

# The Pocket Flute



## Part 3: Other Playing Techniques for the Pocket Flute Key of "G"

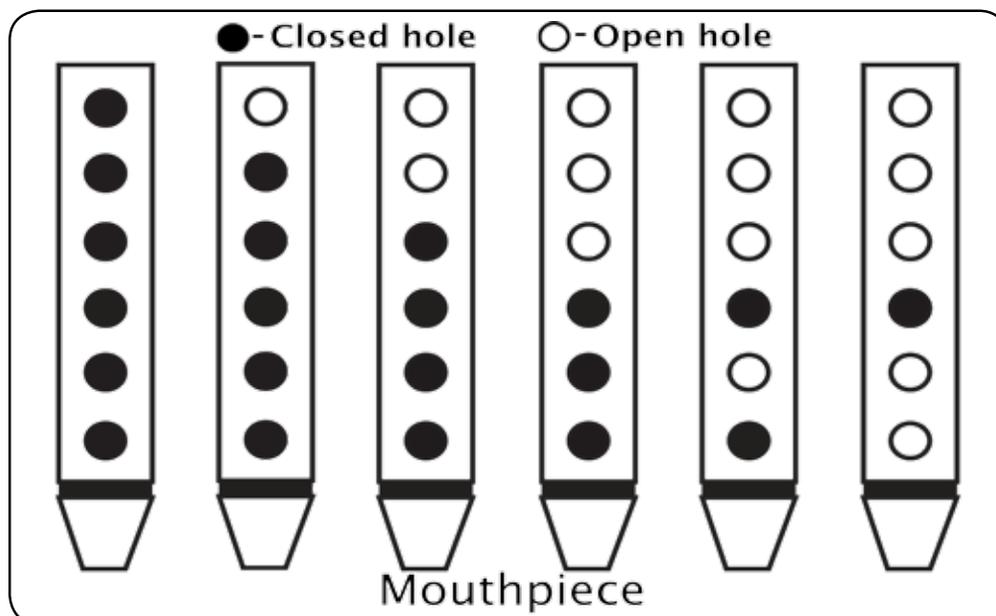
**Learning new techniques  
creates more ways to have fun!**

### Introduction

When trying new techniques on the flute, stick to using the top two or three notes, the two bottom notes tend to be more delicate. Once you feel comfortable on these notes try out your new techniques on the bottom notes too.

### Jumping Notes

Up to this point the melodies you have been playing are composed by moving from one note to the note just above or below it. Now it's time to jump notes. Jumping notes allows you to jump from one note to any other note within a scale. To do this you'll need to follow one simple rule: when you open or close any hole on your flute, all the holes below that hole have to be open and all the holes above it need to be closed. *The only exception to this rule is that the third hole down from the mouthpiece must stay closed at all times (this applies to 6-hole flutes only).* When following this rule, any note you play will be harmonious with the next one. The following fingering chart shows how to play each note in the pentatonic minor scale. Notice that each note follows this rule, everything above is closed, everything below is open.



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***Play from your heart,  
it knows the rhythm of your life.***

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## **Creating Rhythm**

On wind instruments rhythm is created by stopping and starting the airflow with the tongue, a technique called tonguing. To perform this technique, the tongue quickly touches the roof of the mouth just behind the front teeth, like making the sound “ta”. Without the flute say “ta”, notice where your tongue touches the roof of your mouth. Now say, “ta, ta, ta, ta”, now “ta,\_ta,\_ta,\_ta,ta,ta,ta,\_ta,\_ta.” Repeating these lines over and over creates a rhythm. On your flute, try this on a single note first, then try changing notes at each “ta” (the point when the breath stops). Tonguing can be very fast and deliberate or slow and subtle as well as all ranges in between.

## **Singing with Your Breath**

Once you feel comfortable with your fingering turn your focus to your breath. Varying your breath pressure while you play adds feeling to your melodies. It’s like singing with your breath. When we sing we use voice inflections to enhance our melodies, otherwise we sound monotone. The same holds true when playing the flute. By varying your breath pressure to create inflections you add color and feeling to your melodies. For example, without the flute in your mouth, try creating a short melody with your breath by varying breath pressure (like whistling without sound). Now, using just a couple of notes, do the same thing into the flute. Applying this technique while playing a scale or simple melodies will bring your playing to life.

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***First learn what’s in the box,  
then take it all out and throw the box away!***

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## **Playing Out of Bounds**

Experimenting with different fingering and breath techniques is fun and rewarding. If you are getting bored with your playing or feel like you have reached a plateau, take it as a positive sign that you have mastered your present techniques. At this point it’s time to get experimental. Put what you know aside, make strange sounds, move your fingers turtle slow or rabbit fast, mimic bird songs or the wind in the trees. These types of experimentation will enhance your style and push you beyond your plateau. We have had the pleasure of playing flute with many people and are always amazed that no two sound the same; everyone has their own individual style.