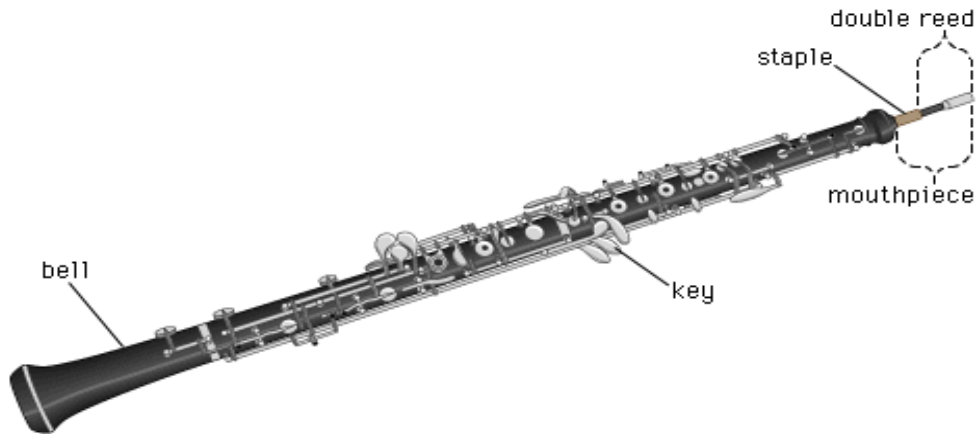


The Oboe

What the parts are called:



Fun Facts:

- The oboe is a medium-high sounding instrument that requires lots of air pressure to make a good sound!
 - It uses a tiny "double reed" which is usually handmade by the player!
- The oboe is made out of wood and metal and gets bigger at the lower end, where it flares into the bell!
 - The oboe plays a tuning note at the beginning of orchestra concerts.
- The English Horn, a sister to the oboe, is longer than an oboe, so it sounds lower. Its bell is shaped like a pear! It sounds wonderful in slow, thoughtful solos!

How the sound is made:

The musician, called an "oboist", blows a steady stream of air through a "double reed" (a small piece of cane that is folded over, cut and wrapped very tightly at one end with a special thread). The reed vibrates, which causes the air column inside the instrument to also vibrate, causing the sound that we hear!

opening or closing the holes that run the length of the instrument. The musician's fingers operate many levers and buttons called "keys". If all the keys are pressed down, or closed, the pitch is lower. As more keys are lifted up, the pitch gets higher. Keys for the little fingers open and close holes further down the oboe that the hands cannot normally reach.

How the pitch changes:

The pitch (how high or low the oboe sounds) depends on the length of the air column. This invisible air column goes from the mouthpiece, below the double reed, to the opening at the other end of the instrument. Its length can be changed by

Music featuring the oboe/English horn:

Oboe: Georges Bizet: 2nd Movement from Symphony in C Major (cd track 3)

English horn: Antonin Dvorak: excerpt from Symphony No. 9, 2nd Movement (cd track 4)

The Oboe



Tucson Symphony Orchestra