

Instruments Of the ORCHESTRA

There is always the opportunity to name specific instruments in the GCSE exam. Sometimes you are asked to name what instruments are playing. Sometimes you will be asked to describe a piece of music, in this case naming instruments that are used will always get you some marks.


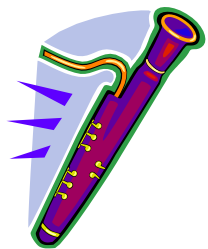

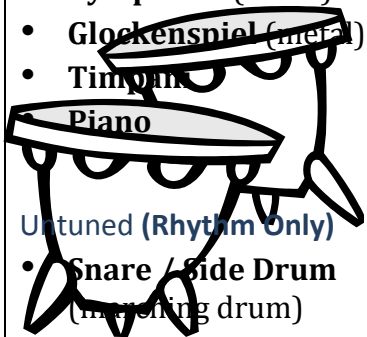
The Orchestra

The orchestra is divided into four groups or **families** of instruments. The **families** are:

- **Strings**
- **Woodwind**
- **Brass**
- **Percussion**



The Instruments Of Each Family

Strings	Woodwind	Brass	Percussion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violins • (Violas) • Cellos • Double Basses • Harp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Piccolo) • Flutes • Oboe • Clarinets • Bassoon 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trumpets • French Horns • Trombones • Tuba 	<p style="color: blue;">Tuned (pitched)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Xylophone (wood) • Glockenspiel (metal) • Timpani • Piano <p style="color: blue;">Untuned (Rhythm Only)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snare / Side Drum (marching drum) • Bass Drum • Tambourine • Triangle • Marracas 

INSTRUMENTAL GROUPS

You might have to identify various type of instrumental groups – these are the most common ones & have appeared in exams. Google them or youtube them for examples of what they sound like.

Orchestra or **Full Orchestra** or **Symphony Orchestra** – All the classical instrument types – String & Woodwind & Brass & Percussion

Brass Band – Only Brass & Percussion – be careful because brass band instruments can sound really gentle.

Wind Band also known as **Military Band** – Woodwind, Brass & Percussion (no strings) – usually the flutes & clarinets really stick out.

Wind Quintet – Usually 1 Flute, 1 Oboe, 1 Clarinet, 1 French Horn, 1 Bassoon – very light sounding.

String Orchestra – Just Violins, Cellos & Basses (& Violas but that is not important) usually quite gentle or sad sounding – google Adagio for Strings by Samuel Barber.

String Quartet – 2 Violins, 1 Viola & 1 Cello, sounds lighter than the string orchestra.

Folk Band – Harp, violin, guitar, hand held drums (perhaps drum kit) prominent flute might be used possibly vocals as well.