Anvika Menon

Dr. Gingrich

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Review of the Yamaha Silver Head YFL 362 Flute

Music is an expression of the soul, with your deepest vulnerabilities and most cherished victories enshrined in the chords and melody of a song. The energy that flows from your heart to your fingers as you create this universal gift is magical. Months of hard work and rehearsals went into concocting this masterpiece, turning the black and white sheet music into an aurora of colors. The experience of practicing and performing with your closest friends, your second family, is unspeakable. In the midst of this magical whirlwind, sits you, the musician, delicately positioning your flute, breathing with the musical phrases, and releasing your emotions into the notes that emerge. The magic comes from the musician, not the instrument. Yet, the instrument is a fundamental part of one’s ability to render justice to the enduring evocations of the musical piece.

Flutes, perhaps the most ancient instrument, are an amalgamation of nickel, silver, and gold. Contrary to popular opinion, the musician blows *across* the embouchure hole and not *into* it. Depending on the pitch of a specific note, flautists must direct their air stream to hit the embouchure hole at the right angle to access the desired register (upper for higher notes, middle for notes in the middle of the musical staff, and lower for lower notes). Several instrument brands have crafted fine models and types of flutes, but the one that stood out to me, particularly, was the [Yamaha Silver Head YFL 362](https://www.musicarts.com/yamaha-yfl-362-intermediate-flute-main0138650?source=LPPC8CFA&cntry=us&currency=usd&gclid=Cj0KCQjwj9LkBRDnARIsAGQ-hUcDpGxO6FBLuKXk_JNZEQZjC0B4i_XNeJaF_wSZ-efepY7csnPHUQYaAvM0EALw_wcB). An intermediate-level flute, the Silver Head is a good fit for the young flautist that is looking to advance into open-holed flutes without dealing with the expenses and maintenance of a professional model.

For those that aren’t as acquainted with flute lingo, closed-hole flutes are often for beginners because their keys are completely coated in metal, and finger adjustment doesn’t have to be perfect. However, [open-hole flutes](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ii7SBTMx1fU) require a certain level of finesse to place the pads of your fingers over the hole that lies at the center of each individual playing key. A slight slip in finger position and the flute’s tone will be skewed dramatically. The advantage of the open-hole flute is that it provides for a richer sound and a smoother intonation as the aerodynamics change, rendering a sharp contrast in musicality. However, the aspiring flautist is not obligated to attempt the open-hole version just yet. Most open-hole flutes, including the Silver Head, come with wax or rubber plugs to simulate the easy playing of a traditional closed-hole model, allowing the student to make a gradual change to open-hole playing at will.

The Yamaha product is unique because the smooth metal and carefully placed lip plate make playing resonant notes incredibly easy compared to most flute types. The biggest struggle in flute playing comes with finding the “sweet spot” –the perfect placement of the lip plate that allows you to blow directly across the embouchure hole. The Yamaha removes this obstacle by using a slenderer shape that makes the lip plate fit almost perfectly, regardless of mouth shape. In addition, the higher-quality metals used in the head joint reduce the blowing effort required to produce a decent tone. As soon as your air stream hits the back of the head joint, a resonant sound travels through the body of the instrument. With beginning flutes, the placement of the embouchure hole in relation to the lip plate necessitates an extra push of air to produce sound, especially when the lower quality metals are more susceptible to changes in temperature and environment. With the Yamaha, blowing into the embouchure hole (picture kissing your flute), warms up the often-cold metal and allows for enough internal humidity to play with ease. This tactic does work with beginner flutes as well, although to a significantly lesser extent. The intonation of the Silver Head YFL 362 is almost comparable to driving a smooth new sports car, with every sound and movement falling perfectly into place, and the instrument feeling like an extension of your own body.

Apart from the open-hole system, the B-foot joint (an extra lower note only present in more upper level flutes), is easy to reach, with the rolling mechanism in the keys making it easier to slide into low C and transition to the even-lower B. Compared to most other comparable flutes for the intermediate player, the rolling mechanism is fairly unique in that most flutes lack this particular element. Although a minor point of notice, this element does make playing quickly significantly more effective and greatly aids in playing scales. Coupled with ridges on the metal keys, this flute brand was created for speed.

As the budding musician advances through their flute career, he or she will almost inevitably find the music selections getting more and more complex, with syncopated rhythms, faster metronome speeds, and various time signatures that require the player to move with lightning speed. The Silver Head (and all [Yamaha flutes](https://www.fluteworld.com/Yamaha-Flutes.html), for that matter) have circular ridges on each key that function similarly to the raised bump on the “F” and “J” keys of a keyboard, allowing the player to find their place and get a good grip on the instrument. Every flute player knows the struggle that arises when an instrument has been used for an extended period, and the accumulated spit and humidity makes the keys feel slippery. Having a firm place to plant your finger pads mitigates the effects of this frequent problem and prevents fingers from sliding off keys at critical sections in the music. This element is vital to maintaining good technique through advanced music and keeping up with the rapid pace of the ensemble.

Housed in an accident-proof case, the Yamaha Silver Head YFL 362 is an excellent flute of choice for the intermediate player. However, the key word is intermediate. While highly advanced in playing capabilities, the instrument does possess a few minor flaws. Just like humans, it can feel like the Silver Head has its own good days and bad days too. [Tone](http://bethchandler.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Flute-Intonation.pdf) can range from stunningly operatic to a very airy attempt at flute-playing. When this happens, the best course of action is typically to blow into the instrument in case the metal is too cold to reverberate and try removing a few hole plugs to change the aerodynamics. These two tricks have helped me, personally, deal with the occasional ups and downs of playing this particular flute for almost a year. Maintenance is also more important than it seems. The need to [adjust the crown to check tuning](http://bethchandler.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Flute-Intonation.pdf) is rather unnecessary with the Silver Head since it’s ability to stay in tune is quite good with a few simple head joint adjustments. However, the silver head will become more difficult to tune as it ages, especially if the instrument is not cleaned on a regular basis. Without swabbing the inside, the spit accumulates, and the prolonged internal humidity can negatively affect the metal. In addition to cleaning, bi-yearly visits to a musical store are encouraged to ensure that everything is working as it should. Instrument insurance, that can often be bought along with the instrument, lowers the cost of these checkups and provides easy options to get the best care needed.

Compared to beginner flutes (such as a [Jupiter](http://jupitermusic.com/international/products/woodwinds/flutes/) or [Gemeinhardt](http://www.gemeinhardt.com/)), the Yamaha Silver Head is a major step-up. However, it isn’t a flawless instrument, and there are more advanced flutes (and even professional flutes) that may be more suitable for the musician, depending on level and interest. Despite this, it is certainly one of the most, if not the most, cost-effective options available on the market. Costing almost [$2,000](https://www.musicarts.com/yamaha-yfl-362-intermediate-flute-main0138650?source=LPPC8CFA&cntry=us&currency=usd&gclid=Cj0KCQjwj9LkBRDnARIsAGQ-hUcV7o0nEz6lc069fous7u6FP8QEqCq3UpheghcRMK2Oebjn2F_3X0saAiDWEALw_wcB) for a brand-new one, the flute is less pricey than its slightly higher-up competitors, with prices rising upwards of [$3,000](http://www.woodwind-group.com.au/price-range/9.html). For a cost that isn’t a wallet-breaker, considering the fact it is a higher-level instrument, and the immense quality and efficiency guaranteed by the product, the Yamaha Silver Head YFL 362 is the perfect blend of the high school and professional worlds, a cornerstone of the crescendo from the sheltered comforts of beginner playing to the bright stage lights of formal performances.

# Rules

<https://www.trumpethub.com/> https://windplays.com/yamaha-ycl-225-review/

1. **Explain the reasoning and context behind certain suggestions.** The key takeaway from the review about trumpets is that it explains the most important elements and why they matter before reviewing any particular model or brand. The writer acknowledges that not everyone looking to buy a new trumpet will have the same in-depth knowledge of trumpet dynamics as a professional or experienced musician. By giving a brief overview of how one plays the trumpet and what aspects contribute to the sound produced, the reader is in a better position to understand the finer technicalities of the review and make an informed decision about purchasing a good trumpet.
2. **Compare the instrument to comparable brands.** With as many music brands and model types that exist, purchasing a new instrument can be a confusing and daunting task. Through highlighting the most descriptive elements of a variety of common trumpet brands, the reader can find the instrument whose qualities appeal most to them. This is also important to put one particular instrument model in perspective with its competitors. By comparing factors such as cost, intonation, and versatility, a potential trumpet-buyer can determine what a specific price or element means in the larger context. This is also prevalent in the clarinet review. For example, an instrument that costs more than a thousand dollars can seem exorbitant to someone who isn’t as acquainted with instruments, but compared to similar models, such a price might be relatively inexpensive.
3. **Suggest tips for use.** Both the trumpet and clarinet reviews offer advice for troubleshooting problems and for trying out instruments. Predicated off the assumption that not everyone reading a particular review will be knowledgeable enough to fully comprehend the importance of certain elements, the suggestions for instrument use provide a helpful addendum that contributes to the overall experience. By acknowledging potential shortcomings in an instrument and outlining ways to prevent these issues from interfering with playing capability, the reader is made to feel much more comfortable with buying the instrument and treating it well. While not required, the insertion of helpful tips can push a potential buyer from being on the fence and doubting the instrument’s quality to feeling safe in the thousand-dollar purchase, knowing that any problems that arise can be fixed with a few minor adjustments. The tips also ensure that musicians are well-equipped to take care of their instruments. To musicians, instruments are like their children. To mistreat or damage one by preventable mistakes is an outcome that everyone wants to avoid.
4. **Critique specific elements.** Similar to other product reviews, the best way to give a comprehensive picture of the subject is to analyze specific aspects of the instrument and connect them to the overall quality. The trumpet and clarinet reviews accomplish this task through critiquing elements such as the mouthpiece, barrel shape, individual keys, wood quality, and valves. Since the instrument is the sum of all these parts, having an in-depth understanding of how these parts contribute to the instrument as a whole is vital to determining which instrument is the best option. This is especially critical in the case of flutes, where the same basic features are repeated in every model and type. To delve into the actual mechanics behind the manifestation of these characteristics ensures that there is a clear line to mark differences between brands and how one particular model is unique.
5. **End with a decisive conclusion.** Instrument reviews can often seem convoluted, with a variety of technical terms being thrown at the reader, and numerous brands being mentioned. To a young musician, this can only add to the confusing chaos that comes with choosing a new instrument. After all, it is no cheap expenditure, and one wants to be sure they are getting a product worth the cost. By ending each analysis of a clarinet brand claiming that “At the end of the day, **the YCL-650 is the best professional level clarinet at budget price”** or “While the Selmer CL211 may not be the perfect instrument for a beginner, it would be a solid choice for a more advanced student who wants to invest in a quality instrument,” the author of the clarinet review has now simplified the in-depth exploration of specific elements and comparisons to a final stance that can easily be understood. The thesis-like statement at the end enables the reader to have a comprehensive, yet succinct, opinion that influences their decision to buy an instrument. By providing a definitive, clear conclusion, the review comes across as more persuasive and organized.