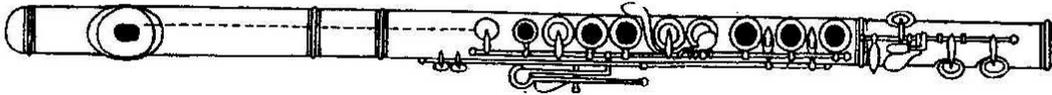


# How to assemble and hold your flute:

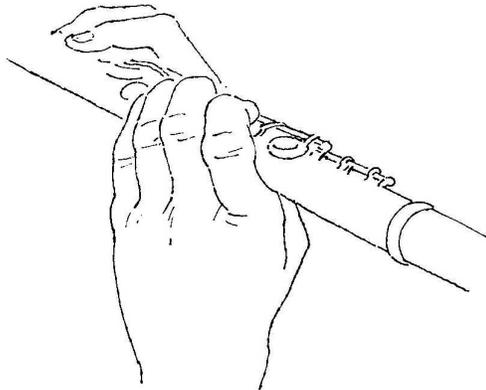
By Jennifer Cluff 2003 ~ More diagrams at: [www.jennifercluff.com/lineup.htm](http://www.jennifercluff.com/lineup.htm)

- ✓ Only allow your hands to touch the smooth cylindrical sections of the flute and do not clasp any of the moving parts. Rods and keys are easily bent and expensive to straighten again. Bent keys cause leaks and leaks cause poor tone quality.
- ✓ Use a gentle twisting motion so that the tube ends stay round and “true.”
- ✓ 75% of flutists will line up the FAR SIDE of the embouchure hole with the center of the keys. The other 25% will find that, through experimentation and with their teacher’s help, that they’ll line up the CENTER of the embouchure hole with the center of the keys.



- ✓ Align the small silver ball on the footjoint’s rod with the center of the lowest key. (D key). Later you can experiment with moving it closer to your right hand pinky’s reach depending on the length of that shortest of fingers.

## Hand Position



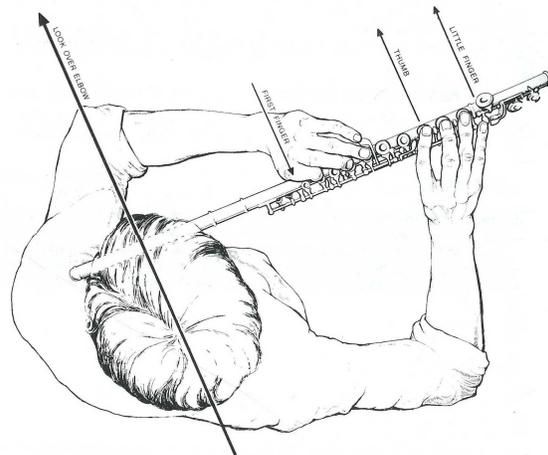
The flute rests on the lowest section of your left hand’s index finger. This part of the finger meets the flute body between the two topmost keys (C and C#) and supports from below.

If you are guiding the end of the flute forward with your right hand, the left hand feels like it can support from *beneath* the flute, and does not have to push the flute toward your chin. Elbows are comfortably down. Picture the flute as pivoting on the left index finger, so that it acts as a hinge. Any amount of guiding the footjoint away from you brings the headjoint closer to your chin. Experiment with this.

As you can see from the picture of the person holding the flute at right, the flute is NOT parallel to the shoulders.

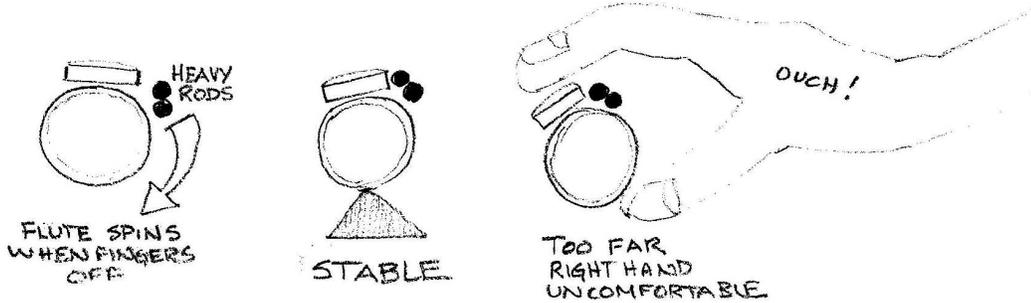
In band, turn your chair to the right at a 45 degree angle. When standing to practice at home, turn your feet and hips to the right at a 45 degree angle. Then gently turn your upper body and your head so that you’re looking over your left elbow.

The flute should make an angle or pie-wedge between the line of your shoulders and the line of the flute’s body. Guiding the foot jointing away from you with the right hand should allow a relaxation of your left shoulder down and into its socket.



## Balancing the flute in your hands

The rods that run down the length of the flute's body that hold the keys on are the heaviest part of the flute, and if the keys are parallel to the floor, or leaning slightly backwards, when you take all your fingers off (for a C# for example) the flute will spin in your hands and roll toward you. This can cause hand-clenching and arm-strain, as the flutist attempts to hold the flute more firmly to stop this from happening. See for yourself:

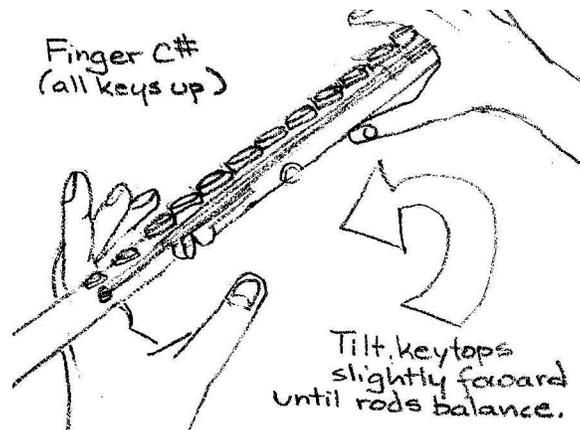


#1: Keys parallel to ceiling, heaviness of rods causes flute to spin toward you when you take all fingers off as if playing C#.

#2: Keys tilted slightly forward. Rods more on top. Flute is stable.

#3: Keys are tilted too far forward, making left hand comfortable, but right hand is forced to reach too far over rods, making right hand uncomfortable.

## To find perfect balance point for you, experiment:



Hold the flute so that it rests on the lowest joint of your left hand index finger, and allow all other fingers to be off. As you rotate the flute so that the heavier rods are more on top, and the keys tilt slightly forward, you will find a point at which the flute no longer rolls in your hands. Adjust your headjoint so that you can get your best tone with your normal lip plate, while the body's angle is adjusted so that the keys remain tilting slightly forward. Get a flute teacher's help with this if you have specific problems with short fingers, long fingers, cramping hands, leaking keys or other flute problems.

Lots of pictures online at: [www.jennifercluff.com/lineup.htm](http://www.jennifercluff.com/lineup.htm)