

Dr. Verbeck's Piccolo Tips:

- Always strive for a beautiful sound! Everything you do on the piccolo should be a tone study.
- SPACE! Make sure you have plenty of space in your mouth, focusing on the space between you back teeth.
- Make sure your tongue isn't creating a roadblock.
- Air pressure and air speed need to be stronger and faster on piccolo than on flute.
- While practicing, always keep in mind that you are practicing to perform, not practicing to practice. Challenge yourself to make your playing interesting and musical even if it is "just scales," or "just long tones." You want to be engaged when you perform, so practice being engaged.
- Know your pitch! Practice with a tuner and know the tendencies of your instrument.
- Alternate fingerings are a must on piccolo. Get a good fingering book!
 - The d# key can make a big difference to the timbre and ease of a note. Experiment!
 - Have alternate fingerings at the ready for your excerpts!
- Try to play everyday even if it is only for 5 minutes.
- The left hand notes in the lower register tend to "pop." Know this and adjust accordingly.
- Much of what you do on the flute will work on the piccolo, but on a smaller scale. If you are struggling, DO LESS!
- We tend to "try really hard" when playing piccolo because we need stronger air pressure for the piccolo. This often translates into tension in the neck, throat, face, etc. Redirect that effort into good air support and leave everything else behind.
- Pull out your headjoint! By keeping the headjoint pushed in too much, your upper register will be difficult to play and your piccolo's scale will be compromised.
- Use your flute to practice the piccolo! If you have a difficult passage to practice, especially if it is in the upper register, woodshed using your flute.