

TROMBONE

DESCRIPTION

- The trombone is a member of the brass family of instruments.
- The trombone is primarily a circular brass tube bent into the shape of an "S," with a mouthpiece at one end and a bell at the other end.
- The most visible and recognizable part of a trombone is its slide, which moves in and out to change the pitch.

HOW TO PLAY

- The trombone player holds the trombone in place with the left hand, which is placed near the mouthpiece. The right hand moves the slide back and forth.
- The trombone player places closed lips against the mouthpiece and blows, causing air to pass through the air column inside the trombone. As in most brass instruments, sound is produced by "buzzing" the lips against the mouthpiece.

SOUND

- In general, the trombone has a mellow tone, which blends well with other instruments. But it can also play forcefully.
- Trombones usually play lower notes, but good players can play very high notes as well.

FUN FACTS

- The trombone was developed in the 15th century and was first known as a sackbut.
- At first, trombones had valves used to change the pitch, like trumpets. There are still trombones with valves, but most of today's trombones have a slide.
- The most common instrumentation for a brass quintet includes two trumpets, one French horn, one trombone, and one tuba/bass trombone. A brass quartet may include two trumpets and two trombones, or two trumpets, one French horn, and one trombone.

SOUND SAMPLES

TRACK 17 - Slide that Trombone

TRACK 18 - Come Hear the Band!

TIGER ON THE TROMBONE



CLARINET

DESCRIPTION

- The clarinet is a member of the woodwind family of instruments. Within the woodwind family, it is part of a group known as single-reed woodwind instruments. It is usually made of wood, plastic, or a combination of the two.
- The body of the clarinet is a narrow tube made up of three sections, which must be assembled before the clarinet can be played. The tube flares at the bottom. This is called a bell, and the sound comes out of the bell.
- At the top part of the clarinet is a mouthpiece. A reed, generally made of a single piece of cane, is attached to the mouthpiece and rests on the lower lip. Reeds may also be made of synthetic materials. The reed is held in place by an adjustable band called a ligature.

HOW TO PLAY

- First, the clarinetist must wet the reed in the mouth for a minute or two, then attach the reed to the mouthpiece using the ligature.
- The mouthpiece is placed in the mouth with the reed side down, resting on the bottom lip. The lower lip is curled over the lower teeth, so that the teeth don't dig into the reed.
- Then the player pulls the corners of the mouth around the mouthpiece, so no air will escape. Sound is made by blowing into the mouthpiece.
- Fingers are positioned over the keys, left hand above the right. Each key covers up a hole, causing the pitch to change.

SOUND

- A clarinet is known for its dark, round tone. But it can actually produce quite a variety of sounds.
- The clarinet has three very different registers. The lower register is known as the chalumeau, and is known for its warm and dark quality. The throat tones are located in the middle register and produce a weaker tone. The mid to upper range of the clarinet is known as the clarino, which produces the clearest sound.
- Several notes, known as the break, exist between the throat tones and the clarino registers. These notes are quite difficult for the beginning clarinetist to play.

FUN FACTS

- The clarinet was invented in Nuremberg, Germany, early in the 18th century by Johann Christoph Denner and his son Jakob.
- The clarinet is a popular instrument in jazz and big bands.
- Traditional Jewish Klezmer folk music also features the clarinet (listen to Track 50).

SOUND SAMPLES

TRACK 24 - Hey, Ho! Nobody's Home

TRACK 25 - Classy Clarinet

CAT ON THE CLARINET

