

SECTION I: POSITIVE GROUP INTERACTION

INTRODUCTION

The word “consort,” originally referring to a 17th-century English chamber ensemble, comes from the Latin word *serere*, meaning “to join together.” A consort is a group of players working together towards a common goal—enjoyable music making. The success of the group in achieving that goal depends largely upon the way the individual members behave towards one another.

In Chapter 6 of *The Recorder Book* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), Kenneth Wollitz compares consort playing with team sports. While both endeavors involve teamwork, their goals are essentially opposite. The aim of teamwork in the sports arena is “mock war.” The aim of teamwork in a consort is “mock peace.” Group music making is a purely cooperative, non-competitive endeavor. Therefore, members of a consort are expected to behave towards one another with tact and respect. According to Mr. Wollitz, “the very act of playing together is, or should be, civilizing.” He mentions the following six ways in which the Golden Rule can be applied to consort rehearsal behavior.

1. Arrive on time. Be in your place, ready to tune, when the rehearsal begins.
2. Curb unnecessary chitchat during rehearsals. Listen carefully to the director.
3. Don't play while the others are tuning or the director is speaking.
4. Don't play other peoples' instruments without their permission.
5. If you borrow music, put the owner's name on it, and if you lend music, put your name on it.
6. Don't write on borrowed music with ink or magic marker. Use a light, easily erasable pencil.

Chapter 1 of this handbook provides suggestions on how to form a consort, and courteous group behavior is explored further in Chapters 2 and 3. Chapter 2 shows how to apply tact in various problem situations frequently encountered by consorts. Chapter 3 presents ten rules developed by members of an amateur consort to hold the group of players with diverse skills, backgrounds, and personalities together.

The individual also must take responsibility: parts must be taken home and practiced, and instruments that sound good together must be chosen. Chapter 4 presents a multi-step program that will help players make the most of their practice time and Chapter 5 offers helpful advice on shopping for recorders.

Chapter 6 is a tongue-in-cheek list of rules for ensemble etiquette.