

MEET THE INSTRUMENT FAMILIES!

Did you know that instruments are divided into groups called Families? There are 4 Instrument Families in a symphony orchestra. The instruments in each family share certain characteristics, such as their shape, what material they are made of, and how they are played.

Let's meet the Instrument Families!

fam·i·ly ['fam(ə)lē]

Noun

- A group of people related to one another
- A group of objects that share a significant characteristic

STRING FAMILY

These family members:

- have a similar shape, are made of wood, and come in different sizes
- have strings stretched across the front
- make their sound by drawing a bow across the strings, or by pulling the strings with your fingers



WOODWIND FAMILY

These family members:

- have a similar shape—long tubes that you blow air into
- originally, all woodwinds were made of wood. Today, the modern flute is made of metal and other woodwinds have some metal parts
- all woodwinds except the flute use a small piece of wood called a reed. The reed vibrates and produces sound when you blow across it



MEET THE INSTRUMENT FAMILIES! (CONTINUED)

BRASS FAMILY

These family members:

- are all made of long brass tubes curled up into different shapes.
- have cup-shaped mouthpieces that you buzz into to create sound
- all have a bell—that's the flared end of the brass tube. That's where the sound comes out!



TRUMPET



FRENCH
HORN



TROMBONE



TUBA

PERCUSSION FAMILY

These family members:

- make sounds when they are hit, shaken, scraped, or rubbed
- many are played by striking the instrument with a stick or mallet
- most are used to keep the rhythm and to create special sounds



SNARE
DRUM



TIMPANI



CYMBALS



BASS
DRUM