

Group Allocation - Which player are you?

There is no perfect way to do this, and it is a really difficult process for the organisers, as you would appreciate. Recorder playing involves a complex set of skills, which differ from person to person. As well, many of us find it hard to assess our own playing; sometimes people over-estimate their skills and cause difficulties for themselves and challenges for the tutor, but more often, people under-estimate, and end up in a group that doesn't challenge them sufficiently. We really rely on you having a good look at these descriptors, and working out which, on the whole, suits you best. It won't be perfect, and if you feel you end up in the wrong group, we usually can accommodate a change at the weekend.

Level 1

You have been playing recorder for a while, but may not be an experienced group player. You may be a relatively new player, still consolidating basic skills. You perhaps only play one fingering (eg only tenor or treble.) If you are a treble player, you don't play 'up an octave'. You prefer to play music in an easy key – no more than 2 sharps or flats, (preferably less!) and prefer straightforward rhythms. You are not keen on too many nasty surprises (eg accidentals, difficult rhythms) and you are not keen on high notes. You are not a particularly strong sight-reader, but can get the gist of a part with practice. You prefer not to have to hold a part on your own. You want to be challenged to learn new skills - maybe some theory along the way, and maybe some new fingerings. You are keen to learn ensemble skills, including tuning skills. You want to have fun, and to be supported by a tutor who will expect that group members will have some shortcomings in technique and musical knowledge. **Note:** Are you a good descant/tenor player, but not yet confident on treble/bass (but not a complete beginner in either case). You might like to join this group for one session.

Level 2

You play in a group regularly. You are a competent sight-reader, but may need extra practice on tricky parts or if the music is fast. You can hold a part on your own if it isn't too hard, but prefer company, and you can read from a score. You play both F and C fingering, although you may have a preference for one or the other, or in a few cases, play one instrument only, but at a competent level. You probably can read treble up an octave. You can play high notes (but maybe would rather not!). You find more than 2 sharps or flats a bit challenging, but will manage without too many indiscretions. You will have a good go at accidentals and hard rhythms. You have experience in playing music with a minim beat (3/2, 4/2) even if you are sometimes baffled by the rests. You are happy to learn new fingerings and articulations. You usually know when you are lost and have an idea of how to get back in (now that is a useful skill!). You love to be challenged, but like some pieces to be a little easier so that you can relax sometimes.

Level 3

You have all the skills of Player 2 but at a high level, but also have most of the following attributes. You can play both C and F fingering at a high level, and will bring at least 3, but preferably 4, instruments with you and be happy to play them as required. You may well be that rare bird – a good descant player! You are a good, fluent and reliable sight reader in both F and C fingering, including passage work, accidentals, difficult rhythms and high notes. You should be able to play a bass instrument from treble clef. You are able to play different articulations as requested. You have that useful skill: knowing how to 'fake' musically at times in the interest of keeping the part going. You are happy to hold a part on your own – and probably prefer it that way. You are experienced playing in a full range of time signatures. You are an experienced ensemble player, and know how to tune your instrument to the group. You are keen to be challenged and to work hard on challenging music, both technically and regarding interpretation and stylistic issues.

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