



# Nigteagle Flute Company

PO Box 3847, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147 • 970 264 5366  
info@nigteagleflutecompany.com

[www.nigteagleflutecompany.com](http://www.nigteagleflutecompany.com)

Thank you for selecting an heirloom quality Nigteagle Flute. Please examine your flute for any possible damage in shipping. If your flute has a carving on the end (eagle, turtle, wolf, etc.), it is very, very fragile. Please treat your flute with great care, and in return the flute will reward you with a lifetime of joy.

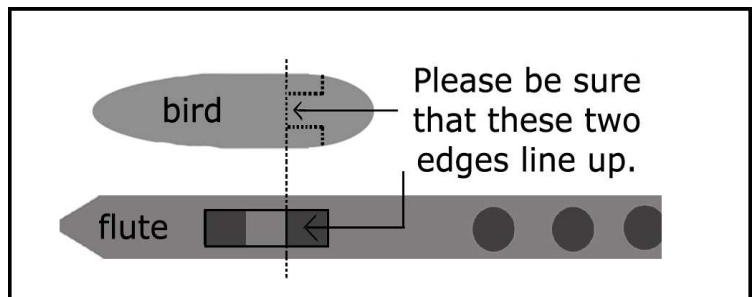
These instructions should help you get familiar with your flute. If you have any questions, please call or email, and we will be happy to help. For accessories, fingering charts, and other music, please visit our website: [www.nigteagleflutecompany.com](http://www.nigteagleflutecompany.com)

## About Your Flute

**The bird:** In order for your flute to play its best, or at all, the bird (reed block) must be correctly positioned and tied securely to the flute body. The bird should be aligned so that its flat edge (back between its feet) sits flush with the proximal end of the true sound hole. The true sound hole is the lower of the two square airway holes and should be the only visible airway opening. The other square airway hole, which is closer to the mouthpiece, should be hidden under the flat bottom of the bird.

When you first receive your flute, examine the reed block to familiarize yourself with its position. A strong light may help you to see in under the bird's head.

**The laces:** The leather ties on your flute need only one overhand knot. This knot is the same as the first step in tying shoe laces. It's best not to tie more than one knot in the leather strap as this will not keep the reed block tighter, nor does it stop it from becoming loose. It does make it more difficult to retighten the laces. When tightening the laces, turn the flute so you are looking at the bottom of the flute body and support the flute using your underarm. Then steadily pull the ends of the leather tight.



**The flute:** Nigteagle flutes are six hole flutes. The natural scale played by the flutes is pentatonic, an ancient scale common to many cultures worldwide. The flutes also produce a full chromatic scale.

The flutes are available in five tonal ranges: high treble, treble, bass, deep bass, and contrabass. For more about the tonal ranges and alternate keys, please visit our website: [www.nigteagleflutecompany.com](http://www.nigteagleflutecompany.com)

# Playing Your Flute

**Position:** The flute is most easily played while standing with your arms relaxed at your sides. When playing in a sitting position, let your spine remain erect so that your lungs have room to work freely. The flute points down toward our Earth Mother.

**Breathing:** Native American flutes require little air. Higher flutes require more air flow than lower flutes, and higher notes on each flute require more air than the flute's lower notes. Practice breathing deeply and in a relaxed manner. Gradually increase the amount of time you can hold a note, and the number of notes you can play between a breath. Remember to increase the airflow for higher notes and decrease the airflow for the lower notes.

**Fingering:** If the flute whistles or squeaks, you may be using too much or too little air, but it is more likely that you are not completely covering all of the finger holes. Use the pads of your fingers, not the tips, to cover the holes. If you have not played a woodwind before, you may find that one finger may keep riding up (or down) and not covering its hole completely. Many beginners find that the left hand ring finger rides up. To train your finger, tie a piece of rawhide or string adjacent to the hole so that the finger can't ride up (or down). After some time, remove the crutch.

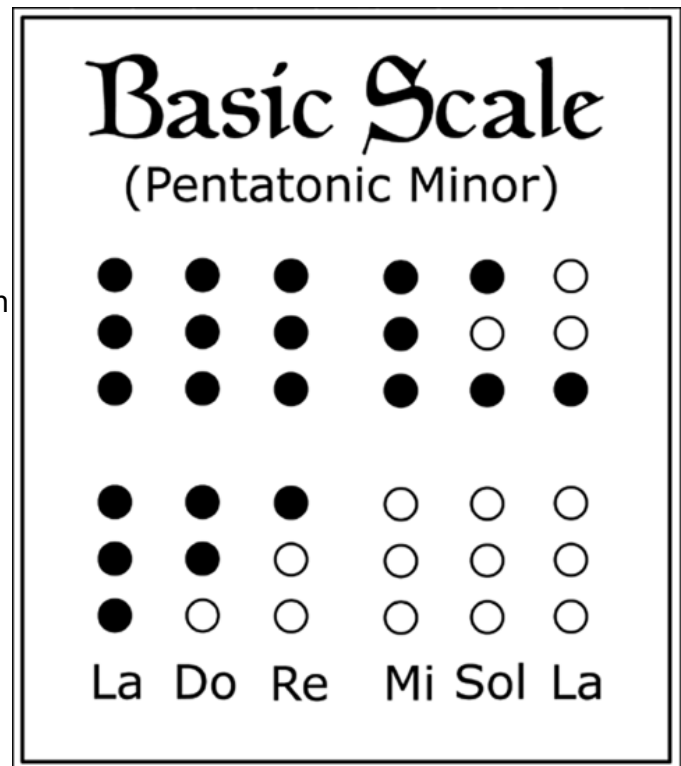
Many people learn the notes on the flute from the bottom (all holes covered) to the top. If you have trouble getting your fingers to cover all of the holes, try learning the notes from the top down. That way, you have less holes to keep covered at once. When one finger can cover its hole consistently, add the next.

**The basic scale:** This is the simple, natural scale of the Native American flute. For an extended scale chart, please visit our Website.

Each vertical column of circles represents your six-hole flute. The left hand is on top and covers the top three holes with index, middle, and ring fingers. The right hand is on the bottom and covers the bottom three holes with index, middle, and ring fingers.

The black circles are covered, or closed, holes. The white circles are uncovered, or open, holes.

To begin at the bottom of the scale, start with the note at the left of the chart with all holes covered. Then uncover the lowest hole by raising the right hand ring finger. Slowly move up the scale as you get comfortable with each note.



You may have trouble covering all of the holes at first, causing the flute to squeak. In this case, begin at the right of the chart with the high note (only one hole covered), and work down the scale, slowly adding fingers as you are comfortable.

**Articulation:** Tonguing is a wind player's technique that gives notes a defined beginning, and separates repeated notes. To practice tonguing, say either "tu" or "du," without vocalizing, as you begin a note. Coordinating tongue and fingers may take some time and is best accomplished with slow, even practice. A combination of tonguing and slurring (moving from note to note without tonguing) makes for expressive playing.

## Caring for Your Flute

Keep your flute away from moisture, extreme heat, cold, constant draft (as from a fan or open window), dogs, and extended direct sunlight. Avoid sudden, drastic temperature changes. If you take an unprotected, moist flute out into freezing weather, it may crack.

Once or twice a year, remove the leather thong and rub the flute and reed block with a high grade natural wood oil. Allow to set for five minutes, wipe dry, and reassemble. Keep the bridge area clear of any finish as build up over the years will reduce air flow.

New flutes are dry and need a breaking-in period. Play your flute only a few minutes at a time for the first week, then gradually add to the playing time. Acclimating your flute to breath moisture slowly gives it a chance to absorb the changes without cracking.

If your flute is played for an extended period of time, moisture will accumulate in its airway. You may notice the flute becoming muffled. This is know as wet-out. At this point, the flute needs a break from playing. It may be necessary to shake accumulated moisture out of the mouthpiece end of the flute. Do not leave the flute disassembled in an attempt to dry it out faster. This may cause the reed block and the flute body to dry out of shape (warp).

Please be careful not to overplay the flute. Long periods of moisture on the inside of a dry flute will crack it. Should you "play the voice out of the flute", you risk a crack. If you enjoy playing for extended periods of time, you might want to use more than one flute.

Nighteagle flutes are guaranteed against any inherent defects. We will repair or replace any flute that has been properly cared for that may develop a problem. Do not attempt to modify or repair the flute, as this will void any warranty. The carved versions are not guaranteed against breakage. We will also attempt to repair, at the customer's expense, any flute that has been accidentally damaged.



## About Native American Flutes

The end-blown flute is a primitive instrument that has been played for thousands of years. According to legend, the American Indian flute was a courting flute, made by a young man when he fell in love. He played it out of sight of his beloved at first, eventually allowing her to see him. If she was moved by his flute playing, she would let him know.

One of the oldest Native American Legends is of Kokopelli, the hump-backed flute player. This legend appears throughout the Americas. His music brought fertility and abundance to the people. Kokopelli played his magic flute to remind us that love is magic.

For more information, flute bags and flute stands,  
fingering charts, and music, please visit our Website:

**[www.nighteagleflutecompany.com](http://www.nighteagleflutecompany.com)**