

South Forsyth Middle School 6th Grade Band Picking the Right Band Instrument for You

We are glad you are considering joining the band at **South Forsyth Middle School**. **Please note, sixth grade is the only grade-level that currently offers beginning band through high school in most Forsyth County schools.** We firmly believe that a student's initial interest in playing an instrument is an important part of that student's potential success in band. As a result, we try to place a student on their first or second instrument choice because students will naturally work harder at something they are interested in. This is, however, not the only factor we consider when recommending an instrument for a student to play. The thrill of playing this new instrument will quickly fade if a student is struggling on an instrument that they are not well suited to play. Below is a chart for you to consider when looking at ALL of the possible pros/cons for each instrument.

**Please read this chart together and try to reach a consensus on your
TOP THREE instruments you would like to try.**

<i>Instrument</i>	<i>Who will succeed at this instrument?</i>	<i>Who might struggle with this instrument?</i>	<i>Cost to rent</i>	<i>Additional information to know</i>
Flute	Students who can persevere , who are patient , have a good work ethic , and who can quickly make a sound at the audition and demonstrate good finger coordination. This is an instrument that is extremely competitive in honor bands and chair placements as the student progresses, so students who enjoy that type of challenge will love this instrument.	Students looking for instant success, who want to do the minimum amount of work, and who are unable to initially make a sound or handle complicated fingering patterns. Certain lip shapes have a hard time on flute.	Minimal Avg. of \$15-20 for 1 st 3 months	Due to popularity of the instrument, we limit the number of flute players to balance the overall instrumentation of the band program. Students will need to show clear potential to be selected. This is a challenging instrument to begin to learn and requires a great deal of patience and an extremely dedicated student.
Oboe	Students who are extremely hard workers , who are very bright , who love a challenge , who would enjoy playing a unique instrument, and can make a sound on the reed and handle complicated fingering patterns.	This is one of the hardest instruments to start on. Students who want instant success or are unwilling to put in the needed practice time will struggle.	Avg. \$40 per month for initial rental plus reeds, if not taken care of, can be an additional \$8 or more per month	This is an instrument in high demand for the band. Students on this instrument have access to more college scholarships than most. This is an instrument that will require private lessons during the 5th grade in order to succeed. There will be a list of approved teachers in the area. Lessons run from \$5-20 per lesson.
Bassoon	This instrument is from the same instrument family as the oboe (Double Reeds) and shares many of the same challenges and rewards. (See above)	See Oboe	This instrument is provided by the school but is in limited quantity. Reeds run about \$15 per reed.	The student chosen for this instrument will need private lessons in order to succeed. A list of private teachers will be provided.
Clarinet	This is an instrument with lots of keys. Someone who is very detailed and enjoys complex tasks will enjoy this instrument. This is also an extremely competitive instrument as the student progresses. Students who love a challenge will love this instrument.	Students with small hands will struggle with certain aspects of playing this instrument until they grow. This instrument requires a certain amount of patience as the year progresses because it starts easy but gets increasingly more difficult.	Minimal Avg. of \$15-20 for 1 st 3 months	The clarinet section is the largest section in most bands. To maintain this balance, we will need to start numerous clarinet players. This is an easy instrument to start on but very difficult to master. There will be an on-going expense of reeds that can be minimized if students take proper care of them.
Saxophone	Students who need a quick start at something. Someone who is very detailed and enjoys complex tasks will enjoy this instrument. Students will need to	While some success on this instrument comes quickly, to progress on this instrument the student must give a great deal of	Avg. \$40 per month for initial rental plus reeds	Due to popularity of the instrument, we limit the number of saxophones players to balance the overall instrumentation of the band. This instrument is easy to begin to learn

	make a sound on the instrument at the audition. This instrument plays an important role in our jazz band . Students who want to play jazz will like this instrument.	attention to details and practice regularly.		but becomes increasingly more challenging as the student progresses. Students will have the chance to switch to tenor or baritone saxophone in middle school.
Trumpet	This is an instrument that requires regular practice . A great deal of demand is placed on the muscles around the lips that help make the sound. A good work ethic is a necessity. Students will need to be able to demonstrate an ability to create a buzz that is both high and low at the audition. Some patience is required as higher notes can be a struggle for many beginners.	Students who will be getting braces in the first year will have a difficult time. Once the student has progressed some, having braces is less of an issue. Progress can be slow with this instrument, so a great deal of patience is required. Certain mouth and lip shapes can present obstacles to the student.	Avg. of \$15-20 for 1 st 3 months	This is largest section in the brass family and we will need to start numerous students on this instrument to maintain proper balance. This is Dr. Poor's primary instrument. A consistent commitment to practicing will greatly improve a student's chance of success on this instrument.
French Horn	Students who have a good ear will be more successful on this instrument. Singing experience is a plus . Students will need to be able to demonstrate the ability to match pitch in the audition. Students who are bright, hard workers, patient , and who love a challenge .	Students unable to match pitches will struggle on this instrument. Students who want instant success or do not enjoy a challenge will also struggle.	Avg. \$40-60 per month for initial rental. We do have some school instruments that can be assigned	This is an instrument in high demand for the band . Potential for future scholarships is greater on this instrument. Private lessons are not required but strongly encouraged for this instrument. It is the hardest of the brass instruments to start on.
Trombone	This instrument requires a good ear because there are no keys, just a slide . Students will need to make a sound on the mouthpiece and match pitch. Students with some previous singing experience are more likely to succeed. Students who are patient and willing to work hard are also more likely succeed.	This is a larger brass instrument , so students with small statures will struggle with certain aspects of the instrument until they grow. Students with difficulty hearing different pitches will also struggle. Progress can also be slow, so patience is required	Avg. of \$15-20 for 1 st 3 months	This is an instrument in high demand for the band The Middle School and High School bands need more trombone players and we will be encouraging as many players as is reasonable to play this instrument. This is one of the easier instruments in the brass family to begin to learn, but can become quite challenging as you progress.
Baritone Euphonium	See trombone	See trombone Many trombone players also eventually learn baritone and vice versa.	Avg. \$40-60 per month for initial rental.	We do have a limited number of school instruments that can be assigned. Most students will need to rent their own instrument.
Tuba	This instrument is the most important sound to the band . So we need students who are reliable, dedicated , and can push lots of air into the instrument.	This is the largest of the brass family. Students may struggle until they grow because it requires a great deal of air.	No cost Provided by the school	This is an instrument in high demand for the band Potential for future scholarships is almost limitless on this instrument to a good player. We have 6-8 instruments and would like to fill both slots.
Percussion	This requires an extremely organized and dedicated student with previous piano experience . Percussion students will learn two instruments (snare and bells) and 2 clefs . Students must also demonstrate good rhythm and tempo.	Students must be able to manage time and practice twice as much as all other band members. Students who want to <u>only play</u> drums will not enjoy learning both instruments.	Avg. of \$15-20 for 1 st 3 months	Students selected should have previous piano experience . Students without piano experience have shown in the past struggle at maintaining progress with learning two instruments. We limit the number of percussionists to insure proper instrumentation for the band .