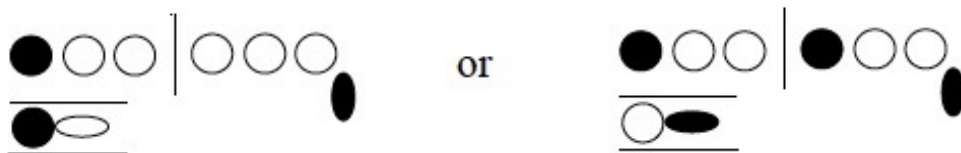


Using the Thumb B Flat Fingering

By Steve Hommel

First Semester Workbooks give the band director the option of teaching flutes with either the 1 and 1 fingering for B flat, or the Thumb B flat fingering.



Although the 1 and 1 fingering is the primary fingering for Bb on the flute, I have found many advantages to starting elementary students in particular with the Thumb Bb. (Thumb Bb is actually the fingering intended for diatonic passages in flat keys.)

When using the Thumb Bb, flutes will start the Workbook with virtually the same easy fingerings as clarinets and alto saxes:

E, D, C for clarinets; B, A, G for Altos; Bb, A and G for flutes.

Your whole woodwind section can start together, 1 finger, 2 fingers. 3 fingers.

Note: The argument often made for using the 1 & 1 fingering with beginners, is that having that first finger of the right hand down makes it easier to balance the flute. In my experience, very few beginners have a problem balancing the flute with the Thumb Bb. However, if balance is an issue, the student may put down the first finger of the right hand while also depressing the thumb Bb key as a temporary balance aid.