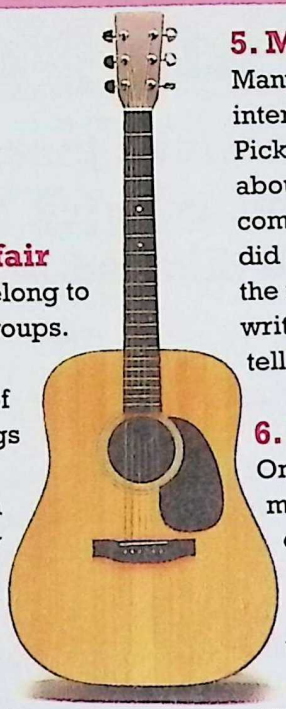
Making Music

A musician is someone who creates art with musical instruments. Try your hand at one or more instruments. Is the musical life for you?







1. A Family Affair

All instruments belong to different family groups. For example, a clarinet is made of wood, so it belongs to the woodwind family. Choose an instrument family and learn what the members of that family do.

2. A New Sound

Design a brand new instrument. How is it played? What does it sound like?

3. Practice, Practice, Practice

The best way to master any instrument is to practice. However, practicing the same thing over and over can be boring. Keep things interesting. Not sure how to start? Try learning two new songs. Or play a song—or scales—backwards. Another idea would be to create your own silly songs.

4. Compose Yourself

Write a simple melody of at least eight measures for an instrument. Write down your piece using symbols for notes, key, tempo, and dynamics. Try to teach someone to play your newly composed piece.

5. Musical Roots

Many pieces of music have interesting stories behind them. Pick a piece of music and find out about the following: What was the composer like? What other pieces did she or he compose? When was the music composed? Why was it written? Does the piece of music tell its own story?

6. Be a Conductor

One of the most celebrated musicians on the stage is the conductor—and she or he doesn't even play an instrument! A conductor guides the musicians through the music by keeping the count, telling various sections when they start or stop, and telling the musicians if they should play softly or loudly. Choose a piece of your favorite music, and learn how to conduct the piece. Use something for a baton, such as a wooden spoon or chopstick, and keep the beat. When should the piece be played loudly? When should it be played more softly?

7. Music with a Theme

Select one of these themes and play music that matches it, for an audience of friends or family: the sea, a river, a busy urban area, a forest, a mountain range, a field or meadow, a circus or festival, a march or parade.



8. On Stage

Using your musical skills, take part in a performance in a Girl Scout ceremony, an individual recital, a group performance, or a community musical event.

9. Opera, Anyone?

Watch an opera or operetta on television, or attend an opera in person. Listen for the story. How much of it is sung? How much is spoken and in what language? How are the voices related to the characters (for example, why does a soprano sing a certain role rather than a bass)? Who composed the opera, and when did she or he live?

10. The World and Its Influence on Music

Throughout history, composers have written songs about significant world events. Some of these pieces were written in celebration. Find out about two pieces of music that were influenced by historical events. Play or sing them for your troop or group and explain what influenced the composers to write them.

