

Monday, May 1st, 2023, 7 PM ET  
AGO Webinar

# Certifications: Orchestrations

**Texu KIM**

# Overview

Intro

Before the Exam

During the Exam

Q & A

# Intro

Good orchestration/arrangement begins with:  
meeting the client's needs – it's a form of service.

Good test-taking begins with knowing that *this is a test.*  
A test exists to assess specific knowledge & skills.

# From “100 Strategies for Successful AGO Certification”

## 97. (F11.) Orchestration.

The instrumentation aspects of orchestration are relatively straightforward. Candidates with a background in arranging for orchestra have an advantage here. A systematic approach to review and mastery of **the range** and **capability** of instruments and the **historical stylistic use** of the orchestra is indicated.

# Items to Review before the Exam

Instrumentation: ranges & tessituras, dynamics, clef & key signatures, transpositions, etc.

Orchestration: distribution/combination strategy

Notation/Communication: formatting, information to include

# Resources

Books: Any orchestration textbooks, including:

Berlioz/Strauss, Rismky-Korsakov, Forsyth, and

[The Study of Orchestration](#) by **Samuel Adler**, etc.

Online:

Indiana University's [Instrument Studies for Eyes and Ears](#)

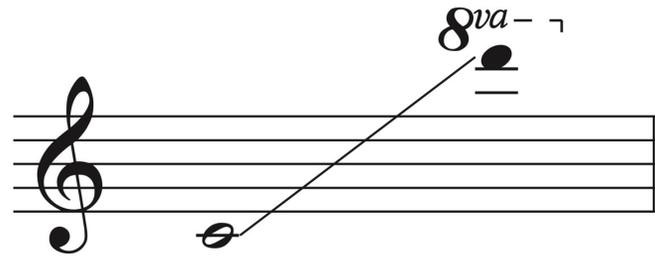
[Instruments](#) by Philharmonia (UK)

[The Idiomatic Orchestra](#) (blog, intermediate-advanced)

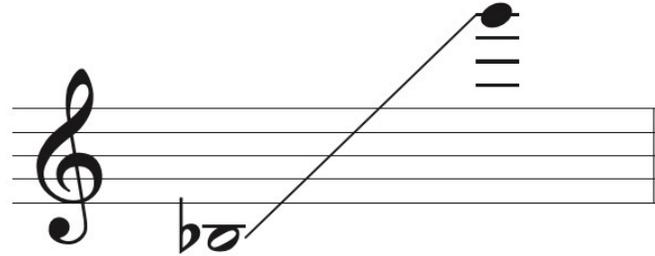
by Karl Aage Ramussen & Lasse Laursen

# Woodwinds

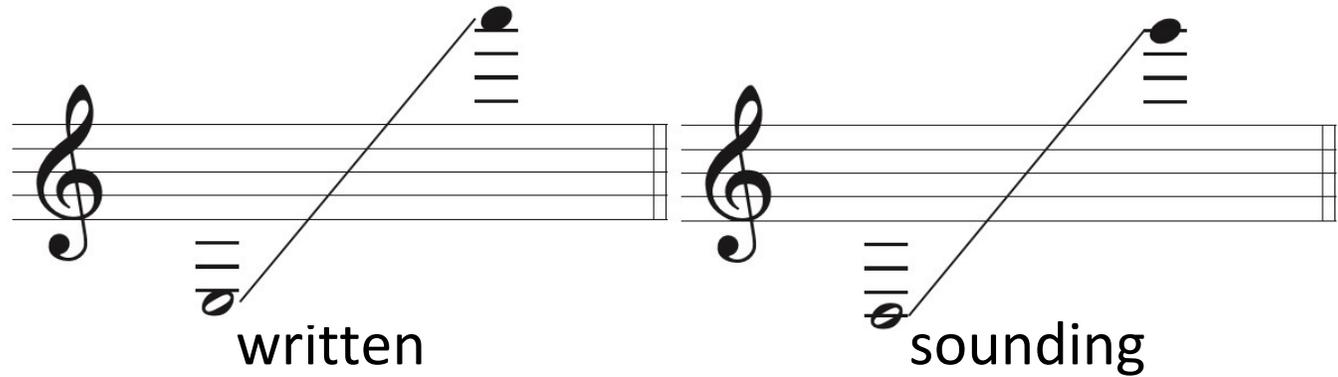
Flute (Fl.)



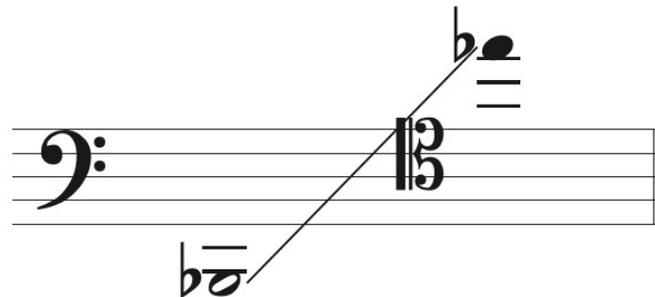
Oboe (Ob.)



B-flat Clarinet (Cl.)



Bassoon (Bn., Bsn.)



# Woodwinds

Flutes & Clarinets: sound softer in the lower range

Oboes & Bassoons (double reeds): sound thicker in the lower range

Avoid extreme registers

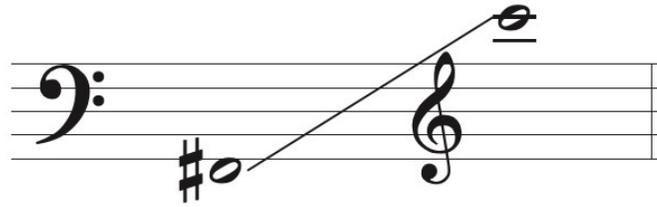
Useful for pedals, arpeggios, scales, and melodies.

They can do large leaps (except for the Bn. going down) and various articulations. (Slur = without tonguing.)

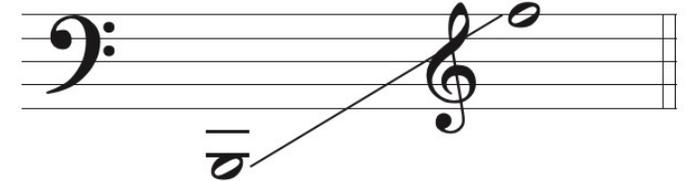
Remember: players need to breathe.

# Brass

F Horn (Hn.)

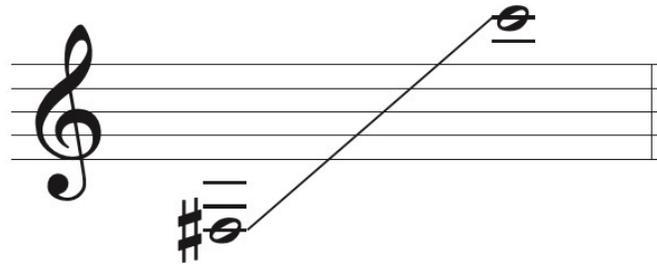


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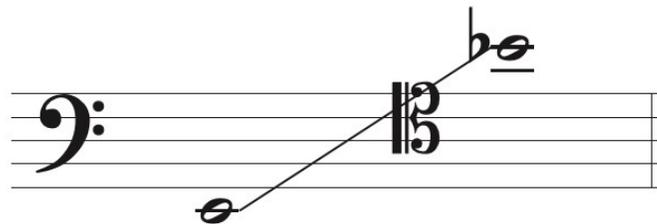


sounding

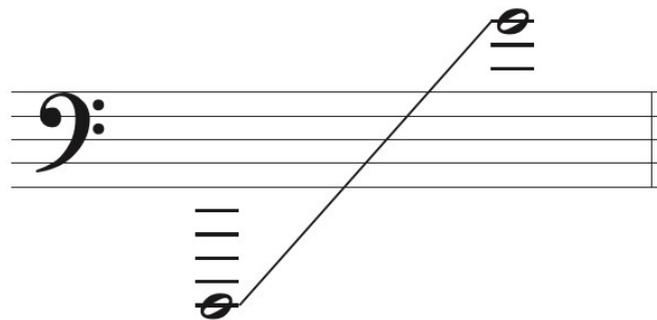
Trumpet (Tp., Trp.)  
(in B-flat or C)



Trombone (Trb., Tbn.)



Tuba (Tba.)



# Brass

Loud, especially the trumpet. (You may use mutes in real life).  
Mostly softer in the lower range (except for low brass).

Useful for pedals, accents, and melodies.

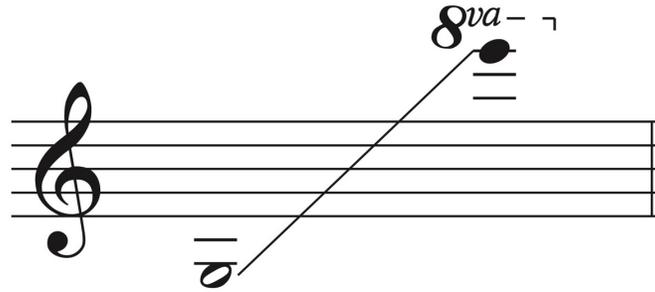
Steps and leaps up are more comfortable.

Various articulations using tonguing. (Slur = without tonguing)

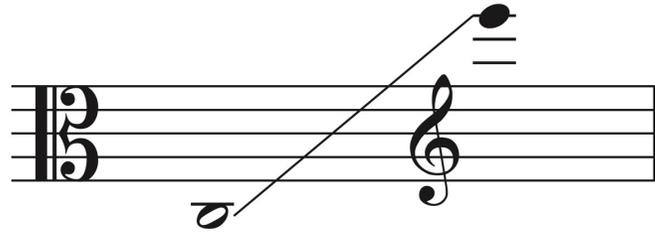
Players need to breathe.

# Strings

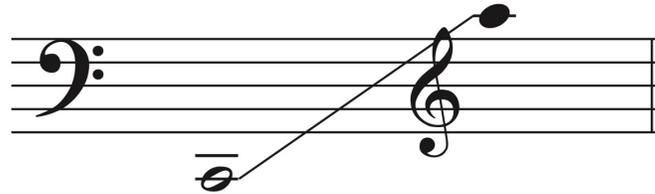
Violin (Vn., Vln.)



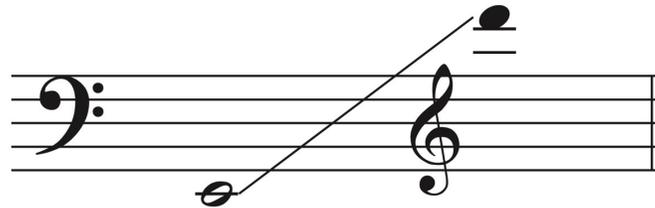
Viola (Va., Vla.)



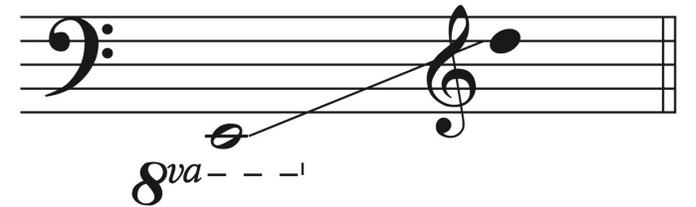
Cello (Vc.)



Double Bass (Db., Cb.)



written



sounding

# Strings

The “bread” of the orchestra.

Very useful for pedaling, scales, and not-too-large leaps.

No need to breathe. (Slur = without changing bow direction)

Vn. I often delivers the melody.

Vn. II & Va. (& Vc.) play the inner voice.

Vc. & Db. Play the bass.

# Strings

Normally, multiple instruments per section.

But expect one per part for the exam.

(No divisi available, therefore.)

Double stops are available (6ths > 3rds > 5ths/4ths,... generally) but not on Db.

# Range Chart

Tuba Db. Bn. Hn. Vc. Tbn. Va. Cl. Tp. Vn. Ob. Fl.

The chart displays the following notes and markings:

- Tuba: Treble clef, G4
- Db.: Treble clef, F#4
- Bn.: Treble clef, E4 (with flat)
- Hn.: Treble clef, D4
- Vc.: Treble clef, C4
- Tbn.: Treble clef, B3 (with flat)
- Va.: Bass clef, G3
- Cl.: Bass clef, F3
- Tp.: Bass clef, E3 (with sharp)
- Vn.: Bass clef, D3 (with 'gva' marking)
- Ob.: Bass clef, C3 (with flat)
- Fl.: Bass clef, B2 (with 'gva' marking)

# Formatting

Order from top to bottom:

WW (Fl. - Ob. - Cl. - Bn.)

Brs. (Hn. - Tp. - Tbn. - Tba.)

(Perc., etc.)

Str. (Vn.I - Vn.II - Va. - Vc. - Db.)

Bracket & shared beams within each group

Add a brace to multiple staves that share instruments (Vn., etc.)

# Distribution, Doubling, & Pedaling

Use a single idea to orchestrate each phrase

Orchestrate a repeated phrase differently

Use (section) strings to double & pedal

Top lines: octave doubling (up)

Bass: octave doubling (down)

# During the Exam

1. Analyze the provided excerpt  
WRT form, phrases, motives, ranges, etc.
2. Sketch them on the excerpt
3. Write the notes down on the sheet

[Behind Bars: The Definitive Guide to Music Notation](#)

# Finishing the Exam

Remember to add tempo & dynamics, articulations, etc.

If you have multiple (but no more than two) players in one staff (the instruments should be identical), make it sure

# Demonstration from Fellowship Exam 2021

Demonstration from Exam 2022 (if Time)

Q & A

Thank You, and Good Luck with the Exam!!