



## Care and Maintenance of wind and brass instruments

### Clarinet

#### Cleaning after practice

Remove moisture from the inside of your instrument using a 'pull through' cloth.

Wash your mouthpiece out regularly with warm (not hot) soapy water with a mouthpiece cleaning brush (alternatively an old toothbrush can be used)

#### Assembly

- Hold the upper joint in your right hand and press down the ring key. This will raise the upper link key.
- Hold the lower joint in your left hand and carefully twist the two joints together.
- Gently twist the bell onto the bottom of the lower joint.
- Attach the mouthpiece to the barrel.
- Twist the mouthpiece and barrel onto the top of the upper joint.

#### Reeds

Always handle your reed with care, as cracks/chips in them will cause a squeaking sound.

Remove your reed after playing, this will allow it to dry out. A wet reed left on your instrument will turn black and mouldy!

### Flute

#### Cleaning after practice

Use the cleaning rod and cloth to remove moisture from the inside of the flute

### **Assembly**

- Always be very careful assembling your flute. Try not to put pressure on the keys.
- When connecting the headjoint and body, hold the head joint around the tube, without touching the lip plate and hold the body of the flute at the top.
- When connecting the footjoint hold the keys gently, and attach using a twisting and pushing motion.

## **Saxophone**

### **Cleaning**

Wiping with a slightly damp cloth will remove any finger marks from the lacquered finish.

### **Assembly**

- Insert the crook into the body carefully to prevent damage to the octave mechanism.
- Attach the mouthpiece onto the crook (this can be done before or after). The reed should be protected with the reedcap during this process.

### **Sticky Pads**

Sometimes a pad will stick due to a build up of moisture and/or dust. A cigarette paper or thin cloth can be used to remove any residue by placing it under the pad, closing the key gently and pulling the paper out while holding the key down.

### **Reeds**

See [clarinet](#)

## **Trumpet/Cornet/Tenor Horn**

### **Cleaning/Bathing**

The instrument should be 'bathed' at regular intervals i.e. once a month. A bowl of warm water with a little washing up liquid should be used.

The mouthpiece should be removed after each lesson/practice and also should be washed out each month with warm soapy water.

### **Water Keys**

Water should be 'blown' from the instrument after each lesson/practice session. This is easily done by placing the mouth around the mouthpiece and blowing, holding open each water key.

## **Assembly**

- Attach the mouthpiece by placing it carefully into the lead pipe and giving a small twist to gently tighten it into the pipe.
- Do not bang or twist the mouthpiece too hard or the mouthpiece will get stuck. If this happens, then ask your teacher if they can borrow a mouthpiece extractor to remove the mouthpiece.
- Do not attempt to remove a stuck mouthpiece, especially with a vice and an adjustable spanner!!

## **Valves**

Valves may become sticky for two reasons i.e. fails to 'pop' back up in the usual way.

1. Valve needs oiling
2. Valve needs cleaning due to the build up of old oil, dirt and saliva.

To oil the valve, first remove the valve from its casing by unscrewing the top of the valve.

Only remove one valve at a time!!

Apply a few drops to the area of the valve with the holes, try not to oil inside the holes as the oil collects and causes wastage. Return the valve to its casing and turn the valve clockwise until you hear a 'click'.

Make sure the valve is aligned correctly, the instrument will not produce a note if it is not.

Check the valve for dirt. If dirt is evident, rinse with lukewarm water and rub gently with a lint free cloth.

This may take a while but when clean, rinse thoroughly and oil.

## **Slides**

A number of slides can be removed from the cornet. Each slide should be cleaned and lubricated.

Pull the slides out completely and clean the outer section with a cloth and warm water. Once clean, a small amount of Vaseline should be placed onto the internal slide sections. Ensure slides are re-inserted correctly.

## **Trombone**

### **Cleaning**

The mouthpiece should be cleaned regularly using warm soapy water and a mouthpiece brush (or old toothbrush)

### **Slides**

Keep the slide completely clean, and ask your teacher about lubricating with slide oil, or just water.