

Percussion

Woodwind

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French
Horn

Woodwind

Brass

Harp

Violin I

Viola

Violin I

Cello

Bass

The Sections

Cello

The Cello is the second biggest and often plays the tune with the violins. It makes a low, strong and concentrated sound. It sits on the floor instead of under the chin like the violin.

Harp

The harp is often counted in the string section although it isn't part of the violin family. It has lots of strings that are plucked and strummed.

Bass

The Bass is the biggest, it is lower than the cello and usually plays the bass line, supporting all the other string players and keeping everyone in time and in tune. They are literally the 'base'.

Violin

The Violin is the smallest member of the strings family. It usually plays the tune, and is the highest in pitch. It's also the biggest section, split into Violin 1 and Violin 2.

Viola

The Viola is the next smallest and has different strings to the violin. It has the same strings as the cello but an octave higher. The viola makes a rich warm sound.



The Strings and Harp

The string family use a bow to vibrate a string to make sound, the harp is plucked or strummed.

Oboe

The Oboe is a 'double reed' instrument which means it is played by using your mouth to make two reeds vibrate against each other. This makes a really clear and nasal sound, great for solos.

Bassoon

The Bassoon is the biggest of the woodwind family, and it is a 'double reed' instrument. It often plays with the basses and cellos, but its clear sound is great for interesting solos and melodies.

Flute/Piccolo

The modern flute is made of metal but used to be made of wood, which is why it's in the woodwind family. It is played by blowing across the mouthpiece and pressing the keys. The piccolo is like a small flute.

Clarinet

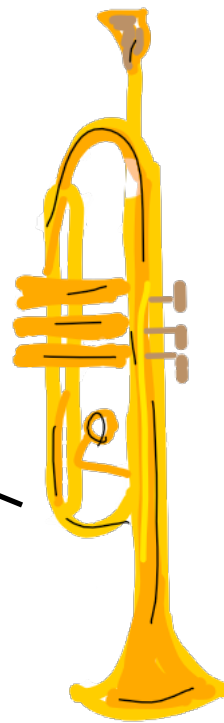
The clarinet is a 'single reed' instrument. The player attaches a reed to a small mouthpiece and the sound is created when they blow and the reed vibrates. The pitch is controlled by the keys.

The Woodwind

Instruments that are (or were) made of wood and use air to create sound.

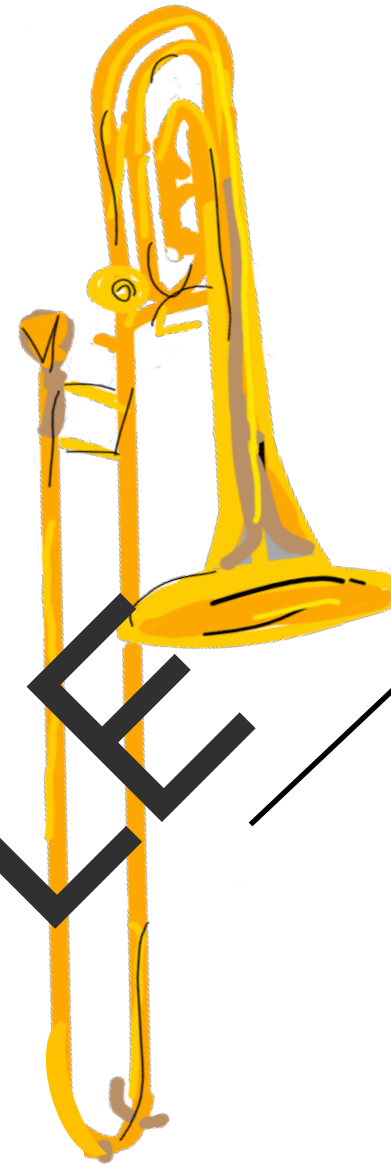
Trumpet

The trumpet is played by vibrating your lips and blowing a controlled and skilled raspberry into the mouthpiece! All brass instruments are played this way. The trumpet is the highest and often has the main melody.



Trombone

The trombone uses a slide to control the pitch, instead of valves like the trumpet and tuba. It is the middle child of the brass family and likes to play loud strong fanfares with rich harmony.



Tuba

The Tuba is the biggest member of the brass family, the lip vibration is huge! The pitch is controlled by three or four valves and it often plays the bass line and supports the rest of the orchestra.



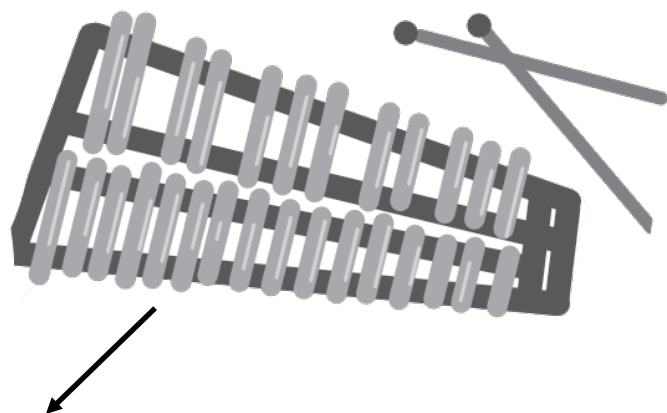
French Horn

The modern French Horn is made of the same material as the rest of the brass, and is played in a similar way, but is technically not a member of the brass family, so they have their own section.



The Brass and French Horns

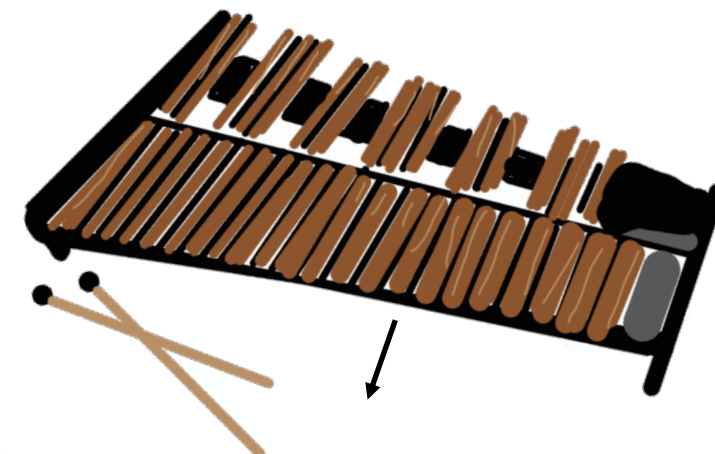
Metal instruments played by buzzing the lips into a round mouthpiece.



Glockenspiel

The Glockenspiel is laid out like a keyboard made of metal chimes that are struck with two or sometimes four beaters.

Timpani
The Timpani, or kettle drums, are a set of tuned drums that sound full and booming, they are tuned to the piece the orchestra is playing.

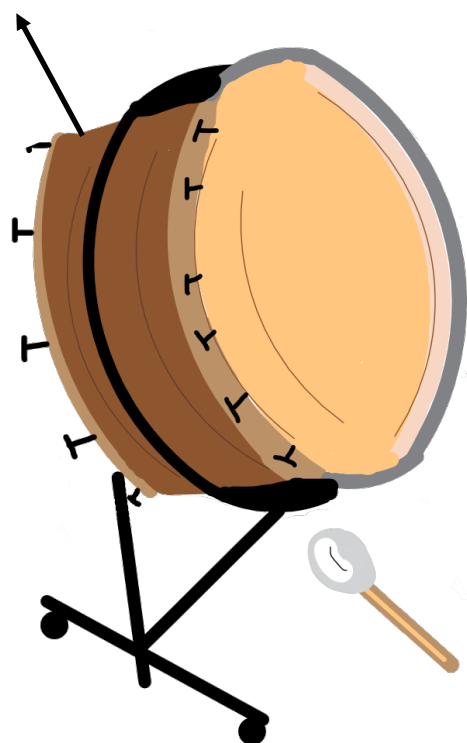


Xylophone

The xylophone is made of wood and is usually bigger than the glockenspiel. It makes a more full and deep wooden sound.

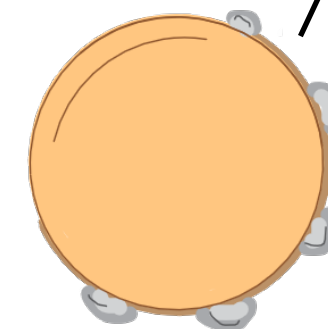
Bass Drum

The Bass Drum is very large and is hit with a large beater. A roll effect sounds like thunder.



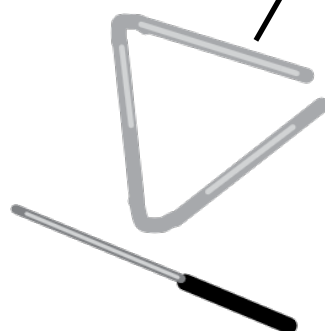
Tambourine

This can be hit or shaken as it has a skin and metal 'zills', like tiny cymbals.



Triangle

The Triangle is played with a small metal beater and can be a dainty 'ting' or struck repeatedly for a louder effect.



Cymbals

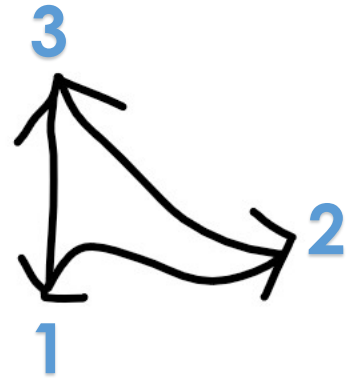
A pair of cymbals are often used at climax points and crashed together by the player.



The Percussion

Instruments that are struck to create sound, usually with beaters.

Three in a Bar

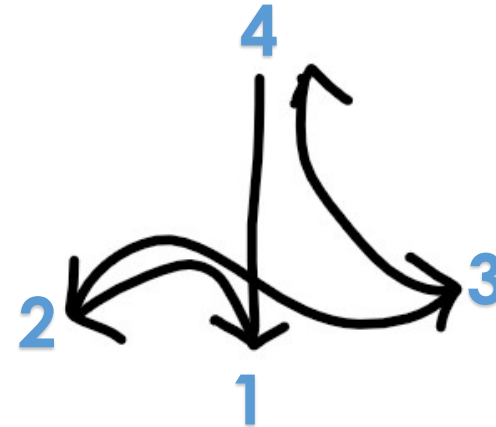


The first beat in a bar is called the **“Down Beat”**



Two in a Bar

Four in a Bar

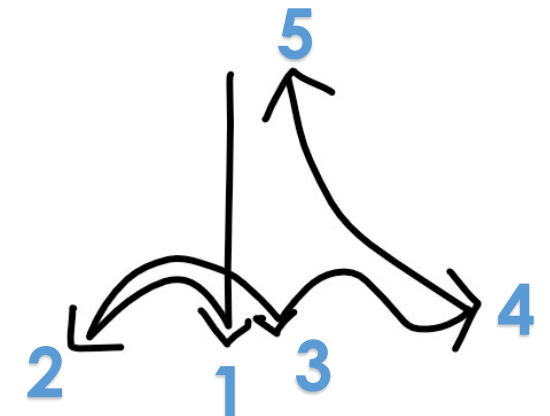


Sometimes a small baton is used so players that are far away can still follow the conductor easily.

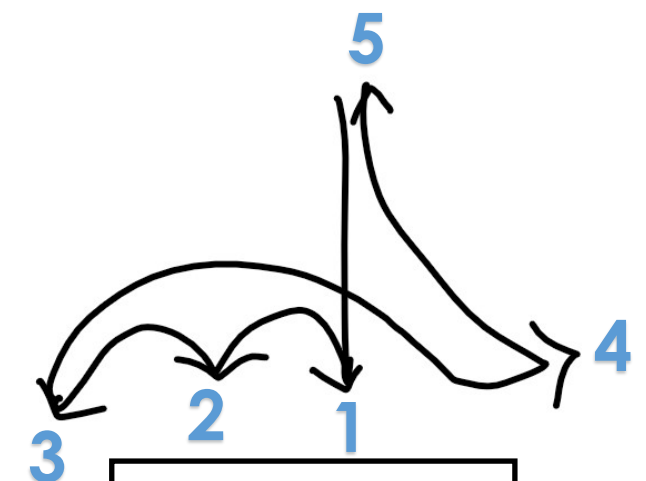


There are specific arm waving patterns according to how many beats are in a musical bar.

Five in a Bar (2+3)



The last beat in a bar is called the **“Up Beat”**



Five in a Bar (3+2)

The Conductor

This person stands at the front of the orchestra and moves their arms and hands to keep the orchestra playing at the same time.