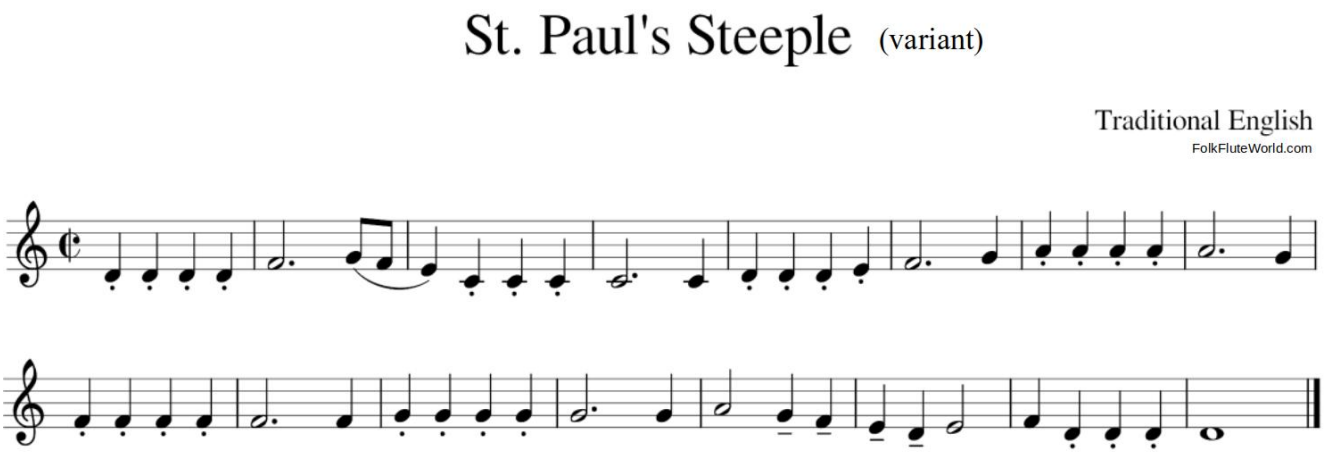
Listen to yourself as you play this song. As you practice it, try to imbue it with beauty. Sing through your ocarina.

Don't just pedantically blow each note. Phrase the notes in such a way that it expresses what you think the composer intended.

These are the first steps to getting beyond mechanically playing notes and evolving into an ocarinist who interprets the music in meaningful fashion.

Song: St Paul's Steeple

Several hundred years old, this song comes in several variants with different choruses. It's often considered a nursery rhyme. Here is one version:



The dots underneath the quarter notes mean to play them **staccato**. That is, short and punchy.

The opposite of staccato for an individual note is **tenuto**. Underscores beneath notes dictate tenuto. Play the tenuto notes as long and continuous.

Play staccato notes as "dit-dit-dit". Play tenuto notes as "laah-laah-laah".

You see staccato notes throughout this tune, and a few tenuto notes towards the end. Many songs rely on this contrast between staccato and tenuto to form interesting contrasts within their melodies.

Song: Frère Jacques

Here's a fun song for which many American schoolchildren learn the French words. It's thought that the song dates back to the 17th century.
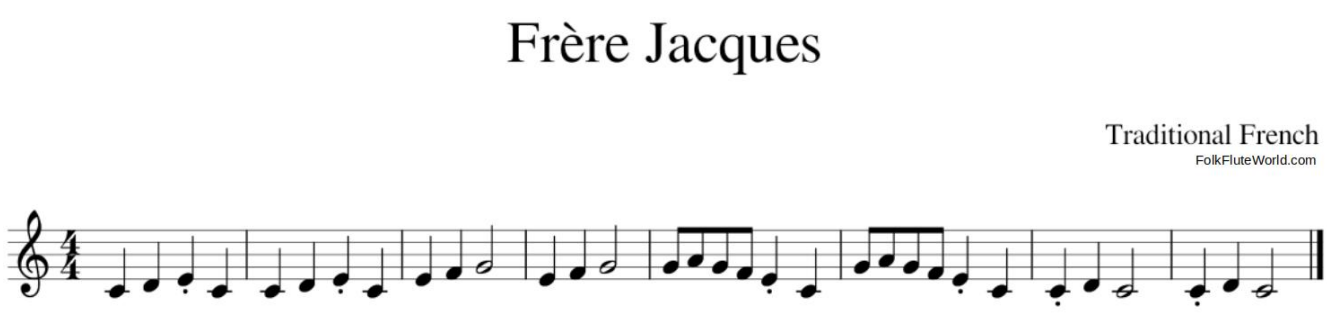
The original French words are humorous. They tell of a monk who has overslept and forgotten to ring the churchbells. The lyrics implore him to arise and do his duty and ring them:

> *Brother Jacques, Brother Jacques,*
> *Are you sleeping? Are you sleeping?*
> *Ring [the bells for] matins! Ring [the bells for] matins!*
> *Ding, ding, dong. Ding, ding, dong.*

Unfortunately, the most popular English translation loses the cute meaning of the French original.

Here is the sheet music. Like the previous tune, it uses dots below notes to indicate staccato.

If you practice to where you can play the song quickly, you'll find the two sequences or **runs** of eighth notes good practice for your dexterity.



In a later lesson, we'll show you how to play this song as a **round** -- a tune where players play different parts of the same song at the same time. *Frère Jacques* is one of the most famous (and fun) rounds of all.

Song: My Bonnie
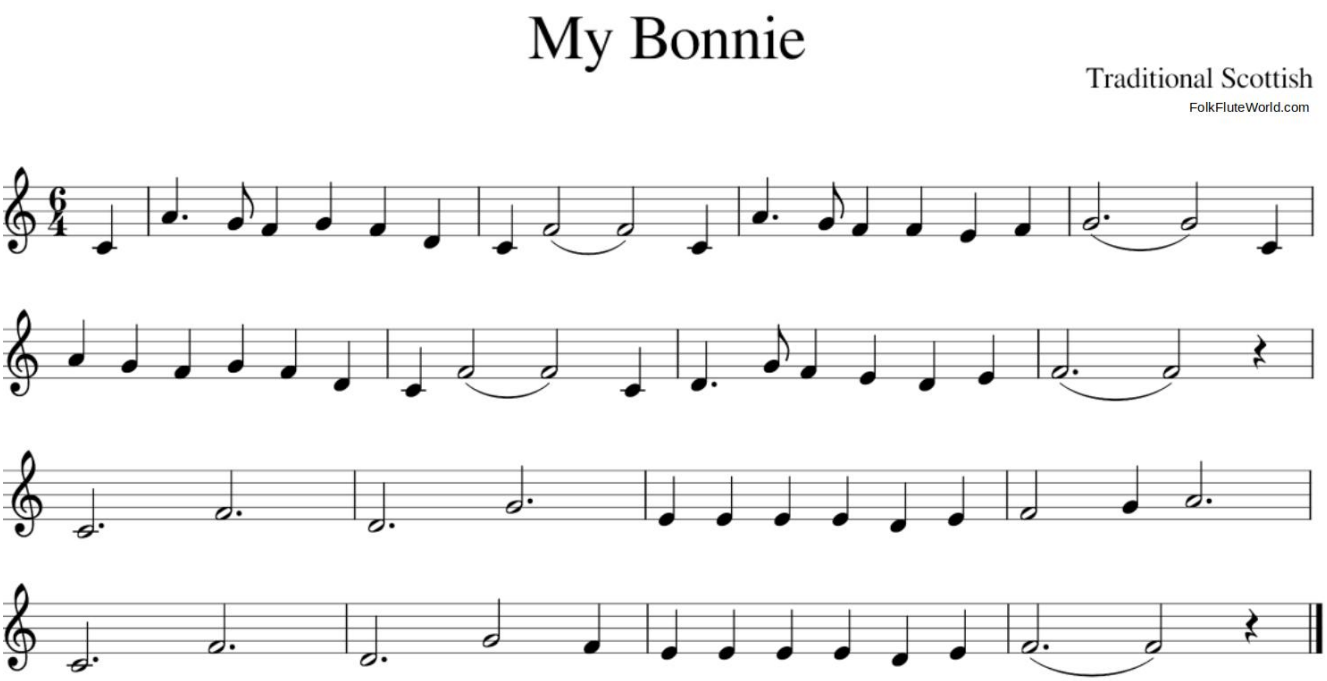
This next song is a traditional Scottish tune you'll undoubtedly recognize. The Beatles recorded a rock n' roll version of it in 1961. It's generally regarded as their first recording session and their first single record.

Their rendition charted as number 5 in Germany, but failed to crack the UK or USA lists.

This song presents a nice solo tune for ocarina, with its combination of movement and extended notes. Try to play the tied (or "slurred") notes with as beautiful a tone as you can, to see how sonorous ocarinas can be. Remember that the ties combine two notes into one. You don't separately tongue the second note.

You'll notice that the time signature is 6/4. Don't let that throw you. It's 6 beats per measure, with each quarter note getting one beat. So you just play with each quarter getting one beat, the same as in most the scores you've played thus far. Remember that dotted half notes each get 3 beats.
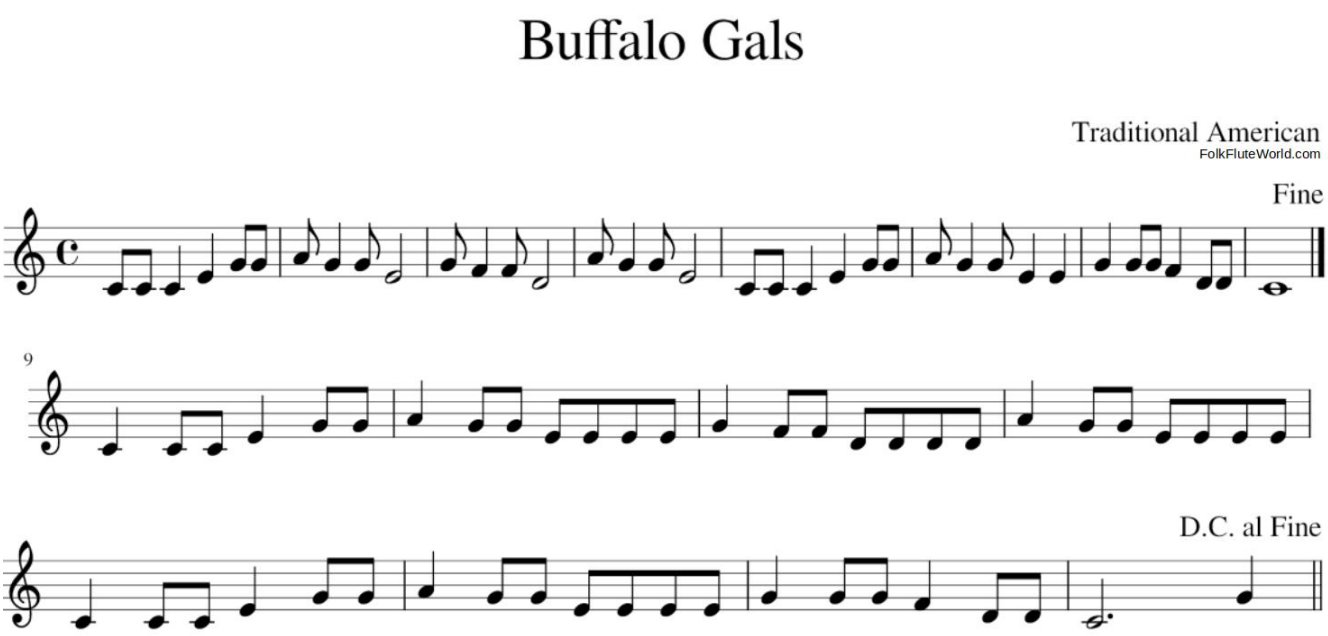
As always, given that you already know how the tune goes, you really don't have to worry about the musical notation. We're just discussing it here to build your knowledge of it.



Song: Buffalo Gals

Here's a fast, snappy song from the early 19th century. Once you comfortable with it, you'll want to play it at a lively pace.

You might recall that this song was featured in the film classic *It's a Wonderful Life* from 1946. George Bailey sings it to his sweetheart, Mary, as they fall in love.



The big "C" at the very start of the score is a synonym for the 4/4 time signature. So just as in 4/4 time, each measure contains 4 beats, and the quarter note gets 1 beat.

Play this score very slowly the first few times through, to get used to the timing. Remember that eighth notes consume half the time of quarter notes. So if a quarter note gets 1 beat, and eighth note gets 1/2 of a beat.

Given its mix of quarter and eighth notes, this is a pretty fast-paced song. It's an exercise in tonguing eighth notes.

You'll notice the instruction **D.C. al Fine** at the end of the piece. That means to return to the start of the score, and to play until you encounter the word **Fine**, which means "End". Thus, you play through the entire piece, return to the start, and play until you reach **Fine** at the end of the first line.

Summary

That wraps it up for now. This is a good practice lesson, so return to it in future sessions until you feel you've thoroughly mastered it. That's the best way to build up your skills.

In the next lesson, we'll take a break from hands-on practice and discuss how to care for your ocarina. Whether it's plastic or ceramic, a little bit of care goes a long way in ensuring that your instrument will last a lifetime.

Lesson 10 -- Caring for Your Ocarina

Ocarinas require very little care. But they do need some care, otherwise they may become unplayable.

This lesson tells you how to care for your oc.

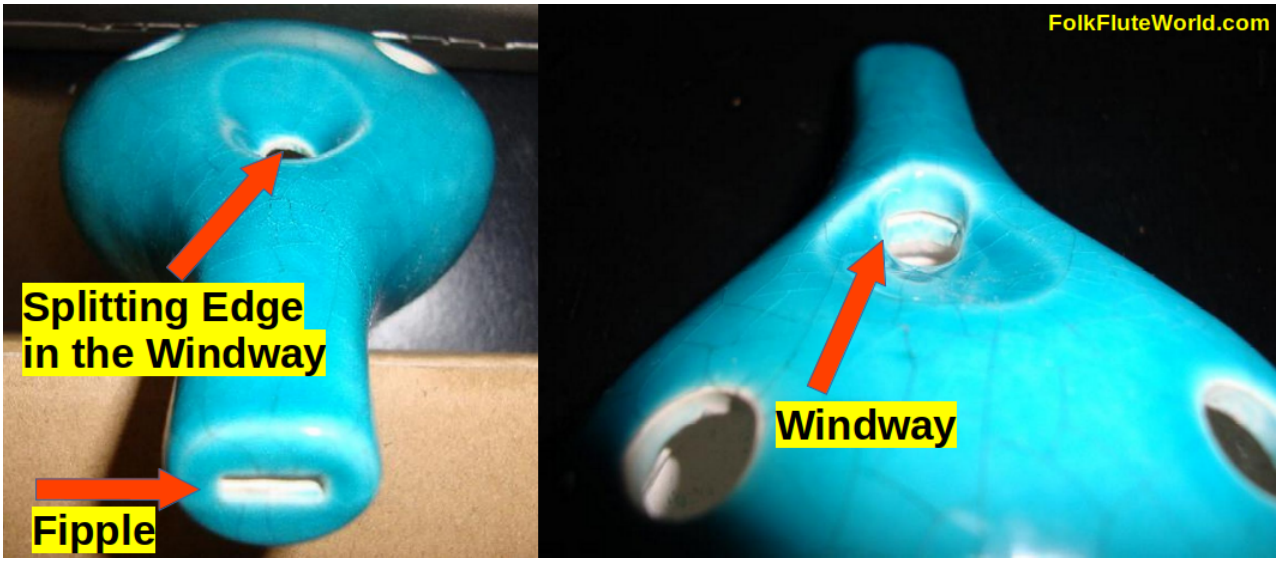
Wetting Out

First up: a phenomenon called **wetting out**.

If you play your flute for a long session, you might notice that notes suddenly start sounding muffled. Instead of true and pure, they sound weak, wobbly, or subdued.

This is because your breath contains moisture. The mouthpiece or fipple of your instrument has a narrow wind passage.

After some play, this windway can become obstructed with the moisture from your breath.



Air Passageways Can Clog Up

You can suck in your spit at intervals as you play to avoid wetting out.

Or, you can blow a very hard, sharp breath into the fipple to see if that blows out the moisture. Or give the instrument a couple good, hard shakes.

Another technique is to dry the windway with Q-tips or some other delicate swab narrow enough to fit the passageway.

Your goal is to reduce or eliminate the moisture that has collected inside the narrow windways of your instrument. Once you've done so, it should be playable again.

Plastic tends to accumulate moisture more quickly than ceramic ocarinas. This is because plastic is completely impervious to water and has no absorption ability. In contrast, earthenware is slightly porous and has at least some absorptive capability.

Avoid Wetting Out

Reduce or avoid wetting out by:

- Try to blow a dry breath
- Don't point the oc downward when you play, so your saliva won't run into it
- Don't "swallow" the mouthpiece, only place your lips on the edge of it

Cleaning

For the same reason as wetting out, your instrument needs periodic cleaning. The moisture within it collects dust and solidifies over time, blocking the windway.

How you go about cleaning your ocarina depends on whether it is plastic or ceramic.

For a plastic ocarina, simply submerge it in warm water and swish it about. Some like to use a very mild detergent like dishwashing liquid. In this case be sure to rinse in clean water afterwards.

Don't immerse a ceramic or clay oc in water unless the manufacturer tells you that this won't harm the instrument. Some ceramics can be damaged by dunking, while it doesn't affect others.

In any case, you can use moist Q-tips, a narrow swab, folded paper, or thin cloth to carefully clean the inside of your clay instrument. Concentrate on the mouthpiece, fipple, and windway... that's where blockage usually occurs.

Don't use alcohol or chemical cleaners unless you specifically know they won't harm your instrument. Never put your oc in a kitchen dishwasher.

Use a microfiber cloth to gently clean the outside. Or wipe it gently with a moistened lint-free cloth.

If you have difficulty hitting the highest or lowest notes on your oc, always ensure it is clean and dry.

Transport

Plastic ocarinas are pretty robust. No special care is required when transporting them.

Ceramic ocs are delicate. Most will shatter if dropped on a hard surface. Or they may chip or nick if bumped by a hard object. Transporting them requires more care.

For this reason, it's a really good idea to keep whatever box your ceramic oc arrived in. Whether that's a nice carrying case or just the outer shipping box, it makes the perfectly sized container for safely and securely transporting your instrument. It's also makes a good storage box.

Be sure to retain any molded plastic holder, padding, or bubble wrap that came with the original box.

Storage

Don't expose your ocarina to temperature extremes. For example, don't leave it in your car on a hot summer's day. And don't store it in your unheated attic over the winter (or in the summer either, if your attic gets hot).

Plastic ocarinas are unaffected by water. Ceramic instruments are a different matter. Unless the vendor advises you otherwise, try to keep your ceramic instrument out of rain. Don't store it in moist or high humidity environments like a damp basement.

Summary

Beginners sometimes become confused as to why their ocarina suddenly stops working. Now you know: it's wetting out. Just eliminate the moisture, and you're ready to play again.

Or maybe you've never cleaned your ocarina, and it won't play at all. Time for a cleaning.

This lesson explained all there is to keeping your ocarina in top shape. Follow this simple advice and your oc will last a lifetime.

That's one of the great benefits to the ocarina. They cost so little yet can last indefinitely with proper care.

In the next lesson we'll introduce the last two notes you need to learn in order to play a full scale. Of course, the lesson comes with several songs to practice these new notes.

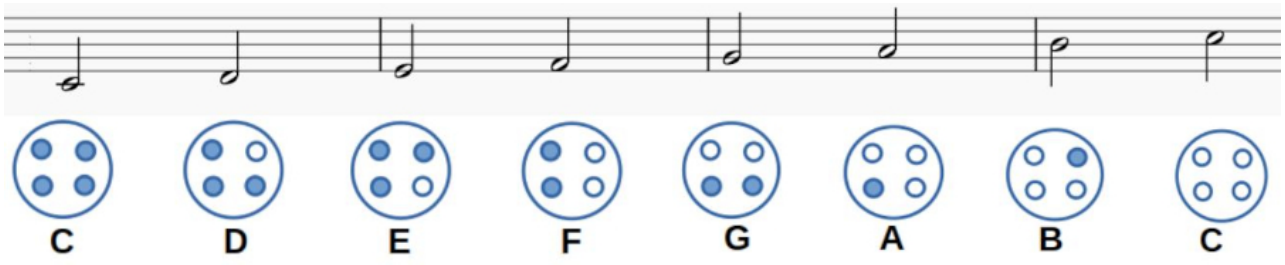
Lesson 11 -- Rounding Out the Scale... and More Songs

Now it's time to learn the final whole notes for the 4 hole pendant ocarina. You'll know its complete scale.

The next notes up the scale are: B and high C.

These eight notes -- from low C to high C -- constitute the complete range of the 4 hole C pendant.

The 6 hole oc extends this range with two more whole notes on the high end with its two thumb holes. (We'll cover those in a later lesson.)



The Complete Scale (for 4 Hole Pendants)

Practice ascending and descending these notes in sequence a few times to refresh your memory of them. Try to memorize B and high C.

The Two Highest Notes -- For 4 Hole Pendants

On some 4 hole ocarinas, you'll notice that these highest notes sound airy. That's because you have all (or nearly all) the holes open in the oc's enclosed sound chamber. It's full of leaks!

On cheaper or lesser quality ocarinas, the highest note might sound excessively airy, harsh, or ill-tuned. Maybe you can't play the highest note at all.

In this case, experiment with shooting your breath very sharply into the instrument. A powerful, directed air steam may enable you to hit and hold the note.

Try tilting the mouthpiece at slightly different angles as you blow. It's not unusual to find that blowing high C requires the instrument be at a very specific angle. Some ocs require sharp breath directed at a particular angle to voice the highest note.

If your highest notes sound out of tune, it could be due to temperature. Make sure your oc is at room temperature and that you're playing in a comfortable room.

Ultimately, some ocs simply can't play their highest note. Or, they won't play it in tune. This is why we urged you to obtain a quality ocarina in Lesson 2. They'll play the highest notes in tune with pleasant tone. With the ocarina's limited range, you really need access to every possible note.

Rising Breath Ocarinas

With most ocarinas, you'll notice that you have to play the lowest couple notes with less breath than the highest. This is natural, given the physics of the instrument. As you ascend the scale and remove your fingers from the tone holes, you create an increasingly leaky vessel. No surprise, then, that the higher notes require more breath pressure than the lower.
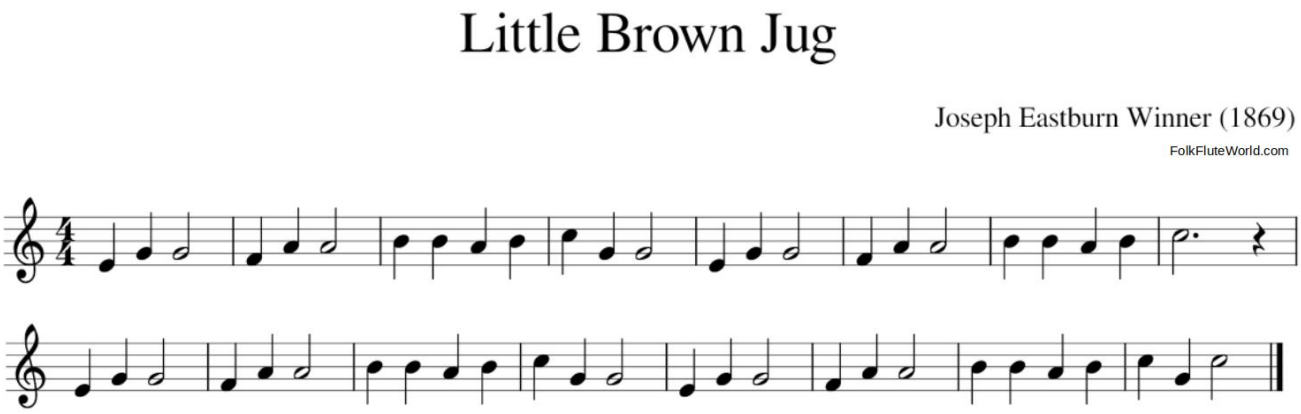
Because of this, most ocs are called **rising breath ocarinas**. It's perfectly normal and the way most ocarinas work. But if you simply can't play the highest note or two after some dedicated experimentation, or they sound harsh or off-key, it may be time to buy a higher quality oc. See Lesson 2 on "Selecting a Pendant" for recommendations.

Song: Little Brown Jug

Let's try a song for practicing B and high C. It's a classic tune from the American Civil War era, written by Joseph Eastburn Winner. He intended it as a drinking song -- so many of the catchiest classics are -- but it ended up slipping into mainstream America as a perennially popular folk song.

Glenn Miller and his Orchestra had one of their earlier hits with a jazzed-up version of this song in 1939. Miller went on to a phenomenal career as "the king of swing" until his untimely death in 1944 at age 40.

Miller's plane went down somewhere over the English Channel in World War II. To this day, it's a mystery as to the cause. Some believe he was shot down by either enemy or friendly fire. Others suggest the most likely explanation is mechanical failure of some kind, such as engine failure. And still others advance weather-related causes, such as the icing of the wings or a frozen carburetor.



There's nothing new in this song in terms of musical notation. But it gives you a good initial work out with B and high C. Practice it several times to become familiar with those notes.

Part of your initiation into the high notes is learning how to hold the ocarina. You'll discover right away it's a bit different when you must leave all top fingering holes open. But that's the point here. Try it several ways and you'll figure out the most stable way to grasp your pendant.

If your ocarina came with a necklace, now is a good time to wear it. So if you fumble or drop your oc, it will only fall onto your chest, instead of all the way to the floor. A plastic oc will usually survive the floor, but ceramics often chip or break.
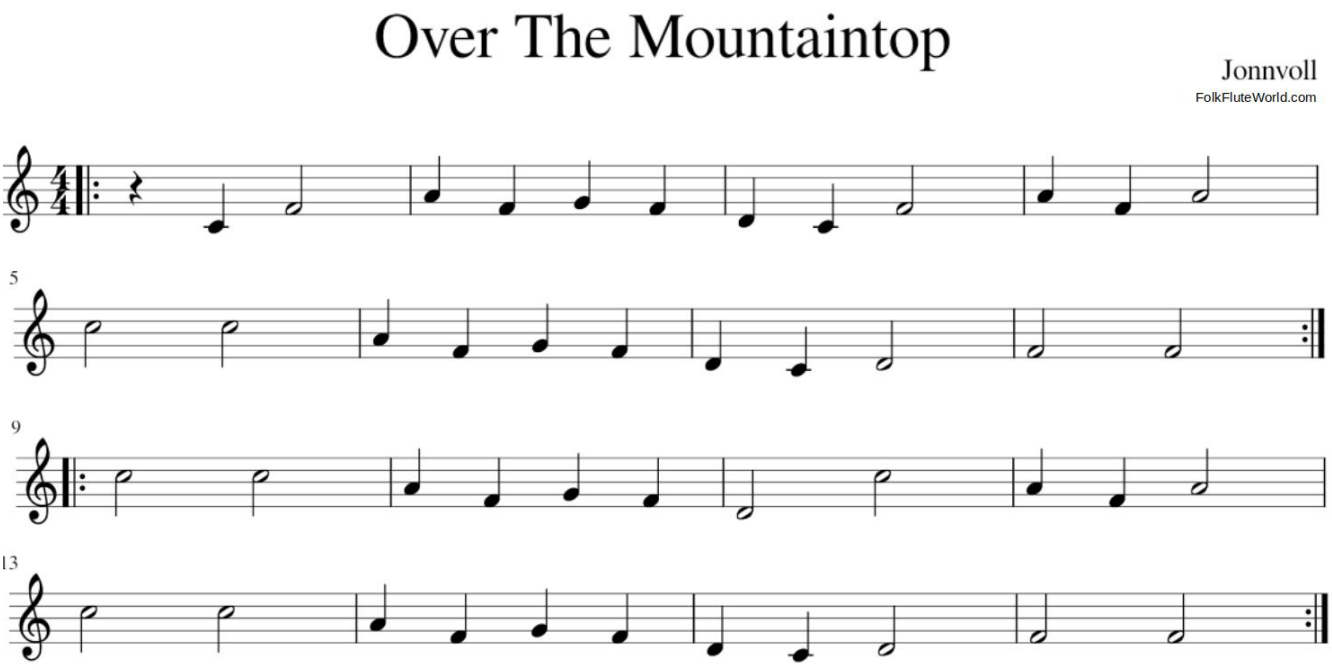
Here's a little test for the quality of your ocarina. Play a low C whole note, then flip up to high C. Do they sound exactly an octave apart? On a lower quality oc the high C may sound slightly flat.

Song: Over the Mountaintop

Here's a simple but beautiful tune. It's from the booklet *Songs of the Ocarina*, an open source compilation of original tunes from The Ocarina Network. It's good practice for playing and holding high C. It spans the entire range of the 4 hole ocarina, from low C to high C.

When playing it, concentrate on those high C's. Make them sound clean and pure if you can, rather than airy or raspy.

It sometimes helps to "attack" the high note with a sharp breath, and then to hold it from there.
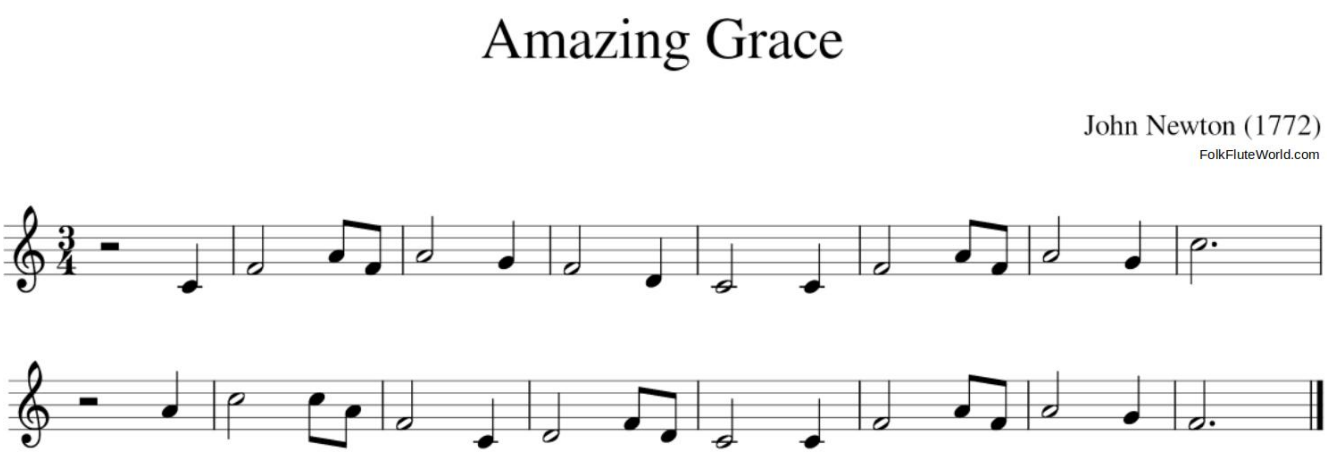


Remember how we talked about **repeat signs** earlier? In this score you see the first two lines in the score grouped as a unit by the enclosing repeat signs. You play through these two lines twice due to the repeat signs.

Following that, you go on to the third and fourth lines. They, too, are enclosed in matching repeat signs. So you play them through twice as well. At that point you stop playing.

Song: Amazing Grace

Next up is a hymn composed by Anglican churchman and poet John Newton in 1779. Mr Newton was, by his own admission, a drunkard and "petty sinner." He intended the lyrics of this song to serve as the spiritual autobiography of his conversion.

This classic tune also spans the 4 hole pendant's range in its entirety from low C to high C.



Song: On Top of Old Smokey

This next song is good exercise in holding notes and making them sound beautiful. Listen to how those long holds sound when you play them. Are you able to make them sing? Don't just mechanically plod through the notes but instead communicate feeling and emotion using the ocarina as your vehicle.

Everyone knows the tune of *Old Smokey*, so it's trivial to decode the timing of the music. Remember that slurs connect two -- or more -- notes as if they were one long note.
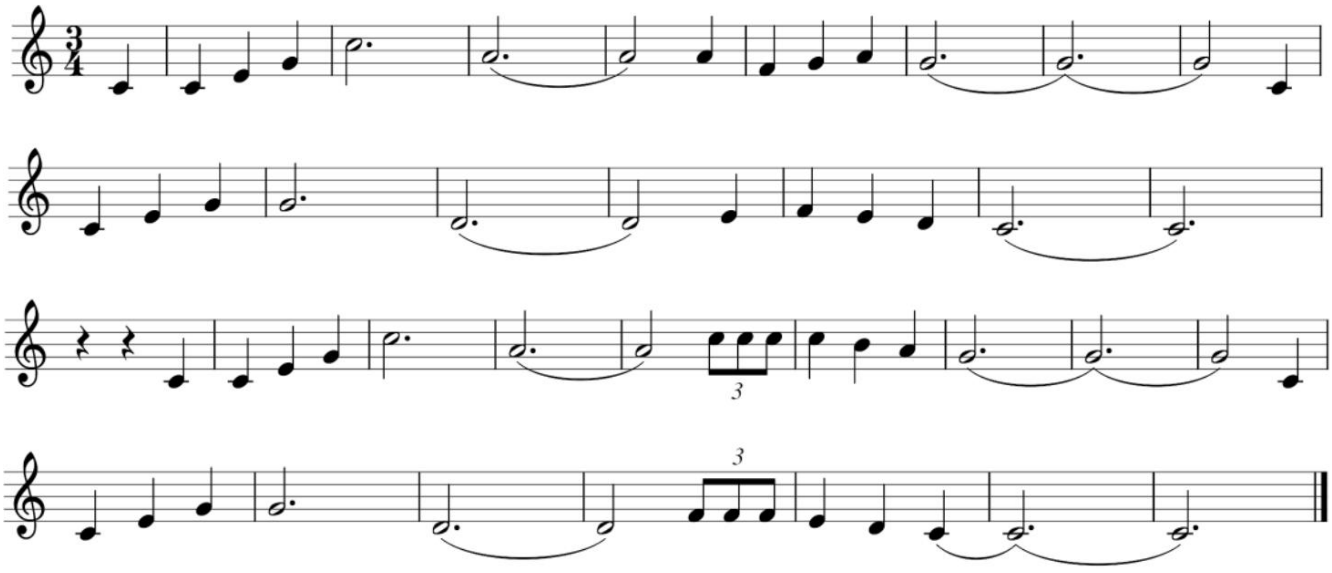
See the **triplets** in lines 3 and 4? Those are three eighth notes connected together with a "3" appearing above. That means to play the three eighth notes in a single beat. So in this song the triplets represent three quick notes sounded within a single beat.

Sing or hum the tune to yourself, and you'll quickly understand how to play those triplets. They sound together as a quick "tat-tat-tat".

On Top of Old Smokey

Traditional Appalachian Folk Song

FolkFluteWorld.com



One other feature of this score deserves mention. Remember the rule that every measure in a score is required to have the same number of beats? And that the **time signature** at the start dictates how many beats are in each measure?

You might have noticed that the first measure in this song has only 1 beat! It's a single quarter note, that low C that starts the song.

You'll run across many songs where the first measure has fewer beats than all other measures in the score. Very often what you'll see is one or two notes that naturally lead into the melody. They're often called **pick up** notes. Or you may hear them called the **lead in**. (Technically, they're termed the **anacrusis**, but no one really calls them that.)

So while every measure in a score is required to have the same number of beats as the time signature requires, you will find that many composers violate this rule in their first measure. A few also ignore the rule in their last measure.

Of course, a composer could pad his first or last measure by including a rest to fulfill the time signature requirements. But in practice, many don't. And so you have this odd phenomenon where all measures in a score are required to have the same number of beats per measure as shown in the time signature -- except for possibly the first and last!

While the number of beats may vary in the first or last measure, **the kind of note assigned a single beat never varies**. In *Old Smokey*, for example, the first measure still assumes that a quarter note gets 1 beat.

The only way the kind of note that gets one beat can vary is if the time signature changes. In later lessons, we'll see an example or two where the time signature changes right in the middle of a song. It's an easy situation to handle and we'll tell you how.

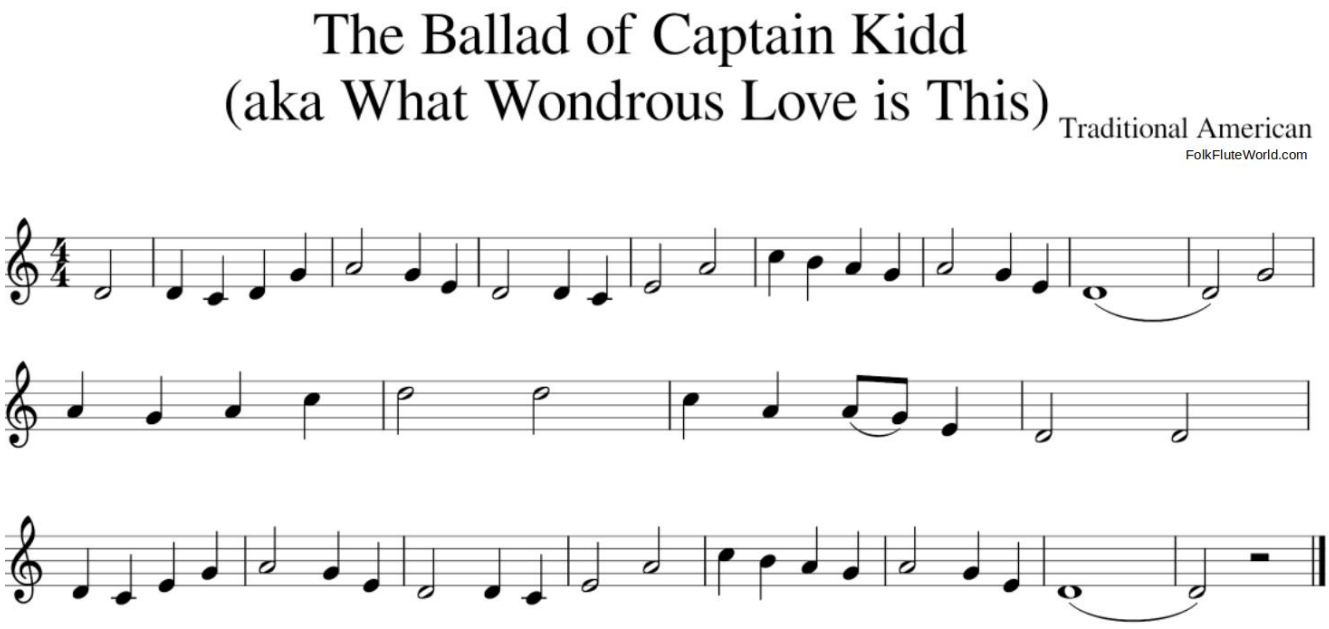
Song: The Ballad of Captain Kidd

Captain William Kidd was a Scottish pirate who looted ships from many nations until his capture and hanging in 1701. This ballad was written on handbills spread in London at the time.

The lyrics tell of a man who "buried his Bible in the sand", and then "looted ships and ran". The song was so popular it instantly spread from England to the American colonies.

During the religious Great Awakening in America in the early 1800s, the song was co-opted and adapted into the Christian hymn, *What a Wondrous Love is This*. Today it's included in the hymnals of several denominations -- minus the original bawdy lyrics, of course!

This song presents a good exercise in climbing and descending the scale. Its timing is pretty easy to decipher, even if you don't know how the tune goes. It's a lovely melody.



How to Improve Your Play

One common beginner mistake is to hesitate after each note.

Your playing will sound much better if you play notes continuously, without "air gaps" between them.

Don't spit out each note individually. Make your notes flow.

Here are a few other quick tips to improve your play:

1. Cover holes completely
2. Don't shade open holes
3. Start each note by gently tonguing it (not solely with your breath)
4. Blow at the proper pressure for each note
5. Play notes in tune
6. Keep your instrument dry and clean

Summary

Having reached this point in this course, you now know all the whole notes of the 4 hole ocarina.

In future lessons, we'll introduce the two most important sharps and flats -- F# and B♭ -- and we'll cover the two extra whole notes playable on the 6 hole ocarina.

And we'll work through many more practice songs.

In this lesson, we urged that you express yourself and your feelings through your ocarina. In the next lesson, we'll discuss specifics of how to do this and techniques that will help.

Lesson 12 --Express Yourself!

To this point, you've learned how to play the scale on your ocarina. You can recognize notes in sheet music and finger them properly. And you can decipher the timing of sheet music well enough to figure out many popular melodies.

Gaining those skills has likely required your full attention.

Now let's shift our focus. How does your ocarina sound when you play? Are the notes beautiful and full? Are they in tune across the scale? When you play a song does it sound natural and melodic, or forced, with plodding tread to keep it in proper timing?

This lesson explores **technique** -- the many aspects of making your ocarina sound as lovely as possible. You want your instrument to become the song itself when you play.

And you want to do that while accurately representing the score.

Let's explore ways to improve your performance through playing tips and techniques.

Blowing Technique

One part of making your ocarina sound optimally is your blowing technique. As you've learned, you need the proper breath pressure to make the instrument sound up to its potential.

The optimal pressure varies by the ocarina. It also varies by the instrument's size, with lower pitched ocs requiring greater breath than higher ones.

And on most ocarinas, breath pressure also varies by the pitch. Lower notes on many pendants require lesser pressure, while higher notes require more.

Some ocs require sharp, directed air pressure to play the top note (or two) in tune.

Mastering breath pressure for your particular ocarina and how it performs across the scale can help you become a better player.

The goal is to voice pure notes and project appealing sound, while staying in tune across the entire scale.

Intonation

Intonation basically means: are you playing in tune? Are you playing the notes at accurate pitches?

There are two parts to this. First off, you need a quality instrument that will play in tune.

As we explained in Lesson 2, ocs are considered folk instruments. Many are made for children. Others are produced for decorative purposes, or as collectibles. Some are just whistles that sound a few random notes. Ocarinas with these design goals often don't play in tune.

And then there are the many ocarinas that play in tune... but maybe not for the highest note. Or for the sharps and flats.

This is why you need a quality ocarina. You can't fix an ill-tuned oc through your play.

Assuming you're playing a quality oc, here are some tips...

Before you play your instrument, ensure that it's at room temperature. A cold instrument may play sharp, while a hot one could sound flat.

And then there is your playing. Most ocarinas require proper breath pressure for each pitch to play in tune. What works best is often specific to the ocarina.

You can adjust the pitch higher (make it sharper) by increasing breath pressure, and lower it (make it flatter) by blowing more softly. Mastering your instrument means knowing how to produce tonally accurate pitches.

How do you know if you're playing in tune? Listen carefully, and you can often tell by ear. If one note sounds out-of-tune relative to others, you'll probably recognize that.

Another method is to use **online tuners** to measure your pitch when you sound notes. Lesson 19 lists online tuners you can use. Or you can download an Android or Apple tuner app for your mobile phone.

When playing by themselves, many ocarinists feel that the absolute pitches of their notes aren't critical. What is important is that the pitches of all notes are accurate **relative to one another**.

Your goal should be to develop the ability to play this way instinctively.

If you play with other musicians, you face a completely different situation. Now your oc can't just be in tune with itself -- it must also sound in tune with the other musicians' instruments. All must sound in tune with one another. If not, cacophony may ensue.

Have you ever watched an opera, or play, or musical that has a live orchestra? Remember how you heard the musicians play what sounded like a few random notes prior to the performance? Well, they were tuning their instruments. Every musician plays a few notes and compares it to his fellows to ensure that all the instruments play compatibly in tune.

You can do this with your fellow ocarinists, too. Play the entire scale, and see if your pitches match theirs.

Orchestral instruments have a big advantage over the ocarina. A concert flute or clarinet or saxophone has a **moveable mouthpiece**. The clarinet player, for example, can push his mouthpiece in a bit to sharpen the instrument, or pull it out a little to play flatter notes.

Unfortunately, you don't have that ability with your oc. It's a one-piece instrument. All you can really do is blow a bit harder to sharpen the tone, or blow more softly to flatten it. And the degree to which you can use that technique is pretty limited.

If you play in ocarina ensembles, one solution is for everyone to play ocs from the same manufacturer. Assuming that maker produces professionally tuned ocarinas, this gives you a better chance of forming an in-tune group.

Tempo

In chapter 7, you played the song *For He's a Jolly Good Fellow* from two different scores. I suggested you first play it slowly, then speed up the tempo until you turned it into a rousing celebratory song.

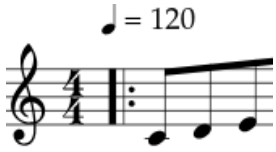
Thus you learned that the speed at which you play a score -- its **tempo** -- can indeed alter the entire character of a tune.

Play *For He's a Jolly Good Fellow* slowly, and it's a pleasant melody. Play it "up tempo" and you turn it into a boisterous group sing-along.

Many composers provide a **musical directive** or instructions right at the start of their score to indicate the speed at which it should be played. Usually in italics, you might see English instructions such as ***fast***, ***slow***, or ***lively***.

Or you might see Italian instructions such as ***lento*** (slowly), ***andante*** (moderately paced), ***allegro*** (fast), or ***presto*** (very fast).

Another way composers indicate tempo is by **beats per minute** (or **BPM**). Relatively slow BPMs are under 60, while fast are over 120. This example indicates 120 beats per minute, where each quarter note gets 1 beat:



In the absence of direction, it's up to you to determine how slowly or quickly to play a song. If the song is familiar, you'll instinctively know how to play it.

If not, you might experiment with several different tempos to discover which best fits the tune.

Phrasing

Measures group notes into equal-sized units of time. A **musical phrase** is harder to define. It's a set of measures that fit together in such a way as to a create meaningful group.

Musical phrases result from the interplay between melody, rhythm, harmony, dynamics, and other characteristics.
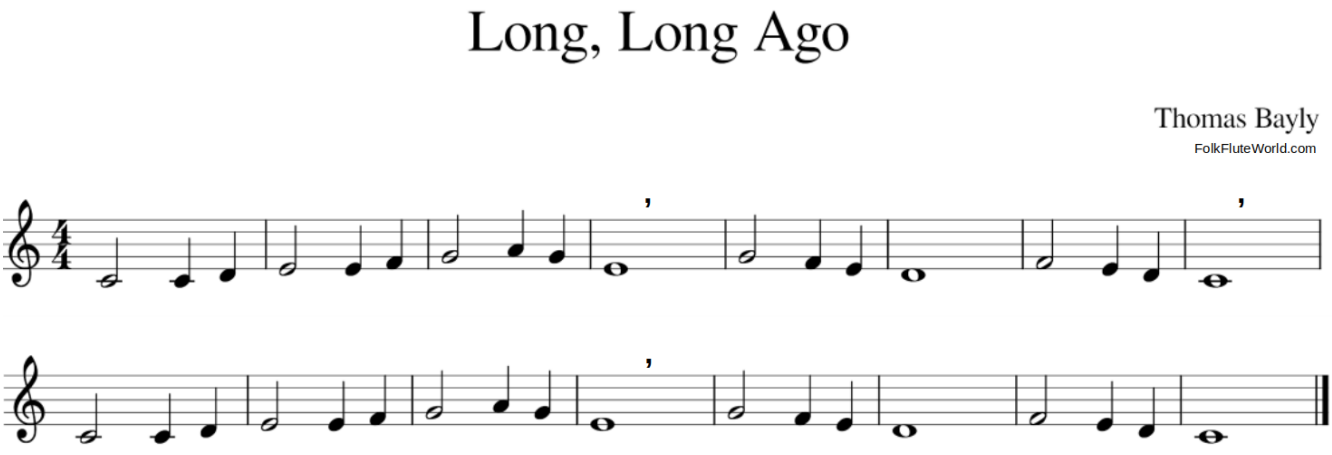
Phrasing refers to how you group measures into musical phrases.

Oftentimes the phrasing of a song is obvious. At other times, phrasing may be more subtle or even open to interpretation.

Remember how we discussed the topic *"When Do You Breathe?"* in chapter 7? Breath control is one important aspect of phrasing.

We offered scores for the song *Long, Long Ago* both without and with breath marks. The latter is the composer's effort to make the song's phrasing explicit.

Here is the version with the breath marks:



Now, what would happen if you were to breathe at the end of every two measures, instead of every four? Try it. You'll find that the melody becomes choppy. So you see how important breath control can be to good phrasing.

When composers include breath marks in their compositions, they have given you important direction in how they view the phrasing of their song. You can often interpret the breath marks as **phrase marks**.

Other musical symbols can indicate phrasing as well. For example, the double line or **bar lines** at the end of scores indicate the end of the score. They can also occur within the score to indicate the end of a phrase or a phrase grouping called a **cadence**.

Slurs and ties can indicate phrasing, too, as can **dynamics** (changes in volume or loudness).

The bottom line is that some scores give you explicit direction in phrasing through such indicators as breath marks, bar lines, slurring, dynamics, and other features.

At other times, you'll be on your own. Often this is because the composer considers the phrasing self-evident. If it's not, it often pays to experiment and see what sounds best, just as you might with the tempo.

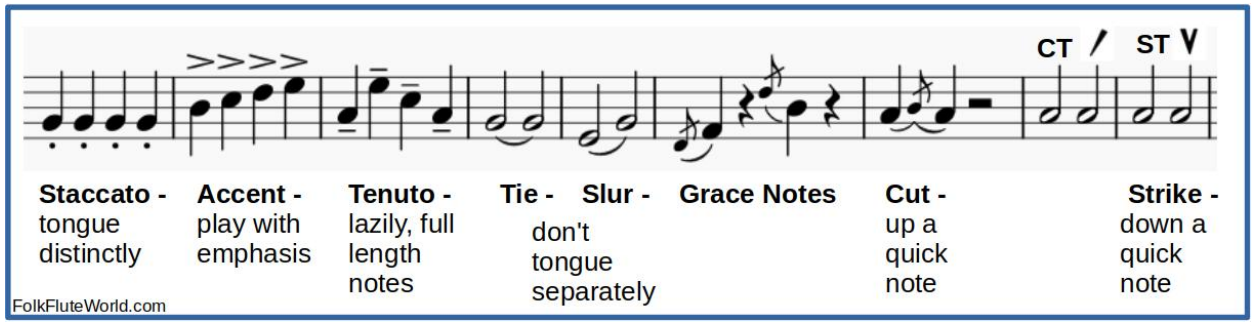
Articulation and Ornamental Effects

Articulation refers to how your start and terminate a note.

You could lead gently into a note by tonguing it delicately with a "lu". Or you could sound the note more definitely with a "du". Or give it a noticeable start with a "tu", or really attack it with a sharp "tee". There's quite a range of possibilities and each gives your sound a different quality.

Ending a note similarly presents a range of possibilities. They range from very sharply terminating a note to ending it gently, all the way to slurring notes together such that they sound as one.

Here are a few musical symbols you'll encounter that are intended to direct your articulation.



A dot above (or below) a note means to very distinctly tongue it. That's **staccato**.

A line in the same position means to extend a note for its full value. **Tenuto** is the opposite of staccato.

You might also see a composer's note to play **legato.** That means to play notes smoothly and extended. Legato blends notes into one another while tenuto gently but separately articulates them. Some composers indicate legato by slurring the notes together.

An **accent mark** indicates emphasis. Like staccato and tenuto, the indicators may appear either above or below the affected note.

A curved line linking two notes -- a **tie** or **slur** -- means to play the notes as it they were combined together into one. If the notes are different, seamlessly glide from the first tone into the second. Don't separately tongue the second note.

Often you'll see slurs that tie two notes together. Other times you'll see them tie entire sequences of notes together. (This is one way composers can indicate phrasing.)

Some musicians distinguish between ties and slurs, with ties being between two notes of the same pitch, and slurs being between notes of different pitches. Others use these two terms interchangeably.

A **grace note** is a very quick first note leading into a more sustained second note. The grace note is often one note higher or lower than the dominant or target note. Grace notes are presented in smaller typeface to indicate their very quick nature.

A grace note is typically a single note, but sometimes you'll see two together.

You may also hear the terms **cut** and **strike** (or **tap**). These involve playing a sustained note, then playing a very quick note that is either higher (a cut) or lower (a strike), and going back to the original note. The cut or strike note is played as quickly as possible.

Cuts and strikes are especially popular in folk music from the British Isles. You frequently encounter them in tin whistle scores. You'll also see **rolls** that combine a cut and a strike in sequence.

Unfortunately, there is no standardized way to represent them in scores. The figure shows several.

Ocarinas are particularly adept at an effect called **glissando**. It's also known as a **slide**. This is where you slide from one note to another with a constant change in pitch. You can accomplish this by gradually sliding your finger on to or off of a tone hole. Or, change your breath pressure at a constant rate.

You can even combine both techniques. Not many instruments can play glissando as well as ocarinas.

Sometimes you may hear about **bending** notes. That simply means changing your breath pressure to gradually alter a pitch in order to "bend" it.

Ocs can **fade** notes, too. That's where your breath falls off until the note disappears.

Ocarinas support other special effects unavailable to most woodwinds. Examples include rapidly tonguing the mouthpiece, humming or buzzing through it, and tongue clicking for percussive effects.

To sum up, there's a whole world of **ornamental effects** available to the ocarinist. We've only introduced a few of the most common here.

Musical Expression

So far we've discussed the **tempo** of a piece -- the pace or speed at which you play it.

We also discussed **articulation**, and how you start and terminate individual notes. Staccato, tenuto, legato, and accent marks all affect how you play notes.

And then there are **ties** and **slurs**, which bind notes together without individual tonguing.

What all this adds up to is this: **music is interpretive**.

If you mechanistically plod through a score, you may technically play it accurately. But you might miss the emotions the composer meant to convey. The result is likely to sound pendantic rather than beautiful or inspiring.

To achieve a high level of play -- to really emote a score -- you must interpret it.

When you first play a piece, concentrate on playing the proper notes with the proper timing. Ensure you accurately play what is written.

But as you start to really understand the composition, try altering it ever so slightly to express the emotions the composer intends. That can elevate your play to a whole new level.

If someone hears you play, they'll immediately notice whether you're playing mechanistically or with true feeling.

You might try recording your playing, and then playing it back and listening to it. You can identify areas for improvement, or learn about aspects of your performance that you can't while playing.

Dynamics

Dynamics refers to the relative loudness with which you play notes and musical phrases.

In a score, you may see English or Italian instructions to play a passage loudly or softly.
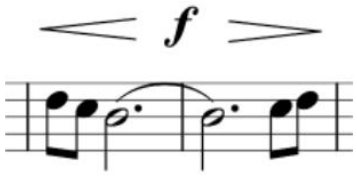
You may also see these abbreviations. As listed here, they range from "play extremely softly" to "play REALLY loud":

ppp => ***pp*** => ***mp*** => ***mf*** => ***f*** => ***ff*** => ***fff***

The instruction **Crescendo** means to increase volume while playing a passage. **Decrescendo** and **diminuendo** mean to play a passage more and more softly.

Crescendo is often indicated by an elongated sign to increase volume (<), while descrescendo is denoted by the opposite sign (>).

This diagram instructs the musician to increase volume to loud (***f***), then to taper off to the volume at which he started the phrase.
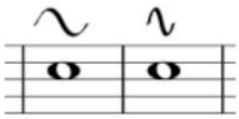


Crescendo to loud, then decrescendo

The physical design of ocarinas limits the dynamics available to you. Play too loudly, and your ocarina will sound sharp. Play too softly, and it plays flat. This forces you to master the art of responsive dynamics within a constrained range.

In upcoming practice songs we'll point out when we encounter these dynamics in the sheet music.

Vibrato



Vibrato

Ever heard how a professional singer puts in a tiny bit of waver when they sing a long note? That's called **vibrato**. A minute bit of wobble or pulsation makes a long-held note sound more appealing.

The above diagram shows a couple ways to indicate vibrato in a score. Most scores leave it up to the musician as to when and whether to apply vibrato.

To become a really good ocarina player you need to learn vibrato. One proven way to learn is to play an exaggerated vibrato by holding a note and consciously varying air pressure into your oc. Then as you get used to this, you can tone down the vibrato to a more natural sounding level.

You'll find that learning vibrato takes a bit of practice. But if you put in the effort, you'll be rewarded with a more expressive, interesting sound. Long notes assume new character with a fine vibrato.

Remember that you can vary both the **speed** and **depth** of your vibrato. As you learn, experiment a bit to discover what sounds best. Most players start with an exaggerated vibrato, and then enhance the effect by toning it down as they become more skilled.

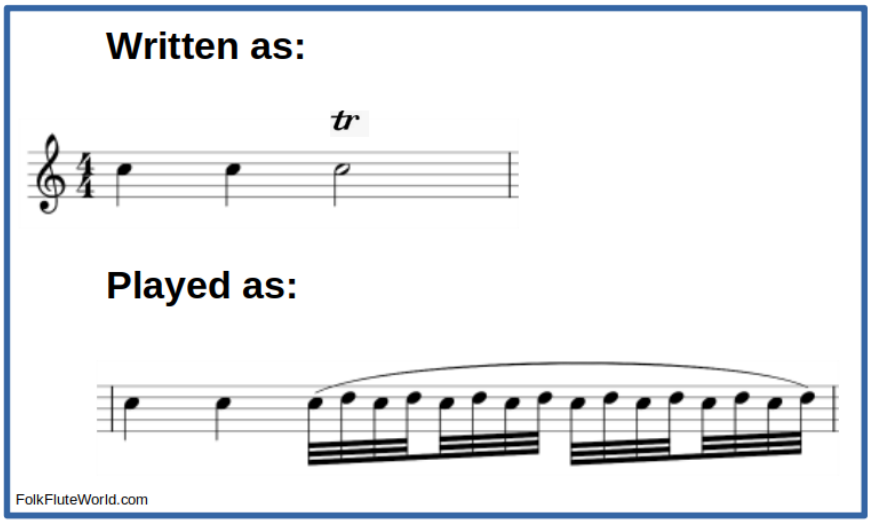
If you need help learning vibrato, just search on the web for how to play vibrato with a flute. (You do it the same way with a concert flute as you do with an ocarina.) Several websites will give you detailed advice, including exercises you can try.

Trills

A **trill** is where a player goes back and forth between two notes as quickly as possible. It's indicated by the letters ***tr*** above a note.

The first line in this diagram shows how a trill is indicated in a score.

The second line shows how it is played by the musician.



Note that trilled notes are not separately tongued. They're too rapid to tongue. That's what the slur indicates in the figure.

There's an entire science behind trilling that goes into what the two notes in the trill should be, how rapid the alternation should be, and more.

For most of us, a trill is like the diagram shows -- a quick, simple alternation between two notes either a half or whole tone apart.

Listen to Yourself!

The most important action you can take to improve your playing -- by far -- is simply to **listen to yourself**.

That sounds obvious, but many of us forget to do it.

When you first play a new song, it's natural that you focus all your attention on the notes in the score, their timing, and how you finger them on your ocarina.

Practice the piece sufficiently to get beyond that. Get comfortable enough with the score that you can actually listen to yourself as you play. This is the best route to improving how you sound.

Or try recording your play. You can use either a recording device, a mobile phone, or your computer for this. Then you can play back the recording and listen to yourself without the distraction of playing.

Based on what you hear, you can make minor adjustments in blowing technique, intonation, tempo, phrasing, articulation, dynamics, vibrato, or ornamental effects.

Remember that you're singing through your ocarina. It's your form of personal expression. Let your emotions emerge and express them through the beautiful sounds you create.

Summary

There is much more to how to express yourself through your ocarina than this short lesson can possibly convey. Nevertheless, we discussed key aspects of how you can improve your performance. We described specific techniques to enhance play.

In the next lesson, we'll practice more tunes that utilize the full range of notes you can play on the instrument. The goal is for you to become fully fluent across the scale.

You can also use upcoming songs as vehicles to experiment with and practice some of the musical techniques we've discussed in this chapter.

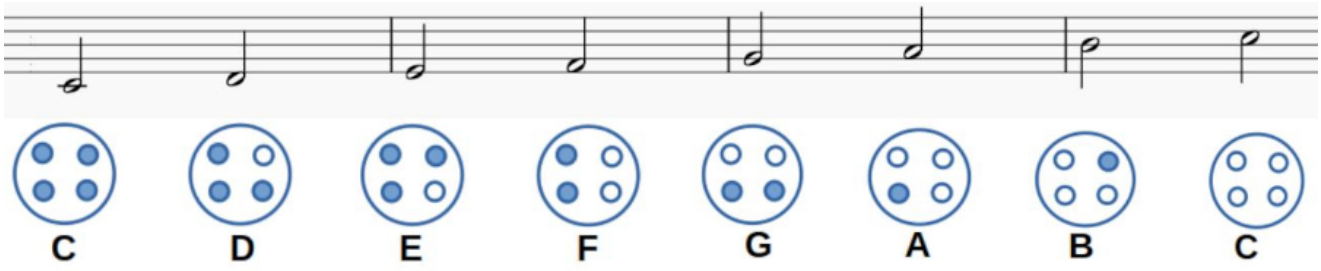
Lesson 13 -- Practicing the Scale

In this lesson we'll practice more tunes that range across the entire scale of the 4 hole ocarina, from low C to high C.

The goal is simply to give you more practice at playing all the whole notes at your disposal.

So that you expand your ability to read sheet music, we'll continue to explain musical notation along the way.

Before we start, you might want to refresh your memory of all the notes. Play up and down the scale several times to refresh your memory:



The Complete Whole-Note Scale (for 4 Hole Pendants)

Song: Just As I Am
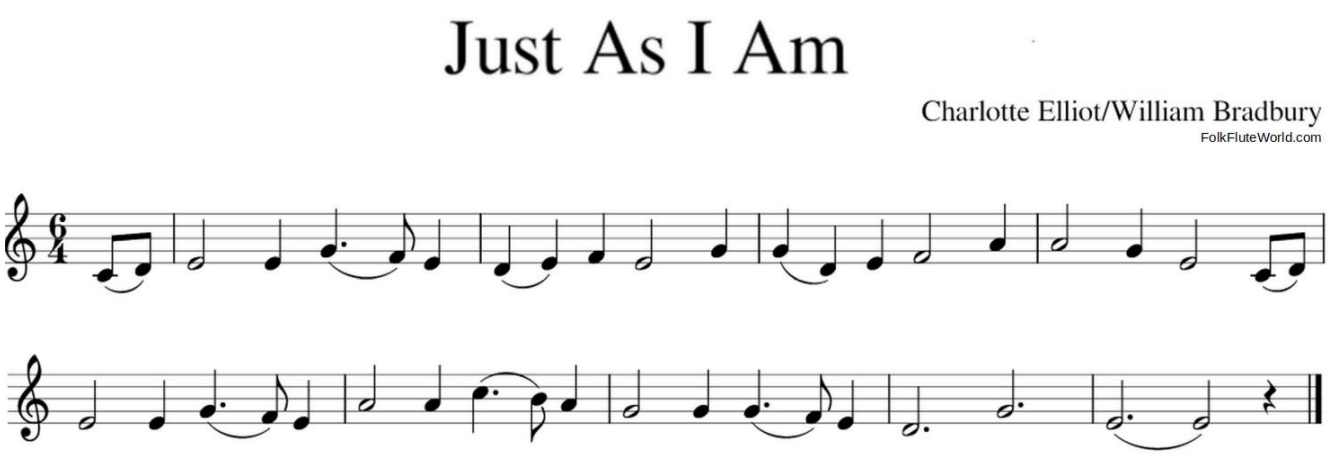
Let's start with a melodic hymn that has been successfully recorded by many artists, most memorably by country singer Johnny Cash.

It's a good warm-up for your timing. It presents eighth, quarter, and half notes. Remember that when notes are slurred together, you play them without separately tonguing them.

The piece also contains dotted quarter and dotted half notes. **The rule is that any dotted note is equal to its normal length plus half of its normal length.** So if we assume that a quarter note gets 1 beat, that means that a dotted quarter note gets 1 and 1/2 beats. A dotted half note would consume 3 beats.

How about that last measure in the song? It tells you to play a dotted half note plus a half note, slurred together. Assuming each quarter note gets 1 beat, a dotted half note consumes 3 beats, and a regular half note is 2 beats. So you end the song on an E that extends for 3 + 2, or 5 beats in total.

The time signature of 6/4 means that you have 6 beats per measure, and each quarter note gets one beat. That's no different from all the 4/4 time songs we've been playing... except that each measure contains 6 beats instead of 4.
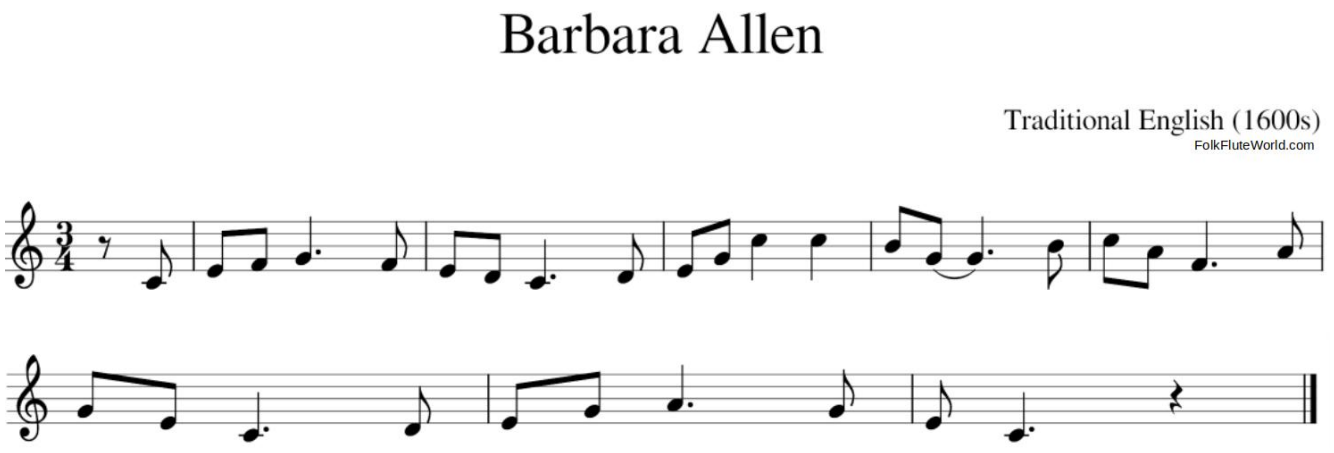


Song: Barbara Allen

This famous dance tune goes back four hundred years. In the 1950s film version of *The Christmas Carol* they used the song for the party scene.

It's good practice for eighth notes. It also gets you more familiar with the common "dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note" combination. Recall that it's played as "daah-dit", with the quarter note extending to one-and-a-half beats, and the immediately following eighth note being quick.

This song also gives you more exercise with B and high C notes:



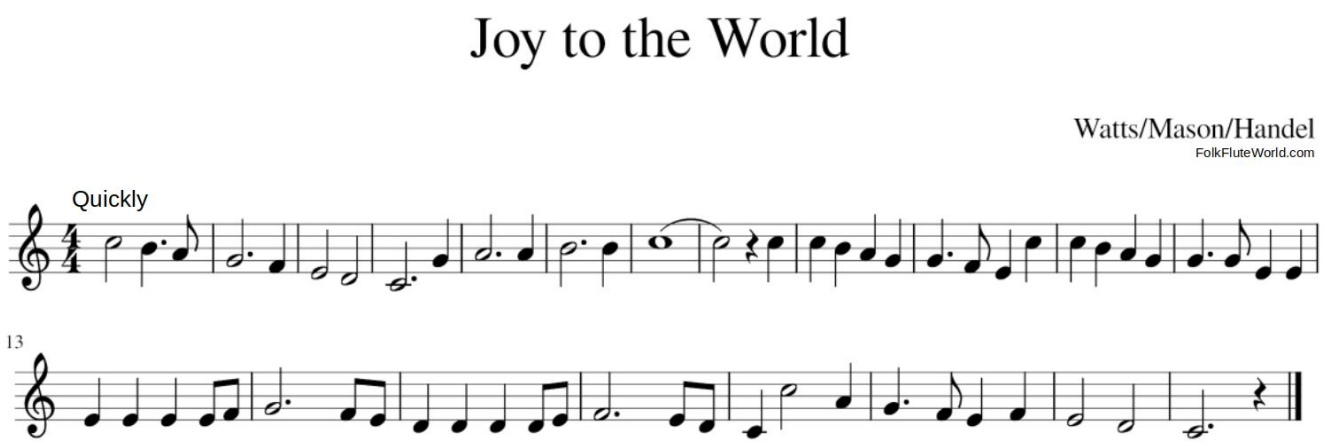
Song: Joy to the World

This song is probably the most widely published Christmas carol in the world. The score is an arrangement of a melody attributed to George Frideric Handel.

Like many Christmas songs, it originally started life as a hymn. Through the efforts of three contributors, it eventually reached its present form and achieved universal acclaim.

We've included this song because it spans the range of an entire octave, from high C to low C. Try playing it slowly at first. Then speed it up as you get comfortable with the fingering. This song is a great way to practice the scale.

In a later lesson we'll show you how to play this song with an ocarinist partner in a duet.



Song: Assam
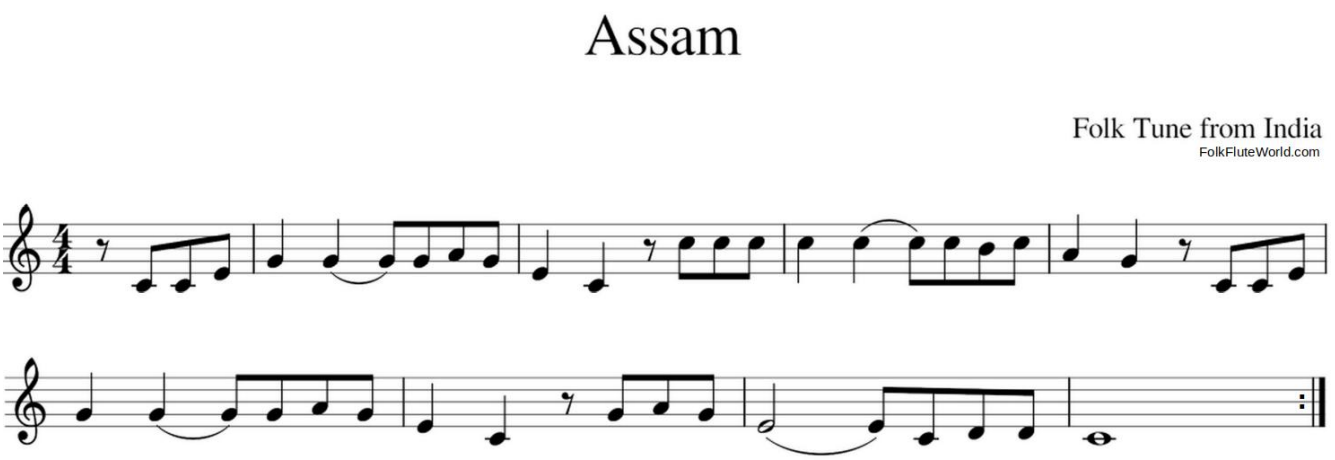
Here's a world-renowned folk melody from Assam state in eastern India. It will exercise your fingering across the scale.

It also gives you a chance to figure out new timing. For example, you see **eighth note rests** in measures 1, 3, 5, and 7. These brief rests last only the length of an eighth note. They make ideal points in which to take a breath without disturbing the song's melodic flow.

You also see several ties in this song. Remember that ties bind two notes together as if they were one. When the notes are the same pitch, it's as if you play one long note consuming the time of both.
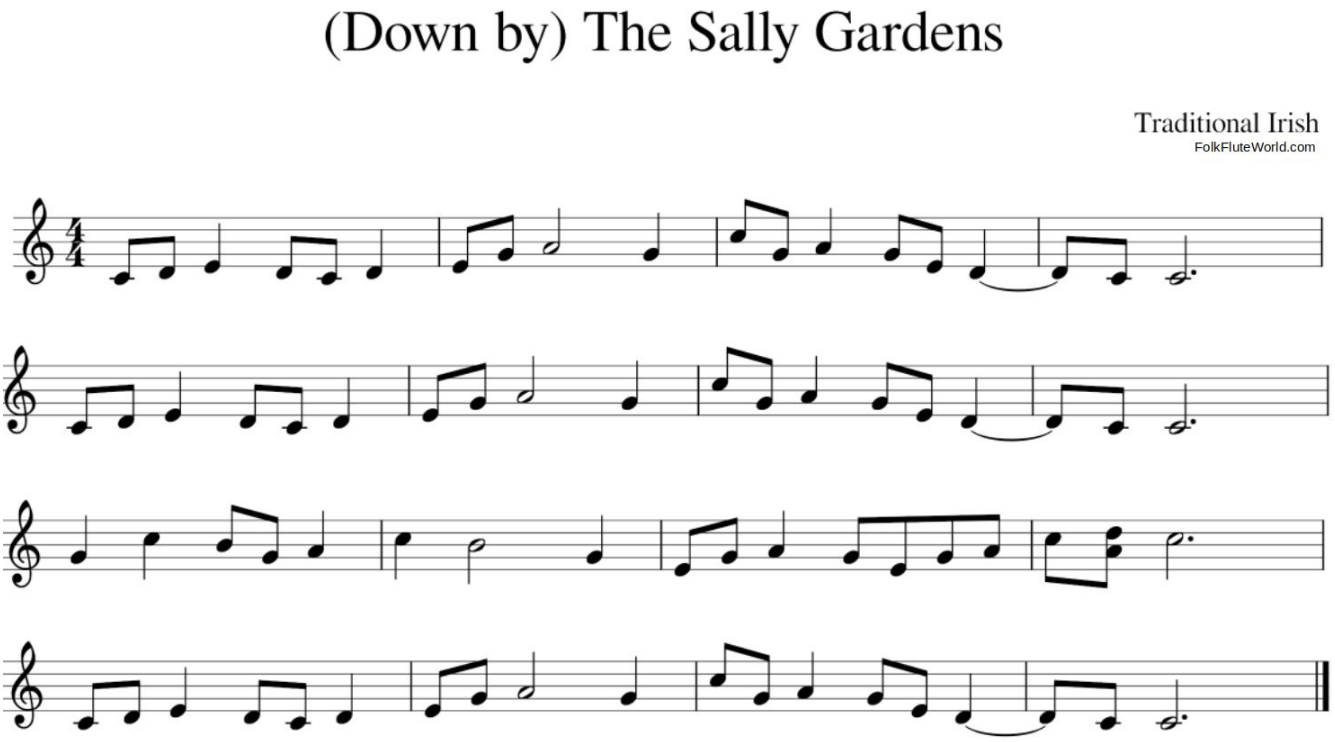
If the slurred notes are different pitches, you want to seamlessly slide from one into the other. Don't use your tongue to transition between slurred notes.

All the ties in this piece connect but two notes. But slurs can include a whole series of notes if desired.



Song: Down By the Sally Gardens

Here's a traditional Irish melody that's widely played in pubs today. If you like Irish and Celtic tunes, there are huge libraries of free sheet music for them on the web. We'll show you where to access them in a later lesson.



There is an important feature to explain in this song. Notice the **double stemmed note** that occurs in the last measure of the third line.

A single vertical **stem** contains two notes -- both high D and A. What's the meaning of this?

If you're playing an instrument that can play **chords** -- groups of notes that are played at the same time -- then double notes like this mean to play both notes at once. Instruments that can play chords include pianos and guitars.

But what if you're playing an ocarina, an instrument that can only play one note at a time? In this case, two notes on a single stem mean "pick one to play".

In this specific case, the two notes on the same stem are A and high D. A 4 hole ocarina can not play high D, it's out of range. A 6 hole oc can play this note because it can reach two notes higher than the 4 hole oc.

So the intent of this **double note** in ocarina music is clear. You pick one of the two notes to play. If you have a 4 hole oc, it must be the lower note. The higher note is provided for those who can play it, with their 6 hole ocarinas. (We'll cover the highest notes for the 6 hole ocarina in an upcoming lesson.)

Inspect this entire score, and you'll find that the higher tone in this single double-stemmed note is the only one in the entire score that is out of range for a 4 hole oc. Thus, double-stemming is a clever device to make this song playable on 4 hole ocarinas.

We'll use double-stemmed notes in future songs so that you can play them on either 4 or 6 hole ocarinas.

Summary

Whew! You made it to the end.

Be sure to go back and replay these songs until you feel you've mastered them. It will take a few sessions, but it will pay off as you become ever more skilled.

Remember, it's not a race to get to the end of this book. The book is only a learning device. Use it at whatever pace makes you feel comfortable, and helps you learn best.

Let's take a break from practicing by taking a brief quiz. This self test will enable you to judge how well you're absorbing the material, plus it gives you a chance to identify and fill in any gaps in your knowledge.

Self Test #1

You've learned quite a lot to this point in this course. How about taking this brief self-test?

It's a quick, fun way to see how well you're absorbing the material. For any questions you miss, you'll be able to learn more by reading the explanations for the correct answers.

For each question, select the **best** answer. Record your answers on a piece of paper or in an online notepad.

Correct answers with explanations appear in the appendices near the end of this book.

1. What are the three kinds of ocarinas?

    A. Pendant, Seedpod, and Transverse
    B. Pendant, Seedpod, and Inline
    C. Seedpod, Transverse, and Inline
    D. Seedpod, Submarine, and Sweet Potato
    E. None of the above

2. What is one advantage of a 6 hole pendant over a 4 hole pendant?

    A. 6 hole pendants have an easier fingering system
    B. 6 hole pendants play two more lower notes
    C. 6 hole pendants sound better
    D. 6 hole pendants play two more higher notes

3. Which of the following is NOT an advantage of plastic pendants over ceramic pendants?

    A. They don't break as easily when you drop them
    B. They're usually less expensive than equivalent ceramic pendants
    C. They sound better
    D. They're easy to clean by submerging them in water

4. What role do your two smallest "pinky" fingers have when playing a seedpod?

A. Use them to cover tone holes
B. Use them for trills
C. They have no role other than if they're useful for holding the ocarina
D. They're used to play sharps and flats

5. What's the advantage to tabbed notation?

A. It visually shows you how to finger each note
B. It tells you the timing of the notes
C. It's used for many other instruments as well as ocarinas
D. It always comes with the lyrics

6. What's the proper order of these notes, from highest to lowest?

A. low C, D, E, F, G, A
B. A, G, F, E, C, low C
C. A, G, F, E, D, low C
D. low C, D, E, F, A

7. How many eighth notes could be played in the time of one half note?

A. 1
B. 2
C. 4
D. 6

8. What's the difference between 3/4 and 4/4 time?

A. 3/4 time has three notes per measure
B. 3/4 time has three beats per measure
C. 3/4 time is 3/4 faster than 4/4 time
D. 4/4 time is faster

9. What does the denominator in a time signature tell you?

A. How many beats there are per measure
B. Whether there are sharps or flats in the score

C. Whether the score is a waltz, march, or other kind of song
D. Which kind of note gets 1 beat

10. One whole note consumes the same amount of time as how many sixteenth notes?

A. 4
B. 8
C. 12
D. 16

11. Which note is this?



A. B
B. A
C. G
D. F

12. For how long do you play a dotted note?

A. For 2 beats
B. For double its normal length
C. For 1 and 1/2 times its normal length
D. For the same amount of time as two quarter notes

13. If you blow a note too hard, what happens?

A. It sounds flat
B. It sounds sharp
C. It sounds exactly one note above its normal pitch
D. It sounds exactly one note below its normal pitch

14. You've been playing awhile, and suddenly your pendant starts sounding muffled or garbled. What should you do?

A. Blow harder
B. Blow softer
C. Submerge your ocarina in cold water
D. Remove any moisture from within the ocarina

15. Why might you keep the box in which your ceramic ocarina was shipped to you?

A. It makes a nice keepsake
B. It could be useful to store or transport the ocarina later
C. You can't play it without the box
D. Boxes are collectible

16. Why might the first measure in a score contain fewer beats than all the other measures?

A. It can't. All measures in a score including the first one are required to have the same number of beats.
B. Because the first measure establishes the speed of the tune
C. Because the first measure establishes the key of the tune
D. It contains pick up notes or constitutes a lead-in to the melody

17. What does the time signature tell you?

A. How many beats in each measure
B. Which kind of note gets one beat
C. Whether there are sharps and flats in the song
D. Both A and B

18. Which statement is true?

A. Dynamics are about how loudly you play, and intonation is about how fast you play
B. Vibrato is about how loudly you play, and intonation is about how fast you play
C. Dynamics are about how loudly you play, and vibrato is about playing in tune
D. Dynamics are about how loudly you play, and intonation is about playing in tune

19. Why are double stemmed notes useful?

A. The give you an alternative note to play if your ocarina can't play the other note
B. They save space in the score

C. They give composers more flexibility
D. They tell you to play two notes at once

20. Which statement is not true?

A. Slurs tie two or more notes together
B. A grace note is a very quick lead-in to another note
C. Glissando means to slide seamlessly between notes
D. Trill means to quickly shift back and forth between two notes exactly one octave apart

21. These are the fingerings for what notes?



A. D, B, F, G
B. D, A, E, F
C. D, G, E, C#
D. E, B, F, G

22. Which statement is not true?

A. ***pp*** means to play very softly
B. Crescendo means to increase loudness
C. An underscore beneath a note means to play it very short with hard tonguing
D. ***f*** means to play loudly

23. What is a fipple?

A. The place where your breath is split to create sound waves
B. The mouthpiece you blow into that directs your breath to the splitting edge
C. The place where you thread your necklace into the ocarina
D. An ocarina with a base note of C6

24. How many notes are the in the standard western scale?

A. 5
B. 6
C. 7
D. 8

25. Which of these three tabs is the correct representation for the note F?



A. The first and second tabs
B. The first and third tabs
C. None of these tabs
D. All of these tabs

Answers with explanations are in the appendices.

Summary

We hope you found this self test useful. Please review the rationale underlying the correct answers for any questions you missed.

In the next lesson we'll tackle sharps and flats. We'll discuss how to recognize them in musical notation, and how to finger them on your ocarina. Then we'll practice a slew of songs to learn how to play them.

Lesson 14 -- Keys, Sharps, Flats, and More

In this lesson, we'll take a break from practicing. Instead, we'll discuss several important topics.

First we'll describe the keys, sizes, and pitches of ocarinas available. Then we'll delve into sharps and flats, how they appear in sheet music, and how you play them on your pendant.

Keys

The **key** of a pendant is the note it plays with all fingering holes closed. It's the lowest note it can play.

Sometimes this is called the instrument's **base note** or its **fundamental**.

For example, for an Alto C pendant, the lowest note is C. This is denoted by **C5** to distinguish exactly which pitch of C it is.

This is the exact same base note as the soprano recorder. It is one octave above **middle C** on the piano, which is C4.

In contrast, the C Soprano ocarina is pitched one octave higher than the Alto C. So its fundamental note is C6.



C Soprano, Alto C, and Tenor G Pendants

Ocs come in almost any key. These are the most common:

	Lowest Note:	Key:
C Soprano	C6	C Major
G Soprano	G5	G Major
Alto C	C5	C Major
Tenor	G4	G Major
Bass	C4	C Major

Most people use the terms in this table, but not everyone. For example, major US vendor STL Ocarina doesn't use the term "Alto C." Instead it calls those ocarinas "C Major ocarinas."

That's fine, except that the C Soprano and bass ocarinas are also "C major ocarinas." So be sure to look at the base note or the range of notes in their product descriptions to determine what you're buying.

Transverse and inline ocarinas feature the same common keys as pendants.

(Note: the base note or fundamental of a transverse oc is the lowest note the instrument plays with all holes closed -- except for any of the tiny sub-holes. Chapter 16 explains about sub-holes.)

Using the Ocarina for Transposing

You can play all the songs in this book on any ocarina. They all sound fine, and you always finger your pendant the exact same way to play them, regardless of your ocarina's size and key.

Ever wonder why that works?

It's because you can treat the ocarina as a **transposing instrument.** Transposing instruments can play from the same musical score … but they voice it with their own set of pitches.

So if you play a score on an Alto C, it sounds at one set of pitches. And if you play the same score on a C Soprano, it voices the same song as another set of pitches. Both sound fine, but obviously when you play the song on the C Soprano, it all comes out an octave higher.

If you played that score on a C Bass oc, it would all sound one octave lower than the Alto C.

If you read and fingered that score in the same way on any G Major ocarina, it would sound fine as well. It would just voice as a different set of pitches as determined by that ocarina's key. (The lowest pitch will be low G, not C.)

This is a huge advantage to playing the ocarina! You can play any score on any oc and not worry about whether the score was written for your specific key of ocarina.

And you can play all sorts of songs originally scored for recorders, tin whistles, Irish flutes, voice, and other instruments as well (as long as all notes are within your ocarina's range).

The situation changes when you play your ocarina with others. Now you need scores specific to the key of each instrument, to ensure all the instruments sound good together.

For example, Lesson 21 introduces **duets** -- tunes that two ocs play together. All our duet scores assume that you play two ocs of the same key together. For example, two Alto C's. Or, two G Sopranos.

You can't mix the two different keys together when playing from the same score. An Alto C playing one part and a G Soprano playing the other won't work. In that case, you would require a score that supplies one part written for the Alto C and the other part written in the proper key for the G Soprano.

Here's another way to understand this. If you play the note with all fingering holes closed on a C Major pendant -- a C Soprano, Alto C, or C Bass -- it sounds a low C. (C6, C5, or C4, respectively.)

But if you play the note with all holes closed on a G Major oc -- a G Soprano or G Tenor -- it sounds a low G. So if you mix the two keys of ocarina together in a single performance, the scores need to respect this difference.

To summarize: you can play any score on any ocarina and it will sound fine. That's because you can treat your oc as a transposing instrument. But if you play in concert with other instruments of different keys, you need scores specific to the keys of those instruments.

Range

The **pitch range** of an ocarina -- how many notes it can play -- depends on how many fingering holes it has. Ocs with more tone holes can play more notes. This chart shows the pitch range for common ocarinas:

Number of Holes:	**Whole Notes:**
12 hole transverse or inline	13
10 hole transverse or inline	11
6 hole pendant	10
4 hole pendant	8

You can see that 4 hole pendants have a relatively limited range. This is why it's so important to buy a quality oc that will play all notes well, including the highest. You need every note in that 8 tone range.

There are several techniques you can use to play scores that stray beyond the standard 8 note range of the 4 hole ocarina. We illustrated one in the previous lesson, where a double-stemmed note provided an alternative to a note outside a 4 hole pendant's range.

We'll cover some more techniques in later lessons. It's usually pretty easy to convert melodies to be playable on your ocarina.

How an Ocarina's Size Affects Your Play

All pendant ocarinas finger the scale in the exact same way. So if you learn to play one, you can play them all.

Their size and key don't matter, nor does their shape or design. All 4 and 6 hole ocarinas finger the same.

So, what differences will you notice when playing different sizes of ocarinas?

First off, the smallest ocarinas require very little air compared to the largest. This means that you can play several phrases with a soprano without having to breathe. In contrast, you can't play as many notes without breathing when playing a large bass.

The result is that breath control becomes more important with lower pitched ocs like the tenor or bass. You don't want to gasp for air at the wrong time and ruin a melody.

Because their smaller volume chamber contains less air, smaller instruments respond better to quick fingering. This means that fast fingering articulates very well with the smaller ocs.

Larger ocs are another story. Sometimes they'll "swallow" fast fingered notes such that you can hardly even distinguish them. This is a natural result of their larger air chambers. It simply takes more time to change the air pressure within a larger chamber. So sometimes those changes in air pressure can't keep up with very speedy fingering.

The result is that larger ocarinas tend to be better suited to melodic tunes or playing the underlying bass or background parts in ensembles. Smaller ocs prove exceptional for quick tunes with fast fingering and showy ornamentals.

Some find it easier to play vibrato with the smaller instruments, since their smaller chambers are more sensitive to slight differences in air pressure. **Vibrato** is where you waver or pulse a long note a very slight bit. Vibrato makes a note that's held for a long time sound more appealing than a simple flat tone.

Another difference among ocarinas: Since higher pitches travel further, smaller ocs are usually louder than larger ones. Got a roommate who thinks your oc is too loud? Drop that C Soprano and buy a soft-spoken bass.

Want to play before an outdoor audience? A smaller oc will project better and is easier to hear over background noise.

The very smallest ocs can get pretty piercing, especially with their highest notes. You may have to use earplugs for an extended session. Either that, or stay away from the highest notes.

Another difference: larger ocs from the same vendor and made from the same material cost more than smaller ocarinas.

And finally, an ocarina's size can affect physical aspects such as finger reach and weight. You could run across a very small pendant you can't play because it crams your fingers too closely together. Or, you could find a bass or larger ocarina where you can't stretch your fingers to reach all the tone holes.

Size affects weight, too. Some of the largest ceramic ocs are pretty heavy to hold for an extended session. That's never an issue with smaller instruments. Or, with plastic ocs, since they weigh less.

How an Ocarina's Shape Affects Your Play

As well as size, consider the shape of your ocarina. As we've noted, pendants come in a staggering variety of designs and shapes. Does this affect your play?

It might. For example, you might find it either easier or harder to reach all the fingering holes, depending on the oc's shape.

The shape sometimes dictates whether the instrument has 4 or 6 holes. Some designs simply don't leave room to properly grasp thumb holes, so they are instead made as 4 hole ocs.

Shape can affect tonal quality (or **timbre**), too. For example, I have a C Soprano pendant in the seedpod shape, and a transverse C Soprano as well. Both are made by the same manufacturer and composed of the same materials. Yet you could distinguish their different tonal qualities in a blind test.

All these facts about size and shape lead to an unavoidable conclusion: you always want to either play an ocarina or listen to its sound sample(s) before you buy it. That's the only way to ensure you'll like the instrument's voice and tonal quality.

Plastic or Ceramic?

Pendants can be made from a variety of materials. Plastic and ceramic (baked clay) dominate. As a result, enthusiasts endlessly debate whether they prefer plastic or ceramic. Different musicians have different preferences.

Both materials have their advantages, as we list here:

Ceramic:	Plastic:
A tone some prefer	Lighter weight
Possibly more attractive	Easier to wear on necklace
Traditional	Less likely to break
Less subject to condensation	Less expensive

My view is that whatever you like, you should play.

Sharps and Flats

At this point, you know the 8 whole notes you can play on a 4 hole ocarina. It's time to explore the "semitones" that lie between these whole notes.

As you know, the standard western musical scale contains 7 notes. From low to high, they are:

C, D, E, F, G, A, B, (high C)

These are the **whole notes**. Those notes halfway between the whole notes are called **sharps** and **flats**.

Familiar with the piano? The whole notes are the white keys, and the sharps and flats are the black keys between them.

Collectively, sharps and flats go by many names: **accidentals**, **chromatics**, **semitones**, **half tones**, and more. We'll use these terms interchangeably (though technically we're simplifying a bit by doing that).

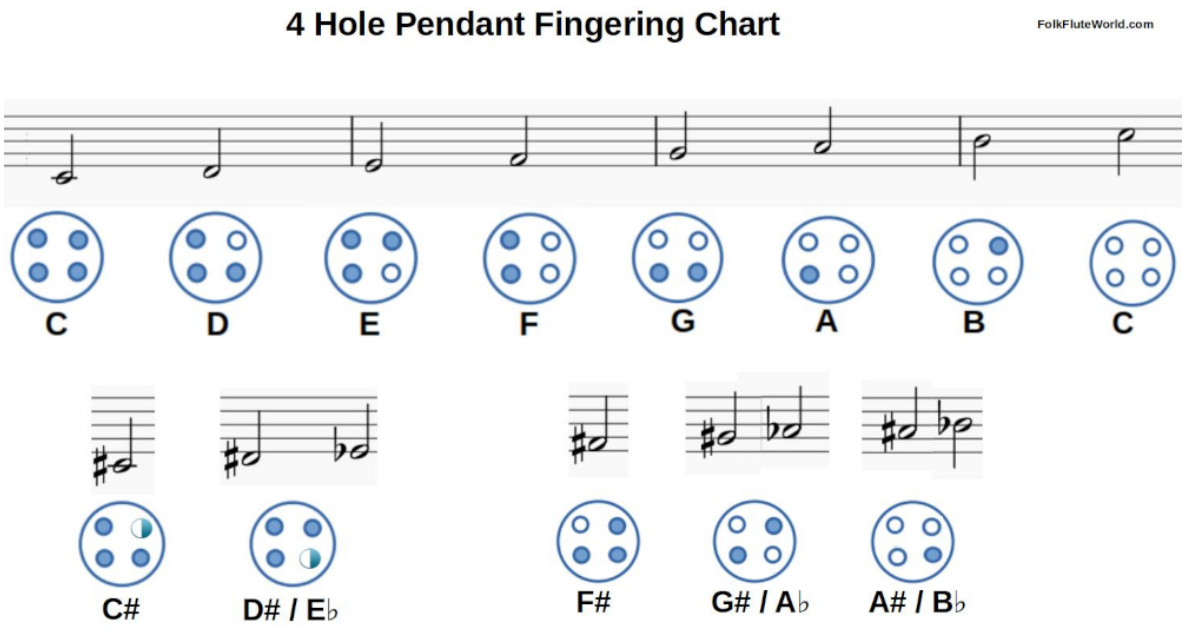
This symbol represents sharps (♯) and this one indicates flats (♭). A sharp is a semitone higher than its associated whole note, while a flat sounds a half tone lower.

An instrument that plays whole notes **only** -- no sharps or flats -- is termed **diatonic**. Instruments that play all the semitones as well are called **chromatic**.

You may hear some say that ocarinas are a diatonic instrument, that they don't play semitones. Actually, that's not accurate. Modern ocarinas can play the complete chromatic scale.

Here is the complete fingering chart for any 4 hole C Major ocarina. (Note: lesson 23 tells how you can play an extra note below low C … but only on some pendants.)

You know all the whole notes in this chart already. The only new fingerings are those for the sharps and flats:

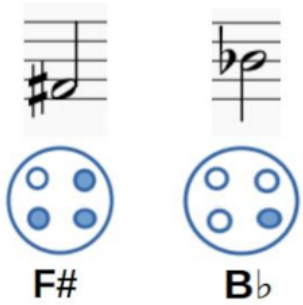


Every accidental can go by either of two names: its name as a sharp, or its equivalent moniker as a flat. For example, you could consider D# as E♭, or vice versa. We've only shown the names you'll commonly see in our chart.

Notice that two of the fingerings -- those for C# and D# / E♭ -- require you to **half-hole**. In other words, you must cover half of a hole with your finger.

Now you may be thinking: half-holing sounds hard. Yes, it can be, depending on your ocarina and how big its holes are.

But here's the good news. The most common accidentals -- by far -- are F# and B♭. Those are the two you really need to learn.



Two New Notes to Learn

You'll naturally pick up the other accidentals as you gain more experience. They don't occur very often in most scores that you'll play on your oc. In a future lesson we'll tell you some tricks for how to handle them.

Now that you know how to finger the two most important semitones, how are chromatics portrayed in musical notation?
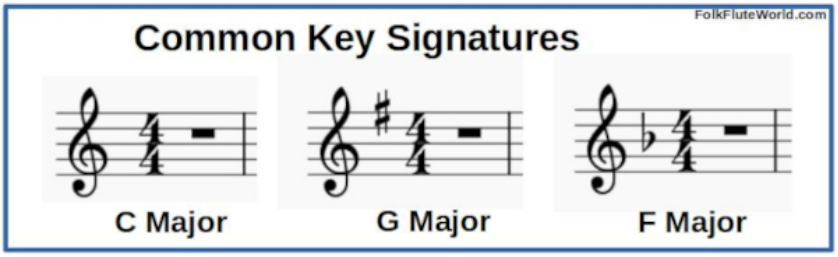
Notation for Sharps and Flats

Sheet music notation indicates accidentals in two ways:

1. At the start of the piece
2. By the symbols # or ♭ right before the notes

stands for "sharp", and ♭ means "flat".

Here's how sharps or flats appear at the start of a piece:



The start of every line in a score includes this **key signature** information.

It occurs immediately after the clef emblem and prior to the time signature.

Whatever key signature is declared, it applies to every note in the entire piece.

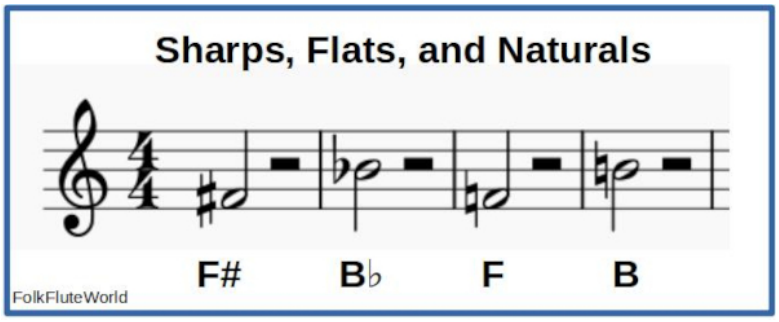
In other words, if you see B♭ in the key signature -- as in the rightmost example in the diagram -- that means that every time you see a B in the piece, you should play it as B♭. That's called the key of **F Major**.

And if you see F# in the key signature, as in the middle example, that means every F you see in the score must be played as F#. That's the key called **G Major**.

The figure shows the three most common key signatures: C Major, G Major, and F Major. For short, people usually just call them "the keys of C, G, and F".

You can see that the key of C Major has no sharps or flats at all. G Major has one accidental: F#. And the key of F Major includes one flat, B♭.

So far in these lessons, all the songs you have played have been scored in C Major. This lesson expands your reach into new keys that contain half tones.



This diagram shows that the other way you might learn that a note is to be played as sharp or flat is by an indicator right before the note in the score.

A sharp or flat symbol can immediately precede a note to tell you to play it either sharp or flat. **This instruction overrides whatever the key signature may be.**

For example, say you're playing a score in C Major. The C Major key signature has no sharps or flats. Then, in the midst of the score, you run across an F preceded by the sharp symbol. This means you should play that note as F#. But in later measures, you play any F as a **natural** -- without the sharp -- as per the key signature.

The last two examples in the above diagram show the **natural sign** (♮). That tells you to play the note as a whole note, not sharp or flat.

You'll sometimes see composers use the natural symbol when they want to ensure you know the proper note to play (it can get confusing in a piece with many accidentals).

Summary

In this lesson, we covered the keys, sizes, and ranges of pendants. We also introduced two accidentals and described how they appear in musical notation.

Don't worry if everything about half tones isn't clear. They are easy to understand when you see them in scores.

So let's do that. In the next lesson, we'll practice some new songs featuring the two most common semitones, F# and B♭.

Lesson 15 -- Playing Accidentals... and New Songs

In this lesson we'll learn how to recognize and play sharps and flats.

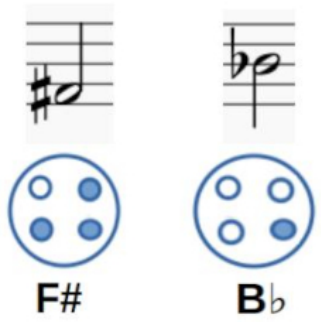
Thus far, all the songs you've played have been written in the key of C Major. That's the key that has no sharps or flats.

Now we'll greatly expand the universe of songs you can play by learning G Major and F Major. Their semitones are, respectively, F# and B♭.

Learning F#

Let's start with a song that has but a single sharp note. The sharp is denoted by the sharp symbol (#) that occurs right in front of the note.

To refresh your memory, here's how to finger F# and B♭:



Now, let's try the song:



You can see that there's only a single occurrence of F# in this piece. It's in the last measure of line 3.

The sharp sign that occurs right before the note tells you to play F#, rather than F. The sharp sign only applies to the note it's adjacent to. All other occurrences of F in the score are played **natural** (not as sharp or flat) as per the key signature at the start of the score.

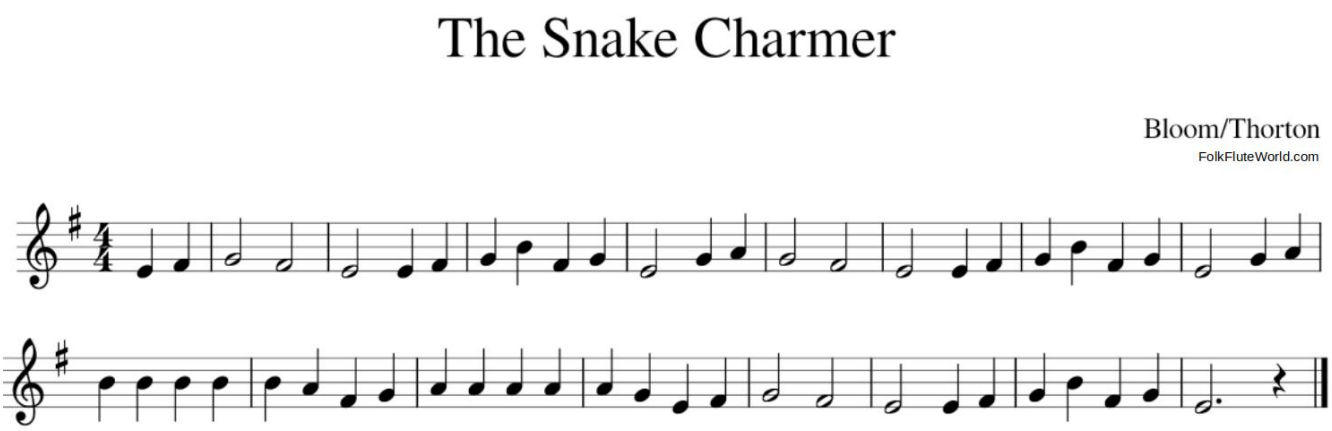
A score can have individual accidentals like this scattered throughout the piece, wherever the composer wants us to play a sharp or flat instead of a "natural" note.

It's often useful to quickly scan through a score to see if it contains any embedded accidentals **before** you play it. That way you won't be surprised when you encounter one!

Song: The Snake Charmer (aka Arabian Riff)

Now, here's a different situation. In this case, the key signature indicates that **all** F notes in the piece are to be played as F#. This applies equally to both high and low F's.

The key signature that dictates F# throughout the song -- and no other sharps or flats -- is the key of G Major. Here's a piece you'll recognize once you start playing, written in G major.



Did you play every F note in the song as F#? If you missed one, I'm sure it sounded terribly wrong. It's pretty easy to recognize when we incorrectly play a sharp as a natural note, or vice versa. It grates on one's ears.

Here's how to avoid this error. Before you start playing any piece, look carefully at its key signature. Memorize it. Then keep in mind whatever sharps or flats it requires you to apply throughout the score.

Song: The Star of County Down

One of the benefits of playing the ocarina is all the free sheet music you can find on the web. There are absolute tons of traditional Irish and Celtic tunes. These are public domain and owned by no one, and they've been collected in gigantic free song libraries for your enjoyment. An appendix to this book tells you where to access these music libraries.

So here's a popular Celtic song in G Major. You'll hear it at a pubs throughout the British isles.

Before you play it, notice the last two measures in the score. The first time you play up to these two measures, you play the **first ending** denoted by the **1.** and its bracket.

Then you follow the repeat sign, and start playing the entire melody from the very beginning.
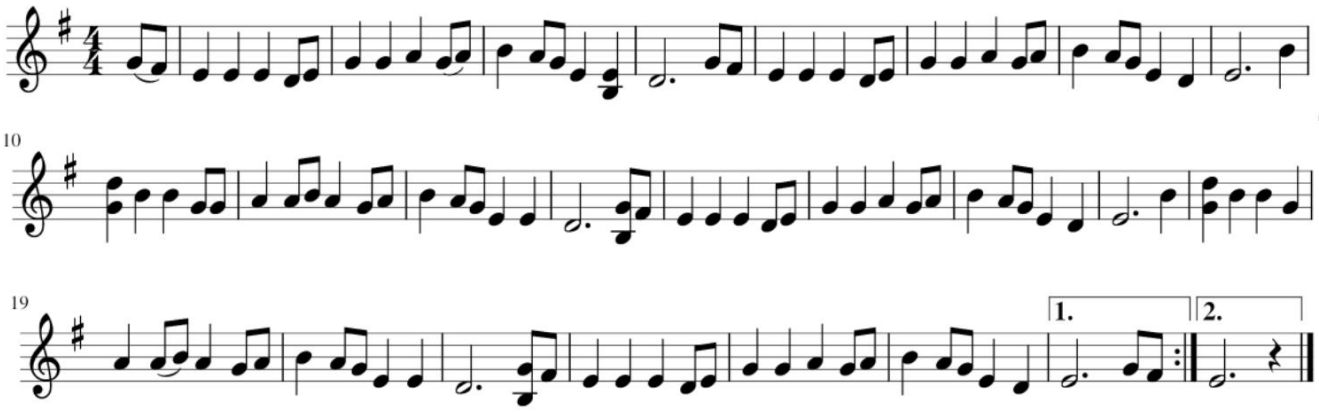
The second time you approach the end of the score, you play the **second ending** denoted by the **2.** and its bracket. Then, you've reached the end of the piece -- as shown by the final double bar at the end of the score.

Okay, here's the tune:

Star of the County Down

Traditional Irish

FolkFluteWorld.com



This song is pretty challenging if you play it up to speed. But as always, the trick is to start out as slowly as you need to. Then increase the tempo as you learn the song.

As you noticed in our previous G Major tune, if you play any F# as F♮ (F natural) by accident, it sticks out like a sore thumb. So, always look at the key signature very carefully before you start playing any piece. Fix in your mind what sharps or flats carry throughout the piece, and that way hopefully you'll remember them when you encounter them in the tune.

This score contains several **double-stemmed notes**. That's where you have two notes written on a single vertical stem. As you recall from an earlier lesson, you can play either note on the stem.

In this score the double-stemmed notes are E and low B, and G and low B. Low B is outside the range of a seedpod ocarina, so play the E or G instead.

This technique of **alternative notes** enables your oc to play many tunes that otherwise would be unplayable. Simply replace any out-of-range notes with playable alternatives.

As long as there aren't very many alternative notes, you may hardly notice that the tune has been altered to fit your instrument.

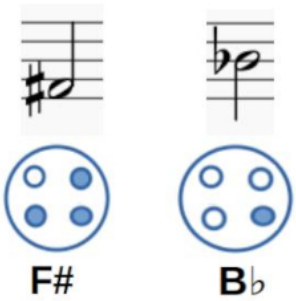
Learning B♭

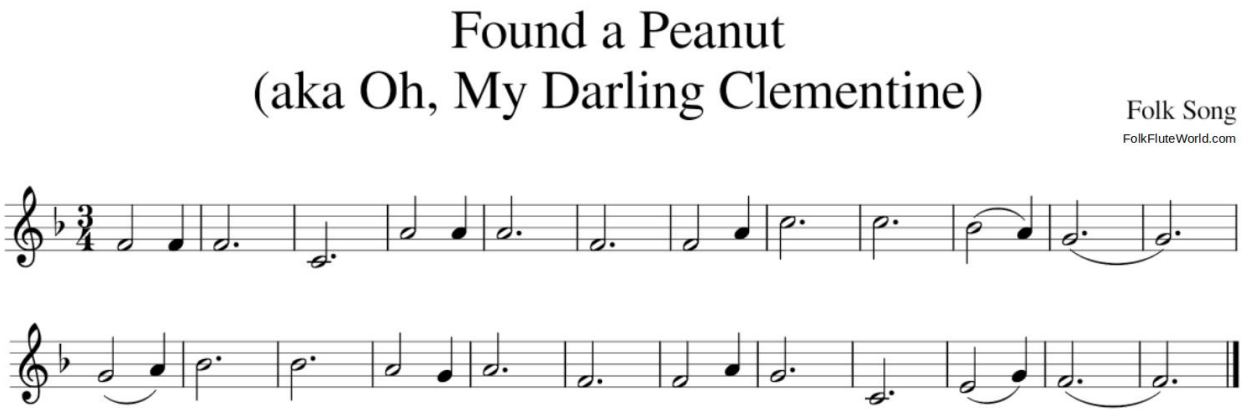
The other accidental you really need to know is B♭. Songs written in the key of F Major contain B♭ in their key signature.

Let's start with a simple tune everyone knows. It's popular among kids and campers and is called *Found a Peanut*. You may also recognize it with different lyrics as the song *Oh, My Darling Clementine*.

Several recording artists have enjoyed mild success with this tune including Bobby Darin, Tom Lehrer, and Jan and Dean (!).

To refresh your memory, here's how to finger B♭. We follow that with the score.





Since the key signature indicates B♭, all B notes in this tune must be played as B♭.

The score is in 3/4 time. That's three beats per measure with each quarter note getting one beat.

Waltzes are often written in 3/4 time. Some are scored in its multiple, 6/8 time.

Marches are often written in 2/4 time, while 4/4 is by far the most common time signature because it's adaptable to almost all musical styles.
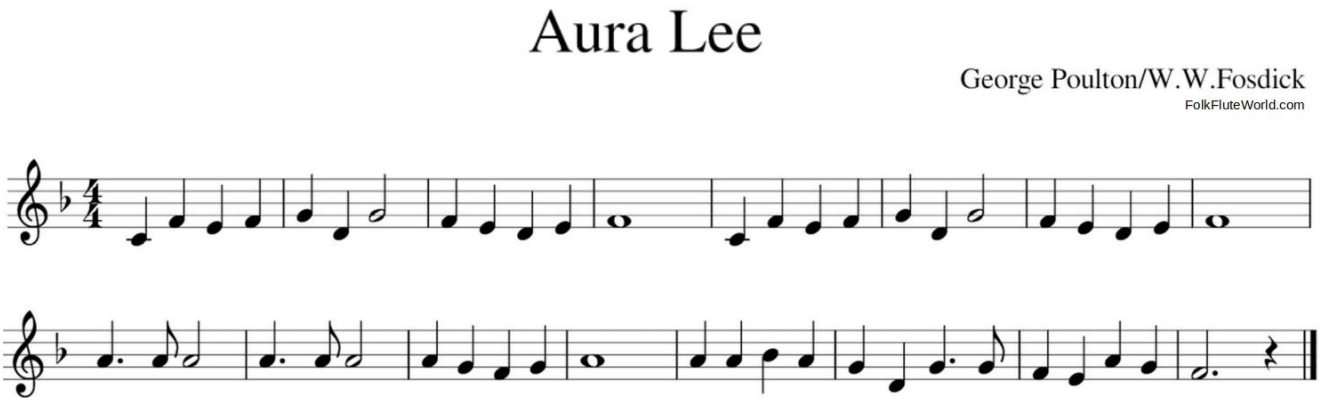
Song: Aura Lee

Here's a song that became widely popular during the American Civil War. Both sides of the conflict adopted it as their own.

The melody was composed by George Polton with lyrics written by my distant relative, William Fosdick. It probably appealed to the soldiers because the words are a sentimental ballad to a sweetheart from whom the singer is separated.

The song went on to inclusion in several early 20th century films, but it's Big Boom came courtesy of Elvis. Presley recorded the tune a cappella in 1956 as *Love Me Tender* and it hogged the number 1 spot on the popular charts for five weeks. Its sweet solo contrasted with other, more raucous Elvis hits of the day, such as *Hound Dog* and *Jail House Rock*.
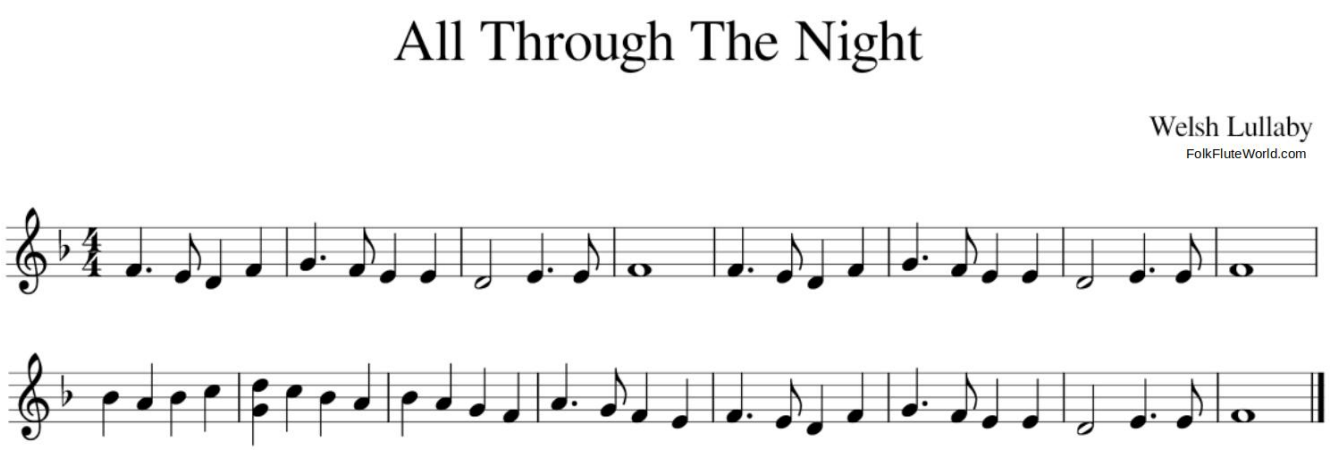
Here's the song in F Major. There's only a single appearance of a B♭ in this tune, but don't forget the key signature and misplay it as natural!



Song: All Through the Night

This last F Major song is a Welsh melody from 1784. It's still popular today in Wales and is sung at festivals and by choirs.

The Welsh name of the song is *Ar Hyd y Nos*. Recording artists like Olivia Newton-John and Michael McDonald have included it in their Christmas albums, though it has no real association with that holiday. It's just a lovely traditional lullaby.



This song can also be played as a round by two ocarinists. A **round** is where two or more musicians play the same song, but they start at different times.

To play this tune as a round, have one musician start playing the song. When he reaches the start of the second line, the second musician starts playing the song from the beginning.

Rounds can be lots of fun in group situations. We'll discuss them in an upcoming lesson and provide a flock of them for your practice and enjoyment.

In another lesson we will explore **duets**, where two ocarinists simultaneously play complementary parts.

Song: The Chromatic Waltz

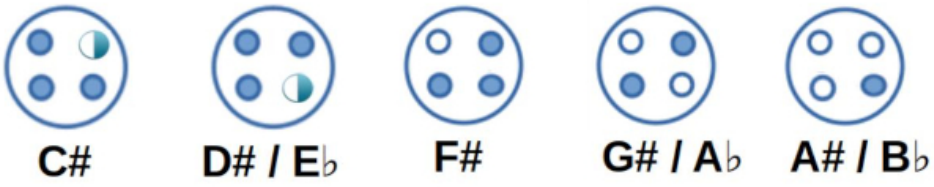
Here's the ultimate chromatic challenge. No surprise that it's called *The Chromatic Waltz*. It contains most of the accidentals in the scale. That concept is apparently so appealing that there are at least two entirely different songs that use the same title!

We've modified this song to suit 4 hole ocarinas. The appendices contain a version with broader range that you can play on a 6 hole oc.

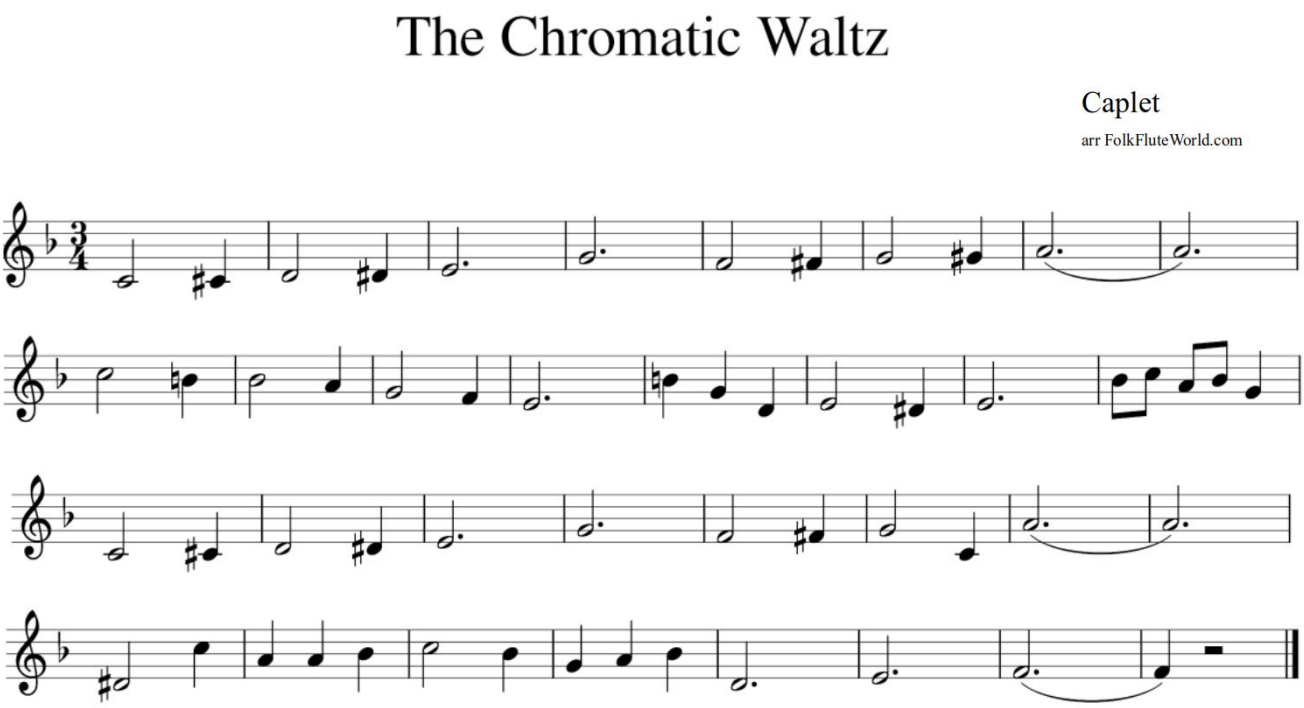
Most of the semitones aren't difficult to finger. It's just a matter of memorizing them. The exceptions are C# and D#, which we'll discuss following the score.

In a future lesson, we'll discuss how to eliminate difficult accidentals from scores by transposing songs to different keys.

Here's a quick review of all the half tone fingerings for a 4 hole ocarina:



Here's the waltz. If you find it too challenging, feel free to skip it. But please read the discussion of half-holing that follows it.



Half-Holing C# and D#

Right off, *The Chromatic Waltz* confronts you with low C# and D#. As the fingering chart shows, these require **half-holing** -- covering half of a hole with your fingertip.



Fingering Hole Sizes: C Soprano, Alto C, and G Tenor

Half-holing can be difficult. You can best achieve it if you gain proficiency on the specific ocarina you want to half-hole. You need an intimate feel for the instrument you're playing to be able to do it.

Another aid is if you play a low pitched oc like a tenor or bass. These have bigger fingering holes, which makes it much easier to half-hole.

Conversely, high pitched ocarinas like the sopranos and the Alto C have smaller holes. Those render half-holing more difficult because you must be very precise in your finger placement. See the photo for a comparison of hole sizes.

You would half-hole the two right-hand holes on the ocs in the photo.

You'll notice from the photo that the hole you need to half-hole for D# -- the hole for your right hand index finger -- is larger than the hole you half-hole for C#. This is true regardless of the size or key of your seedpod. Thus, for any specific ocarina, most people find D# easier to play than low C#. C# is pretty challenging because it targets the smallest hole on the instrument.

A final important factor in half-holing is the length of the note involved. It's not hard to play a quick half-hole for an eighth note, for example, because you only need to approximate the tone to get through the score with a passable sound. On the other hand, a whole note that's held for four beats... well, you can't approximate that and still sound good.

The upshot is that a score with a couple quick C#'s or D#'s may not be hard to play. But a melody that holds those notes for several beats might be much more challenging.

The Future?

One of the exciting frontiers in pendants is the elimination of half-holing. A small number of makers today offer pendants with from one to three extra top holes that allow you to play C# and D# without half-holing.

Some designs employ **split holes**. These bifurcate each of the holes for low C and D into two separate holes. Just covering one of the two holes has the same effect as half-holing, but it's much easier.

If you've ever player the recorder, you're probably familiar with split holes. Most recorders feature them for the last two fingers of the musician's right hand.

Sub-holes offer another approach. A sub-hole is a tiny hole right next to one the of tone holes with which you're already familiar. You can either cover the regular tone hole with your finger -- or cover both the regular hole and the sub-hole at once -- by extending your finger across both holes.

Additional tones holes is a third option. You cover these new holes with your previously-unused third or fourth fingers. (The next lesson discusses an example.)

Today these designs are uncommon. Perhaps in the future one of them will become a de facto standard.

Then, we might end up with pendants standardizing on 4, 6, and 8 (or 9) hole designs.

Summary

This lesson taught you how to recognize and play the most common accidentals, F# and B♭. You'll see these notes a lot because so many songs are written in the keys of G Major and F Major.

If you need to play any of the other accidentals, we've provided tabs for their fingering.

In many cases, if a particular score requires lots of accidentals, it makes sense to look for a version of the song written in a more ocarina-friendly key such as C, G, or F Major. We'll discuss how to accomplish this in a future lesson.

In the next lesson we'll talk about other kinds of ocarinas, like transverses and inlines. And we'll discuss pendants with greater range than the standard 8 or 10 notes. These can make more sheet music accessible because they have fewer out-of-range notes.

Lesson 16 -- Extended Range Pendants... and Transverse Ocarinas

By now you've gotten pretty proficient with your pendant. You've learned the scale and have played a variety of popular songs.

But if you've searched for sheet music on the web, you've surely run across songs that require that extra note or two above high C.

The solution is the two extra thumb holes on the 6 hole pendant. They extend the range of a 4 hole oc by two extra whole notes, high D and high E. The next lesson teaches you how to play the extra notes of the 6 hole pendant.

Some specialized pendants can extend your range even beyond that of the 6 hole pendant. We'll discuss them in this lesson.

We'll also discuss ocarinas other than pendants. Having become adept with seedpods, you probably want to learn more about other kinds of ocarinas. This lesson will round out your knowledge of the "ocarina universe".

We'll cover a little history. Where did ocarinas come from? How did they evolve?

Then, we'll discuss today's transverse and inline ocs. Perhaps you'll want to explore them sometime in the future.

First up, let's discuss pendants with extended range...

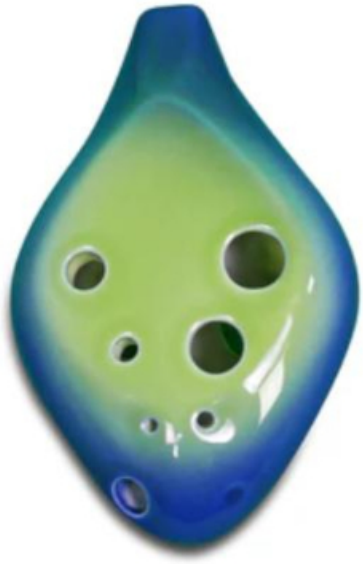
Extended Range Pendants

The 4 hole pendant has a range of 8 whole notes, while the 6 hole has a range of 10 whole notes. Is there a way to gain even more notes beyond that?

Several designers have bent their talents to meeting this challenge. Prominent among them is the major US vendor, STL Ocarina (at STLOcarina.com).

Their solution is their **Maximized Range Pendant**. This C Major ocarina plays 13 whole notes, from A4 through F6.

That's the exact same range as a 12 hole transverse Alto C ocarina.



STL Ocarina's Maximized Range Pendant

(Photo courtesy: STL Ocarina)

As the photo shows, the oc achieves its increased range with the addition of three top holes. It also has slightly larger thumb holes. (This describes the 2026 version.)

This pendant fingers as you have learned. But it extends that by using the additional fingering holes to play three extra whole notes: low B and low A below low C, and high F. Scan the scores in this book and you'll see that it's especially useful to be able to play that low B.

The extra holes also enable you to play low C# and low D# *without* half-holing. That makes it so much easier to play these notes. This is a huge advance for pendant ocarinas!

It's easy to extend your skills from a standard 6 hole pendant to this one. You gain three extra whole notes and you'll never have to half-hole again. Learn more about this unique pendant at STL Ocarina.

This next option is for advanced players only. We discuss it here to make you aware of the kinds of innovative ocs that are available.



STL Ocarina's Maximized Range Double Ocarina

(Photo courtesy: STL Ocarina)

STL Ocarina's Pendant **Double Ocarina With Maximized Range** is what people call a **double ocarina**. It has two breath chambers inside instead of one.

The mouthpiece has two little slits. You blow into one of them, and that chamber sounds the notes. And you cover the set of fingering holes for the chamber you blow into.

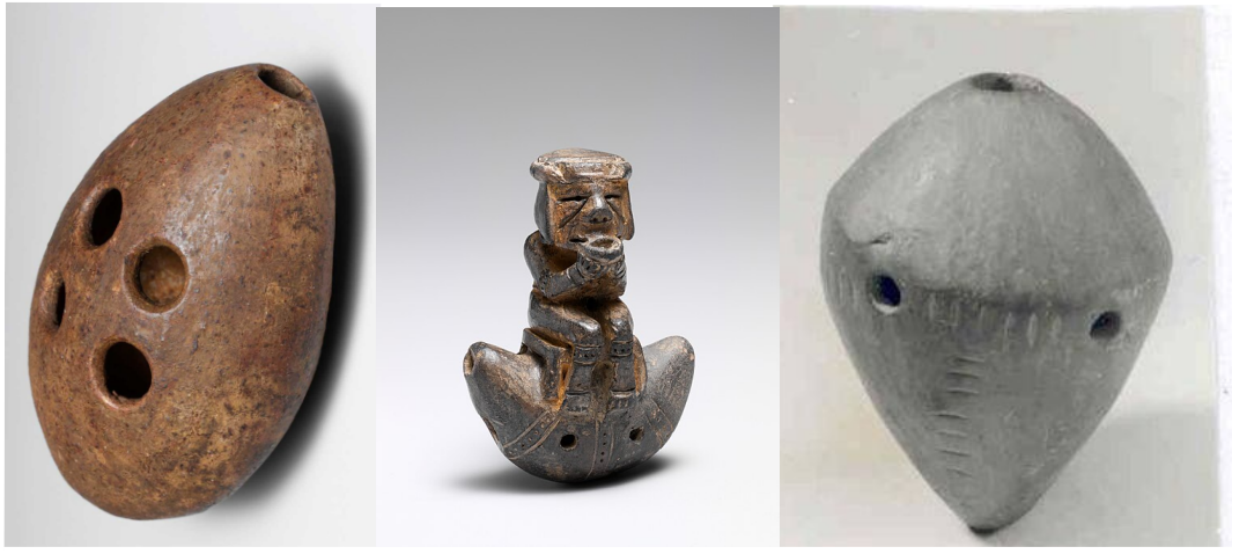
One chamber plays lower notes, and the other voices the higher ones. Together, they give you 18 whole notes, roughly double the range of the typical pendant.

Of course, you have to become fluent in switching between chambers. And there are many small differences between fingering this pendant and what you have learned.

This oc meets the needs of skilled players who are ready to take advantage of an advanced musical instrument. They benefit from a range of well over two octaves in this uniquely innovative design. Learn more at STL Ocarina (STLOcarina.com).

History of the Ocarina

Now that you've gained some proficiency in playing pendants, you might wonder: where do ocarinas come from?



(Courtesy: First two images: Metropolitan Museum of Art/public domain. Third image: Instituti Arkeologik/public domain)

China: Some 7,000 years ago, the Chinese invented a kind of vessel flute called the **xun** (pronounced "shoon"). Like a blowing into a pop bottle, it was up to you to split your breath into sound waves by blowing across the lip of the opening. The above photo shows what an ancient xun looks like.

The Chinese still play xun today, and they are considered an important part of Chinese culture.

Modern xun have more fingering holes and play a wider range of notes than their ancient counterparts. Nevertheless, most still feature the same simple mouthpiece. Thus, playing xun takes some practice to learn how to split your breath on the rim of the mouthpiece suitably to play different notes.

Mesoamerica: The region we call Central America today developed a wide range of similar **vessel flutes** in the pre-Columbian era. Many of these are in animal shapes and are thought to have had religious significance. The photo shows one.

Mesoamerican "ocarinas" are not tuned to any scale, and indeed, any two of them sound different pitches. Thus it is likely they were used in religious practice rather than for playing music. As we mentioned earlier in this book, they are most accurately termed "whistles" rather than ocarinas.

Europe: On the right side of the above photo you see the 8,000-year-old "Runik ocarina." It was discovered in what is today Kosovo. Like many Mesoamerican proto-ocarinas, it sounds a few pitches rather than voicing notes arranged into a scale.

Thus it appears that several ancient civilizations independently developed the early vessel flutes that over time evolved into ocarinas.

Modern Ocarinas

Modern transverse ocarinas owe their invention to Italian brick maker Giuseppe Donati. In the 1850s, he developed the first transverse ocarinas that produced accurate pitches attuned to the modern scale.

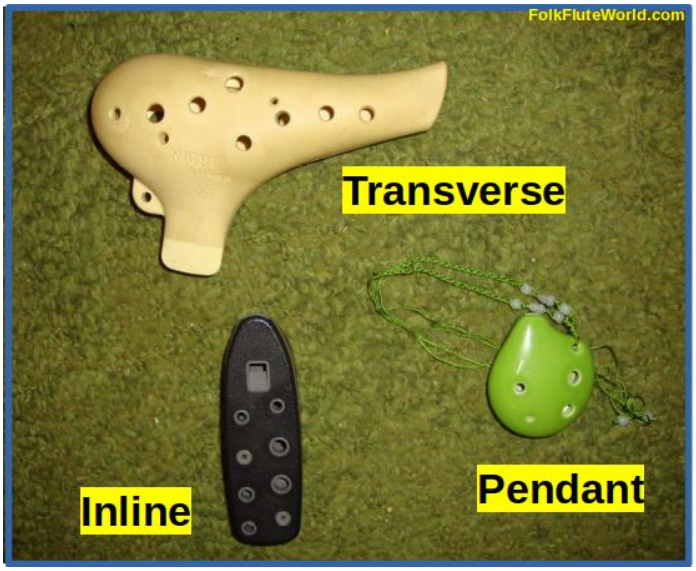
Several innovators since Donati have increased both the pitch accuracy and the range of his original designs.

In more recent times, inventors added the two little "sub-holes" to the transverse oc. This improves it to a pitch range of 13 whole notes (plus all sharps and flats in-between). We'll explain sub-holes below.

In 1964, British instrument-maker and mathematician John Taylor took a totally different approach. He devised a new fingering pattern for ocarinas that produced an entire chromatic scale based on only 4 tone holes. **This heralded the birth of the pendant ocarina.**

Taylor's invention is sometimes referred to as **English Fingering**. His contemporary Barry Jennings added the two thumb holes beneath the instrument that extend its upper range by two whole notes.

The genius of Taylor's design is that accurate pitches depend on the sizes of the tone holes and the resonant chamber -- they have little to do with the shape of the instrument. The result was the profusion of intriguing pendant shapes and designs we enjoy today.



Let's take a look at modern ocarinas.

From the first lesson, you'll recall that people typically classify ocarinas into three kinds:

* **Pendant** (also called **Seedpod**)
* **Transverse**
* **Inline**

Pendants come in a huge variety of shapes. That's one of their biggest advantages and part of what makes them so appealing.

With what you've learned so far, you can play them all -- dolphins, turtles, strawberries, fantasy figures, artworks, and even playable tea cups! It's a fun world of musical collectibles. And cute wearables, too.

In contrast, transverse ocarinas are **always** shaped like "submarines" or "sweet potatoes." In fact, many people call them by those names.

Inlines are **always** played extended straight out from your mouth, just like a recorder. They are either shaped like television remotes, or like short, stubby little recorders.

Transverse and Inline Ocarinas



Let's discuss transverse ocarinas. Most have 12 holes, though some have fewer.

Wait a minute. How can the most popular transverse have 12 holes, when we humans only have 10 fingers?

The answer is the two little **sub-holes** (or "subholes") the above photo shows.

Normally you play with your finger only covering the big holes next to the sub-hole. But you can easily extend your finger(s) to cover both the regular hole and the sub-hole at the same time.

In this way, you can cover 12 holes with your 10 fingers. The payoff is a 13 whole note range for the modern 12 hole oc.

Not all transverse ocs have 12 holes. Some have 11 or only 10. 10-holers have no sub-holes.

Inlines vary in their number of holes, but 8 to 10 are most common. Many don't have sub-holes. These have a range of from 9 to 11 notes.

Fingering

All transverse and inline ocarinas finger the exact same way (with very minor exceptions). **If you can play one, you can play them all.**

Just like with pendants, this means you can shift between different sizes and brands very easily.

But the fingering pattern is different from what you've learned with pendants. It's usually termed **linear fingering**. You cover all the holes to start, then progressively lift your fingers in order, one after the other, to play up the scale.

Most people find this even easier than learning to play pendants. But the sharps and flats do require a little more complicated fingering.

Generally speaking, most pendant players don't find it particularly difficult to add transverse/inline fingering to their skillset.

How about the sheet music you've learned how to read? You can play it all on pendants, transverses, or inlines. As long as you're playing solo, you can play all this sheet music on any size, key, or style of ocarina.

That's the big benefit to learning to play such a simple, yet versatile instrument as the ocarina. Download my **free** book on transverse and inline ocs from FolkFluteWorld.com or Archive.org.

Where to Start

If you decide to pick up a 12 hole transverse, which one should be your first buy?

Any oc might work for you. But if you're purchasing for the first time, you'll want to choose carefully. Just as with pendants, some plastic transverses are low-end items, price competitive but of marginal or even substandard quality.

And among the ceramics, some companies have quality control issues. Many would likely ship you a very good oc, but there's a small possibility you could get a dud from the same company.

What to do? First off, we recommend starting with an Alto C transverse. This is the most popular size by far. 12 hole Alto C transverses normally have a range of 13 whole notes, from A4 to F6.

C5 is considered the fundamental, just as with Alto C pendants. These are C Major ocarinas.

The ideal would be to buy in person. That way you can "try before you buy". But too few shops carry ocarinas for that to be practical for most people.

For online purchases, we recommend the same three vendors as we did in Lesson 2 on selecting a pendant. These companies do an excellent job of pre-selecting quality instruments from which you can choose:

- **Stein Ocarina** (SteinOcarina.com)
- **Songbird Ocarina** (SongBirdOcarina.com)
- **STL Ocarina** (STLOcarina.com)

Always listen to sound samples if they're available. And listen with a critical ear -- mind the highest notes, and listen to see if the oc has a tone you like.

As before, I would not recommend buying from Amazon unless you're pretty savvy about ocarinas.

What about specific brands? For plastic, the consensus in the ocarina community seems to be that two options stand out. These are the Alto C's from Night By Noble and Focalink.



For ceramic, there are many excellent options, such as this Focalink "Pastoral" model:



All these ocarinas are musically capable. They play all notes in tune and with good tone. Quality control is excellent, and the possibility of receiving a substandard item is negligible.

The prices on these ocarinas can vary widely due to currency fluctuations, transport costs, tariffs, and import fees. So shop around. At the time of writing, quality plastic ocs are often in the $30 to $50 USD range, while the Focalink ceramics vary from $40 to $90. You can find these and many other quality ocs at the three vendors we listed above.

There are many great choices other than the ocs I've mentioned! The only reason I've listed some here is to give you a few safe, musically sound choices as a starting point for comparison.

Two and Three Chamber Ocarinas



Double Ocarina

Just as STL Ocarina has maximized pendant range with their double ocarina, so too are transverse ocs available with two or even three separate chambers.

Many vendors make them. This photo shows how a dual-chambered transverse looks.

You blow into the proper slit for the chamber you want to employ. (You can see the two breath slits if you look carefully at the mouthpiece in the photo).

Then you cover the proper holes for that chamber with your fingers.

The advantage is that these ocarinas have wider range than single chamber ocarinas. Many span two full octaves, usually even more. A double oc is a bit like having two ocarinas in one.

These instruments are for advanced players only. But it's important that you know what's out there. Who knows what you'll explore after completing this course?

Summary

This lesson introduced you to pendants that are designed for extended range. Perhaps one of them will become your new partner as you evolve in your musicianship.

You can take what you've learned in this course and directly apply it to these pendants to gain greater musical capabilities.

Then we discussed the standard 12 hole transverse ocarina, as well as inlines. We offered recommendations to ensure you acquire a quality instrument if you need advice before purchasing your first transverse oc.

You can download a **free** digital copy of my book ***The Ocarina Course: Transverse and Inline Ocarinas*** from FolkFluteWorld.com or Archive.org. With 400 pages, 32 lessons, and 180 songs, it tells you everything you need to know and offers an easy but complete tutorial on these instruments.

I receive no compensation for recommendations. They are solely based on product merit and are meant as helpful advice.



Alto C transverse by Fabio Menaglio, from Budrio, Italy, where the transverse was invented.

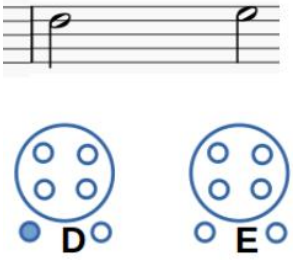
Lesson 17 -- 6 Hole Ocarina: High D and E

This lesson covers the two whole notes you can play on a 6 hole pendant, but not a 4 hole ocarina. These are high D and high E.

At the end of this lesson, you'll be able to play the full range of notes on a 6 hole ocarina, from low C to high E.

If you don't own a 6 hole pendant, you can use this lesson to determine if acquiring a 6 hole oc would be worth your while. Also, you can play one song in this lesson, the first version of *My Country 'Tis of Thee*.

High D and E



Here are the two new notes, the highest notes playable on 6 hole ocarinas.

When you first try them, you may have to experiment with how to hold your pendant with all fingers off the holes -- you've probably become accustomed to relying on your two thumbs covering the underside holes to grasp the instrument.

Here's where the last two fingers of your hand become useful in playing -- your ring finger and pinky finger. You can use them to hold your oc while your other fingers are off the tone holes.

If you have a necklace with your pendant, now is a good time to use it. That way, if you happen to drop your oc, it will only hit your chest instead of the floor.

With some ocarinas, you may find that you need to send a sharply directed breath into the oc to hit these highest notes. That's a natural result of the fact you're playing an enclosed chamber flute -- to which you've added the maximum number of open holes.

You can also try tilting the angle at which you hold the ocarina. It's not unusual to find that the highest note requires a very specific angle to play. (Some call this **fipple bend** or **acute bend**.)

These techniques are the same we described back in Lesson 11, for hitting the highest notes on 4 hole ocarinas (B and high C). For 6 hole ocarinas, these techniques apply to high D and E.
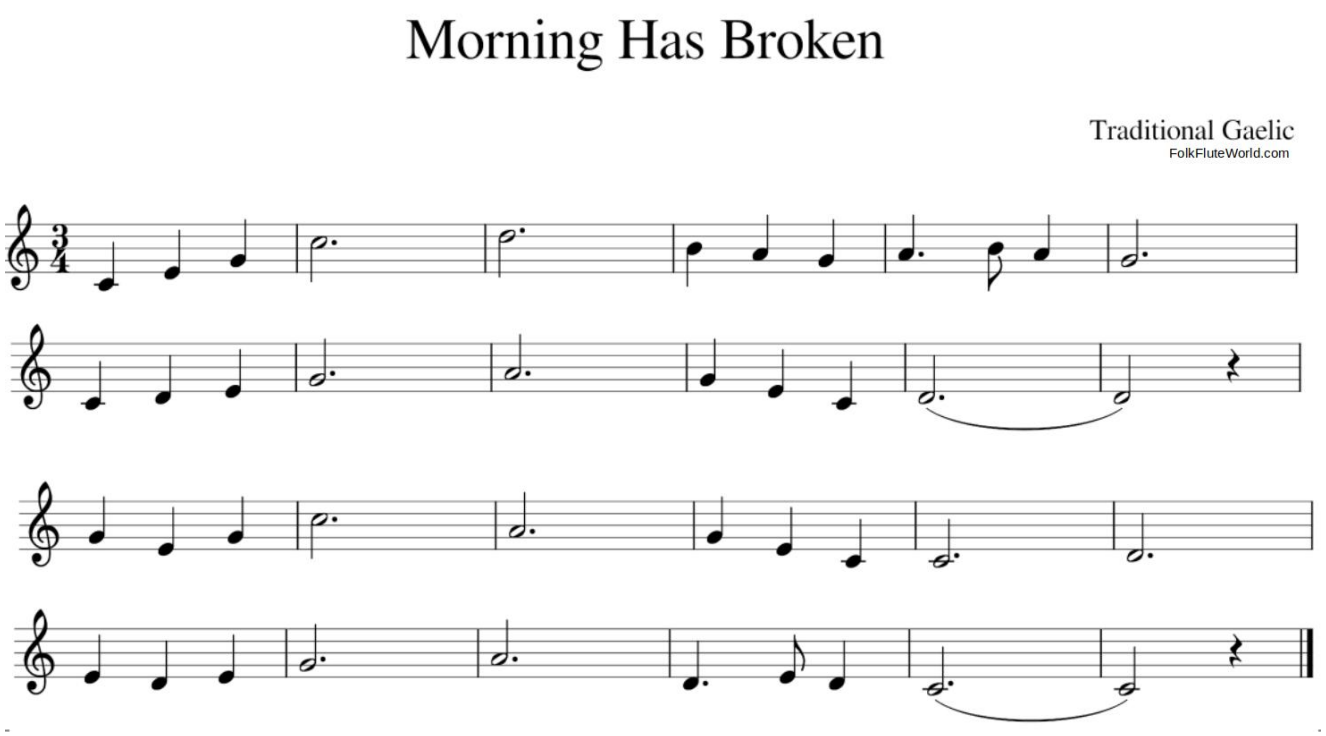
Okay, let's try some songs.

Song: Morning Has Broken

This first song is a traditional Scot-Gaelic melody. Màiri Dhòmhnallach wrote lyrics for it in the early 1800s that popularized the tune.

In 1981, Yusuf Islam released a version with English lyrics that become a bestselling pop record. At the time, the singer was better known by his stage name, Cat Stevens.

We start with this composition because it contains only a single high D. Yet it's essential to the melody. (This is one of those cases where it's difficult to substitute an alternative lower note that doesn't disrupt the melody.) Here is the song:



Were you able to keep hold of your oc on that long high D? Hopefully you'll develop that skill in this lesson.
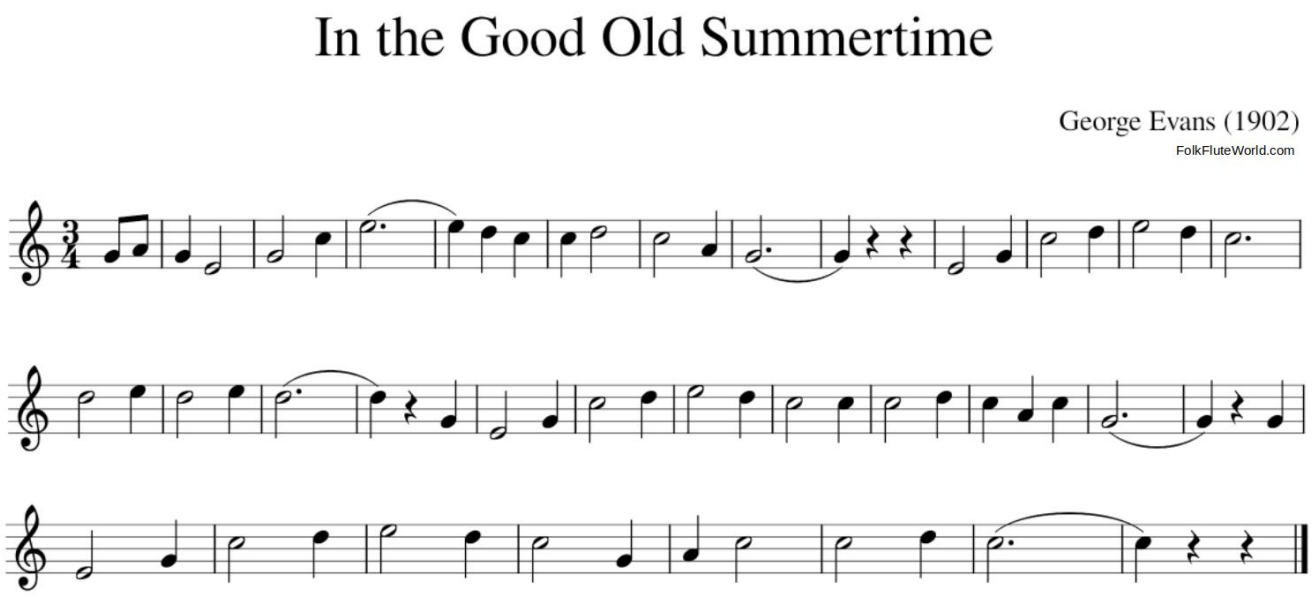
When we talked about expressing yourself in lesson 12 (aka **espressivo**), this is the kind of song we had in mind. It's easy to play, slow, and melodic... a great place to apply your developing abilities to bring out all the beauty of the song.

Song: In the Good Old Summertime

This next tune emerged from Tin Pan Alley at the turn of the 20th century. Tin Pan Alley was a section of New York City from which music composers and publishers dominated the American music scene from the 1880s until the mid-20th century.

Composer George Evans couldn't interest any of the big Tin Pan Alley publishers in this song. But it was picked up for a musical comedy review in 1902 and promptly became a classic that endures to this day.
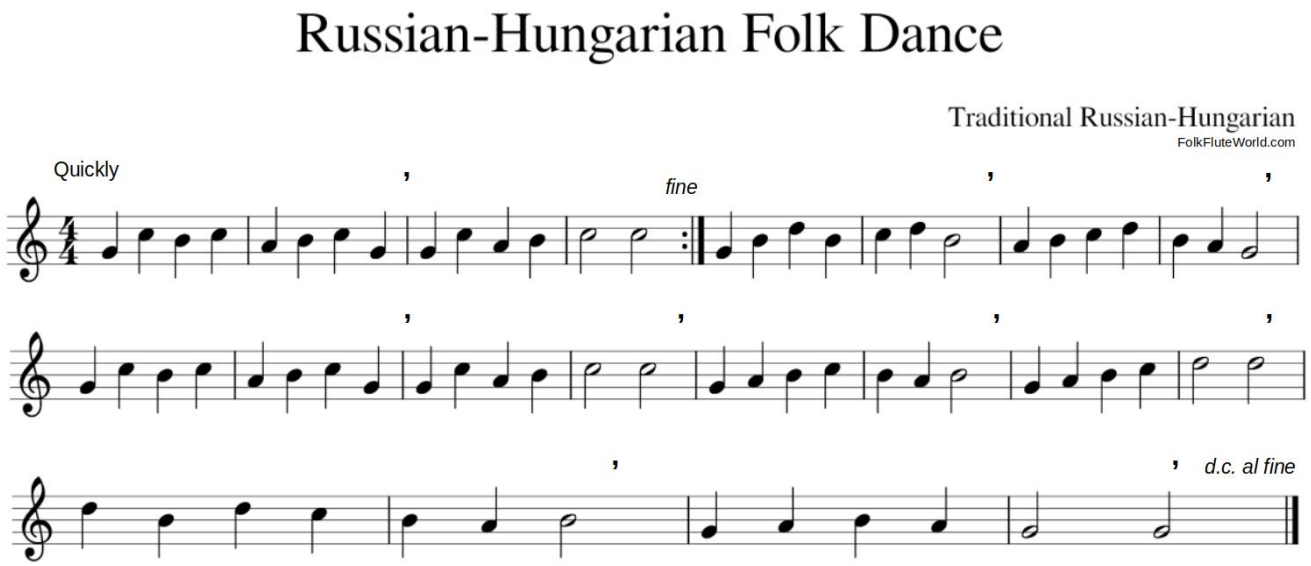
From the musical standpoint, the song is pretty simple to play, with a nice melody. It will certainly give you a work out for learning the notes on the top end of the scale, high C, D, and E.



Song: Russian-Hungarian Folk Dance

Let's try something a little snappier. Sound out this tune slowly, so you get the feel of its fingering patterns.

When you're ready, take it at a faster tempo. It will challenge you as it continually crosses the higher notes of the 6 hole ocarina.



This piece offers a good opportunity to discuss repeating sections of a score.



Repeat Sign
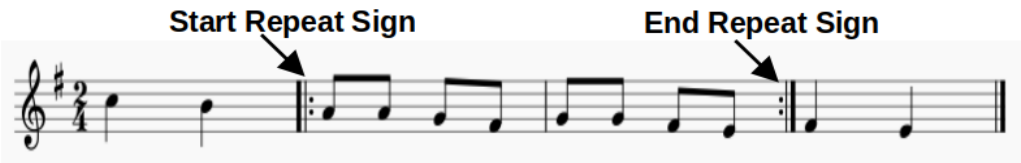
In the fourth measure of the first line, you see this **repeat sign**. That tells you to repeat that section of measures from the beginning.
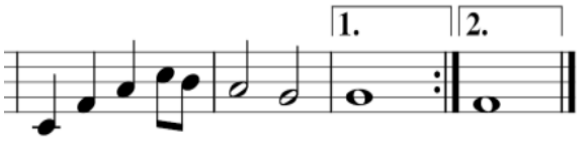
So you play the first four measures of this song, encounter the repeat sign, and play them again. Then you continue to measure five and play through to the end of the score.

At that point, you see the instruction **d.c. al fine**. That means "when you hit these words, go back to the start of the piece and play until you see the word **fine**." **fine** means "end" in Italian, so that's where you stop playing. (You don't repeat the first four measures a second time, as you did in your first iteration.)

The words **d.c. al fine** and **fine** could appear in either lower or upper case letters, depending on the music publisher. They require the same action from you in either case.

Here's another common construct you'll encounter. It simply means to repeat the measures between the repeat signs one time.





You'll see this last construct all the time. The first time through the score, you play the **first ending**, indicated by the **1.** and the bar indicating the measure(s) to play.

You encounter the repeat sign, so you go back to the start of the piece and play the whole thing again.

When you come upon the ending for the second time, you play the **second ending**, the measure(s) indicated by the **2.**. And then you stop playing, as indicated by the double bar at the end of the very last measure.

We should note that what almost everybody calls the **first and second endings** are technically termed **volta brackets**, or **the volta**.

Song: Let Me Call You Sweetheart
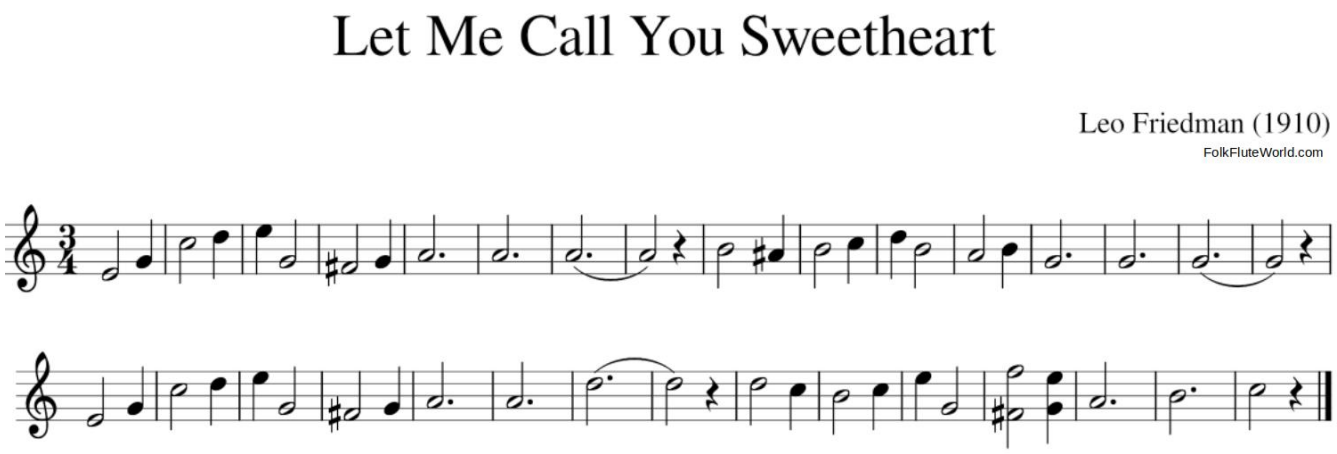
Here's a classic tune that was a huge hit for a long-ago vocal group named The Peerless Quartet. The song has since been recorded by a wide range of prominent artists, and has made numerous appearances in films and television shows.

In the popular mind, it's a romantic ballad associated with the good times of a century ago.

From the musical perspective, it offers a good opportunity to practice the highest notes of the 6 hole oc. It also includes two accidentals: F# and A#. You might wonder: A# ? What's up with that?

Recall that every accidental can be considered either by its name as a sharp, or by its name as a flat. A# is simply another name for your old friend B♭, with which you're already familiar. Finger it as B♭.
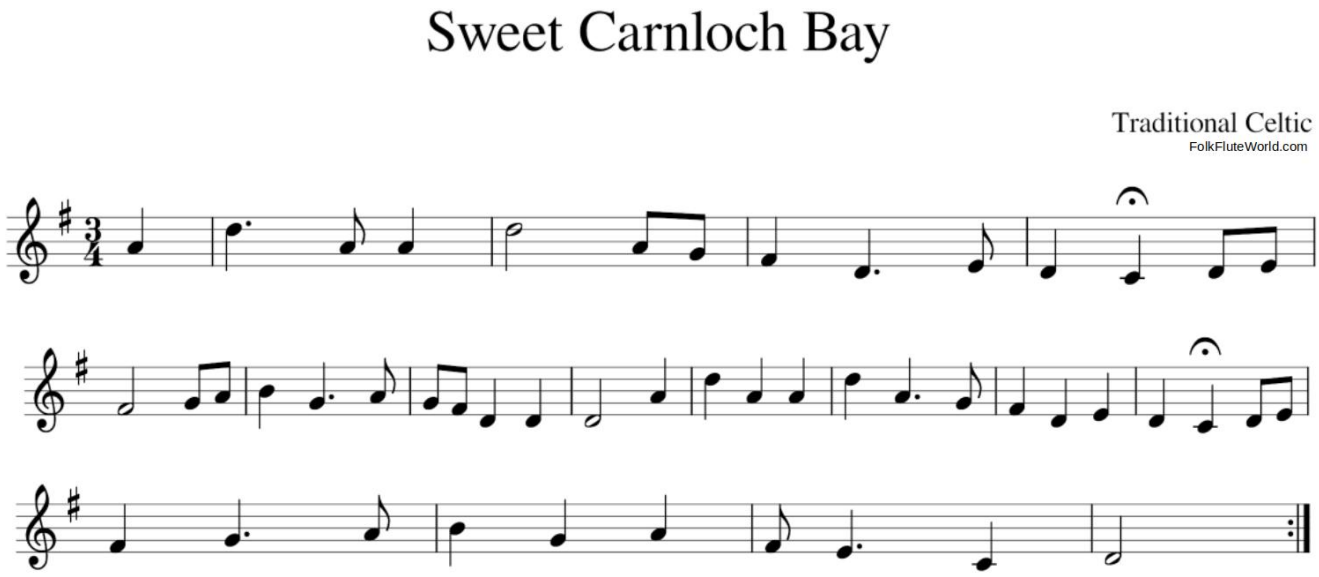
The original score includes one out-of-range note: high F. As the alternate note indicates, play it as a low F# and it fits the song perfectly.



Song: Sweet Carnloch Bay

Here's a fine old Celtic tune. If it sounds a little odd to modern ears, that's a result of its ancient heritage. I really like this weird tune.

This score gives you some practice with high D and all the F#'s of a G Major key signature. Remember that "eyes" (or fermatas) over the low C's in the last measures of lines one and two mean to hold those notes for an extended time.



Song: My Country 'Tis of Thee

Two countries represent themselves through this song. In the UK, it's called *God Save the King*. In the USA, some call it *America*, but it's probably better known to the public as *My Country 'Tis of Thee*.

We've provided the sheet music for this song in two different keys. The first version is in the key of F. Played slowly, it sounds stately and serious.
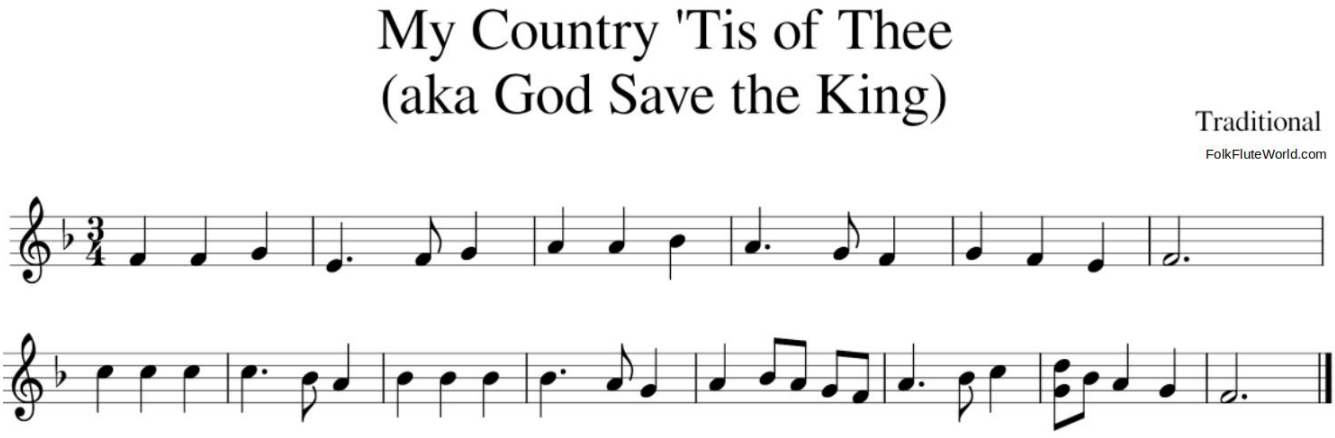
The second version is in G Major. Played it at a slightly faster pace or **tempo** it almost sounds sprightly.
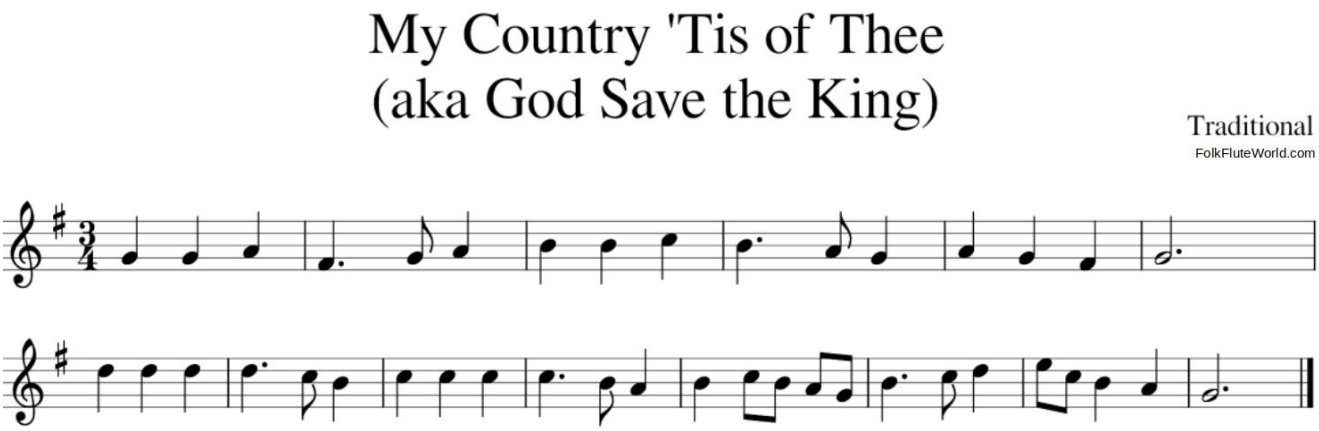
The point here is that the same song can sound significantly different to our ears, depending on the key in which it's written. Different keys evoke different emotions in the listener.

Composers know this well. Writing a score for a monster movie? Create something in a minor key, or with lots of accidentals. Sad scenes require the same techniques, perhaps paired with a slow melody. Descending notes convey somber, sad, or scary feelings.

Writing for a happy or celebratory scene? Create an upbeat song in a quick tempo in C major or other simple key.

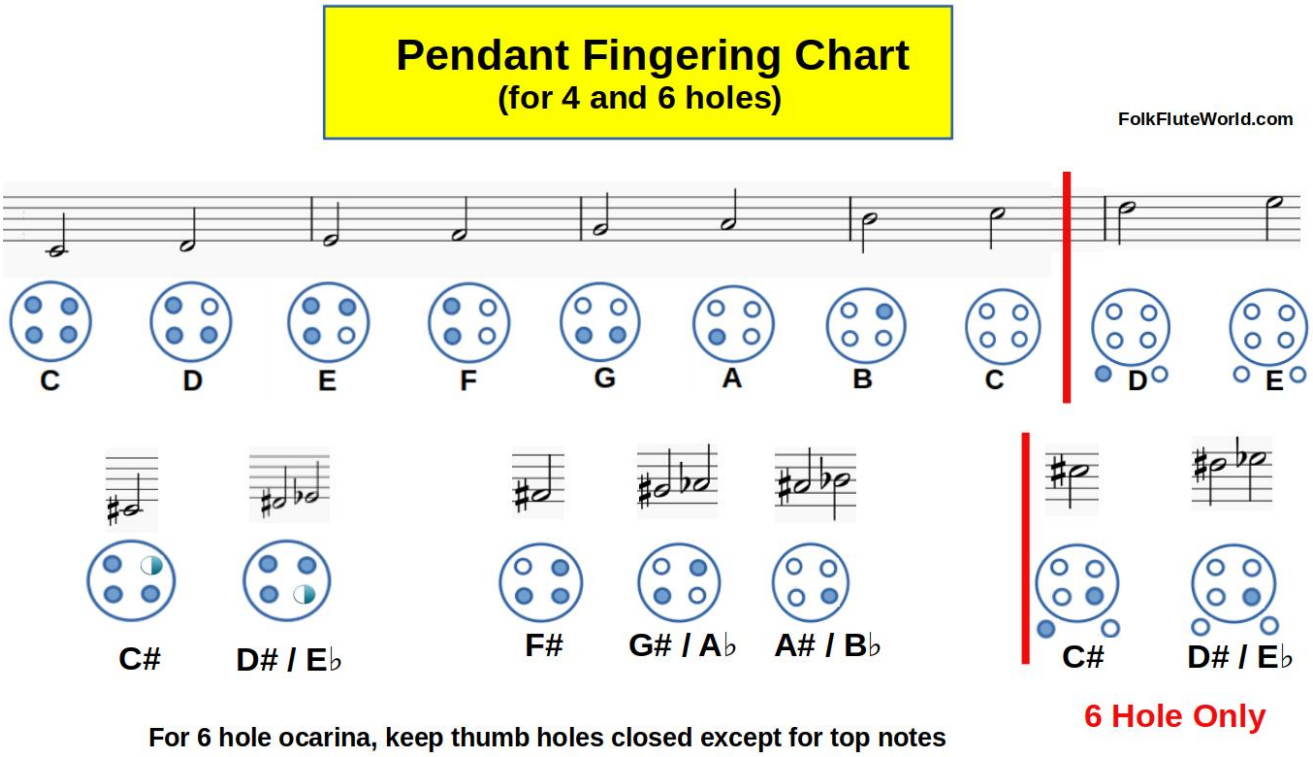
Okay, here are the two versions of the song. The first plays well on a 4 hole ocarina if you just substitute a G for the high D in the second to last measure. The second version, in G Major, is strictly for 6 hole ocarinas.





Fingering Chart

To summarize, here is a complete fingering chart for all pendant ocarinas:



The associations between the notes and fingerings are those for all C Major pendants (the C Soprano,

Alto C, and C Bass).

If you were to play a G Major oc, all the fingerings are the exact same. However, the note you sound with all fingering holes closed is low G.

So the chart shifts appropriately because your base note is low G instead of low C. The notes in the G Major scale are: G - A - B - C - D - E - F# - (high G).

Note that there may exist **alternative fingerings** for some notes.

For example, on most 6 hole pendants you can play high D by removing your thumb from either thumb hole, and you'll hear an indistinguishable tone. Test this on your own instrument. If one fingering sounds superior, adopt that approach.

For some pendants -- not all -- it is possible to play one to three semitones lower than are shown on this chart. Lesson 23 will cover this.

Summary

In this lesson you learned the two highest notes of the 6 hole ocarina, high D and E.

These notes are only playable with a 6 hole oc. If you have a 4 hole pendant, you'll have to play alternative notes for high D and E. Or, find a version of the song in a different, more playable key.

In the next lesson we'll go into this in more detail. How do you find songs that you can play on your ocarina? Let's explore that topic ...

Lesson 18 -- How to Find Free Sheet Music You Can Play

In this lesson we'll take a break from practicing to talk about where to get free sheet music to play.

Given that pendants have limited range, you have to know your way around to find playable songs. If you do, there's a ton of free sheet music available. We'll tell you where to get it and everything else you need to know about that in this lesson.

We'll also explain how to alter scores so that they're easier to play on your ocarina.

Lead Sheets

When seeking suitable sheet music, it's helpful to know the term **lead sheet**.

A lead sheet is a score that contains only the melody. It dispenses with all harmonic and bass parts, as well as the chords one often finds in piano or guitar music. Lead sheets provide an easy-to-read melodic line, so they're often readily playable on ocarinas.

You could consider all the scores in this course lead sheets (except for those for rounds and duets).

Where to Find Free Sheet Music

The best way to get free sheet music that is easily playable on pendants is to find music specifically scored for them. That assures that all notes are playable on your instrument and in easy keys.

Near the end of this book we provide an extensive list of websites that offer scores that are free for download. The websites offer more than one million free scores.

This list is kept updated online at the non-commercial website **FolkFluteWorld.com.** Go there for links to two dozen repositories of ocarina music. It's all free and contains thousands of songs.

FolkFluteWorld also provides links to music libraries of public domain lead sheets, including free scores for similar instruments like recorders, tin whistles, concert flute, and voice.

Altogether, this book's appendices or the website connect you to huge tune libraries of over 1 million free scores.

For most people, the one million plus free songs are enough that they never need buy sheet music. The exceptions would be if you want to play specific copyrighted works. Those you have to pay for.

Copyright

When you seek scores, it is important to understand about copyright. Copyright law is complicated. Here are the simplified basics.

In the United States, most sheet music is either:

- Public domain
- Copyrighted
- Open source licensed

Public domain -- A song in the public domain means that you have free, unrestricted use of the score. You can download the song, send copies to your friends, play it in public, etc. (But be aware that specific arrangements of public domain songs can be copyrighted.)

In the United States, works published or registered prior to 1978 automatically enter the public domain **95 years** after they are published. So you have free access to works that are at least 95 years old.

Most works newer than that are copyrighted.

Copyright -- Copyright means that you must pay the copyright owner for the sheet music. So you buy a copy of the sheet music from a reputable dealer, and they or the music publisher handle the required payment to the copyright holder.

Be sure you buy from a vendor that respects copyright law. Some internet scammers sell copyrighted scores online and don't pay the required copyright fees.

Be clear on what you're buying. Rights for personal use, for example, differ from performance rights. And those differ from rights to distribute sheet music.

Finally, be aware that websites that sell copyrighted songs typically mix in public domain pieces in their inventories. Those you don't have to buy! You can get them for free through the internet links in this book's appendices, FolkFluteWorld.com, or public domain music repositories.

Open source licenses -- These licenses provide a way for composers to give you free access to their sheet music while still protecting their authorship. The most common open source licenses are those offered through Creative Commons, an international non-profit organization.

Generally speaking, you can download and play open source music for free. But you should read the license for any restrictions if you intend other uses.

This Course

An example of open source licensing is the digital ebook (PDF version) of this course.

Its **Creative Commons license (BY-NC-ND)** with **AI Restriction** states that you may --

- Take this course for free
- Freely distribute it
- Post it on any website for download

But you may not --

- Distribute this work other than in its entirety
- Change the content in any way
- Sell print copies
- Input it to AI

This course is free because I developed it for the satisfaction of creating something worthwhile, and I wanted to share the fun of ocarinas with as many people as possible. An open source license accomplishes this -- while retaining the integrity of the material and my authorship.

But the course can't include current sheet music because that's all copyrighted. And the license fees required to reproduce sheet music cost **far more** that than those you pay to download a score for your personal use. Those fees would be astronomical for a course like this.

The result is that you get this free course with sheet music for some 140 songs. All songs have all been verified as at least 95 years old. If you want to play current songs, you will have to purchase them.

Making Melodies Ocarina-Friendly

Now you know where to get a million free scores. You can play many of them on your oc "as is".

But that's not true of all of them. After all, some were scored for other instruments that have different capabilities.

The constraints that get in the way of playing tunes on pendants are songs that:

1. Stray out of range for a few notes
2. Contain large out of range sections
3. Contain many accidentals
4. Are scored in unsuitable keys
5. Are too densely written to easily read

Let's talk about these problems and how to solve them.
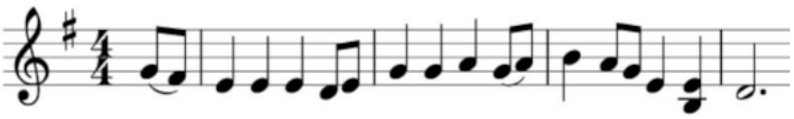
A Few Out of Range Notes

Let's say you chance upon a melody you'd really like to play that's not scored for ocarina.

You carefully inspect all the notes in the song and find one or two that are out of your oc's range.

In most cases, you can replace the unplayable note with a compatible playable one. You've seen us do this in several of our tunes in these lessons.

One example was in Lesson 15, with the song *Star of County Down*:



Altering a Note to Playable

The penultimate note was originally written as a low B. That's playable on 12 hole transverse ocarinas, but not on 4 and 6 hole pendants. So we added a playable alternative to the same stem -- in this case, a low E.

This technique works well if you only need to change a couple notes in the tune. You probably won't even notice the change when you play the song. However, on rare occasions it won't work because the musical context doesn't allow it... the original note is too critical to the tune to replace.

To what new note should you alter the original? The best way to find out is to try a few alternatives and see what sounds best.

Often you'll find that two notes above or below the original often sounds good. Change a high E down to a high C, or a high D down to a B.
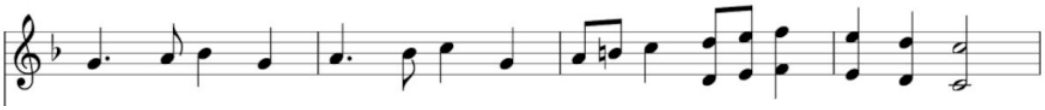
But ultimately, it all depends on the context. The surrounding notes dictate what sounds best.

A Block of Notes Out of Range

Here's a related situation you might run into. A song is all within range except the notes within one section of the melody. Perhaps you could just rewrite those measures.

In Lesson 21, we do just that in the song *Deck the Halls*.

This section of the score shows several high notes in last two measures that are out of range for a 4 hole oc. The highest note (high F) is out of range for a 6 hole pendant. The solution is simply to rewrite those measures an octave lower. Play it and you'll see that it doesn't detract from the song.



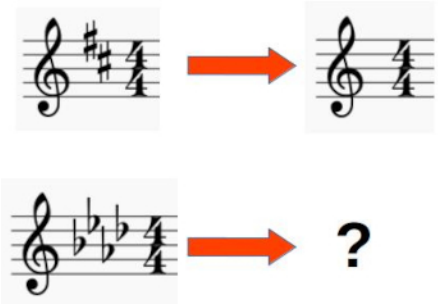
Transposing a Section

Many Notes Out of Range / Too Many Sharps or Flats

Now let's say you happen upon a tune you'd like to play but it requires lots of out of range notes.

Or maybe the score is just cluttered with sharps or flats. That's difficult to play.

What to do?



Transposing Keys

One answer would be to change **all** the notes in the score to a different key. That's called **transposing**.

For example, you could rewrite a tune from the key of D Major to C Major, thereby eliminating D Major's difficult-to-play C#.

The diagram shows how this change looks. D Major is a very popular key for Irish flute and tin whistle songs. You'll find huge libraries of free D Major scores on the web. Transposing can make these songs more accessible to the ocarina.

The second example suggests transposing a melody from A♭ Major to some easier key. You can see how that could make such tunes easier to play.

There are two dozen different musical keys. While you'll almost never see some of them, others are popular -- and tough to play on ocarinas. Transposing is a great way to simplify them.

The other benefit to transposing is that you can move **all** the notes in a score either up or down on the staff. You can sometimes use this to eliminate out of range notes while preserving the tune.

How do you transpose a score? It can be very simple if you have the appropriate musical notation for computer transposing tools. On the other hand, it can be tedious if you have to do it by hand.

In Lesson 20 we'll explain how to easily transpose scores.

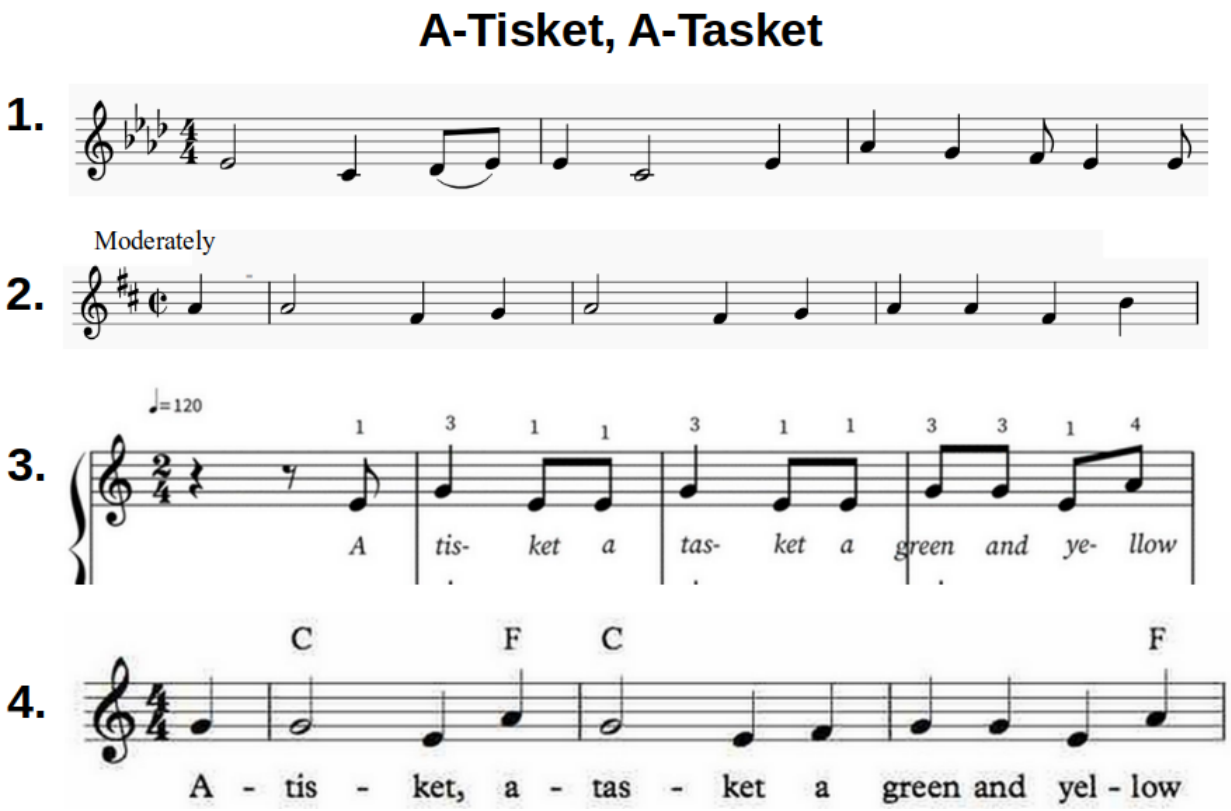
Use the Web to Find a More Suitable Score

Here's another way to avoid tough scores littered with accidentals or scored in difficult keys. Let the web do the work for you.

There are multiple variants of almost any popular song out on the internet. You just need to search diligently to find the best one.

Here's an example. For the traditional tune *A-Tisket, A-Tasket*, we found four different scores on the internet.

Look at the first line of each score. Which would you rather play?



Example 1 has four flats. That's something with which most of us don't have much experience. It looks pretty tough.

Example 2 looks clean and easy to play. But C#? That calls for half-holing. If there's a quick C# or two in the song, that's fine. But if there are many of them, that's difficult for most of us.

Example 3 is better. It's in C Major and so has no sharps or flats.

Example 4 is even better than example 3. It's clearly written to help you figure out the timing of the song. That's why the timing is a standard, slow 4/4.

My conclusion is that example 4 looks best. It's in a simple key and easy time signature.

The lesson is that diligent web-searching will often unearth some scores that are much easier to play than others.

The Closing of the Web

Unfortunately, the web is closing. By that we mean that more and more websites are eliminating free access. They're erecting paywalls. That public domain song you used to be able to download for free? Now, many websites charge a monthly subscription or purchase fee to access it.

That's fine if you seek specific songs. But what if you want to play hundreds of songs? What if you like to try out lots of songs just to learn how to play them? Sheet music fees can really add up.

This is why this book's appendices and my website, FolkFluteWorld.com, list dozens of free, public domain music libraries. There's still an absolute ton of legally-free music out there. But you have to spend the time and energy to find it. I've spent the time so you don't have to.

(If you're reading this course years after it was written and FolkFluteWorld.com has disappeared, you can access it through The Internet Archive's Wayback Machine at https://web.archive.org/. Or just web search for libraries of public domain sheet music).

Summary

We briefly explained how the concepts of public domain, copyright, and open source apply to sheet music. This information is provided with the legal disclaimer below.

We told you how to find tons of free sheet music on the web. But some of it is unsuitable for 4 and 6 hole ocarinas. We explained a few ways to adjust scores so that you can more easily play them.

In the next lesson, we'll get back to hands-on and play some rounds.

Disclaimer

The information provided in this course and on website FolkFluteWorld.com is for general informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice. If you require legal advice about copyright or other matters, please consult a qualified legal professional.

Lesson 19 -- Rounds

Let's have some fun playing your ocarina with others.

A **round** is a song that can be played by two or more musicians who play the same song, but start it at different times. They stagger their starts to the tune. That's the traditional approach.

Alternatively, the musicians can all start playing at once, but they start at different points in the song.

In either case, markings in the song show the points at which new musicians start playing.

Some rounds are designed for four ocarinists. But if you have either two or three on hand, they usually work fine with that number of players as well. We'll start with a few of those.

Other rounds are composed for two players. They offer an alternative to traditional duets. We include them in this lesson following those for four musicians.

The scores in this lesson are all written for ocarinas of the same key. For example, for two, three, or four Alto C ocs. Or, for several G Sopranos. They won't sound right if you mix ocarinas of different keys together, such as an Alto C and a G Soprano.

What if you don't have a partner? All rounds play well for a single musician. They will be good practice for you if you solo. So don't skip this lesson if you don't have companions available!

Before we start, let's talk a bit about tuning. It's an important topic when you play your oc with others.

Tuning

Whenever you play your oc with someone else, you want to be sure your ocarinas are in tune with each other.

This is problematic because ocarinas are not tunable. They don't have a mouthpiece you can adjust in or out like concert flutes, clarinets, or saxophones to raise or lower their pitch.

So what can you do? Step one is always to ensure that all ocarinas are at normal room temperature before you play. This gives them the best chance to all play in tune.

Secondly, buy quality ocarinas. As stated in Lesson 2, ocarinas are folk instruments. Many are poorly tuned. Buying a quality instrument reduces the chances of an ill-tuned dud.

If you're serious about tuning, test an ocarina before you buy it. You can measure its tuning by googling for "instrument tuners", or by using the instrument tuners at these websites:

- Tuner Ninja (https://tuner.ninja/)
- Mussica (https://www.musicca.com/tuner)
- Band Mate Tuner (https://www.bandmatetuner.com/web)
- The Online Metronome (https://theonlinemetronome.com/instrument-tuner)
- Online Tuner (https://onlinetuner.org/)

And before playing, test the ocarinas participating against each other to see how in tune they are as a group.

Serious ocarinists who play together often use a set of ocarinas made by one manufacturer. A good maker will craft them all in tune with each other.

Professionally made ocarinas are typically tuned on the basis of **A440** (the audio frequency of 440 Hz). But some Asian products are tuned for **A442**. The difference is very slight but can be noticeable in some situations.

Lastly, remember that you can raise or lower the pitch of your oc a bit by how hard (or softly) you blow. To some small degree, players can adjust their play to one another by this simple expedient.

How to Play Rounds

In a round, each musician plays a different part of a song at the same time.

The first time you try this, you might find it a bit disorienting. It can be difficult to keep your place in the music and uphold your part. You may find yourself listening intently to your own playing. You might even play loudly to try to drown out the others.

But practice a piece a few times, and you'll become more secure in your role. No need to overcome "competing" parts. It's all part of a whole.

The trick to rounds, duets, and ensembles is learning how to fit parts together. Coherence and harmony are the goals. Initially you may find yourself playing your part mechanically. Over time you'll learn how to play your part in concert with your partners.

Play with the same musicians for some time, and you'll develop a true partnership. You'll develop "ensemble instincts" and play more as a group, than as a set of individuals playing from the same score at the same time.

Song: Three Blind Mice

This simple song provides an excellent exercise for playing high notes. Especially if you take on the challenge of learning to play it very quickly! You don't have to play it with others to get in some worthwhile practice.
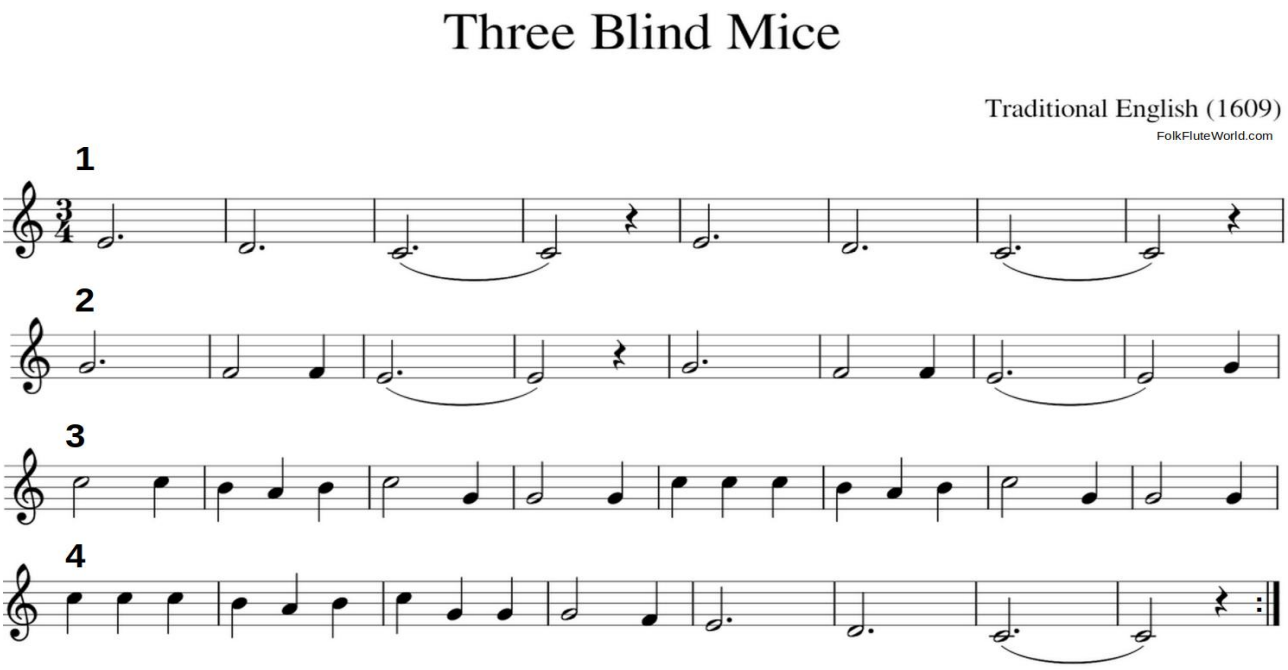
Like many simple rounds, this song is popular as a nursery tune. Yet it's fantastic fun for adults to play as a round.

It's a good place to start this lesson because you'll be able to uphold your part even if you're not used to playing in rounds. Everyone knows the tune.

So rustle up a friend or two or three and try it.

The large numbers above lines in the score tell when each player should start. One musician starts playing. The second starts when the first hits line two (signified by the big **2** above the staff). The third player starts when the first attains line **3**, and the fourth starts when the first player gets to the part labeled **4**.

If you only have yourself and a partner, you start the song, and your partner starts it when you reach the second line (that labeled **2**).



This score is scripted in the 3/4 time signature. Remember that means that there are three beats per measure, and that a quarter note gets one beat. It's more fun if you play this song fairly quickly, much faster than it's written.

Part of what makes a round work is that each section has the same number of measures. In this song, each section consists of 8 measures.

The **repeat** symbol at the very end of the piece is optional to keep the round going. You may want to hold a group discussion before playing to agree on when the song will end.

And mind the slurs. Those tie two notes together as one.

Song: Row, Row, Row Your Boat

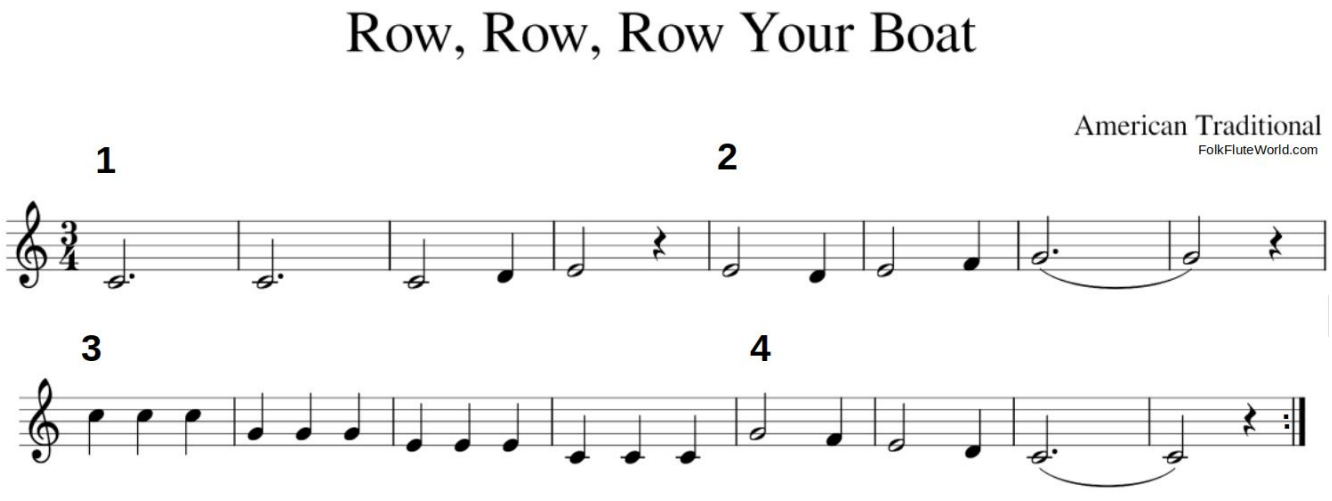
Here's another simple, fun tune everyone knows.

Like the previous round, this one can give you some practice even if you play it alone.

The song dates from 1852 and was composed by Eliphalet Oram Lyte. He was an American teacher and composer active in the 19th century.

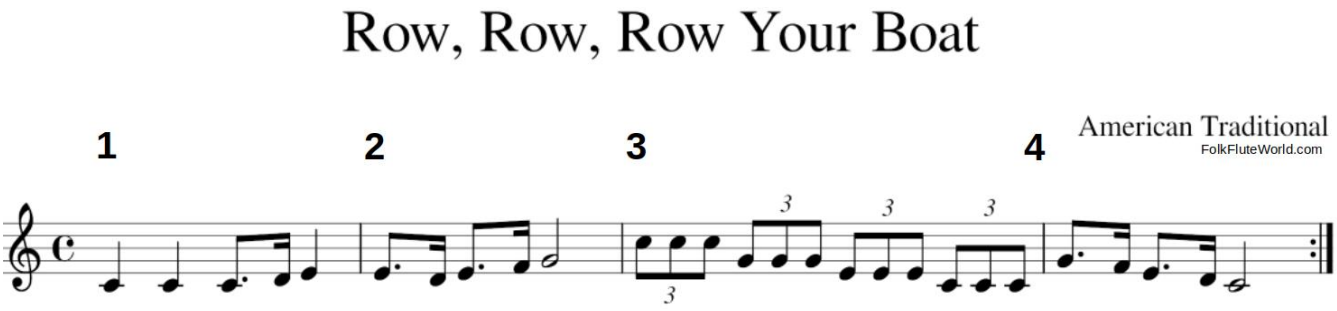
To familiarize you with reading music, we'll provide two versions of this song. The first is in a simple style, the second a bit more challenging. See if you can interpret them both.

Both versions define the parts in the round by a number above the staff at the proper locations.



The next version we will show you is in 4/4 time -- indicated by the **C** time signature -- instead of 3/4 time.

Notice the dotted eighth notes followed by sixteenth notes. You know the timing of this song from your childhood. So now, match up that timing with the way the score represents it. This is a common musical construct. You'll want to make sure you understand it and recognize how to play it when you encounter it in future scores.
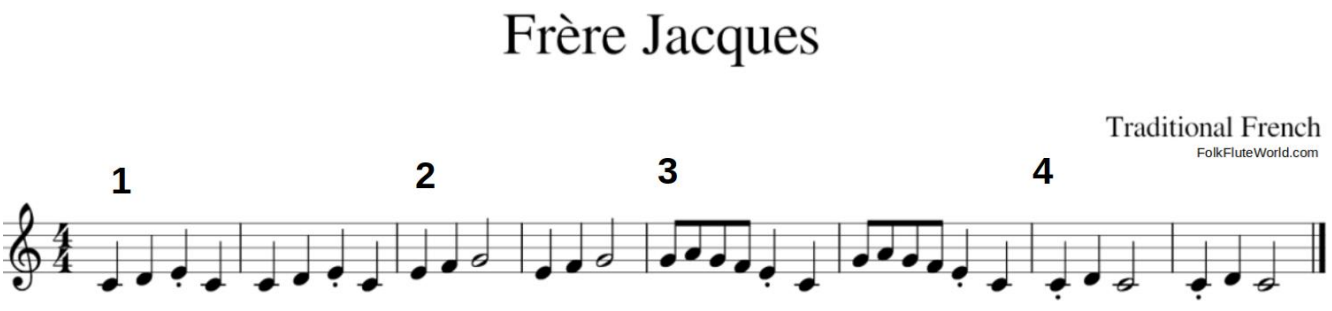


Another common device you see in this score are the sets of three eighth notes that have a number **3** superimposed above them. These are **triplets**.

These triplets tell you to play three notes in the timing space of a single beat. So in this 4/4 score, a set of three eighth notes consumes the same amount of time as a single quarter note.

You'll see triplets in lots in scores. Be sure to look at them in this song and match the way you know the tune goes with how these triplets are used to express that. Then you'll be able to play them properly next time you run across them.

Song: Frère Jacques

Here's a song you practiced back in Lesson 9. That should make it easy to maintain your part when you now play it as a round.



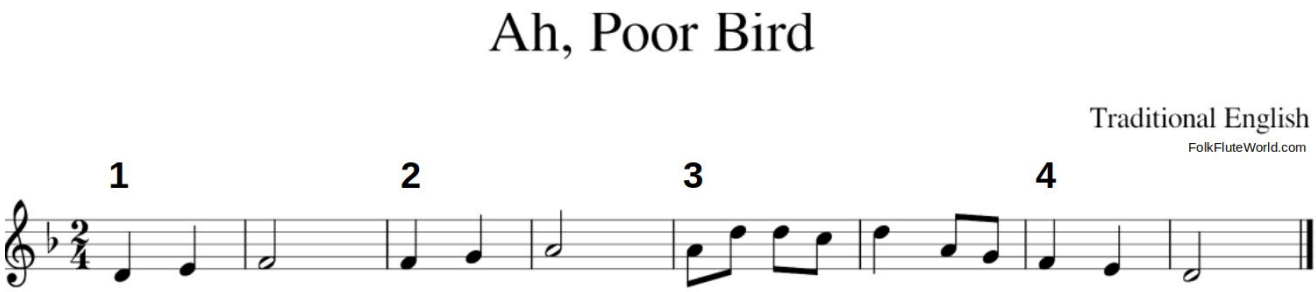
Part of playing with other musicians is being in sync with them. In other words, your timing of the notes has to match theirs precisely. The staccato notes in this piece -- denoted by the dots beneath the notes -- require your timing to be spot on to make this piece sound harmonious when played as a round.

Unlike the previous three songs, this one does not have repeat sign at the end of the score. Some rounds are written without it. They assume you know to repeat the tune. It's often wise to agree amongst yourselves beforehand as to how many times you'll play through the score.

Of course, just as one musician starts the song solo, the ocarinist who starts playing last will also solo as he finishes his role.

Song: Ah, Poor Bird

Here's another simple but enjoyable round. It works best with 6 hole ocarinas that can play those high D's.



Rounds for Two Players

Song: Make New Friends
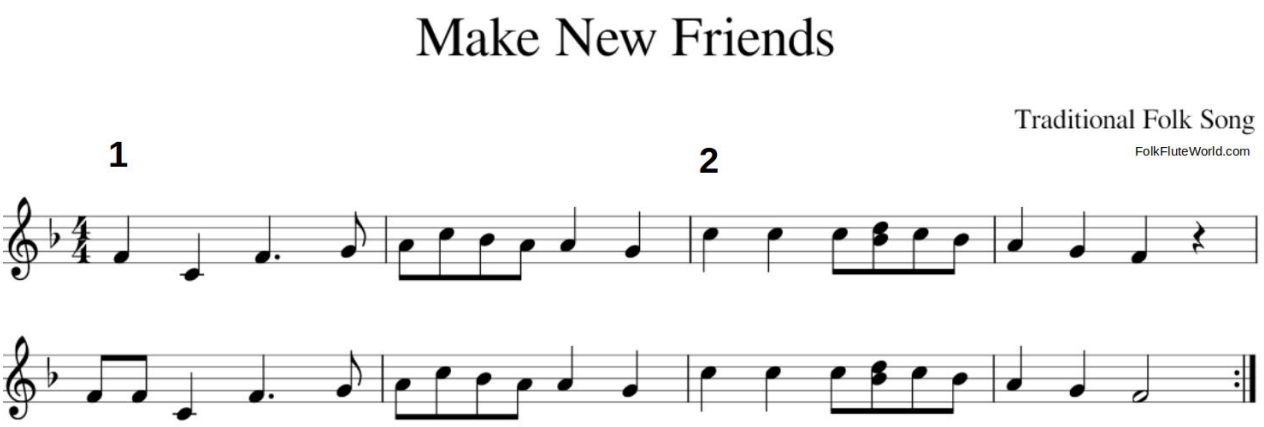
Let's turn our attention to rounds for two. Even if you don't have a partner available, you still might want to practice these songs.

This first song is popular for camping and other group activities for youngsters. Those who grew up as Girl Scouts may remember it.

This song gives you some good practice for high notes. Among them is high D. This note occurs one time each in the 3rd and 7th measures.

If you have a 4 hole pendant, you can't play this note, so the score recommends that you instead substitute a B♭ for that high D.
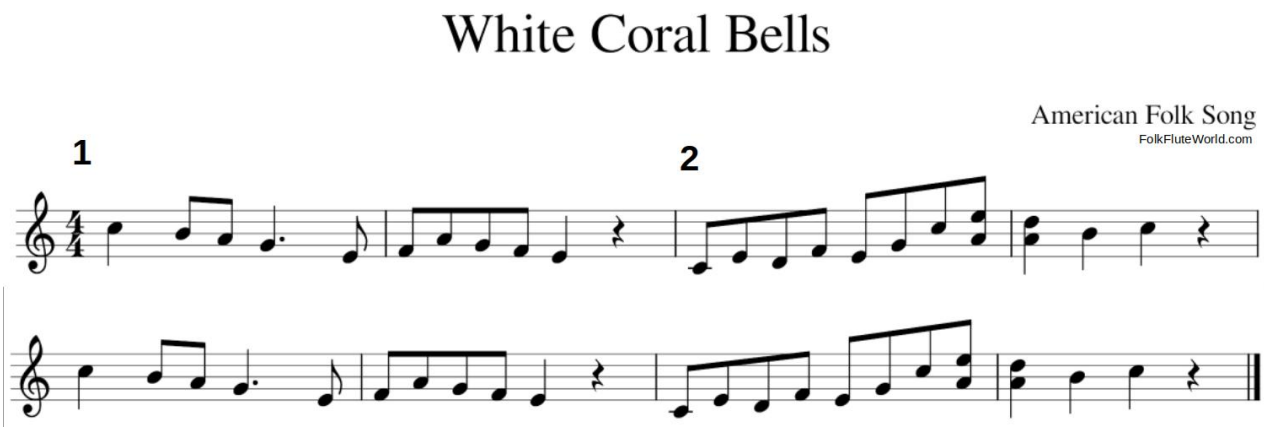
This simple technique of exchanging a compatible note for an unplayable one is very useful whenever you're confronted with a piece that briefly strays out of your ocarina's range. It renders an unplayable song playable.



Song: White Coral Bells

Here's another camper favorite. It has appealing lyrics:

> *White coral bells upon a slender stalk,*
> *Lilies of the valley dress my garden walk.*
> *Oh, don't you wish that you could hear them ring?*
> *That will happen only when the fairies sing.*
>
> (Lyrics courtesy of ScoutSongs.com)

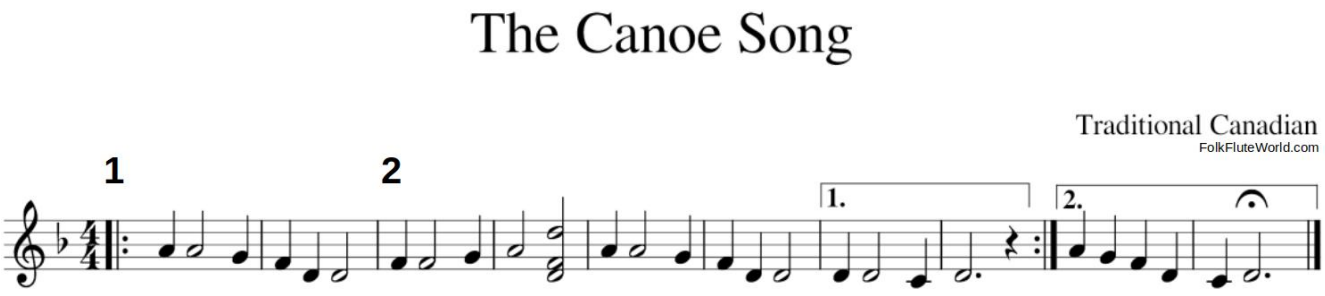


Song: The Canoe Song

Here's a traditional Canadian folk song. It also features attractive lyrics:

> *My paddle keen and bright,*
> *Flashing with silver*
> *Follow the wild goose flight*
> *Dip, dip, and swing.*
>
> (Lyrics courtesy of ScoutSongs.com)

The triple-stemmed note at the end of the fourth measure is played as high D with a 6 hole ocarina. With a 4 holer, try the lower two alternatives, and see which you prefer.



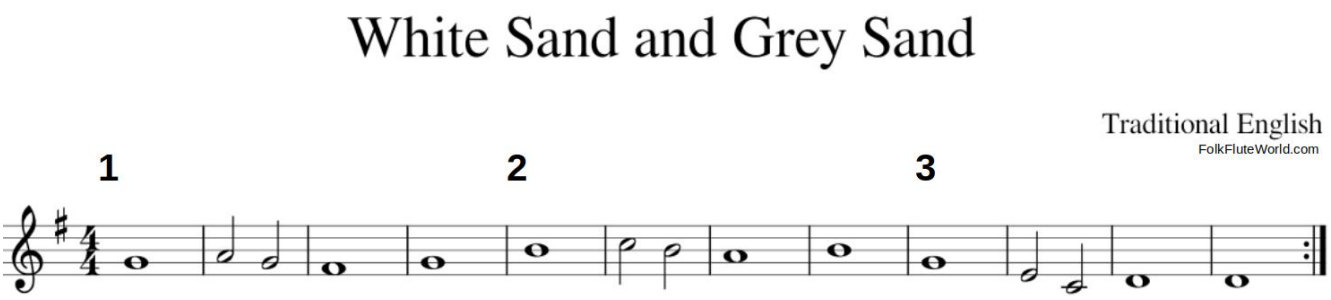
A Round for Three

Song: White Sand and Grey Sand

Here's an oddity... a round designed for three. Of course, you can also play it with two.

It's a very simple, slow melody, but beautiful in its harmony.

This is a street vendors' song from the days when writers used quill pens. People bought sand to dip their pens to remove excess ink. White sand could absorb more ink and was therefore more expensive, while gray sand was less useful but also less expensive.



Summary

We hope you enjoyed playing these rounds with friends. Or, if you played them solo, that you found them worthwhile to further developing your skills. In a future lesson we'll offer duets for you to play with a single partner. In duets, both partners simultaneously play the score from the start.

In the next lesson, we delve into another kind of musical notation. It's used for computer processing of music. For example, it allows you to effortlessly transpose songs into new keys.

Lesson 20 -- ABC Notation

In lesson 8 we discussed musical notations.

We introduced standard sheet music notation, and also the tabbed notation unique to pendants.

In this lesson we'll learn about a third notation. This one was developed for computer processing. Using it, computer programs can read songs, transpose them to different keys, help you edit them, and output standard sheet music notation.

They can even play the songs for you.

And while they do, they show where they are in the score, so that you can follow along. It's an excellent way to learn how to read music.

So while it may at first seem like a burden to hear about yet another musical notation, you can see that this one is very useful.

Our explanation will be simple and brief. We offer more detail with a couple of the songs in the appendices.

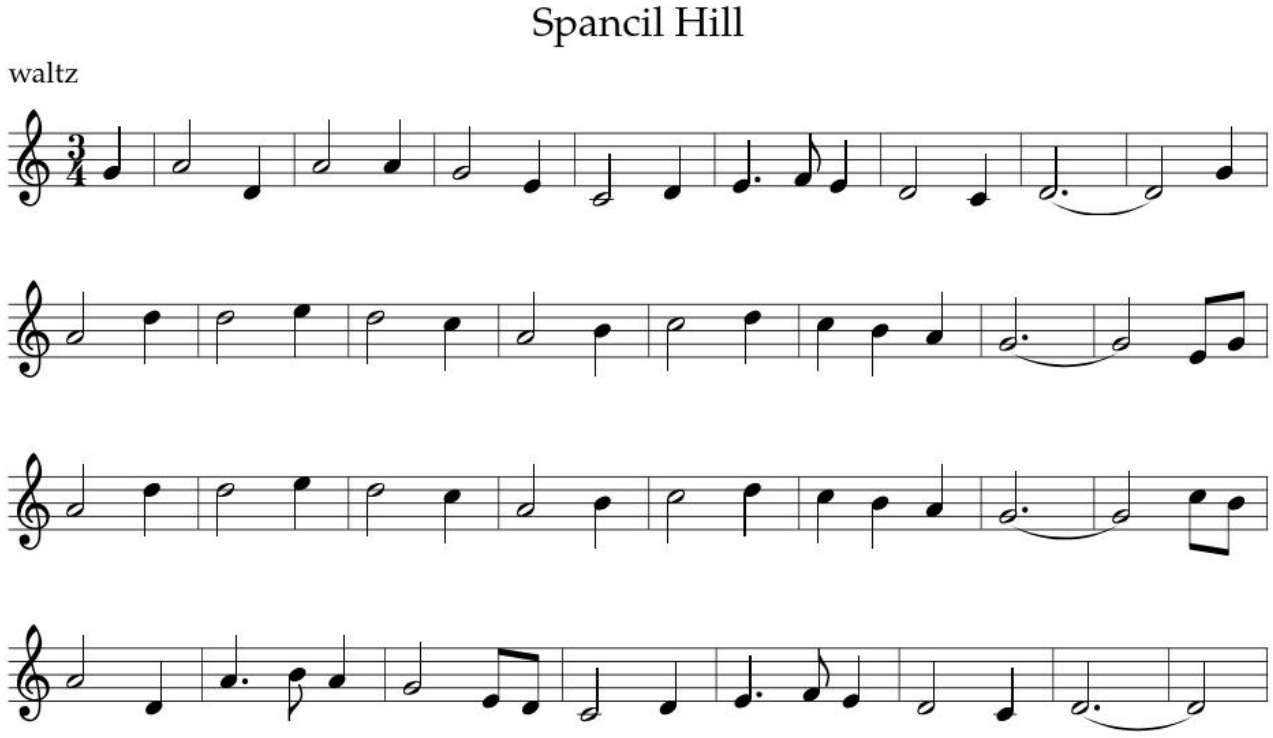
ABC Notation

ABC notation is an alternative to standard sheet music notation and tabbed ocarina notation. It was developed specifically for computer processing.

Computer programs can take songs written in ABC notation and:

- Convert them to standard sheet music
- Play them for you
- Show where they are in the sheet music while they play so that you can follow along
- Enable you to edit songs, then play back the changed version to you
- Instantly transpose a song to any key
- Analyze songs to find others that have similar musical characteristics

Here's an example of sheet music for a song called *Spancil Hill*.



(Courtesy of ABCNotation.com and MichaelEskin.com/abc)

Here's that exact same song in ABC notation:

```
X: 7
T: Spancil Hill
R: waltz
M: 3/4
L: 1/8
K: C
G2|A4D2|A4A2|G4E2|C4D2|E3FE2|D4C2|D6-|D4G2|
A4d2|d4e2|d4c2|A4B2|c4d2|c2B2A2|G6-|G4EG|
A4d2|d4e2|d4c2|A4B2|c4d2|c2B2A2|G6-|G4cB|
A4D2|A3BA2|G4ED|C4D2|E3FE2|D4C2|D6-|D4|
```

Without delving into coding details, you can see that ABC is pretty simple. There are a few lines of heading information that contain the song title, key signature, time signature, and so forth.

Then, each line of the standard sheet music results in one line of ABC notation. In this example, the sheet music score contains four lines, and so the ABC also contains four corresponding lines.

Each line names the notes in the order they appear in the score. Uppercase letters represent lower notes, and lowercase letters represent high notes. Numbers right after the notes tell about their timing. Vertical bars (|) separate each measure.

Reading ABC Notation

Let's take a closer look at this sample of ABC notation and decode its meaning. It's pretty simple, which is one of the reasons that ABC is so popular.

The lines at the top of the ABC file each have a single letter followed by a colon. These describe basic aspects of the melody. Here is what those lines mean:

```
X: 7                Reference Number: This is song #7
T: Spancil Hill     Title: Spancil Hill
R: waltz            Rhythm (aka type of song): waltz
M: 3/4              Meter (aka time signature): 3/4 time signature
L: 1/8              Unit Note Length (which note gets 1 timing unit):
                    1/8 means that each 8th note gets 1 timing unit
K: C                Key: C
```

Now look at the four long lines that follow this introductory material. Each corresponds to one line of the standard sheet music. So with four lines in the score, we get four lines of ABC notation:

```
G2|A4D2|A4A2|G4E2|C4D2|E3FE2|D4C2|D6-|D4G2|
A4d2|d4e2|d4c2|A4B2|c4d2|c2B2A2|G6-|G4EG|
A4d2|d4e2|d4c2|A4B2|c4d2|c2B2A2|G6-|G4cB|
A4D2|A3BA2|G4ED|C4D2|E3FE2|D4C2|D6-|D4|
```

Let's decode the first few notes.

Measures are separated from one another by vertical bars (|). So the first line of the score consists of 9 measures.

Look at the first measure. It contains just the single pick-up note into the song: **G2**. That's the note G, and we know it's low G because it's a capital letter (high G would be in lower case, encoded as **g2**).

The **2** following the note says that it gets two timing units according to the meter **`L: 1/8`**. That is, it's a quarter note because it gets two units in terms of the meter **`L: 1/8,`** where each 8th note gets 1 timing unit.

How about the next measure?

`A4D2` means low A as a half note, then low D as a quarter note. The **`4`** indicates a half note, and the **`2`** means a quarter note (as defined by the meter of **`L: 1/8`**).

A dash following a note means to tie (slur) it into the next note. **`|D6-|D4G2|`** means to connect the D in the prior measure to the D that follows it in the next measure by a tie. This code snippet describes the final two measures of the piece.

That's about all there is to basic ABC notation! At this point you should be able to work through the rest of the ABC score if you care to.

Benefits

The benefit of ABC is that now computer programs can understand and manipulate this song for us.

For example, from the sheet music you can see that *Spancil Hill* is only playable on a 6 hole ocarina -- not a 4 holer -- because it contains high D and high E. Can computer programs help us convert this to use with a 4 hole pendant?

Perhaps transposing the song to a different key would help. With the song in ABC notation, it just takes a click of the mouse to transpose the song to any other key you want. You can just keep clicking and transposing until you see a version you like.

Another click, and a computer program outputs the song in standard sheet music notation for you to play. Or, you can tell the computer to play the song for you.

Here's another option. We could edit the ABC code ourselves and change those high D's and E's to other notes of our choosing. Then, a click of the mouse will play our changes back for us.

Don't like the result? Change those D's and E's to some other notes and play it back again. You can see how useful these tools can be. You can edit the score, and get instant feedback on your changes.

Here's another benefit: instead of busting your brain trying to figure out how the tune goes, you could just direct that a computer program play the song. You can see how the score matches the song as it's played.

This is a great way to improve your ability to read scores.

Besides your computer speakers or headphones, ABC tools can ship your songs to any number of electronically capable instruments for automatic play or analysis. Most use the so-called **MIDI**

interface for compatibility. MIDI stands for **Musical Instrument Digital Interface**. It's the standard protocol used to connect a wide variety of digital devices for music playback and manipulation.

A Transposing Example

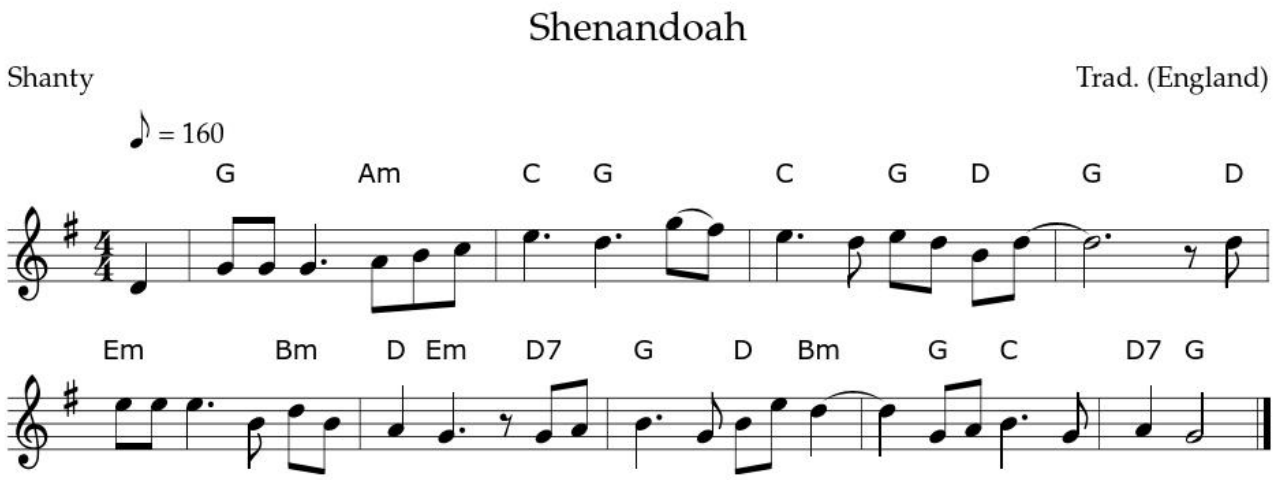
Here's an example of how ABC notation and its transposing tools can help.

On the website **ABCNotation.com**, we used its **Search For Songs** feature to search its million tune public domain library for a song called *Shenandoah*. We retrieve about a dozen results. Some are different versions of the song, while others are the same version in different keys.

Most likely we can find one among the dozen that's suitable for ocarina.

But let's say we can't. We find many variants in the key of D Major, which contains F# and C#. We reject those because C# requires difficult half-holing.

Here's a better result in the key of G Major, with its single sharp:
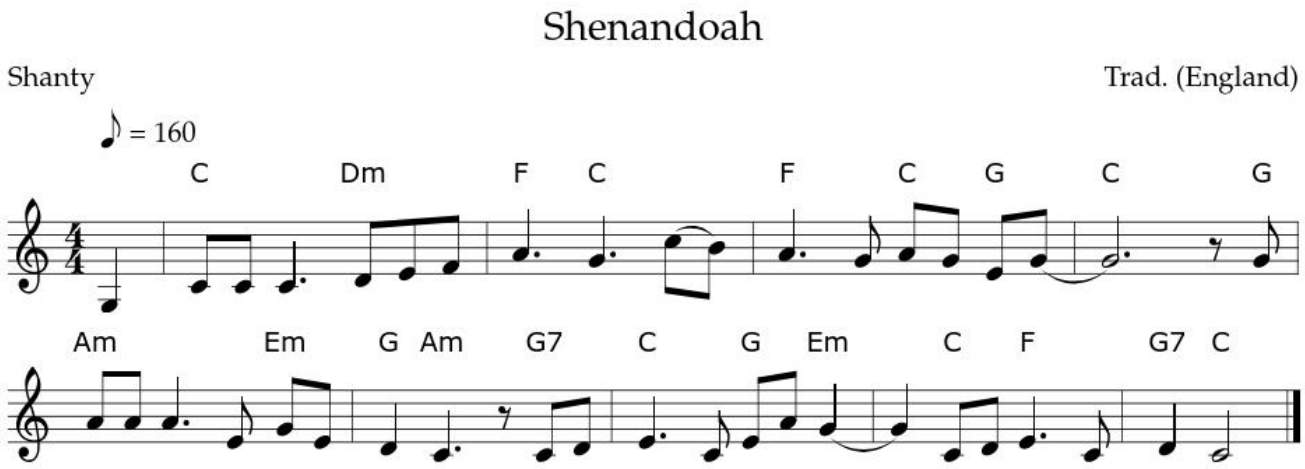


(Courtesy of ABCNotation.com and MichaelEskin.com/abc)

But you can't play this on an ocarina with those high notes! So we decide to transpose the song to a more amenable key.

We copy the ABC notation provided with that sheet music, and paste it into any ABC transposing tool. There are several available.

We like the one over at MichaelEskin.com/abc. The website has a complete and easy-to-use set of automated tools, as well as offering a huge collection of free music. It comes with better documentation than competing tools so you can teach yourself about ABC and how to benefit from it.

We click the **Transpose** button a couple times. And voilà! We get a more playable version of the tune in C Major:



(Courtesy of MichaelEskin.com/abc)

That first low note in the tune is unnecessary, so you can just exclude it. The result is a nicely playable score for your 4 or 6 hole ocarina. All the notes are in range and there aren't any difficult sharps or flats.

Resources

We've given you the barest introduction to ABC notation here. In the appendices, I'll walk you through a couple more ABC scores. You'll learn more about ABC notation and its features.

To access the huge libraries of free ABC tunes, use automated tools, and learn more about ABC notation, visit these websites:

- ABCNotation.com
- MichaelEskin.com/abc
- FolkFluteWorld.com

A quick internet search also returns several other useful ABC websites.

Summary

ABC notation applies computer power to your songs. You can edit them, play them back, transpose them, listen to them on your computer, and more.

Over a million free tunes exist in ABC -- and therefore in traditional musical scores, which ABC can output. In our next lesson, we'll get back to hands-on practice with several duets.

Lesson 21 -- Duets

In this lesson we offer several duets you can try with a fellow ocarinist.

We'll start with some very simple songs so you can get used to playing duets. Then we serve up some more challenging ones. Along the way we'll offer advice and some playing tips.

The first four songs can be played on either 4 or 6 hole ocarinas. The last three require at least one of the two ocarinas to be a 6 holer.

The scores in this lesson are all written for ocarinas of the same key. For example, for two Alto C ocs; or, for two G Sopranos. They won't sound right if you mix two of different keys, as in an Alto C and a G Soprano.

If you don't happen to have an ocarinist partner available, don't skip this lesson! You can still benefit from practicing these songs on your own.

How to Play Duets

Let's start with a few tips for playing duets.

One concern is whether the two players are both at the same or different skill levels. Duets can work well either way, but it's best if you know what you're getting into.

Equally skilled players can learn and grow together. With partners at different levels, one can mentor the other.

Attitudes and expectations count, too. My own are to have fun, learn a bit, and increase my skills. That fit perfectly with several partners. But one prospect was very serious about practicing to performance-level perfection, which to me isn't fun, so we amicably agreed to seek other partners.

It's often helpful to practice the tunes solo prior to getting together as a duet. That way you've got the basics down in advance. Play both parts, even if you already know that you'll just play one in the duo. That gives you a 360 degree understanding of the song, and it's more likely you'll be a successful partner.

When starting out with your partner, try playing songs slowly at first. This not only ensures playing accuracy but also gives you a chance to "jell" as a team.

You can pick up the tempo after a few iterations. Better to start out slowly and develop your teamwork than to assume you'll have that without practice.

Balance your parts. If you have a solo, project it and shine. If your part is secondary, the bass line, or a harmony part, hold back and let your partner lead. You're trying to create a cohesive whole, not compete with one another. You don't want to sound like two ocarinists who happen to be playing from the same score at the same time.

Duets are about perfect harmony. It's more than just synchronizing your timing, you ultimately want to sound like one person with two voices. Some of the most beautiful duets are simple tunes rendered as one.

Your timing has to be spot-on when playing a duet. Play solo and you have more leeway. Play together and poor timing immediately becomes apparent.

Sometimes a **metronome** (music clock) will help in the early stages of learning a new piece or developing your partnership. Metronomes audibly tick off the timing of the beats. They help you keep in proper time.

As the old saw says: *In duets, there's no prize for finishing first!*

Use computer tools to assist in your play. You can access or download a metronome app for your computer or mobile phone.

Another useful app is for tuning. Of course, you can't tune an ocarina like a concert instrument, but you can at least make slight breath adjustments if necessary. Be sure all ocarinas are at room temperature before starting. And check to ensure they're relatively in tune with one another.

Sometimes it helps to have ocarinas from the same vendor. That increases the likelihood that they'll be in tune with each other.

We recommend swapping parts during a session. That way both players get the chance to play both lead and harmony. It's fun to play both roles.

Lastly... have fun!
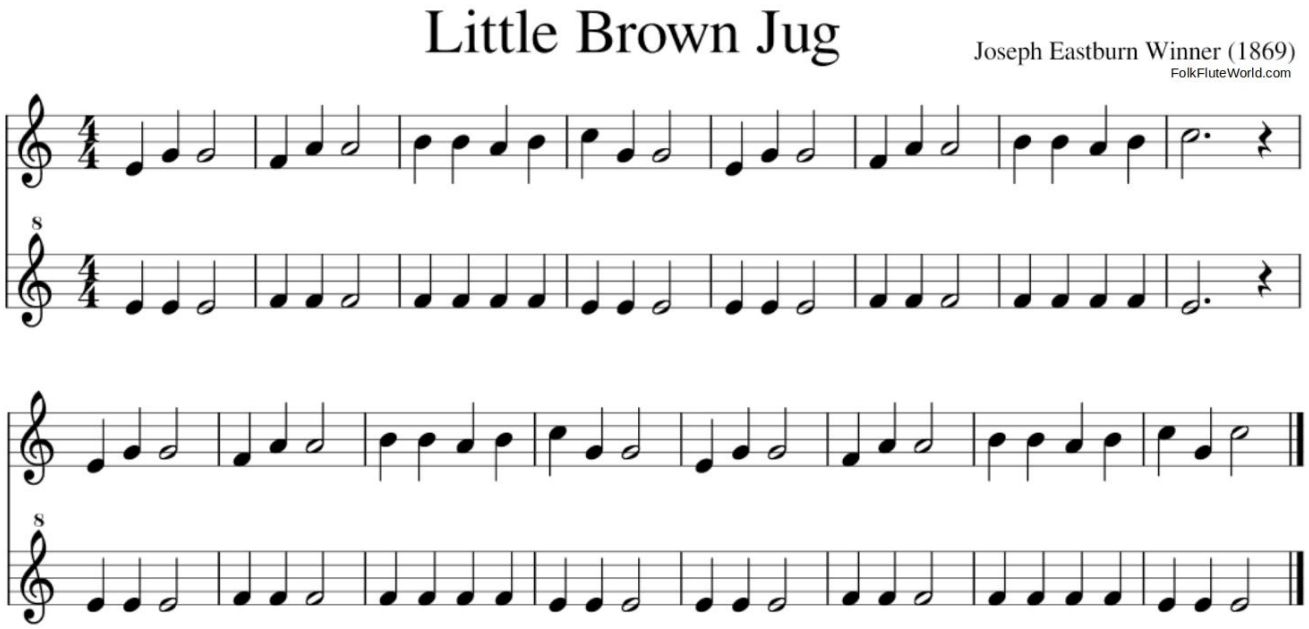
Song: Little Brown Jug

Let's start with a song from an earlier lesson. That way you'll know both the tune and the lead part.

This song is pretty simple in that the timing across both parts match 100%. That should make it easy to sync your timing with your partner.

You can see that the score is divided into paired lines. The "lead" ocarinist plays the top line while their accompanist plays the lower line. Duet parts are always scored in parallel in this manner.

So, now with each of you assigned to one of the two parts, try playing the duet version of *Little Brown Jug*.
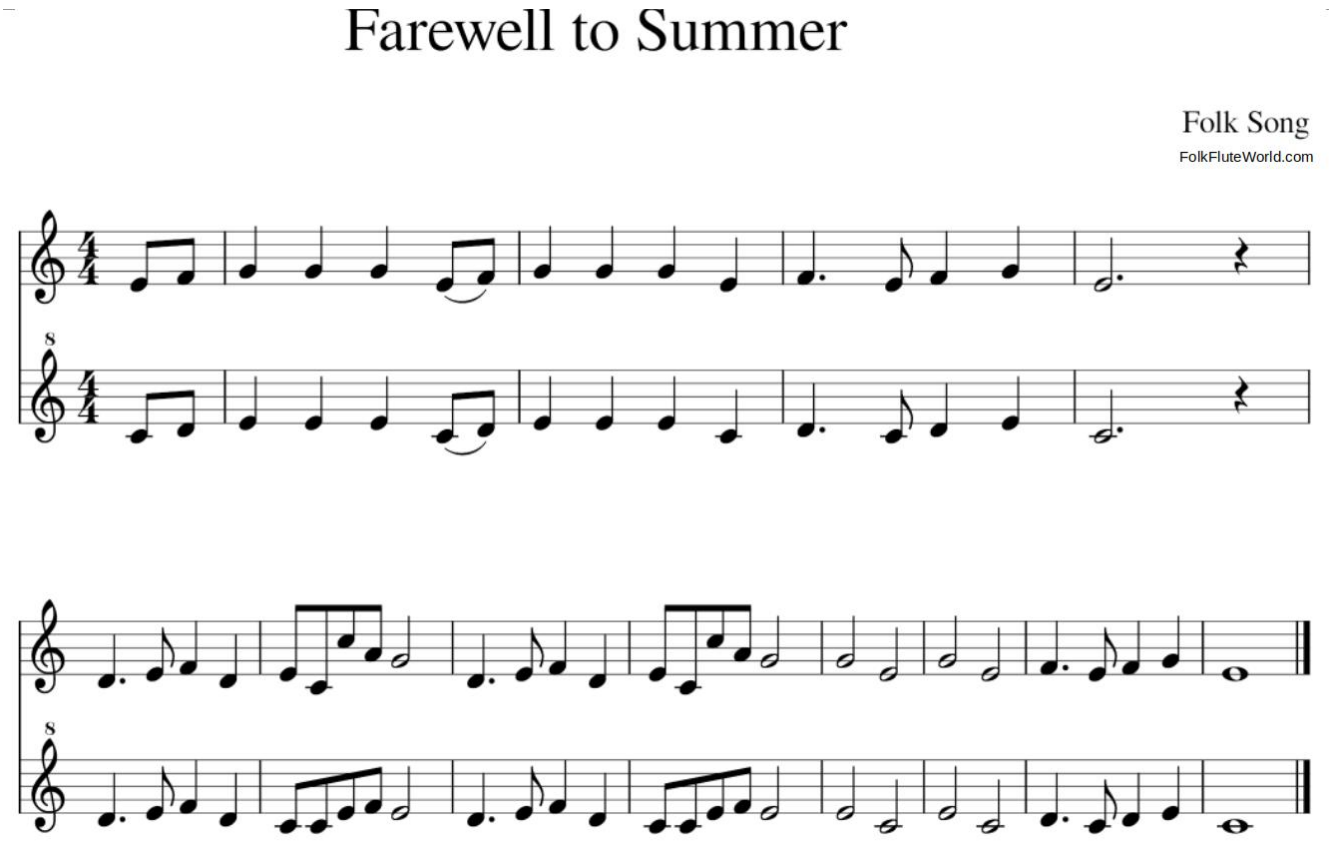


Were you both able to play at the same tempo? Did you keep "in sync" with one another? Oftentimes it helps to "count off" prior to starting play: *"One, two, three, four..."*. That sets the pace in advance.

Another trick is to use a metronome, a "music clock" that audibly ticks the beats. In the old days, metronomes were clock-like devices you had to buy. Today, just access a metronome website, or download the metronome app for your mobile phone.

Song: Farewell to Summer

This classic folk song shares with the previous duet common timing between the two staves. Songs with common timing are easier to play than those that separate the two participants into entirely different timing sequences.



Were you in sync with one another during those runs of eighth notes? If your timing is just the smallest bit off between the two of you, anyone who listens to you will notice it. Practice the song as many times as you need to to achieve perfect synchronization.

If you play a lot with a particular partner, eventually you'll instinctively develop a "partnership understanding" that keeps you synchronized.

How Harmony Works

Harmony refers to how two notes fit together in a way that sounds pleasing.

In our first two duets, you undoubtedly noticed that the **interval** or distance between the notes in the two parts often follows a pattern.

Here's how the intervals between the notes of the C Major scale look:

C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
unison	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	octave

In C Major, an interval of **thirds** usually sounds harmonious to our ears. That's why when the upper player plays a C, the second musician plays either a E (two notes up), or an A (two notes down). Thirds sound naturally **harmonic** to our ears.

You can read the intervals chart to identify other pairings of notes in thirds.

Though thirds often predominate, other pairings can also sound good. For example, one musician might play a C, while the other plays a G above it. That's harmony in the perfect fifth.

Beyond intervals, another feature of appealing harmonies is **movement**. In some duets you see instances where the top line melody moves up the scale while the secondary ocarinist remains static. Or perhaps the opposite occurs.

Or perhaps both the top and bottom lines move together in the same direction up the scale, or simultaneously they diverge in opposite directions across the staff.

Various modes of motion and their coincidence or contrast is another facet of intriguing harmonies.

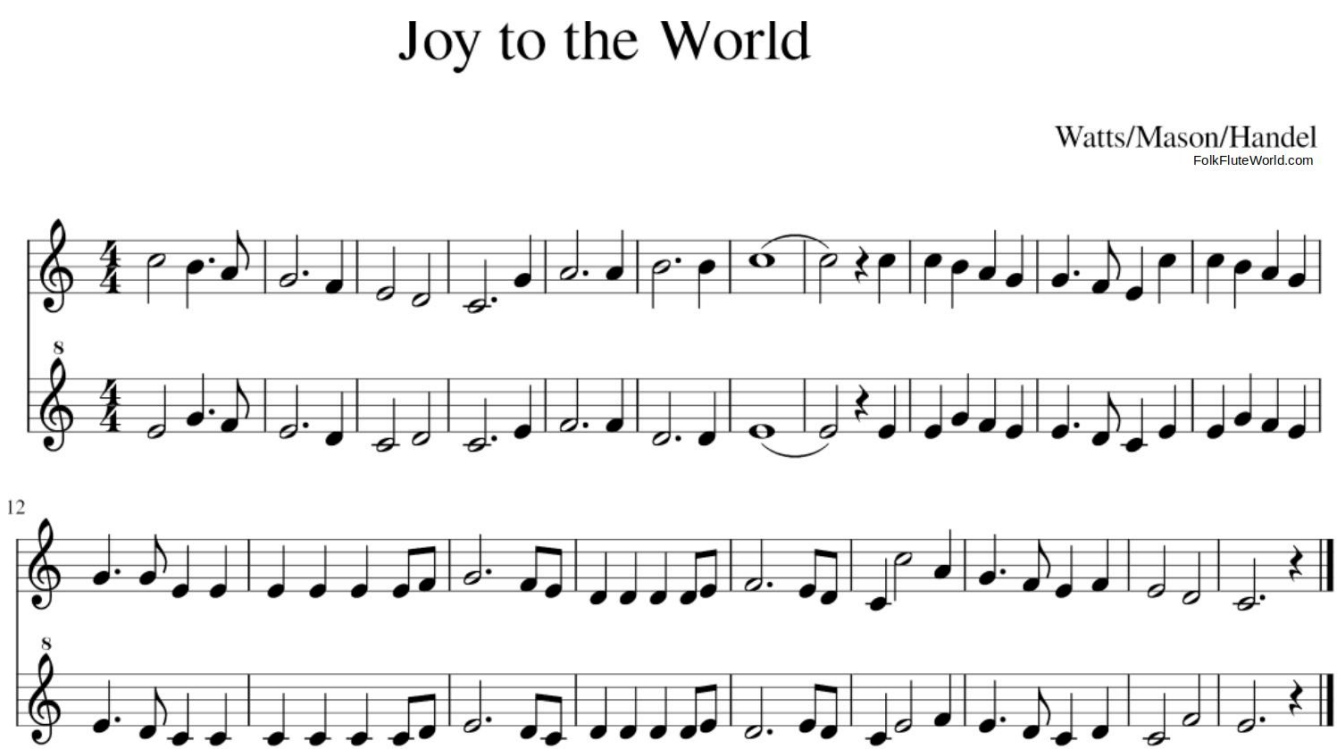
Lastly, you might encounter duets where the lead plays the melody, while the secondary part provides background with sweeping whole notes or sustained tones. In this case, the secondary part would normally be played softer to allow the lead to shine through.

There are many, many other aspects to harmony in duets than what we've mentioned here, but this is at least a bit of an introduction.

Song: Joy to the World

This Christmas classic makes a fine duet.
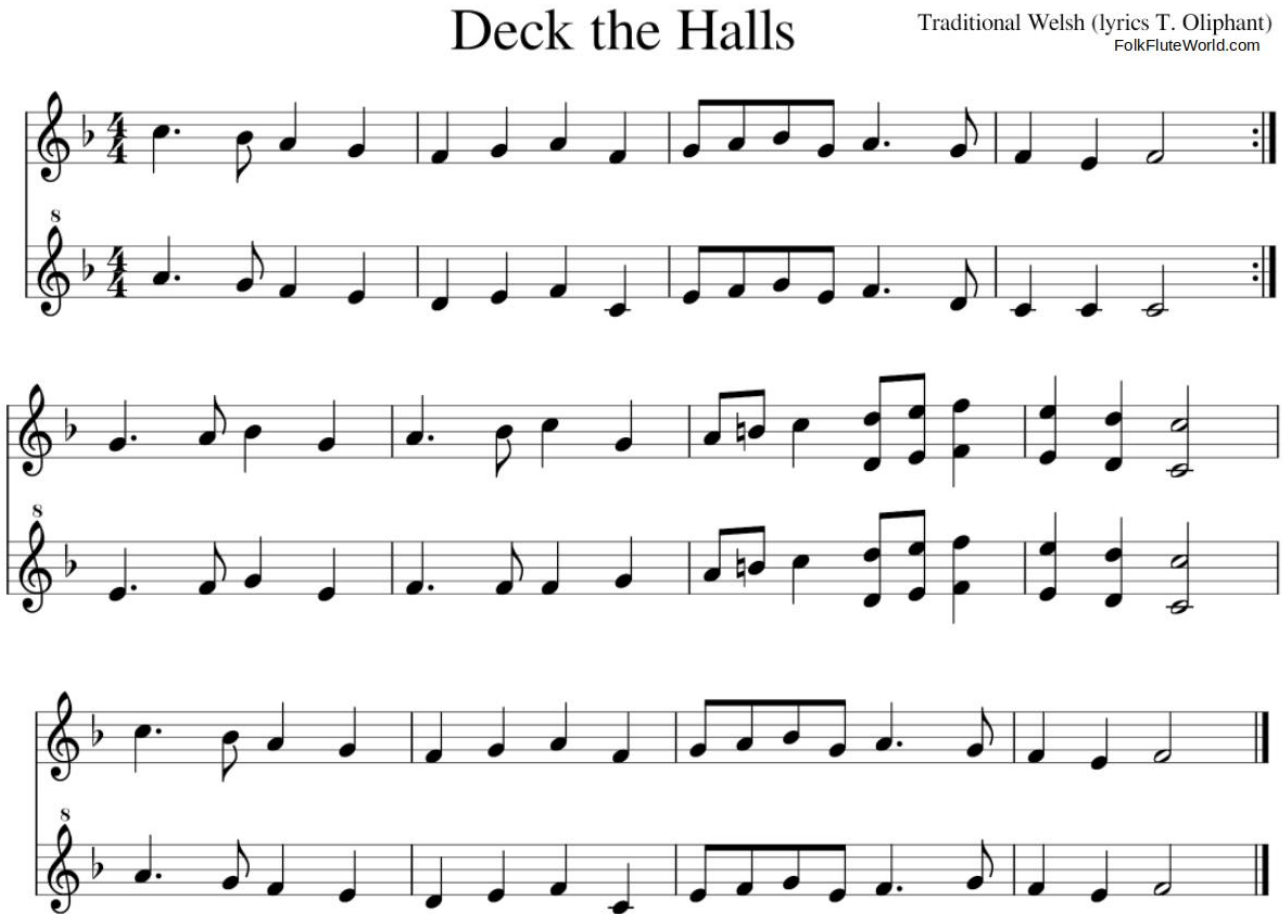
The lyrics were written in 1791 by English minister Isaac Watts, while the melody is thought to be an arrangement of a composition by George Frideric Handel. The words were originally intended as celebratory but ultimately came to be identified with the Christmas holiday.



This song is a good example of the dotted-quarter-note-followed-by-an-eighth note construct. You can refer to this song to ensure you remember this timing sequence, as you'll frequently encounter it in other scores.

Song: Deck the Halls

This fun duet is today a popular Christmas carol. The melody dates back to 16th century Wales. The lyrics were written by Thomas Oliphant in 1862, which put it on track to its present day status as a Christmas classic.



Notice the double-stemmed notes towards the end of the second line. Rather than replace out-of-range notes with harmonic ones, we simply dropped six notes an octave lower. This is another technique you can use to alter out-of-range notes so that they are playable. Using this technique renders both parts of this score playable on 4 hole ocarinas.

These Duets Require at Least One 6 Hole Ocarina

Song: Chopsticks
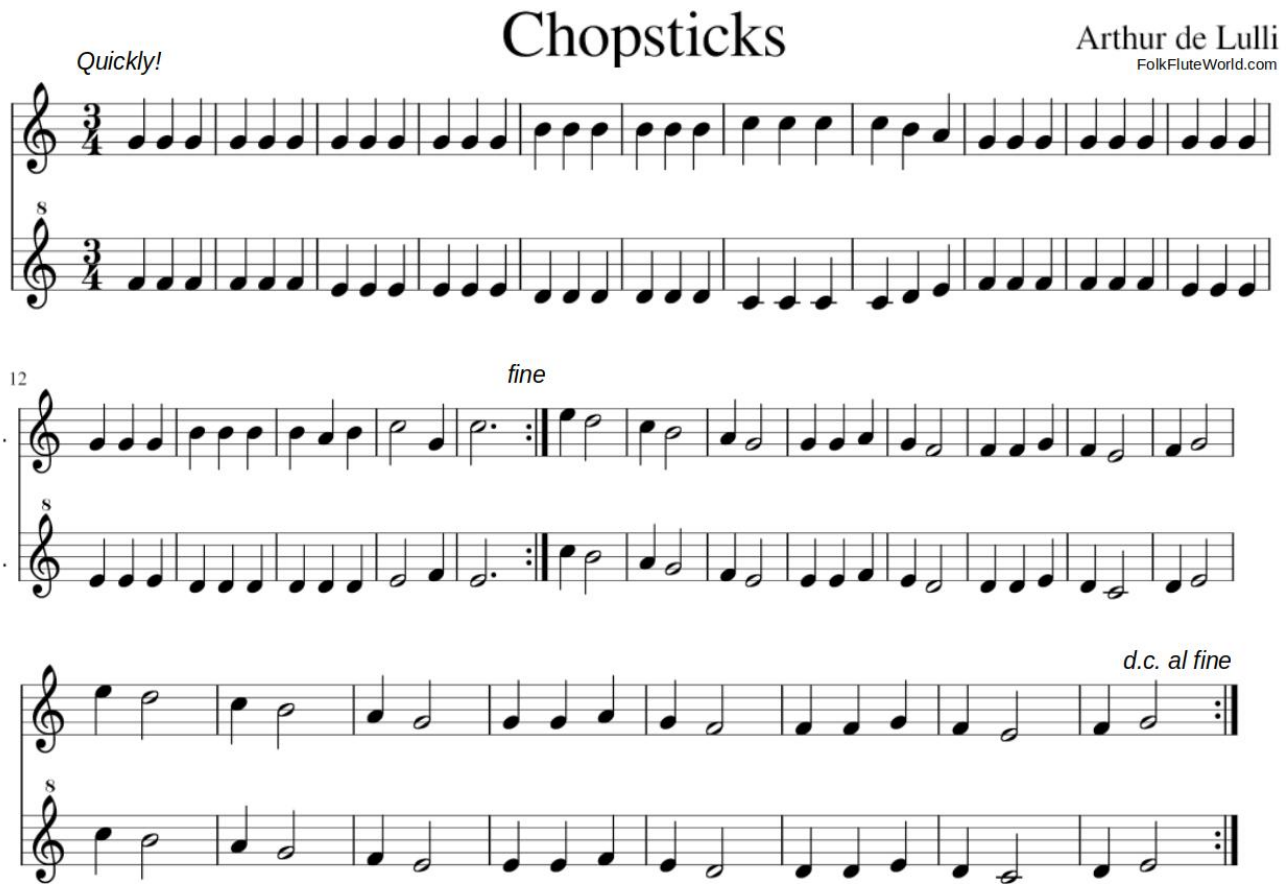
Okay, time for a goofy fun one. *Chopsticks* was composed in 1877 in the UK by British composer Euphemia Alla. (He used the pen name of Arthur de Lulli.)

It has since become the one song that *everyone* can thinks they can play on the piano, regardless of how bereft they may be of musical ability. This piece makes a fun duet as shown in this rendition.

Many people aren't familiar with the song's intermediate chorus -- a catchy, pretty tune that neatly counterbalances the simplistic repetition of the main theme.

Inspect the score, and you'll see that the top line -- that of the **lead** player -- requires a 6 hole ocarina. It ventures up to high E. But the **harmony part** or **secondary part** can be played on a 4 holer. You'll find a number of duets like this, where you can divide the parts to match the instruments you have available.

In fact, the two duets following this one are similar. The lead part requires a 6 hole ocarina, but the second part can be played on either a 4 or 6 hole oc.



Remember how to follow the repeat signs in this composition? You play from the start to the 5th measure in the middle line. There you follow the repeat sign back to the beginning.

Now play all the way to the end. This time you ignore that repeat sign in the middle of the piece, because you already followed its instruction previously.

When you arrive at the end of the piece you see the instruction, **d.c. al fine**. That means to return to the start and play until you hit the end sign, **fine**. Get to that point and you're done.
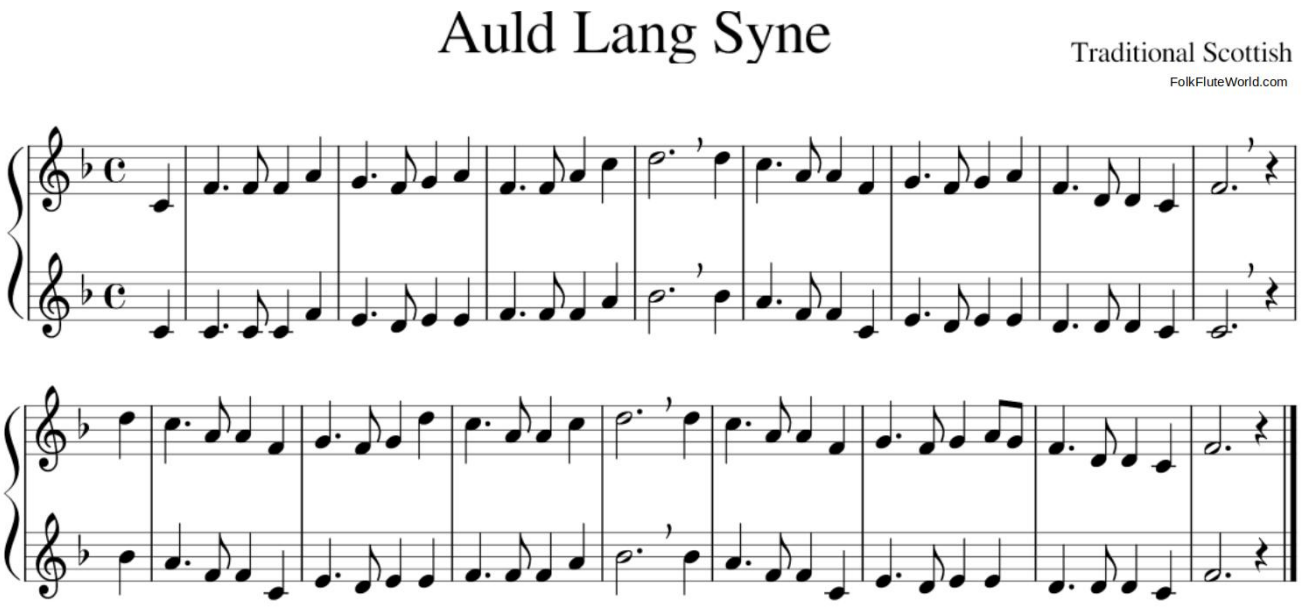
Song: Auld Lang Syne

Auld Lang Syne makes a powerful duet. Everyone knows the tune yet the second part adds the depth needed to convert it into something more interesting.

Many people don't realize that Scottish poet Robert Burns wrote the lyrics. They're set to an old Scottish tune whose origins are lost to history.

The Scottish title of the song roughly translates to modern English as "days gone by", or "long long ago". Everyone associates the song with New Year's celebrations, but you'll also hear it at other occasions of farewell, such as graduations and funerals.

This is another duet that requires a 6 hole ocarina for the lead part but supports a 4 holer in the secondary or harmony part.

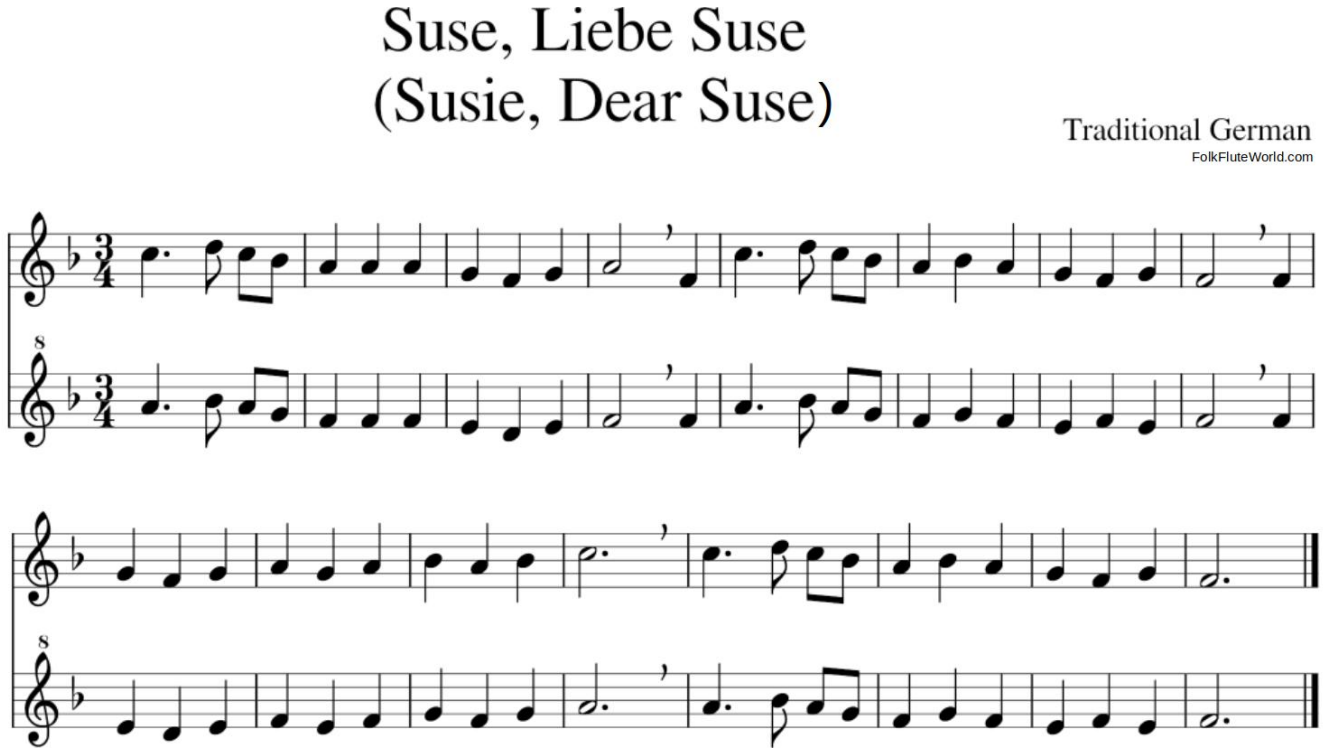


Song: Suse, Liebe Suse

The title of this song roughly translates to *Suzy, Dear Suzy*. It's an old German folk song brought to America by immigrants.

This version is in F Major (one flat, B♭). The ocarina playing lead must be a 6 holer, while the other can have either 4 or 6 holes.

Hopefully, you'll find this a fairly simple duet at this point. The song relies heavily on thirds for its harmony.



Summary

We hope you've enjoyed playing a few duets with a friend. Duets combine partnership and friendship with a mutual interest in ocarinas. They're a great way to learn tips from others.

Even if you play the songs in this lesson alone, they're a good opportunity to improve your playing skills.

In the next lesson we'll explore how you can tell a good ocarina from an unplayable one. It's a useful ability to have, as there are so many unplayable collectibles and ill-tuned toy "ocarinas" on the market.

Lesson 22 -- How to Spot an Unplayable Oc

There exists an entire universe of unplayable ocarinas -- pieces that play a few random sounds but not a true musical scale.

Most are intended as collectibles. They're cute and make great display pieces. But they're not designed to play music. They're best termed **whistles** rather than ocarinas.

How do you spot them? This lesson tells you. We'll also discuss how to avoid poorly tuned instruments.

Inspect the Tone Holes

One dead giveaway that you're looking at a whistle rather than a true ocarina is if all the holes on top are the same size. Often those same-sized holes will be symmetrically positioned.

Playable ocarinas have different sized holes. They are typically arranged slightly off-center rather than in perfect symmetry.

The whistles in this photo are lovely collectibles. Their symmetrically spaced holes, all of equal size, indicate that they are not designed to be played as musical instruments.



Another tip-off is if the item has the wrong number of holes. Standard playable pendants always have exactly 4 holes on top that penetrate the sound chamber. No more, no less.

They have either 0 or 2 thumb holes underneath.

You'll often see pendants that have an extra 5th hole. The big question is: does that hole penetrate the sound chamber?

Inspect the piece very carefully. Tilt it at different angles and move it under the light.

If the extra hole(s) penetrates the enclosed sound chamber, the piece is unplayable.

If not, it's intended to thread a necklace or lanyard. Many pendants have those, and they are perfectly good, playable musical instruments.

Examples

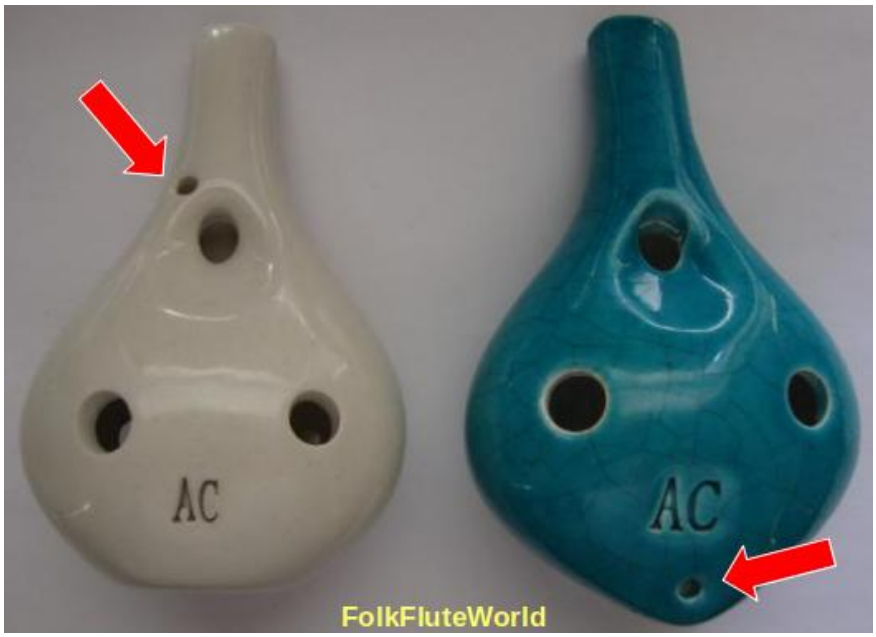
These photos show two pendants. The pretty painted piece is unplayable. The red arrow points out an extra 5th top hole that penetrates the sound chamber.

If you could hold the piece in your hands, you could tilt it around a bit and peer into the hole to determine this.

The blue pendant plays fine. Its extra hole does not penetrate the sound chamber. It's used for stringing the oc on a necklace. This is why they're called "pendants". The necklace hole does not affect the sound.

Top View





Underside View

Avoid Poorly Tuned Ocarinas

Ocarinas are folk instruments. Some are so poorly tuned it's obvious when you play a scale. Others play whole notes in tune but not their chromatics.

Still others won't play their highest note. If they do, it sounds harsh, flat, or excessively airy.

These musically substandard pendants have legitimate markets. Collectors buy them for display, and classrooms buy them in quantity at rock-bottom prices to teach gradeschoolers musical basics.

But if you want to play beautiful music, you want to avoid these mediocre pieces. How can you do that?

One quick and easy method is to buy from vendors who ensure the musicality of what they sell. We recommended this approach in Lesson 2. Our experience has been that Stein Ocarina, Songbird Ocarina, and STL Ocarina are trustworthy sellers of capable musical instruments.

What about Amazon? They sell many excellent musical instruments. But they also sell various kinds of whistles and unplayable collectibles.

If you buy through Amazon, you need to know who made the item you're looking at, and whether that piece is produced as a quality musical instrument.

Don't go by Amazon's "star ratings". Those are often inaccurate because they include ratings from those who bought the piece as a collectible, and those with insufficient musical experience to judge.

Listening to sound samples of the instrument you're considering is essential. But take care. You need to hear samples that play the oc's highest and lowest notes, and all sharps and flats. Listening to a pretty song that excludes some notes is of limited value.

One sure way to find a quality, in-tune oc is to buy in person. Get hands-on and test the product yourself. That way you can be certain you're happy with it. Unfortunately, few shops carry ocarinas so this isn't practical for most of us.

Another option for in-person testing is if you have friends who will let you try their ocarina before you buy your own.

Summary

In this lesson we described ways to ensure you're buying musically capable pendants, not just nice looking display items.

In the next lesson, we'll tell how it's possible -- on some pendants -- to play a note even lower than that you play with all fingering holes covered.

Lesson 23 -- One More Note?

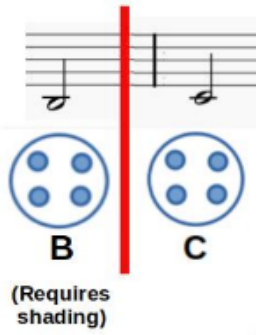
To this point in this course, we've stated that the lowest note playable on any pendant is that you play with all fingering holes covered. That's called the instrument's **base note** or its **fundamental**.

Actually, with some pendants, you can play one to three semitones lower than that. So you can play a note lower than the base note! This lesson explains how.

Shading

The lowest playable note on any pendant is the one you play with all fingering and thumb holes covered. For any C Major pendant, such as the Alto C, that note is low C.

But by carefully covering a portion of the sound hole or **windway** where the splitting edge of your instrument is located, you may be able to play one note lower:



Thus you could play low B on an Alto C pendant. This technique is variously called **shading, swallowing a note**, or **bending**. There's no agreed-upon term for it. We'll call it shading.

Accurately shade the windway just a tiny bit more and blow very softly, and you might even be able to play low B♭ on some pendants.

Examples

Look at the photo below.

It shows two soprano pendants. The green one on the left is a tiny C Soprano. It measures only 2" width by 2 ¼" length. Its base note is C6.

To the right is a slightly larger A Soprano. This oc measures 2" width by 2 ½" length. Its fundamental is A5.

On the green seedpod, the splitting edge -- where your breath is split to create sound waves -- is located in the upper center of the instrument's underside.

On the blue oc, the windway with the splitting edge is the rectangular opening on the top of the oc.



Bottom and Top Windways

To try shading, play your lowest note with all fingering holes covered.

Now try to cover a portion of the windway where the splitting edge is located with your lip. Move your mouth and either your top or bottom lip forward to "swallow" a little part of the windway.

If you cover just the right amount of the windway, you'll be able to play one to three semitones lower than the instrument's base note. Blowing very softly helps hit the lowest possible note. Try tilting the oc to different angles and you may find one that aids your effort as well.

Using these techniques, both these ocarinas can play one note lower than their base note.

So, you can play one note lower on your pendant than you'll find on most official fingering charts!

Remember all the scores in this book in which we provided an alternative for low B for your Alto C pendant? If you could play that note, it really opens up a lot of possibilities. This might do it for you.

Will Your Instrument Allow It?

Whether you can actually play any tones below your pendant's base note depends on a couple factors.

First, you must be able to access the windway with your lip to cover a portion of it. Whether you can do this depends on the size, shape, and design of your ocarina. Sometimes it's just not physically possible (especially with larger instruments).

Second, this technique requires significant practice to consistently achieve an accurate pitch while playing a song.

This next photo shows why the design of your pendant dictates whether shading will work.



Both of these pendants are Alto C's. It's possible to shade with the orange oc, though challenging due to its size (2 ¾" width by 3" length).

But it's not physically possible with the blue winebottle oc. That long neck of a mouthpiece locates the windway opening too far away from the point at which you blow into the instrument.

Shading mainly applies to soprano and alto ocarinas. Larger ocs are often too big to comfortably cover a part of the windway with your lip. Shading isn't feasible with most tenor or bass pendants.

Windway openings that are large tend to make shading easier because you don't have to be quite as precise in how much of the windway you cover. But that's assuming you can "swallow" enough of the pendant to get your lip positioned to partially cover it!

Summary

Partially covering the pendant's windway with your lip may enable you to play from one to three more semitones on the low end of the scale. That gives you one whole note below that you'll see on the fingering chart for your instrument. With some pendants, you may even be able to voice the flat below that.

On C Soprano and Alto C ocarinas, those lowest notes would be low B and low B♭.

Whether this is possible depends on the size, shape, and design of your oc. Shading mainly works only with soprano and some alto instruments.

The technique requires considerable practice if you intend to produce accurate pitches while playing melodies.

Next up, we'll discuss the concept of the musical **scale.** We'll go into how different cultures around the world employ their own scales to uniquely define their own musical traditions. We'll tell how you can participate in these traditions with your ocarina.

Lesson 24 -- Scales

The pendant ocarina is a truly international instrument. It's played throughout Asia, the Indian subcontinent, North America, Latin America, and Europe.

You can play music from an incredibly wide range of cultures on the instrument.

This lesson briefly discusses how ocarinas relate to these different musical traditions.

What's a Scale?

An **octave** is the interval between two notes, where one has twice the frequency of the other.

For example, high C is exactly one octave higher than low C. It sounds at twice the frequency of low C.

A **scale** is an ordered set of notes that span one octave.

As you have learned, the standard western scale consists of these 7 notes:

> C, D, E, F, G, A, B, (high C)

The western scale also contains 5 semitones or chromatics situated between these whole notes. These are the notes:

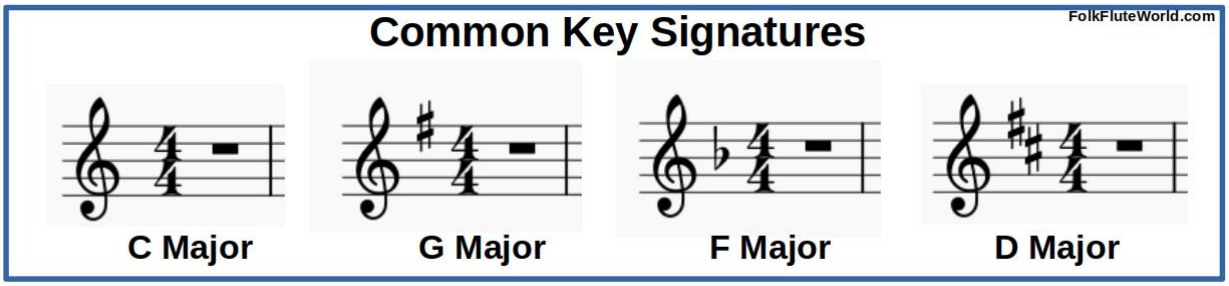
> C# / D♭, D# / E♭, F# / G♭, G# / A♭, A# / B♭

You can view a scale as a musical palette from which notes are selected to create songs.

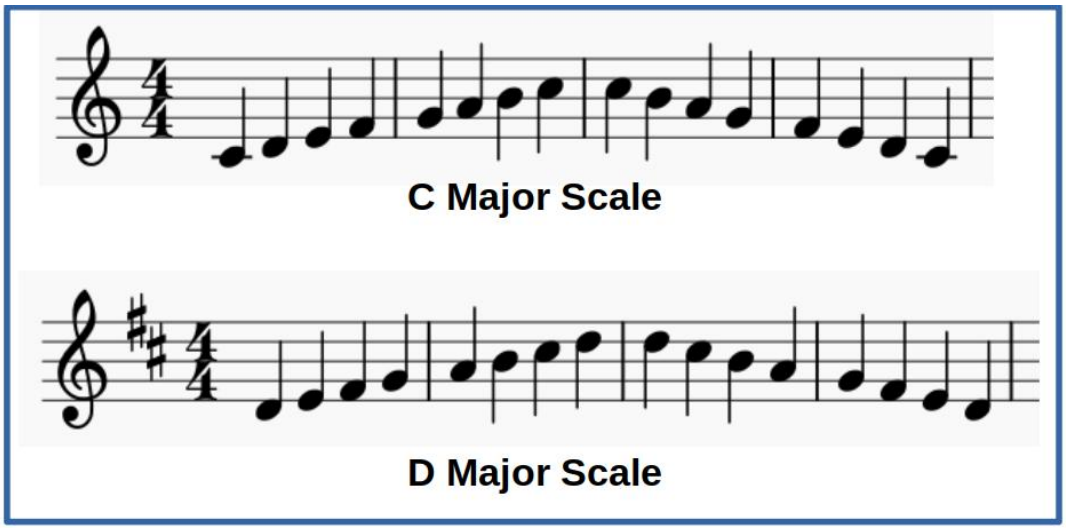
Common Scales

Remember how in Lesson 14 we discussed **key signatures**?

We explained that each key signature has its own set of sharps or flats that persist throughout the score, as assigned at the start of the score. Here are the four very common key signatures we discussed:



Another way to look at key signatures is in terms of the scales they define. Each scale starts with the base note of its name, and contains the accidentals of its key signature. Here are a couple examples:



There exist a couple dozen major and minor scales in western music. In this book, to simplify explanations, we've blithely assumed all our scores as being defined by a few simple major keys.

As you learned in Lessons 18 and 20, an easy way to ensure you can play songs scored in scales that are difficult to play is to transpose them to different keys. Computer programs make it as simple as a click of a button to transpose scores. This can:

1. Eliminate out-of-range notes
2. Convert difficult accidentals into easier-to-play whole notes
3. Change unusual or difficult time signatures into those with which we are more familiar

Non-western Scales

Many cultures around the world use scales other than our standard western scales. These may employ different frequency intervals between the notes other than what we are accustomed to in western music. They may contain a different number of pitches in their scales.

The result is music that features its own unique flavor or sensibility. In this way, cultures have evolved their own musical traditions. Examples include various Asian, Middle Eastern, and eastern European scales.

With your chromatic ocarina, you can play these non-western scales and the melodies based on them. This opens up an entire universe of songs and scores from various cultures, countries, and musical traditions.

For example, you'll notice that the song *The Snake Charmer* in Lesson 15 contains only 5 different whole notes. The melody is thought to have derived from an Algerian folk song that used a Middle Eastern scale.

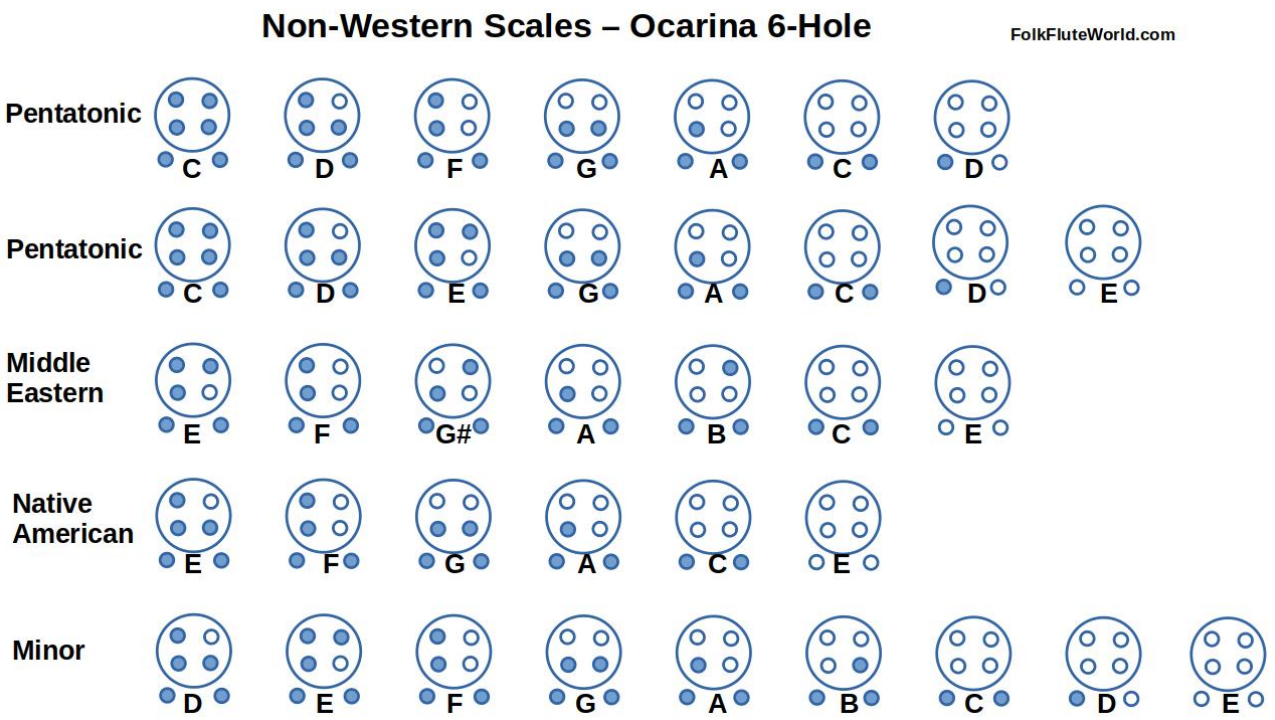
The melody came from a different musical palette than our standard western scales. That's why it sounds unusual or exotic to our western-trained ears.

Another example is the Japanese song *Sakura* in the first Songs Appendix. It, too, contains only 5 different whole notes. Though provided here in western music notation, the melody is actually based on one of the five note -- or **pentatonic** -- Asian scales.

Should you choose to explore the music of other cultures, we have provided fingering for some common non-western scales below.

The chart addresses both 6 and 4 hole pendants. If you have a 4 hole oc, just exclude any notes above high C in the chart.

Be aware that there are many other scales (and variants) beyond the few we list here.



You can have a lot of fun and learn much about music by pursuing music from cultures outside of the western European musical tradition.

Summary

In this lesson we briefly described how different cultures have evolved their own musical sounds and styles, and the way in which different scales underlie these unique traditions.

You can find more information on international scales and ethnic flutes at FolkFluteWorld.com.

Next up, let's take the second and final self test in this course. Self tests ensure you're absorbing the material, and they help you identify anything you missed or don't recall.

Self Test #2

Here's a final quiz to see how well you're absorbing the material. For any questions you miss, you'll be able to learn more by reading the explanations of the correct answers.

For each question, select the **best** answer. Record your answers on a piece of paper or in an online notepad.

Correct answers with explanations appear in the appendices.

1. What is a "base note"?

A. The lowest or fundamental note a woodwind plays
B. A note that is flatter than normal
C. A note that sounds poorly
D. A simple note rather than a complex one

2. What are the respective whole note ranges of 6 hole, 4 hole, and 12 hole ocarinas?

A. 10 notes, 8 notes, and 12 notes
B. 12 notes, 8 notes, and 12 notes
C. 10 notes, 10 notes, and 12 notes
D. 10 notes, 8 notes, and 13 notes

3. Which statement is true?

A. Sopranos require less breath and bass usually cost more
B. Sopranos are smaller and bass usually cost less
C. Sopranos finger more simply and bass usually cost more
D. Sopranos are harder to finger and bass usually cost more

4. D# is the same note as?

A. E♭
B. F♭

C. C#
D. None of the above

5. Which accidentals require half-holing?

A. C# and B♭
B. C# and D#
C. D# and B♭
D. G# and A♭

6. Which key has two sharps?

A. C Major
B. F Major
C. E♭ Major
D. D Major

7. What does it mean to play a note "natural"?

A. Play it as a flat
B. Play it as a sharp
C. Play it as a whole note (neither sharp nor flat)
D. Play it as a rest (no note at all, just silence)
E. Playing the note however seems most natural to you

8. If a note has a sharp sign immediately in front of it, what do you do?

A. Play the note as sharp
B. Play the note as dictated by the key signature
C. Play the note as natural
D. Play the note as a whole note

9. Which statement is NOT true about 12 hole transverse ocarinas?

A. They are also called "submarines"
B. They play a wider range of notes than pendants
C. They finger the same way as inlines
D. They always cost more than pendants

10. Why does a dual chambered ocarina have two mouthpiece slits to blow into?

    A. So you can play two notes at once
    B. So the instrument sounds louder
    C. So you have a spare chamber if one wets out
    D. So you can select which chamber to blow into and which notes to play

11. If you have a score that is very difficult to play because of its chromatics, what are two possible solutions? (Select two answers)

    A. Transpose the score to a better key
    B. Play all the chromatics as natural whole notes
    C. Change all each accidental to its closest whole note
    D. Find a score in a more suitable key on the internet

12. Which statement is true?

    A. In a round, musicians all play the same melody but starting at different times
    B. In a duet, musicians all play the same melody but starting at different times
    C. In rounds, it doesn't matter if the musicians' timing gets off relative to each other
    D. In duets, it doesn't matter if the musicians' timing gets off relative to each other

13. Which of the following is NOT a capability of current ABC based computer tools?

    A. Transpose the score to a better key
    B. Play the score for you
    C. Allow you to edit a score and play back the changes to you
    D. Output a traditional score from ABC notation
    E. Convert a traditional score into ABC notation

14. What's a metronome?

    A. A device or app that automatically transposes scores
    B. A device or app that audibly ticks to a set time signature
    C. A device or app that can tell you if your playing is sharp or flat
    D. None of the above

15. What notes are harmonic thirds to E?

A. D and F
B. G and B
C. C and G
D. C and B

16. How can you spot an "ocarina" that can't play music?

A. It has two holes underneath
B. It's shaped round, like an apple
C. Top holes are all differently sized
D. Top holes are all same sized

17. What's the base note of an Alto C ocarina?

A. C4
B. C5
C. C6
D. A4

18. What two notes are these?



A. G and B
B. F# and B♭
C. F and B
D. G# and B♭

19. If you play a long run of quick sixteenth notes on a bass ocarina, what can happen?

A. The bass might "swallow" some notes or poorly articulate them
B. The bass will brightly pop out the notes in a noticeable way

C. The bass will squeak
D. The bass will wet out

20. Grace notes, cuts, strikes, flips, are examples of what?

A. Decrescendos
B. Dynamics
C. Ornamentation
D. Intonation

21. Which statement is NOT true?

A. All pendants finger the same way
B. All transverse and inline ocarinas finger the same way
C. All bass pendants finger the same way as all soprano pendants
D. All pendants and all transverse ocarinas finger the same way

22. What's the biggest advantage to a double chambered pendant?

A. It plays louder so the audience can hear better
B. It plays a wider range of notes
C. It weighs more
D. Its notes are more pitch accurate

23. Which strategy can help you to half-hole better?

A. Get a lower pitched oc with larger tone holes
B. Get really familiar with the specific oc you want to half-hole
C. Practice half-holing a lot
D. All of the above

24. You're at the music store to buy a new pendant for playing some jazz. You notice that your choice has a 5th hole on top. What should you do?

A. Don't buy it. A 5th hole means it's not playable
B. Buy it. They wouldn't be selling it if it weren't playable
C. Look really carefully and determine if that 5th hole penetrates the sound chamber
D. Buy it. That extra hole means it can play more notes

25. How many semitones are in the standard western scale, and what are they?

A. There are 7. They are C, D, E, F, G, A, and B
B. There are 5. They are C#, D#, F#, G#, and A#
C. There are 4. They are C#, D#, F#, and B♭
D. There are 4. They are D♭, E♭, G♭, and B♭

Answers with explanations are in the appendices.

Summary

We hope you found this self test useful. Please review the rationale underlying the correct answers for any questions you missed.

Next up is the final lesson in this course.

Following that are four appendices full of new songs for you to learn and enjoy.

Lesson 25 -- Where to Go From Here

Congratulations! You stuck with it and have reached the end of this course.

You are now a true ocarinist. You can play slow songs and imbue them with feeling. You know how to sound out fast songs to get started, and later to play them up to speed.

You can read and understand basic sheet music. You can also read tabbed songs written for pendants.

You learned about ABC notation and how useful it can be with its computer-based tools, and you know what it means to transpose songs.

That's quite a lot to be proud of! I hope you feel it's been a fun and worthwhile journey.

So, where do you go from here?

More Songs To Play

We've provided 85 more songs for you to play in the four appendices that immediately follow this lesson.

Scores in the first two appendices are playable on either 4 or 6 hole ocarinas. Those in the third require a 6 hole oc, while those in the fourth are a mix of 4 and 6 hole pieces.

Each song comes with an explanation of its background, along with playing tips. Just like the songs in our lessons, these were selected as good vehicles for self-improvement. And for enjoying yourself, too!

You already know you can access over one million free scores through the websites listed in the appendices and by visiting FolkFluteWorld.com. These provide links to libraries that offer sheet music specifically for ocarina.

You'll also find links to huge libraries of scores for other instruments. For those tunes that are unplayable on your oc, you now know how to adjust or transpose them as necessary.

You'll find all kinds of songs. Some of the categories include:

- Celtic and Irish tunes
- American folk songs
- Folk melodies from many nations
- Classical music
- Christmas songs
- Waltzes and dance melodies
- Marches and military and college anthems

- Tunes from the Renaissance and middle ages
- Morris dances
- Asian melodies from Japan and China
- Children's' songs and nursery rhymes
- Songs scored for recorder, tin whistle, concert flute, and voice

The one category you won't find are songs under copyright. Those scores you must purchase.

Possibilities

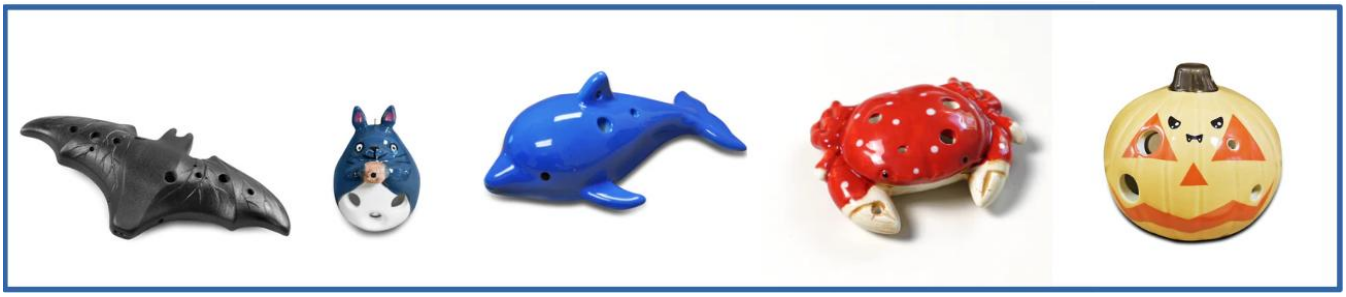
So where do you go from here? There is so much more to explore.

You've learned how to play **any** 6 or 4 hole ocarina. What a universe that opens up!

Some folks like to collect pendants. There are so many cute, cool, fun, and wild shapes... everything from dolphins and other animals, to fruits and vegetables, to fantasy figures, to artworks, and more.

There's even a ceramic tea cup that you can both drink from and play as an ocarina!

Here are a few examples from just one vendor...



Themed Pendants from STL Ocarina

Some ocarinists adopt a small C Soprano to wear as a necklace. You'll be the life of the party when someone asks you about it, and you respond by playing them a tune! Here are a few examples:



Necklace Pendants from Songbird Ocarina

And look at these playful pendants:



Necklace Pendants from Stein Ocarina

Beyond the fun of different pendant designs, you'll find that their different shapes affect their tonal qualities. You may also discover that it's easier or more comfortable to finger some shapes than others.

Ceramic Versus Plastic

If you bought a ceramic oc, you might like to try a plastic one. They're more portable because they're unbreakable, and they're easier to clean. They don't cost much.

If your first oc is plastic, try a ceramic one. You may enjoy its more mellow, traditional ocarina sound. And ceramic ocs don't wet out as quickly as plastic.

Different Sizes, Pitches, and Keys

You might like to explore different sizes of instruments. Each has its own personality.

Tiny C Sopranos almost sound like birds. They wear well on necklaces.

The Alto C is pitched the same as the soprano recorder. Tons of sheet music is written in the key of C.

The tones from these high-pitched instruments carry further than those of lower ocarinas. They project well over lower-voiced background instruments and cut through the clutter of background noise. So if you play outside or perform before an audience, you might want to choose them.

The deep tenor and even deeper pitched bass offer low, mellow tones. They're perfect if you have roommates or housemates your playing might disturb. Get a bass and you're not likely to bother others.

Many fall in love with the soft, spooky sounds of the ceramic bass. Its ethereal tone can be otherworldly.

These lower instruments also make ideal accompaniments for duets and ensembles. Instead of a duet consisting of two Alto C's, try playing the same piece with an Alto C on lead and a bass for the second part.



C Soprano, Alto C, Tenor, and Bass

(Courtesy: Stein Ocarina, Songbird Ocarina, STL Ocarina)

Ocarinas come in almost any key. These are the predominant pendant sizes listed by their lowest note and key:

	Lowest Note:	**Key:**
C Soprano	C6	C Major
G Soprano	G5	G Major
Alto	C5	C Major
Tenor	G4	G Major
Bass	C4	C Major

Remember that not every vendor uses terms like "Alto C" or "Tenor" in the same way. So when shopping, the definitive things to look for are the Lowest Note and the Key. That's why we provide this chart.

Now that you know how to play, I'll bet you'll really enjoy exploring the unique voices offered by ocs of various pitches, keys, and shapes.

Try ocs from different makers as well. Given its origins as a folk instrument, you'll find significant differences in tone and playability.

Extended Range Pendants

Here's another area you might wish to explore. STL Ocarina, Akira Tenrai of Japan, and others have offered pendants with 8 or 9 holes for extended ranges of up to 13 whole notes. Some eliminate half-holing entirely. Two-chambered pendants offer even wider ranges. Lesson 16 describes two of the STL Ocarina offerings.

I wouldn't be surprised if one of these developments were to become standard fare in the future. Which one will it be? Or has it yet to be invented? You might enjoy experimenting with them now.

Make Your Own Ocarina

Some enthusiasts take on the challenge of creating their own ocarina. It's fun to mold your own oc and do it exactly the way you prefer.

If you like to work in clay, search the internet and you'll find many websites and videos that tell you how to make ocs. The projects range from fun beginner projects to sophisticated pieces that require detailed instructions and expertise.

The How-to's address both 6 and 4 hole ocarinas, as well as traditional transverse ocs.

You might enjoy Robert Hickman's definitive book, *The Art of Ocarina Making*.

Duets and Ensembles

Playing in groups offers another avenue to explore.

Most ocarinists start out solo as they learn the rudiments of the instrument. But at a certain point you might like to play duets, rounds, or ensembles with other ocarinists. We've provided a few scores to get you started on this path in Lessons 19 and 21.

You get the pleasures of music and the joys of companionship all in one. You might also learn a lot and find a good opportunity to exchange playing tips.

If you and your companions are at different points in your musical journeys, you might gain a mentor. Or, you might enjoy mentoring a more junior partner.

As we've discussed earlier, tuning can be a challenge with ocarina ensembles. Lesson 19 offers suggestions on how to manage this.

It doesn't matter whether the ocarinas in your duets or ensembles are all pendants, or some mix of pendants and transverse ocs. All that counts is their keys and whether they are in tune with one another.

If you don't know companions with whom to play, you can find some online through websites designed to match people with similar interests for local meetings. The classic website is called Meetup.com, but if you search for these websites, you'll find many more. Some are free while others require payment for membership.

Other musicians just use general-purpose social media websites to arrange their meetings. Options include Facebook, Instagram, Discord, Bumble, Nextdoor, Classmates, TikTok, and many others.

Play with Background Tracks

Don't have a partner for a duet? Want to play lead in your own ensemble?

You might try **backing tracks.** These enable you to play the lead to prerecorded background accompaniment created by others. So you can enjoy playing with a band simply by downloading some background recordings.

Search the internet for a term like "download background tracks" and you'll find many royalty-free recordings created for just this purpose. Or, you can pay for individual tracks or a subscription service.

In either case, you can download background for almost any kind of music and then play it back while you play the lead part on your oc.

Recording

Try recording yourself as you play your pendant. Computers with inexpensive microphones, speakers, and headphones make it all very easy. Or, use your mobile cell phone.

Or you can invest in more sophisticated, specialized equipment, such as a high quality microphone.

Play back how you sound, and you'll quickly identify where you need to improve. Make adjustments, record the same song again, and see if you've enhanced your play.

Recording also allows you to play duets by yourself. Record one part, then play it back while you play the other. You can even record and mix several parts for your own ensemble or "one-man band."

Music editing computer programs -- **audio editors** -- allow you to alter your original recordings. You can "clean up" background noise, edit out disruptive breaths, merge parts, add reverberation, and perform all sorts of audio feats. Both free and commercial products are available. Just search the internet for "music editors" or "audio editors."

Recording also allows you to capture any melodies you compose.

Composing

Ever tried your hand at writing your own songs? Many find it enjoyable and satisfying.

Using a very simple instrument like the ocarina enables you to become instinctive with fingering. As you gain this proficiency you'll discover that this intimacy with your instrument helps you concentrate on the creative aspects of pitches, timing, rhythms, and their interrelationships, rather than on the mechanics of playing. The oc's simplicity makes it a useful composing companion.

The simple oc is perfect for improvising your own melodies on the fly.

Some even take on the challenge of composing their own multipart songs. You can use higher ocarinas like the Soprano G or Alto C for melodies, while you record background parts on the tenor or bass.

Modern technologies enable you to record several individual parts and combine them. You can "be your own band."

Some like to use different instruments for background and rhythmic parts. Keyboards and guitar are popular.

The ukulele has gained some prominence in this role. Its 4 strings render it simpler than the 6-stringed guitar. Many don't realize that ukes come in soprano, concert, tenor, and baritone pitches… which gives the instrument true versatility in backgrounding.

Search on Youtube or similar video websites and you'll find many examples of how individuals have created multipart ensembles with ocarina lead.

Transverse and Inline Ocarinas

Some pendant players go on to explore transverse and inline ocs.

Remember that transverses and inlines both finger the same way. That's different from how pendants finger, as you learned in this course.

Fortunately, most people find the **linear fingering** of transverses and inlines even easier than what you learned for pendants.

And, of course, regardless of their fingering, these ocarinas can play all the same sheet music as pendants.

One notable advantage to the common 12 hole transverse is that it plays a range of 13 whole notes. That's three more than the 6 hole ocarina (assuming no shading). Those extra notes make it easier to play some tunes that require greater range.

You saw several songs in this course, for example, that called for low B. A 12 hole transverse can play that note by simple fingering.



Transverse Ocarinas: C Soprano, Alto C, Tenor, and Bass

Inline ocs come in a variety of sizes, styles, and materials. This photo displays a few examples:



Inline Ocarinas

The oc on the left in the above photo is the **Coda EDC Flute** from Mountain Ocarinas (at MountainOcarinas.com). It's a double-chambered ocarina with a full two octave range.

Mountain Ocarinas also makes the two ocs in the center of the photo. These are an Alto C and the smaller G Soprano. They feature the more typical pitch range of inlines: 10 and 11 whole notes, respectively.

Over the years they've been made from a variety of materials including high-quality polycarbonate plastic, warmstone, cocobolo wood, corian, and aluminum. Most have been made in poly. They're very rugged and highly portable. You can slip one in your pocket and take it anywhere you like.

The two rightmost ocarinas in the photo are called **tonettes**. These simple plastic ocs were used to introduce *tens of millions* of American schoolchildren to music in the 1940s through the 1970s.

Though tonettes look like some kind of flute, they are in fact ocarinas because they do not have open ends. They consist of an enclosed resonating chamber, like all ocarinas.

Schools trained youngsters on tonettes prior to the ascendancy of the plastic recorder in the 1980s. Ask your grandparents and they'll surely recall them.

The inlines in the above photograph are all manufactured from high-quality instrumental plastic. But you'll sometimes see inlines handcrafted from wood as well.

Here are several wood inlines created by famous ocarina-maker Charlie Hind. The photograph highlights the exceptional craftsmanship skilled artisans put into their instruments.



(Photos Courtesy of Charlie Hind)

Get a free digital copy of my book ***The Ocarina Course: Transverse and Inline Ocarinas*** at FolkFluteWorld.com or archive.org. Or buy a print copy at Amazon.

Course Summary

I hope you've enjoyed this course and found it useful. I developed it for the love of creation, and to share the fascinating world of ocarinas with others. That's why the digital ebook version is free.

If you found the course worthwhile, please tell your friends about it on social media. Spread the word!

Or post a review at Amazon. Reviews are vitally important these days to distinguish serious books from the many AI generated books that the creators often don't even proofread for errors.

That's all I ask in return for my effort in developing this free course.

You can learn lots more about ocarinas at FolkFluteWorld.com. That website links to many free resources including articles, sheet music, videos, product reviews, and more.

It also covers many other kinds of simple flutes that might interest you, including transverse and inline ocarinas, tin whistles, recorders, xuns, and ethnic flutes of all kinds from around the world.

Your Feedback, Please

I'm very interested in any comments, corrections, or suggestions for improvement. My goal is to make this book as useful as possible. You can find my current contact information at the website FolkFluteWorld.com.

Your Next Steps

Next up, we offer four appendices with some 85 more songs for you to practice and enjoy. Accompanying each tune is a few words about its origins, as well as playing tips.

After that are the answers to the two self-tests.

Then you'll find lists of websites that offer free scores you can play on your ocarina. You can access over one million free tunes.

Next come two indexes. The first indexes the terms used in this book, while the second alphabetically lists all the songs and tells you in which lessons they appear.

The last page of this book contains a fingering chart for both 6 and 4 hole ocarinas. You might like to print it out and keep a copy with your ocarina.

So, don't stop now. Keep on learning, playing, and enjoying!

Print Copies -- and Free Transverse Book

Order a print copy of this book at Amazon.

Nice large format -- 8 ½" by 11" -- so the scores are easy to read. In full color.

My companion book on transverse and inline ocarinas is also available for free at FolkFluteWorld.com or Archive.org. Or buy a print copy at Amazon.

Free downloads of my **Recorder Course** book at Folkfluteworld.com.
400 pages, 30 lessons, 220 songs with access to 1 million more!
By an expert musician (**not** AI).

Practice Songs 1

This appendix provides 20 more practice songs of all levels of difficulty. All are playable with either 4 or 6 hole pendants.

For each song we'll give a little background and suggest what to concentrate on when you practice.
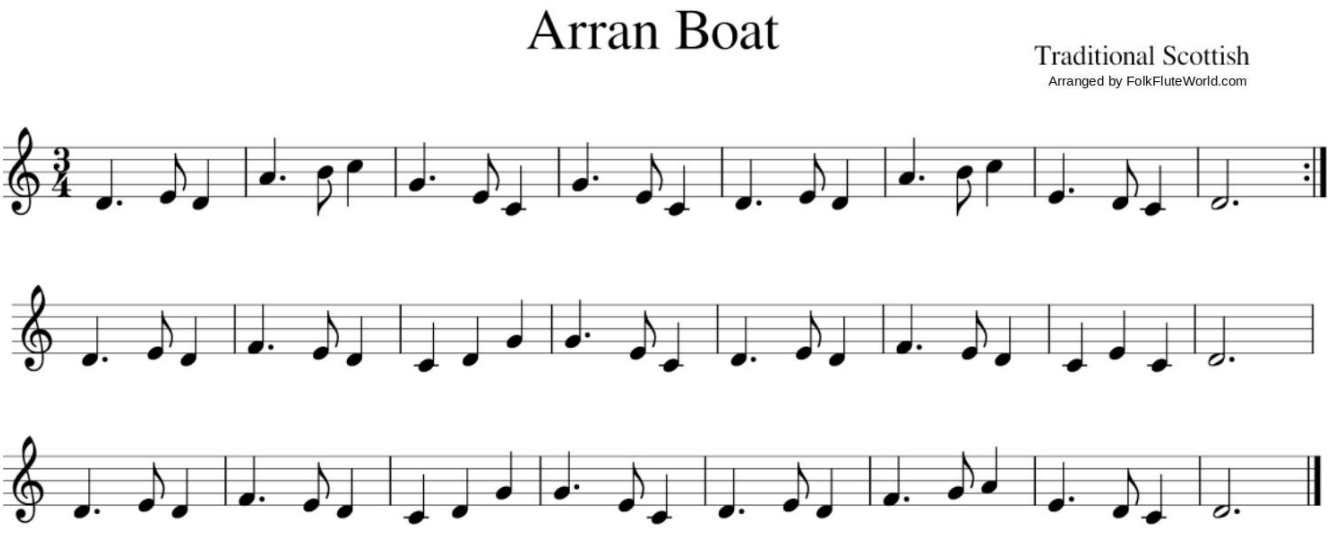
Songs are listed alphabetically.

Arran Boat Song

Here's a traditional Scottish folk song. You'll find it in almost any collection of songs from the British Isles.

The song was named after the Isle of Arran in the Firth of Clyde, off the west Scottish coast. It first appeared in published form in 1875 in the book *Merry Melodies*.

Practice: The timing is simple as long as you remember how to play that dotted-quarter-note-followed-by-eighth-note combination. Remember to repeat the first line as indicated by the repeat sign at line's end.
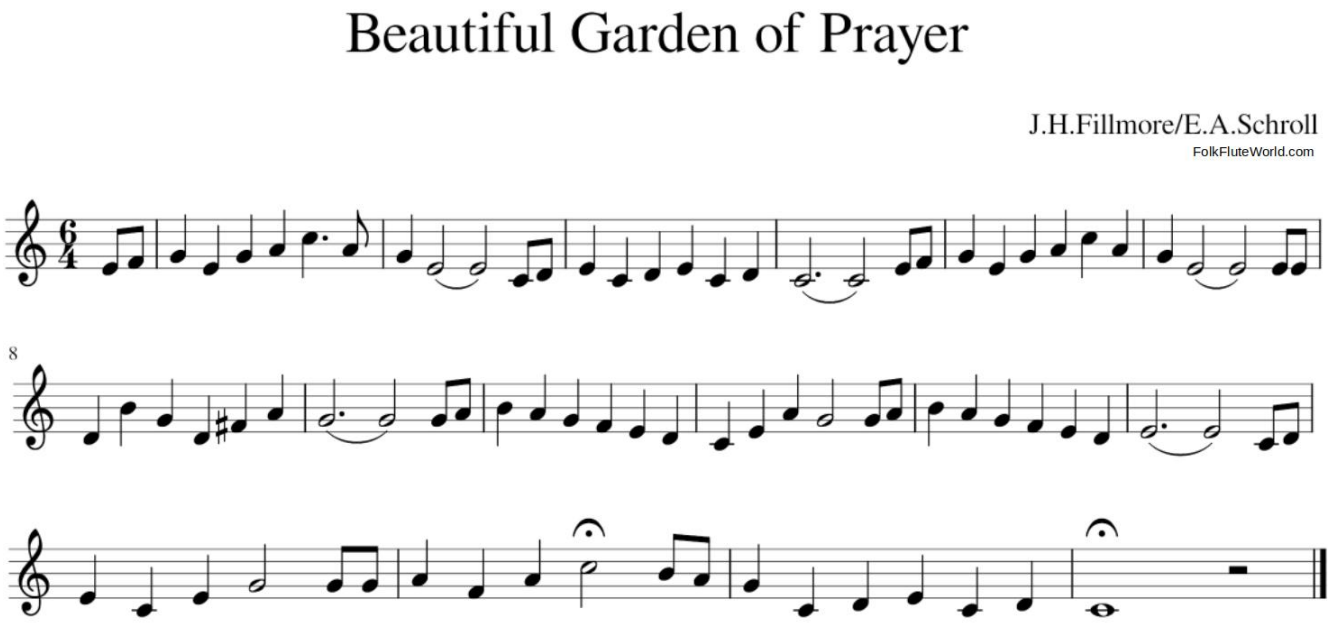


Beautiful Garden of Prayer

Christian hymns are an excellent source of free scores that feature beautiful melodies yet are often very easy to play. Most are in the public domain. This one is typical.

This melody is also known under the title *There's a Garden Where Jesus is Waiting*. Eleanor Allen Schroll wrote the most popular lyrics for the tune in 1920.

Practice: There are two **fermata** or **holds** in this song, both in the last line. In an orchestra, the conductor indicates to the musicians how long to hold the note. In your solo play, it's up to your own best judgment.

Try to imbue this simple yet lovely melody with true expression.
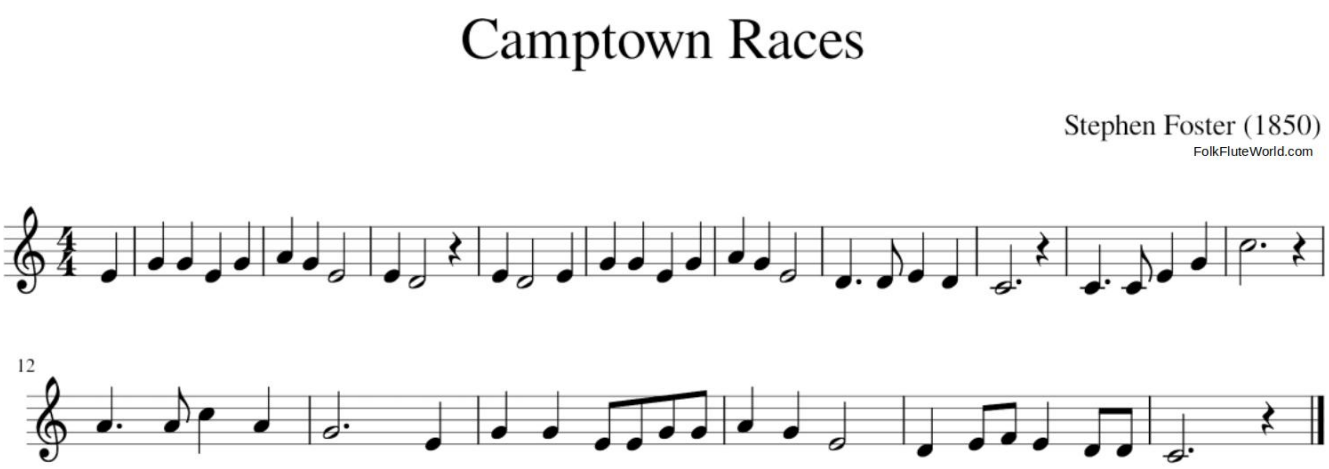


Camptown Races

Stephen Foster wrote this song in 1850. The Camptown, Pennsylvania horse races were his inspiration. The tune became widely popular within just a few years.

Although Foster died young -- at age 37 in 1864 -- he was the first truly prominent American composer. He's sometimes called "the father of American music."

His other famous tunes include *My Old Kentucky Home*, *Old Folks at Home* (better known as *Swanee River*), *Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair*, and *Nelly Bly*.

Practice: This score should be an easy one if you first practice it slowly before picking up the tempo. When you master it, you'll want to play it at a jaunty tempo.

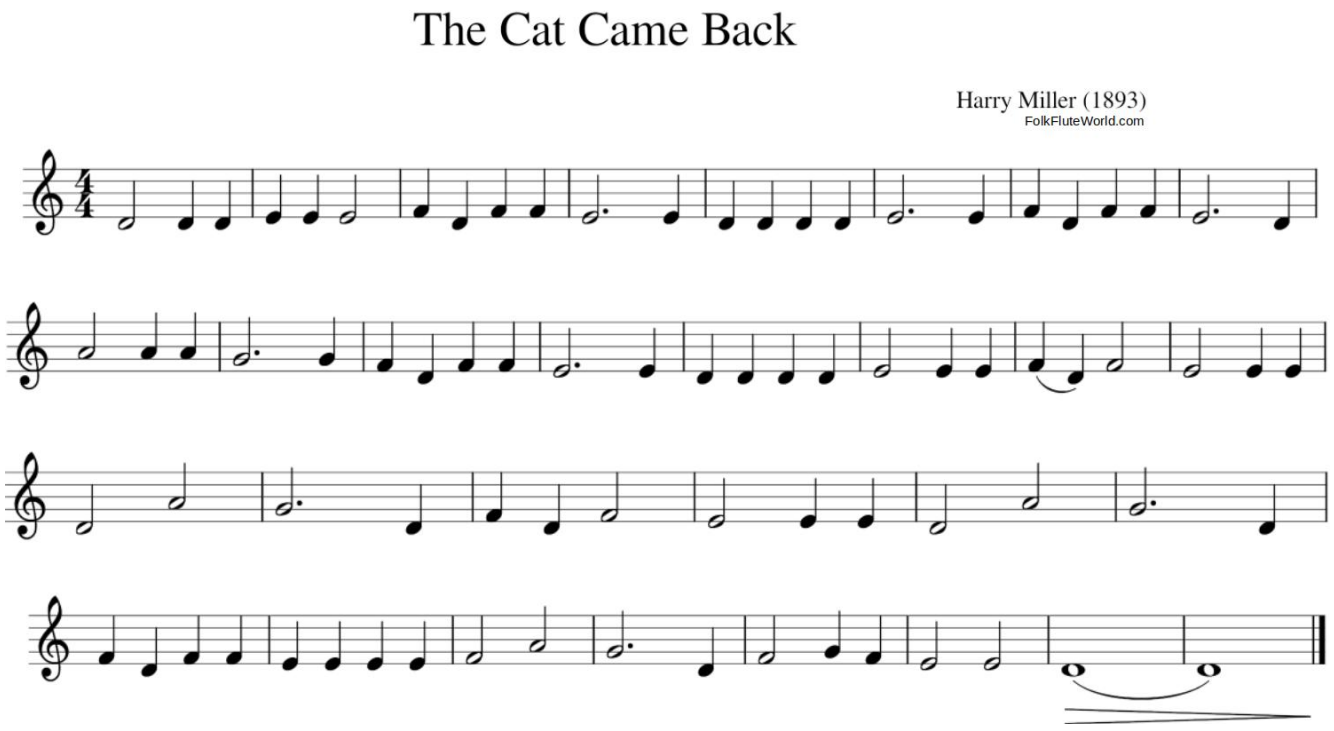


The Cat Came Back

Harry Miller wrote this song about ol' Mr. Johnson who had a cat that came back to haunt him after he tried to get rid of it. It's since became a popular children's' song with that scary edge that youngsters enjoy -- a tad frightful but not too serious.

Practice: This is a simple tune, good for repetitive practice with the notes in the low range of the scale. A key goal should be to intersperse your breaths at optimal points in the song. You don't want to disrupt the ominous mood by taking breaths at inappropriate times.

The last two measures of the song require you to hold a note and slowly decrease its loudness, as indicated by the **decrescendo** symbol. Doing this with an ocarina requires some skill because you don't want to soften the note such that it goes flat. You'll have to have enough breath to hold that last note for 8 beats.
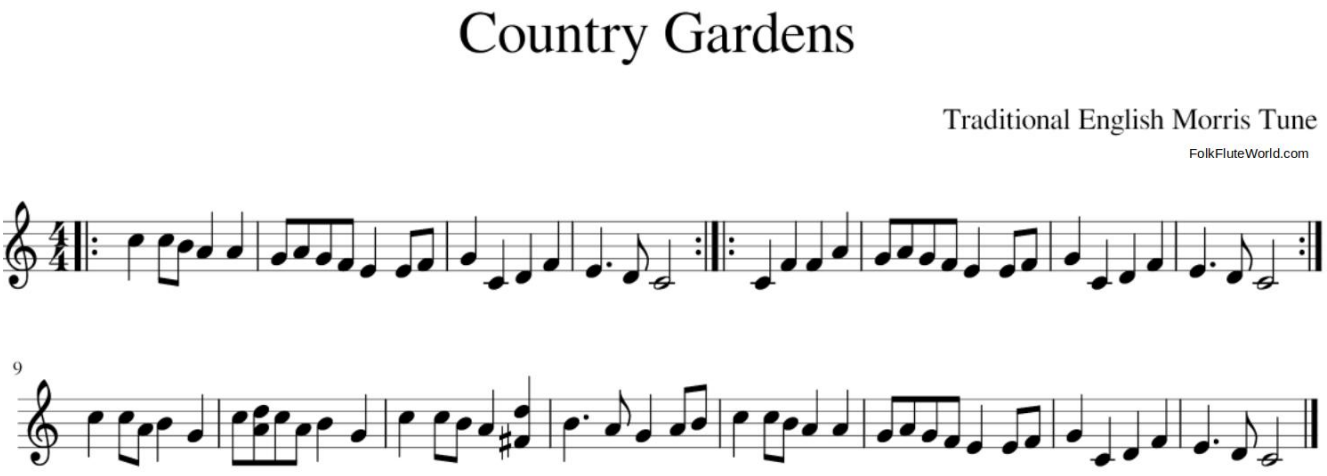


Country Gardens

Here's a lively tune often associated with Morris dancing and May Day festivals. It's also been titled *Echoes of the Trees*.

Country Gardens can be traced back to at least 1728. Cecil Sharp famously collected it along with hundreds of other English folk songs to formally preserve them. He was central to the revival of traditional music in the British isles in the Edwardian period.

Practice: Be sure to properly interpret the repeat signs. You play the first four measures, then you repeat them one time. Then you play the next four measures, and repeat them one time. Only after all that have you played the first line to its conclusion.

For double-stemmed notes, play the high notes if you have a 6 hole oc, otherwise play the low ones.
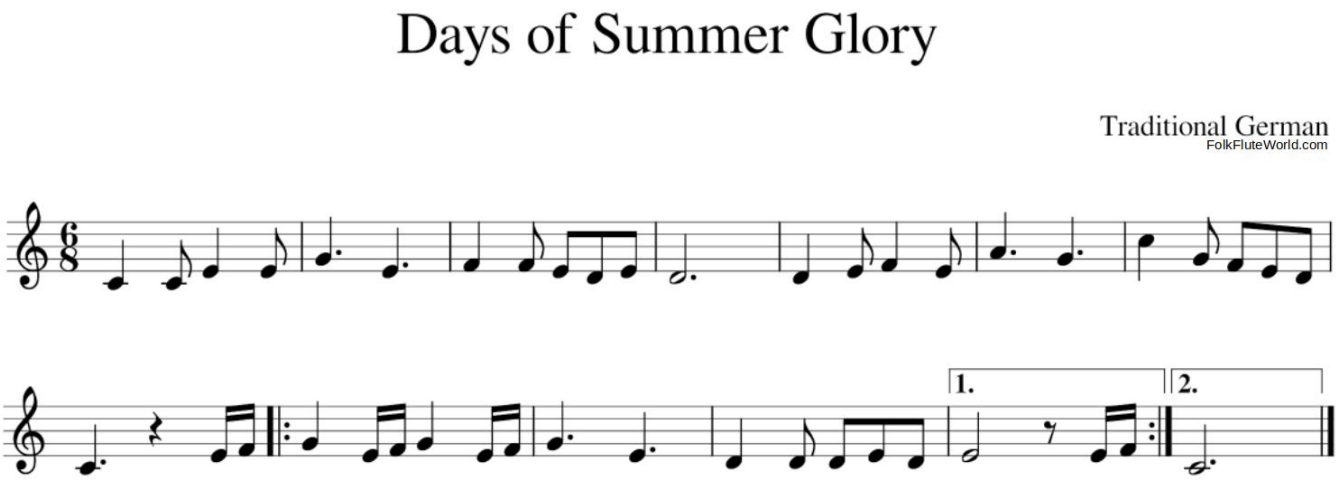


Days of Summer Glory

The first lines of this German folk song voice a universal hope:

Days of summer glory
Days I love to see
All your scenes so brilliant
They are dear to me.

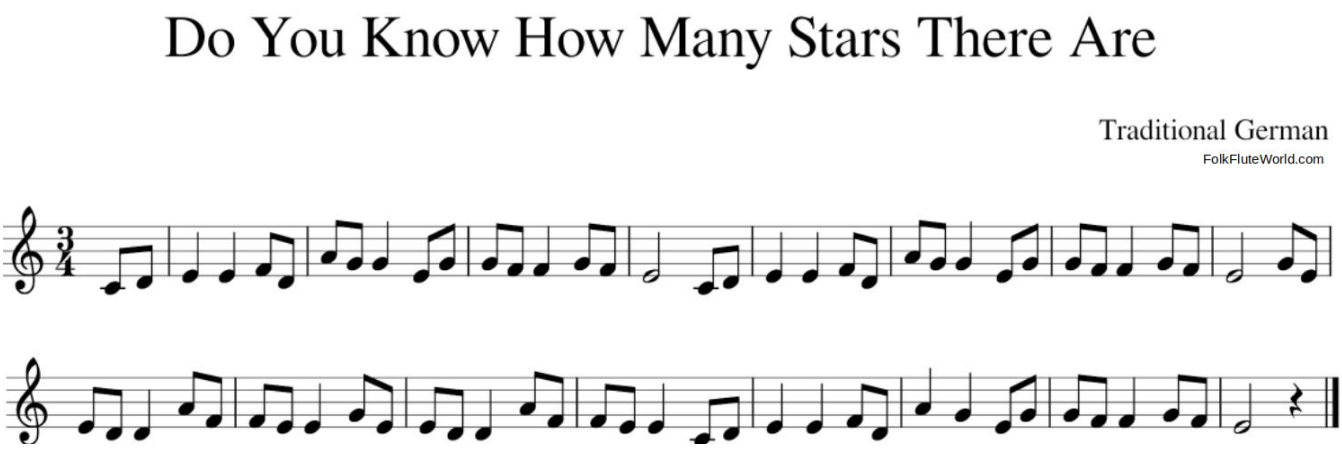
Practice: Be you understand the timing of the sixteenth notes in the second line. In this 6/8 score, each eighth note gets 1 beat. So the sixteenth notes each get 1/2 of a beat (just the same as an eighth note in 4/4 time).



Do You Know How Many Stars There Are

Here's a German folk song whose original title is *Weißt Du, Wieviel Sternlein Stehen*. Its melody was first published in 1818, while the most popular lyrics were printed by pastor Johann Wilhelm Hey in 1837.

Practice: The first measure in the score illustrates how "pick up" notes can start a song off in a measure that doesn't conform to the time signature. That measure contains only 1 beat instead of the 3 called for by the 3/4 time signature. You might also see this song without a last rest at the end. Thus, the first and last measures of scores sometimes break the rule that all measures should conform to the number of beats dictated by the time signature.



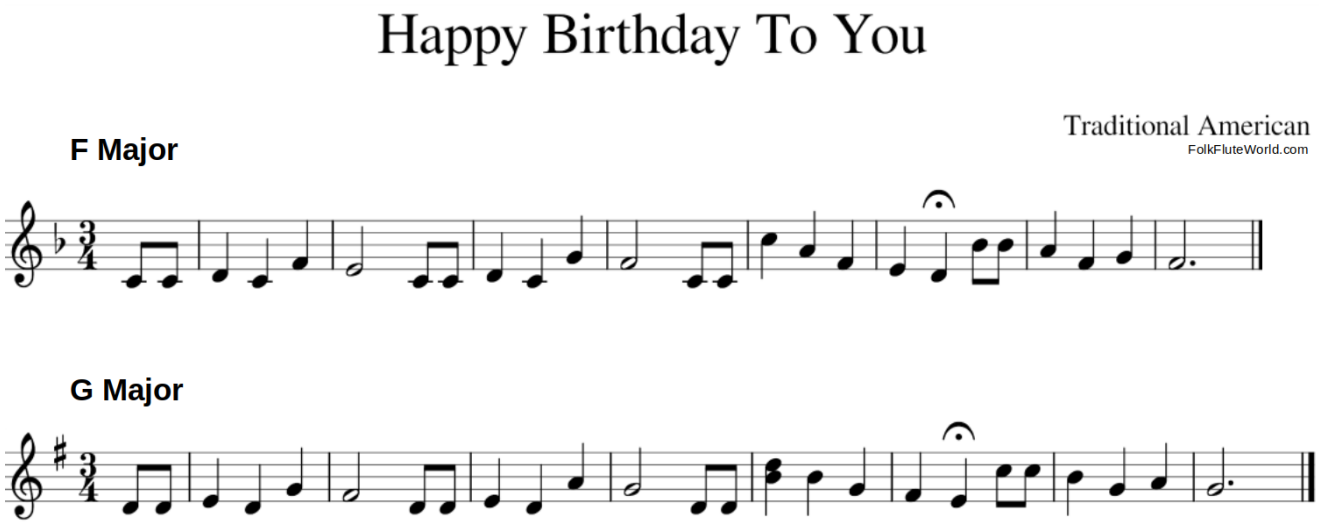
Happy Birthday To You

Well, here's an easy one! Everyone knows the tune, and it's not difficult to play. Many attribute the melody to sisters Patty and Mildred J. Hill back in the 1890s, but others dispute this. The *Guinness Book of World Records* claims that this is one of the most recognized songs among English speakers.

Although the tune dates to the 1890s, a company called Warren Chappell claimed its copyright and collected fees from television and film producers for its use. The company charged up to $5,000 for each use by a television program, and up to $50,000 for use in a film.

The courts ruled against Warren Chappell in 2013 and forced them to pay back $14 million they had collected. Today the song is considered to be in the public domain.

Practice: We provide the song in two different keys. For the first version, mind the B flats and the hold in the third to last measure. The second version contains a single high D. Play this as a B if you use a 4 hole oc.

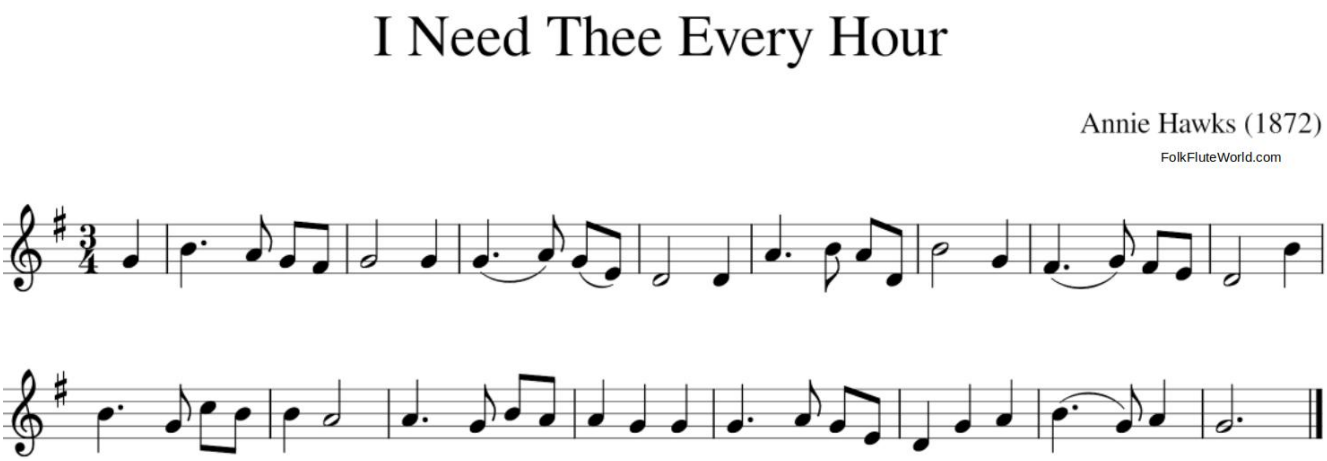


I Need Thee Every Hour

This is probably the best-known song by hymnist and poet Annie Hawks. The song dates from 1872 and is included in many church hymnals. Hymnals are an abundant source of free public domain scores, many of which feature beautiful melodies.

Practice: It's important to get the slurs right to make this song sound the way it's intended. Remember, a slur between two notes of equal pitch really means to play one long note. A slur between two notes of different pitches means that you seamlessly glide from one to the next, without using your tongue.

Some musicians like to distinguish between ties and slurs, where a **tie** connects notes of the same pitch, and a **slur** connects notes of differing pitches. Many use these two terms interchangeably.



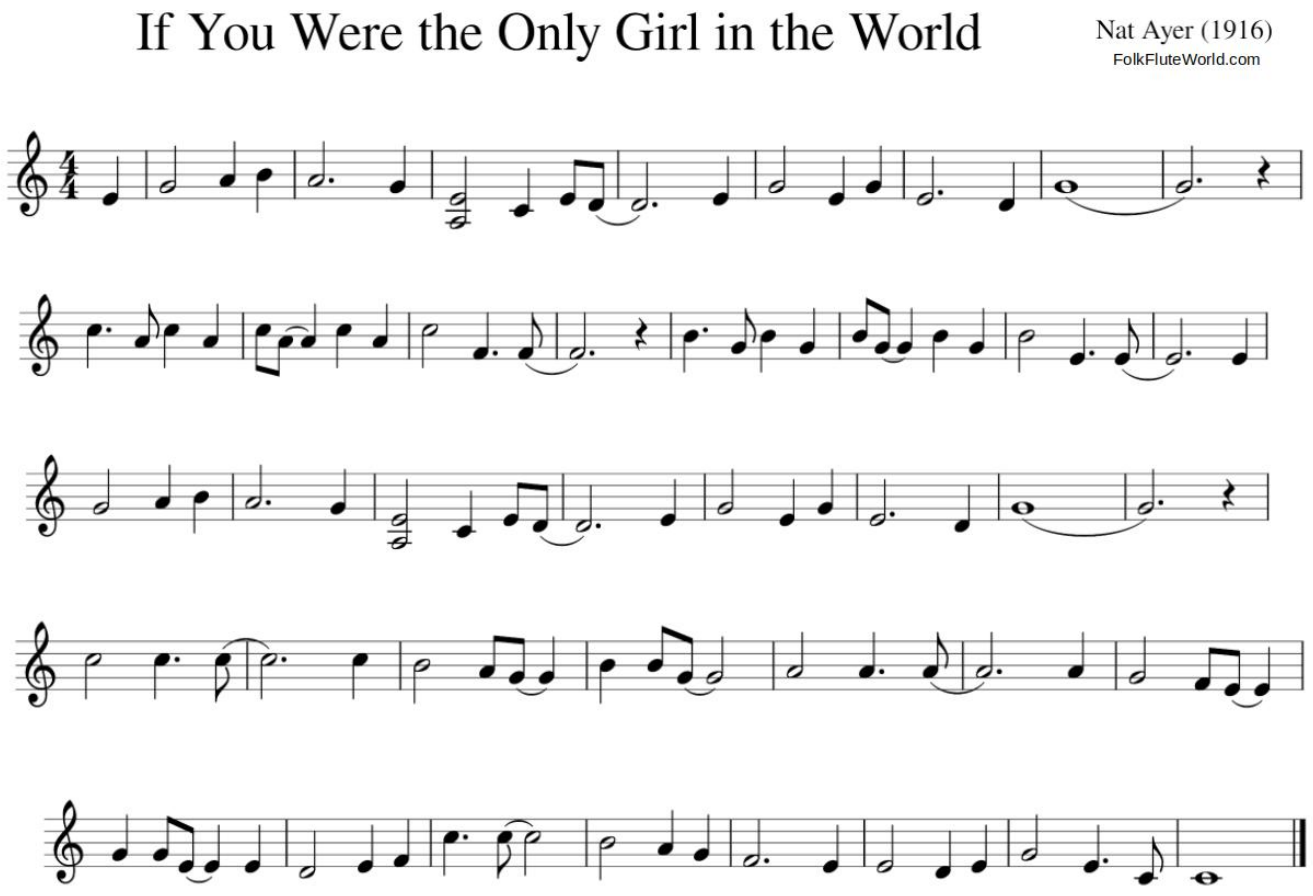
If You Were the Only Girl

This song epitomizes the style of popular songs between the turn of the twentieth century and the 1920s. It was written during the first world war and performed in London as part of the musical *The Bing Boys are Here*.

The tune has great staying power: it titled one episode of *Upstairs, Downstairs* in the 1970s and was famously sung on *Downton Abbey* upon the return of Matthew Crawley from the first world war.

Crooners recording it have included Perry Como, Peggy Lee, Doris Day, Bing Crosby, Dean Martin, and more.

Practice: This is a beautiful song. Your goal as an ocarinist is to bring that beauty into every note. Don't just pedantically follow the timing but imbue it with emotion to which any listener would respond.



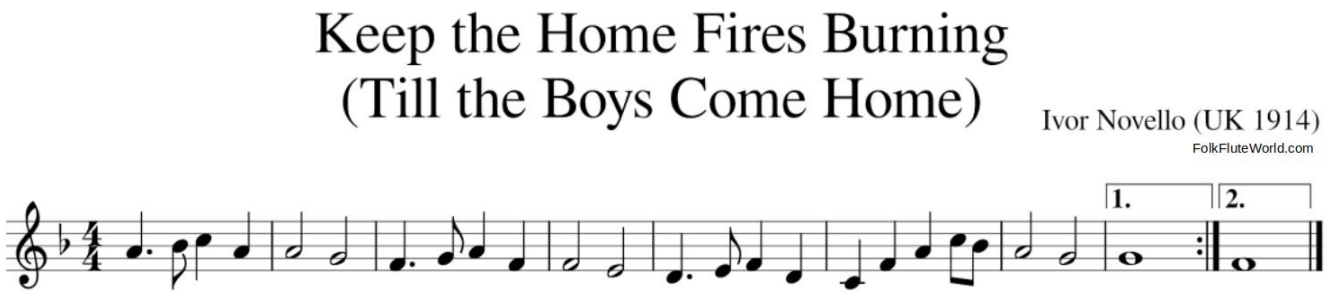
Keep the Home Fires Burning

Here's a very different tune from the same era. It's a patriotic exhortation to "keep the home fires burning" until the return of the King's men from the Great War.

Its composer, Ivor Novello (1893-1951) was a multi-talented singer, composer, actor, and playwright. This was his first widely popular composition.

The song's lyricist, Lena Guilbert Ford, was killed in 1918 by a German air raid on her town of Warrington Crescent, UK.
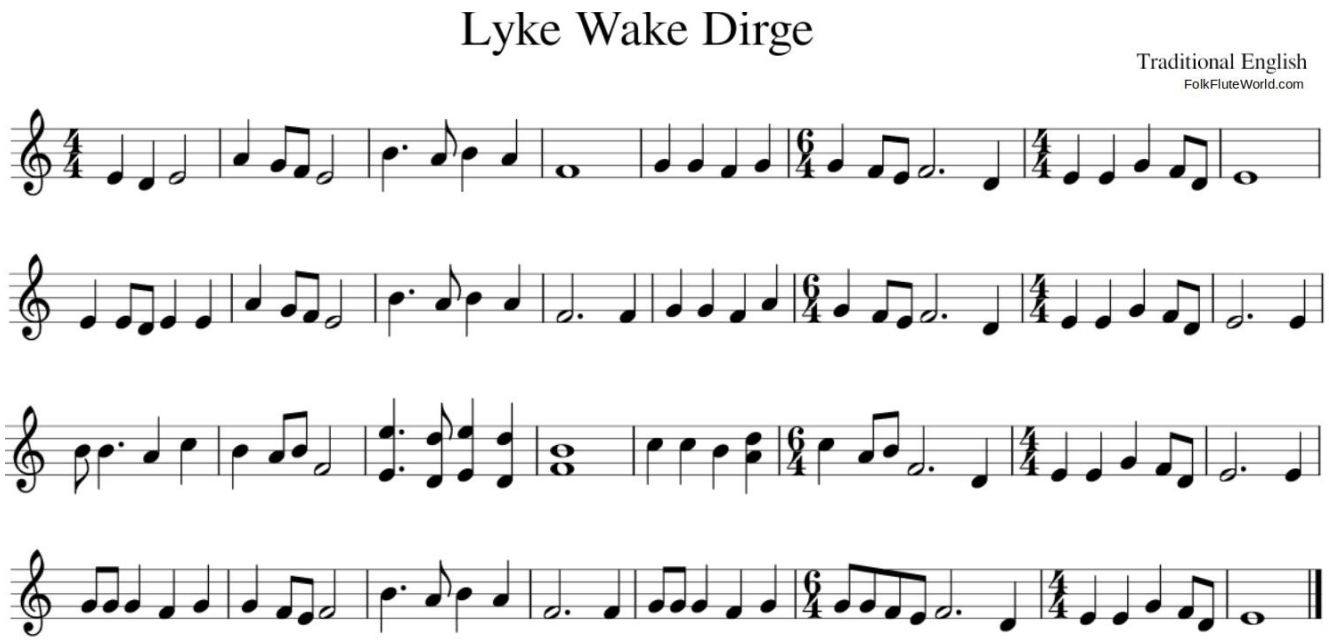
Practice: Hopefully you feel this is an easy tune at this point.



Lyke Wake Dirge

Let's slow it down... way, way, down. This somber tune is a **dirge**, a song for funeral processions. Sonorous and rather odd, it perfectly captures grief and the unknowns of our existence. "Lyke" is a now-obsolete term for a corpse.

Practice: Notice how this song shifts -- right in the middle! -- between 4/4 and 6/4 time signatures. Don't let that throw you. Since both time signatures give a quarter note one beat, you can seamlessly transition between the two without difficulty.
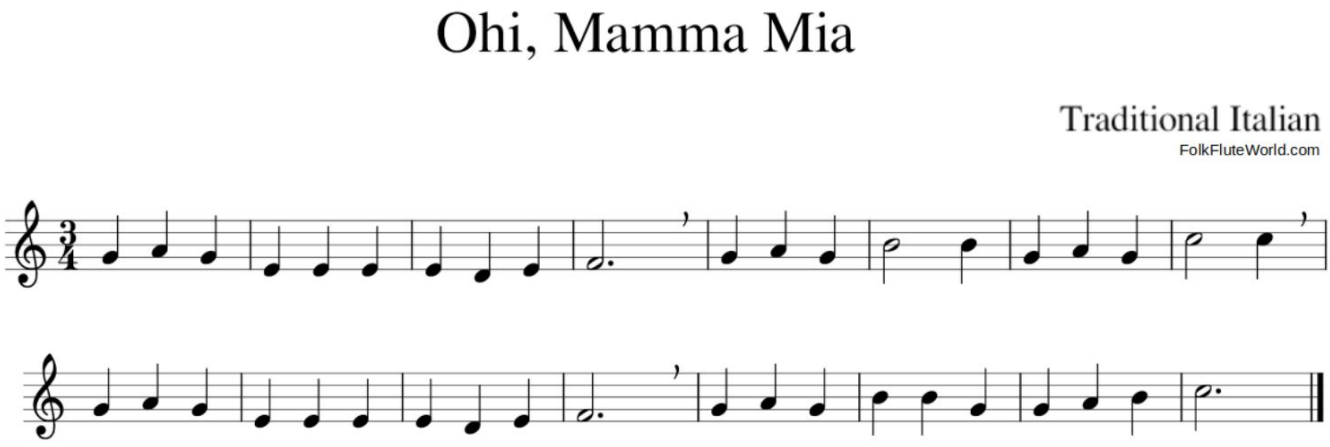


Mamma Mia

This a traditional Italian folk song. It's played in quite a variety of styles and arrangements.

It's not to be confused with an ABBA song by the same name, written in 1975 by members of that popular singing group.

Practice: You should be able to handle this one pretty easily. The timing is simple and straightforward and there are no challenging chromatics. Follow the breath marks for proper phrasing.
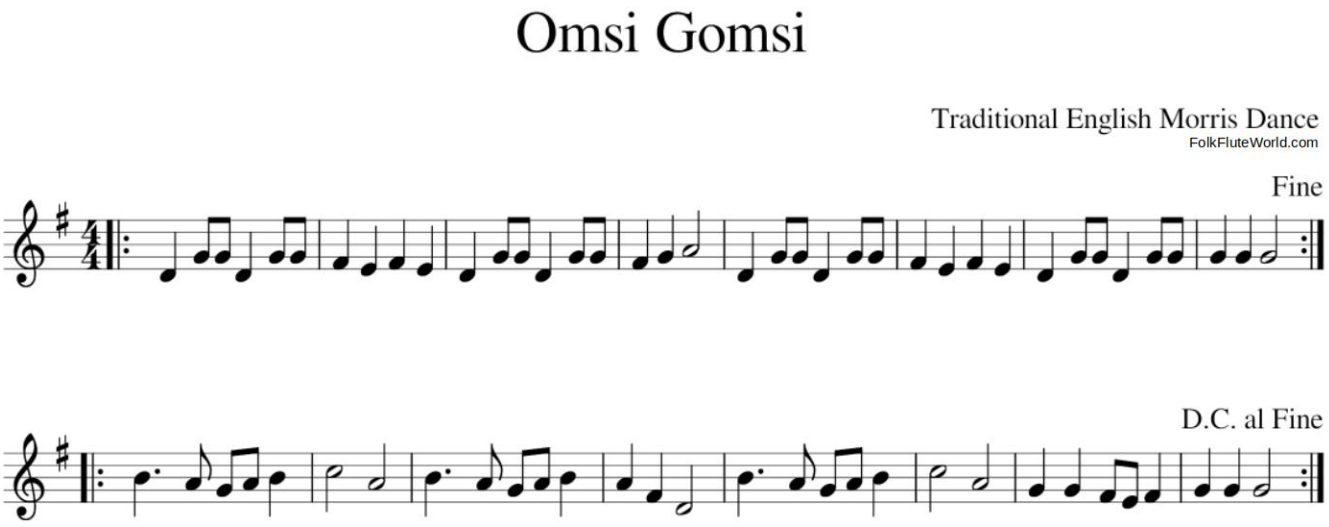


Omsi Gomsi

This quick, fun song with the goofy title is a **Morris dance**. Morris dancing is a form of English folk dance performed at various local festivals and May Day celebrations. Dancers wearing period costumes parade through the streets stepping to lively tunes that date back to the middle ages.

Morris tunes tend to be quick and repetitive. Nearly always you'll see multiple "repeat signs" in their scores.

Practice: Morris dances should be played at fast tempo. After you give it some practice, you should be able to step up the pace to that of a boppy, happy dance tune.
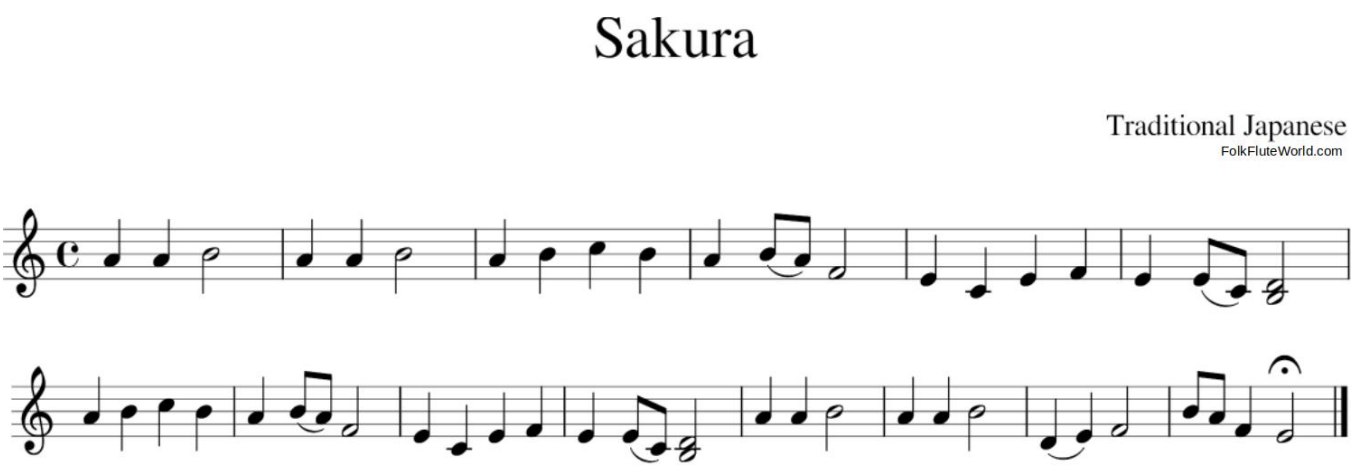


Sakura

"Sakura" means "Cherry Blossoms". This traditional folk song has been popular in Japan since the Meiji period of the late 19th century. The song was originally written in an Asian five-note pentatonic scale.

While many assume this melody is ancient, it likely dates from the Edo period (1600s to 1800s).

Practice: For the two double-stemmed notes, play the higher. A 12 hole transverse ocarina or an "extended range" pendant could play the original lower note (low B).

Or, if you have a small pendant and are able to shade the windway, go for that low B.



Silesian Folk Melody
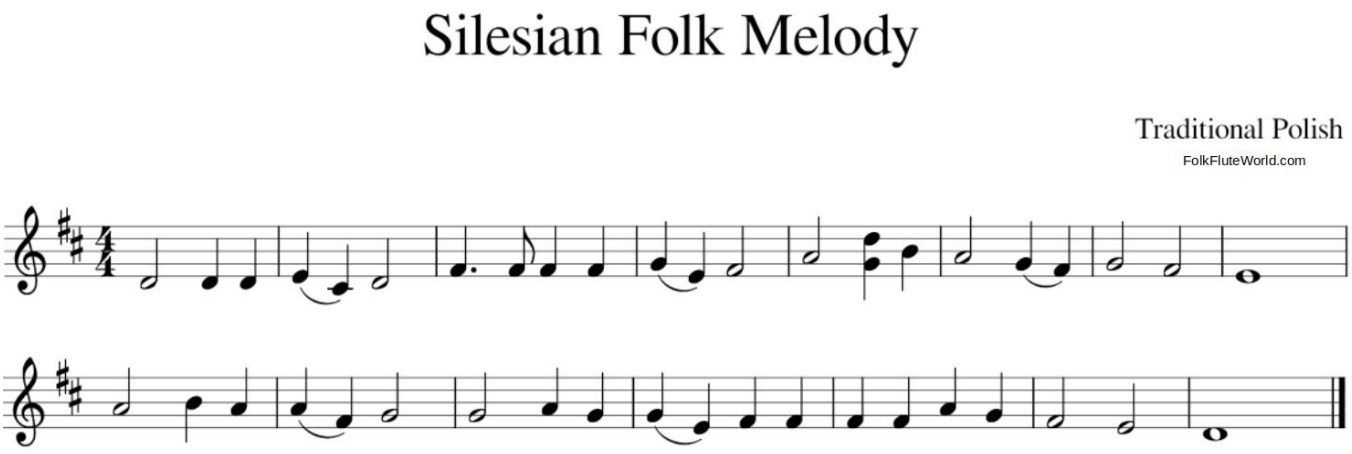
This is a folk melody from Silesia, a western region of Poland with its capital of Wrocław. Like many traditional folk songs, it has been put to many uses including the melody for the Christian hymn *Fairest Lord Jesus*.

Practice: This song is in the key of D Major. That key has two sharps, C# and F#. In this score you'll see many occurrences of F#, but only one of C#. See if you can manage to half-hole your way past that single low C#.

You'll find many free D Major tunes on the web. It's the primary key for songs scored for the Irish flute and the tin whistle (aka the "penny whistle").

If you find a D Major tune in ABC Notation, it becomes a simple matter to feed it into an automatic transposing tool. Often that will result in a score you'll find much easier to play on your ocarina.

But first take a close look at the score. You might find it only has one or two quick C#'s that you can manage. Or, it might not have any at all, in which case D Major presents no challenge.

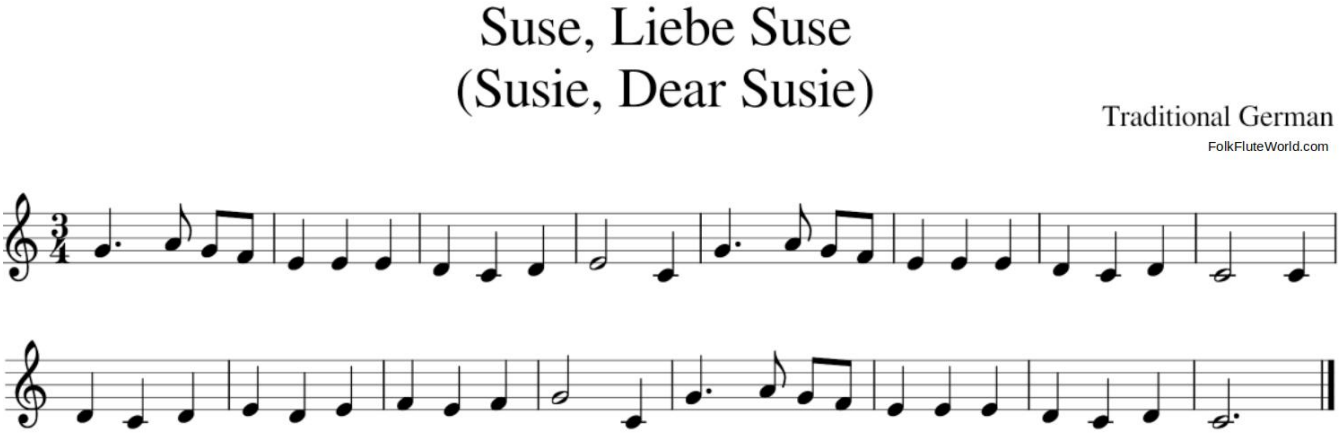


Susie, Dear Susie

This is a traditional German cradle song popular from the 17th century. It was probably brought to the United States by German immigrants. 19th century composer Engelbert Humperdinck included it in his famous opera, *Hansel and Gretel*.

Practice: Be sure to play the dotted-quarter-note-followed-by-eighth-note combination with the correct timing. If you need a refresher, refer back to Lesson 7 and the way this construct sounds in songs like *Michael, Row the Boat Ashore* and *London Bridge Is Falling Down*.

The *Arran Boat Song* at the top of this appendix relies almost completely on this timing construct.
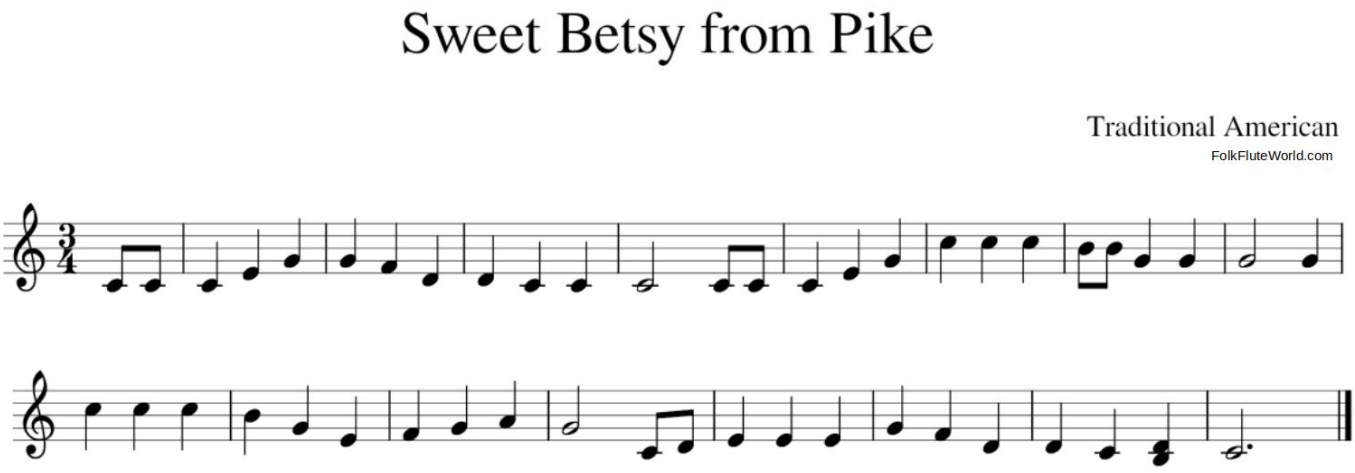


Sweet Betsy From Pike

This American folk ballad dates from the days of the California gold rush. It relates the trials of a pioneer named Betsy and her lover Ike who migrate from Pike County, Missouri to California. Each verse relates a different adventure they endure.

The song was first published in 1858 and is often cited as a representative western folk tune.

Practice: This is one of those classic songs everybody knows, so it makes for a good sing-along session. Play it on your ocarina while your friends sing along.
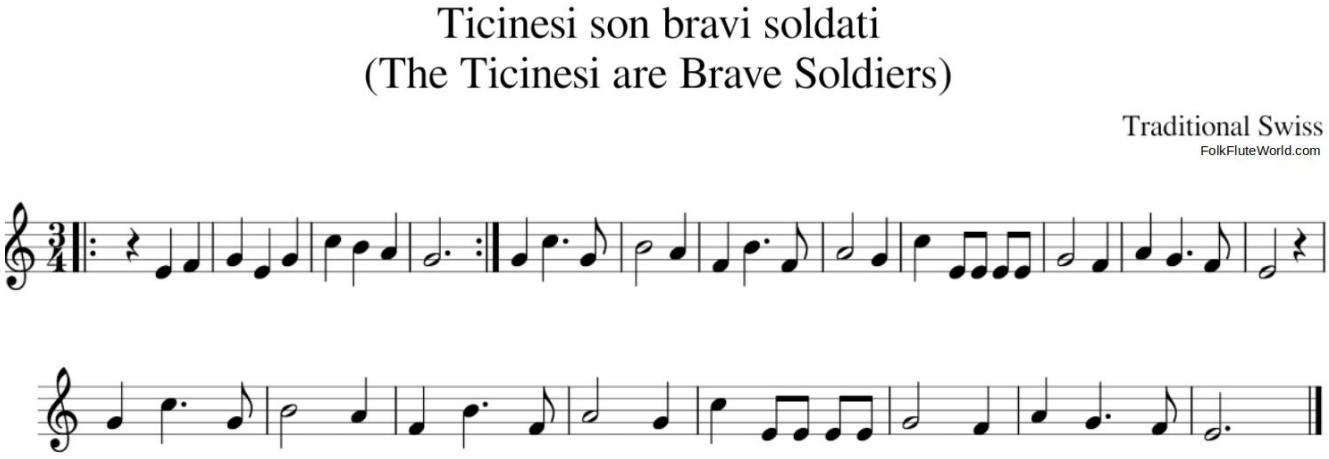


Ticinesi son bravi soldati

The title of this song translates roughly as *The Ticinesi are Brave Soldiers*. It's a folk song from the Swiss province of Ticino. That's the predominantly Italian-speaking province that geographically juts into north-central Italy. The song is used as the military anthem for the region's soldiers.

Practice: Notice that the first four measures are enclosed within repeat brackets. So you play them twice before continuing with the remainder of the score.

You'll have to take care to keep proper time in this song. It intermixes quarter notes, dotted quarter notes, eighth notes, and half notes in a unique way.
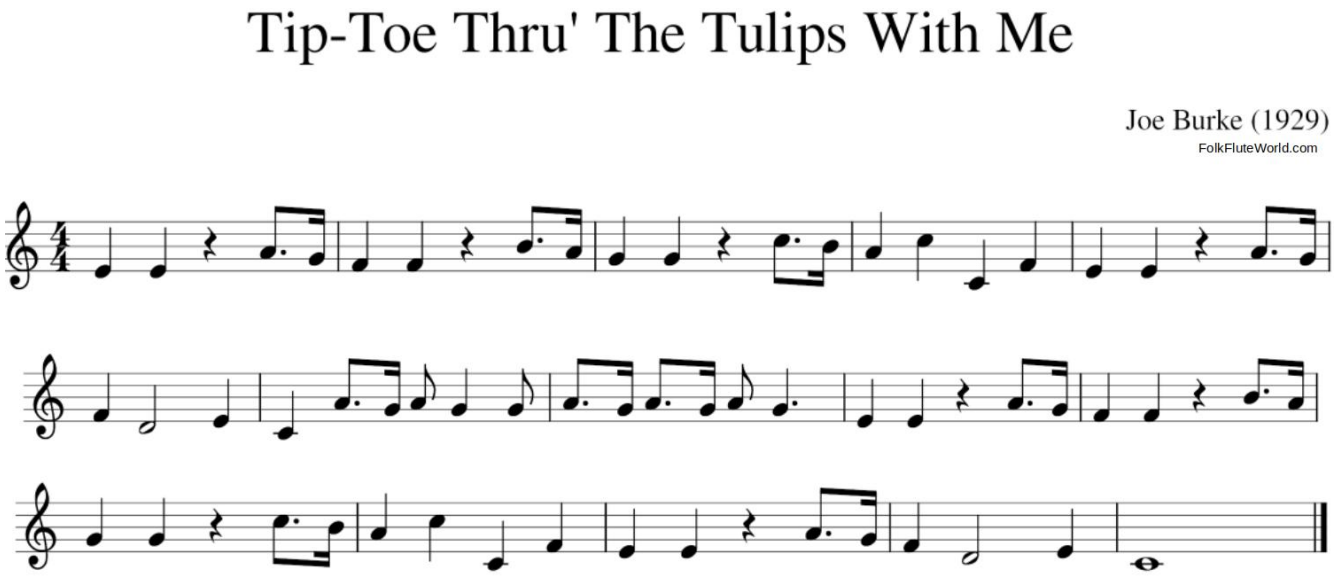


Tip-toe Thru the Tulips With Me

This song was composed for a 1929 film entitled *Gold Diggers of Broadway*. That movie was among the earliest "talkies."

The song found renewed fame when pop singer Tiny Tim crooned it on the television show *Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In* in 1968. Tim went on to star in the most-widely viewed TV event in the 1960s (after the moon landing) -- his on-screen marriage to Miss Vicki. The marriage lasted eight years, about as long as Tim's fame. But he truly loved performing and continued even as his audiences dwindled, until his passing in 1996.

Practice: The new feature in this song is the dotted-eighth-note-followed-by-a-sixteenth-note combination. This is similar to a combination with which you're already familiar, the dotted-quarter-note-followed-by-an-eighth-note. The difference is that this new combination is faster, consuming only the total time of two eighth notes.



Continue on to more songs …

Practice Songs 2

Here are 20 more songs playable on either 4 or 6 hole ocarina.

We provide a bit of background on each song, as well as playing tips.

Tunes are listed alphabetically.

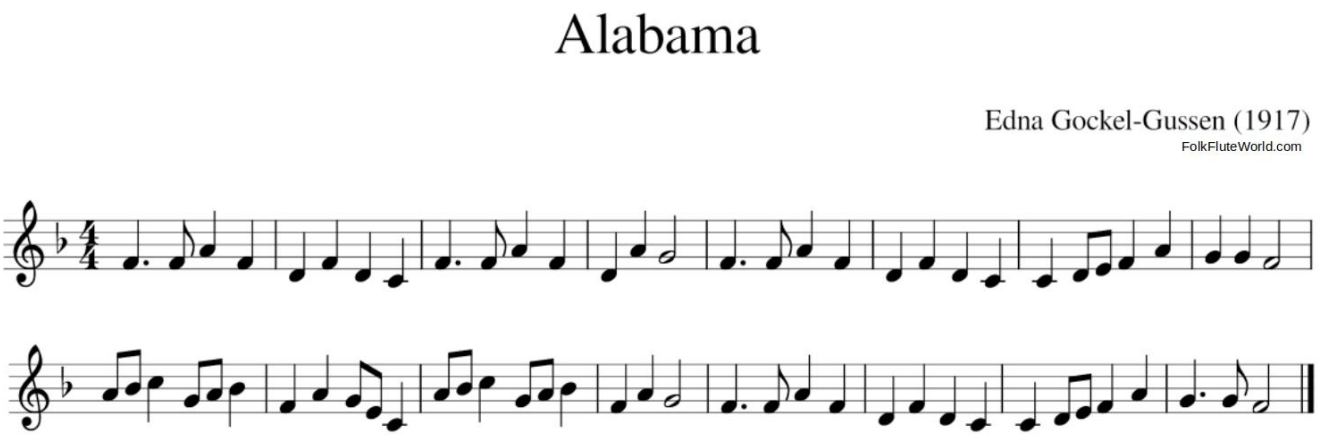
Alabama

This is the official song of the state of Alabama.

The lyrics were written by Julia Tutwiler, a 19th century advocate for education and prison reform.

Organist Edna Gockel Gussen scored the tune in 1931. Shortly thereafter, the legislature approved it as the Alabama state anthem.

Practice: As always, carefully inspect the score's key signature *before* you start playing. In this case you'll note the B♭ and remember to play it correctly when it pops up several times late in the score.
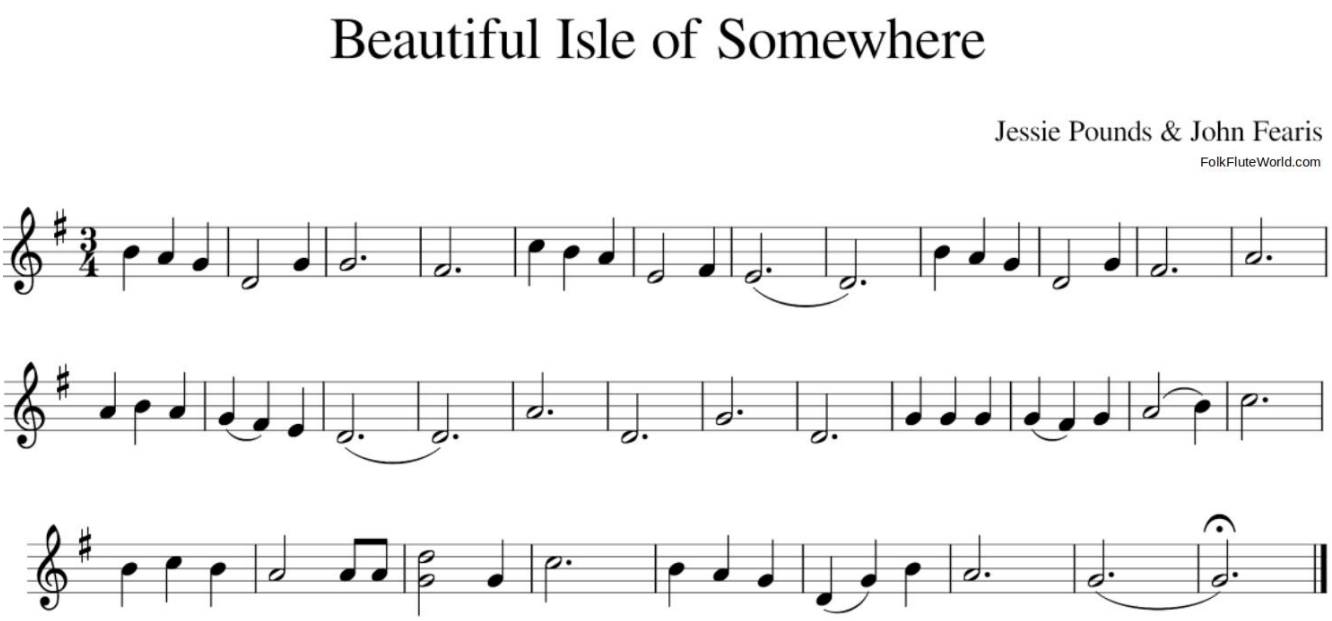


Beautiful Isle of Somewhere

This song depicts an imaginary paradise somewhere beyond this earth. It gained great popularity when played at President McKinley's funeral after his assassination in 1901. It's still played at funerals today.

McKinley had been shot by an anarchist, a follower of what was then a minor political movement. It's alleged that the President died due to the unhygienic practices of his physicians. Today he undoubtedly would have survived.

Practice: Musically speaking, this is an easy song. Play it for a beautiful tone and try to make it live up to its title.

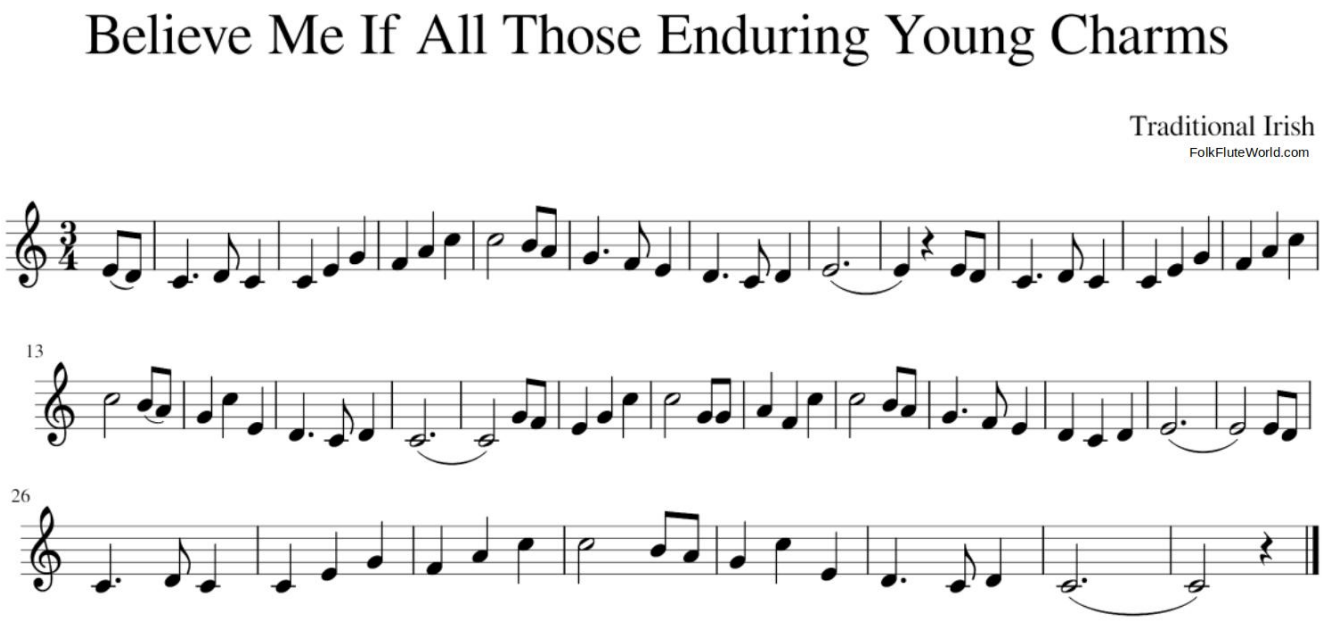


Believe Me If All Those Enduring Young Charms

This Irish tune can be traced all the way back to the 17th century. Poet, composer, and writer Thomas Moore famously wrote lyrics for it.

The melody was also adopted for the Harvard University alma mater theme by Reverend Samuel Gilman (class of 1811). With new lyrics it bids the university a fond farewell.
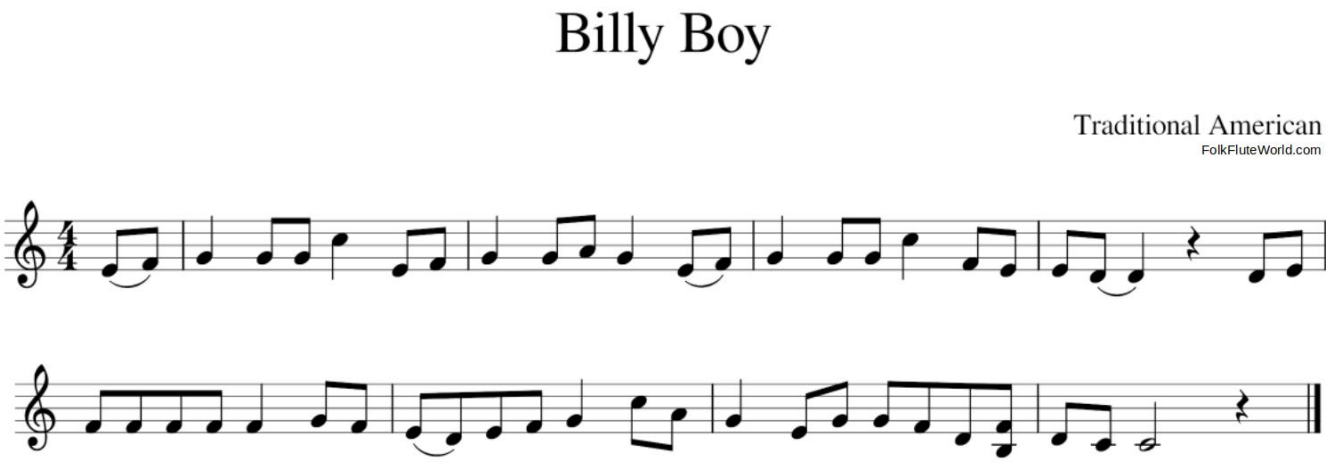
Practice: This song ranges from low C to high C, and mixes all kinds of notes and timing. While there's not some specific item you should focus on in practice, if you can play this song well, you can feel confident that you're well on your way to being able to play most of the popular songs you'll encounter.



Billy Boy

The lyrics of this American folk song question young Billy about why he should be allowed to marry his intended. Both suitors are considered too young for marriage -- although legal age limits were in the early teens when the song was current in the 1800s.

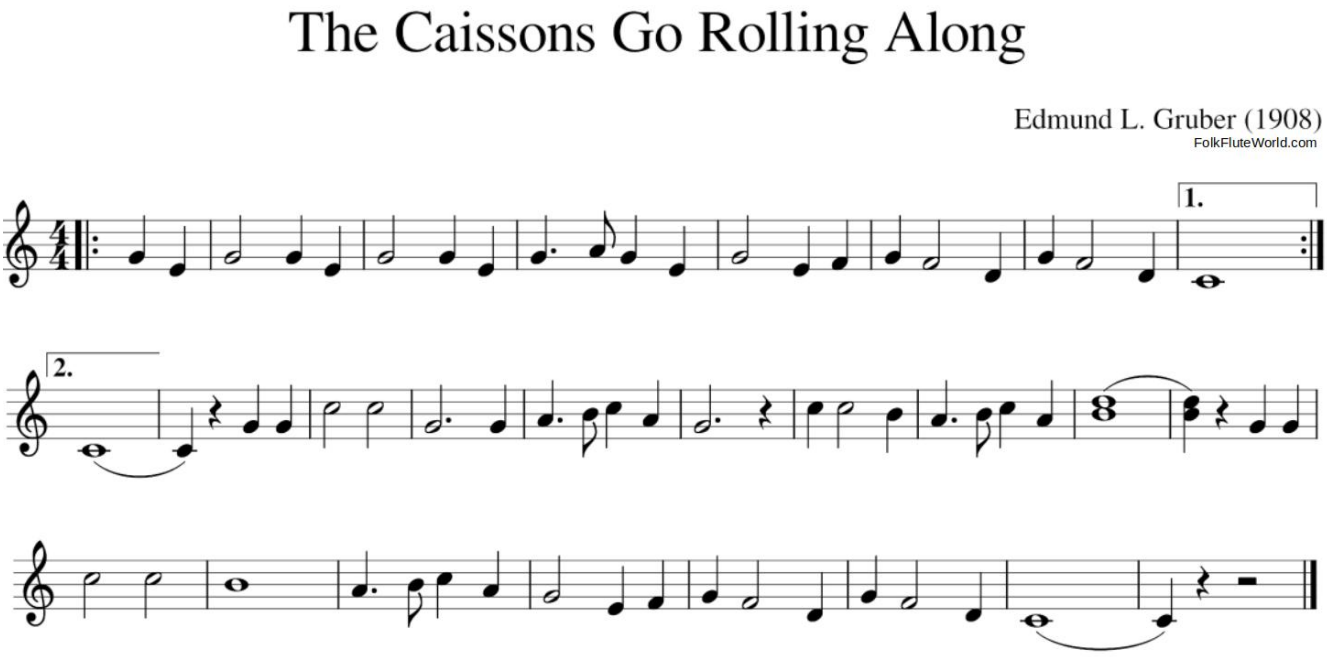
Practice: This score presents you with mostly eighth notes. You'll want to articulate them clearly, but don't overdo the tonguing.



The Cassions Go Rolling Along

This song was penned in 1908 by Edmund Gruber. "March Master" John Philip Sousa transformed it into a march called the *US Field Artillery March* in 1917. At that time it became the unofficial theme song for the US Army. It will surprise many Army veterans to hear that it wasn't until 1956 that it became official, with new lyrics by Harold Arberg.
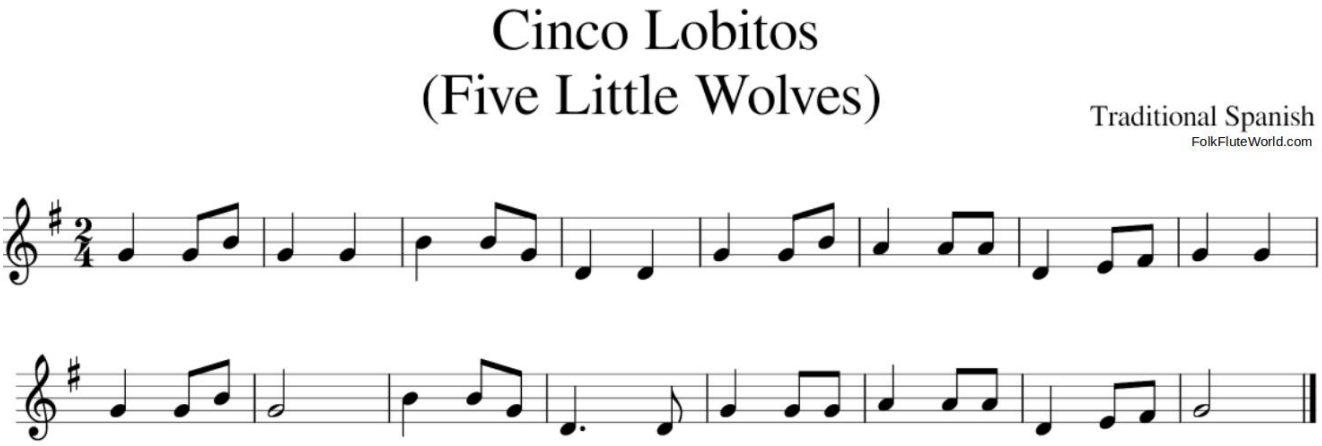
Practice: This is a confident, upbeat song, usually played at a fast clip. The song contains but a single high D that can't be played on a 4 hole ocarina, which we've altered here to a B. Some might say changing that note diminishes the build in the song. If you have a 6 hole oc, try playing it both ways. What do you think?



Cinco Lobitos

The title of this song translates as "five little wolves." It's a Spanish folk song that is popular among children, and is sometimes used to teach counting.

Practice: This G Major tune should be fairly easy to play. It's in 2/4 time -- 2 beats per measure, with each quarter note getting 1 beat. 2/4 time is often used in upbeat scores and marches.



Coventry Carol

This somber classic dates from 16th century England.

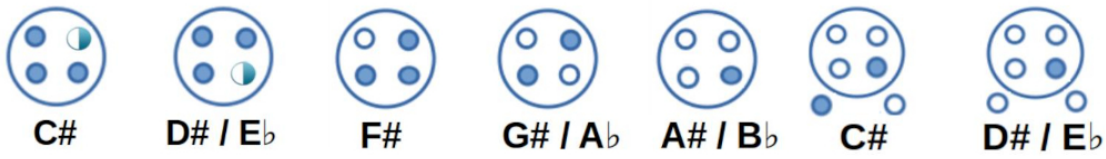
The carol refers to the "Massacre of the Innocents," whereby King Herod ordered all male infants in Bethlehem killed. Herod did this to forestall the prophecy that one of them would grow up to challenge his rule.

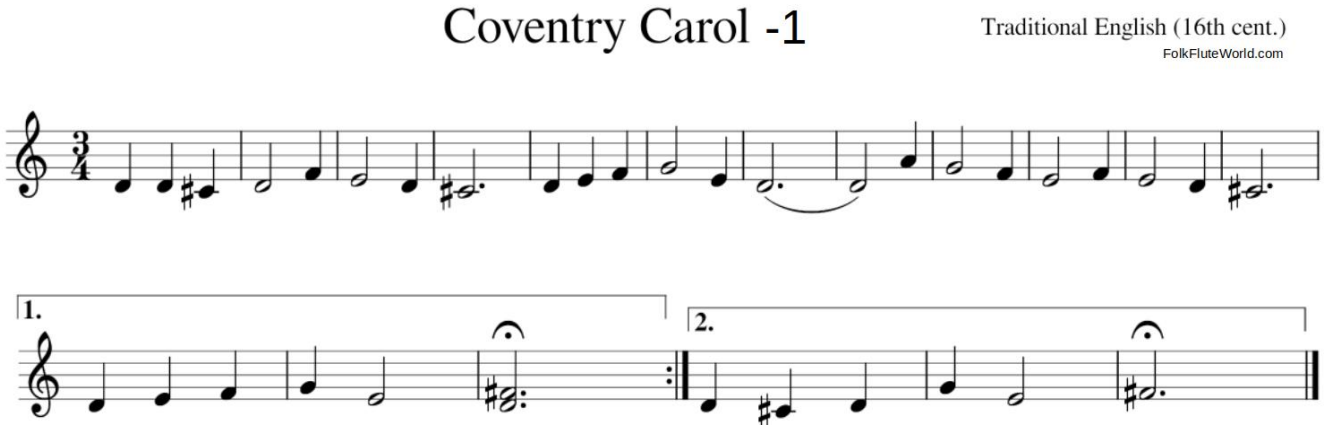
Practice: The song is noted for its half tones. So that you get good practice with them, we've provided three versions of the song. The first practices low C# and F#, the second employs low D# and G#, and the third uses G# and high C#.

The song is challenging, any way you cut it. But if you want to learn accidentals, practice the score in its different keys and you'll gain mastery of them.

The third version of the song requires a 6 hole ocarina.

Before you start, here's a quick reminder of the fingering for the sharps:
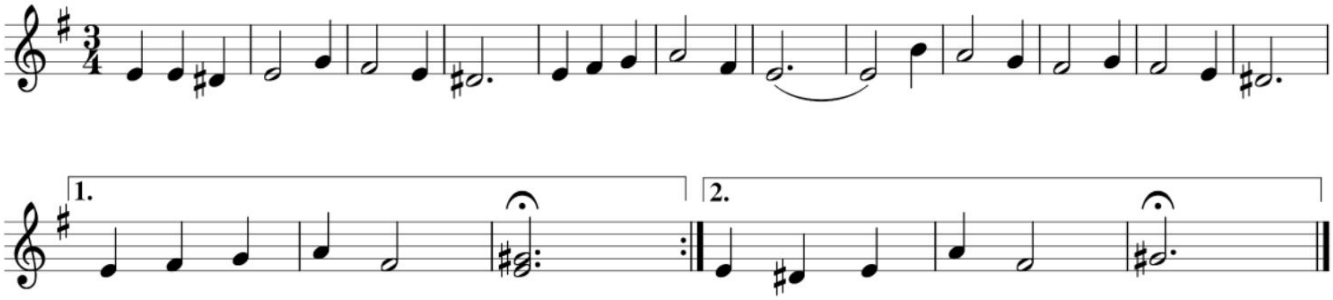




Coventry Carol -2

Traditional English (16th cent.)
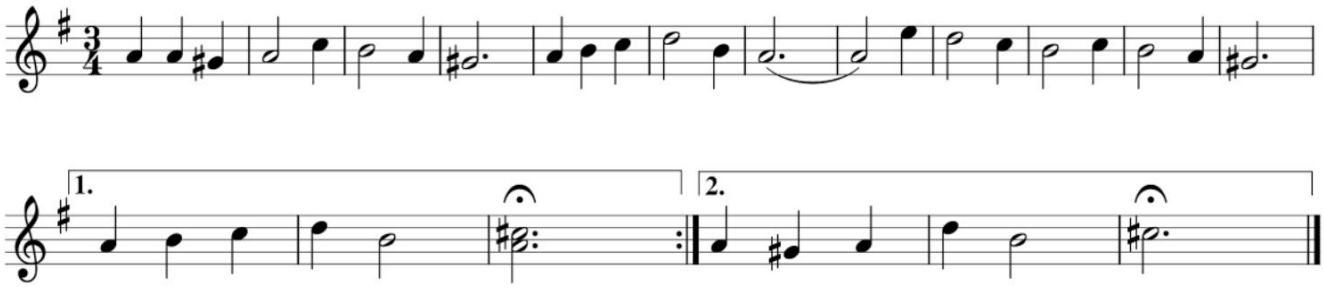
FolkFluteWorld.com



Coventry Carol -3

Traditional English (16th cent.)

FolkFluteWorld.com



The Cuckoo

The cuckoo bird symbolizes the arrival of spring in the English countryside. That's what this song is about. It's since become a popular folk song in all Anglophone countries under a variety of titles.

Practice: The challenge in this song is the timing of the measures containing the dotted eighth -- sixteenth note combination. Once you've got that deciphered, you can readily play the song. If you need a refresher, recall that *Tip-Toe Thru' the Tulips* in the previous song collection employed the same pattern of notes.

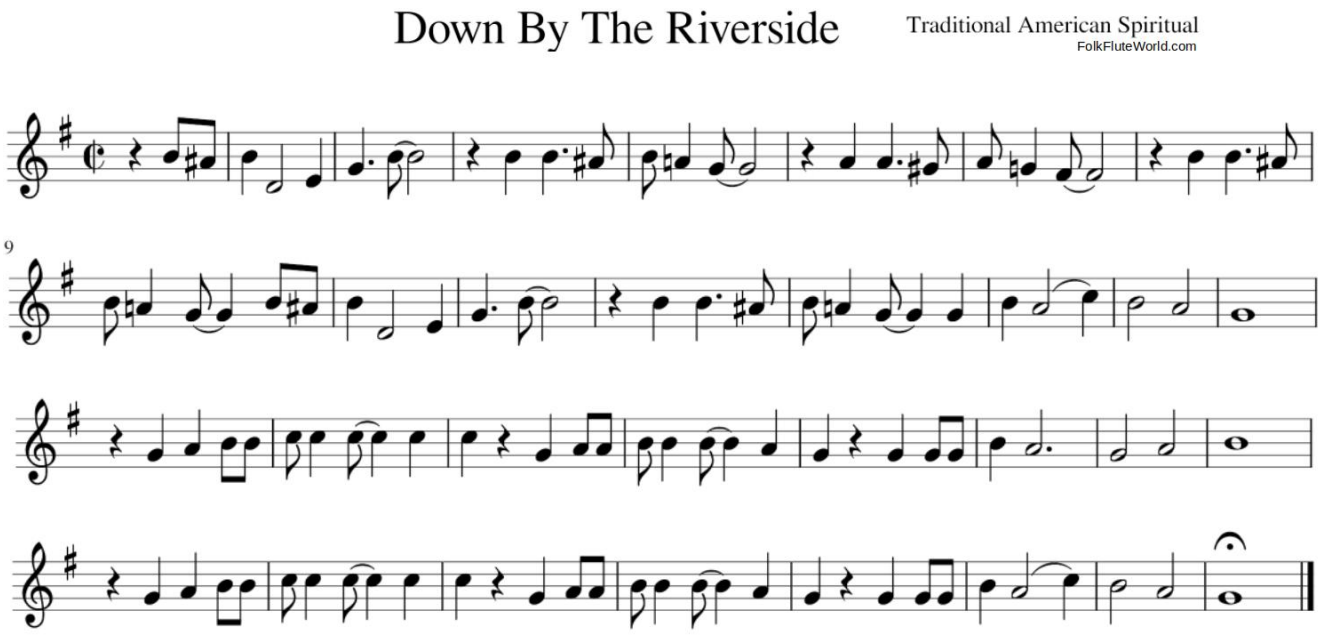


Down By the Riverside

This is a traditional American spiritual dating from before the Civil War. It's also been adapted as an antiwar protest song, due to its pacifist imagery.

Practice: You see several occurrences of A# in this song. Remember that each halftone can be labeled in either of two ways: as a sharp, or its equivalent name as a flat. A# is actually B♭, so you're well familiar with this note.

After you play an A#, the score helpfully employs the natural sign to show that subsequent occurrences of A are to be played as natural, rather than sharp.



Havah Nagila
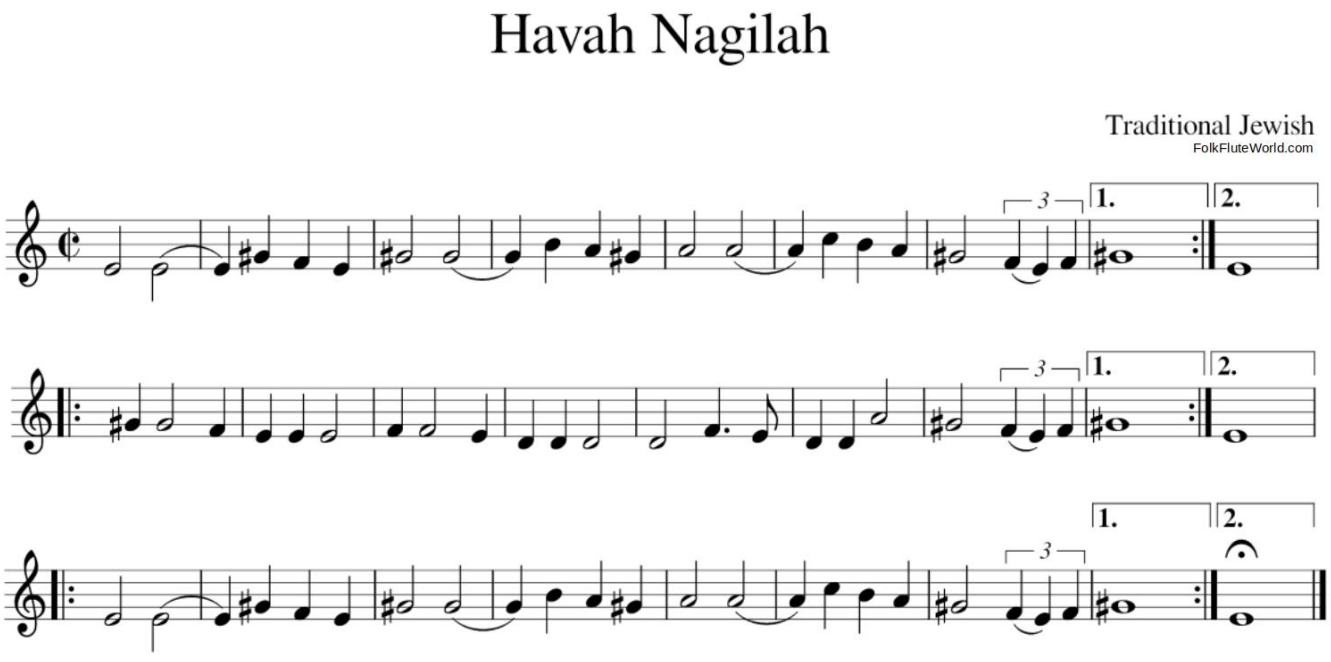
The *Havah Nagila* (or *Havah Nagilah*) was composed in 1918 to celebrate the Balfour Declaration and a British victory over the Ottoman Turks. It was based on an old Hassidic religious chant.

Today it's sung at various celebrations including weddings, bar and bat mitzvahs, and Jewish holidays.

Practice: Notice how the repeat brackets tell you to repeat each line one time. Play the first ending the first time through, and the second ending the second time through. The volta notation shows which ending to play each time.

See the triplets in this tune? They occur just before the 1st and 2nd endings. These triplets consist of three quarter notes. That means that you play three equal notes within the time otherwise required to play two quarter notes.
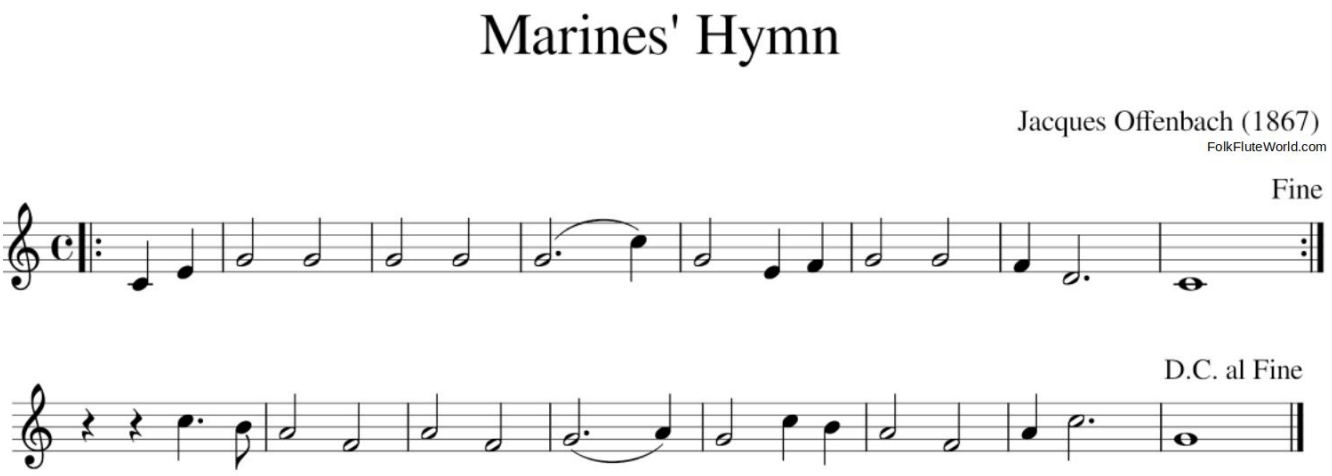
Be prepared for all those G#'s!



Marines' Hymn

This tune was written by German-French composer Jacques Offenbach in 1867. Lyrics were later updated and it became the official anthem of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Practice: This song should be pretty easy. It's a bouncy melody that expresses a can-do optimism. Try to express that jaunty, confident mood in your play.
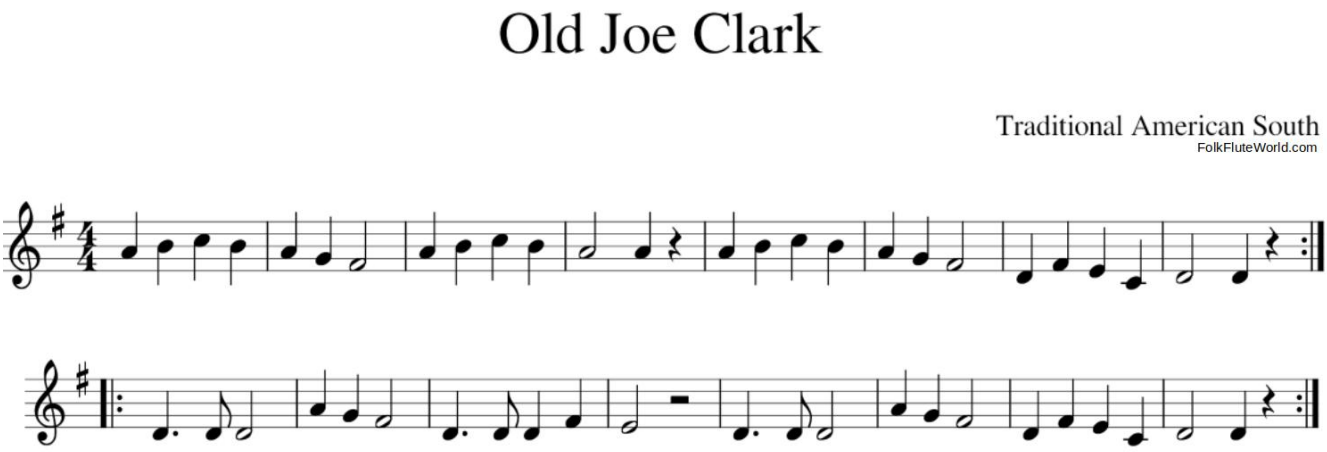


Old Joe Clark

Here's a classic from the hill folk of Appalachia. Probably from the late 1800s, it gained popularity during the first world war among southern troops. Today it's often heard at bluegrass festivals and country fairs. It's an surprisingly jazzy song that always gets a rousing reception from the crowds.

There must be a hundred different lyrics to this tune. Many are humorous and known by heart to fans.

Practice: Don't be afraid to take liberties with the timing to jazz this song up a bit. Convert those strings of placid quarter notes into the dotted-quarter-eighth-note combination you know well by now. That will give it some swing.
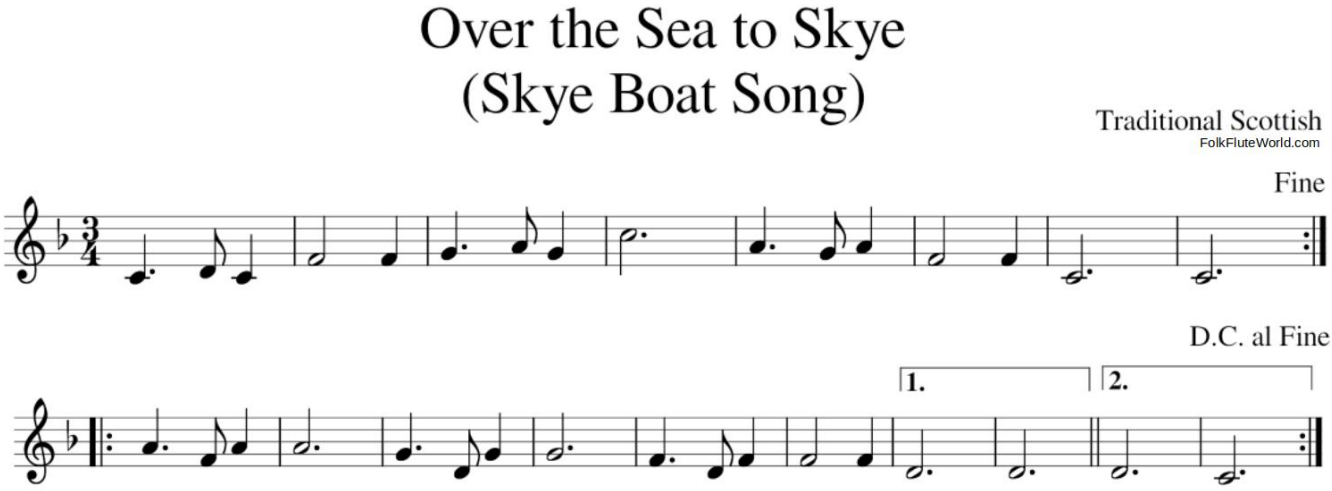


Over the Sea to Skye

Also known as the *Skye Boat Song*, this tune has had several sets of lyrics since it emerged in the 1700s. Robert Louis Stevenson tried his hand at writing its lyrics in 1885.

You'll find this tune in every compilation of folk songs from the British isles.

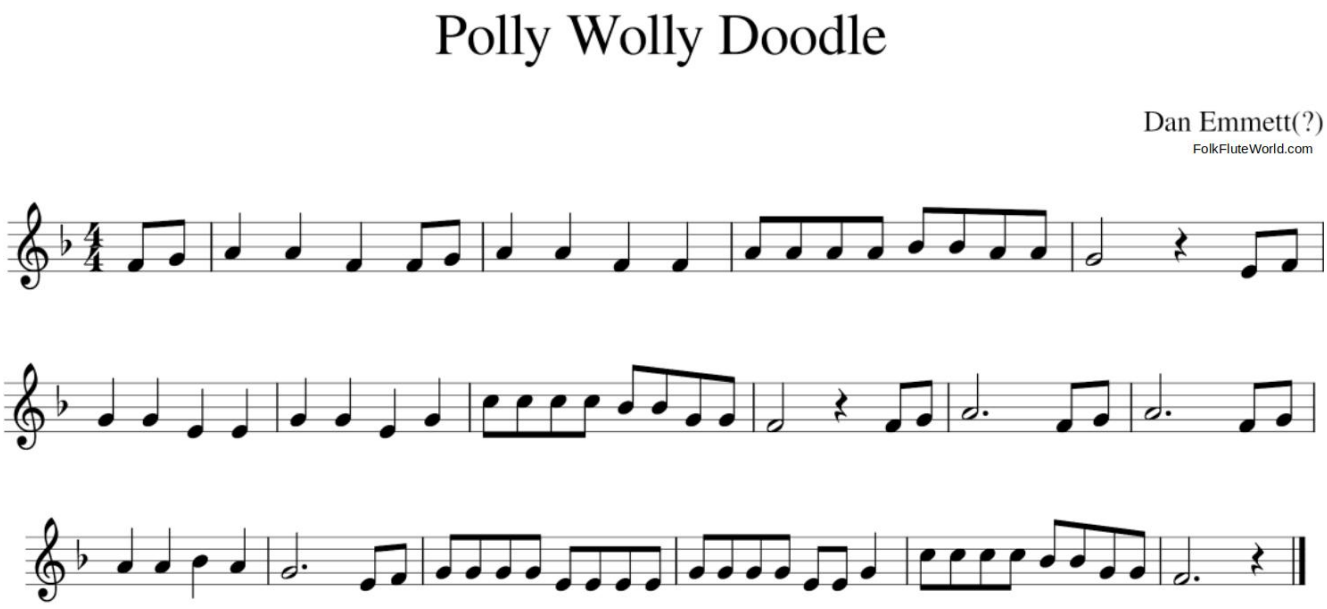
Practice: This song is usually played as a slow lullaby or waltz. This score illustrates how using repeat signs and the volta with their different endings can greatly compress the space required to score a song.



Polly Wolly Doodle

This tune first appeared in the 1840s. It rapidly gained popularity and has been reworked with many lyrics for varied uses. Today one often hears it in children's' shows.
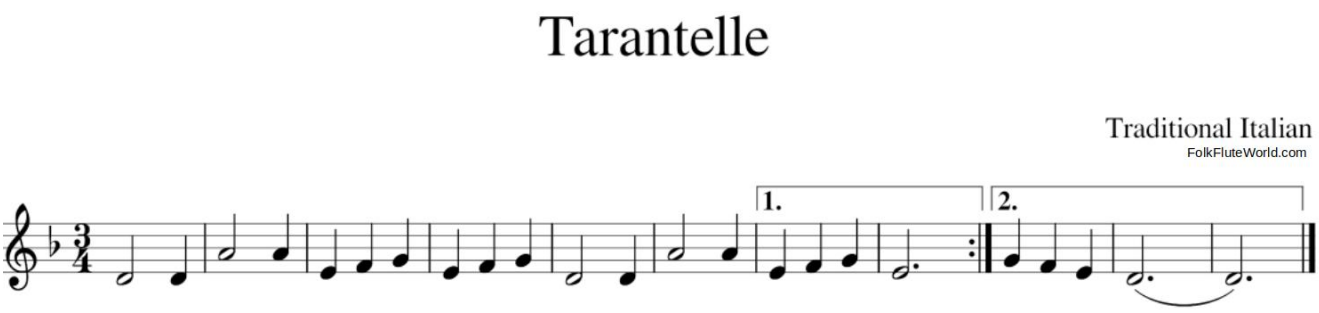
Practice: Here's a tonguing challenge, with long strings of eighth notes. You want to distinctly tongue these notes but not so hard that they detract from the melody.



Tarantelle

This traditional melody is one of several used for tarantella dances in southern Italy. Most the dances are quick 3/4 or 6/8 tunes accompanied by tambourines.

Practice: This is a simple tune, and a good opportunity for trying to convey the happiness of dance. Once you become familiar with it, play it at a quick pace.
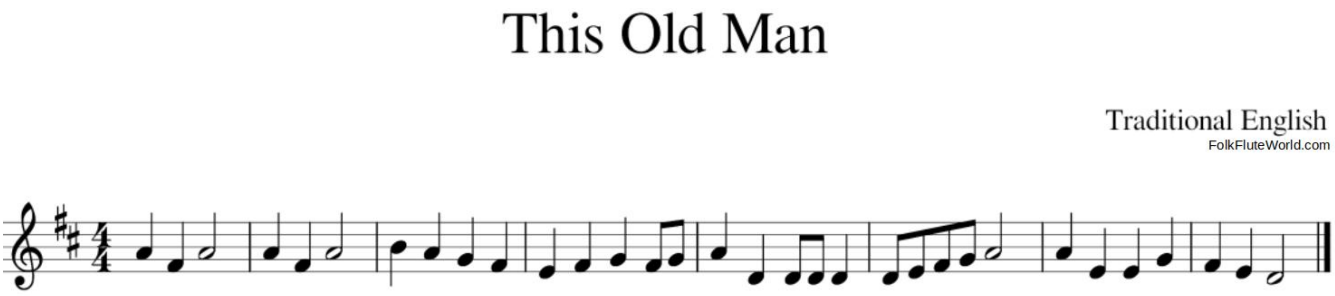


This Old Man

This vintage tune is a nursery rhyme sometimes used to teach children how to count.

Like many ancient melodies, this one has been widely adapted for commercial use. It was employed in modified form in the 1958 film *The Inn of the Sixth Happiness*.

Rocker Ritchie Valens released it as *The Paddi-Wack Song* in 1959, and the Snowmen had a minor popular hit with it under the name *Nik Nak Paddy Wak* in 1986.

Practice: Try speeding up this song to a quick pace, the way schoolchildren might chant it.



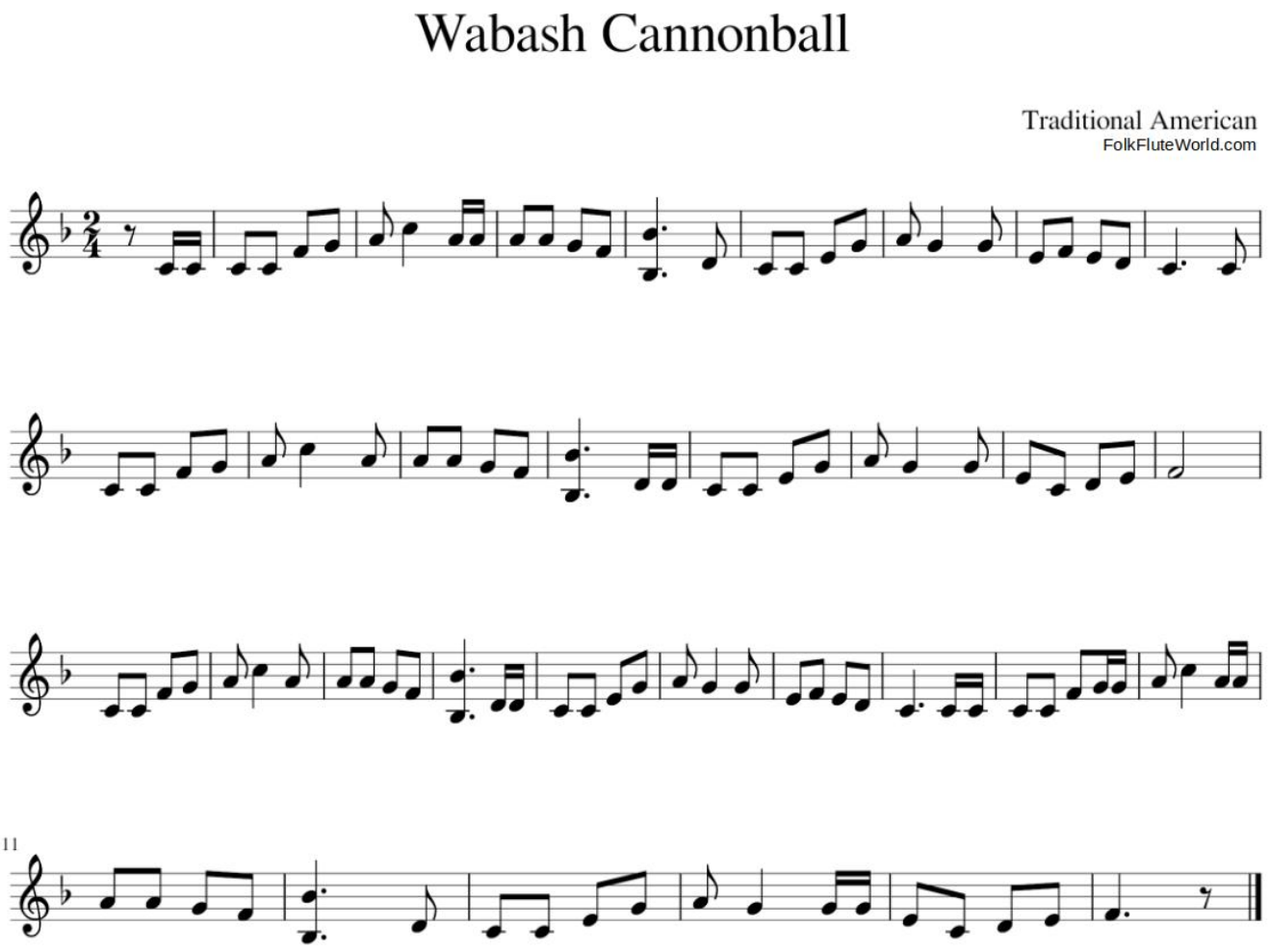
Wabash Cannonball

This traditional folk song became a country music staple after it was recorded by the Carter Family in the 1920s and then by Roy Acuff in 1936. Acuff had a major hit with it and it became his theme song.

Mr. Acuff was a central figure in country music in the 1930s and 1940s. His appearances at the Grand Ole Opry spanned four decades. Fans frequently hollered for him to perform *Wabash Cannonball*.

Practice: The song is in 2/4 time. That's two beats per measure, with each quarter note getting one beat. This is one of the few songs we've seen that contains sixteenth notes. Two of those would comprise one eighth note, so they're very quick. The sixteenth notes as used as **pick up** notes to start the main tune.

Try to match how you know this melody goes with its representation in this score.

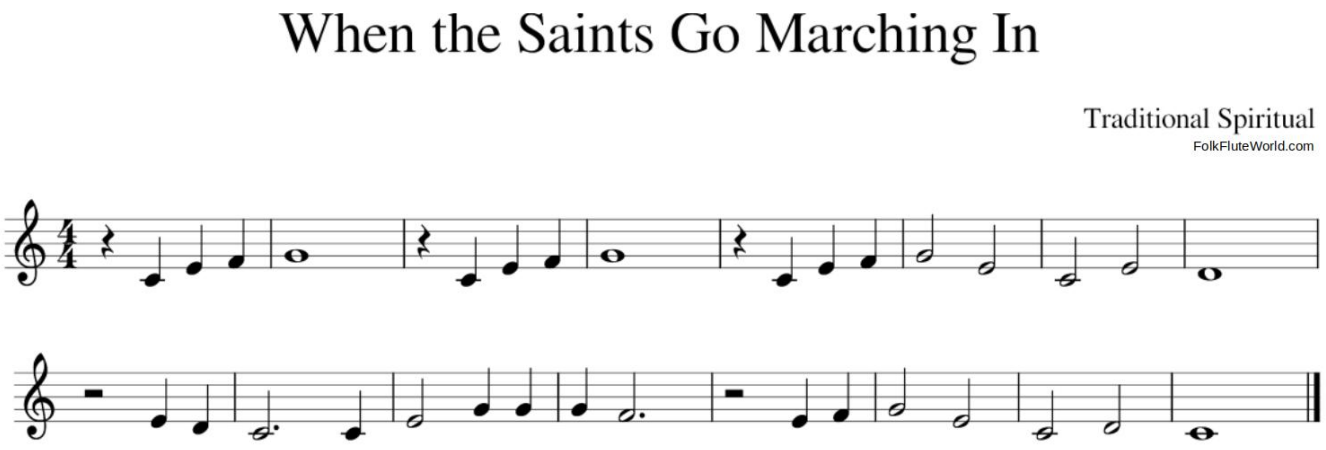


When the Saints Go Marching In

This song likely evolved from African-American gospel songs in the late 1800s. It's often played up tempo as a jazz standard and is considered the classic New Orleans anthem.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the song was typically played slow and stately. It evolved into the snappy jazz rhythm we know today by the time of the second world war.
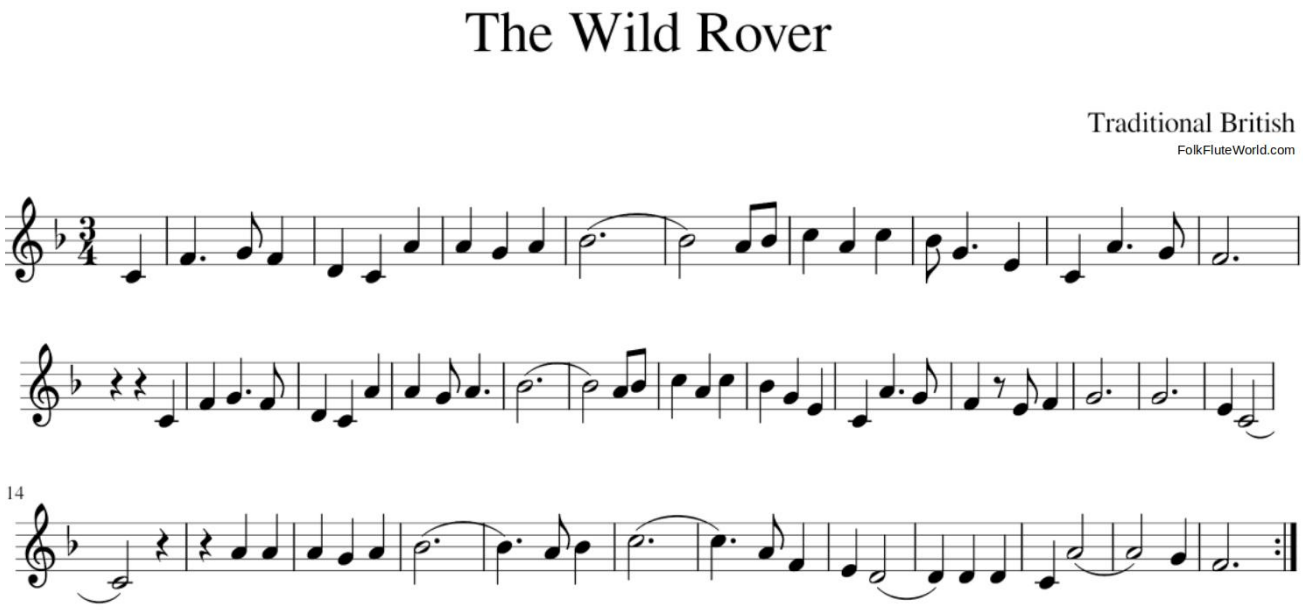
Practice: The song plays easily and is repetitious. It's best played at accelerated tempo. Jazz it up by altering the timing however feels right to you.



The Wild Rover

Numerous claims have been made regarding the origins of this tune. About all one can say for certain is that it's from the British Isles and is several hundred years old. It's quite popular.

Practice: The timing of this song is a little tricky. It's a good test of how well you can follow a mix of quarter, eighth, and half notes, plus their dotted equivalents. Sound it out slowly first if you need to.

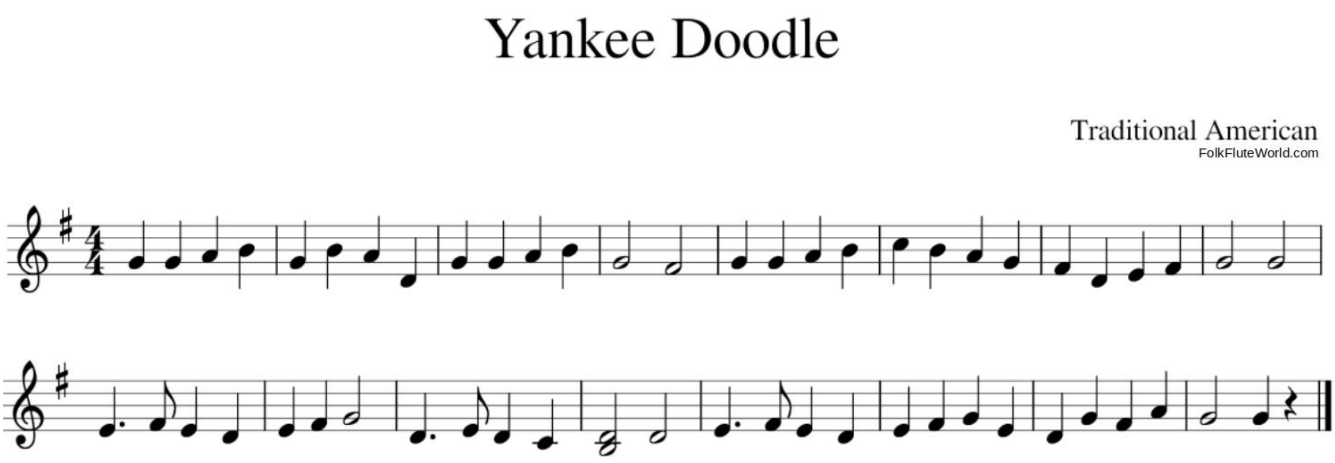


Yankee Doodle

The origins of this old tune are lost to time. Most likely it's Irish. It was brought to America during the colonial era and promptly became a favorite.

Today most Americans think of *Yankee Doodle* as a patriotic folk song. They associate it with the American Revolutionary War of 1775 to 1783.

Practice: This is an easy song to play, unless you play it at challenging speed. It contains a single low B in the second line. That's playable on a 12 hole ocarina, but on 4 and 6 holes you can play a low D instead.



Continue on for more songs ...

Practice Songs 3

This collection contains 20 practice songs specifically for 6 hole pendants.

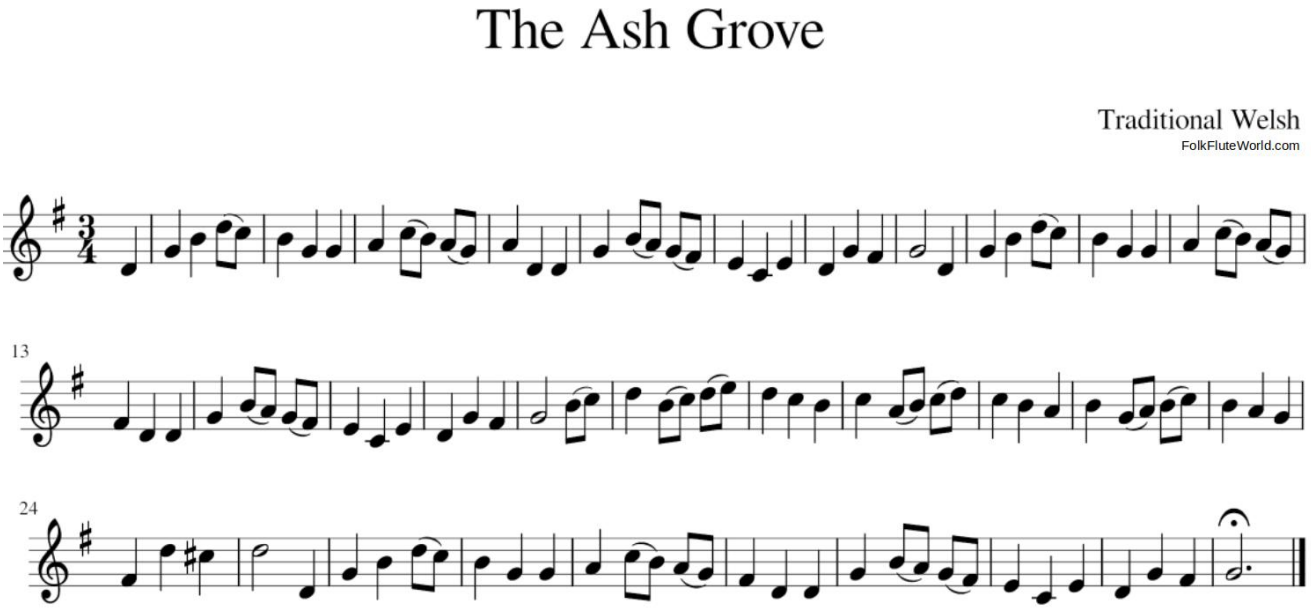
We provide a bit of background on each song, as well as playing tips.

Songs are listed alphabetically.

The Ash Grove

This Welsh tune is several hundred years old. Its best-known lyrics were written by Thomas Oliphant, a 19th century Scottish musician, artist, and author.

Practice: The timing of this song is consistent and thus pretty easy. But with its eighth note runs, the tune will certainly keep your fingers busy. It challenges you in the upper range of the 6 hole ocarina as it frequently reaches into high C, D, and E. Take heed of the high C# in the first measure of the last line.
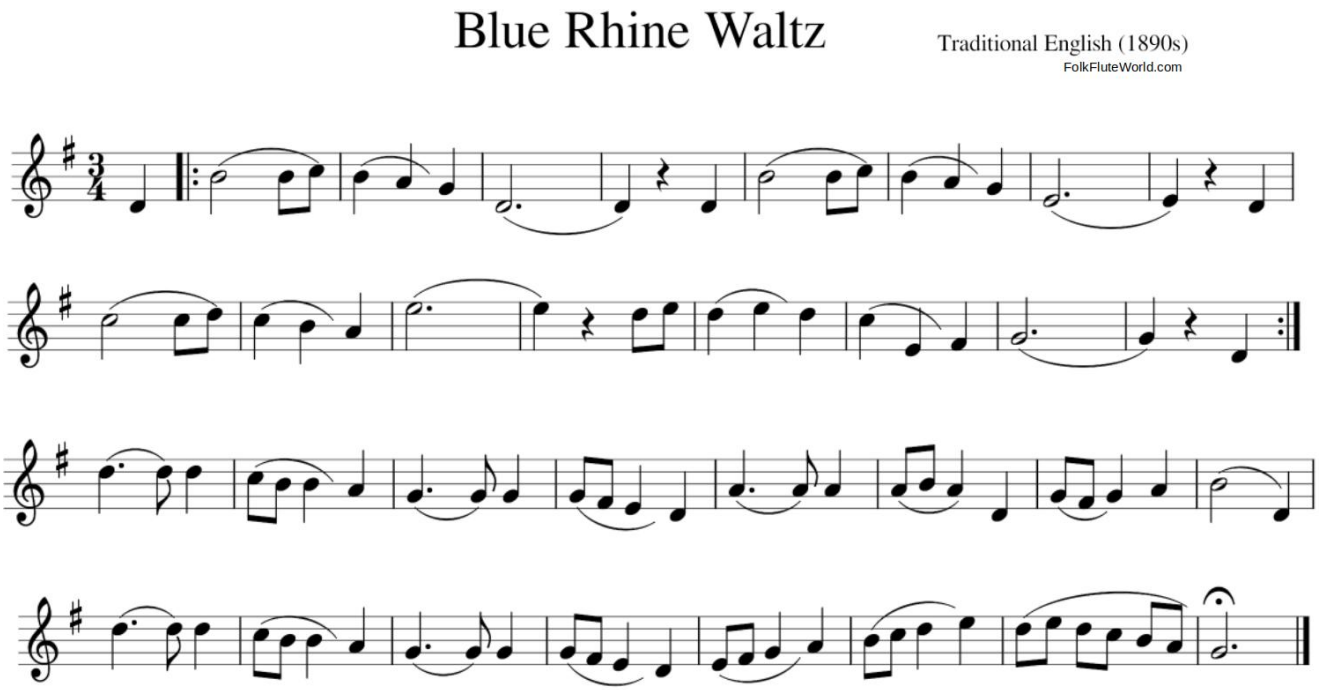


Blue Rhine Waltz

Though you might assume it German, this popular waltz had its origins in 1890s England.

People often confuse it with the *Blue Danube (Waltz)*, from composer Johann Strauss II in 1866. The two songs are unrelated.

Practice: The outstanding feature of this score is all the slurs (or ties) between notes. They must be played correctly to properly render the tune. Remember that a slur between notes of different pitches means you shift from one to another without separately tonguing the latter note(s) in the tie.
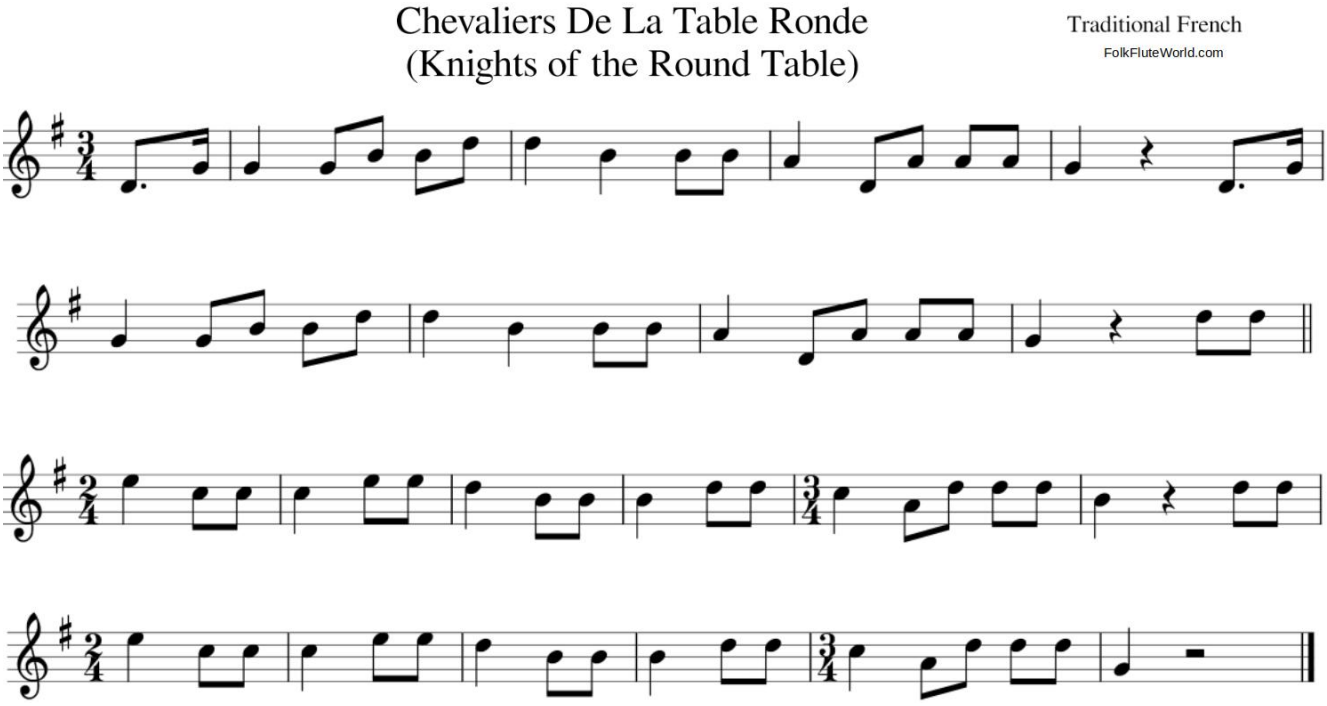


Chevaliers de la table rounde

This is a popular drinking song in the French speaking areas of Europe in France, Belgium, and Switzerland.

It's rather bawdy and encourages unhealthy drinking with its last lines stating that *"The moral of this story is to drink before you die"*.

Practice: The song shifts between 3/4 and 2/4 time signatures. But this shouldn't cause difficulty as the quarter note retains one beat throughout.



The Chromatic Waltz

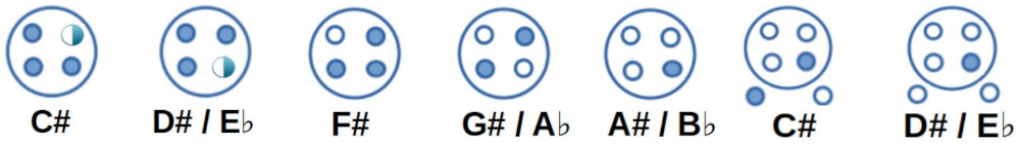
Here's the perfect exercise to learn all the semitones.

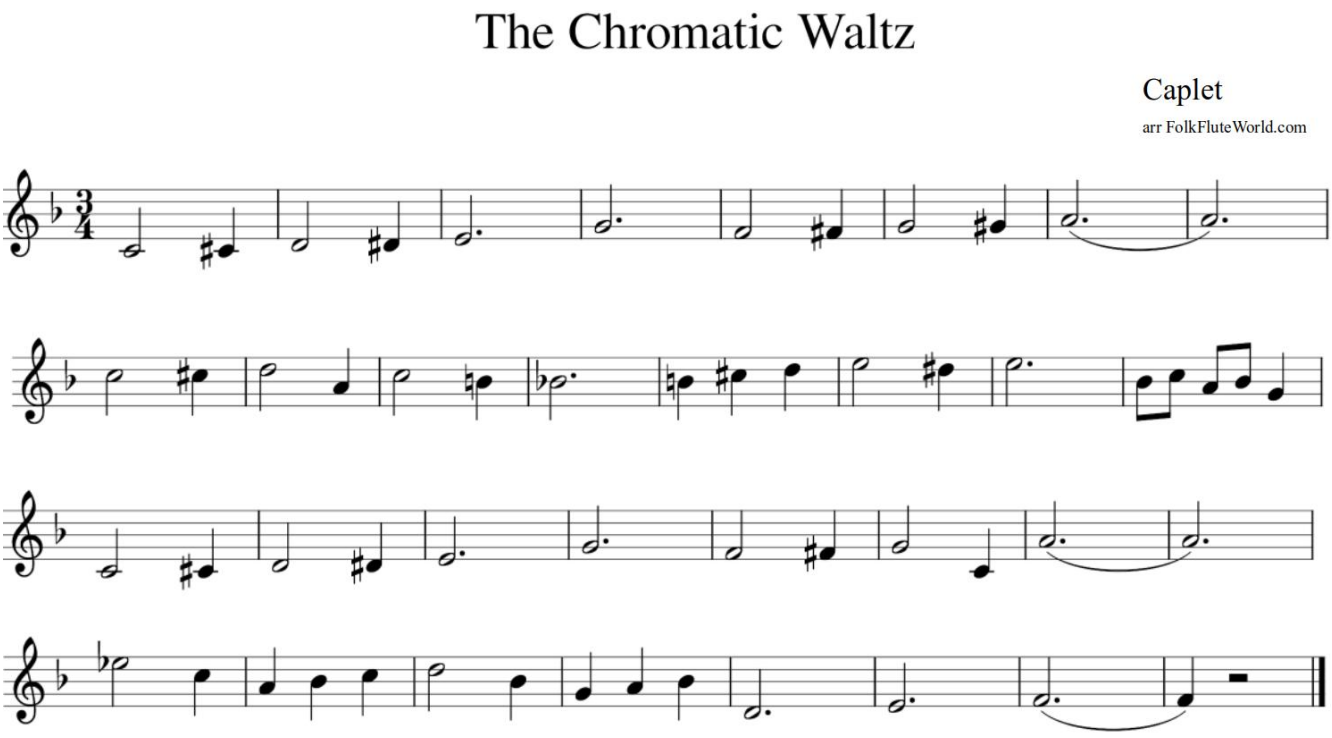
Practice: This is a tough song to play on an ocarina. You must half-hole several of the notes, and they're critical to the song, so you have to sound them accurately.

If you play a low pitched oc, like a tenor or bass, your instrument has bigger holes that may make half-holing easier.

If you play an Alto C or Soprano, you'll have to be very precise in half-holing to play this song. Low C# is particularly difficult because you must half-hole a very small tone hole. Don't feel bad if it's beyond you!

To refresh your memory, here are all the accidentals:
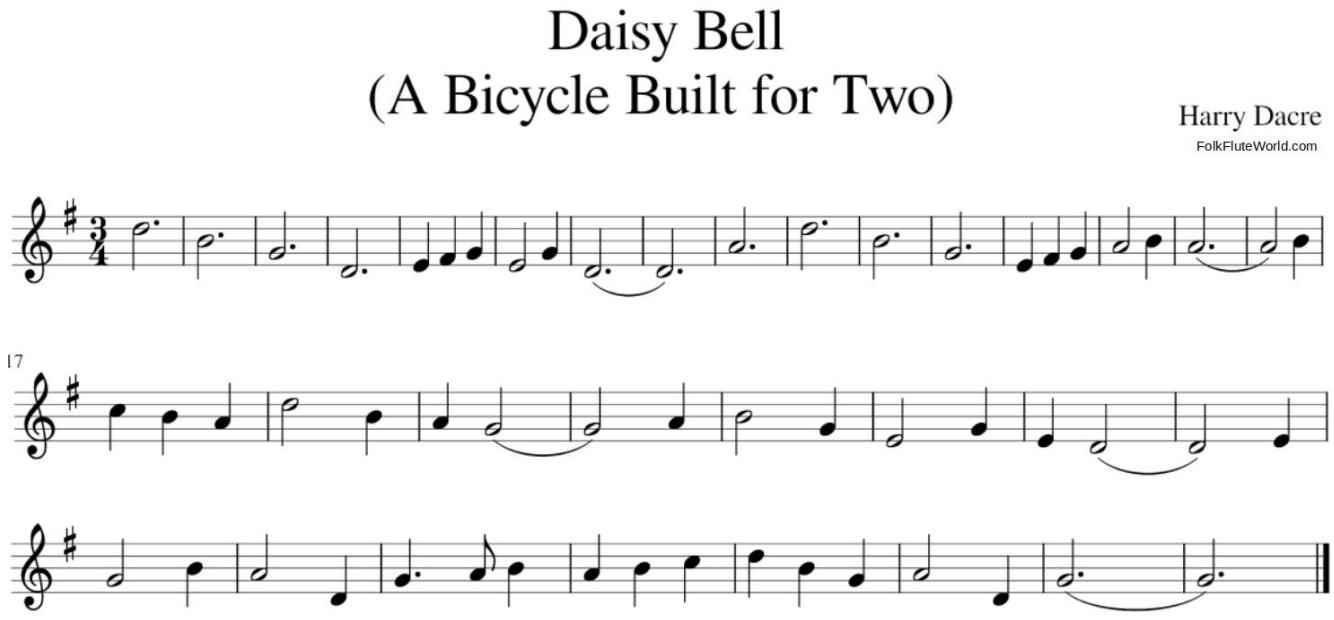




Daisy Bell (aka "A Bicycle Built for Two")

In the popular mind, this song from 1892 represents the "gay nineties". When it was penned, bicycles were all the rage. And for good reason. For the first time in human history, people could move quickly about without horses.

The irony, of course, is that the hoopla about bicycles quickly faded as automobiles took center stage just a few years later.

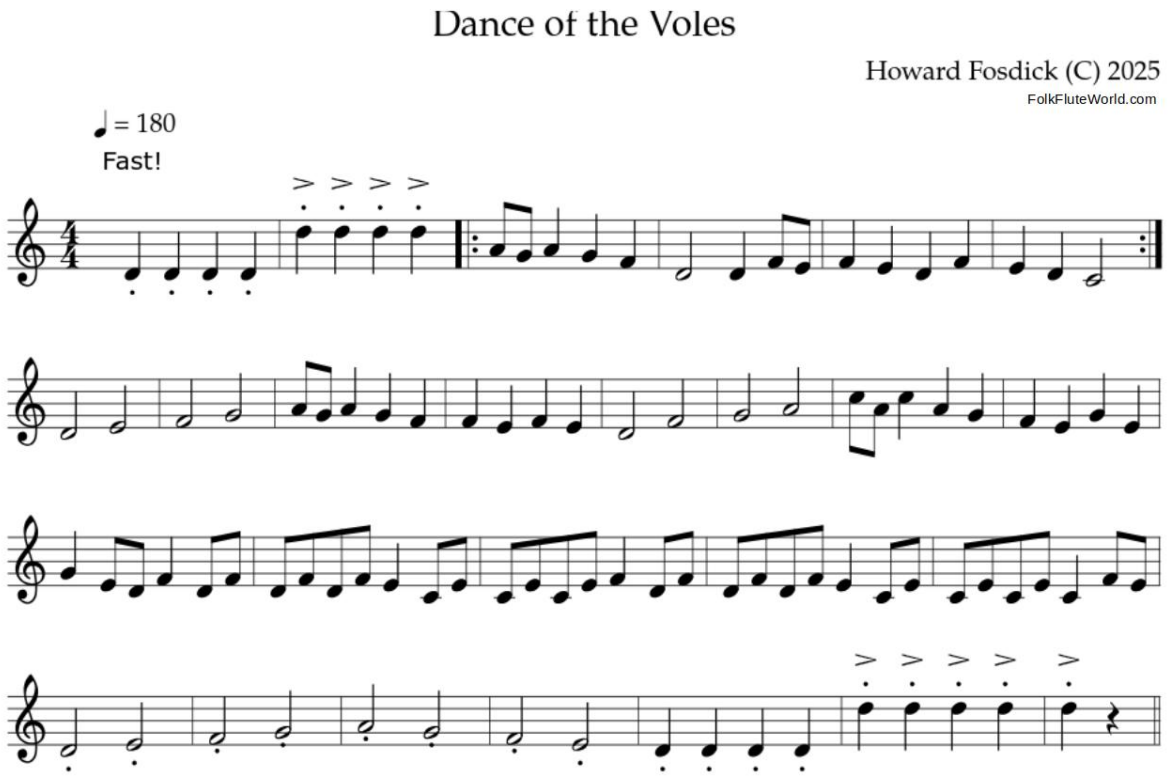
Practice: Both the timing and fingering of this song are pretty easy. Try to give the song the feel of a lilting waltz.



Dance of the Voles

This is a dancing tune for the voles in the novel *The Moon and Remembrance*.

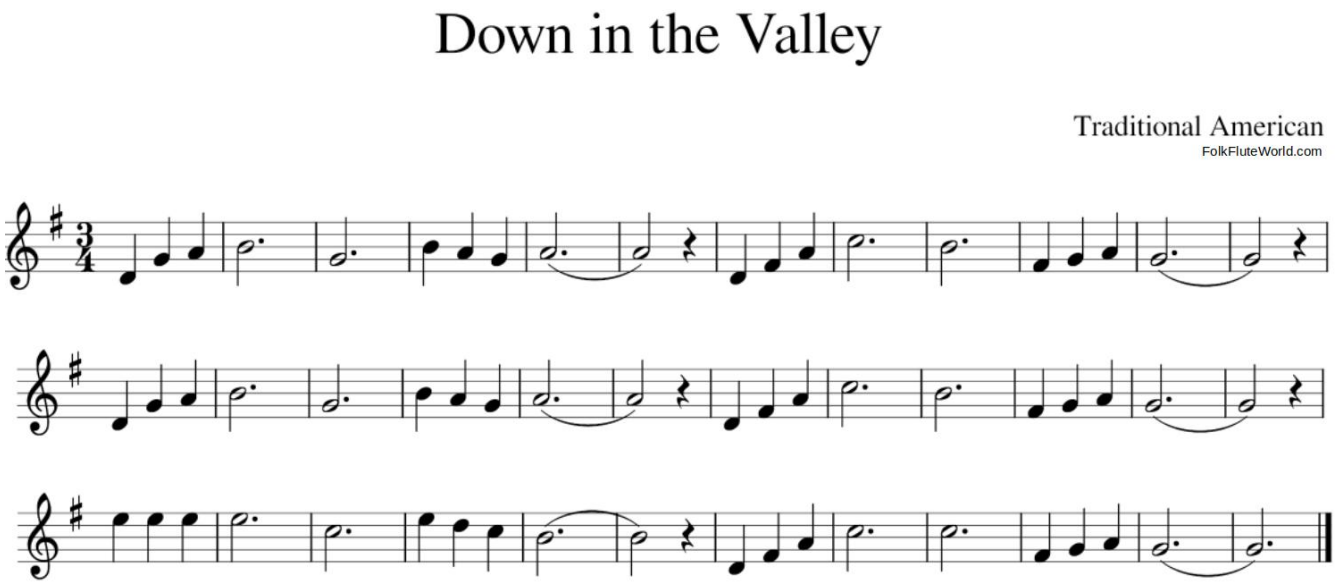
Practice: The first four notes are staccato, and the next four are to be "attacked". They're the lead-in for a quick dance tune. This is one of those songs you may have to practice slowly before trying at its intended speed.



Down in the Valley

This is a traditional American folk song that became especially popular in the 1920s, when many early recording artists produced their own versions. One was released as the *Ballad of Birmingham Jail*, with lyrics said to have been written while their author awaited trial for moonshining.

Practice: This score is fairly easy and repetitive, just the sort of song that demands the pure tone of the ocarina for its beauty to emerge.



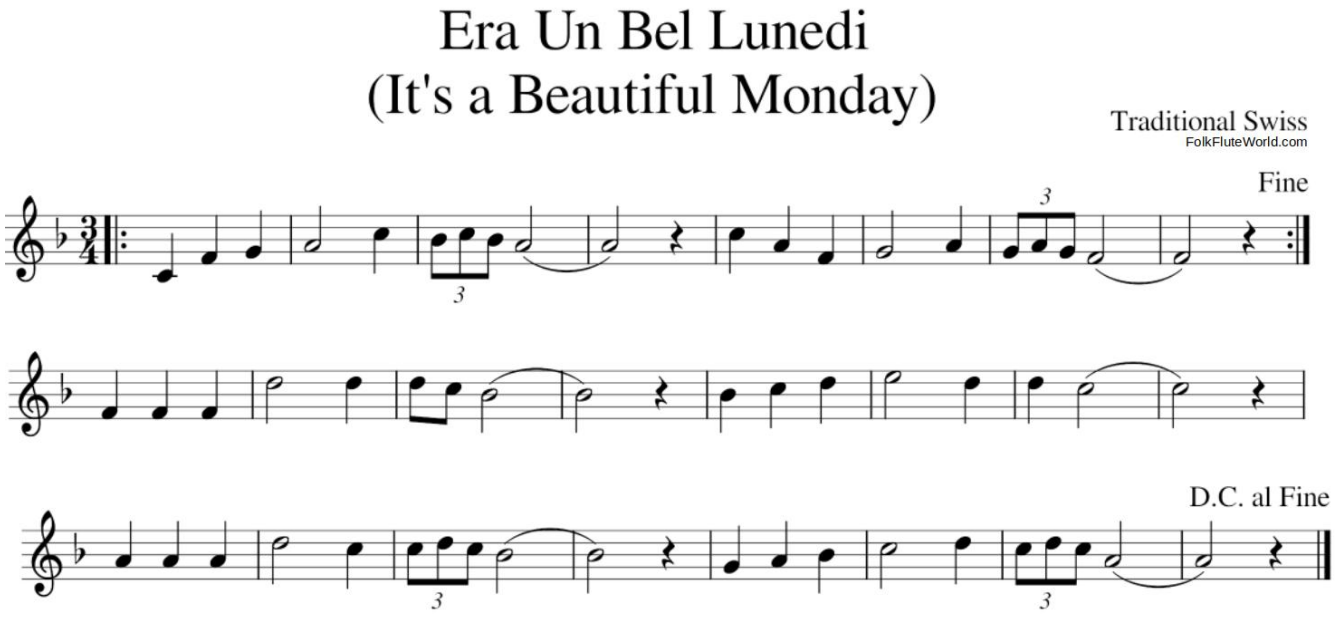
Era un Bel Lunedi

This traditional Swiss folk song reminds one of clear vistas and alpine valleys. It's a happy song... a waltz of the type one associates with the mountains and the outdoors.

The title translates as "It's a Beautiful Monday."

Practice: Remember that those eighth notes grouped in three's and labeled **3** are **triplets**. You play the three eighth notes within a single beat. So those three eighth notes fit into the time duration otherwise consumed by two.

Mind the repeat signs. The way you play this song is to play the measures of the first line and repeat them one time. The second time through you play right past the repeat sign to the end of the score. Now you encounter **D.C. al Fine**. That tells you to return to the beginning of the score and play until you see the word telling you to stop, **Fine**.
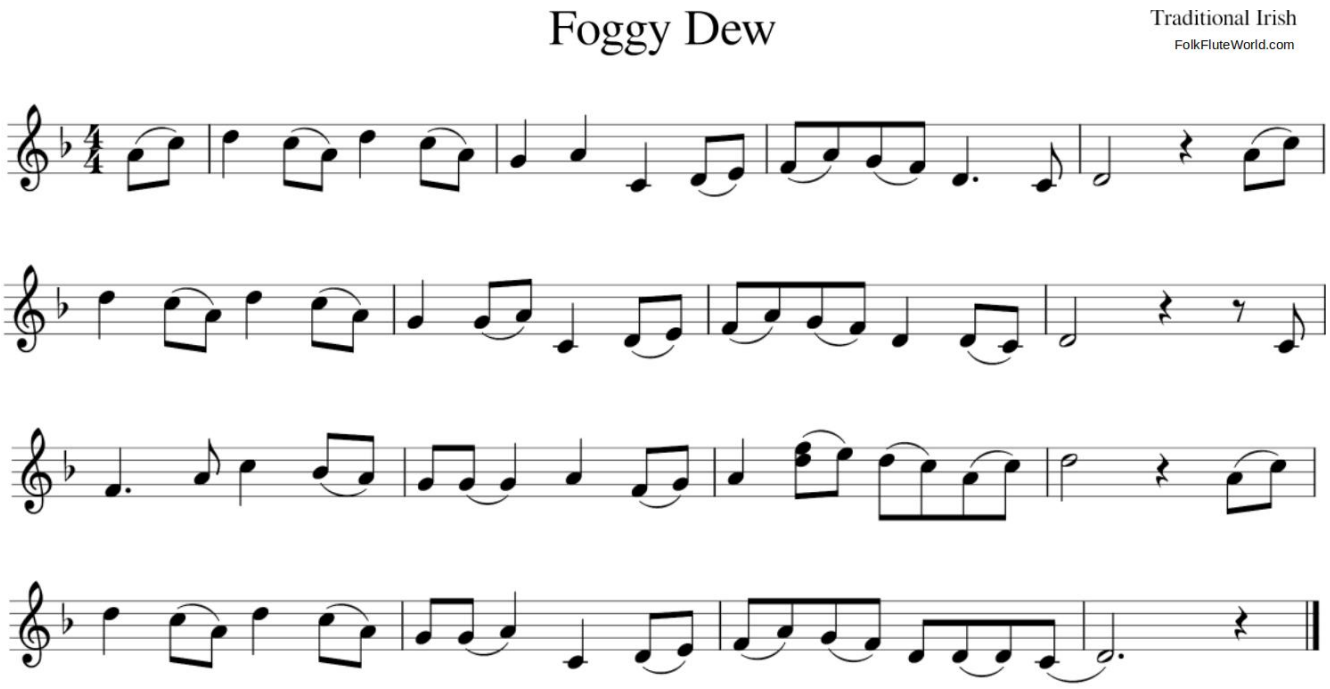


Foggy Dew

Here's an Irish national tune. It commemorates the Easter Rising of 1916. Written during the first world war, it urges Irishmen to fight for Irish independence rather than for Britain in the world war.

Practice: This song spans the ocarina's range and offers a good workout for ascending and descending the scale.

This song is a lament. It's meant to be played slowly in spite of the fact that it contains mostly eighth notes.



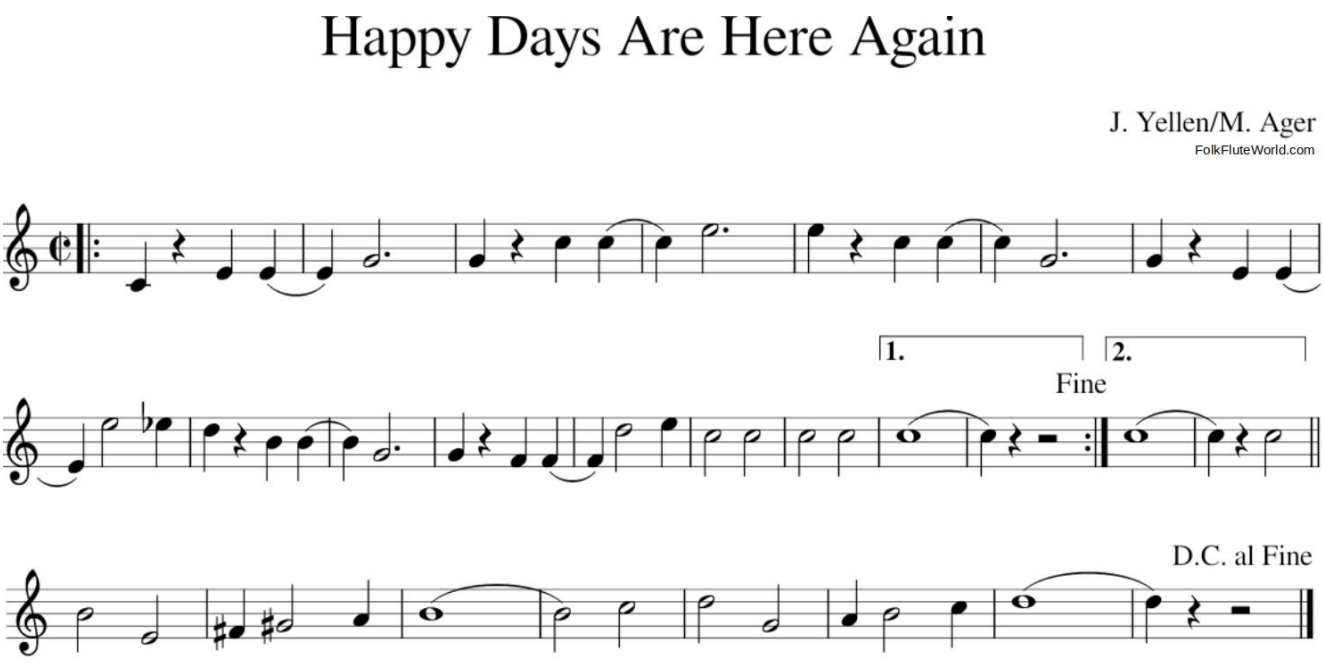
Happy Days Are Here Again

Here's another Tin Pan Alley song by the composer-lyricist team of Milton Ager and Jack Yellen. They composed the piece in 1929 and it made its debut the next year in the film, *Chasing Rainbows*.

When it really came into its own was at the 1932 Democratic National Convention. The story is that the orchestra kept playing a somber, plodding version of *Anchors Aweigh*, over and over. (Candidate Franklin Roosevelt had been Assistant Secretary of the Navy.)

Somebody on the floor finally shouted, "For God's sake, have them play something else!" The band struck up this boppy tune to instant applause. A campaign song phenomenon was born.

Practice: Watch for the high E♭ (aka D#) in the first measure of the second line, and the sharps in the second measure of the third line.
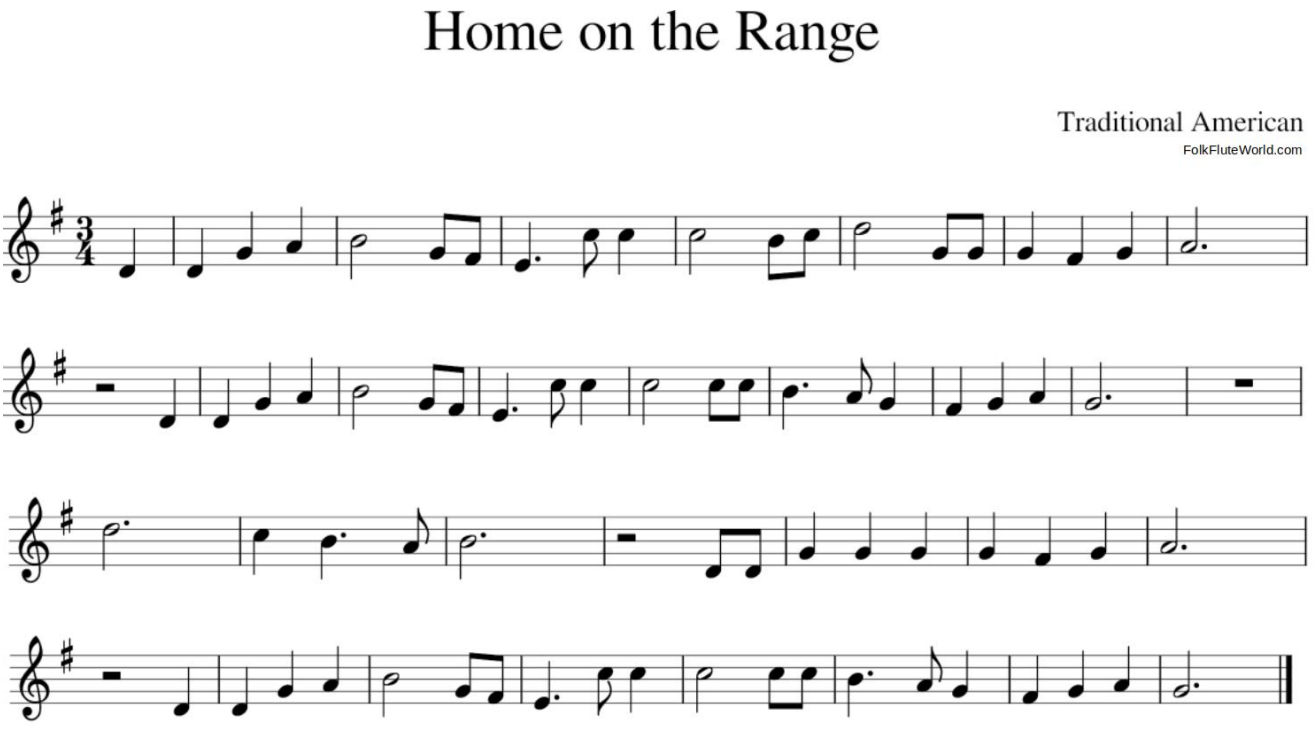


Home on the Range

Everyone knows this western ballad. Some call it the "anthem of the west". Few also know that it is the state song of Kansas. The origins of both the melody and its lyrics are disputed, but its popularity remains unchallenged.

Many artists have recorded the song, most notably Bing Crosby, who laid its tracks three times in the 1930s. Others include Frank Sinatra, Gene Autry, Pete Seeger, and of course, Boxcar Willie.

Practice: Here's a good workout for high C's and D's.

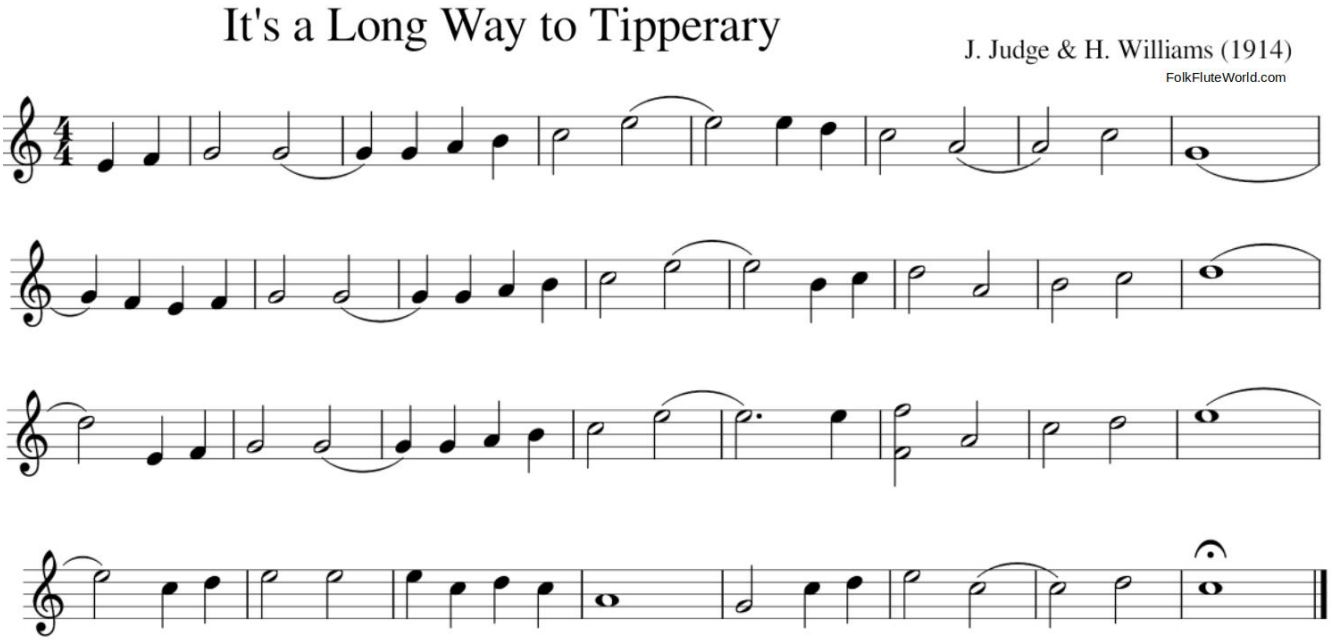


It's a Long Way to Tipperary

This marching song from the first world war relates a sense of gaiety. It reflects the fact that the public wildly cheered the advent of World War I in Germany, the UK, and the United States.

Contrast this with the mood in those countries at the start of World War II. This time the populace had "wised up" and the atmosphere was somber and grim in all participant nations.

Practice: The song is easy and fun. Play it at a happy tempo.
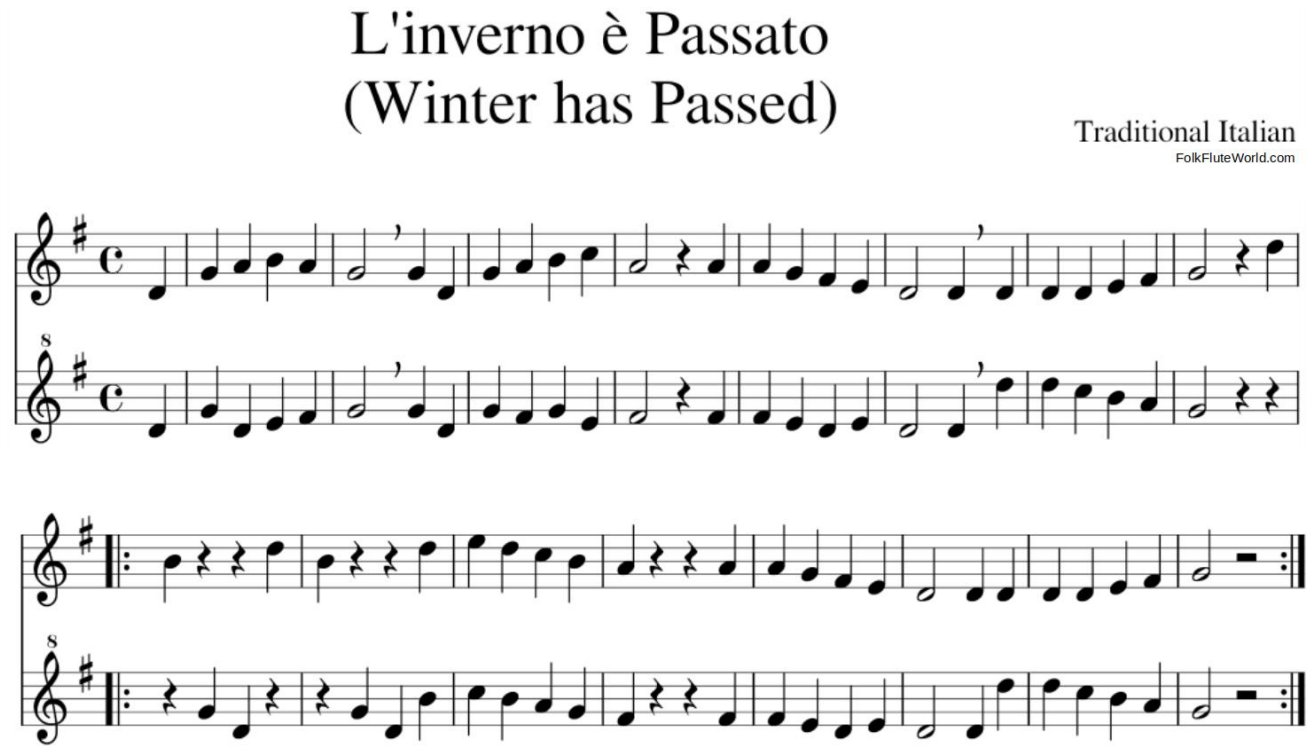


L'inverno è passato (Duet)

This simple, happy duet is easily played by two 6 hole ocarinas. It's an Italian folk song that celebrates the passing of winter.

Practice: You'll want to follow the timing closely so that you stay synchronized with your partner. That's especially important because of the rests (it won't do to have either musician violate them).

Even if you don't have a partner with whom to play, you'll enjoy this song.
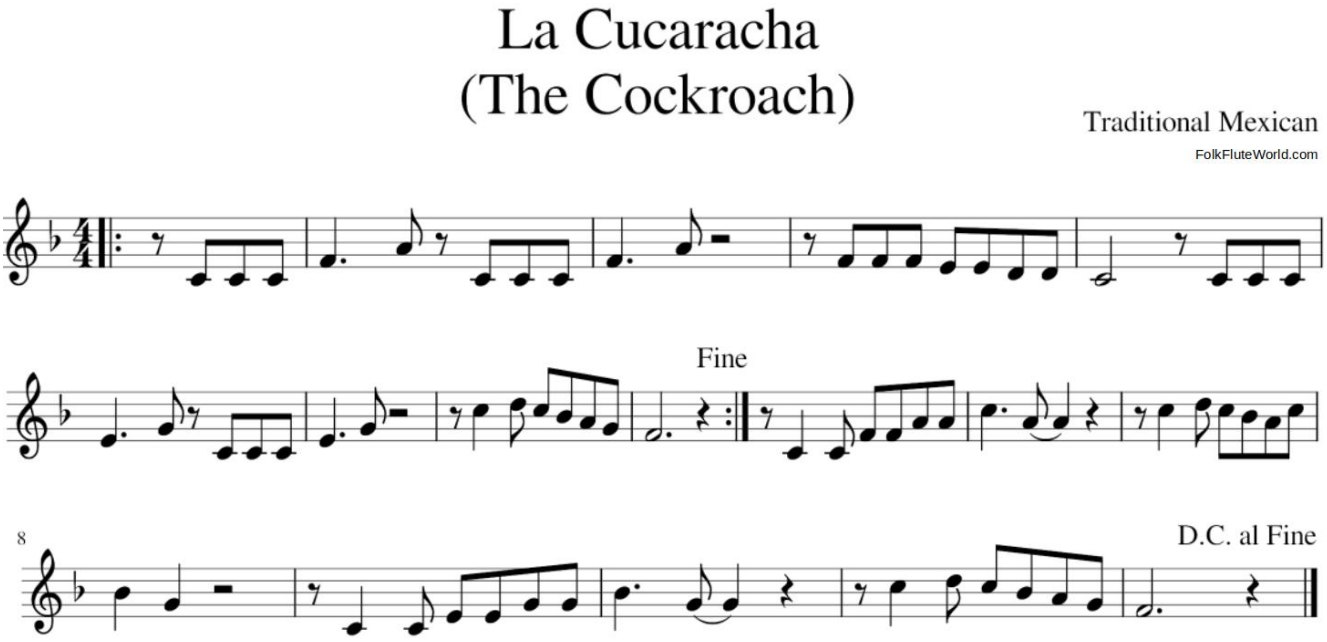


La Cucaracha

The origins of this Mexican song are uncertain. It had become popular by the time of the 1910 Revolution. Today it's intimately associated with Mexican culture.

American films stereotypically employ this tune for every Mexican festival and party.

Practice: This is one of those songs you'll want to play very slowly to get the hang of. If you're ambitious, step it up to full throttle after you learn it.



Now Westlin' Winds

Famed Scottish poet Robert Burns composed this song and its lyrics. It frequently appears in compilations of tunes from the British Isles.
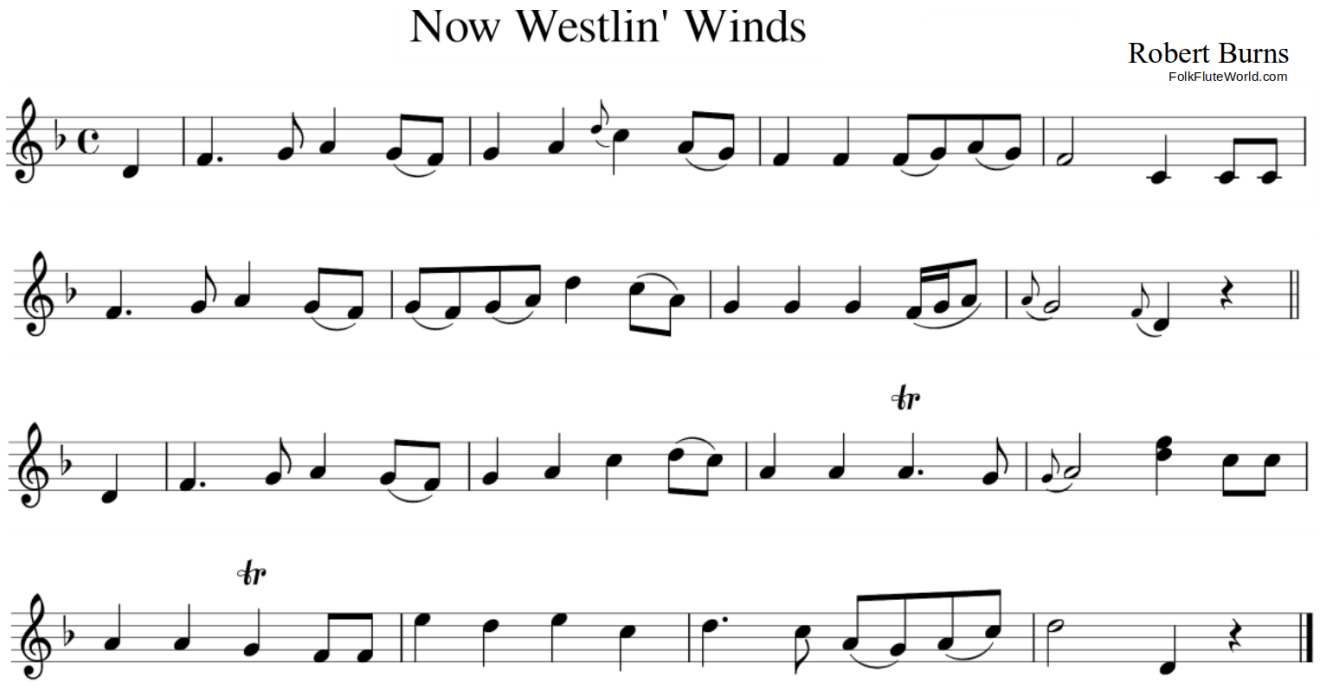
Practice: The notation introduces several new features. First, notice the symbol ***tr*** above certain notes. This means to **trill**. A trill is where you very quickly shift back and forth between two notes. The "dominant" or base note is shown in the score.

The very quick trill note is usually either one note higher or lower than the base note. By default, you should assume it's one note higher.

So in the third line, you would trill between A and B, and in the fourth line, you would trill between G and A.

Since trills are quick waffling between two notes, they could alternatively be written as a series of 32nd notes going back and forth between the two notes. But that would look awkward in the score, so instead composers employ the ***tr*** convention.

Another new feature: those tiny little notes that you see slurred into dominant notes. Whether you play the song with or without these **grace notes**, the measures add up to their required four beats. These very quick grace notes lead into other notes and shouldn't disturb the timing of the piece. Thus, grace notes are always shown in very small typeface.


Now Westlin' Winds
Robert Burns
FolkFluteWorld.com
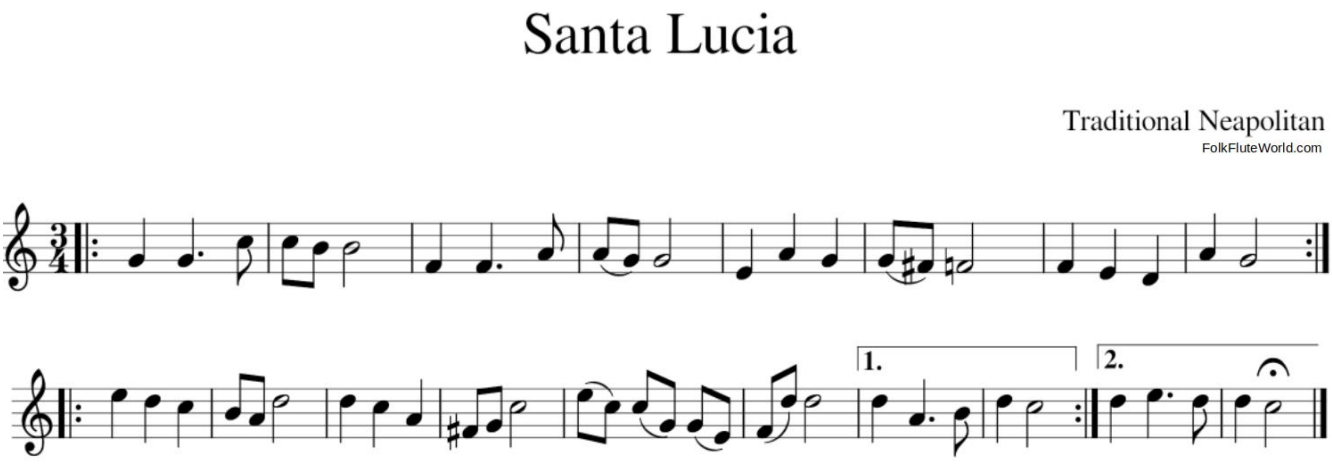
Santa Lucia

Santa Lucia is the classic song from Neapolitan Italy. It's appeared in countless films and television shows to evoke the feeling of southern Italy.

The song is versatile. You might hear it crooned in slow, dramatic "opera style" or in faster, happier cadence.

Practice: Notice how this song repeats. You play the first line of the score twice, as indicated by its enclosure in repeat brackets.
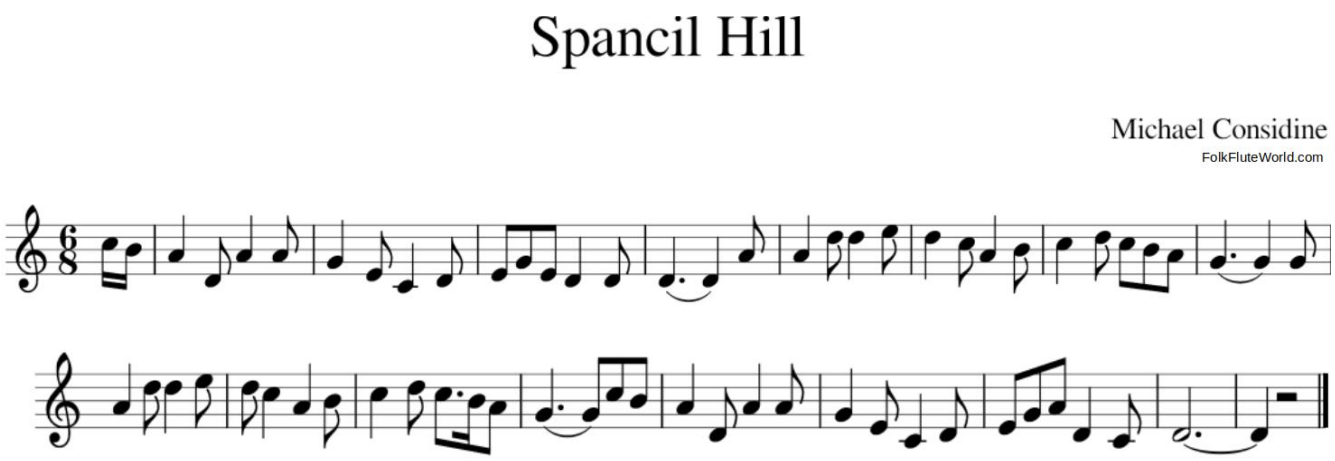
Next, play the second line one time along with its first ending (**1.**). Then, repeat the second line and conclude playing its second ending (**2.**)



Spancil Hill

Spancil Hill was composed by Michael Considine in remembrance of his Irish hometown. Due to the poverty of the region, Considine immigrated to United States. Only in his early twenties, he penned the song and sent it to his nephew back in Ireland. He died shortly thereafter, at the age of 23.

Practice: Contrast this version with that included in Lesson 20 on ABC Notation. This is the same song scored in 6/8 time instead of 3/4 time. Play them one after the other and you'll notice many minor differences in how the tune is rendered, as well. This is pretty common with folk songs. You'll often find minor differences in the melody between different scores.



Szla dzieweczka

The title translates to *The Girl Was Walking*. The simple lyrics follow a girl as she wanders through the forest and says "hello" to a hunter.
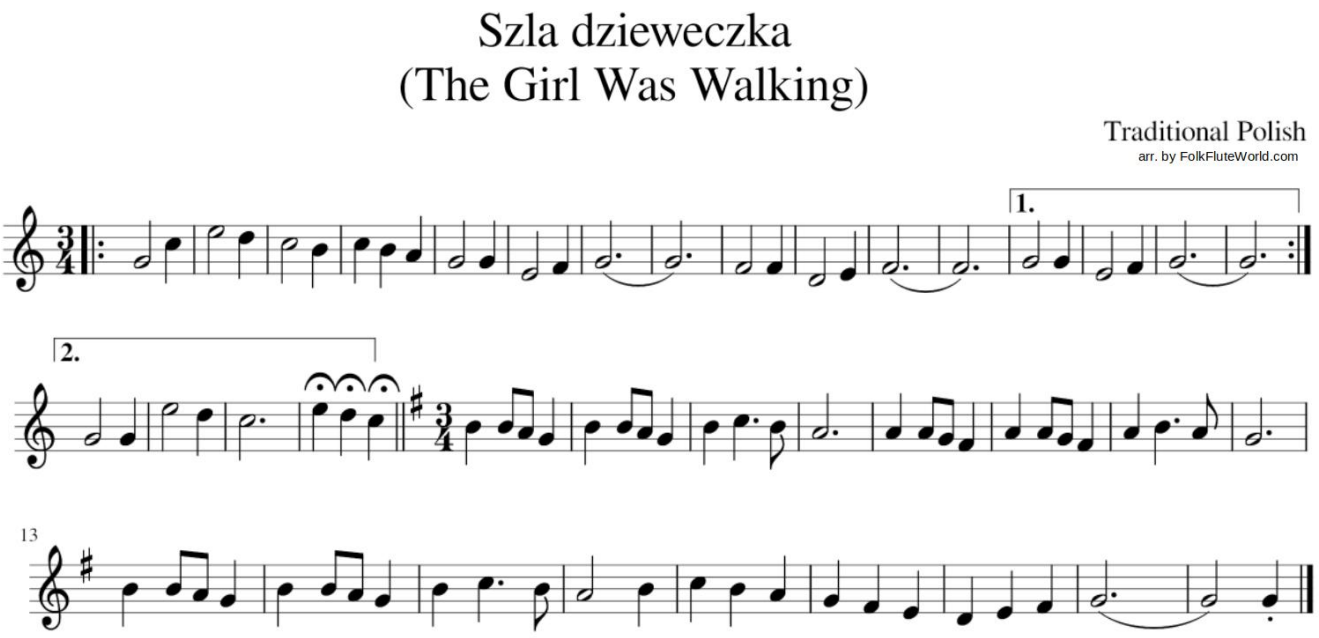
This is a popular Polish folk song from the early 19th century. It's often sung at celebratory occasions like weddings and festivals.

Practice: Be sure to repeat the first line, as indicated by its enclosure inside repeat brackets.

The ending for the first time through -- the **first ending** -- is marked by the **1.** and its extended line. So you play those four measures as the ending the first time you play the first line of the score.

After you've repeated that first line, you play the **second ending** denoted by the **2.**. After you play those four measures, you play the remainder of the song to the end.

Note that the key signature shifts from C Major (no sharps) to G Major (one sharp) after the second ending. The lead-in to this key change is three descending holds.



Wayfaring Stranger
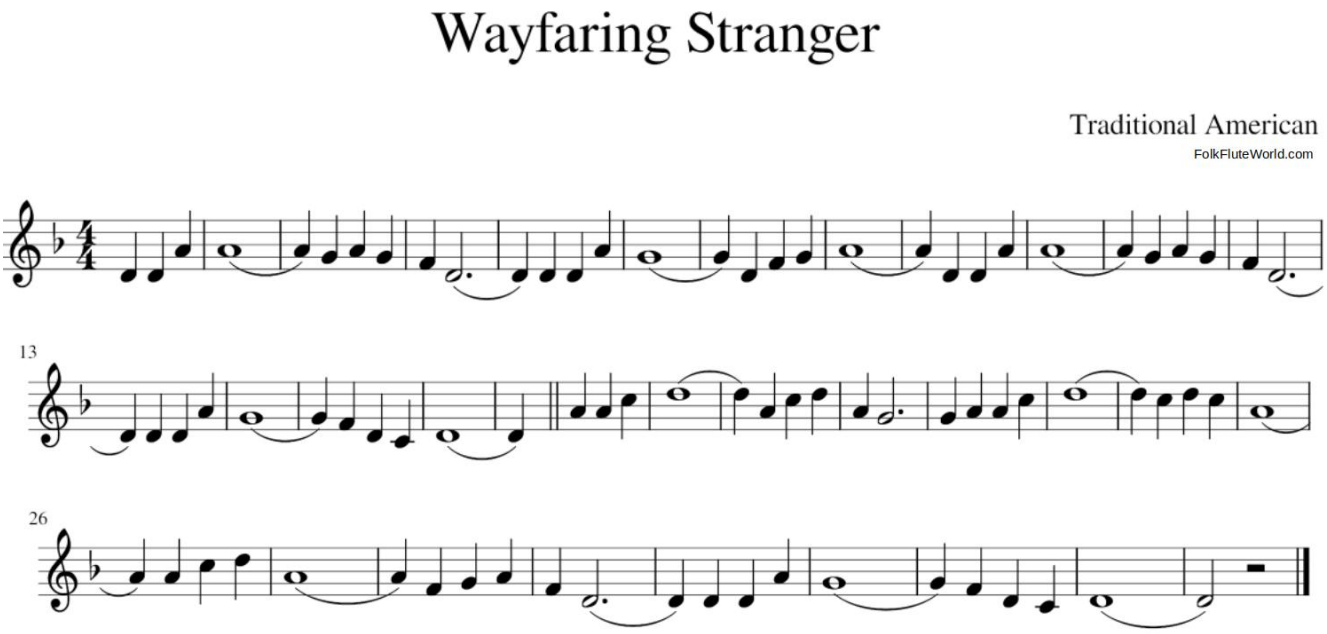
This song is a classic American folk tune. Like many, its origins are obscure. It was popular prior to the American Civil War.

You'll find many versions of this tune on the web, and they significantly differ from one another.

Practice: Try to imbue this song with the longing it represents. It's a good opportunity to try for a mild vibrato on the extended notes.

You'll recall that vibrato is a very slight wavering or waffling during a whole note. You've heard opera singers do it.

You can learn it by exaggerating how you make your breath pulse. Then gradually reduce the degree of the differential in the pulses. It takes a bit of practice but is well worth your time, as its effects in a song like this are dramatic.

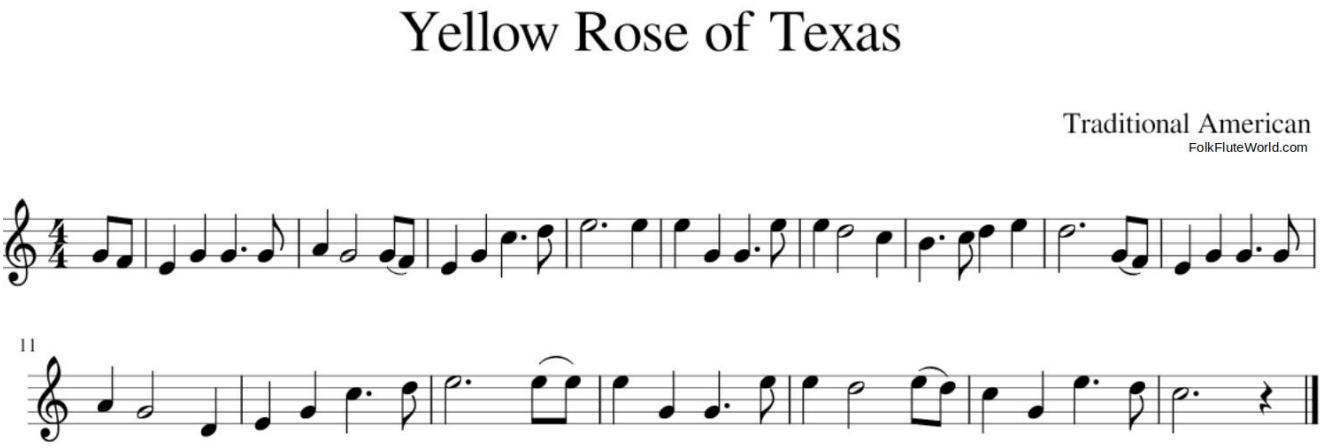


Yellow Rose of Texas

This American folk tune dates back to at least the 1850s. Ask many Texans what they're state song is, and they'll reply *The Yellow Rose of Texas*. It's played everywhere from sports events to state functions.

But in reality the state song is *Texas, Our Texas* -- which many people have never heard of.

Practice: This is a fast, upbeat tune. Practice it slowly, but then take it up to speed before you leave it.



Continue on for more songs ...

Practice Songs 4

This last chapter presents a collection of songs we just couldn't leave out. They include some of our favorites.

The first section contains 7 scores playable on either 4 or 6 hole ocarinas.

The second section contains 19 scores playable only on 6 hole ocarinas.

Tunes are listed alphabetically within each section.

For 4 or 6 Hole Ocarina

Ain't She Sweet

Many consider this the theme song for the Roaring Twenties. It emerged from that song-writing complex called Tin Pan Alley in New York City in 1927, penned by the team Milton Ager and Jack Yellen.

Ager and Yellen wrote many other popular songs of the era including *Happy Days Are Here Again*, *I'm Nobody's Baby*, and *Hard Hearted Hannah*. Both were inducted into the Songwriters Hall Of Fame.

Practice: The timing in this score is a little tricky, but since you probably know how the tune goes, it shouldn't present a problem.

Note the A♭'s in the third line. A♭ is the same note as G#. The flat symbol applies to the note to which it's adjacent, and also to all subsequent A's in the same measure.

That's a general rule: **a sharp or flat symbol immediately next to a note applies to that note and all following occurrences of the same note in the same measure.**

Once you get to the next measure, the key signature again applies.
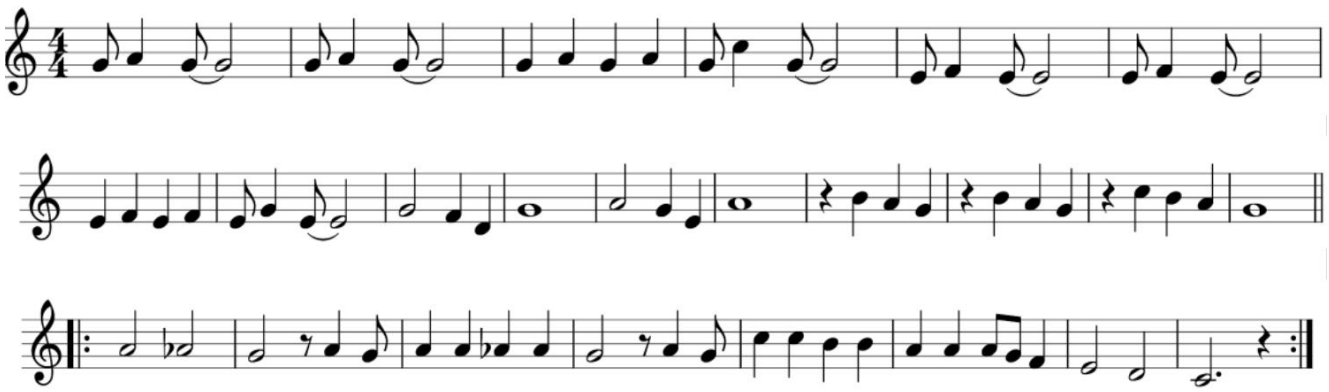
In all cases, a sharp, flat, or natural sign that immediately precedes a note should be applied to that note.

If a composer wants the same note to occur twice in a measure, first as a sharp, and then as a natural, he will normally place the natural symbol in front of the second note.

Ain't She Sweet

Milton Ager
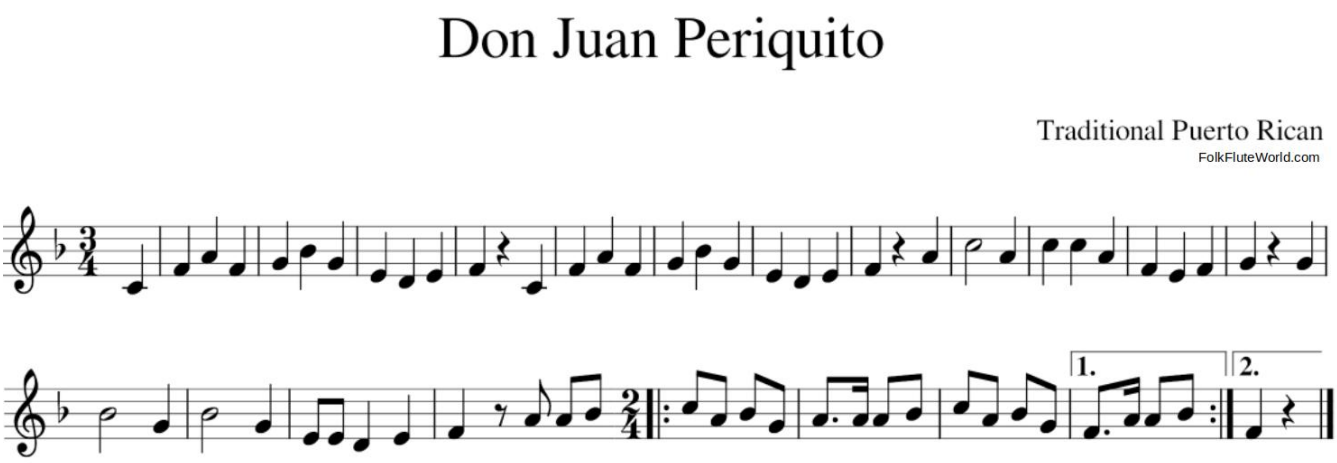
FolkFluteWorld.com



Don Juan Periquito

This Puerto Rican folk song is the basis for a children's' dance. The words are pretty much nonsensical, with my favorite line translating as *"Little sea snail, you left without dancing!"*.

Practice: If you play the measures after the 2/4 time change quickly, it will give you a good workout ranging between high C, B♭, A, and G.

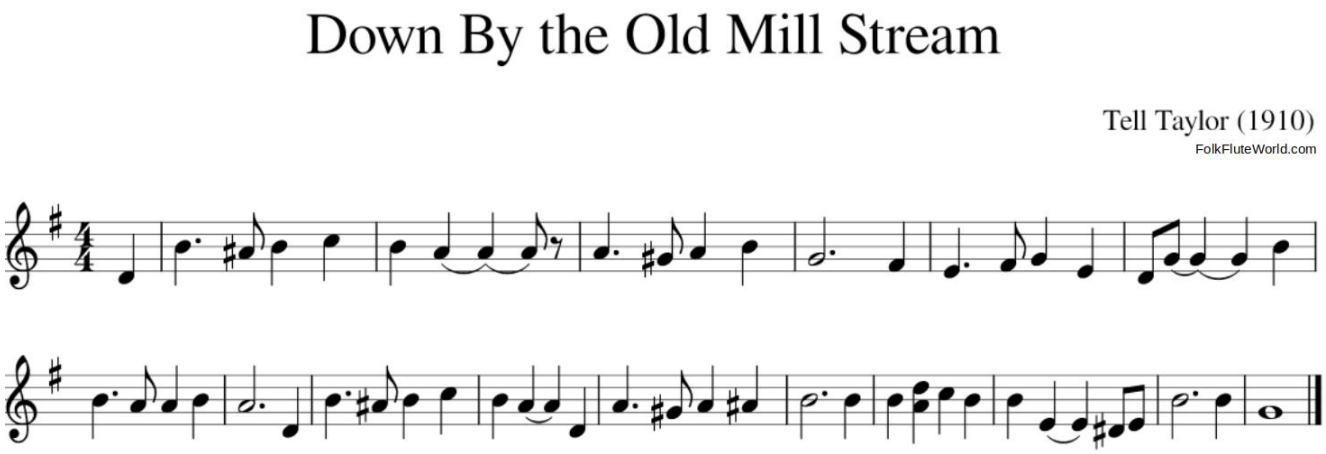


Down by the Old Mill Stream

This song is a standby for barbershop quartets. It was one of the most popular songs of the early 20th century and sold some four million copies in sheet music. Today few recognize the title, but you may well recognize the tune.

Practice: You can play this song on a 4 hole ocarina with but a single alternate note in the second line.

Be prepared for when accidentals A#, G#, and D# pop up! They're not in the time signature, but F# is, so altogether you face the challenge of four sharps in this score. If you can play this tune fluently, you can rest assured that your really know your accidentals.
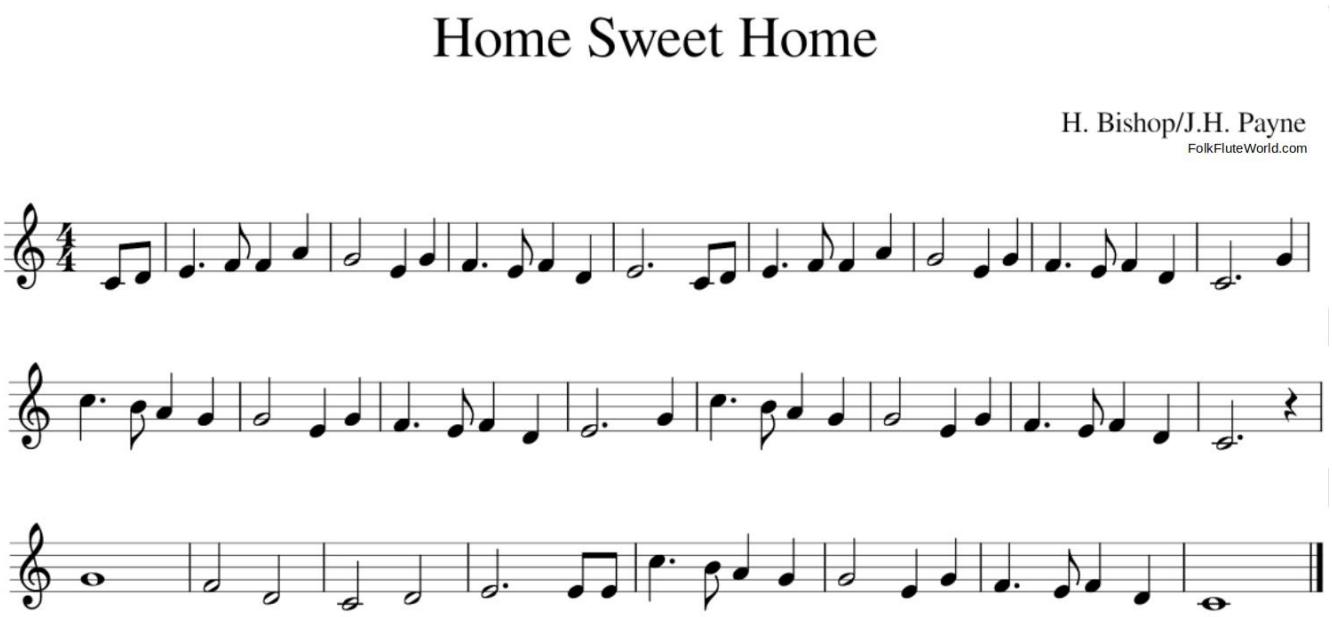


Home Sweet Home

This song was written by Englishman Henry Bishop but found its greatest popularity in the United States. During the American Civil War, it was banned from Union army camps as likely to incite desertion. Its paean to "home sweet home" was thought too enticing to play around the campfires.

The tune has appeared in many films, but is probably most closely associated with *The Wizard of Oz* from 1939. It was quite popular among recording artists from the turn of the century to the second world war.

Practice: This pretty tune doesn't present any new obstacles. It relies heavily on the dotted-quarter-note-eighth-note combination.



My Singing Bird

This Irish folk song is a homage to the beautiful song of the lark. The melody hails from Munster, while the most popular lyrics are those written by poet Edith Wheeler in the early 1900s.

Practice: We provide two different scores for this song.

The first shows how densely notation can be compressed by use of repeating sections.

You play the first line twice, then the second line, and then the first line once again (by following the *D.C. al Fine* to *Fine* directions).

Thus the score expresses this entire song in a mere two lines. If the repeating sections weren't used, it would instead require four lines.

The downside to this compressed notation is that repeating sections are all played exactly the same.

The second score shows how forgoing a compact score in favor of very slight alterations in the song can increase interest in the melody.

The small changes you'll notice in the expanded version are:
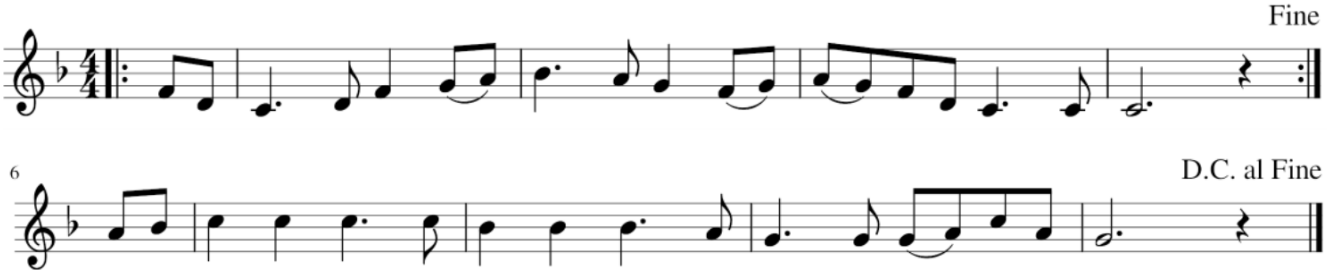
- The introduction of more slurs in the final line of the score
- The last note in the score is held for an extra beat versus the prior lines
- The *dotted quarter note / eighth note* pattern in the 3rd measure of the first line is altered to straight quarter notes in the corresponding measure in the 2nd line
- The pick-up notes going into the last line vary from those in lines 1 and 2

Such small changes have subtle but important impact on how the song sounds. Thus, the expanded version takes more space on the page but provides more variation on the basic tune.

You'll find that many folk scores from the British Isles don't use compression because they vary the tune in small ways such as those we've mentioned.
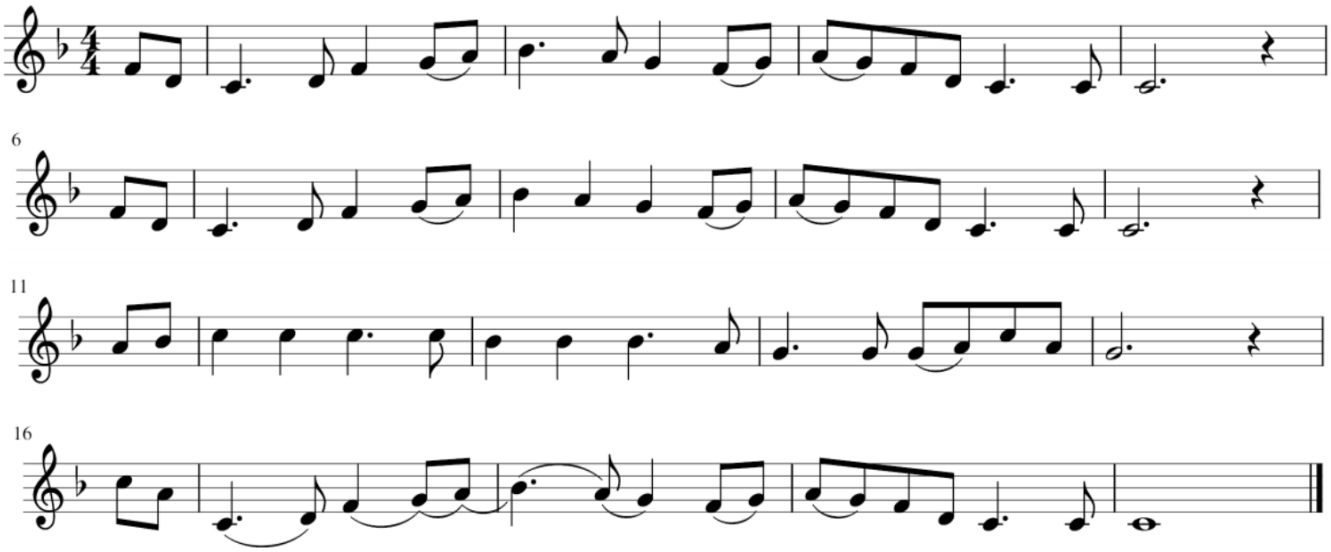
My Singing Bird

Traditional Irish
FolkFluteWorld.com



My Singing Bird (Expanded Version)

Traditional Irish
FolkFluteWorld.com



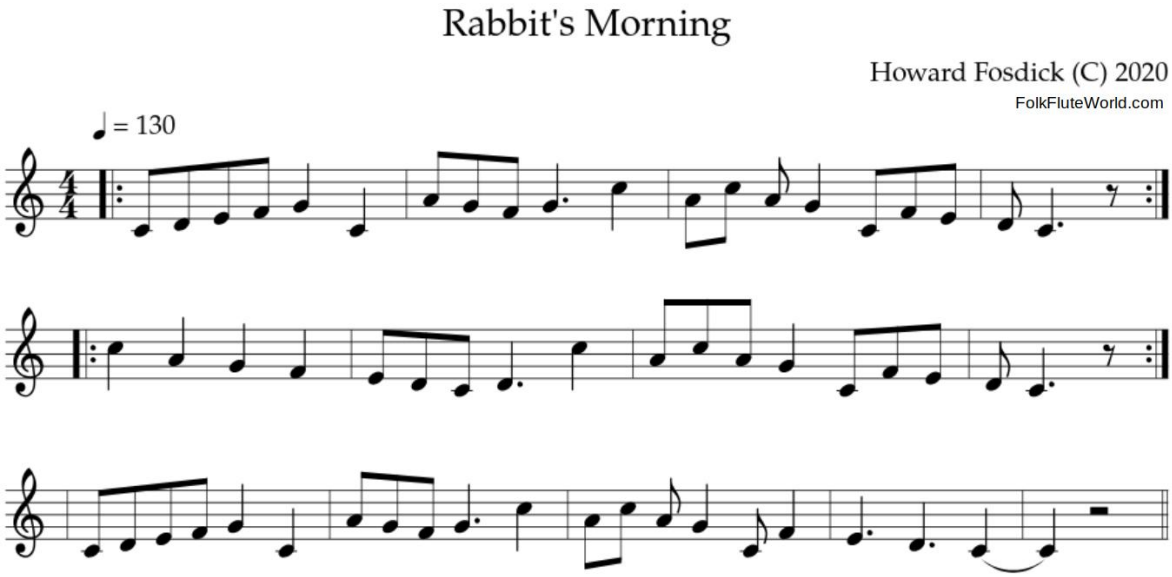
Rabbit's Morning

Here's a simple tune that expresses rabbit's joy during his morning silflay.

Practice: The start of the score indicates the tempo in terms of beats per minute (BPM). For this score, 1 quarter note gets 1 beat and there are 130 beats per minute. That's a moderately fast pace.

Notice how the last measure in each line does not conform to the time signature's declaration of four beats per measure. It's not unusual to encounter discrepancies like this, especially when working with older scores. Just play through such measures by maintaining one beat per quarter note.

The ABC notation follows the score. You can see that the keyword **Q:** sets the tempo for the piece, the symbols **|:** and **:|** indicate repetition, and the dash (**-**) dictates a tie of two notes.




```
X:1
T:Rabbit's Morning
C:Howard Fosdick (C) 2020
M:4/4
L:1/8
K: C
Q: 1/4=130
|: CDEF G2 C2|  AGF G3 c2| Ac AG2 CFE| DC3 z :|
|: c2 A2G2F2|  EDC D3 c2| AcAG2 CFE| D C3 z  :|
| CDEF G2 C2|  AGF G3 c2| Ac AG2 CF2| E3D3 C2-| C2z4 ||
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Take Me Out to the Ball Game

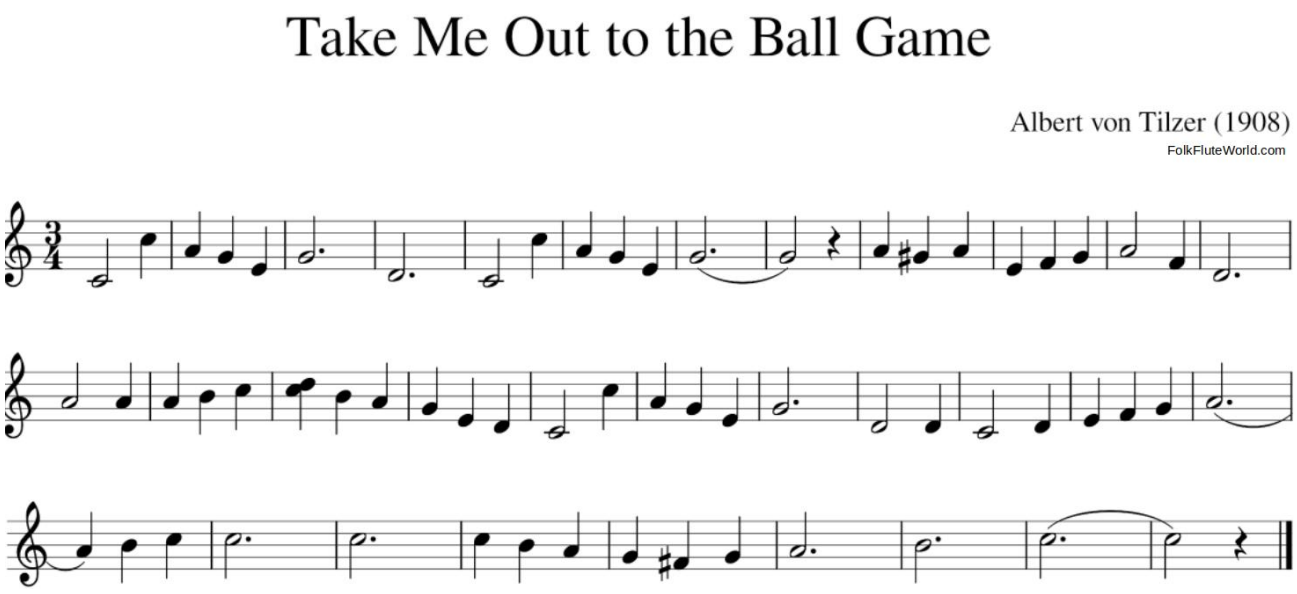
Here's one of those few songs to which most Americans know the words.

Composer Jack Norworth was inspired to compose it when he saw a sign reading "Baseball Today -- Polo Grounds" while riding the New York subway.

Baseball may no longer be "America's game" in the way it was back when he wrote this song in the early 1900s, but the tune remains a timeless classic.

Practice: You can play this song on a 4 hole ocarina with but a single alternate note in the second line.

Be prepared for when accidentals G# and F# appear. These embedded sharps remind you that it's often a good idea to scan a score prior to playing it.



These Scores Require a 6 Hole Ocarina

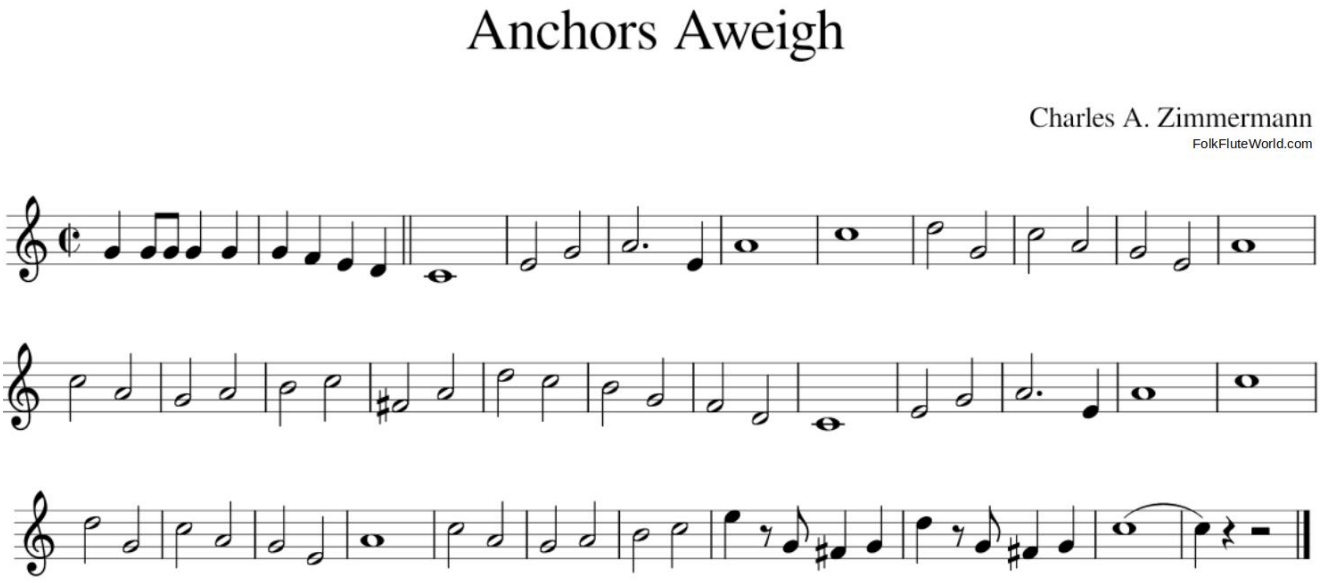
Anchors Aweigh

A young naval lieutenant named Charles Zimmermann wrote this song in the 1906. Its first public performance was at the Army-Navy football game in December of that year.

Today, it's the fight song of the U.S. Naval Academy, and the unofficial anthem of the U.S. Navy.

Practice: This song is scored in **cut time**. That's denoted in the time signature by a capital "C" with a vertical line drawn through it. It's the same as the 2/2 time signature. It means two beats per measure, with each half note getting one beat. In practical terms, that usually means to play the song at a fast clip.

Cut time is formally called ***alla breve***.
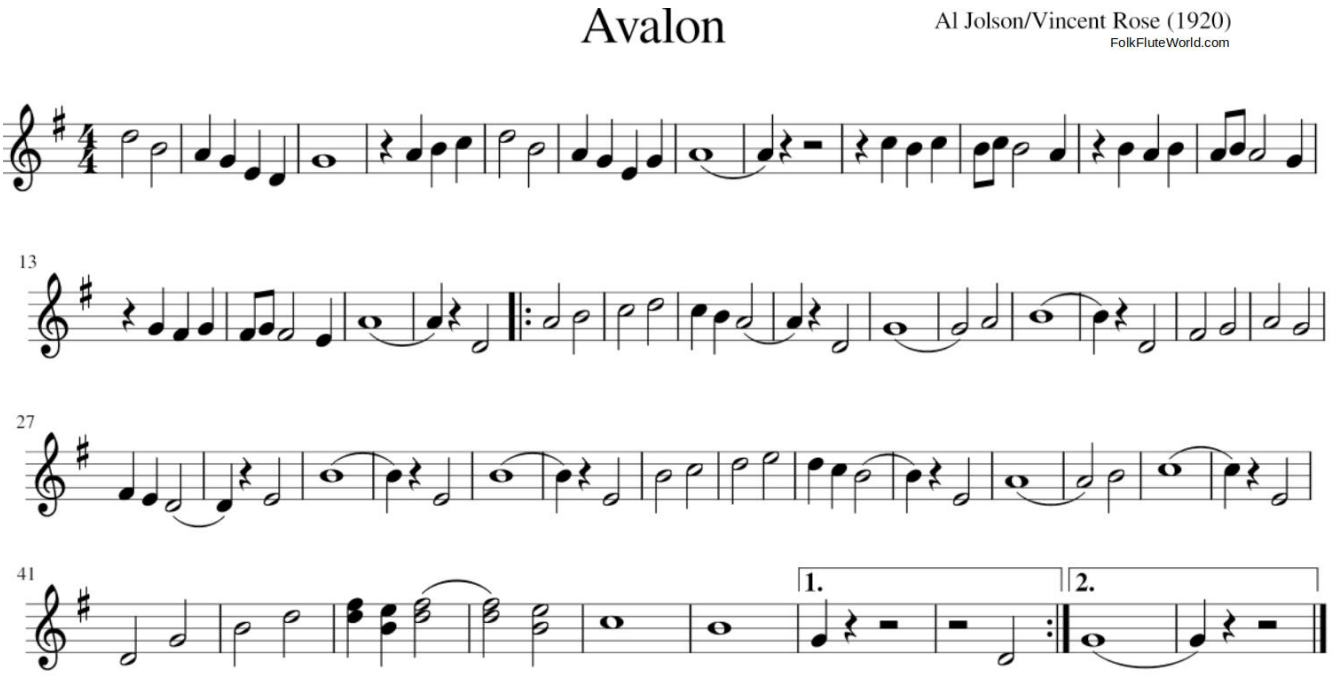


Avalon

Al Jolson wrote this tune in 1920.

Jolson was one of most popular and highest paid singer/actors of his era. He starred in the first ever talking film, *The Jazz Singer*, and was featured in many musicals up until World War II. His career was on the wane by that time, but he perked up and spent much time and effort entertaining the troops in the war and also in the subsequent Korean War.

Practice: This song requires that you play the slurs correctly. It's a pretty song to emote through your ocarina.
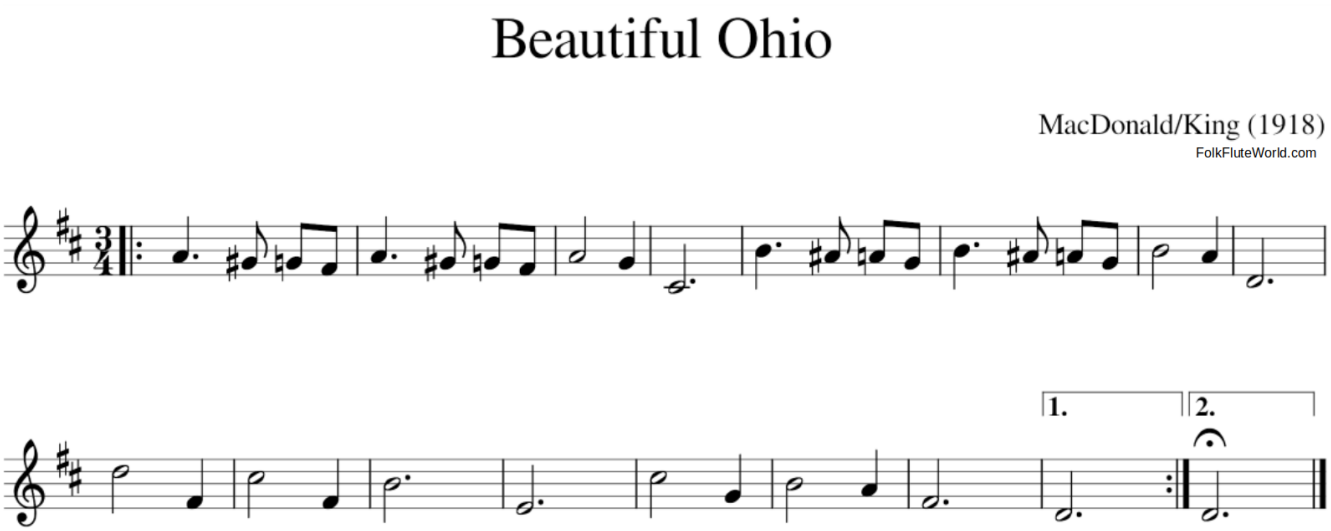


Beautiful Ohio

This song was written in 1918 and is the state song of Ohio. This confuses many people who have heard that the state song is *Hang On, Sloopy*, a rock hit from the 1960s. In fact, *Sloopy* is Ohio's official rock song while *Beautiful Ohio* remains its official state song. So both enjoy formal recognition.

Practice: This song is in the key of D, which has two sharps, C# and F#. Not only that, but G# and A# appear in the song as accidentals. So this score is challenging. Fortunately, it's played as a waltz in 3/4 time, so you have time to handle those sharps.

Notice how, in the first measure of the score, the composer includes the natural symbol. This ensures that you play the measure as A - G# - G - F#. This is a good example of how scores indicate accidentals and whole notes in the same measure.
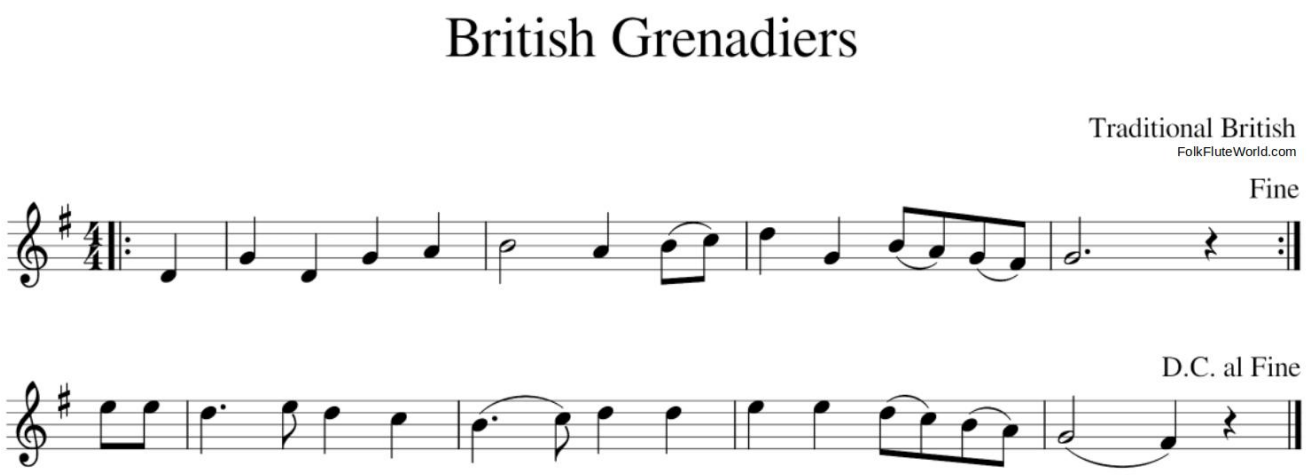
If you can manage this song, you can be proud that you're fluent in chromatics!



British Grenadiers

You've undoubtedly heard this marching song in the background of historic and military movies. The tune dates from the 17th century and was used by the British military… and the film industry.

Practice: This is a simple tune, but to play it up to lively speed you'll need to have your fingering down pat. The repeat symbols show to repeat the first line of the score, but not the second.



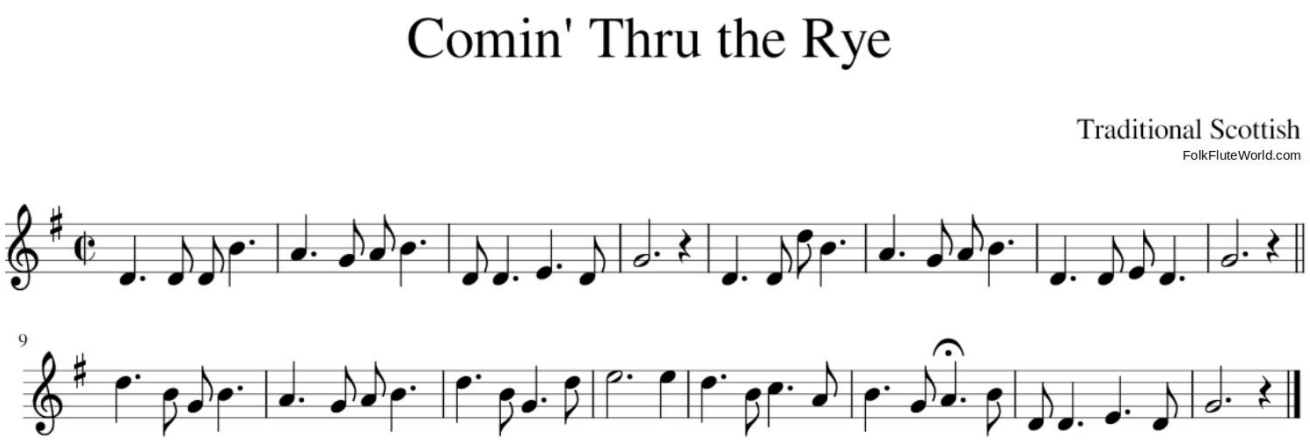
Comin' Thru' the Rye

Common' Frae The Town is an ancient Scottish tune. Scottish Poet Robert Burns (1759–1796) wrote new words for it in 1784 and it became better known as *Comin' Thro' the Rye*.

No one really knows what "coming through the rye" refers to. Some think it means walking through a field of rye, while others believe it means wading across the river Rye. Still others claim that the phrase refers to walking across a cobblestone road prone to puddling.

Practice: The rhythm of this song relies heavily on the dotted-quarter-note-followed-by-an-eighth-note combination. Get that down and you've got this song mastered.
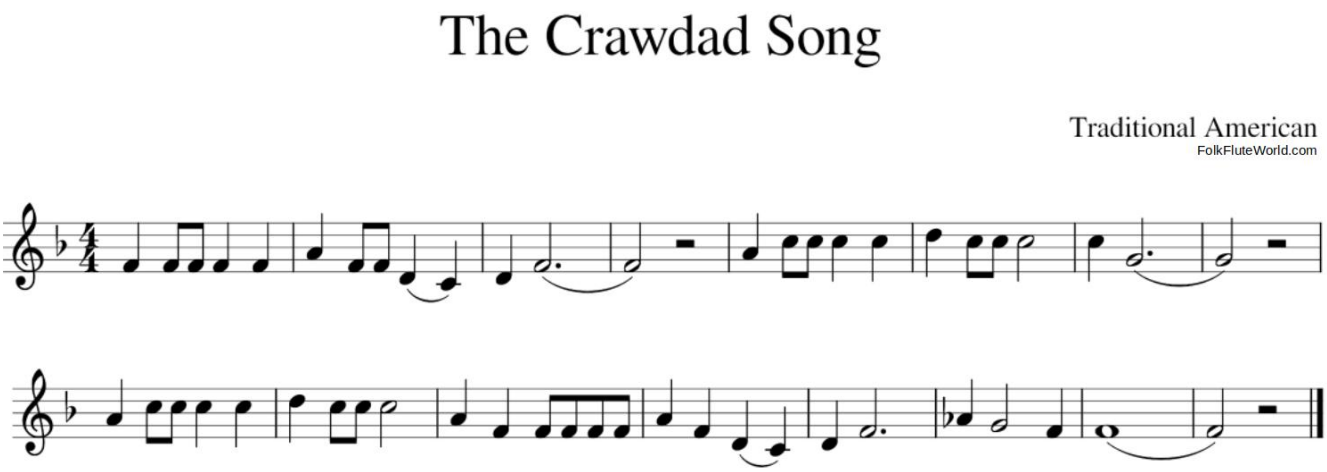
The time signature calls for **cut time**. So once you've mastered the fingering, play this song at a quick tempo.



The Crawdad Song

This is an American folk song thought to have originated among African Americans in the tradition of singing while working. Many believe it evolved among railway workers in the South.

Practice: Be sure to catch the A♭ near the end of the song. That unexpected slide into the final notes gives the song a jazzy aura.



Ev'ry Night When the Sun Goes In

Here's an old Appalachian mountain tune that likely traces its roots back to British immigrants.

It's a weeper. Though like many old melodies several sets of competing lyrics exist, those most widely known emphasize the loss of a deep love.

In some older versions, it's a mother weeping for her dead child. In more modern lyrics, it's often a lover mourning her beloved.

In every case, it's what one could call a "Died for Love" theme, where the narrator pleads to pass away to join a loved one, or perhaps asks that she should have died in place of the departed.

Here's a sample set of lyrics:

> *I wish to the Lord my babe was born,*
> *A-sitting upon his pappy's knee,*
> *And me, poor girl, was dead and gone,*
> *And the green grass growing over me.*
> *True love, don't weep, etc.*

This song has been widely recorded by bluegrass, country, and folk performers. Perhaps best known is the version by folk balladeer Joni Mitchell, recorded in the 1960s.

Practice: We provide this song in two keys, D Major and F Major, in order to show how vital the key is in setting the tone of a song.
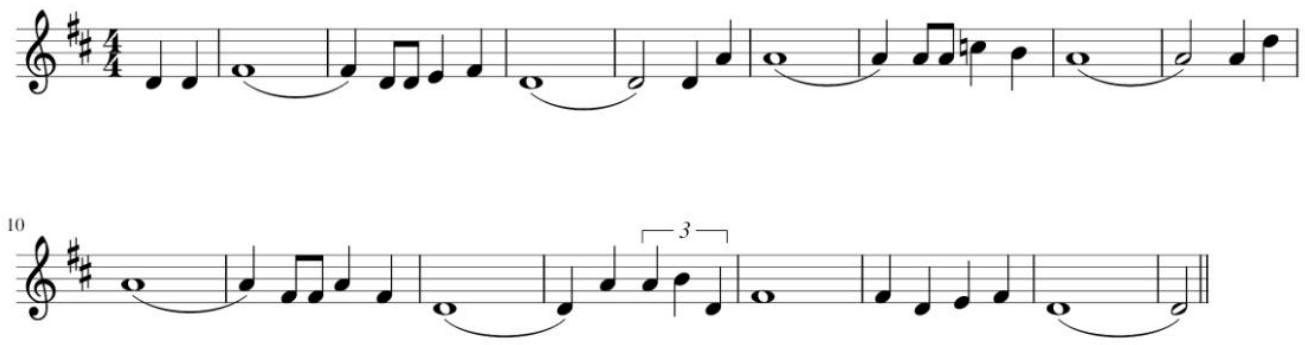
The D Major version seems happier or at least less somber. The score in F imparts a more mournful feeling to the melody that better matches its sad lyrics. Would you agree?

Look for the quarter note triplets in the second lines of the scores. Just as an eighth note triplet consumes the time of two eighth notes, so does a quarter note triplet fit into the time required by two quarter notes.
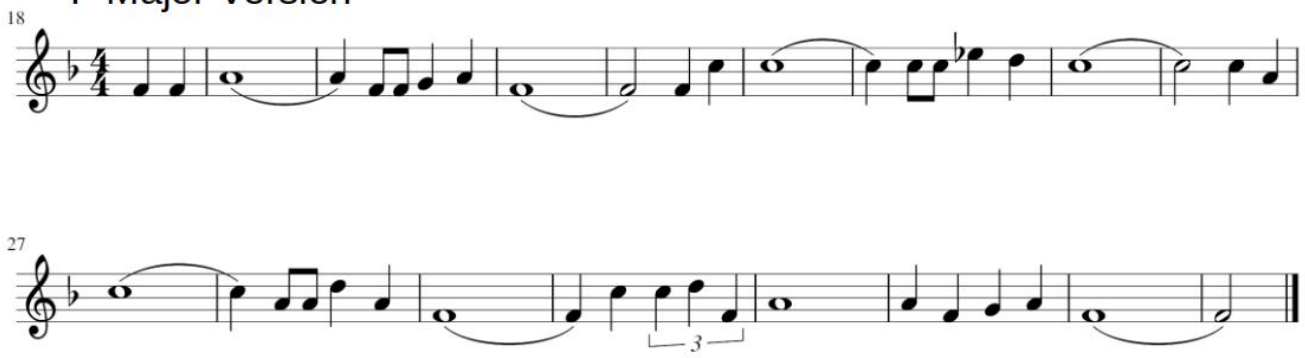
Ev'ry Night When the Sun Goes In

Appalachian Folk Song
FolkFluteWorld.com

D Major Version



F Major Version



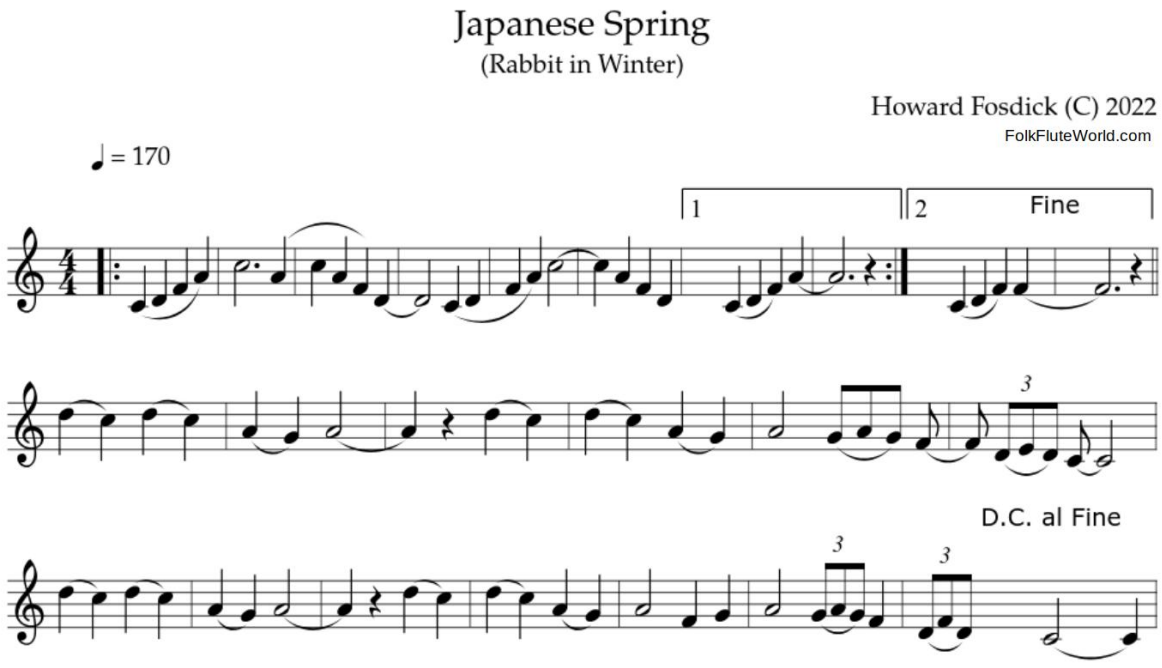
Japanese Spring (Rabbit in Winter)

This simple tune is written in a pentatonic -- five note -- scale. Traditionally, scales for Japanese, Chinese, and other Asian music are pentatonic.

Practice: Once you sound out this song, try playing the quarter notes quickly and extending the dotted half notes for as long as you like. See if you can develop your own expressive style for the melody.

Note that the triplets in the second line are signified by a simple "3", instead of a "3" with extended bars, as in the score above for *Ev'ry Night When the Sun Goes In*. That's because these are triplet eighth notes, whereas the previous score contained triplet quarter notes. You'll encounter both notations.

The final two measures differ in lines 2 and 3 of the score. Though the differences are subtle, they are important.



ABC Notation: Here is the exact same score as above written in ABC notation:

```
X:1
T:Japanese Spring
T:(Rabbit in Winter)
C:Howard Fosdick (C) 2022
M:4/4
L:1/4
K: C
Q: 1/4=170
|: (CDFA) | c3 (A | c AF) D- | D2(CD | FA) c2- | c  AFD | [1(CDF) A- | A3 z :|  [2 (CDF) F-  "Fine"
| F3 z||
(dc) (dc) | (AG) A2- | Az (dc) | (dc) (AG) | A2  (G/A/G/) F/- | F/ (3(D/E/D/) C/- C2 |
(dc)(dc) | (AG) A2- | Az(dc) | (dc) (AG) | A2  FG | A2  (3(G/A/G/) F | (3(D/F/D/)
"D.C. al Fine" C2-C |
```

You see the same conventions we imparted in Lesson 20:

- **T:** for the Title
- **C:** for the Composer
- **M**: for the Meter (or time signature). The time signature here is **4/4**
- **L:** is for which kind of note gets one beat. **L:1/4** means a quarter note gets 1 beat
- **K:** for the Key of **C**

Then you see one line of ABC notation for each line in the score. Capital letters mean low notes, while lower case letters indicate high notes. Notes are grouped into measures by vertical bars (|).

This score introduces several ABC features that will be new to you:
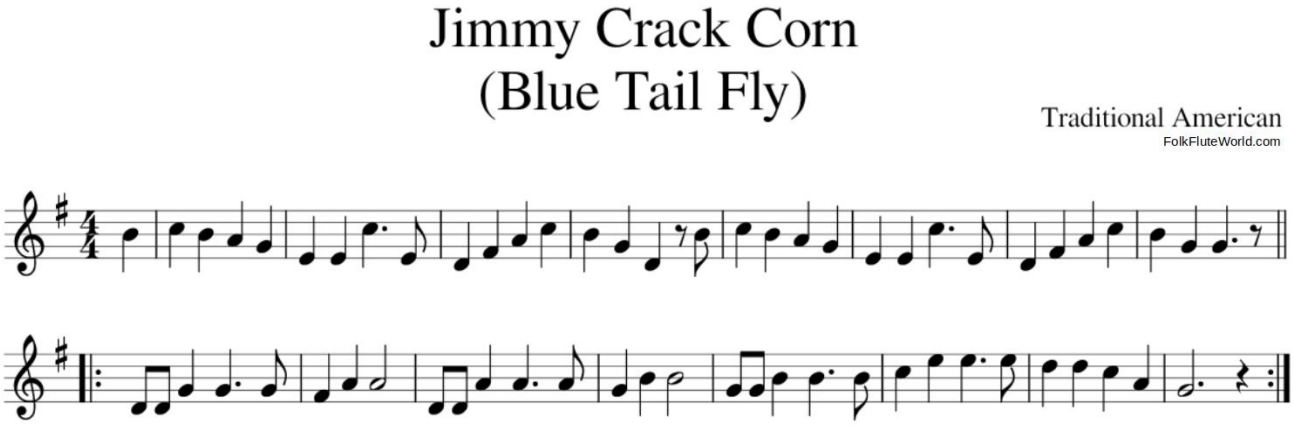
- **Q:** sets the tempo in terms of beats per minute (BPM). It's 170 in this score.
- **|:** and **:|** are **repeat brackets**. These group measures in the score that are to be repeated
- **[1** and **[2** indicate the first and second endings in the first line of the score
- **(** and **)** group two or more notes into ties or slurs. Dashes (**-**) can tie notes together.
- **(3** indicates triplets. (Three eighth notes to be played within the time of two)
- **||** These two vertical bars together make a double bar appear in the score
- **z** indicates a rest
- "D.C. al Fine" and "Fine" are indicated simply by inserting these text strings

Jimmy Crack Corn

This is a minstrel show song from the 1840s in the United States. It became popular about one hundred years later during the folk revival of the 1940s.

The original words were a lament by a slave over his master's death. But many believe they had a hidden subtext that the enslaved person was pleased over that death and may have even contributed to it.

Practice: Eighth note rests appear in every fourth measure in the first line in the score. These are always good, non-disruptive points at which to take breaths. The quarter note rest at the end of the second line can serve the same function. Always view rests as potential breathing spots.
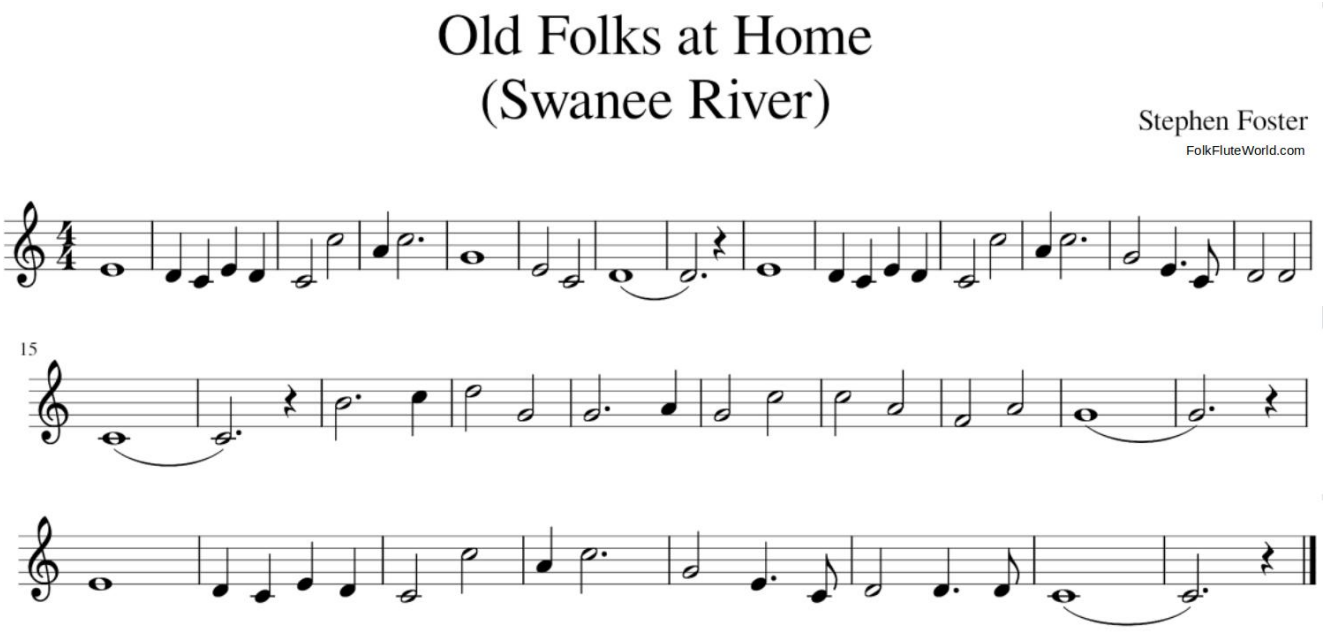


Old Folks at Home

This is one of many famous Stephen Foster tunes. Among others, he composed *Oh! Susanna*, *Camptown Races*, *Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair*, *My Old Kentucky Home*, and *Beautiful Dreamer*. It's an amazing output for a man who died at the early age of 37. No wonder Foster is sometimes called the "father of American music."

This particular song is better known as *Swanee River*, than under it's true title, *The Old Folks at Home*.

Practice: This is a beautiful melody that should be played at a leisurely pace. It's a good opportunity to really make your ocarina sing and enjoy a pleasant tune.
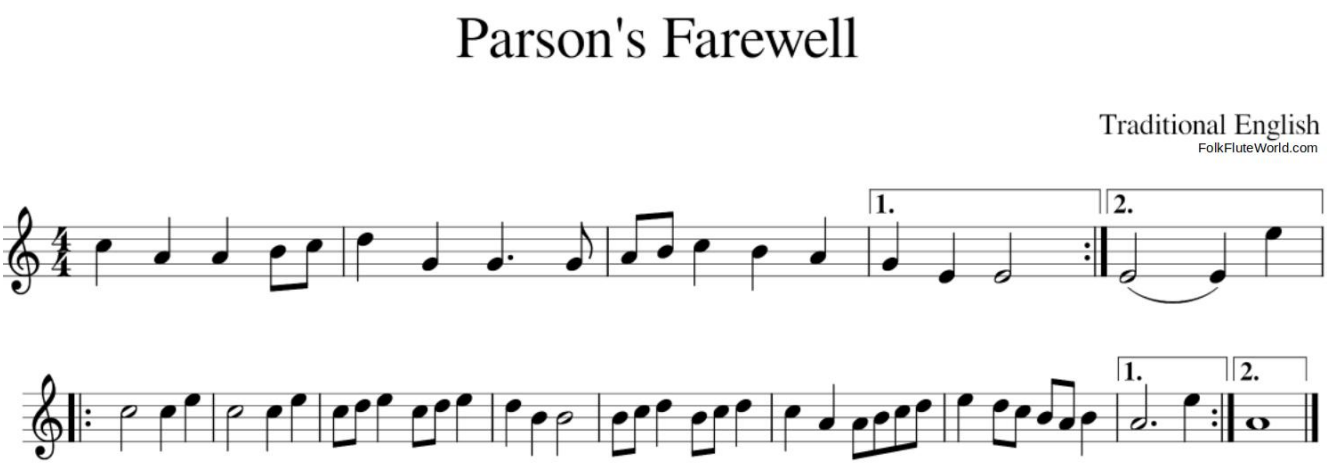


Parson's Farewell

This is a traditional English dance tune from the 1600s. One often hears it at Morris Festivals and in Renaissance recitals.

Like all Morris tunes, it's usually played at a lively pace, with several repetitions of each refrain.
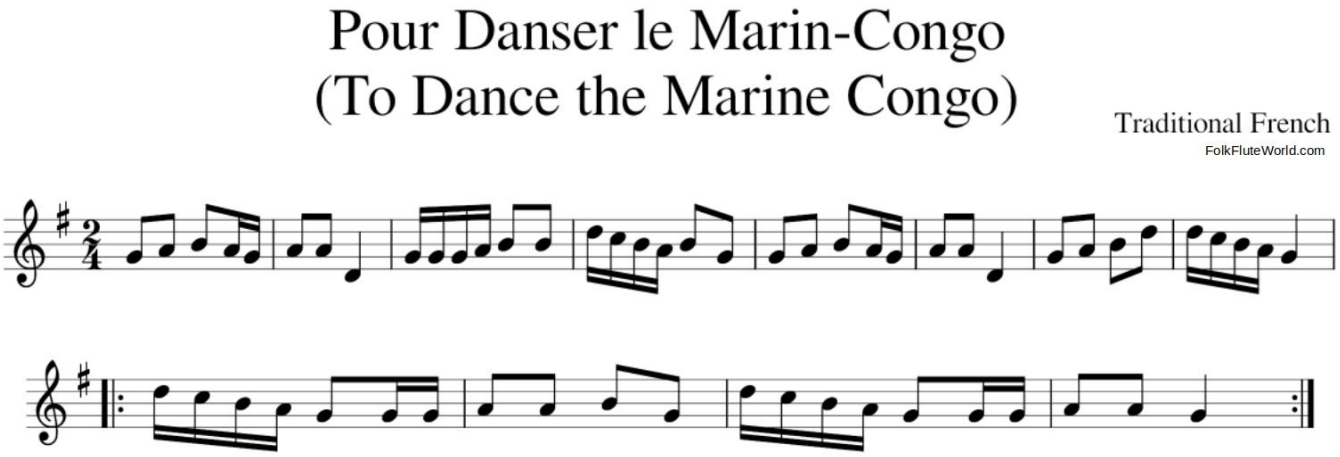
Practice: Here's some practice for playing high C, D, and E on your 6 hole ocarina.



Pour Danser le Marin-Congo

This tune accompanies dancers of the "Marine Congo". It's thought to be a congo dance brought to France by sailors, hence the word "marine".

Practice: This song confronts you with a blizzard of sixteenth notes. But you know what to do. Play the song very slowly at first, as if the sixteenth notes were quarter notes. Once you get used to the timing and the relationship in the score between the sixteenth and eighth notes, you can speed up the tempo and play this song with alacrity.

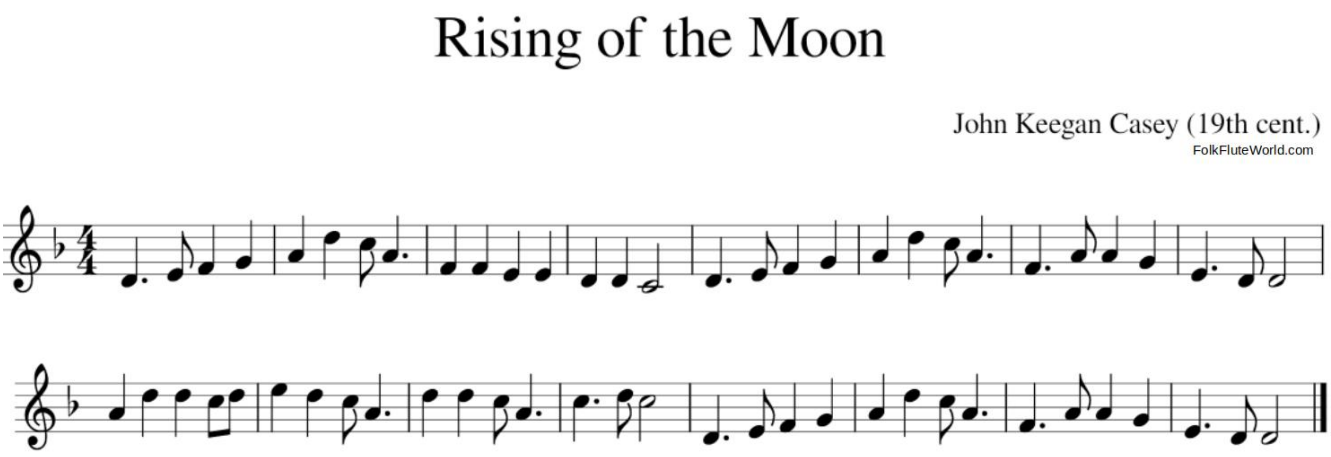


The Rising of the Moon

This song commemorates the unsuccessful Irish Rebellion of 1798 against the British.

It remains a popular tune in Ireland to this day. You'll often hear it in schools, and at festivals and sporting events.

Practice: This score is an oddity in that its F Major key signature calls for B♭. Yet the note never occurs in the score.

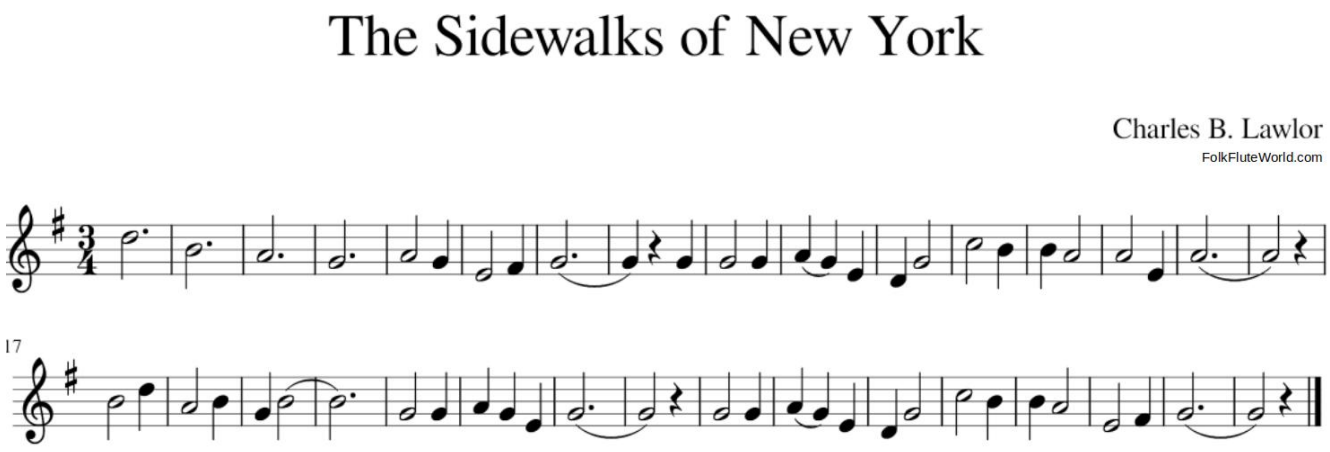


The Sidewalks of New York

Sometimes you'll find this tune titled *East Side, West Side*. It's been popular since it was composed in the 1890s.

Along with Frank Sinitra's rendition of *New York, New York*, it's identified as a theme song for the city.

Practice: Played at a leisurely to moderate pace, this G Major tune doesn't present any unusual challenges.



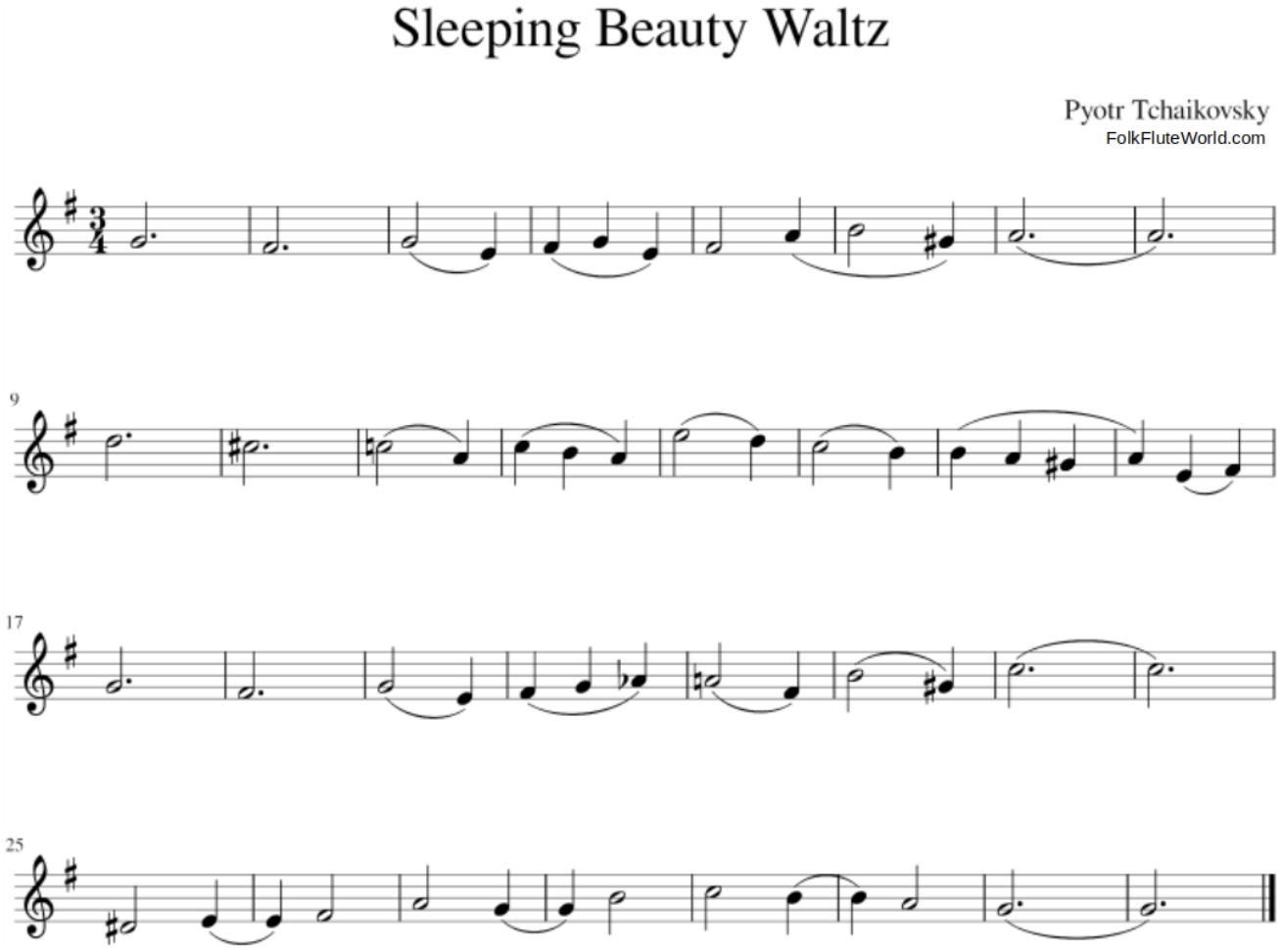
The Sleeping Beauty Waltz

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky was one of the world's great composers. He was probably the first Russian to achieve international acclaim for his music. He's usually considered a member of the Romantic period of the mid to late 19th century.

Even those who know little of orchestral music will recognize such compositions as *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker*, and the *1812 Overture*.

Here's a portion of his *Sleeping Beauty Ballet*.

Practice: This score is pretty simple, though its several chromatics introduce some complexity. Try to give it the lilting feel of a sweeping ballet.



Song of Seikilos

Here's a thrill! You can play the world's oldest song.
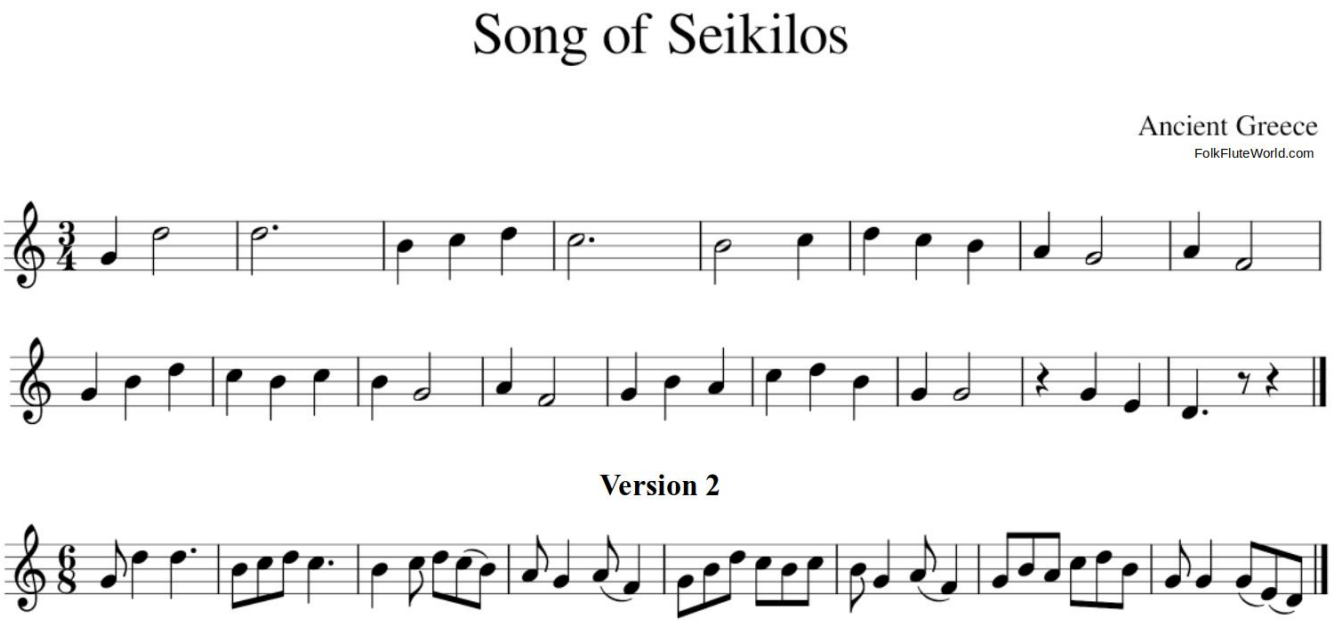
This song is the world's oldest that is known in its entirety. It was found on a stone pillar engraved in ancient Greek. It dates from between the 1st and 2nd centuries AD.

The carved stone is thought to be a memorial from a man named Seikilos to his wife Euterpe, after her death. If Seikilos meant it as a timeless memorial, he certainly achieved his purpose.

These plaintive lyrics accompany this melody:

> *While you live, shine*
> *dance and sing, be joyful*
> *Life is but a short while*
> *And time will take its toll.*

Practice: We've provided two different scores for this song, one in 3/4 time, the other in 6/8 time. Try playing both. Does the melody differ between the scores?

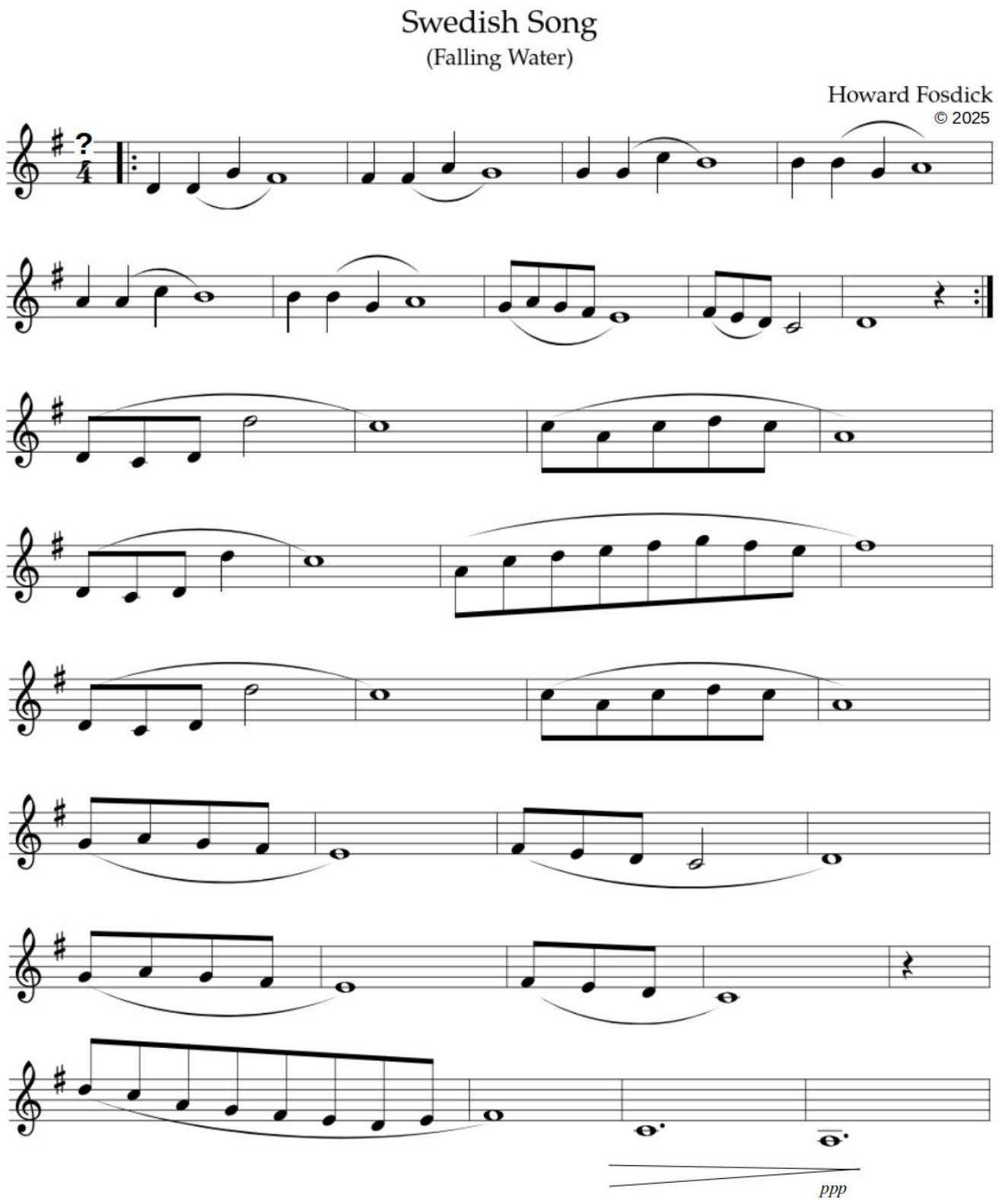


Swedish Song (Falling Water) -- For Extended Range Ocarina

This song was composed by the author for extended range ocarina, or other instrument with extended range (such as a recorder, tin whistle, or concert flute).

Practice: The song is unusual in that each beat remains a quarter note throughout, but the number of beats per measure varies. Instead of measures, beats are grouped into logical sections called **phrases**. As long as you play with the timing of each quarter note getting one beat, you'll play the song correctly.

Mind the slurs, they're important to the character of the melody. The last two notes in the score are dotted whole notes; they get 6 beats each.


Swedish Song
(Falling Water)
Howard Fosdick
© 2025
ppp

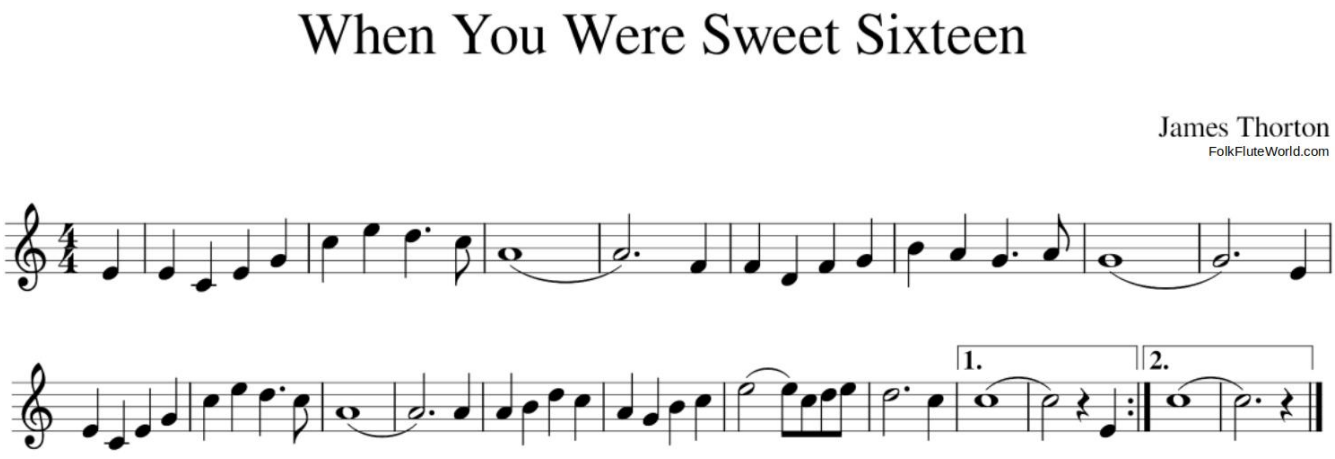
When You Were Sweet Sixteen

When composer Jim Thornton's wife asked if he still loved her, he replied, *"I love you like I did when you were sweet sixteen."*

The exchange inspired this song, which -- sung by Mrs Thornton -- quickly became a vaudeville hit.

Practice: The repeat sign in the "first ending" tells you to repeat the entire song. The second time through, play the "second ending", then stop.
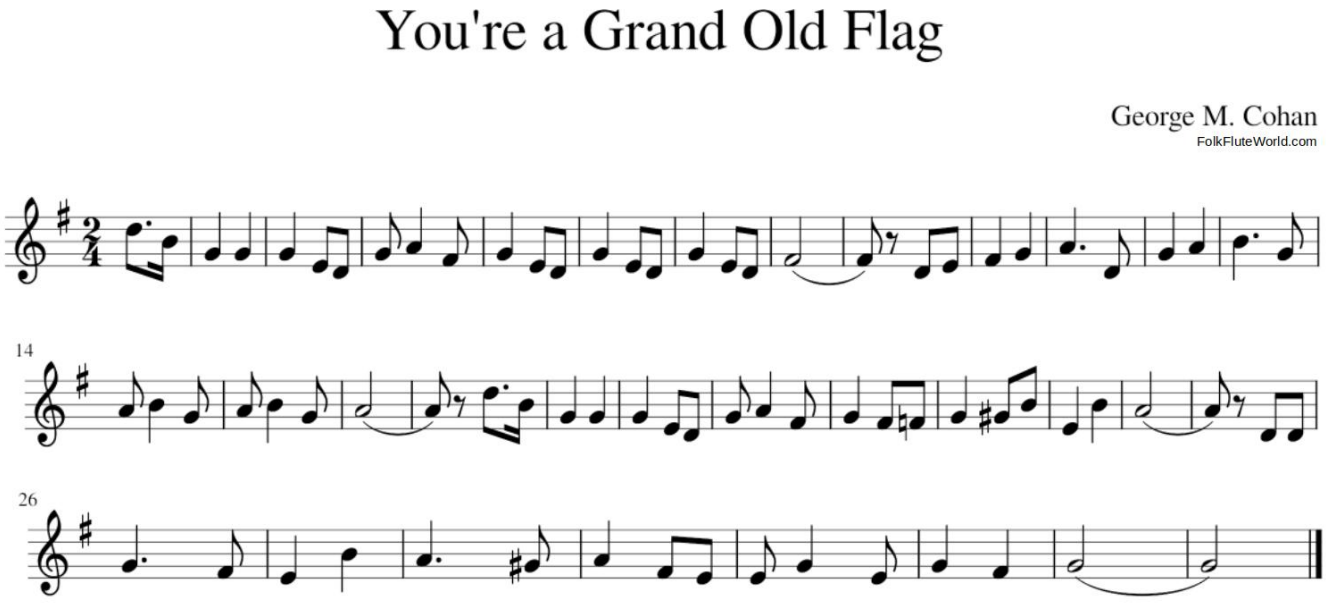
This song is good practice for hitting the high E towards the end of the score.



You're a Grand Old Flag

This patriotic song dates from 1906 when it was penned by George Cohan. It's in the tradition of marching bands and John Philip Sousa.

Practice: From the musical standpoint, it's a bit tricky with G# and other sharps. It's in the key of G, and requires both F# and F-natural. Given the accidentals, this is one of those songs that proves how useful it is to inspect a score before playing it.



Continue on for answers to the two self-tests ...

Self Tests -- Answers

Here are the answers to the two self tests.

If you get any wrong, make sure you understand why the given answer is correct. Or, go back to the relevant lesson and refresh your memory on the correct answer.

******** Self Test #1 ********

1. What are the three kinds of ocarinas?

ANSWER: C is correct. The three kinds of ocarinas are Seedpod, Transverse, and Inline. Remember that "Seedpod" is just another name for "Pendant".

A and B are incorrect because "Pendant" and "Seedpod" are the same thing. D is incorrect because "Submarine" and "Sweet Potato" are the same thing.

2. What is one advantage of a 6 hole pendant over a 4 hole pendant?

ANSWER: D is correct. 6 holers play two more higher notes than 4 holers.

A is incorrect because both 6 and 4 holers have the same fingering system. B is incorrect because 6 holers play two more higher notes than 4 holers (not lower notes). C is incorrect because there is not necessarily any difference in sound between 6 and 4 holers.

3. Which of the following is NOT an advantage of plastic pendants over ceramic pendants?

ANSWER: C is correct. Plastic ocarinas do not necessarily sound better than ceramic. It all depends on the ocarinas compared.

A is incorrect because it's true that plastic doesn't break as easily as ceramic. B is incorrect because it's true that plastic ocs are generally less expensive for the same size of ocarina than ceramic. D is incorrect because it's true that you can clean a plastic oc by submerging it in water.

4. What role do your two smallest "pinky" fingers have when playing a seedpod?

ANSWER: C is correct. They have no role other than if they're useful for holding the ocarina.

All other answers are incorrect because your pinky fingers are never used for fingering notes.

5. What's the advantage to tabbed notation?

ANSWER: A is correct. Tabbed notation's big benefit is that it visually shows you how to play each note.

B is incorrect because a big disadvantage of tabbed notation is that it gives you no idea of the timing of notes. C is incorrect because tabs are unique to pendant ocarinas. D is incorrect because many tabs come with lyrics, but many others do not.

6. What's the proper order of these notes, from highest to lowest?

ANSWER: C is the correct order of these notes from highest to lowest.

A and D are incorrect because they list the notes from lowest to highest. B is incorrect because it repeats C twice.

7. How many eighth notes could be played in the time of one half note?

ANSWER: C is correct, there are 4 eighth notes per half note. Remember, there are two eighth notes per quarter note, and two quarter notes per half note, thus there are four eighth notes per half note.

8. What's the difference between 3/4 and 4/4 time?

ANSWER: B is correct. 3/4 time has three beats per measure, as shown by its numerator.

A is incorrect because the time signature doesn't tell you how many notes there are per measure, it tells you how many beats there are per measure. The two could be different. C and D are incorrect because these time signatures aren't about how fast you play a tune.

9. What does the denominator in a time signature tell you?

ANSWER: D is correct. The denominator in a time signature tells you which kind of note gets 1 beat.

A is incorrect because the numerator of a time signature tells you how many beats per measure, not the denominator. B is incorrect because the time signature has nothing to do with whether there are sharps or flats in the score, that's the function of the key signature. C is incorrect because the time signature does not tell you what kind of song the score addresses.

10. One whole note consumes the same amount of time as how many sixteenth notes?

ANSWER: D is correct, there are 16 sixteenth notes per whole note note.

A is incorrect because 4 sixteenth notes equal 1 quarter note. B is incorrect because 8 sixteenth notes equal 1 half note. C is incorrect because 12 sixteenth notes equal 1 half note plus 1 quarter note (or 1 dotted half note).

11. Which note is this?

ANSWER: C is correct, this is the fingering for the note of G.

All other answers are incorrect because they specify notes other than G.

12. For how long do you play a dotted note?

ANSWER: C is correct. The rule is that you play a dotted note for its normal time plus half of its normal time. For example, in 4/4 time, you would play a dotted half note for its time (2 beats), plus half that value (1 beat). So in 4/4 time a dotted half note gets 3 beats.

All other answers are incorrect because they violate the rule that a dotted note consumes its normal time plus half of its normal time.

13. If you blow a note too hard, what happens?

ANSWER: B is correct, blowing a note too hard causes it to go sharp.

A is incorrect because blowing too little causes a note to go flat. C and D are incorrect because blowing too hard does not necessarily alter a note by one tone (one note).

14. You've been playing awhile, and suddenly your pendant starts sounding muffled or garbled. What should you do?

ANSWER: D is correct. Your instrument is "wetting out". Its windway is blocked by moisture from your breath. You need to remove that moisture to continue playing.

A is incorrect. Blowing harder won't remove the accumulated moisture (though a very sharp blow could help). Answers B and C are incorrect because they also do not solve the moisture issue.

15. Why might you keep the box in which your ocarina was shipped to you?

ANSWER: B is correct. The box could be very handy for safely transporting or storing your oc in the future.

Answers A and D are incorrect because the box might make a nice keepsake and it might be a collectible, but the real reason you want to save it is to have a safe, secure place to keep and transport your ocarina. Answer C is incorrect because you can certainly play your oc without its box.

16. Why might the first measure in a score contain fewer beats than all the other measures?

ANSWER: D is correct. The first measure often contains a note or two that lead into the main melody. These are often called "pickup notes" or "the lead-in".

Answer A is incorrect because it's not unusual to see the first (and possibly the last) measures of a score have a different number of beats than directed by the time signature. B and C are incorrect because the first measure neither establishes the speed of the tune nor its key.

17. What does the time signature tell you?

ANSWER: D is correct. The time signature tells you two things: how many beats there are in one measure, and what kind of note gets 1 beat. The first is disclosed by its numerator, the second is indicated by its denominator.

Answers A and B are incorrect because D is the better, more complete answer. C is incorrect because it is the key signature that tells you what sharps and flats occur throughout the score, not the time signature.

18. Which statement is true?

ANSWER: D is correct. D. Dynamics are about how loudly you play, and intonation is about playing in tune (your pitch accuracy).

Answers A and B are incorrect because intonation has nothing to do with how fast you play, it's about whether you play in tune. C is incorrect because vibrato is not about how fast you play, it's a technique to make a long note sound better by introducing a very slight waver or pitch waffle into the note.

19. Why are double stemmed notes useful?

ANSWER: A is correct. "Double notes" give you two alternate notes you can play, and you pick the one you like. With ocarinas they can be used to supply an alternate note if one is unplayable or out-of-range for your instrument.

Answer B is incorrect because double notes have nothing to do with saving space in the score. C is incorrect because they're not intended to give composers more flexibility. D is incorrect because ocarinas are physically incapable of playing more than one note at a time. D might be correct if you're playing an instrument that can do that by playing chords, such as a piano or guitar.

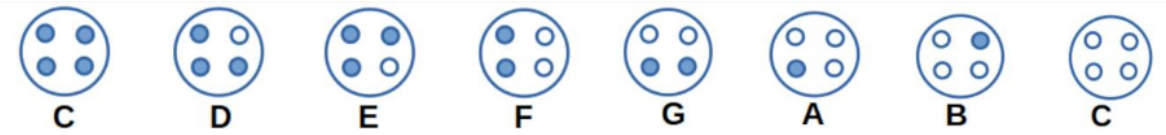
20. Which statement is not true?

ANSWER: D is the correct answer. In a trill, you shift very rapidly between two adjacent notes, not between two notes that are an octave apart.

Answers A, B, and C are all incorrect because they are true statements, and the question asks for the statement that is not correct.

21. These are the fingerings for what notes?

ANSWER: B is correct. See the fingering chart below.



22. Which statement is not true?

ANSWER: C is the correct answer. An underscore beneath or above a note means to play it **tenuto**, maximum length with very gentle tongue.

Answers A, B, and D are all incorrect because they are true statements, and the question asks for the statement that is not correct.

23. What is a fipple?

ANSWER: B is correct. The fipple is the mouthpiece of a woodwind that automatically directs your breath to a sharp splitting edge where it is split to create sound waves.

Answer A is incorrect because it refers to the sharp splitting edge, not to the fipple. C is incorrect because the term "fipple" does not apply to the hole where you string a necklace. D is incorrect because it defines the base note of a C Soprano ocarina, not a part of an ocarina.

24. How many notes are the in the standard western scale?

ANSWER: C is correct. There are 7 notes in the scale. From lowest to highest they are: C, D, E, F, G, A, B

Answer A is incorrect because there are 5 notes in many Asian scales, but there are 7 in the standard western scale. B and D are just incorrect numbers.

25. Which of these three tabs is the correct representation for the note F?

ANSWER: D is correct. All three diagrams properly represent the note F. Remember that representations vary slightly. Some rely on circles, others on squares. The rightmost diagram includes the two thumb holes. Tabs need not include the thumb holes unless they represent the highest notes of the 6 hole ocarina.

******** Self Test #2 ********

1. What is a "base note"?

ANSWER: A is correct. A woodwind's base note is the note it plays with all holes closed. That's the lowest note it can play.

(One important exception: the base note of a 12 hole transverse ocarina is the note it plays with all holes closed -- except for its sub-holes.)

The other answers are incorrect because a base note has nothing to do with how a note sounds.

2. What are the respective whole note ranges of 6 hole, 4 hole, and 12 hole ocarinas?

ANSWER: D is correct. A 6 hole oc can play 10 whole notes, a 4 holer plays 8 whole notes, and a 12 hole transverse plays 13 whole notes.

3. Which statement is true?

ANSWER: A is correct. Sopranos are smaller than bass and bass usually cost more.

B is incorrect because it makes the untrue claim that "bass usually cost less". C and D are not true because sopranos and bass finger the same.

4. D# is the same note as?

ANSWER: A is correct. D# and E♭ are the same note. Both are 1/2 tone above D and 1/2 tone below E. Remember that every accidental can be called by either its name as a sharp, or by its name as a flat.

5. Which accidentals require half-holing?

ANSWER: B is correct. The two lowest accidentals, C# and D#, both require half-holing on pendants.

No other answer is correct because no other pair of accidentals requires half-holing for both of them.

6. Which key has two sharps?

ANSWER: D is correct. D Major has two accidentals, F# and C#.

A is incorrect because C Major has no sharps or flats. B is incorrect because F Major has one flat, B♭. E♭ Major is incorrect because it has three flats.

You'll often see tin whistle and Irish flute music scored in D Major. So it's a common key and important to be aware of.

7. What does it mean to play a note "natural"?

ANSWER: C is correct. When you play a note as a natural, that means it is a whole note, not a sharp or flat.

A and B are incorrect because a natural note is neither sharp nor flat. Answer D is incorrect because this has nothing to do with rests. Answer E is incorrect because this is a specific instruction on how to play a note.

8. If a note has a sharp sign immediately in front of it, what do you do?

ANSWER: A is correct. Regardless of the key signature, when a note has a sharp sign right in front of it, you play it as sharp. In other words, a sharp symbol adjacent to a note overrides whatever the key signature might call for.

B is incorrect because the immediate sharp sign takes precedence over the key signature. C is incorrect because the sharp sign tells you not to play the note as a natural. D is incorrect because the sharp sign tells you to play an accidental, not a whole note.

9. Which statement is NOT true about transverse ocarinas?

ANSWER: D is the correct answer. There is no general rule or tendency that says that transverse

ocarinas cost more than pendants.

A is incorrect because transverse ocs are often called submarines. B is incorrect because it is true that 12 hole ocarinas play a wider range of 13 notes, compared to the 4 hole pendant's range of 8 whole notes and the 6 hole pendant's range of 10 notes. C is incorrect because it is a true statement -- transverse ocarinas and inlines finger alike.

10. Why does a dual chambered ocarina have two mouthpiece slits to blow into?

ANSWER: D is correct. The purpose of two breath slits is so that you can blow into the chamber of your choice. One chamber gives you a range of lower notes, while the other chamber gives you a range of higher notes.

A is incorrect because you can't play two notes at once (or perhaps it's more accurate to say that dual chambered ocarinas are not designed for this purpose). B is incorrect because having dual chambers has no relationship to loudness. C is incorrect because the purpose of two chambers is to extend the instrument's range, not to manage wetting out.

11. If you have a score that is very difficult to play because of its chromatics, what are two possible solutions? (Select two answers)

ANSWER: A and D are correct. You can either transpose the score or find a more playable version on the internet.

B and C are incorrect because these change the score in ways that will make it sound incorrectly.

12. Which statement is true about rounds and duets?

ANSWER: A is correct. In a round, musicians all play the same melody but starting at different times. Or, they all start playing at the same time but at different places in the score.

B is incorrect because it's true for rounds, not for duets. C and D are incorrect because musicians playing together must all be in proper timing to sound correctly. Synchronized timing is required for both rounds and duets.

13. Which of the following is NOT a capability of current ABC based computer tools?

ANSWER: E is correct. Computer tools that work with ABC Notation can perform all the tasks listed except for converting a traditional score into ABC Notation. (Note that some such tools do exist but don't work very well at the time of writing. Perhaps this will change in the future).

14. What's a metronome?

ANSWER: B is correct. Metronomes audibly tick off the beats for you. This can help musicians stay in proper timing.

B and C are incorrect because these are not functions of metronomes.

15. What notes are harmonic thirds to E?

ANSWER: C is correct. Harmony in thirds requires notes that are either two notes above or two notes below the melodic note. G is two notes above E, and C is two notes below it.

The other answers are all incorrect because they are not two notes above or below E.

16. How can you spot an "ocarina" that can't play music?

ANSWER: D is correct. Top holes that are all the same size are a dead give-away that the ocarina you are looking at is not capable of playing music. It might be a pretty collectible or just a cheap fake.

The other answers are all incorrect because identifying unplayable ocarinas has nothing to do with whether they have thumb holes beneath, or are shaped like an apple.

17. What's the base note of an Alto C ocarina?

ANSWER: B is correct. The base note of an Alto C ocarina is C5, the same as the base note of the soprano recorder. That's one octave above C4, which is referred to as "middle C" on the piano.

A is incorrect because that's middle C on the piano. C is incorrect because that's the base note of C

Soprano pendants. D is incorrect because A is not a base note for any C Major instrument.

18. What two notes are these?

ANSWER: B is correct. These are F# and B♭. These are the two accidentals you really need to learn for playing the pendant.

19. If you play a long run of sixteenth notes on a bass ocarina, what can happen?

ANSWER: A is correct. Given the large size of the bass and the large amount of air held in its enclosed chamber, it doesn't respond very quickly to changes in breath pressure. Thus it is possible that it can "swallow up" notes that are played very quickly, such as sixteenth notes.

B is incorrect because it's the opposite of what might happen. C and D are incorrect because the size of an ocarina is not relevant to these two events.

20. Grace notes, cuts, strikes, flips, are examples of what?

ANSWER: C is correct. These are all examples of ornamentation.

A is incorrect because "decrescendo" means to reduce loudness over some period of time. B in incorrect because "dynamics" describes how loudly one plays. D is incorrect because "intonation" refers to playing in tune.

21. Which statement is NOT true?

ANSWER: D is correct because it is not true that pendants and transverse ocarinas finger the same. They finger differently.

A is incorrect because it is true that all pendants finger the same way. B is incorrect because it is true that all transverses and inlines finger the same way. C is incorrect because it is true that bass and soprano pendants finger the same way.

22. What's the biggest advantage to a double chambered pendant?

ANSWER: B is correct. The purpose of having more than one chamber is to play a wider range of notes

A is incorrect because loudness is not the motivation behind more than one chamber. C is incorrect because although a dual chamber pendant will typically weigh more than a single chamber pendant of the same size, this is not why people play dual chamber ocarinas. D is incorrect because the accuracy of pitches is not necessarily any better with a dual chambered oc than with a single chambered one.

23. Which strategy can help you to half-hole better?

ANSWER: D is correct because all the strategies listed may help.

Answers A, B, and C are all true statements, so the best answer is D, "all of the above".

24. You're at the music store to buy a new pendant for playing some jazz. You notice that your choice has a 5th hole on top. What should you do?

ANSWER: C is correct. Maybe the instrument is playable, maybe it is not. The way to tell is to look very closely to see if that 5th penetrates the sound chamber. If it does, the pendant is not playable.

Answers A, B, and C are incorrect. You can't make an a priori judgment on whether the pendant is playable. You need to closely inspect to see if the 5th hole penetrates the sound chamber. (Alternatively, you could test the ocarina by playing it.)

25. How many semitones are in the standard western scale, and what are they?

ANSWER: B is correct. There are 5 semitones in the standard western scale. This answer correctly lists them.

Answer A is incorrect. It lists the 7 whole notes of the scale, but the question is asking about semitones. C and D are incorrect because there are 5 semitones, not 4.

One Million Free Scores

Over a million free scores are available from a variety of websites. We list some of them here.

If you're reading a digital copy of this book, just click on the website name in the left column.

If you're reading a print copy, the website name is spelled out in full in the right column. Copy and paste it into your web browser. (On a few browsers, you may need to add **www.** or **http://** before the website name.)

Websites come and go, so we can't guarantee which are still active when you read this book. Visit website **FolkFluteWorld.com** for the current, updated list.

If a website has disappeared, you can often find it by using the Internet Archive's **Wayback Machine** at **Archive.org**. Just enter the website name in the Search Box and you'll see a copy of the website and all its material at the time it was last archived.

Free Ocarina Scores

FolkFluteWorld	FolkFluteWorld.com
12HoleOcarina	12holeocarina.com
Ocarina music at Pinterest	Pinterest.com/reba5brown16/12-hole-ocarina-sheet-music
STL Ocarina	STLOcarina.com
Ocarina Songbook	OcarinaSongbook.com/12-hole
OcarinaTabs	OcarinaTabs.org
Japanese folk songs	codaedc.com/japanese-folk-songs
Christmas carols	codaedc.com/coda-carols
8Notes for Ocarina	8notes.com/school/search_fsm.asp?keyword=ocarina
IMSLIP library	imslp.org/wiki/Category:Scores_featuring_the_ocarina
Riffspot for Ocarina	riffspot.com/music/12-hole-ocarina
Legend of Zelda Music	ninsheetmusic.org/browse/series/TheLegendofZelda
Mixing a Band	Mixingaband.com/12-hole-ocarina-tabs-sheet-music-scales-and-lessons
4 Hole Ocarina Tabs	OcarinaTabs.org/category/4-hole
Easy Music	Easymusic.altervista.org/easymusic-home
TON Songbook	FolkFluteWorld.com/free_sheet_music/TON_Songbook.pdf
BBC/UK Schools	Ocarina.co.uk/inclusive-and-accessible-ocarinas/bbc-ten-pieces
Michael Eskin's tunes & tools	MichaelEskin.com

Free Tune Libraries (Lead Sheets)

FolkFluteWorld	FolkFluteWorld.com
ABC Notations HUGE library	ABCnotation.com/tunes
IMSLP HUGE tune library	imslp.org
Public Domain Sherpa	Publicdomainsherpa.com/free-sheet-music.html
Free-scores.com	Free-scores.com/index_uk.php
Public Domain Music Project	PDinfo.com
Michael Eskin -- Many libraries	MichaelEskin.com/tunebooks.html
Michael Eskin -- Tune websites	MichaelEskin.com
Jack Campin -- ABC Scores	Campin.me.uk
Jack Campin's 9 Note Tune Book	Pureocarinas.com/music_books/9_note_tune_book.html
Morris Tunes - ABC Library	https://www.ucolick.org/~sla/morris/music/abclib.html
FolkInfo.org Huge Tune Library	joe-offer.com/folkinfo/index.html
FolkTune Finder Library	FolkTuneFinder.com
Trad Music UK 10k Tunes	TraditionalMusic.co.uk
Mandolin 10k Tunes	Mandolintab.net/index.html
Flageolet Tunes	Flageolets.com/music
Bainbridge's 40 Flageolet Tunes	FolkFluteWorld.com/free_sheet_music/Bainbridges_Flageolet_40_Tunes.pdf
Christmas Songs (Catalonia)	FolkFluteWorld.com/free_sheet_music/Nadal_web_Catalonia_Xmas_songs.pdf
Christmas Tunebook-Paul Hardy	FolkFluteWorld.com/free_sheet_music/pgh_xmas_tunebook.pdf
Capotastomusic library	Capotastomusic.com
XmasMusicSongs	Christmasmusicsongs.com/index.html
Celtic Music Archives	Tinwhistler.com/Sheet
Morris Dance Tunes -- C. Sharp	FolkFluteWorld.com/free_sheet_music/Morris_Dance_Tunes_Sharp.pdf
The Session -- traditional songs	TheSession.org
The Bird Fancyer's Delight	FolkFluteWorld.com/free_sheet_music/bird_fancyers_delight.pdf
Free Lead Sheets (M Kruvchuk)	MichaelKravchuk.com
Christian Hymns library	SongsAndHymns.org
Family Radio Library	FamilyRadio.org/fr-library/hymns
NameThatHymn.com	Namethathymn.com/christian-hymns/come-thou-fount-lyrics.html
SacredSheetMusic.org	SacredSheetMusic.org
Public Domain Hymns	PDhymns.com
Hymn Charts	HymnCharts.com
Hymnary.org	Hymnary.org
RiffSpot collection	riffspot.com
Mama Lisa's Music World	MamaLisa.com
Mutopia Project library	ibiblio.org/mutopia
Johns Hopkins Music Library	levysheetmusic.mse.jhu.edu
Song Society Tune Books	efdss.org/vwml-digitised-resources/historic-dance-and-tune-books
River of Song website	RiverOfSong.uk
Singing Games for Children	SingingGamesForChildren.com

Free Tunes Scored for Recorder

You'll find that recorder scores are an abundant source of sheet music for your ocarina. You may sometimes have to transpose scores to ensure that all notes are within your pendant's range.

8Notes for Recorder	8notes.com/recorder
Capostasto Music	CapotastoMusic.com/soprano-recorder-sheet-music/easy.htm
Solo Recorder	SoloRecorder.wordpress.com/about
Philadelphia Recorder Society	PhiladelphiaRecorderSociety.org/links2.php
Recorder music at Pinterest	Pinterest.com/search/pins/?q=recorder%20sheet%20music&rs=typed
Free-Scores.com Recorder music	Free-scores.com/free-sheet-music.php?CATEGORIE=130
Making Music Fun	Makingmusicfun.net/htm/soprano_recorder_sheet_music_index
Virtual Sheet Music / Recorder	VirtualSheetMusic.com/recorder
MuseScore for Recorder	Musescore.com/sheetmusic/recorder
Choral Public Domain Library	cpdl.org/wiki
Serpent Publications	SerpentPublications.org/drupal7
IMSLP for Recorder	imslp.org/wiki/Category:For_recorder
MuseOpen	musopen.org/music/instrument/recorder
Music All the Time	MusicAllTheTime.com/recorder/sheet-music-and-educational-materials-for-recorder.html
Music Notes	Musicnotes.com/sheet-music/instrument/woodwinds/flute-family/recorder
English Folk Songs by C. Sharp	FolkFluteWorld.com/free_sheet_music/english_folk_songs_sharp.pdf
Recorder Homepage Scores	RecorderHomePage.net/repertoire/scores-on-line
Dolmetsch Sheet Music	Dolmetsch.com/sheetmusic.htm
Blokfluit.org huge database	BlokFluit.org

Free Tunes Scored for Tin Whistle (aka Penny Whistle)

Tin whistle libraries also contain many good scores for ocarina. Since the most popular key of whistle is the D Whistle, many songs are scored in D. Recall that D key has two sharps: F# and C#.

Some D Major scores you can play "as is". Others are best transposed to a more ocarina-friendly key. Lesson 20 explained how to automatically transpose D Major scores to more easily playable keys.

Irish-Folk-Songs.com	Irish-folk-songs.com/tin-whistle.html
FluteTunes.com	Flutetunes.com/composers.php?id=6
WhistleTabs	Whistletabs.com
TinWhistler	Tinwhistler.com
8Notes for Tin Whistle	8notes.com/tin_whistle/all
8Notes for Irish Flute	8notes.com/school/search_fsm.asp?keyword=irish+flute
Learn Tin Whistle	LearnTinWhistle.com/tabs
The Session -- Irish songs	TheSession.org
Tin Whistle music at Pinterest	https://www.pinterest.com/lucent62/tin-whistle-music/
Irish Flute music at Pinterest	Pinterest.com/liselov/irish-flute
Riffspot for Tin Whistle	Riffspot.com/music/tin-whistle
TradSchool Tunes	TradSchool.com/en/10-tin-whistle-tunes-sheet-music-and-tabs
Whistle Away	WhistleAway.com/tin-whistle-notes-sheet-music
Whistle Away Christmas Songs	WhistleAway.com/tin-whistle-christmas-songs
Tin Whistle Tabs	TinWhistleTabs.wordpress.com/author/cutiepietinwhistle
Funky Whistle	FunkyWhistle.com
Irish Tunes	FreeSheetMusic.net/music/most-recorded-irish-tunes
More Irish Tunes	FreeSheetMusic.net/music/worldfolk/popular.html
Free Sheet Music.net	FreeSheetMusic.net
Celtic Scores.com	CelticScores.com/instrument/Flute
Free-Scores	Free-scores.com/free-sheet-music.php?CATEGORIE=120&genre=Celtic
Jack Campin's ABC Scores	Campin.me.uk
Morris Tunes - Dartington	Dartingtonmorris.uk/tunes
Morris Tunes - ABC Library	https://www.ucolick.org/~sla/morris/music/abclib.html
O'Carolan Collection	FolkFluteWorld.com/free_sheet_music/carolan_collection.pdf
16th Century Songs Collection	FolkFluteWorld.com/free_sheet_music/16th_century_songs_collection.pdf
Tipple's Irish Tunes	TippleFlutes.com/tunebook-with-sheet-music-and-mp3-audio
Montreal ABC Tunebook	MontrealSession.ca/index.html

Videos and Other Learning Resources

Here are several Youtube channels that focus on ocarina tutorials and music. If you're reading a print copy of this book, simply go to Youtube.com and enter the search terms "how to play ocarina".

Popular ocarina channels include those by David Erick Ramos, Andy Cormier, Gina Luciani, OcarinaOwl, Freckled Zelda, and others. These feature a mix of product reviews, tutorials, and performances.

Vendor channels include those by Stein Ocarina / Zack Shih, Songbird Ocarina, and STL Ocarina. They're excellent sources of song samples for their products.

Several websites cover ocarinas. As they frequently come and go, we refer you to FolkFluteWorld.com for an up-to-date list.

Summary

There are over a million free scores you can access to play on your ocarina, plus many free learning resources. This appendix lists many of the websites that host them.

Since books are not as easy to keep updated as websites, we urge you to visit FolkFluteWorld.com for the current lists.

Print Copies -- and FREE Transverse Oc Book

Order a print copy of this book at Amazon.

Nice large format -- 8 ½" by 11" -- so the scores are easy to read.

My companion book on transverse and inline ocarinas is also available for free at FolkFluteWorld.com or Archive.org. Or buy a print copy at Amazon.

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* 400 pages -- the most complete recorder book
* Written by an expert musician (**not** AI)
* 30 lessons
* 220 songs, and access to 1 million more!
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Mobile Phone Ocarina Apps

Several ocarina apps are available for iPhone and Android. One was among most popular of all apps that simulate musical instruments. In fact, the first "oc app" won an Apple Top Ten Award.

Interest in oc apps reached fad proportions around 2010. It has since faded a bit but remains strong.

Mobile phone ocarina apps offer several key advantages:

1. Many carry their mobile or cell phones everywhere they go. Thus the oc app is always available, right at hand.
2. Some who have never played an instrument find oc apps more accessible than handling a physical instrument (after all, they use their cell frequently throughout the day).
3. Electronic ocs offer some features and sounds not available with real ocarinas.
4. The better apps bundle accessories that would otherwise be separate items from your ocarina, such as tabs, song libraries, and tutorials. It's all conveniently available in your phone.

We won't discuss any one app in specific detail here because there are several available. What follows is a general description.

Playing

To play your cell phone ocarina, hold the edge of the phone to your face and softly blow into the microphone. You finger the "tone holes" on the phone's face.

How hard you blow controls volume. Tilting the phone produces vibrato or alters the pitch.

Some find they must adjust the touch sensitivity of their phone to get the fingering to work accurately. Removing any phone cover may help. Even so, some prefer fingering a real ocarina to their phone screen.

You can play 4 hole pendant style or with up to 8 fingering holes. The fingering systems duplicate those of actual ocarinas. So you can transfer your skills between app and ocarina to some degree.

You can either compose your own songs or play well-known tunes. You can even follow scrolling tab notation as you play.

Features

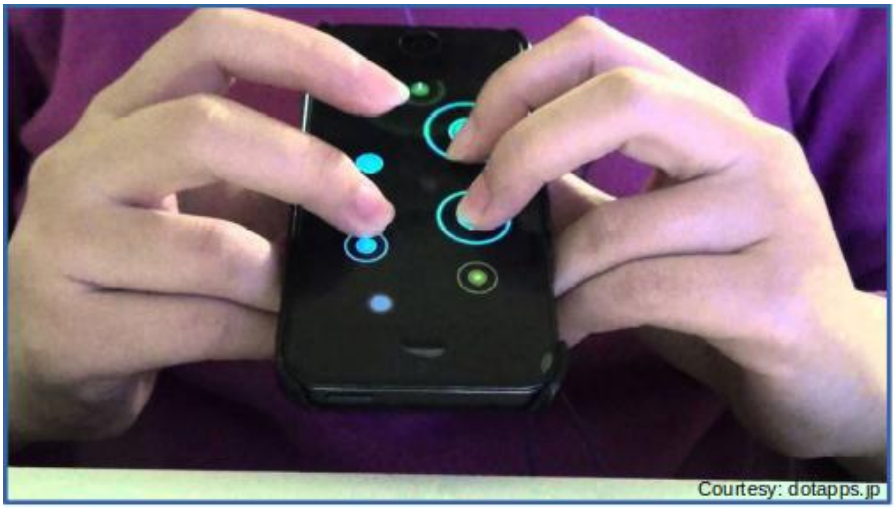
The apps are mature and offer a wide range of features: automatic harmony that mimics your play, vibrato with rate and depth, timbre control, tabs display, sound dynamics, and recording and playback. Apps include a selection of modes: Ionian, Dorian, Phrygian, and others, Zeldarian mode for *Legend of Zelda* fans, and whistle mode. They support scales such as diatonic, minor, and harmonic.

The biggest draw might be the song libraries, with tabs and scores, and interactive training.

Those enthused about the apps share their songs worldwide and what they've learned. With a few taps you can bring up a world map and listen in to songs in progress anywhere. You should understand that -- with most these apps -- by default your playing is broadcast.

The voice produced by the phones' speakers sounds little like a real ocarina. It's electronic. Many describe it as "futuristic" or "spacey". Some like it better than a real ocarina, some dislike it. Most just see it as different. Those same electronics make possible many unique app features.

You can download oc apps from the Apple App Store, Google Play, or independent sources.



Summary

If you haven't tried any of the oc apps, you really should. They turn musicianship into a bit of a game. While you may or may not find their electronic voices as pleasing as a real ocarina, the features that electronics make possible make this a fun diversion. And for most of us, the mobile phone is always at the ready: you can play even if your real ocarina is unavailable.





John Taylor invented the 4 hole pendant fingering system in 1964. See his experiments on the table.



Barry Jennings added the two thumb holes several years later, inventing the 6 hole pendant.

(Photos courtesy of James Gregory, Peter and Josie Hodkinson, Blake Anderson, and Jerry Pollard)

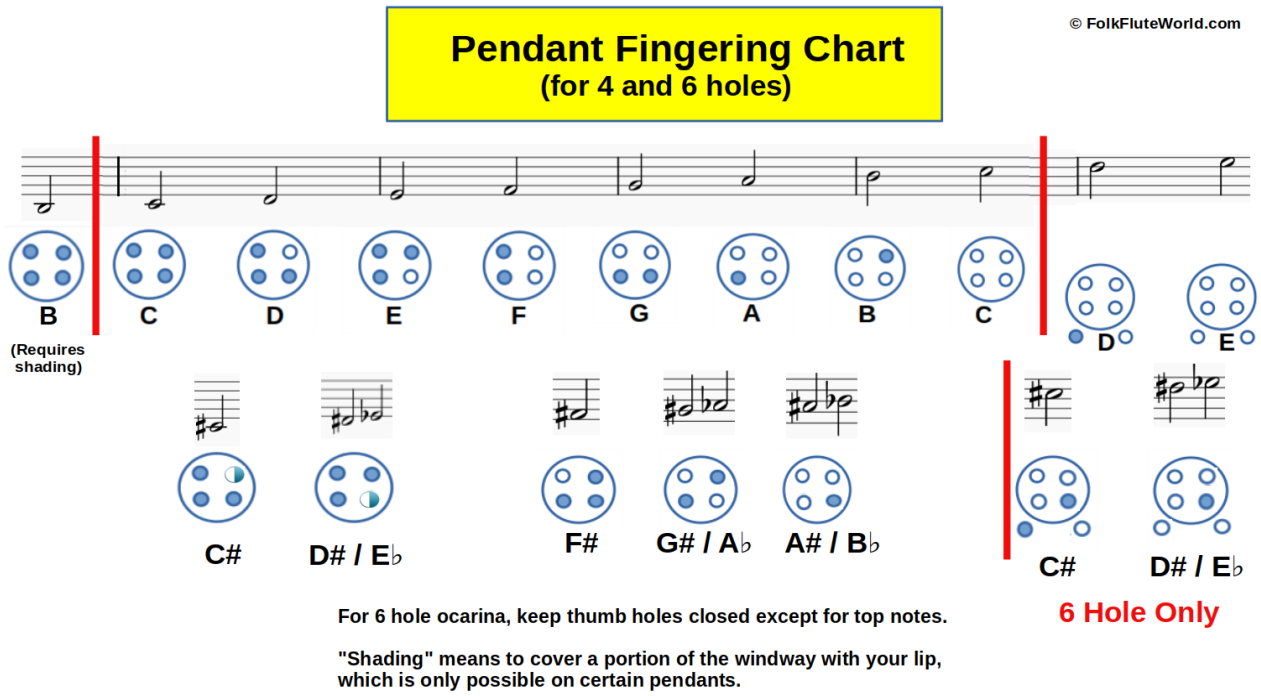
Fingering Chart

Here is a complete fingering chart for **all** pendant ocarinas.

The associations between the notes and fingerings are those for all C Major pendants (the C Soprano, Alto C, and C Bass).

Fingering is the exact same for all G Major pendants. However, the note sounded with all holes closed is low G, the next note up is A, etc., on up the scale. So the notes and pitches in the G Major scale are: G, A, B, C, D, E, F#, (high G).

Print a copy of this chart so that you can take it along with your ocarina, wherever you go.



For the Alto C, the actual pitches all sound one octave higher than written on the staff.

You may discover alternative fingerings for some notes. For example, many pendants play high D by covering either of the two thumb holes.

Only a few pendants -- usually small ones -- can play low B by shading.