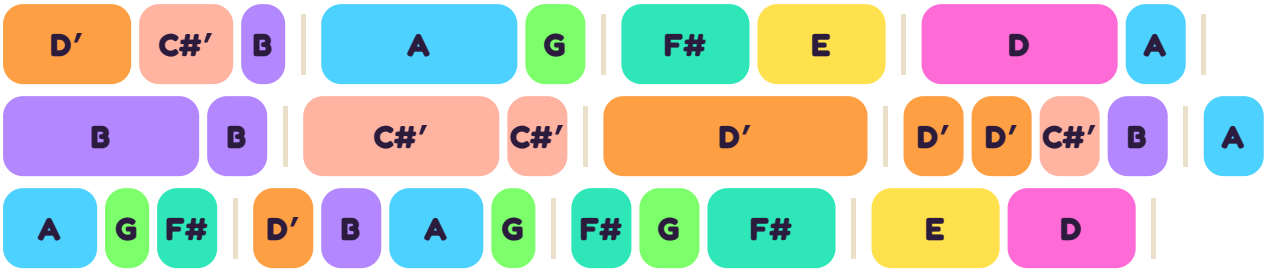
A little challenge · 8 notes

How to play Joy to the World on the ocarina

Joy to the World ocarina notes with color coding & letters, sheet music, fingering diagrams, and interactive audio practice.
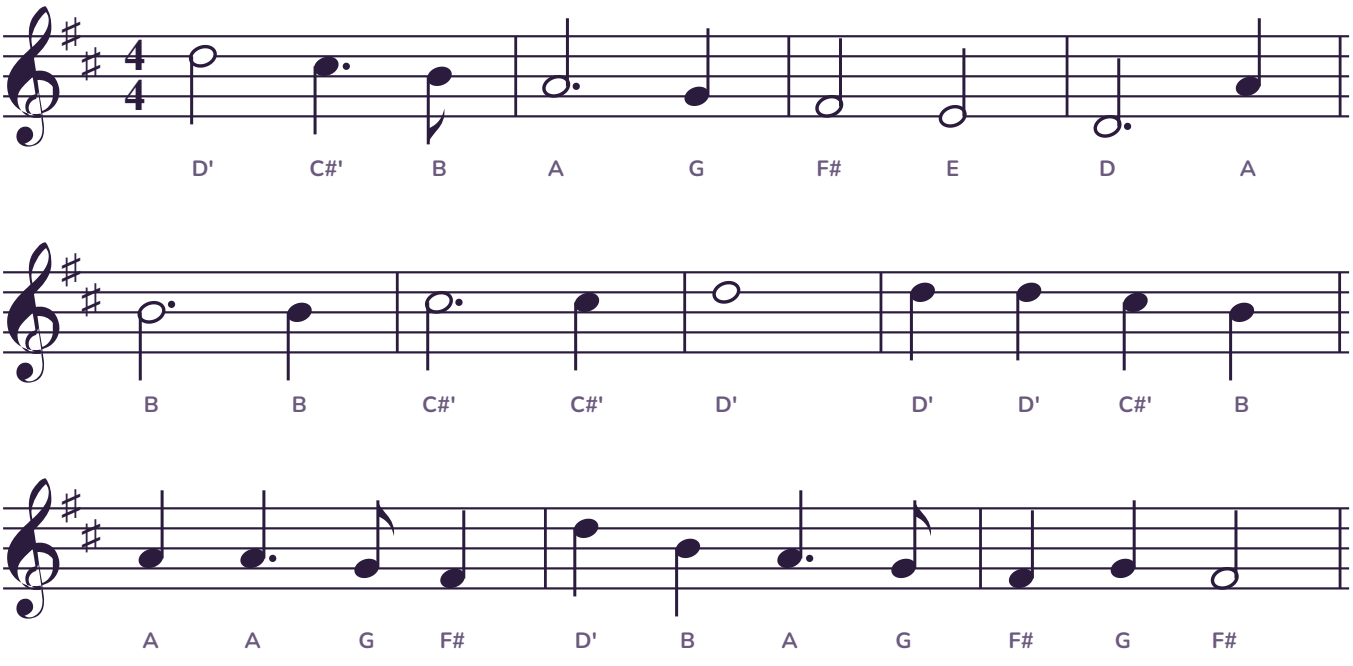
The festive carol arranged by Lowell Mason in 1839. It steps down from high D through high C#, which needs precise fingering. It uses 8 notes: **D**, **E**, **F#**, **G**, **A**, **B**, **C#'**, **D'**.

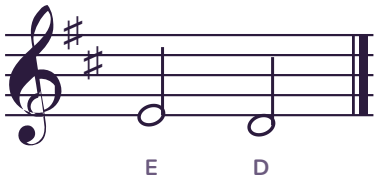
The notes & rhythm



Longer blocks are longer notes; a vertical line marks each bar.

Sheet music





Standard treble clef notation with letter guides below each note.

The notes as letters

D′ C#′ B A G F# E D A B B C#′ C#′ D′ D′ D′ C#′

B A A G F# D′ B A G F# G F# E D

Ocarina fingerings

D · low D



Front · finger holes

Back · thumb holes and extra sub-holes (open)

E · low E



Front · finger holes

Back · thumb holes and extra sub-holes (open)

F# · F#



Front · finger holes

Back · thumb holes and extra sub-holes (open)

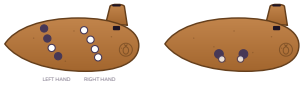
G · G



Front · finger holes

Back · thumb holes and extra sub-holes (open)

A · A



Front · finger holes

Back · thumb holes and extra sub-holes (open)

B · B



Front · finger holes

Back · thumb holes and extra sub-holes (open)

C#' · high C#



Front · finger holes

Back · thumb holes and extra sub-holes (open)

D' · high D



Front · finger holes

Back · thumb holes and extra sub-holes (open)

Playing tips for Joy to the World

- Start each note cleanly with a gentle tongue stroke (whisper "too" or "doo").
- Seal every hole completely with the soft pads of your fingers, not your fingertips.
- The ocarina's pitch follows your breath: blowing softer lowers the pitch, blowing harder raises it.
- The low notes need the gentlest breath of all. If a low note warbles or squeaks, soften your breath and check that your lower fingers fully seal their holes.
- F# uses a cross-fingering: check that the holes around the open one stay firmly sealed.
- High C# is played with the left thumb open (or half-covered on 12-hole ocarinas). Balance the ocarina gently on your right thumb and pinky.