

Overtone flute (koncovka) playing technique

Different tones can be played by changing the intensity of blowing and/or by covering the bottom end of the flute with a finger. (That is why it is called koncovka, which means end-flute).

A very gentle blow plays the base note; stronger blows produce higher harmonics – so called overtones. The stronger the blow – the higher the tone. With open bottom end, one can play overtones listed in the top line of the table below. With covered bottom end, one can play the tones in the bottom line. By combining it together, the flute plays the full lydian and mixolydian scales (shown in turquoise), which are typical scales used in Slovakian and Wallachian melodies. The table is for an overtone flute in C key; for other keys the notes have to be transposed accordingly.

Open bottom end	C	C	G	C	E	G	Bb	C	D
Closed bottom end	G	E	Bb	D	F#	A	H	C#	

(c)Martin Takáč, traditional flutes

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