





## **TONE COLOUR/TIMBRE**

**Definition:** Sound of a musical instrument/piece

e.g. piercing, eerie, rich, harsh, bright, dark, mellow

### **STRINGS (violin, viola, violincello and double bass)**

	<b>Violin</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Highest range</li><li>- Very bright</li></ul>
	<b>Viola</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Range is somewhat lower</li><li>- Is darker, thicker and a little less brilliant than the violin</li></ul>
	<b>Violincello</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Rich, warm, lower register</li><li>- Bright, brilliant higher register</li></ul>
	<b>Double bass</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Lowest range</li><li>- Very heavy tone and is less agile than other string instruments</li></ul>

### String Terms

**Pizzicato** – plucked string

**Double stop** – two notes at once




**Vibrato** – a rapid, slight variation in pitch in singing or playing some musical instruments, producing a stronger or richer tone





**Mute** – a device fitted to a musical instrument to alter the sound produced: by affecting the timbre, reducing the volume

**Tremolo** – a wavering effect in a musical tone, produced by rapid reiteration of note, by rapid repeated variation in pitch of a note

**Harmonics** – very high-pitched tones like a whistle

### **WOODWIND (piccolo, flute, oboe, English horn, clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon and contrabassoon)**

	<b>Flute</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- High range and is extremely agile</li><li>- Capable of producing rapid successions of tones</li><li>- Tone is full and velvety in low register</li><li>- High register is bright and sparkling</li></ul>
	<b>Piccolo</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- High register is shrill and whistle-like</li></ul>
	<b>Oboe</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Nasal, intense, expressive tone</li><li>- Pitch is difficult to adjust, the entire orchestra is tuned to its A</li></ul>





	<b>English horn</b> (neither English nor horn)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A low, or alto, oboe</li> </ul>
	<b>Clarinet</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Can produce tones very rapidly</li> <li>- Wide range of dynamics and tone colour</li> </ul>
	<b>Bassoon</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deeply nasal tone</li> </ul>
	<b>Contrabassoon</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lowest range</li> </ul>

### **Others**





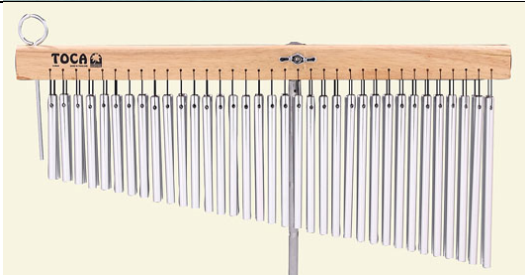
Recorder is like a flute and piccolo, it has no reed. Tone resembles the flute's but is softer and gentler

Saxophone – rich, husky and speechlike tone

## **BRASS (trumpet, French horn, trombone and tuba)**

	<b>Trumpet</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Brilliant, brassy tone</li></ul>
	<b>French horn</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Less brassy</li><li>- More mellow</li><li>- More rounded than trumpets</li></ul>
	<b>Trombone</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Combines trumpet's brilliance with French horn's mellowness</li></ul>
	<b>Tuba</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Thick heavy tone – adds weight to the lowest orchestral register</li></ul>

## PERCUSSION

	<b>Timpani</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deep, slightly boomy sound yet melodic (nothing like a bass drum)</li> </ul>
	<b>Xylophone</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dry, wooden tone</li> </ul>
	<b>Glockenspiel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bright and silvery</li> </ul>
	<b>Celesta</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tinkling and graceful</li> </ul>
	<b>Chimes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Church bells</li> </ul>

<u>DEFINITE PITCH</u>	<u>INDEFINITE PITCH</u>
Timpani (kettledrums) Xylophone Glockenspiel Celesta Chimes	Snare drum (side drum) Bass drum Tambourine Triangle Cymbals Gong (tam-tam)

All instruments listed above are in orchestras

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