

Woodwind Cleaning Guide

Cleaning your instrument is extremely important. It will keep your instrument in the best playing condition (making things easier for you) as well as lengthen the instrument's life. Follow the following instructions for cleaning and maintaining your instrument.

Items needed:

Silk Swab (NOT cloth)

Padgard (flute/saxophone only)

Soft Cloth (handkerchief recommended)

Polishing cloth (for instruments only!)

Cork Grease

Flute

Daily:

- Swab your instrument after every playing session. Silk swabs recommended.
- Wipe your keys with a soft cloth (handkerchief, old t-shirt rag).
- Check your instrument for loose screws – specifically where the long rods are.

Monthly:

- Wipe your instrument with a polishing cloth (sold at instrument stores) to remove any finger oil build up.
- Focus on the keys and lip plate. Remove any lip residue off the lip plate.

Oboe

Daily:

- Swab your instrument after every playing session. Silk swab required!
- Wipe your keys with a soft cloth (handkerchief, old t-shirt rag).
- Wipe the corks to remove excess cork grease; focus on the joints where the body connects. Get all gunk out of the crevice!
- Check your instrument for loose screws – especially where the long rods are.

Monthly:

- Wipe your instrument keys only with a polishing cloth (sold at instrument stores) to remove any finger oil build up.
- Empty your case of any old reeds. Dr. Kunz will take any old cork “staples”.

Clarinet

Daily:

- Swab your instrument after every playing session. Silk swab required!
- Wipe your keys with a soft cloth (handkerchief, old t-shirt rag).
- Wipe the corks to remove excess cork grease; focus on the joints where the body connects. Get all gunk out of the crevices!
- Check your instrument for loose screws – especially where the long rods are.
- Look for any bent keys; focus on the bridge areas.

Monthly:

- Wipe your instrument keys only with a polishing cloth (sold at instrument stores) to remove any finger oil build up.
- Empty your case of any old reeds. They harbor bacteria! If they are unplayable, place them in the garbage.
- Soak your mouthpiece in warm, soapy water. Use mild dish soap. Clean with soft sponge/rag to remove any “gunk” from the inside. Rinse with water and let dry.

Saxophones

Daily:

- Swab your instrument after every playing session. Silk swab required!
- Wipe where the neck attaches to the body to remove any excess dirt.
- Check your instrument for loose screws – especially where the long rods are.

- Look for any bent keys or places keys are not sealing; focus on the palm keys and neck.

Monthly:

- Wipe your instrument with a polishing cloth (sold at instrument stores) to remove any finger oil build up.
- Empty your case of any old reeds. They harbor bacteria! If they are unplayable, place them in the garbage.
- Soak your mouthpiece in warm, soapy water. Use mild dish soap. Clean with soft sponge/rag to remove any “gunk” from the inside. Rinse with water and let dry.

Brass Cleaning Guide

Cleaning your instrument is extremely important. It will keep your instrument in the best playing condition (making things easier for you) as well as lengthen the instrument's life. Follow the following instructions for cleaning and maintaining your instrument.

Items needed:

Valve Oil	Rotor Oil (French horn only)	Slide Cream (trombone only)
Slide Grease	Soft Cloth (handkerchief recommended)	Polishing cloth (for instruments only)

Trumpet

Daily:

- After every playing session, empty your water keys. Hold open the water key, blow steady stream of air through the instrument to get any water out. Make sure to wiggle valves while doing this to get ALL water out.
- Using a soft cloth/handkerchief, wipe the outside of the instrument to remove any fingerprints.

Weekly:

- Using lukewarm water and mild dish soap, soak your mouthpiece in the soapy water. Using a mouthpiece specific brush (available at any music/instrument store), scrub the mouthpiece to remove any grime.
- Make sure all slides move easily – use slide grease on slides if they are difficult to move.
- Oil valves – Remove valves from casing and place 1-2 dots ONLY of valve oil on each valve. Place back into the casing.

Monthly:

- BATH TIME! – your brass instrument needs a bath every so often.
 - Bathtubs are the best for this: Grab an old towel and place into bathtub. Take the valves out and place to the side (make sure you know which is 1, 2, and 3!). Take the entire trumpet apart and wipe all excess grease off. Using warm water, fill the tub enough to cover the instrument (do NOT use HOT WATER – it will damage the instrument). Let the instrument soak for about 30 minutes to loosen dirt and debris. While soaking, rise the valves with warm water. Try not to let the felt get wet. Use a valve casing brush (available at any instrument store) to clean the holes in the valves. Set aside to dry. Back to the instrument! Using a snake brush (available at any instrument store), run the snakes bristle heads in and out of all tubing several times under the water to remove build up. Focus on the leadpipe! Use the valve casing brush to clean the casings. Be gentle... don't scrub as hard as you can! Rise everything with lukewarm water when done. Wipe the instrument dry to avoid spotting.
 - Blow excess water out of instrument and allow to dry.
 - When dry, start reassembling.
 - Valves first: place 10 dots of oil on each valve and put back in its casing.
 - Slides: place slide grease (available at any instrument store) on any “not shiny part” with your finger. Spread the grease around evenly, trying not to get it on the inside of the tubing. Place slide back into tube and rotate to ensure even distribution. Do this for both sides (Dr. K will demonstrate this). Once you've done this, put slide back in normally and wipe any excess grease with towel. Do this with every slide!
- Wipe the outside of your instrument to ensure there is no grease or oil on it. You're all done!

Yearly:

- Have instrument checked at Allegro or Milano Music. Chemical cleans might be in order if above maintenance has not been followed!

Trombone

Daily:

- After each playing session, open water key and blow steady stream of air through instrument. NEVER use your foot to hold open the water key. If you need to remove mouthpiece to reach, that is acceptable.
- Wipe outside of instrument with soft cloth to remove fingerprints (handkerchief works great!).

Weekly:

- Using warm water and mild dish soap, soak your mouthpiece in the soapy water. Using a mouthpiece specific brush (available at any music/instrument store), scrub the mouthpiece to remove any grime.
- Make sure all slides move easily – use slide grease on slides if they are difficult to move.
- Wipe inner slide to remove build up. Use cloth with NO lint (brown paper towels in band room are great!).
 - After you wipe the excess with brown paper towel, place slide cream on the inner slide and spread around evenly. Place inner slide into outer slide one at a time and rotate around to spread evenly inside the outer slide. Once you've done this, put inner slide back into outer slide. Make sure you have on correct direction (look for slide lock).

Monthly:

- Bath time! Your brass instrument needs a bath every so often.
 - Bathtubs are the best for this. Place old towel in bottom of bathtub. Take tuning slide out and take slide apart. Place pieces on towel and fill bathtub with warm water (NEVER use HOT WATER – it can damage your instrument). Allow enough water to cover the instrument. Let instrument soak for 30 minutes. When ready, clean all the tubing using a snake brush (available at music store). Hand slides can be cleaned by filling outer slide with water and inserting inner slide, working it in and out. It'll be messy, so be careful! Be extremely careful with the slides, as any dent in the slide can damage the instrument a lot. Rinse everything with lukewarm water. Wipe the outside with a soft cloth to prevent spotting. Let horn dry.
 - Reassembly: use a small amount of slide grease on the tuning slide. Spread evenly with your fingers. Place one side at a time into the trombone and rotate around to ensure it is spread evenly on the inside. Place a decent amount of slide cream (available at any music store) on the inner slide. Spread evenly with your hands (wipe hands before handling outer slide). Place into outer slide one at a time and rotate in circle to ensure it spreads evenly. Do this to both sides. Put inner slide back into outer slide and test to see how it feels. If it is sluggish, put more cream on!

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French Horn

Daily:

- After every playing session, empty all water from inside of your instrument:
 - Rotate horn COUNTER CLOCKWISE (to the left). Water will pour out of leadpipe (make sure mouthpiece is off). Rotate 2-3 times.
 - Take each slide out, one at a time. Please make sure to push the corresponding valve when you take slide out. You do NOT want to hear a “popping” sound when you pull out the slide. Dump all water from each slide.
- Wipe off the instrument with a soft cloth or polishing cloth. This will remove fingerprints and oils.

Weekly:

- Using warm water and mild dish soap, soak your mouthpiece in the soapy water. Using a mouthpiece specific brush (available at any music/instrument store), scrub the mouthpiece to remove any grime.
- Make sure all slides move with ease. If not, wipe old grease off with soft cloth. Put small amount of slide cream onto “not shiny” part of slide and reinsert into instrument.

- Place *rotor oil* onto valves. Remove slide (hold down valve lever when doing this). Hold French horn so open slide is toward you. Place 2-3 drops of rotor oil into the slide. Work the valve lever to distribute the oil. Replace slide and repeat on next valve.
- Oil the rotors. Remove the valve cap and apply *key oil* to the pivot points, rotating the valve to work it in.

Yearly:

- Take to Allegro or Milano Music for a cleaning. Due to the sensitivity of the French horn, students are asked to take it for cleaning to the store, rather than bathe it like the other brass.

Baritone/Tuba

Daily:

- After every playing session, empty your water keys. Hold open the water key, blow steady stream of air through the instrument to get any water out. Make sure to wiggle valves while doing this to get ALL water out.
- Using a soft cloth/handkerchief, wipe the outside of the instrument to remove any fingerprints.

Weekly:

- Using warm water and mild dish soap, soak your mouthpiece in the soapy water. Using a mouthpiece specific brush (available at any music/instrument store), scrub the mouthpiece to remove any grime.
- Make sure all slides move easily – use slide grease on slides if they are difficult to move.
- Oil valves – Remove from casing and place 1-2 dots ONLY of valve oil on each valve. Place back into the casing.

Monthly:

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