

# Flugelhorn

The **flugelhorn** (/ˈfluːɡəlhɔːrn/—also spelled **fluegelhorn**, **flugel horn**, or **Flügelhorn**—from German meaning *wing horn* or *flank horn*, German pronunciation: [ˈflyːɡlhɔ̃ʁn]) is a brass instrument that is usually pitched in B♭ but occasionally found in C.<sup>[1]</sup> It resembles a trumpet, and the tube has the same length but a wider, conical bore.<sup>[2]</sup> A type of valved bugle,<sup>[1]</sup> the flugelhorn was developed in Germany from a traditional English valveless bugle, with the first version sold by Heinrich Stölzel in Berlin in 1828.<sup>[3]</sup> The valved bugle provided Adolphe Sax (creator of the saxophone family) with the inspiration for his B♭ soprano (contralto) saxhorns, on which the modern-day flugelhorn is modeled.<sup>[4][5]</sup>

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## Etymology

The German word *Flügel* translates into English as *wing*<sup>[6]</sup> or *flank*. In early 18th century Germany, a ducal hunt leader known as a *Flügelmeister* blew the *Flügelhorn*, a large semicircular brass or silver valveless forerunner of the modern-day flugelhorn to direct the wings of the hunt (military use dates from the Seven Years' War, where this valveless instrument was employed as a predecessor of the bugle).<sup>[4]</sup>

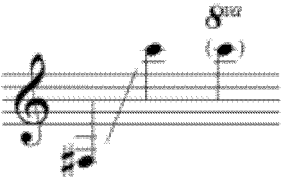
## Structure and variants

The flugelhorn is built in the same B♭ pitch as many trumpets and cornets. It usually has three piston valves and employs the same fingering system as other brass instruments, but four-piston valve and rotary valve variants also exist. It

### Flugelhorn



A standard 3-valved B♭ flugelhorn

Brass instrument	
Classification	<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Wind</li><li>Brass</li><li>Aerophone</li></ul> </div>
Hornbostel–Sachs classification	<div> 423.232 (valved aerophone sounded by lip movement) </div>
Developed	<div> Early 19th century </div>
Playing range	
<div>  <p>(as written; actually sounds a major second lower)</p> </div>	
Related instruments	
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Saxhorns<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Alto horn</li><li>Baritone horn</li></ul></li><li>Trumpet</li><li>Cornet</li><li>Flumpet</li><li>Mellophone</li></ul> </div>	

can thus be played without too much trouble by trumpet and cornet players, though some adaptation to their playing style may be needed. It is usually played with a more deeply conical mouthpiece than either trumpets or cornets (though not as conical as a French horn mouthpiece). The shank of the flugelhorn mouthpiece is similar in size to a cornet mouthpiece shank, and standard tapered flugelhorns are interchangeable with cornets.



A rotary valve flugelhorn

Some modern flugelhorns feature a fourth valve that lowers the pitch a perfect fourth (similar to the fourth valve on some euphoniums, tubas, and piccolo trumpets, or the trigger on trombones). This adds a useful low range that, coupled with the flugelhorn's dark sound, extends the instrument's abilities. More often, however, players use the fourth valve in place of the first and third valve combination, which is somewhat sharp (compensated for on trumpets and cornets and some three-valve flugelhorns by an easily movable slide for the first or third valve).

A pair of bass flugelhorns in C, called fiscorns, are played in the Catalan cobla bands which provide music for sardana dancers.

## Timbre

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The tone is fatter and usually regarded as more mellow and dark than the trumpet or cornet. The sound of the flugelhorn has been described as halfway between a trumpet and a French horn, whereas the cornet's sound is halfway between a trumpet and a flugelhorn.<sup>[7]</sup> The flugelhorn is as agile as the cornet but more difficult to control in the high register (from approximately written G<sub>5</sub>), where in general it slots or locks onto notes less easily. It is not generally used for aggressive or bright displays as trumpets and cornets often are, but tends more towards a softer and more reflective role.

## Use and performances

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The flugelhorn is a standard member of the British-style brass band, and it is also used frequently in jazz. It also appears occasionally in orchestral and concert band music. Famous orchestral works with flugelhorn include Igor Stravinsky's *Threni*,<sup>[8]</sup> Ralph Vaughan Williams's *Ninth Symphony*,<sup>[9]</sup> and Michael Tippett's third symphony.<sup>[10]</sup> The flugelhorn is sometimes substituted for the post horn in Mahler's *Third Symphony*,<sup>[11]</sup> and for the soprano Roman buccine in Ottorino Respighi's *Pines of Rome*. In HK Gruber's trumpet concerto *Busking* (2007) the soloist is directed to play a flugelhorn in the slow middle movement.<sup>[12]</sup> The flugelhorn figured prominently in many of Burt Bacharach's 1960s pop song arrangements. It is featured in a solo role in Bert Kaempfert's 1962 recording of "That Happy Feeling". Flugelhorns have occasionally been used as the alto or low soprano voice in a drum and bugle corps.

Another use of the flugelhorn is found in the Dutch and Belgian "*Fanfareorkesten*" or fanfare orchestras. In these orchestras the flugelhorns, often between 10 and 20 in number, have a significant role, forming the base of the orchestra. They are pitched in B $\flat$ , with sporadically an E $\flat$  soloist. Due to poor intonation these E $\flat$  flugelhorns are mostly replaced by the E $\flat$  trumpet or cornet.

The 1996 film Brassed Off features a flugelhorn performance of Rodrigo *Concierto de Aranjuez*, Adagio, as a key moment.<sup>[13]</sup> The solo is played by Paul Hughes.<sup>[14]</sup>

## Notable players

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Joe Bishop, as a member of the Woody Herman band in 1936, was one of the earliest jazz musicians to use the flugelhorn. Shorty Rogers and Kenny Baker began playing it in the early fifties, and Clark Terry used it in Duke Ellington's orchestra in the mid-1950s. Chet Baker recorded several albums on the instrument in the 1950s and 1960s. Miles Davis further popularized the instrument in jazz on the albums *Miles Ahead* and *Sketches of Spain*, (both arranged by Gil Evans) though he did not use it much on later projects. Other prominent flugelhorn players include Freddy Buzon, Freddie Hubbard, Tom Browne, Lee Morgan, Bill Dixon, Wilbur Harden, Art Farmer, Roy Hargrove, Randy Brecker, Hugh Masekela, Feya Faku, Tony Guerrero, Gary Lord, Jimmy Owens, Maynard Ferguson, Terumasa Hino, Woody Shaw, Guido Basso, Kenny Wheeler, Tom Harrell, Bill Coleman, Thad Jones, Arturo Sandoval, Lee Loughnane of the rock band Chicago, Mike Metheny, Harry Beckett, and Ack van Rooyen. Most jazz flugelhorn players use the instrument as an auxiliary to the trumpet, but in the 1970s Chuck Mangione gave up playing the trumpet and concentrated on the flugelhorn alone, notably on his jazz-pop hit song "Feels So Good". Mangione, in an interview on ABC during the 1980 Winter Olympics, for which he wrote the theme "Give It All You Got", referred to the flugelhorn as "the right baseball glove".

Pop flugelhorn players include Probyn Gregory (Brian Wilson Band), Ronnie Wilson of the Gap Band, Rick Braun, Mic Gillette, Jeff Oster, Zach Condon of the band Beirut, Scott Spillane of the band Neutral Milk Hotel, and Terry Kirkman of the band The Association. Marvin Stamm played the flugelhorn solo on "Uncle Albert/Admiral Halsey" by Paul and Linda McCartney.

## Footnotes

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9. Stumpf II, Robert. "Classical Net Review - Maestrino - Stokowski Conducts New Music" (<http://www.classical.net/music/recs/reviews/c/cal00539a.php>). *Classical Net*. Retrieved 25 October 2019.

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## External links

- An overview and brief history of the flugelhorn (<http://www.jewelrygenius.com/flugInfo.html>), including a short sound clip
- How to play a flugelhorn (<https://web.archive.org/web/20151222224027/http://www.thetrumpetblog.com/how-to-play-a-flugel-horn/>) at TheTrumpetBlog.com

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