



Upgrading Your Flute Guide

Congratulations! You are now progressing well on flute and are an intermediate player!

When you need an upgraded instrument, it can be confusing what to get as there are so many brands to choose from. At this level, the choice should be guided by trying out a number of flutes but here are some links and tips for finding the right one for you!

Terminology:

- **Split E mechanism** - a mechanism designed to improve the ease and stability of playing the high E note. I would recommend this.
- **Offset G** - the G key is not in line with the other keys. This is often better for your hands in the long run.
- **.925 silver lip plate** - this is the part of the flute you put your lip on to make the sound. Having this in solid silver can improve the quality of the flute sound.
- **.925 silver riser** - this is the part just inside the lip plate hole your air hits. This will make the most difference in response times and tone.
- **Silver plated** - this is the standard for beginner flutes, any solid silver is an upgrade to the quality, durability and sound production.
- **Open hole** - this means there are holes in the center of keys. This can be fun to use for contemporary pieces and can improve flute hold in the long term. You can get plugs to fill these in so you can use the flute both ways.
- **C foot joint** - this is your normal foot joint.
- **B foot joint** - has 1 extra note, a low B! It adds extra weight to the flute and isn't often used.
- **Key arms** - this can be in various styles, but it doesn't make any playing difference, only aesthetic.
- **Pinless mechanism** - this is more for the purposes of servicing the flute.

Flutes under £1000 to try

Trevor James 31PF-EASLR "Privilege" Flute £599

<https://www.justflutes.com/shop/product/trevor-james-31pf-privilege-flute/26888>

.925 silver lip plate and riser, Offset G, Split E, shaped lip plate, Closed holes (open available)

Yamaha YFL-272SL Flute £649

<https://www.justflutes.com/shop/product/yamaha-yfl-272sl-flute>

.925 silver lip plate and riser, Offset G, Split E, Open holes

Yamaha YFL-212LRS Flute £739

<https://www.justflutes.com/shop/product/yamaha-yfl-212lrs-flute>

.925 silver lip plate and riser, Offset G, Split E, Closed holes

Di Zhao Boston DZ-301CEF Flute £799

<https://www.justflutes.com/shop/product/di-zhao-boston-dz-301-flute/1678277>

.925 silver lip plate, Offset G, Split E, Open holes

Pearl PF-B525E-HC "Quantz Brezza" Flute £839

<https://www.justflutes.com/shop/product/pearl-b525-hc-quantz-brezza-flute/1691481>

.925 silver lip plate and riser, Offset G, Split E, Open or closed holes, heavy crown, brezza lip plate cut, pinless mechanism, B foot joint upgrade available

Pearl PF-F525E-HC "Quantz Forza" Flute £929

<https://www.justflutes.com/shop/product/pearl-pf-f525-quantz-forza-flute/72601>

.925 silver lip plate and riser, Offset G, Split E, closed holes, heavy crown, forza lip plate cut, pinless mechanism, B foot joint/ open hole upgrade available

How to know if the flute is right for you?

Start with the following:

- If your last flute had Split E mechanism and offset G, this would be worth sticking with.
- Do you want to have open holes? (Do you want to play contemporary/ jazz?)
- Do you want a B foot? (It's 1 extra note, makes the flute heavier, not used often)

I would recommend going for a solid silver riser and lip plate (if possible and within budget even a solid silver head joint) as this will make the flute louder and more responsive to articulation and dynamics. Any other solid silver parts will improve longevity.

Now we know what specs you want, it is time to try some flutes out! At this level, the shape/cut of the lip plate and feel of the flute will vary and change how you feel playing it.

Make sure any open hole flutes you test have the plugs in them as it takes a while to be able to play without them.

When playing each flute, try the following:

- Play high/ low notes - are these easy or hard to get out?
 - Some flutes will be better on one end and not the other. You normally will want one that is good on both!
- Crack out your tuner and play long notes - can you get all your notes in tune?
- Try some fast tonguing - is it clear?
- Try some dynamics loud and quiet - is there a nice big difference?
- Play a slow piece and a fast piece you know well, this will give you a good feel of each instrument.

Narrow down your flutes as you play them, get second opinions (from family, shop assistants, or me)! Doing a blind test can help if there is not a clear winner.

Most importantly, have fun! Getting to know a new instrument fully can take time but an upgraded instrument will help push your playing to the next level!