

Piccolo

The **piccolo** /ˈpɪkəloʊ/ (Italian pronunciation: [ˈpikˌkolo]; Italian for "compact", but named *ottavino* in Italy)^[1] is a half-size flute, and a member of the woodwind family of musical instruments. The modern piccolo has most of the same fingerings as its larger sibling, the standard transverse flute,^[2] but the sound it produces is an octave higher than written. This gave rise to the name *ottavino* (Italian for "little octave"), which the instrument is called in the scores of Italian composers.^[3] It is also called *flauto piccolo* or *flautino*.

In the orchestral setting, the piccolo player is often designated as "piccolo/flute III", or even "assistant principal". The larger orchestras have designated this position as a solo position due to the demands of the literature. Piccolos are often orchestrated to double the violins or the flutes, adding sparkle and brilliance to the overall sound because of the aforementioned one-octave transposition upwards. In concert band settings, the piccolo is almost always used and a piccolo part is almost always available.

Contents

[Traditional use](#)

[Repertoire](#)

[References](#)

[Bibliography](#)

[External links](#)

Traditional use

Historically, the piccolo had no keys, but it should not be confused with the fife, which is traditionally one-piece, has a smaller, cylindrical bore and produces a more strident sound.

It is a myth that one of the earliest pieces to use the piccolo was Ludwig van Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, premiered in December 1808. Although neither Joseph Haydn nor Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart used it in their symphonies, some of their contemporaries did, including Franz Anton Hoffmeister, Franz Xaver Süssmayr and Michael Haydn.^[4] Also, Mozart used the piccolo in his opera *Idomeneo*. Opera orchestras in Paris sometimes included small transverse flutes at the octave as early as 1735 as existing scores by Jean-Philippe Rameau show.^[4]

Piccolo



Woodwind instrument

Classification

- Woodwind
- Wind
- Aerophone

Hornbostel

421.121.12-71

–Sachs

(Flute-like

classification

aerophone with keys)

Playing range



The piccolo sounds one octave higher than written.

Sounding:



Related instruments

- Flute
- Alto flute
- Bass flute



A piccolo being played

Piccolos are now mainly manufactured in the key of C. In the early 20th century, piccolos were manufactured in D \flat as they were an earlier model of the modern piccolo.^[5] It was for this D \flat piccolo that John Philip Sousa wrote the famous solo in the final repeat of the closing section (trio) of his march "The Stars and Stripes Forever".

Although once made of wood, glass or ivory, piccolos today are made from plastic, resin, brass, nickel silver, silver, and a variety of hardwoods, most commonly grenadilla. Finely made piccolos are often available

with a variety of options similar to the flute, such as the split-E mechanism. Most piccolos have a conical body with a cylindrical head, which is like the Baroque flute and later flutes before the popularization of the Boehm bore used in modern flutes. Unlike other woodwind instruments, in most wooden piccolos, the tenon joint that connects the head to the body has two interference fit points that surround both the cork and metal side of the piccolo body joint.



Early 19th-century French piccolo in D-flat.

Repertoire

There are a number of pieces for piccolo alone, by such composers as Samuel Adler, Miguel del Aguila, Robert Dick, Michael Isaacson, David Loeb, Stephen Hough, Polly Moller, Vincent Persichetti, and Karlheinz Stockhausen.



A piccolo with a grenadilla body and a silver headjoint.

Repertoire for piccolo and piano, many of which are sonatas have been composed by Miguel del Águila, Robert Baksa, Robert Beaser, Rob du Bois, Howard J. Buss, Eugene Damare, Pierre Max Dubois, Raymond Guiot, Lowell Liebermann, Peter Schickele, Michael Daugherty, and Gary Schocker.

Concertos have been composed for piccolo, including those by Lowell Liebermann, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Todd Goodman,^[6] Martin Amlin,^[7] Will Gay Bottje,^[8] Bruce Broughton, Valentino Bucchi, Avner Dorman,^[9] Jean Doué, Michael Easton,^[10] Egil Hovland, Guus Janssen, Daniel Pinkham and Jeff Manookian.

Additionally, there is now a selection of chamber music that uses the piccolo. One example is Stockhausen's Zungenspitzentanz, for piccolo and two euphoniums (or one synthesizer), with optional percussionist and dancer. Another is George Crumb's Madrigals, Book II for soprano, flute (doubling piccolo / alto flute), and percussion. Other examples include a trio for piccolo, contrabassoon and piano 'Was mit den Tränen geschieht' by Stephen Hough, the Quintet for Piccolo and String Quartet by Graham Waterhouse and Malambo for piccolo, double bass, and piano by Miguel del Aguila. Currently published trios for three piccolos include Quelque Chose canadienne (Something Canadian) by Nancy Nourse and Bird Tango by Crt Sojar Voglar for three piccolos with piano. Petrushka's Ghost for eight piccolos by Melvin Lauf, Jr. and Una piccolo sinfonia for nine piccolos by Matthew King are two more examples.

References

1. "Piccolo" (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/piccolo>). *Merriam-Webster*. Retrieved 2012-05-26.
2. "Transverse flute" (<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/transverse+flute>). The Free Dictionary By Farlex. Retrieved 2012-05-26.

3. "The Names of Instruments and Voices in English, French, German, Italian, Russian1, and Spanish" (<http://www.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/instname.htm>). Yale University Music Library. Retrieved 2012-05-26.
4. Nourse, Nancy (April 2008). "The Symphonic Debutante Piccolo: Was it Really Beethoven's Fifth?". *Flute Focus* (14): 26–29.
5. Hanlon, Keith D. (2017). *The Piccolo in the 21st Century: History, Construction, and Modern Pedagogical Resources* (Doctor of Musical Arts in Flute Performance). West Virginia University. doi:10.33915/etd.5756 (<https://doi.org/10.33915%2Fetd.5756>). ProQuest 1947737021 (<https://search.proquest.com/docview/1947737021>).
6. "Todd Goodman: Composer" (https://web.archive.org/web/20090417025700/http://www.qsoa.org/Todd_Goodman.htm). Quincy Symphony Orchestra Association. Archived from the original (http://www.qsoa.org/Todd_Goodman.htm) on 2009-04-17. Retrieved 2009-06-13.
7. Martin Amlin (<http://www.presser.com/composers/info.cfm?name=martinamlin>) Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20131215104120/http://www.presser.com/composers/info.cfm?Name=MARTINAMLIN>) 2013-12-15 at the Wayback Machine page of Presser website.
8. "Will Gay Bottje" (<https://composers.com/will-gay-bottje>). *American Composers Alliance*. Feb 19, 2009.
9. Avner Dorman (<http://www.cabrillomusic.org/2009/avner-dorman.html>) on the Cabrillo Music Festival website. Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20090724072133/http://www.cabrillomusic.org/2009/avner-dorman.html>) July 24, 2009, at the Wayback Machine
10. Concerto for Piccolo, Percussion and Strings (<http://www.australianmusiccentre.com.au/work/easton-michael-concerto-for-piccolo-percussion-and-strings>), Australian Music Centre page.

Bibliography

- Gippo, Jan (ed.). *The Complete Piccolo: A Comprehensive Guide to Fingerings, Repertoire, and History*, second edition, foreword by Laurie Sokoloff; contributing editors, Therese Wacker, Morgan Williams, and Tammy Sue Kirk. Bryn Mawr: Theodore Presser Company, 2008. ISBN 978-1-59806-111-6

External links

- [The Woodwind Fingering Guide \(http://www.wfg.woodwind.org/flute/\)](http://www.wfg.woodwind.org/flute/), with piccolo fingerings
-

Retrieved from "<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Piccolo&oldid=985996617>"

This page was last edited on 29 October 2020, at 05:21 (UTC).

Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License; additional terms may apply. By using this site, you agree to the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy. Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization.