



WOODEN FIFE KIT

Musicmaker's Kits, Inc

P.O. Box 2117
Stillwater, MN 55082-3117

(651) 439-9120
email: info@musikit.com

PARTS LIST:

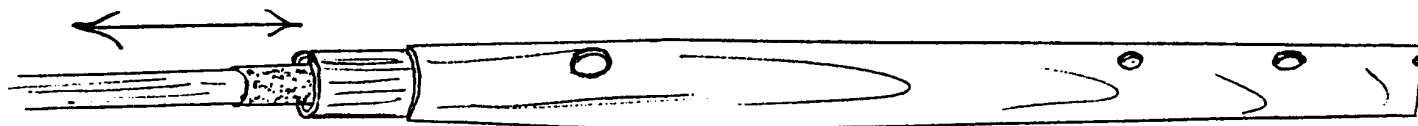
- Unfinished Maple fife
- 2 brass ferrules
- cork plug
- dowel (3/8" X 18")
- 2 scraps sandpaper (adhesive backed)
- Instructions

INSTRUCTIONS

____ 1. The primary task of this kit is to sand and finish the fife. Sanding the inside of the bore is the most difficult job, so we have included a dowel and some self-adhesive sandpaper to make it easier for you.

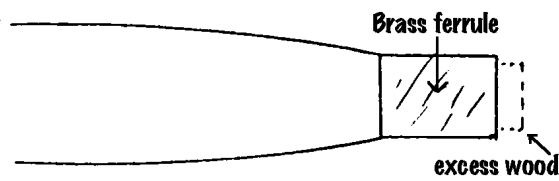


Peel the wax paper backing off the two pieces of sandpaper and wrap one around each end of the wooden dowel. One scrap is 100 grit (coarser) and the other is 180 grit (finer).



____ 2. Use the coarser end of the dowel to sand the bare wood inside the bore, moving the dowel back and forth in the direction of the grain (lengthwise). Blow out the sawdust now and then.

Switch to the finer sandpaper at the other end of the dowel when you think the coarse paper has done its job. The smoother the bore, the easier it will be to play your fife.



___3. Test the brass ferrules to see if they slide over the ends of the fife. If not, carefully sand the ends of the fife until the brass fits easily all the way to the shoulder of the wood.

___4. Decorate the fife as desired. You may do some painting, wood-burning, lettering, carving and/or staining to suit your tastes. This is a fun project to customize. I think the instrument looks best when stained a deep reddish-brown color. We carry some powdered dyes that work very well for that effect.

___5. Wrap masking tape around the ends (where the brass ferrules will be glued), so as not to get any finish on them.

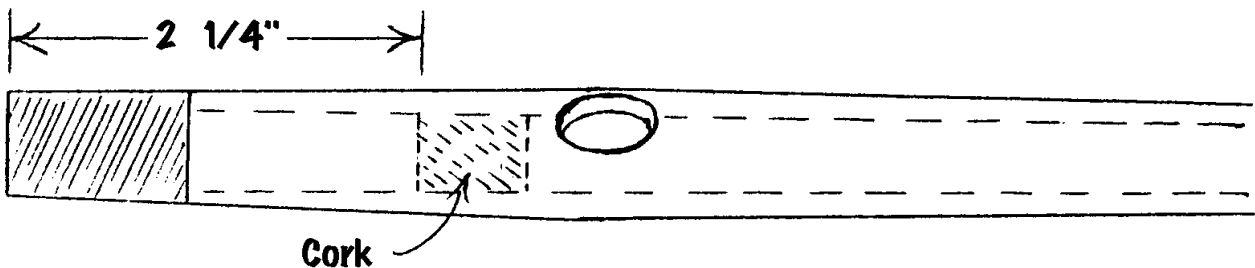
___6. Apply the finish of your choice. You may use a simple oil (Tung, Watco, Linseed, etc) for a quick, low-luster finish, or you may apply a varnish, polyurethane, or lacquer finish. I like the results of several coats of Deft Clear Wood Finish from a spray can.

NOTE: We recommend finishing the inside of the fife too. Wrap a scrap of fabric over the end of the dowel, dip it in your oil or varnish, and push it through the bore of the fife several times to wipe a thin coat on the inside.

___7. When dry, use super glue or 5 minute epoxy to glue the brass ferrules in place.

The brass ferrules should fit all the way onto each end of the fife. You may need to trim off the excess wood flush to the brass. This is easy to do with coarse sandpaper.

___8. Sand the inside of the bore one more time with the finer sandpaper. Clean the bore of all sawdust by pushing a tissue or scrap of clean cloth through the length of it.



___9. Insert the cork into the end nearest the large blow-hole, and push it to a depth of exactly 2 1/4\" from the end.

___10. Your fife should play very well now. If it does not, you may push the cork back out and continue smoothing the inside of the bore. We find that a thorough oiling on the inside makes the fife very easy to play.

HINTS FOR PLAYING YOUR FIFE

If you are not already an accomplished flautist, it may take some time and patience to get your mouth positioned properly to play this instrument. Flute teachers tell their beginning students to position the mouth right on the blow-hole (as if you were to “kiss” it) and then roll the fife down the lower lip until you get a good clear sound when you blow.



Another good hint is to place only the three fingers of your left hand on the fingering holes (leaving the right hand fingers off their holes). The notes in the mid-range are the easiest to play. Once you get a good sound on these notes, you can begin to add more fingers to the holes and work your way down the scale until you get sound from the lowest note (with all six holes covered).

If the fife sounds weak and “breathy” in the lower range, the bore has dried out. A thorough oiling inside will restore the original sound.

Please note that this is a Bb above middle C on the piano (with all holes covered) will sound as Bb above middle C on the piano. The folk music available, however, is printed in the key of D, because that is standard for Irish whistles. When you play the scales and songs as printed on the accompanying literature, the notes will play in a different key than shown on the page. This will be of no concern if you are playing alone, but when other instruments accompany the fife, they will need to play in the same key as the fife.

FINGERING CHART



D	E	F#	G	A	B	C#	D	E	F#	G	A	B	F	G#	A#	C	D#	F	G#	A#
●	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	●	●	○	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
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The six vertical dots represent the six finger holes of the fife, the top dot in the line representing the finger-hole nearest the mouth hole. Black dots indicate closed holes, and clear dots indicate open holes. You will find that the harder you blow, the higher on the scale will be the note you produce.

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