

The Pocket Flute



Part 1: Beginning Techniques for the Pocket Flute Key of "G"

***If your fingers can cover all the holes on this flute,
you can learn to play it!***

Holding the Flute

To make covering the holes easier, flatten your fingers and use the finger pads rather than the tips to cover the holes (1). With either hand, cover the top three holes using your index, middle and ring fingers. Use the same fingers on the other hand to cover the bottom three holes (2). Use your little fingers and thumbs to support the flute (2,3).

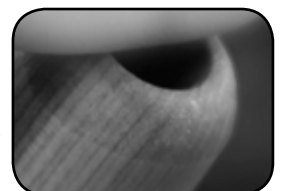


Air Pressure

Beyond closing all the holes, playing a flute is about applying the correct amount of air pressure rather than air volume. On smaller flutes like this one, you will need to generate more air pressure than on larger deeper toned flutes. To make this easier, be sure to use the correct mouth position, or embouchure.

Embouchure

To produce the correct embouchure, close your lips and place the flute against them. Close approximately half of the air hole with your upper lip (see photo to the right) and place the lower lip just slightly underneath the air hole. This technique creates backpressure and provides increased control of the tone, produces a better sound, and reduces moisture buildup.



Playing the Low Note

With all the holes closed and using the correct embouchure, blow into the flute. The note should have a sweet solid tone. If not, you may be blowing too hard and/or one of the holes may be slightly uncovered. Check that all the holes are completely closed (use the finger pads) and try again using less air pressure.

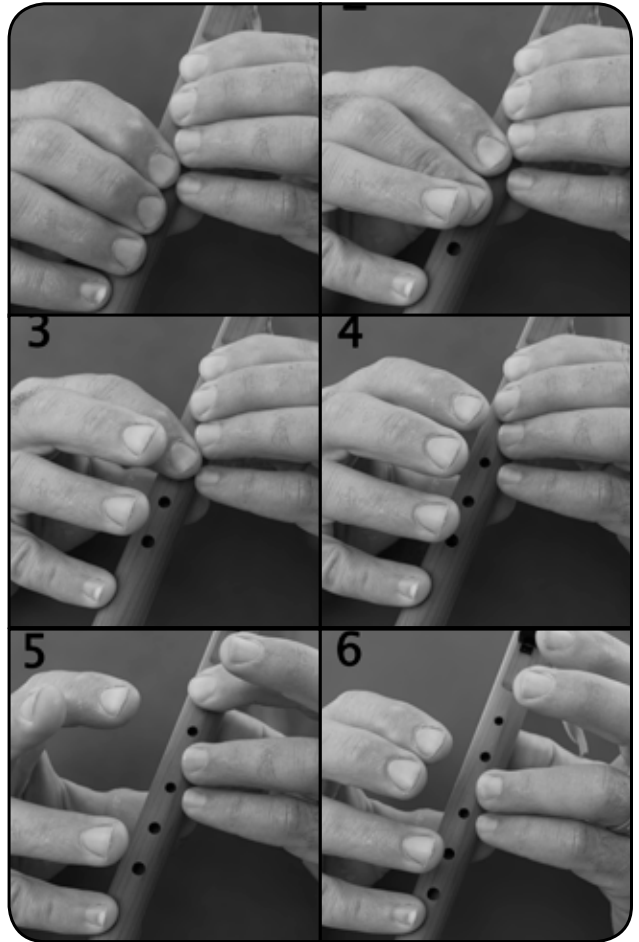
Playing Up the Scale

Once you produce a solid low note begin opening the holes one at a time from the bottom up, slightly increasing the air pressure as you go up the scale. *As a beginning player the third hole down from the top will remain closed at all times.* Eventually you can use this hole to play other scales. Go slow. Be sure each note is sweet and clear before opening the next hole. When you need a breath, pause, take a breath and continue playing.

Playing Down the Scale

Once you reach the top note (all the holes open), pause, take a breath and begin closing the holes one at a time from the top down. Go slow. Pause and listen to each note. Be sure each is sweet and clear before closing the next hole. If it is not, lift the finger and replace it so it covers the hole completely. Reduce the air pressure as you work your way down.

Play up and down the scale a number of times. This will familiarize you with the notes and teach your fingers to find the holes on their own, creating a solid foundation from which you can build sweet melodies.



Beginning Playing Tips:

Close Holes Completely: Any hole that you close must be completely covered or the flute will produce a squeaky sound.

Play slowly: Take your time with each note, this will help you develop good habits, fingering speed will come by itself.

Close your eyes: This develops your tactile skills and your muscle memory, helping coordination develop more quickly.

Breath: Breathe at normal intervals, try not to wait until you gasp for air. Your breath capacity will develop naturally.

Experiment: To learn the tonal range of each note blow softly at first and then increase your breath until the note breaks.

Tone: Each note has a sweet spot, if a note is shrill or breathy decrease the air flow, if it is wispy or weak increase the air flow to liven it up.

Play the scale: Playing the basic scale proficiently is the foundation from which you will build your melodies. Keeping the 3rd finger from the top closed, play the scale up and down. Slightly increase the air flow as you play up the scale and decrease it on your way back down.