

HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR PRIVATE/SCHOOL OWNED INSTRUMENT = FLUTE/PIC

Flute / Piccolo Care

Items you need:

- Cleaning kit
- Polishing Cloth
- Cleaning/Tuning Rod
- Small Hand Towel

Daily Care

***If your instrument gets wet – ALWAYS DRY IT WITH A TOWEL then a polishing cloth. If the inside of you case gets wet – ALWAYS LEAVE IT OPEN to dry out!

1. When removing your flute from its case never pick it up by its keys. Remove it by the ends where there are no keys.
2. Put the flute together with a slow back-and-forth twisting motion, never push or pull the flute when assembling or disassembling this can cause the instrument to become bent at the joints.
3. Each time you put the flute together a small amount of debris will build-up on the tenons (this is normal), however, this can make it difficult to assemble. Always wipe the tenons (joints) with a soft cloth before assembling.
4. The use of lubricants on the tenons is not recommended - this can cause damage over time. The only exception to this rule is on some piccolos and wood flutes that have cork joints. You should apply a small amount of cork grease to these joints, as needed, to aid in assembly.
5. After you are finished playing, use a cleaning rod with an absorbent cloth to swab out the inside of all parts to remove moisture. Carefully wipe off the outside of the flute to remove oils or perspiration caused by your hands.
6. Always store your flute in its case when not in use, this helps prevent damage and aids in keeping the instrument from tarnishing. Do not place anything in the case that can press on the flute, this can bend keys.

Other:

- Check all screws and pivots to see if they are coming loose. If they are, take your flute to a repair shop to have them adjusted. It is not suggested that you try and adjust them yourself because they can be over tightened or damaged.
- Clean your mouthpiece out at least once a week

Tuning:

Proper intonation on the flute is dependent upon making small adjustments depending on the pitch tendencies of the flute. Other factors also contribute to difficulties in intonation, including weather, make and model of the instrument, inherent pitch of the instrument, & pitch standards of various ensembles.

Intonation on the flute is determined by:

- 1.) The speed of the air stream (slower air=flatter pitch; faster=sharper)
- 2.) The angle of the air stream (lower angle=flatter; higher=sharper)
- 3.) Left hand pressure (more pressure=lower; less=sharper)

Do not move your head or roll the flute excessively (preferably not at all). Both of these techniques can be used in very “extreme” circumstances (if nothing else works well enough), but most pitch adjustment should be made with the embouchure, jaw, flute placement, and air column.

Some things to consider when making overall pitch adjustments on the flute:

- 1.) Headjoint cork—use your cleaning rod to check the headjoint cork. The line on the rod should be centered in the middle of the embouchure hole.
- 2.) Headjoint placement in body of flute—all flutes are designed for the headjoint to be pulled out 1/16th to 1/4th of an inch.
- 3.) Embouchure—a “smiling” embouchure will generally cause the player to be sharp.

4.) Breath pressure—too little air will cause the pitch to be flat, too fast air will cause the pitch to be sharp.

Tuning

Make sure your instrument is warm. The best way to warm up the flute is to cover the embouchure hole with your mouth, close all keys, and blow *gently* through the instrument until it feels warm to the touch. Blowing hard, fast air through the instrument does not warm it up more quickly and only produces more condensation!

When tuning to (an)other instrument(s), let the instrument that sets the pitch standard play first. Listen carefully, then play a relatively short tuning note. Stop to hear the difference. Have the other instrument play again, then test your note again. You may also check a brief arpeggio or interval. Do not play an entire scale or lots of extraneous notes.

Be sure to play with the same quality of tone and breath support with which you will be performing. While you are performing, if you feel that you are not completely in tune, do not hesitate to attempt to make an adjustment during several measures rest, or between movements. It is much better to make an effort to adjust than to play an entire performance out of tune!

Flute/Piccolo

Basic Tuning Rules

- 1. Warm up thoroughly before tuning*
- 2. Always use sufficient air support and play at a mezzo forte dynamic level.*
- 3. Do not use vibrato or try to manipulate the tuning note—play it straight.*
- 4. Before completing the chart, tune to the pitches shown below by adjusting the head joint accordingly.*

Your Tuning Notes

Play quarter note pitches to help “prep” the tuning note (the half note pitches).

Note- The head joint has an adjustable tuning plug at the closed end. It is extremely important that this plug is in the right location (screwed in the correct amount) in order to tune accurately. Check that it is placed correctly by inserting a cleaning rod into the open end of the head joint until it touches the cap. If correctly placed, the etched line on the cleaning rod should appear exactly in the center of the tone hole.

If the plug needs to be moved outward (away from the open end), tighten down on the threaded cap. To move the plug toward the open end, loosen the cap and push in. Please ask for help in doing this. Once it is in the correct place, **DO NOT MOVE IT!**

Your Tuning Mechanism

Head joint- pull the head joint out if the pitch is sharp; push it in if the pitch is flat.

How to Adjust a Pitch While Playing

- Sharp- Roll head joint in (direct air more downwards into tonehole).
- Flat- Roll head joint out (direct air more across tonehole).
- Alternate fingerings

HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR PRIVATE/SCHOOL OWNED INSTRUMENT = CLARINET

Clarinet Care

Items you need:

- Large cloth (not felt) cleaning swab
- Polishing Cloth
- Cork Grease
- Small Hand Towel

Daily Care

** If your instrument gets wet – ALWAYS DRY IT WITH A TOWEL then a polishing cloth. If the inside of your case gets wet – ALWAYS LEAVE IT OPEN to dry out!

1. When removing your clarinet from its case never pick it up by the keys. Remove it by the ends where there are no keys.
2. When putting your clarinet together, first apply a small amount of cork grease to the tenon corks.
3. Put the clarinet together with a slow back-and-forth twisting motion, never push or pull the clarinet when assembling or disassembling this can damage the tenon or tear the cork.
4. When tightening the screws on the ligature, the device that holds the reed on the mouthpiece, take care not to over tighten them this can cause the screw to break or cause the reed to be too close to mouthpiece.
5. After you are finished playing, pull a cleaning swab through all parts of the clarinet to remove moisture. Carefully wipe off the outside of the instrument and keys to remove oils or perspiration caused by your hands.
6. Always store your clarinet in its case when not in use, this helps prevent damage and aids in keeping the instrument clean. Do not place anything in the case that can press on the clarinet, this can bend keys.

Other:

- Check all screws and pivots to see if they are coming loose. If they are, take your clarinet to a repair shop to have them adjusted. It is not suggested that you try and adjust them yourself because they can be over tightened or damaged.
- Clean your mouthpiece out at least once a week

Breaking in a Reed:

A reed must be broken in over a period of days if it is eventually to become one that is dependable and usable for a period of time.

1. Soak for 15 seconds. Play for only 5 minutes. Play only low register (octave) and at *mf*.
2. Rest the reed for one or two days.
3. Repeat steps one and two. Add some play in upper register (octave).
4. Soak for 30 seconds. Play for 10 minutes. Use both upper and lower registers and some altissimo register. Play both *p* and *ff*.
5. Rest the reed for one or two days
6. Repeat steps 4 and 5
7. Once the break-in period is over, a reed should not be played more than two hours in any one session.
8. Always allow a reed to rest several days before using it again.
9. *Performance* reeds should be played occasionally for short sessions (30 minutes) to ensure and maintain their condition.

Reed Storage

- In order to keep reeds from warping they should be stored against a hard, flat surface with light but even pressure and at a relative humidity between 60% and 80%.
- A high quality reed storage case is a necessity for the life and quality of life of your reeds.

Basic Tuning Rules

1. Warm up thoroughly before tuning
2. Always use sufficient air support and play at a mezzo forte dynamic level.
4. Before completing the chart, tune to the pitches shown below. Adjust the barrel, middle joint, and/or bell as shown below if pitch is sharp or flat.

How to Adjust a Pitch While Playing

- Sharp notes- "lip up" (increase lower lip pressure)
- Flat notes- "lip down" (drop jaw, open throat)
- Alternate fingerings

TUNING THE Bb CLARINET FOR REHEARSAL OR PERFORMANCE

The goal of tuning the clarinet should be twofold:

1. Tune the clarinet generally to a certain pitch level (ie. 440)
2. Keep the clarinet in tune with itself as much as possible.

1. Throat tones: "G", "A", "Ab" and "Bb" on the staff
2. The long pipe, right hand clarion tones: "B", "C", and "D" on the staff.

The Throat Tones:

The throat tones do not react the same as the rest of the clarinet when tuning is done by pulling the barrel. The throat tones sink much lower than the rest of the clarinet as the barrel is pulled. For example, pulling the barrel a certain amount may lower most of the clarinet by 5 cents while the throat tones lower as much 10 cents from that same amount of pulling. The more the barrel is pulled the flatter the throat tones become in relation to the rest of the clarinet. Therefore it is not uncommon to find the throat tones are flat to the rest of the clarinet if excessive pulling of the barrel is required.

The Clarion Tones:

The long pipe clarion tones we mentioned tend to be sharp notes on most clarinets. Among these naturally sharp tones is the third space "C" (concert "Bb"); the tone which is most commonly used in tuning the clarinet. When this naturally sharp "C" is used as the tuning note the barrel needs to be pulled excessively to bring it down to pitch, and this, as we observed above, results in flat throat tones. Therefore, this method may yield an in tune "C", but cause other areas of the clarinet (and most especially the throat tones) to be terribly flat.

A better method of tuning and one which accomplishes both of our goals is as follows:

1. Tune the concert "F" (open "G") by pulling the barrel.
2. Tune the clarion concert "F" (clarion "G") by pulling the middle section.

Tuning in this way causes the clarinet to play better in tune with itself and most especially preserves the tuning of the throat tones. The reason is that the throat tones are tuned first at the barrel, and then the clarion "G" (another tone which tends to be somewhat sharp) is tuned by pulling at the middle joint. The combination of pulling at the barrel for open "G" and at the middle joint for the clarion "G" has the effect of bringing the naturally sharp third space clarion "C" down to pitch without any further adjustment at the barrel being necessary.

Recommendations for Playing in Tune

- ~Tune G first by pulling out the barrel
- ~Next tune C by pulling from between the upper and lower joints
- ~If middle B is sharp, you could pull out the bell (keep in mind that lower E is flat so pulling out could make it even flatter.
- ~A common mistake is pulling out too much at the barrel to tune C, so throat tones become very flat.
- ~Prevent throat tones by using tuning rings or getting a longer barrel.
- ~An expensive option would be to purchase of buffet barrel which range is sizes from 62 mm- 69mm.
- ~Pitch can be flattened by removing material from the back of the mouth piece.
- ~When shopping for a mouth piece you should always bring a tuner, and use more than one reed when trying out mouth pieces.
- ~A clarinet with sharp throat tones should get a mouth piece that places these tones lower.
- ~Clean the holes of the clarinet to restore the original pitch. Dirt can get caught in the holes and make the pitch sound fuzzy and flat.
- ~Thick pads, and bumper corks can keep holes from opening far enough. The hole will be fuzzy and flat. Corks can be sanded and pads can be replaced by a technician.
- ~Bent keys, which can be repaired by a technician also, can cause that note to be flat.
- ~Tune at mf or louder because loud clarinet sounds are lower than softer ones.
- ~Alternate fingerings that are easiest to play technically are usually the most in tune.
- ~Too little lip pressure produces a sound that is airy, fuzzy, and a little tubby.
- ~Too much lip pressure produces a nasally tone quality, a sharp pitch, and an inability to play dynamics above mp.
- ~Articulate with a flat tongue. The tip of the tongue should be to the tip of the reed.
- ~If the tongue is too close to the tip of the reed then every note will have an attack.

HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR PRIVATE/SCHOOL OWNED INSTRUMENT = SAXOPHONE

Saxophone Care

Items you need:

- Cleaning swab- no “pad savers”
- Polishing Cloth
- Cork Grease
- Small Towel

Daily Care

***If your instrument gets wet – ALWAYS DRY IT WITH A TOWEL then a polishing cloth. If the inside of you case gets wet – ALWAYS LEAVE IT OPEN to dry out!

1. When removing your saxophone from its case never pick it up by the keys. Remove it by picking it up by the bell.
2. When assembling your saxophone be sure to wipe the neck joint and inside of the receiver with a soft cloth this will make it easier to assemble.
3. Apply a small amount of cork grease to the mouthpiece cork to help the mouthpiece move into position.
4. When tightening the screws on the ligature, the device that holds the reed on the mouthpiece, take care not to over tighten them this can cause the screw to break or reed to become too close to mouth piece.
5. After you are finished playing, pull a cleaning swab through the saxophone to remove moisture. Carefully wipe off the outside of the instrument and keys to remove oils or perspiration caused by your hands.
6. Always store your saxophone in its case when not in use, this helps prevent damage and aids in keeping the instrument clean. Do not place books or folders in the case, this can bend keys.

Other

- Check all screws and pivots to see if they are coming loose. If they are, take your saxophone to a repair shop to have them adjusted. It is not suggested that you try and adjust them yourself because they can be over tightened or damaged.
- Clean your mouthpiece out at least once a week

Breaking in a Reed:

A reed must be broken in over a period of days if it is eventually to become one that is dependable and usable for a period of time.

1. Soak for 15 seconds. Play for only 5 minutes. Play only low register (octave) and at *mf*.
2. Rest the reed for one or two days.
3. Repeat steps one and two. Add some play in upper register (octave).
4. Soak for 30 seconds. Play for 10 minutes. Use both upper and lower registers and some altissimo register. Play both *p* and *ff*.
5. Rest the reed for one or two days
6. Repeat steps 4 and 5
7. Once the break-in period is over, a reed should not be played more than two hours in any one session.
8. Always allow a reed to rest several days before using it again.
9. *Performance* reeds should be played occasionally for short sessions (30 minutes) to ensure and maintain their condition.

Reed Storage

- In order to keep reeds from warping they should be stored against a hard, flat surface with light but even pressure and at a relative humidity between 60% and 80%.
- A high quality reed storage case is a necessity for the life and quality of life of your reeds.

Tuning the Saxophone

- 1.) Warm up thoroughly before tuning the saxophone
- 2.) Tune at a comfortable volume level (mf), with a smooth tone. No vibrato.
- 3.) Tune to a reliable pitch (electronic tuner, keyboard, etc.) using the recommended tuning note(s) below.
- 4.) Do not “humor” the tuning note by making physical adjustments. Play it straight. Adjust the mouthpiece if the pitch is sharp or flat.
- 5.) Recheck the tuning note with the reliable pitch until it is in tune.

Basic Tuning Notes

Use the black notes to slur into the pitch you will use for tuning.

Tuning Mechanism: Mouthpiece. Pull out the mouthpiece if the pitch is sharp; push it in if the pitch is flat.

Factors that can cause poor alto saxophone intonation:

- Poor quality or worn out saxophone
- Alto saxophone out of adjustment
- Leaking pads or joints
- Poor quality or damaged ligature
- Poor quality, cracked or chipped mouthpiece
- Incorrect reed strength or adjustment
- Poor posture or saxophone position
- Poor embouchure
- Insufficient air support
- Restricted range, flexibility, and endurance due to poor playing procedures and/ or lack of practice
- Insufficient Warm up
- Playing off the Standard Tuning Frequency (A = 440)
- Pitch Tendencies of saxophone and performer
- Poorly trained ears

Adjusting pitches

There are multiple ways to physically adjust the pitch while playing the alto saxophone.

To raise the pitch (if the pitch is flat)

- 1.) Use less air
- 2.) Put more lower lip pressure on the reed
- 3.) Alternate fingerings – check with your director
- 4.) Combinations of the above

To lower the pitch (if the pitch is sharp)

- 1.) Use less air
- 2.) Put less pressure on the reed by dropping the jaw
- 3.) Alternate fingerings – check with your director
- 4.) Combinations of the above

It is very important that you learn to do this without compromising the tone. You must work to have a good embouchure, proper breath support and be an active listener in order to play with good intonation with a proper tone. A good quality mouthpiece and reed are very important factors.

Practice

Practicing adjusting your pitch is very important. You need to learn the best methods to adjust the pitch, as well as increasing your ability to adjust notes quickly. A good way to practice is to get out your most recent Pitch Tendencies Chart, your instrument and your tuner. Warm up properly and tune your instrument. Start in a comfortable register, and then work your way up and down the range of the instrument. Play each pitch as a long tone and work to adjust it in tune using the methods listed above. Concentrate on keeping good air support and focus on maintaining a great sound at all times. Good tone is vital. Once you have adjusted a note so that it is in tune, try to start it in tune. After a while, try to play a few notes in a row, getting each note in tune.

You can (and should) also do this with all of your Major and minor scales as well.

HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR PRIVATE/SCHOOL OWNED INSTRUMENT = VALVE BRASS CARE

Trumpet, Mellophone, Baritone, and Tuba (And Other Valve Instruments)

Items you need:

- Snake
 - Soft Cloth/Polishing Cloth
 - Valve Oil
 - Large Towel – Bath Sheet/Beach Towel
- ALWAYS – unless other wise told – USE GLOVES WHEN PLAYING YOUR INSTRUMENT! This will help to prevent the silver plate or gold lacquer on the horn from corroding!
- If your instrument gets wet – ALWAYS DRY IT WITH A TOWEL then a polishing cloth. If the inside of you case gets wet – ALWAYS LEAVE IT OPEN to dry out!
- POLISHING: Use ONLY a SILVER POLISHING cloth to polish your instrument. The upperclassmen/veterans will show you how to polish your instrument correctly. DO NOT SHARE cloths from instrument to instrument.

Daily Care

1. Valves on brass instruments need to be lubricated on a regular basis. To do this: (a) Unscrew the valve cap and pull the valve out about half way. (b) Apply a drop of valve oil to the wide part of the valve. (c) Push the valve back into position making sure that it is lined up correctly. (Note): The valve has a guide that keeps it in place. To check for correct alignment gently try to turn the valve. If it doesn't turn it is lined up. If it turns keep turning the valve till you hear a slight "click" and the valve stops turning.

2. Occasionally a mouthpiece will become stuck in the horn. If this happens **don't** try force to remove it - this can cause major damage to the instrument. Ask your band director or staff person to use the proper too to remove it.

3. After you are finished playing make sure you remove any excess moisture from the inside of the horn by opening the water keys and blowing through the instrument. Carefully wipe off the outside of the instrument to remove oils or perspiration caused by your hands. Use your polishing cloth to wipe down the instrument after each time you play.

4. Always store your instrument in its case when not in use, this helps prevent damage and aids in keeping the instrument clean. Do not place books or folders in the case, this can bend slides and cause valve problems.

Other:

Mouthpiece

- Rinse with soap and water one a week.

Tuning Slides

- Press all valves to when removing ANY slides. Apply a SMALL amount of slide grease to each slide and spread over entire surface. Press all valves when inserting slide and wipe off excess grease.

TUNING YOUR VALVE BRASS INSTRUMENT - BRIEF

Pitch Tendency

Each horn will have a natural tendency to be either sharp or flat within certain pitches. A thorough understanding of one's horn and its behavior in relation to tuning will aid greatly in the ensembles ability to effectively be "on tone" and "in tune".

Within chords and in regard to intonation, we must also understand the role of the different notes with the chord. In order to accomplish this task of "micro-tuning", you must know your place within the chord.

Yet another issue with pitch tendency that we encounter is the effect of valves on intonation. For each valve or combination of valves, we have an undesired affect on the pitch. In order to correct this, the appropriate slide or lip adjustment must be made. The last of the great issues is temperature.

Hot = Sharp Cold = Flat

1	1 Step, Flat, Lip Up
2	½ Step, Sharp, Lip Down
1+2	Sharp, Use 1st Slide
2+3	Flat, Lip Up (NO SLIDE)
1+3	Sharp, Use 3rd Slide
1+2+3	Very Sharp, Use Slide 1 & 3

Trumpet:

Tune your Bb (1st valve) as closely as possible if you have a thumb saddle. If you don't have a thumb saddle, tune your Bb slightly flat (but no more than 5 cents). Play your A (12), and, if you have a thumb saddle, see how much you have to pull the slide out to make the A play in tune. Tune your Ab (23) and adjust the third slide to make it as in-tune as possible. If you have a finger ring on your 3rd slide, you could adjust the "starting position" that the 3rd slide stays in when you're not using it. Play low G (13, *not* open G) and find out how much you need to move the third slide to fix the tuning. Repeat on F# (123).

*If you don't have a finger ring on your 3rd slide, you'll have to compromise on the longer fingerings. Use your own judgment, depending on which fingerings you use most (23, 13, 123). **Additional note for trumpet and cornet players: if you have a thumb saddle and finger ring on your trumpet but don't use it, USE IT!!! The more you become accustomed to yourself playing in tune, the more accurate your intonation will be. This can be an enormous help when concert season rolls around, too.

Mellophone:

Tune your Bb [F if an F mello](1st valve and slide) as closely as possible. If you don't have a thumb saddle, tune slightly flat (but no more than 5 cents). Play your A [E if an F mello](12), and, if you have a thumb saddle, see how much you have to pull the slide out to make the A play in tune. Tune your Ab [Eb if an F mello](23) and adjust the 3rd slide to make it somewhat flat (about 10 cents is the limit here). Play low G [D if an F mello](13, *not* open) and see where it sits on the tuner. You'll have to compromise on the longer fingerings. Use your own judgment, depending on which fingerings you use most (23, 13, 123).

Baritone / Tuba:

Tune your Ab [Bb if Bar. TC](1st valve and slide) slightly flat (but no more than 5 cents). Most marching baritones have a thumb saddle for the 1st slide; if you have one of these, tune your Ab [Bb if TC] as closely as possible. Play your G [A if Bar. TC](12) and see where it sits on the tuner. It may be a little sharp; this is a compromise you must make to get your overall tuning as close as possible. (you can, of course, lip it down a little, but that's harder to do when you're marching around the field). Tune your F# [Ab if Bar. TC](23) and adjust the 3rd slide to make it somewhat flat (about 10 cents is the limit here). Play low F [G if Bar. TC](13, *not* open) and see where it sits on the tuner. You'll have to compromise on the longer fingerings. Use your own judgment, depending on which fingerings you use most.