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Well hey there! Welcome to episode 10 of Busy Kids Love Music, an educational podcast for music-loving families. I'm Carly Seifert, the creator of Busy Kids Do Piano, and I'm excited to have you here with me today. This episode is scheduled to air on New Year's Eve, so I'll also take the chance to wish you a very happy New Year! Before we dive into today's episode, I wanted to let you know that my online piano lesson programs open for public enrollment in January, so if piano lessons are on your list of New Year's resolutions, be sure that you're on my waitlist. Visit [busykidsdopiano.com/waitlist](https://www.buskidsdopiano.com/waitlist) so that you don't miss out on your chance to join when public enrollment opens in the New Year.

In today's episode of Busy Kids Love Music, we are learning all about the saxophone. Most instruments were tinkered with and adjusted over time by many different inventors and musicians, but the saxophone was invented by Adolphe Sax in 1846 -- and he did it all on his own. When Adolphe Sax first introduced the saxophones, people were not impressed. But the instrument's popularity grew as a military band instrument.

We often think of the saxophone as being a popular instrument in jazz, funk or pop music, but many famous classical composers also wrote music for the saxophone. The piece you hear now is a piece for the saxophone and orchestra composed by famous French composer Claude Debussy. Elise Hall, an influential American saxophonist, commissioned many composers to create saxophone works for her so that she could perform solo saxophone music with an orchestra in a concert hall.

The saxophone really gained its notoriety in jazz music. Do you remember what a solo is? It's when the instrument plays all by itself. The trumpet and saxophone are the two leading solo instruments in jazz music.

Sidney Bechet was the first great jazz soloist in saxophone history. He was a famous clarinet player in New Orleans but began to use the soprano saxophone because it was louder and more powerful than his clarinet. Because of this added volume, he turned the soprano saxophone into a solo instrument.

Perhaps one of the greatest giants of jazz saxophone history -- and really all of jazz history -- is Charlie "Bird" Parker, Jr. Charlie Parker was able to play the saxophone at incredibly fast tempos and developed a style of jazz called bebop. Bebop was known for its fast tempos and super complicated technique and harmonies.

The saxophone is classified as a woodwind instrument, even though most saxophones are made from brass. In the brass instrument family, lips vibrate at a mouthpiece cup to produce a sound. A saxophone produces its sound by using a reed that vibrates when air is forced between the reed and the mouthpiece which is why it is classified as a woodwind instrument.

There are three main parts to the saxophone -- the crook, the body and the mouthpiece. The crook attaches to the body at the top by sliding in. The mouthpiece attaches to the top of the crook by sliding over the cork. When you produce a sound using the reed and press additional fingers down on the body, the pipe in the saxophone gets longer and the pitch gets lower. When you remove fingers, the pipe gets shorter, and the pitch is higher.

There are many different members of the saxophone family. The sopranino saxophone is the smallest member of the saxophone family and has a high, sweet sound, although it is the least common type to be used in music.

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The subcontrabass saxophone is enormous and requires its player to stand on a chair in order to play it. There are only a few of these in existence, but they are over 7 feet tall. The instruments most used in an orchestra are the soprano, alto and tenor saxophones. Saxophone is also used in opera, choral music and musical theatre scores.

I hope you've enjoyed learning a little bit more about the saxophone with me today. Be sure to download this episode's listening calendar, which includes links to saxophone performances in all sorts of different styles. You can get your hands on that listening calendar by visiting [busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/10](http://busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/10). If you enjoyed today's episode, please be sure to rate and review our podcast on iTunes. Thank you so much for joining me today, and I look forward to seeing you again in 2 weeks on the Busy Kids Love Music Podcast!