

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE  
**B FLAT MARCHING FLUTE**

LESSONS FOR BEGINNERS





This instruction manual aims to provide a structured learning programme to assist the novice flute player to progress steadily on the B Flat marching flute. It is intended for use as a learning resource to compliment the teaching of the instrument by an experienced tutor. It does not claim to be definitive in terms of technique as variations in fingering of notes may exist depending upon differing makes and models of flute. The repertoire contained within this manual is typical of the style of music traditionally played on the B Flat flute. This resource may also readily be used to instruct beginners on how to play the E Flat Piccolo or F Flute.



## INTRODUCTION

Before beginning to blow the flute, it is important to be comfortable and relaxed. Whether playing seated or standing, the posture of the upper body and arms remains the same. You should be in an upright and comfortable position with shoulders back. Arms should be held with the elbows away from the body.



When positioning the fingers for playing, the left hand should be turned so the palm faces back towards the player. The first three fingers (index, middle and ring fingers) of the left hand cover the three upper holes. The right hand has the palm facing away from the player. The first three fingers (index, middle and ring fingers) of the right hand cover the lower three finger holes, and the little finger of the right hand operates the key at the bottom of the flute.



The basic technique for learning to play any flute, be it a Fife, B Flat flute (1 Key, 2 Key or 5 Key) or Concert flute, is the same. The aim is to create a smooth and clear sound from the instrument by blowing across the embouchure or mouth hole.



The shape of the mouth and lips when blowing is extremely important. The most natural form is perfectly symmetrical, with the corners of the mouth relaxed, and the lower lip placed along the edge of the embouchure hole.



Shape the mouth (*as shown above*) and blow across the embouchure. Always blow across the hole rather than into it. Create only a small opening between the lips to let the air escape. Imagine trying to blow a hair or small piece of tissue paper off the tip of your tongue. This should give you an idea of how to start sounding the note, and how much air to use. Keep practicing this until you get a smooth, clear sound every time.

Now try making the note last for several seconds, gradually releasing a steady and even stream of air.

*Tip: Practice in front of a mirror to ensure your mouth is in the correct position.*



1 Key B Flat flute



5 Key B Flat flute

There are several variations of B Flat flute design commonly played in Ulster today. For the purposes of this instruction manual, most of the exercises and tunes can be played on any B Flat flute. However, the content in weeks 15 - 20 can only be played on flutes capable of playing C natural. (2 Key or 5 Key flutes)

# I KEY B<sup>b</sup> FLUTE FINGERING CHART

Notes	d	e	f#	g	a	b	c#	D	E	F#
Notes	d	e	f#	g	a	b	c#	D	E	F#
Hole 1	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	●	●
Hole 2	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	●	●
Hole 3	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	●	●
Hole 4	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	●
Hole 5	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Key Press	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1

● Hole closed / covered

○ Hole open

1 Key pressed

	G	A	B	C#	D'	E'	F#'	G'	A'
	●	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	○
	●	●	○	●	●	●	○	○	●
	●	○	○	●	●	○	●	●	●
	○	○	○	●	○	●	●	○	●
	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	●
	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○
	1	1	1	1	1	1			

Left Hand

Right Hand

# 5 KEY B<sup>b</sup> FLUTE FINGERING CHART

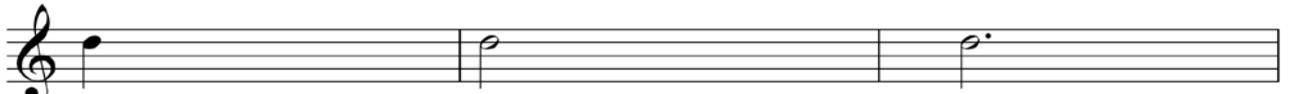
	d	e	f#	g	a	b	c	c#	D	E
5	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●
4	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	●	●
3	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	●	●
2	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	●
1	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	○
		1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1

- Hole closed / covered
- Hole open
- 1 Key pressed
- 3 Key pressed

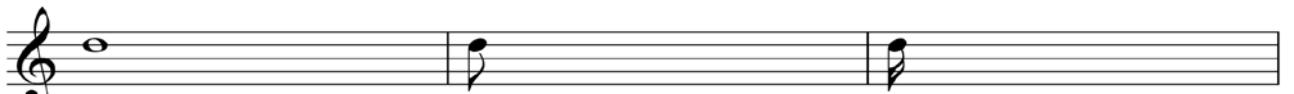
Left Hand	Right Hand
F#	G
A	B
C	C#
D'	E'
F#'	G'
A'	

The 5 Key B Flat flute is capable of playing a full chromatic range of notes. This instruction manual is aimed at beginners therefore only the notes required for the tunes in this book are illustrated above.

# GUIDE TO MUSICAL NOTATION



1 Beat Note (Crotchet)      2 Beat Note (Minium)      3 Beat Note (Dotted Minium)

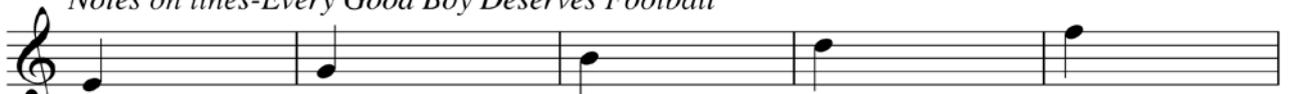


4 Beat Note (Semibreve)      1/2 Beat Note (Quaver)      1/4 Beat Note (Semiquaver)



1 + 1/2 Beat Note (Dotted Crotchet)      Notes tied together-one note played for total length of both notes = 1 1/2 + 1 = 2 1/2 Beat Note

Notes on lines-Every Good Boy Deserves Football



e      g      b      D      F

If a note is in a space-use your FACE!



f      a      c      E

Notes above the lines:



G      A      B      C      D'



E'      F'      G'      A'

Sharps



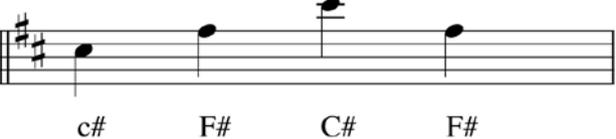
F#      F#'      C#

*G major Key Signature*



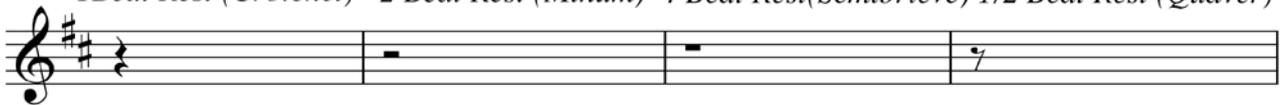
*All F's played as sharp(F#)*

*D major Key Signature*



*All F's and C's played as sharps(F# and C#)*

*1 Beat Rest (Crotchet) 2 Beat Rest (Minum) 4 Beat Rest(Semibrieve) 1/2 Beat Rest (Quaver)*



*4/4 Time Signature=4 Crotchet beats per bar Notes and rests must always add up to 4 beats*



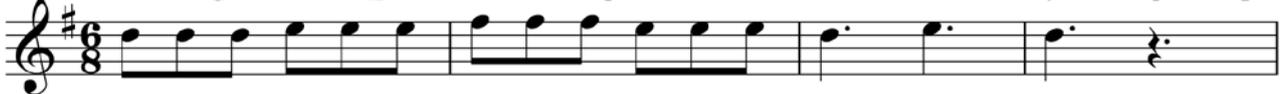
*2/4 Time Signature=2 Crotchet beats per bar Notes and rests must always add up to 2 beats*



*3/4 Time Signature= 3 Crotchet beats per bar Notes and rests must always add up to 3 beats*



*6/8 Time Signature= 6 Quaver (1/2)beats per bar Notes and rests must always add up to 6 quavers*



*Slurred Notes= When two or more different notes are tied together you only tongue the first note*



## WEEK 1-2 EXERCISES

D D D D D D D D D D D D D

E E E E E E E E E E E E

F# F#

Merrily we roll along

F# E D E F# F# F# E E E F# F# F#

F# E D E F# F# F# F# E E F# E D

It is very important to ensure that each appropriate hole is completely covered by the finger. The best way to achieve this is by using the fleshy pad of the finger i.e. the centre of your fingerprint.

## WEEK 3-4 EXERCISES

G G g g G G G G g g g g G g

The fingering position for the notes g and G is the same. The difference in pitch between low g and the higher G is achieved by a combination of a tighter diaphragm/stomach, tighter lips and more force of air to sound the higher note. The same technique applies to the notes a and A, b and B where the fingering is the same. So, in effect use relaxed and soft blowing for the low notes g, a, b and tighten up and push harder for G, A and B.

A A a a A A A A a a a a A a

B B b b B B B B b b b b B b

Merrily we roll along

b a g a b b b a a a b b b

b a g a b b b b a a b a g

B A G A B B B A A A B B B

B A G A B B B B A A B A G

## WEEK 5-6 EXERCISES

### Old McDonald

G G G D E E D B B A A G D

G G G D E E D B B A A G

### Jingle Bells

F# F# F# F# F# F# F# F# A D E F# G G G G G F# F# F#

F# E E F# E A F# F# F# F# F# F# F# F# A D E

F# F# G G G G G F# F# F# A A G E D

## Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star

D D A A B B A G G F# F# E E D A A G G F# F# E

A A G G F# F# E D D A A B B A G G F# F# E E D

## Work for the Night is Coming

A F# G A A B A D D D D E F# A F# G A A B

A D E F# E D E E E E F# G F# E F# F# F#

F# G A A F# G A A B A D E F# E D

This tune has 2 beats per bar, and introduces quaver (half beat) notes.

## WEEK 7-8 EXERCISES

C# C#

c# c# c# c# c# c# C# C# C# c# c# c# C# c#

Remember C # and c # have different fingerings!

D' D D' D' D' D' D D D D

D' D' D' D' D D D D D' D' D D

D and D' (high D) have different fingerings also. Remember to tighten the diaphragm/stomach and lips, then push harder to sound the higher pitched notes clearly.

Remember a dotted crotchet  is worth 1½ beats.

When any note is followed by a dot, half the value of that note is added on to its total length.

 = 3 beats

 = 1½ beats

 = ¾ of a beat

### Scale of D Major

D E F# G A B C# D' D' C# B A G F# E D

### D Major Exercises

D F# A D' D' A F# D D D F# F# A A D' D' D' D' A A F# F# D D

### The Rowan Tree

D E F# F# F# E F# A A D' B A B D' B A A D E F# F# F# E  
F# A B A A F# E F# D A A D' D' C# C# B B D' A B B A G F#  
F# G F# E D E F# F# F# E F# A B A A F# E F# D

## WEEK 9-10 EXERCISES

E' E E' E' E E E' E' E' E' E E E E E' E' E' E E E

### Hold the Fort

A B A F# D' E' D' B A B A F# E\_\_\_\_\_ A B A F# D' E'  
 D' B C# D' C# B A\_\_\_\_\_ D' D' D' D' D' A F# A B B B D'  
 C#\_\_\_\_\_ D' D' D' D' E' D' C# B A A B C# D\_\_\_\_\_

## WEEK 9-10 EXERCISES (cont'd)

D G G G    D A F# G    D E F#G    A G F#E    D' C#B A G F#E D

This exercise introduces dotted quavers coupled with semiquavers.

The dotted quaver note is the same length as three semiquavers or three  $\frac{1}{4}$  beat notes.

The first four bars of this exercise mimic "Here Comes the Bride" to help demonstrate how the dotted quaver and semiquaver should sound together.

### The Shanghai Lilt

D' C# B E B E B A B C# D' C#B A D F# D F#E F#G A D' C# B E

B E B A B C# D' C#D' E' B B B A G F# E F#E D E B B E' E' B B B

E' E' B C# D' C#D' B A G F# A D' C#D' A B B B E' E'

B B B E' E' B C# D' B B B A G F# E F#E D E

## WEEK 11-12 EXERCISES

F# F#

F# F# F# F# F# F# F# F# F# F# F# F# F# F#

### Merrily We Roll Along

F# E' D' E' F# F# F# E' E' E' F# F# F#

F# E' D' E' F# F# F# F# E' E' F# E' D'

### The Lass O' Gowrie (The Battle of Garvagh)

A G F# A A B C# D' E' D' C# B A B C# D' E' F#

E' A G F# A A B C# D' E' F# E' D' C# B A D F# E' D' D'

## Battle Hymn of the Republic

A A A A G F# A D' E' F# F# F# E' D' D' C# B B B C# D' C# D' B A B A F#  
 A A A A G F# A D' E' F# F# F# E' D' D' E' E' D' C# D  
 A A G F# A D' E' F# D' B B C# D' C# D' B A  
 F# A A G F# A D' E' F# D' D' E' E' D' C# D'

## The Boyne Water

D' C# B B C# D' C# B A G F# E D E F# G F# E B A G F# E D b D' C#  
 B B C# D' C# B A G F# E D E F# G F# E B A G F# E F# E E E A B C#  
 D' C# D E' D' C# B A F# A B E' E' F# E' D' B B C# D' C# D' E  
 D' C# B A G F# E D E F# G F# E B A G F# E F# E D



### My Love is like a Red, Red Rose

A F# D D E F# D' C#B A B A B D' E' D' E' F# D D E F#  
 D' C#B A B A B C# D' A D' F# E' D' B D' A F#G A A G' F#  
 F# E A' G' F# A' F# D' B D' A F# G A A B C# D'

### Star of the County Down

F#A B B B A B D' D' E' D'E' F# E' D' B A F# A F#A B B  
 B A B D' D' E' D'E' F# E' D' B D' C# B F# A' F# F# E' D' E' E'  
 E' D' E' F# E' D' B A F# A F# A B B B A B  
 D' D' E' D' E' F# E' D' B D' C# B

## WEEK 15-20 EXERCISES

C C C C c c c c C c C c C C C C  
 C D' C D' C E' C E' C G E c C

On a 2 Key or 5 Key B Flat flute, the note C natural (and c natural) is played by fingering a B while also pressing the C natural (3) key with the right index finger.

### Scale of G Major

G A B C D' E' F# G' G' F# E' D' C B A G  
 G A B C D' E' F# G' G' F# E' D' C B A G  
 G B D' G' G' D' B G

## Abide With Me

B B A G D' E' D' D' C B B C D' E' D' C A B C#  
 D' B B A G D' D' C C B A  
 A B C B A G C B A G

## The Lea Rig (The Lily O)

B A G B D E F# G A G B A B C B A G B E F# E B A G B  
 D E F# G A G G' F# E' D' E' F# G' D' B G A G D' E' D' E' F# G' B  
 C B C D' E' G A G A B C B A G B E F# E B A G B  
 D E F# G A G G' F# E' D' E' F# G' D' B G A G

# Killaloe

D G GB B G D D G GB B G D B D' B D' B D'  
 — D G GB B G D D G GB B G D G D G D G  
 D G AB A G D E GF# E D B AB A  
 B D'C B A D G AB A G D E GF# E D B C  
 D' BD' B A CB A G D C B C A F# D D' BD' B  
 G E' D'E' C B D'C B A B C D' BD B G G F#  
 E GF# E D B C D' BD' B A CB A G DE F#

## Killaloe (continued)

Musical notation for Killaloe (continued) in G major, 4/4 time. The notation consists of three staves of music with corresponding letter-based notes below each staff. The notes are: G F#G A G DE F# G F#G A G DE F# G F#G A B D'C B; A G F# E D B C D' B D' B D' B C B A G F# D; D' B C A B G D' C B G A F# G DE F# G. The final measure of the third staff has two endings: 1. and 2.

The last three lines of this tune are repeated.

## Lord Lovat's Lament

Musical notation for Lord Lovat's Lament in G major, 2/4 time. The notation consists of four staves of music with corresponding letter-based notes below each staff. The notes are: G A B A B D' C B A G B D' D' E' D' E' F# G' F#G'E D'B A G B A A B; A G A B A B D' C B A G B D' D' E' D' B G C E'C B D' B G A G G A; G E' F# G' F#G'E' D'B A G B D' D' E' D' E' F# G' F#G'E' D'B A G B A A B; A G A B A B D' C B A G B D' D' E' D' B G C E'C B D' B G A G G A G.

This tune uses lots of dotted quavers coupled with semiquavers. This theme is common in Scottish traditional music. This popular Pipe Band march is particularly challenging, as at times the semiquaver is played before the dotted quaver, and at other times vice-versa. Start off by playing it slowly, taking care to get the timing right, then increase the tempo as you grow in confidence.





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