

KNOWLEDGE SHEET—The Orchestra

Brass Section	The brass section is one of the loudest in the orchestra. They are usually sat at the back because of this! They have valves which change the length of the tubing, and sound is produced by the players buzzing their lips into the mouthpiece.
Trumpet	The Trumpet is a smallest and highest pitched of the main Brass instruments.
French Horn	The French horn is the Brass instrument that is famous for having a warm and mellow sound.
Trombone	The Trombone is different from all the other Brass instruments because it has a slide to change the pitch of the notes.
Tuba	The Tuba is the biggest of the main Brass instruments. It plays low pitched notes.

String Section	String instruments can be played in two ways. They can either be plucked or bowed. The bow that is used to play a String instrument is usually made of horse hair. A difficult technique used by string players is double stopping. This is when a string player plays more than one note at a time.
Violin	The Violin is the smallest and highest pitched of all the String instruments. There are usually more Violins in an Orchestra than any other instrument.
Viola	The Viola is only slightly larger than the Violin. It's range bridges the gap between the Violin and the Cello. It is the only instrument in the orchestra to play in Tenor Clef B
Cello	The Cello looks like a very large Violin, and is held between the knees when played.
Double Bass	The Double Bass is the biggest and lowest pitched of all the String instruments. The Double Bass actually sounds an octave (8 notes) lower than the notes written for it.

Woodwind Section	Not all Woodwind instruments are made out of wood. A lot of Woodwind instruments have a distinctive mouthpiece containing a reed.
Piccolo	The Piccolo is a smaller version of the flute. There is less room for sound to vibrate because it is smaller. Therefore, it plays high pitch notes. It looks like a small black flute and is half the size.
Flute	The Flute is the only woodwind instrument made of silver metal. Sound is produced by blowing over the top of a small hole in one end. It has a very delicate gentle tone.
Clarinet	The Clarinet is probably one of the most famous Woodwind instruments. It is made out of African black wood. The Clarinet has a rich warm tone and uses a single reed made from Bamboo.
Oboe	The Oboe looks very similar to the Clarinet. The main difference is the mouth piece. It uses a double reed and has a very pinched 'nasal' sound.
Bassoon	The Bassoon also uses a double reed. It is a large brown coloured instrument that plays at a low pitch. It also has a big brother in the orchestra, a 'Contra-Bassoon', which plays an octave lower than written (similar to the Double Bass).

Percussion Section	Percussion instruments are usually scraped, shaken or hit. Percussion instruments can either be tuned or un-tuned. Percussion instruments are usually placed at the back of the Orchestra because they are usually quite loud.
Tuned	If an instrument is tuned, it is possible to hear different pitched notes being played on it. Some examples of orchestral tuned percussion are: Xylophone, Glockenspiel and Marimba.
Untuned	Untuned orchestral percussion cannot play a tune. They are a set pitch. Examples of orchestral untuned percussion are: Snare Drum, Bass Drum and Cymbals.
Timpani	The Timpani is only found in an Orchestra. Timpani are often called 'Kettle Drums' as they look like upside down kettles. They are tuned to 3 or 4 notes and are used to emphasise the end of a piece.