

Frequently Asked Questions About Signing Up for Band or Orchestra in Middle School



How do I pick an instrument if I don't get to try them?

If you have internet access at home, you can see and hear all of the instruments here:

<http://www.beginband.com/sndclips.shtml>

If you like **higher** sounds you might like violin, flute, oboe, or clarinet. If you like **medium/ middle** sounds you might like viola, saxophone, trumpet, or French horn. If you like **lower** sounds you might like cello, bass, trombone, euphonium, or tuba.

If you would like to participate in a jazz band, the traditional jazz band instruments are saxophone (alto, tenor, baritone), trumpet, trombone, drum set, bass, guitar, and piano, but any instrument can be in middle school jazz band!

Most importantly: pick the instrument whose sound you like best and that you are most excited to learn to play (which may not be the instrument that fits in your backpack or that your best friend is playing and that's okay!)

How do I know if the instrument I want to play is part of band or orchestra?

The **BAND** instruments include the woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments: flute, oboe, clarinet, alto saxophone, tenor saxophone, trumpet, French horn, trombone, euphonium, tuba, and percussion. The **ORCHESTRA** instruments include the string instruments: violin, viola, cello, and bass.

How do I get an instrument?

Most families rent or buy from a local store that specializes in musical instruments (such as West Music, www.westmusic.com; Griggs Music www.griggsmusic.com; or Schultz Strings www.schultzstrings.com). Families with financial concerns or those choosing a large/specialty instrument (oboe, French horn, euphonium, tuba, cello, or bass) may rent from the school. Prices for school rentals depend on families qualifying for reduced or free school fees.

Can we buy an instrument online?

Some families choose to purchase an instrument privately or online. Instruments sold online vary greatly in quality. Please do not hesitate to reach out to your future music teacher before you purchase!

What if I have an instrument at home or in my family to use? Can I use that instrument?

Of course! However, instruments need to be maintained just like a car, so we would recommend you have the instrument "tuned up" before starting lessons. Some local businesses who offer this service would be Millar Woodwind Repair, Barnard Instrument Repair, West Music, or Griggs Music.

What if I can't afford to be in band or orchestra?

Every student in the Cedar Rapids Community School District has the opportunity to play an instrument regardless of their financial situation. If you need assistance with anything, please contact your middle school music teacher and we are happy to help any way we can.

Why should I play an instrument?

Because it's fun and it's good for you! This is the one time in your life where you can get great instruction for a nominal

cost. You will not find an adult who says: “I wish I wouldn’t have tried a musical instrument,” but you will find those who wish they would have gotten the chance.

What if I’ve never played an instrument?

That’s okay! Nearly all of the sixth-grade band and orchestra students we work with have never played an instrument. We will teach you everything you need to know.

What is percussion?

Percussion is drums, mallet instruments like xylophone and bells, and auxiliary instruments like cymbals, tambourine, etc. Students who sign up for percussion will receive lessons on drums and bells.

I’ve heard that you need to have two years of piano lessons to do percussion- is that true?

Prior piano experience makes starting percussion much easier since you are learning two instruments (bells and drums), but it is not a requirement.

What is choir?

Choir is singing! You may also hear it called Chorus or Vocal Music.

What if I have other questions?

Contact your middle school music teachers!

BAND	ORCHESTRA	CHOIR
FRANKLIN		
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