



Instrument Families of the Orchestra

Instrument Trivia

	Strings	Woodwinds	Brass	Percussion
What are these instruments made of?	String instruments are made of wood that is held together with glue. String instruments come in many sizes, but all of them have four strings.	Woodwind instruments are made of metal, wood, and sometimes plastic.	Brass instruments are made of brass.	Percussion instruments are created from materials such as metal, wood, plastic, and animal skins.
What are the basic parts of these instruments?	strings, bridge, hollow box	mouthpiece, reed (double or single), metal keys, tube	mouthpiece, tubing, bell	There are a wide variety of percussion instruments. All that is required is one object that can strike another to produce a sound.
How do these instruments produce sound?	By playing the string with the bow or fingers, the string vibrates and produces a musical tone.	To make a musical tone, the player blows on a thin piece of wood, called a reed, that he/she holds in his/her mouth.	A musical tone is produced when the player blows a mouthpiece that is shaped like a tiny cup.	Percussion instruments are hit or struck with sticks, mallets, hammers, an instrument part, or the player's hand.
What affects the pitch produced by these instruments?	Pitch fluctuation occurs when the player shortens the string with his fingers, while the player draws a bow over the strings.	Pitch fluctuation occurs when the player opens or closes keys on the instrument, altering the length of the air column.	Pitch fluctuation occurs when the player pushes a valve, shortening or lengthening the tube or air column.	Not all percussion instruments have the ability to produce a variety of pitches. Those that are "pitched" have a variety of surfaces or the ability to alter the striking surface.