

Flute Maintenance

How to keep things working

A flute is an expensive responsibility and will require careful attention to keep it in prime working order. Each student is held responsible for his/her instrument. It is therefore recommended that siblings, friends and even parents without musical training should not attempt to assemble, play or clean the instrument.

NEVER EVER EVER EVER EVER EVER...

1. Get your flute wet. Water will damage your pads.
2. Use oil, or grease on the joints of your flute.
3. Grab your instrument by the keys. Thin metal bends easily!!!
4. Play with the cap on your headjoint. This affects your sound!

Daily Care:

1. Remove flute from case by the ends (where there are no keys)
2. Always wipe the tenons (these are the sections that you twist into other sections) off before assembly of the flute. A small amount of debris will build up around the joints, which is normal, but can cause problems if ignored.
3. Use a gentle back-and-forth motion to twist flute together. Pushing too hard can bend the joints!
4. Before putting away your flute, remove moisture from inside the flute with your swab. Carefully wipe off the outside of the flute to remove oils or perspiration from your hands.
5. Always store your instrument in its case.

Monthly Care:

1. Check all screws and keys.
2. If any seem loose, take to music store or teacher. DO NOT try to adjust them yourself. Serious damage can be caused by over/under tightening.

Yearly Care:

It is recommended that you have your instrument inspected by a professional each year. The shop may find adjustments or worn pads that are affecting the optimal performance of your instrument.

If you follow these guidelines your flute will last a VERY long time and will sound great the whole time!!!

Clarinet Maintenance

How to keep things working

A clarinet is an expensive responsibility and will require careful attention to keep it in prime working order. Each student is held responsible for his/her instrument. It is therefore recommended that siblings, friends and even parents without musical training should not attempt to assemble, play or clean the instrument.

NEVER EVER EVER EVER EVER EVER...

1. Get your clarinet wet. Water will damage your pads!
2. Use any product other than cork grease on your instrument!
3. Grab your instrument by the keys. Thin metal bends easily!!!
4. Use hot water to clean your mouthpiece!

Daily Care:

1. Remove clarinet from case by the ends (where there are no keys)
2. Apply a small amount of cork grease to the tenons before assembly.
3. Use a gentle back-and-forth motion to twist clarinet together. Be careful not to twist on the keys! Always press the bridge key when assembling upper and lower joint to avoid bending it!
4. Do not over-tighten your ligature. This will make it harder to play and can break the screws or strip the ligature!
5. Always swab the instrument when done playing. Reeds must be removed from the mouthpiece. If left on, your mouthpiece and reed can grow mold!!!
6. Always store your clarinet in your case. Do not put anything else inside your case, this can bend the keys.

Monthly Care:

1. Check all screws and keys.
2. If any seem loose, take to music store or teacher. DO NOT try to adjust them yourself. Serious damage can be caused by over/under tightening.

Yearly Care:

It is recommended that you have your instrument inspected by a professional each year. The shop may find adjustments or worn pads that are affecting the optimal performance of your instrument.

If you follow these guidelines your clarinet will last a VERY long time and will sound great the whole time!!!

Saxophone Maintenance

How to keep things working

A saxophone is an expensive responsibility and will require careful attention to keep it in prime working order. Each student is held responsible for his/her instrument. It is therefore recommended that siblings, friends and even parents without musical training should not attempt to assemble, play or clean the instrument.

NEVER EVER EVER EVER EVER EVER...

1. Get your saxophone wet. Water will damage your pads!
2. Use any product other than cork grease on your instrument!
3. Grab your instrument by the keys. Thin metal bends easily!!!
4. Use hot water to clean your mouthpiece!
5. Set your instrument down with the keys touching the ground!

Daily Care:

1. Remove saxophone from case without squeezing the keys.
2. Always wipe the neck joint with a soft cloth before assembly. Use a small amount of cork grease to the mouthpiece cork
3. Use a gentle back-and-forth motion to twist saxophone together. Don't push the mouthpiece past halfway onto the cork!
4. Do not over-tighten your ligature or screw at that holds the neck in place. This will make it harder to play and can break the screws or strip the ligature!
5. Always swab the instrument when done playing. Reeds must be removed from the mouthpiece. If left on, your mouthpiece and reed can grow mold!!!
6. Always store your saxophone in your case. ***Do not put anything else inside your case, this can bend the keys.***

Monthly Care:

1. Check all screws and keys.
2. If any seem loose, take to a music store or teacher. DO NOT try to adjust them yourself. Serious damage can be caused by over/under tightening.

Yearly Care:

It is recommended that you have your instrument inspected by a professional each year. The shop may find adjustments or worn pads that are affecting the optimal performance of your instrument.

If you follow these guidelines your saxophone will last a VERY long time and will sound great the whole time!!!

Trumpet/Tuba Instrument Maintenance

How to keep things working

A brass instrument is an expensive responsibility and will require careful attention to keep it in prime working order. Each student is held responsible for his/her instrument. It is therefore recommended that siblings, friends and even parents without musical training should not attempt to assemble, play or clean the instrument.

NEVER EVER EVER EVER EVER EVER...

1. Use hot water to clean your instrument!
2. Push or twist your mouthpiece into the lead pipe! It WILL get stuck!
3. Try to “muscle” a valve, valve cap, slide or mouthpiece. Thin metal bends easily!

Daily Care:

1. Valves need to be lubricated regularly. To do this: (a) unscrew the valve cap and pull the valve about halfway out. (b) apply a few drops of valve oil. (c) twist valve back and forth to spread the oil. (d) push valve back into position and tighten valve cap (NOTE: on most instruments there is a valve guide to help. On others, there is a number engraved in the valve. If you are holding the instrument with the mouthpiece facing you, you should be able to see the number). **DO NOT OVER-TIGHTEN THE VALVE CAP!**
2. If your mouthpiece gets stuck, there is a special “mouthpiece puller”. Do not try to pull it off; you can cause serious damage to the instrument. Sometimes a gentle twist is all that is needed to free the mouthpiece.
3. When you are done playing, remove moisture from the inside of the instrument by blowing through the instrument while pressing the water keys. Wipe off the outside of the instrument to remove oil and perspiration from your hands.
4. Always store your instrument in your case. ***Do not put anything else inside your case, this can cause damage.***

Monthly Care:

1. Check all slides to see that they move freely. Lubricate with slide grease if necessary.
2. The inside of your instrument needs to be cleaned regularly. The following page describes this process in detail.

Yearly Care:

Regular monthly care can eliminate the need for additional yearly care, but music shops can execute a “chemical dip” that will more thoroughly clean out the instrument.

If you follow these guidelines your instrument will last a VERY long time and will sound great the whole time!!!

Trombone Maintenance

How to keep things working

A trombone is an expensive responsibility and will require careful attention to keep it in prime working order. Each student is held responsible for his/her instrument. It is therefore recommended that siblings, friends and even parents without musical training should not attempt to assemble, play or clean the instrument.

NEVER EVER EVER EVER EVER EVER...

1. Use hot water to clean your instrument!
2. Push or twist your mouthpiece into the lead pipe! It WILL get stuck!
3. Try to “muscle” slide or mouthpiece. Thin metal bends easily!

Daily Care:

1. The smallest bump or dent in the slide can interfere with its proper movement. The precision needed to repair a slide makes it a time consuming and costly activity.
BE CAREFUL!!
2. The main slide needs to be lubricated regularly. Apply a small amount of slide oil or cream (NOT grease) to the inside tubes of the slide before playing. Move the slide in and out to distribute the oil.
3. If your mouthpiece gets stuck, there is a special “mouthpiece puller”. Do not try to pull it off; you can cause serious damage to the instrument. Sometimes a gentle twist is all that is needed to free the mouthpiece.
4. When you are done playing, remove moisture from the inside of the instrument by blowing through the instrument while pressing the water key. Wipe off the outside of the instrument to remove oil and perspiration from your hands.
5. Always store your trombone in your case. ***Do not put anything else inside your case, this can bend the slide!!!***

Monthly Care:

1. Check the tuning slide to see that it moves freely. Lubricate with slide grease as needed.
2. The inside of your instrument needs to be cleaned regularly. The following page describes this process in detail.

Yearly Care:

Regular monthly care can eliminate the need for additional yearly care, but music shops can execute a “chemical dip” that will more thoroughly clean out the instrument.

If you follow these guidelines your trombone will last a VERY long time and will sound great the whole time!!!

Brass Bath Time!!!

Brass instruments need to be cleaned internally on a regular basis. The following is a description of that process. Please note that French Horns should NOT be cleaned at home. They have special requirements and should only be cleaned by a qualified repair shop!

To clean your instrument, you must take it completely apart! You will also need some cleaning brushes, valve oil and slide grease. Most music shops sell cleaning kits with everything you need in them for about \$10. You will also need a place to wash your instrument, and unless you have a very large sink, the bathtub is probably your best bet!

1. Carefully remove all slides, valves and bottom valve caps (It is helpful to keep these in order, especially if they are not numbered!) Trombones need to be especially careful with their main slide. These are even more delicate when taken apart! If any valves or caps are stuck, take to your teacher or a repair shop.
2. Place all parts, except for the valves, in warm (**NOT HOT**) water. Let them soak for about 10 minutes. Hot water or abrasive cleaners can damage or remove the finish on the instrument. If absolutely needed, a small amount of dish soap can be used (this is not generally needed!).
3. While the instrument soaks, take the valves and run warm water over them while brushing out all openings with a valve brush. Avoid getting the felt at the top of the valves wet! Shake off water and set valves aside to dry (try to keep them in order!!!)
4. Brush all tubes with the “snake”. Brush valve casings with the valve brush. Remove any debris from the bottom valve caps.
5. Rinse entire instrument with clean water. It is extremely important that you allow all parts to become **COMPLETELY DRY** before continuing.
6. Apply a small amount of slide grease to all slides (except main trombone slide! This needs slide oil or cream!). Use a towel to wipe away any excess that builds up when you carefully push them in.
7. Replace the bottom valve caps and lubricate each valve with valve oil before replacing them. Valves must be in the correct order and facing the correct direction in order to work correctly!
8. You’re finished!!! Enjoy playing a **CLEAN** instrument!!!