



Purchasing a flute

There are a number of things to keep in mind when purchasing a flute. First and most important is the **quality**. The brand name of the instrument is important today, as there are a number of newer companies out there that are producing cheaper flutes. These flutes look great and play ok by themselves! The key word is *by themselves!* Often when these instruments are mixed in the band setting, the students find themselves sounding “out of tune”. In an effort to cut costs, companies like these are less precise in manufacturing the instrument along with the materials used in the instrument. In many cases, the kids often find themselves playing the right fingerings but having almost an entire note difference in sound. That is to say they are playing the right note but the wrong note is sounding! Not only is this discouraging to the individual student but also to the others in Band, as it also makes them sound bad. Students learn from the first year the importance of tuning – the **quality of the instrument** is *very* important.

Brand Names

Below are a few brand name makers of quality flutes. With modern day computers, I am sure you can find more – please feel free to contact any music teacher at ALCS if the one you find does not appear below for more input before purchasing.

Armstrong, Emerson, Gemeinhardt, Haynes, Jupiter, Yamaha

Lingo used with flutes

Plateau (closed-hole) French model (open-hole)

These refer to the keys that cover the tone holes. If the keys have a hole in the middle they are open-holed. This uses the skin from the finger to completely cover the tone hole. This is usually found on intermediate and professional model flutes. It usually gives the student a better tone; it is a nice feature for the student if one can afford it.

Body Material

Most flutes are nickel silver or silver-plated; either is good for a flute student. Some students have an allergic reaction to this type of plating, causing a black mark to form on the upper chin where the student has contact with the instrument. If a child is allergic to the plating above an option is a gold-plated lip plate which will not leave a black mark, solving this problem.

C or B footjoint

This is an option on most professional models. It is not needed for most student musicians – it just extends their range two notes and most school music for flute does not call for it.

