

# United States Army Field Band

Hello! I am Sergeant First Class Lauren Curran. This is the United States Army Field Band instrument demonstration video. Today, we're going to demonstrate the standard wind and percussion instruments used in the concert band. We'll start with the flute.

## FLUTE

Hi, I am Staff Sergeant Pam Daniels and this is a flute. The flute is **one of the highest pitched instruments** in the band. While it is a **woodwind instrument**, flutes are usually made of metal. This one is made of gold and silver. The sound is created by blowing across a **small hole** in the head joint here, and pressing down these **keys to change the notes**.

In a band, flutes often sit in the front and get to play many different styles of music, from beautiful slow lyrical melodies like you just heard to fast technical show pieces like this.

And that's the flute.

## OBOE

Hi, I am Staff Sergeant Sarah Schram-Borg and this is the oboe, another member of the woodwind family. As you can see, it looks very similar to the clarinet but with one crucial difference: the oboe uses this a **double reed**, which is two pieces of cane of cane tied together.

When I blow air into the the reed, **the two pieces of cane vibrate together** to make a sound. Oboe reeds are very delicate and must be handled with care. Each reed is handmade, usually by the oboe player and only lasts for a few days.

The oboe has a rich **complex sound** and is frequently used as a solo voice in band and orchestra, because it has such a clear emotive sound that carries over the ensemble. Because of its evocative sound, there are **many beautiful solos** in our repertoire. Here is one by Tchaikovsky. The oboe can also sounds very exotic. Here is a solo from *The Bacchanal*, from Samson and Delilah. And that's the oboe.

# CLARINET

I am Staff Sergeant Joel Clanky and this is the clarinet. The clarinet also uses **a reed**, but unlike the oboe's reed, it doesn't actually make any sound by itself. When you attach it to the mouthpiece and put the mouthpiece on the instrument, it sounds like this.

The clarinet is known for its **warm rich tone color**, and it's also known for its ability to play **extremely softly**.

Another thing that makes the clarinet special, is that many composers wrote some of their greatest music for the clarinet, so if you play this instrument you'll get to play some amazing music that's a really fun to play. And that's the clarinet.

# SAXOPHONE

Hi everyone, I am Sergeant First Class Brian Sakawa, and this is a saxophone. The saxophone was invented by belgian **instrument maker Adolphe Sax** to combine the **power of the brass with the agility of the woodwinds**.

I think the saxophone is one of the coolest instruments and I actually started playing it in 4th grade because I had a friend who is taking private saxophone lessons and he was like the coolest guy in the world, so I had to be like him. Other than being really cool one of my favourite things about the saxophone, is it's **beautiful tone**.

Now, the other thing I love about the saxophone is its **versatility**. I can play in any type of band: a concert band, a marching band, an orchestra, a rock band and, of course, a jazz band.

And that's the saxophone.

# BASSOON

Hello, I am Staff Sergeant Thaddeus Cruncher, and I play the bassoon. Like the oboe, bassoon is a **woodwind instrument** and part of the double reed family. It uses a reed similar to the oboe.

If I play the reed by itself, it sounds a little funny, maybe even a little weird. When you put it on the instrument, it sounds like this.

The bassoon, much like the clarinet, has **keys and** it also has **holes**. It can play a relatively **low and fairly high**, which makes it has a **wide range**.

It can play funny things, or more seriously.

And that's the bassoon.

# TRUMPET

Hello, I am Staff Sergeant Kevin Paul and this is the trumpet. The trumpet is a member of the **brass family**. Like all brass instruments, the trumpet uses a **mouthpiece**, and you play the trumpet by **buzzing your lips into it**. When you put the mouthpiece into the trumpet, it sounds like this.

The trumpet is known for playing **bugle calls and fanfares**. And also spread powerful **heroic character**. Another thing that makes the trumpet great is **its versatility**. They can play soft and lyrical passages.

And that's the trumpet.

# FRENCH HORN

I am Staff Sergeant Becky McLaughlin and this beautiful **brass instrument** is a French horn. As a brass player, I also **buzz my lips into a mouthpiece** and the French horn uses the smallest mouthpiece in the brass family.

Your school may use single horns, which have three rotor valves and one row of tuning slides. The horn I play is called **a double horn**, like you would see in orchestras and bands. It has **three valves**, a thumb valve or a trigger, and two sets of tuning slides. This gives me a **huge range of pitches**.

Your **right hand** goes into the bell of the horn and it normally stays in the same spot, but if you close it up into the bell, you can make the horn sound muted or stopped.

I love the French horn for its **versatility**. You have heard it play big **powerful fanfares**, **warm rich melodies** like this one from *Jurassic Park*, and other great melodies like this one.

And that is the French horn.

# TROMBONE

I am Master Sergeant Aaron Kadrmas and this is the trombone. It has a cup-shaped mouthpiece just like all the other **brass instruments** and it sounds like this.

When you put the mouthpiece back in the horn trombone, it sounds like this. The biggest difference between the trombone and all the other instruments is **the slide**. Everyone else has to push some kind of button to change the pitches, while the trombone **player moves the slide in and out**.

When a trumpet player, for instance, pushes down on one of his or her valves, the length of the trumpet changes because the valves are routing air through longer or shorter tubes. **Trombone slide literally makes the horn longer or shorter** and you can actually see it happening. Here's a funny little tune that demonstrates the slide very well.

Another way to change notes on brass instruments is by **making the lips buzz faster or slower**, which is done mostly by changing air speed and embouchure.

By changing **how fast your lip buzz** you can play many different notes on the same fingering or in my case in the same slide position since brass instruments are well-suited to playing loud exciting music. I'll end with something you just might recognize.

That's the trombone.

## EUPHONIUM

Hello, I am Sergeant First Class Laurent Curran and I play the euphonium. The euphonium might sound like a strange word, but it means beautiful sound. The euphonium is a **low brass instrument**, basically a smaller version of the tuba. It does indeed have a beautiful sound and can play gorgeous **singing melodies** as well as **powerful brassy** music.

Like the other brass instruments you play by **buzzing your lips into the mouthpiece**. When the mouthpiece is attached to the instrument, that vibration goes through the euphonium and makes this sound. The euphonium can play lovely lyrical music. The euphonium also makes a great solo instrument because we used the blazing fingers to play fast virtuosic music.

And that's the euphonium.

## TUBA

Hi, I am Sergeant First Class Scott Devereaux, and I play the tuba. The tuba is the **biggest member of the brass family** and also uses the biggest mouthpiece. When you put the mouthpiece and the tuba together, the instrument amplifies that sound into this sound. The tuba has **a lot of tubing**. Stretched out, the tuba would be **as long as a school bus**. The tuba's length gives it its low pitch, making it one of the lowest voices in the entire band.

It establishes the foundation of tone in pitch for any ensemble. It's an extremely important job that **helps make the rest of the band sound great**. You may think that a tuba can't play fun melodies, but that's just not true. In the right hands, the tuba can play nearly anything. As a student when my band parts weren't challenging enough I would figure out fun melodies at home to play on my tuba. Often they were from my favorite TV shows movies or video games. Here's an example you might recognize.

And that's clearly the best instrument of the brass section: the tuba.

# PERCUSSION

I am Staff Sergeant Andy Emerick, and this is the snare drum. The snare drum is one of the **primary non-pitched instruments of percussion** family. It's a type of **membranophone**, meaning you strike a membrane or drum create a sound.

The snare drum has **two heads** and a set of snares on the bottom. Here's the top head, the bottom and the snares running along the bottom had to create the characteristic sound. Although we don't play pitched notes on the snare drum like other instruments, we can use rolls ornaments and dynamics to create musical phrases

The **bells**, also called the **glockenspiel**, are an example from the pitch side of percussion. Family plastic or metal headed mallets are used to strike the steel bars. Here are two contrasting examples of what could be played on the bells. That's percussion.

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