

Woodwind Instrument Cleaning Instructions

For Flute, Clarinet, and Saxophone

CAUTION: Never, never immerse a flute, clarinet, or saxophone in water. The pads and the glue that hold them would be damaged and they could fall out, requiring some very expensive repair work.

Be careful to never leave your instrument in extreme heat or cold. (For instance, the car trunk)

Suggested Supplies (maintenance kits are available)

Swab for cleaning inside the horn
Cloth for cleaning the outside of the horn
Cork grease (for clarinets and saxophones)
Key oil (needed only 2 to 3 times a year)
Brush or pipe cleaner to clean between keys
Absorbent paper, such as lens cleaning paper

FLUTE

Each flute has a metal rod that is used for cleaning. Wrap a strip of cloth around the cleaning rod, making sure that the end of the rod is covered completely. Swab out each section of the flute after playing. The end of the head joint and the middle joint should be wiped free of dirt with a cloth to facilitate assembly of the instrument.

A sticky pad is usually due to moisture or dirt. To clean the pads, place a piece of absorbent paper, such as lens paper for cleaning camera lenses, under the pad, close the key, and pull the paper through. To avoid sticky pads, don't eat or chew gum before playing.

As you put your flute in the case, carefully wipe off the outside of the flute to remove oils or perspiration caused by your hands.

Monthly care: Check all screws and pivots to see if they are coming loose. If they are, take your flute to a repair shop or your teacher to have them adjusted. It is not suggested that you try and adjust them yourself because they can be over tightened or cause the instrument to become out of adjustment.

A small brush or pipe cleaner can be used to clean the dust and dirt from between the keys where a cloth won't reach.

Yearly care: About twice a year the flute keys should be oiled. A small amount of high-grade key oil should be applied to the friction points in the mechanism. To avoid damage to the pads, immediately remove excess oil with a cloth. Apply the oil with the tip of a toothpick.

Special Note: Always keep your flute in its case when you are not playing it. Never put anything in your case that it was not designed to hold. The pressure from papers or music in your case can bend the rods and keys. Several times a year vacuum your case out. Keeping the case dust free will help keep the dust out of your instrument. **Be sure to latch your case carefully.**

CLARINET

When assembling your clarinet, if needed, apply a small amount of cork grease to the tenon corks.

A sticky pad is usually due to moisture or dirt. To clean the pads, place a piece of absorbent paper, such as lens paper for cleaning camera lenses, under the pad, close the key, and pull the paper through. To avoid sticky pads, don't eat or chew gum before playing.

After each practice, use a swab to clear the moisture from the inside of your clarinet. Swab each section individually as you put your instrument away. Carefully wipe off the outside of the clarinet and the keys to remove oils and perspiration caused by your hands.

Monthly care: Check all screws and pivots to see if they are coming loose. If they are, take your clarinet to a repair shop or your teacher to have them adjusted. It is not suggested that you try and adjust them yourself because they can be over tightened cause the instrument to become out of adjustment.

A small brush or pipe cleaner can be used to clean the dust and dirt from between the keys where a cloth won't reach.

Yearly care: About twice a year the clarinet keys should be oiled. A small amount of high-grade key oil should be applied to the friction points in the mechanism. To avoid damage to the pads, immediately remove excess oil with a cloth. Apply the oil with the tip of a toothpick.

Special Note: Always keep your clarinet in its case when you are not playing it. Never put anything in your case that it was not designed to hold. The pressure from papers or music in your case can bend the rods and keys. Several times a year vacuum your case out. Keeping the case dust free will help keep the dust out of your instrument. **Be sure to latch your case carefully.**

SAXOPHONE

When assembling your saxophone, if needed, apply a small amount of cork grease to the mouthpiece cork.

A sticky pad is usually due to moisture or dirt. To clean the pads, place a piece of absorbent paper, such as lens paper for cleaning camera lenses, under the pad, close the key, and pull the paper through. To avoid sticky pads, don't eat or chew gum before playing.

After each practice, use a swab to clear the moisture from the inside of your saxophone. Swab each section individually as you put your instrument away. Carefully wipe off the outside of the saxophone and the keys to remove oils and perspiration caused by your hands.

Monthly care: Check all screws and pivots to see if they are coming loose. If they are, take your saxophone to a repair shop or your teacher to have them adjusted. It is not suggested that you try and adjust them yourself because they can be over tightened or cause the instrument to become out of adjustment.

A small brush or pipe cleaner can be used to clean the dust and dirt from between the keys where a cloth won't reach.

Yearly care: About twice a year the saxophone keys should be oiled. A small amount of high-grade key oil should be applied to the friction points in the mechanism. To avoid damage to the pads, immediately remove excess oil with a cloth. Apply the oil with the tip of a toothpick.

Special Note: Always keep your saxophone in its case when you are not playing it. Never put anything in your case that it was not designed to hold. The pressure from papers or music in your case can bend the rods and keys. Several times a year vacuum your case out. Keeping the case dust free will help keep the dust out of your instrument. **Be sure to latch your case carefully.**