Fingering (Vertical) Font

Doug Truter

Introduction

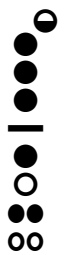
With this font (PC or Mac) you will be able to make your own recorder fingering diagrams. They can be made with any application where fonts are selectable by the user, e.g. word processors, drawing or music notation applications.

The font has been designed to be easy to use, and legible when the font size is small. Its name is *Fingering Vertical* and it is a TrueType font. It is Freeware, but is not to be sold or distributed in an altered state.

You may find the font useful for:

- making your own general fingering charts or tablatures;
- making a chart for trills (not all charts agree on fingering, especially the fingering of trills);
- making a chart for alternative fingerings (for ease of playing, loud/soft notes, avoiding 'clicks');
- making a chart for special fingerings which are peculiar to a particular recorder you play;
- other informative purposes, e.g. to show the fingering for an unusual ornament in a score.

The font can be used to make vertical fingering patterns of different sizes. There is also a companion font which is designed to make horizontal fingering patterns. Its name is *Fingering Horizontal*. It uses the same keys on the keyboard to make fingering diagrams. While the vertical pattern is the more familiar one, the horizontal pattern may be more useful for placing diagrams between systems or staffs in a score, or between paragraphs in a text document.



Font size here = 9

This horizontal pattern can only be made with the font named: *Fingering Horizontal*

Apart from the standard holes (open, closed and 'pinched'), the font includes symbols for more advanced diagrams. It can depict holes to be 'trilled', the large bore hole at the bottom of a recorder, the window of a recorder and holes to be partially closed or shaded.

When a fingering diagram is made with the font, the thumb hole is uppermost and is offset towards the right side of the page. This has been done for a number of reasons:

- because the thumb hole is the uppermost hole on a recorder;
- because the left thumb closes the thumb hole, i.e. the left hand is used;
- because it is consistent with the way the smaller double holes are usually depicted, i.e. the right hand is used;
- it ensures diagrams are easy to make, especially when trill signs are needed.

The font is easy to use because:

- blank space before, after, above and below each hole is built into the font. This ensures correct alignment of the holes and trills without using the space bar. Making a diagram simply involves typing each 'hole' followed by the **Return** or **Enter** key after each hole is placed.
- there is a logic to the way the holes have been assigned to the keys of the computer keyboard. For example, all the thumb holes (the uppermost hole on a recorder) are made by using only the uppermost row of keys on the keyboard (the keys numbered 1 to 4).

You may find it useful to print the next page - it may be all that you need

Making a diagram

Select the font (*Fingering Vertical*) and font size (don't select *italic*, *underline* or *strike-out*).
Make sure that *align left* is on (don't use *centered*, *align right* or *justified* for the diagram).
Type the thumb hole and work your way down the recorder (and down the keyboard), pressing **Enter** or **Return** after you have placed each hole. [The space bar is not used because the correct spacing is built into the font. *Shift* or *Caps Lock* has no effect with this font. You may also need to read later sections on how to install the font and how to use it with applications.]

Symbol map

The map below shows which fingering symbols are assigned to which keyboard keys.

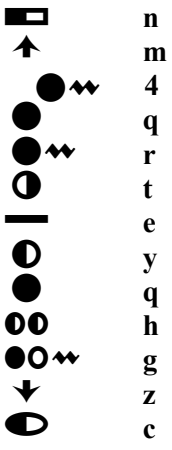
	Basic ←					→ Advanced		
Thumb holes:	1	2	3	4	(the thumb holes will be offset when typed)			
Ordinary finger holes:	q	w	e	r		t	y	
Smaller double holes:	a	s	d	f	g	h	j	
Large bore hole:	(rarely used)					z	x	c
Window shade:	(very rarely used)						n	m

= a hole to be 'trilled'
= a partially closed or shaded finger hole (in this case, for the right hand)
? = a key has been pressed which is not used in the making of the fingering diagrams

Examples

Select the font (*FingeringVertical*).
Select the font size (here it is size 11)

Type ' **2** ' to get:
Press **Enter** and type **q** :
" " " " **q** :
" " " " **q** :
" " " " **e** :
" " " " **q** :
" " " " **w** :
" " " " **a** :
" " " " **d** :



Fanciful example

Inserting tiny spaces with the (forward) slash key

You may never need to use this key. The ' / ' key can be used to add tiny spaces before or after a 'hole'. It behaves exactly like the space bar except that the spaces are much smaller. Keep your finger down if you want to add a lot of these spaces. It may be necessary to use this key if you want to add text before or after any of the holes in a diagram. Tiny spaces may be required to vertically align the holes or the text. This is because the width of a character varies within and between text fonts. Of course, the ' / ' key only behaves this way while the *Fingering Vertical* font is being used.

Can the font be used to make fingering diagrams for other wind instruments?

Yes, to some extent it can, but with varying success. It is very easy, for example, to make a fingering diagram for an Irish tin whistle. Making one for a flute or clarinet on the other hand is more of a challenge. In addition to the '*Fingering Vertical*' font, you would also need to use a text font to type elements like '*R*' or '*R K*' or '*Reg. K*' for the register key and '*Bb L*' for the Bb lever. These could be typed before, after and/or between holes. If a text font is used, you may need to use the ' / ' key to insert small spaces before some of the finger holes to accurately align them vertically.

You may already be familiar with some or most of the information provided in the remainder of this document

How to install the font

The font's file name is: *Fingering Vertical.ttf* . First save this file to one of your folders on your hard drive. The font is installed (or removed) like any other font on your computer. Use your operating system's **Help** for obtaining information on fonts and adding or installing a font. Since Windows XP is widely used (when this was written), this is how the font is installed with that operating system: Click **Start**, then **Settings**, then **Control Panel**, then select **Fonts**, then **File**, then **Install New Font**. You will be asked to identify the drive and folder where *Fingering Vertical* is located, i.e. the folder in which you saved the font file. When this folder is double-clicked, *Fingering Vertical.ttf* should appear in the list of fonts which are in that folder. Click *Fingering Vertical.ttf* to select it, then click **OK**. The font will be installed.

Using the font in applications - general notes

- If you send someone a file produced by your word processor, music notation application etc, the fingering diagrams will not appear unless the receiver also has the *Fingering Vertical* font installed. *Options*: send a printed copy, send the font or convert the document to a PDF file. [Most word processors now conveniently include an icon (and other options) to export their documents as PDF documents. The PDF document you are now reading was entirely produced using *OpenOffice*, an open-source word processor which is available free on the internet.]
- If you have already made a fingering chart, you can use this chart (with some modifications) to make other charts you may require. Don't forget to use different file names.
- When diagrams are shown on the screen they may appear a little different to when they are printed. They are usually less accurately shown on the screen, e.g. holes may not appear completely round. A diagram made with a small font size may be much clearer when printed than when it appears on the screen.
- You may notice something unusual about the way a diagram appears on the screen after you *delete it*, *move it* or *change its size,* especially if a very large font size is used. For example, when you delete it, some or all of it may still appear. When a diagram is moved or dragged, you may notice a small jagged trace from an outer edge of the diagram left on the screen. These 'ghosts' will not affect the way a diagram (or page) is printed. If they bother you, try scrolling up or down the page - this may force the application to refresh the page. [Some applications have **Redraw Screen**, **Refresh Page** or **Update** in their **View** menus which will do the same.]
- In some applications the font's name (*Fingering Vertical*) may be shown alphabetically under F something like this:

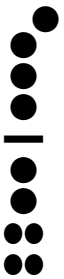
Using the font with word processors

Using a table

While fingering diagrams can be typed directly into a document, it is better to type them in the cells of an inserted table in order to isolate them from the text. When a table is used, each diagram can be made without using the space bar or the ' / ' key. Also, the diagrams will not be affected by what is typed in another cell or elsewhere in the document. Using a table also enables you to place a diagram where it is wanted (horizontally) by dragging the column borders of the table. If only one fingering diagram is wanted, insert a table with one row and one column, i.e. use one cell for each diagram. Be generous with the width of the columns. The column borders can be dragged into place after the diagrams have been made. With most word processors you can select the kind of borders and background you want for a table, including borders which will not show on a print. If you want to make more than one diagram in a table, don't forget to first highlight or select all the cells of the table and then select the font, the font size and *align left*. If this is not done, you will need to adjust settings every time you move to the next cell.

Using a frame or text box

Once a table is completed, you can select it and insert a *Frame* around it or copy/cut and paste it into an inserted *Text Box*. This enables you to drag a table of diagrams as a whole (or a single diagram) to where you want it, anchor it to a page or paragraph and wrap text before, after or around it (as shown on the left side of this paragraph). Be generous with the width and height of the frame or box. The borders can be dragged into place later on. You can adjust the size of the frame or box, alter the borders, background etc. A frame or box is particularly useful when you only have one fingering diagram because it can prevent a lot of blank space. [Not all word processors (or versions of word processors) have these features.]



Importing a file

Alternatively, you could make a diagram using a compatible Drawing application and insert it into your word processor document.

Typing diagrams directly into a document

If you type a fingering diagram directly into a document, it is best to start on a new line and select *Fingering Vertical* and the desired font size right from the very beginning of the line. If you want to move the diagram across the page, you can use the *Tab* key or the *space bar*. If you use the space bar, place an equal number of spaces before each hole of the diagram. [If you place spaces with different fonts, the spaces may not all have the same width. If spaces are placed with different font sizes, the spaces will not all have the same width.]

Typing text on the same lines as holes

If you place text before or after a hole, you need to be aware of alignment problems that may arise if you do this. Text (or spaces) typed before or after a finger hole (i.e. on the same line) must be of the same font size as (or smaller than) the font size used for the *Fingering Vertical* font. The width of characters varies both within and between text fonts. So, if the holes don't line up vertically, the ' / ' key can be used to add tiny spaces before some of the holes. [See page two for information on the use of this key.] An alternative to placing text directly before or after a hole is to place the diagram and the text in separate columns of a table.

AutoCorrect, SpellCheck and Autoformat

Many word processors will correctly recognize that *Fingering Vertical* is a pictorial or symbolic font that is not designed for producing text. They will not automatically correct, check the spelling or suggest ways of completing words when this type of font is used. If your word processor does not recognize *Fingering Vertical* as a symbolic font, you may find it useful to turn off *SpellCheck*, *AutoFormat* or *AutoCorrect* while you are typing your fingering diagrams.

Using the font with music notation applications

Notes are provided for *Finale* and *Sibelius*. If you have a different program, the notes for *Finale* may still be of some use. It is best to add fingering diagrams to a score after note entry and the layout have been finalized.

Finale (and other Finale products)

Use the font in the same way as using any text font, i.e. click the **Text** tool, then click the **Text menu** to select the font (*Fingering Vertical*) and the font size. Click on the score where you want the diagram. The cursor appears. Type the diagram. If necessary, drag the diagram into place by its handle.

Sibelius

Simplest method, suitable for occasional use (requires ten clicks)

- First you need to select the right cursor. Click **Create**, then **Text**, then **Special Text**, then **Special symbols**. Click on the page where you want the diagram. You now have the right type of cursor.
- Now you need to select the right font. Click on the **Properties** icon at the top of the screen (the properties window opens). Click **Text,** then select the font (*Fingering Vertical*) and the font size. Close the **Properties** window when necessary. Type the diagram. If necessary, drag the diagram into place.

More complicated but semi-permanent method

The aim is to get the *Fingering Vertical* font listed in the list of fonts that a 'house style' uses and to select the settings that you want for this font. You need to make your own choices with some of these settings. However, there are some crucial settings which are described now.

- Open a score. Click on **House Style**, then **Edit Text Styles**, then select **Special symbols** from the menu, then click **New**, then **Yes**. On the **General** card at **Name** [where it probably has: 'Special symbols (2)'] type 'Fingering Vertical′, then select the font (*Fingering Vertical*) from the font menu (it should be listed if this font has been correctly installed). Ensure that italic and underline are not selected. Select a font size that you are most likely to use (if you are not sure type in 10. Such settings can be edited at a later time.) Click the **Horizontal Posn** card to ensure that **Align to note** is set to **Left**. Click the **Vertical Posn** card to ensure that line spacing is **100%**. Click **OK**. (*Fingering Vertical* should now be listed in the **Edit Text Styles** menu.) Close the menu. Sibelius now 'knows' about *Fingering Vertical* but only for the currently open (and saved) score.
- How can the settings be retained for use in *other* or *future* scores? Click on **House Style** again, then click **Export House Style**. You will be asked to give your new house style a name. You could name it "My Settings" ,"Fingering" or "Fred". Once named and okayed, this house style will retain the settings for the *Fingering Vertical* font (as well as other settings for the open score). You are now able to use this house style in the future.
- You can import this house style into scores that do not yet know about *Fingering Vertical*. How? Open the 'ignorant' score. Click **House Style**, then **Import House Style**, then select the new house style you named. [You do not have to import everything from this house style. You can, for example, import only the **Text styles** component.]
- To use the *Fingering Vertical* font in a new score with the newly created house style, click **Create**, then **Text**, then **Special Text**, then *Fingering Vertical*. [If it is not listed, you need to import the new house style as described above.] Click on the score to position the cursor. Type the diagram. If necessary, drag the diagram into place. [Once you have set up the house style, only five clicks are required to use the font - though more are required if you want to change the font size.]

Troubleshooting

If the spacing does not look right in a fingering diagram:

- Have you used the correct row of keys? e.g. use only the numbered keys for all thumb holes.
- Have you incorrectly turned on *justified*, *centered* or *align right* for the lines that the holes are on? If the holes don't line up in the cell of a table, make sure that *align left* is turned on for every line that a hole is on. If, for example, *centered* is turned on, you can spend a lot of time trying to align holes in the cell of a table without succeeding.
- Have you made the width of columns in a table too narrow?
- Have you made the borders of a frame or text box too narrow or shallow?
- Have you accidentally pressed the space bar or the ' / ' key?
- Has the font changed without you noticing it? This can happen when spaces are typed because you can't see (on the page) that it has changed. If you highlight spaces, you will be able to see which font and font size were used to make them. If no font and/or font size is shown, then more than one font and/or font size was used.
- If you try to delete a space and don't notice any difference, you may have deleted a tiny space made with the ' / ' key.
- If you want to insert a tiny space and get a ' / ' when you press the ' / ' key, it is because you are using a text font.
- If you use both fingering fonts (vertical and horizontal) you will notice that the diagrams differ in their appearance (apart from their different orientation). The thumb holes are in slightly different positions. You will also notice that (for the same size diagram) the font size for a horizontal pattern needs to be larger than when making a vertical pattern. The font system was not designed to make fingering diagrams. Consequently, the font has been designed within certain constraints. Compromises have been made.