07 Exploring Further

We hope you have enjoyed Play the Organ Year 2025, and that you are interested to learn more about the organ, its music and the people who compose for and play it!

The pipe organ is a truly remarkable musical instrument, variously considered among the oldest, the largest, the loudest and the most versatile in the world! Not for nothing did Mozart call the organ 'the King of all the Instruments'. The organ, the buildings it can be found in, and the music it plays, fire the imagination and the emotions. Artists today use the organ to play classical pieces, electronic music, film music, jazz and much, much more.

Whether you want to find out more about the organ itself, explore its music, or even take your first steps towards becoming an organist yourself, the Royal College of Organists (RCO) and other organisations have a variety of free resources available to help.

Explore the Organ

With more than two thousand years of history, and instruments found and played everywhere from cathedrals and stately homes to cinemas and ice hockey stadiums, there's plenty to find out about the organ!

For a whistlestop tour that includes some of the fundamentals of organ and organ music knowledge (as well some less well known aspects) you might start with the RCO's own *A-Z of the Organ* series on YouTube. These short films, all recorded during the pandemic lockdown of 2020, can be found in a single playlist at **www.youtube.com/rcofilms**.

Once you've found our YouTube channel, you'll find plenty more to enjoy. Our *Introduction to the Pipe Organ* film would be a great place to start, and then feel free to browse wherever your interest takes you – from a musical tour of Westminster Abbey to an organ improvisation on a theme by Frankie goes to Hollywood.

The RCO also has its own online learning hub for organists, called iRCO. Visit **i.rco.org.uk** and register for a free account to gain access to dozens of films, articles and other information about the organ, organists and organ music. To quickly find all the free guest content, click on the search bar, select 'Free', and press the Search button.

PLAY THE ORGAN YEAR 2025

www.rco.org.uk/play

Explore the Music

The best way to hear organ music is definitely in person! Many town halls, churches and cathedrals host regular organ concerts, and details of these will generally be advertised locally by the venues. They can often also be found at **www.organrecitals.uk**.

If you can't get to a venue, then why not try Spotify? A search for organ music will return literally thousands of playlists and albums, or why not search for our "Organ Goes Pop!" playlist to find out how everyone from Coldplay to DJ Shadow, Muse to Arcade Fire, have incorporated the sound of the organ into their music. And once you've found our Spotify (royalcollegeoforganists) you'll find plenty more playlists to enjoy.

Similarly, a search for 'organ recital' on YouTube will quickly produce thousands of performances for you to enjoy, among them many world-class recitalists and breath-taking instruments and venues. Also on YouTube, our friends at Fugue State Films have a great many recitals among extracts from their many series of organ films.

There are also several recording labels which offer organ music albums: try Regent Records, Hyperion, Priory or, for an alternative take, labels such as ECM.

Learn to Play

A great many organists also teach the organ, so if you already know an organist through an event like Play the Organ Year, why not ask them if they or anyone they know can help?

The RCO has a network of accredited teachers throughout the UK, providing one-to-one lessons for students of all ages and standards without audition, whether beginner, intermediate or advanced, whatever their goals. We also have many members who offer private tuition. You can find details, as well as how to get in touch with our team, at **www.rco.org.uk/organteachers**.

A great many organists come to the instrument via the piano, and of course this will give you a definite head-start when it comes to taking organ lessons! If you're a pianist interested in transitioning to the organ, then our friends at the American Guild of Organists (AGO) have a great playlist of 30 short films just for you. Search YouTube for AGO *Lessons for a New Organist*.

Finally, a great way to find out more and support the future of organ music is to join the Royal College of Organists. Membership of the RCO is open to anyone with an interest in organ and choral music, whether you play or simply enjoy the music. There are also other ways you can sponsor or support our work. Visit www.rco.org.uk for more information.