

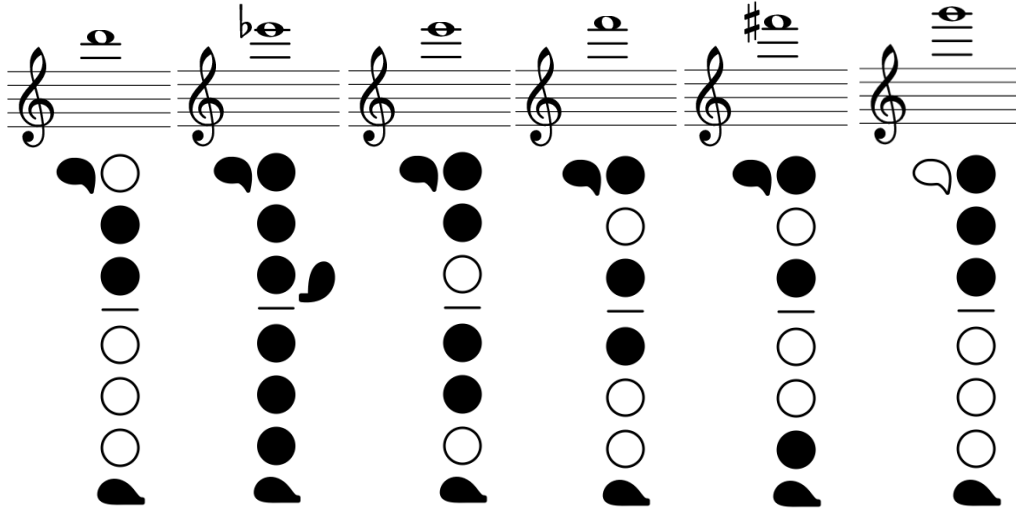
## Common Flute Fingering Errors

By [Jessica L. Banks](#)

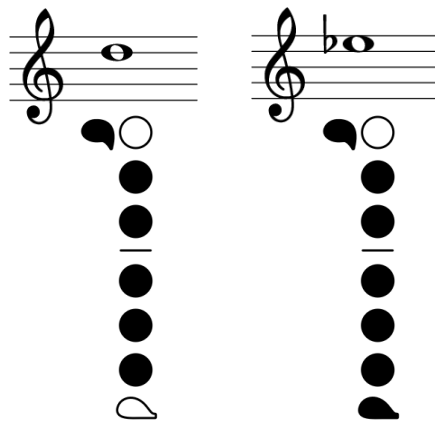
I have judged All-State Auditions in 4 different states, and every year I hear students who play scales with wrong fingerings. These students are well-prepared and sound fantastic on their pieces, but sadly they have a glaring knowledge gap that can greatly impact the audition outcome. The issue - wrong fingerings. I'm not talking about note errors made due to nerves, these are errors that the students practiced into the music. One reason these fingering mistakes are so common is because they are consonant errors, meaning they don't jump out like a wrong note- they sound like they are playing the right note. These errors are difficult to hear when a student plays alone and nearly IMPOSSIBLE to hear in an ensemble.

So, here's what to look for:

**Notes above D6:** MANY students play these notes with the same fingering as the octave below, but this produces a harmonic and is not the correct fingering. The note might come out and might sound "correct", but it won't produce a clear tone and will take more effort to play. Example: F in the staff is played 123 | 4 w/pinky and thumb, but above the staff you lift the 2nd finger to play F (1-3 | 4 w/ pinky and thumb).



**D and E-flat in the staff:** The first finger must be up! If the first finger is down the note will create a harmonic which has a fuzzy tone quality.



**Trill Fingerings:** There are so many errors that can happen with trills. First students must know what two notes they are alternating between- the note written and the note diatonically above it within the key. Students will trill G to A-flat because a G is written and A-flat is the next note above it, but this would only be appropriate if A-flat is in the key signature. Another errors is that students just make up fingerings when an alternate is needed. So when they get to a High F to G trill they will shake RH 1 instead of using the thumb as would be indicated in a trill chart. The best trill chart out there can be found at [wfg.woodwind.org](http://wfg.woodwind.org)

And while we are talking about fingerings, **can we PLEASE update our pedagogy and teach Thumb B-flat as the main fingering for B-flat.** That means on day 1 we are teaching students to use this fingering instead of 1+1 which IS AN ALTERNATE FINGERING!!!!

Anyone who has followed my social media for any amount of time knows that I feel strongly about this, but it's not an opinion. It is just old pedagogy to teach 1+1 first. No other instrument teaches a secondary/alternate fingering first. We teach the main fingering and then add in the others- we need to do this with B-flat too. Want the full explanation? [Check this out](#) and then [this short video](#): )

*\*Fingering diagrams and note examples created using: <https://fingering.bretpimentel.com> and <https://notes.bretpimentel.com>.*