

ABSOLUTE FLUTE

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09/09/2025



The Flute Before, Now and Future

Welcome back to another year of music making! I hope your summers have been sunny, restful and fun!

I thought a while about what to write in this newsletter that would be beneficial at the start of the term, and came to a few conclusions: I decided my aim was to encourage reconnection with music and to the wonderful instruments that we play.

The best way to reconnect with music as a whole is listening to wonderful pieces and players! On the back page of this newsletter, I have included a whopping 30 pieces of various styles, genres and lengths for you to listen to! These all feature a flute (or a few) and should serve as some varied inspiration for you over the next half term! I highly recommend working your way through them and seeing if you might be able to listen to 1 each day. There are orchestral works, solos, duos, world flutes, flute choir pieces and more!

P.S. If you fancy listening to even more, I have been doing an 'Unveiling' project with composers from around the world and performing lesser known pieces and premiers (predominantly on low flutes). [This playlist can be found here.](#)

I have also included the first installment of the history of the flute. - what better to reconnect with our instruments this term than to learn their origins? In the next newsletter, we will look at post 1600s and the creation of the Boehm flute!

The final element I have decided to focus on is articulation as I think it is often underappreciated. Have a read of some of the different techniques and give them a try this term (I can always advise on these in lessons if you need).

I hope your term gets off to a great start!

Victoria Heath

In this newsletter
you can expect:

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the Flute

Monthly Music -
30 days

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Tips, Tricks and Information

Articulation

Achieving perfect articulation on the flute is an ever changing and evolving process through a flautist's journey.

To begin on the flute, we often use the sound 'tu'. For this sound, the tongue hits the top of the teeth and releases. Remember: it is the release of the tongue which allows the sound to flow! The other most common sound is the 'du' for which the tongue hits the roof of the mouth, just in front of the soft palate. In general, you want to use one of these tonguing methods to create a defined and crisp beginning to your notes.

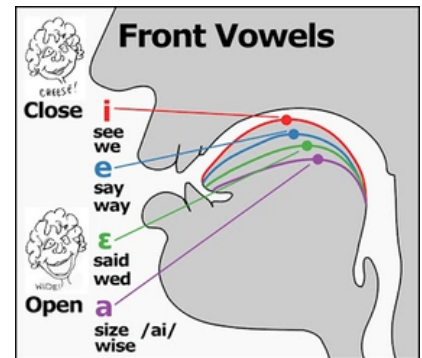
As you progress into harder pieces, they may call for extra technique. For example, faster or harder sounds.

If you are looking for an even more defined tonguing, one that will carry across a hall, you can try tonguing between the lips in a 'thu' sound. This involves pushing the tongue forwards towards the opening of the mouth or the upper lip. The force of air escaping when you remove the tongue creates a wonderfully clear articulation! This method is often used by Suzuki teachers and is referred to as 'French tonguing'.

For the opposite effect, a 'phu' sound can be used. This is a fabulous method for a soft beginning of a phrase. For example in Faure's Fantaisie or Brahms Symphony No.4. This is perfect for that tricky, pianissimo high note! Use the slow separation of the lips to allow the air out in a really controlled way.

Breath attacks are a great method for bringing out accents, This is achieved by using your diaphragm to accelerate your air before it even reaches your tongue. This uses more of a 'ha' sound which, combined with a tongue, creates great force to your notes.

It's also worth mentioning double and triple tonguing. This is used for faster playing - **TKTK** for double and **TKT** for triple. I would always recommend practicing the K on the beat here as well to avoid any weak or uneven sounds in your fast passages.



Tongue Movement

As tonguing and articulation are yet another internal procedure on the flute, it can be helpful to look more closely on what is happening to the shapes inside our mouths.

Watch below an MRI where you can see the tongue moving and making different shapes!

<https://youtu.be/fPbJLXaPnZg>

You may also want to experiment with the vowels you use at the end of your sound. In general, you want to use an open chamber with the tongue low within the mouth to create resonance. However, sometimes experimenting with other shapes can cause different tones and colours within your playing. This can make your playing more expressive and I highly recommend giving them a try next time you practice!



Tips, Tricks and Information Continued...

Munster Bacon

Traditional Irish



The History of the Flute - pre 1600s

Flutes have a fascinating history behind them and I thought I would begin to delve into their origins over the next couple newsletters.

Of course, we are starting all the way at the beginning - with the oldest instrument on record! This is a Neanderthal flute made from a cave bear bone, thought to be over 60,000 years old!



As instruments developed over the years, flutes and drums spread far and wide with humans using animal skins, bones for the instruments, before moving onto wood. Holes were made with sharpened rocks so that different notes could be made.

Flutes then began to be developed in 2 ways in various locations simultaneously - vertical playing instruments (like a recorder) and transverse (side-blown) flutes.

The first likely flute was called the 'ch-ie' and emerged in China. This sported 5 holes and a transverse position and was still made from bone.

During the Middle Ages, the transverse flute arrived in Europe with traders from the Byzantine Empire. It became prevalent in Germany, so much so that it became known as the German flute.



In the 1100s and 1200s, the flute was widely used in courtly music and used as a tool within the Military where Swiss mercenaries helped popularize it. As the flute's renown grew, it gave rise to 'consort music' and began to be developed further.

Exam Details

- ABRSM In Person Exam bookings will open 23 Sept 2025 - 07 Oct 2025. The exams will take place 03 Nov 2025 - 06 Dec 2025.
- ABRSM Performance (Online) exams can be booked any time and videos submitted within a month.
- Trinity In Person Exam bookings are currently open for this term with a new online booking system for this year!
- Trinity Digital can be booked any time and videos submitted within a month.

Monthly Music

To get your musical ear back in shape at the start of the year, I have put together a list of 30 pieces to listen to this month on the next page. These are varying genres, instruments and should provide some real breadth to your month!





Events



Chris Hankin - Chamber Music Day at Just Flutes

Sunday, 5 October 2025, 10:00

<https://www.justflutes.com/ins-tore-events/chamber-music-day-just-flutes-chris-hankin-2025-10-05>

Carla Rees - Low Flutes

Saturday, 27 September 2025, 14:00

<https://www.peterboroughflutechoir.co.uk/masterclass25>

Monthly Music – 30 Days of Music

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| 1. Gluck - Dance of the Blessed Spirits
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uy2moslICYM | 1. Loughrey - Ekstasis
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K2WOHjH020E | 1. Beyonce - Deja Vu
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S8oJiAEdMSE |
| 2. Holst - The Planets, Jupiter
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUM_zT3YKHs | 2. Mower - Piccolo Sonata
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dn7usUf_9Jo | 2. Benshoof - Spindrift
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUTkNYE27yY |
| 3. Greensleeves
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vNtVN_B7U78 | 3. Beethoven: Leonore No.3
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pd9oOLAYevA | 3. Bach - Duet in E minor
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGc47BKjSxs |
| 4. Offermans - Jungle Dance
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=usNwiECwovA | 4. Perilhou - Ballade
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=InZMfI0cdwk | 4. Doppler - Casilda Fantaisie
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDHplXwp878 |
| 5. Zimmer - Oogway Ascends
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T28a9ZAYh0s | 5. Beatbox Flute Duet
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5-Q3SegMa0 | 5. Mendelssohn - Scherzo
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUm41WqTix8 |
| 6. Telemann - Sonata in G
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hgE3W2NY9-4 | 6. Beeftink - Farewell
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pX7xrgr12LU | 6. The Turkish March
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-o9cTJYDfJ4 |
| 7. Kearns - Soul Flute
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9blFpUkh-uc | 7. Heath - Gentle Dreams
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3sNmBBCCsAl | 7. Honneger - Danse de la Chevre
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ADeSP196pMc |
| 8. Bizet - Carmen's Entre'acte
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eChLCFAGyx0 | 8. Sančan - Sonatine
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iloqr0WDZc | 8. Piazzola - Libertango
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQSD7VAskIE |
| 9. Reineke - Flute Concerto
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4Ea5N1Fh2Q | 9. Jolivet - Incantation
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2kUfs9XjgtQ | 9. Clarke - Hatching Aliens
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dDugAyHc8B4 |
| 10. Glinka - Nocturne
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oAVA3dZs3j4 | 10. Lewis - Norfolk Idyll
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VtdUq8xDkiQ | 10. Rodrigo - Concierto Pastoral
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UwFJA_agLgc |

Thank you for reading!

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