

All Brass

- Practice a little every day
 - o 15 minutes a day for 5 days is more beneficial than 75 minutes all on one day
 - o Practice time is your time to help yourself improve. Find the things that are challenging you, and work out how to make them better
 - o Practice with a friend
 - o Perform for Family and friends
 - o Use your computer
 - Youtube performers on your instrument, or professional bands such as “The President’s Own” United States Marine Corp Band
 - Smartmusic
 - Musictheory.net
- Always rinse out your mouth if you have had anything to eat or drink before playing your instrument.
- Make sure your hands are clean before handling your instrument
- Always have supply of instrument maintenance items during the year.
- Always open case while it is on the floor
- Always hold onto instrument, have instrument in it’s case, or have instrument on proper stand.
 - o Do NOT:
 - Set instrument on music stand
 - Stand instrument on it’s bell (except tuba)
 - Set instrument on floor where it can be stepped on
 - Place your instrument on your chair
- Store instruments in “normal” temperature environments. Excessive heat (like parked cars in sunny AZ) or excessive cold (Mt. Lemmon ☺) can cause damage to instruments. Sometimes this is permanent damage.
- If there is something wrong with your instrument, let your band director know immediately
- When in doubt, seek help. Home instrument repairs often result in damaged instruments. Be careful with your investment ☺!
- Maintain instrument before you THINK it needs it!
- Mouthpieces should not get stuck
 - o Lightly twist your mouthpiece as you insert it into the receiver. Gently untwist it as you pull it out
 - o Don’t “POP” your mouthpiece
 - o Don’t twist your mouthpiece too much when inserting it into the receiver
 - o If your mouthpiece is dropped, check shank to make sure it is not dented.
 - o Do NOT insert a dented mouthpiece into a receiver. Ask your band director to help you with a dented mouthpiece.
- It is a good idea to stick with the same oil/ grease products to avoid chemicals “gumming up”. If you switch the type of oil/ grease you are using, be sure to thoroughly clean off any of the old oil/ grease before applying the new one.

Horn

- Unwind instrument at every opportunity to eliminate moisture.
- Empty slides after every playing – push down valves when pulling slides
- Do not run water through the horn, or attempt to swab.
- Slides can be cleaned with water and a brush
- Slides should be greased with slide grease at least once a month. Do not wait until a slide is challenging to pull, and do not over grease
- Do not pull stuck valves – seek a repair person for help. Pulling on horn slides can bend, warp and damage the soft metal
- Check both top and bottom valve caps at least once a week so they do not get stuck
- Valves should be oiled regularly (daily) with 3-4 drops of oil. Pull the slides, insert a few drops of oil onto the slide, replace the slide and return the horn to playing condition. Press and release the valve a number of valves, remove the slide and expel excess oil
- The string on the valve needs to be replaced occasionally to avoid breakage. They do not break often, but they can break at critical times. If they are not replaced periodically they will break eventually. Have this done by a repair person once a year.
- The horn can be polished lightly with a soft dry cloth

Horn Upgrades –

- Mouthpiece – Holton Farkus m.c. or m.d.c.
- Double Horn -Conn, Holton

Cornet/Trumpet/Baritone/Tuba

- Empty all water before putting trumpet away in case.
- Valves should be oiled once a day (3-4 drops) with high quality valve oil.
 - o Follow all procedures with each valve one at a time. Be careful to check valve alignment before proceeding to the next valve. *It is very important that you check the alignment because finding the misaligned valve after all valves has been done can be a real challenge.*
 - o Unscrew top valve cap
 - o Pull valve ½ way out
 - o Apply 3-4 drops of valve oil to piston part of valve
 - o Twist valve around in casing to lubricate
 - o Twist valve until you hear a click indicating that the valve is aligned properly
 - o Screw valve cap back in
 - o Blow air into receiver to double check that valve is aligned.
 - o Continue to next valve
- Check both top and bottom valve caps at least once a week so they do not get stuck
- Greasing Slides
 - o Slides should be lightly greased once a week
 - o Remove and grease slides one at a time (Always have valves pressed down when removing slide to alleviate air pressure)
 - o Apply a very small amount of slide grease onto slide
 - o Spread grease out with finger
 - o Insert on portion of slide and rotate to work in grease, then the other
 - o Reinsert slide, begin next slide
 - o If you cannot remove a slide, seek help from a repair person
 - o *Trumpets only – 3rd valve slide should be very easy to move using third valve ring. Grease slide as usual, and gradually add 1-2 drops of valve oil until the slide moves freely*
- Mouthpieces can be cleaned with warm, soapy water and a mouthpiece brush.
- Cornet/ Trumpet/ Baritone/ Tuba can be cleaned in the bathtub if done carefully
 - o Remove all slides and place on lint free cloth or towel, gently wipe off any slide grease
 - o Remove all valves and place on lint free cloth or towel
 - o Remove all valve caps and place on lint free cloth or towel
 - DO NOT MIX UP THE ORDER OF THE VALVES
 - Valves often have the corresponding number on them somewhere, but not always. I always lay them out in the correct order on a lint free cloth.
 - DO NOT SUBMERGE VALVES IN WATER
 - Valves often have felt dampeners on them that can become very nasty if they get wet. Avoid this by keeping the valves out of the water.
 - o Fill bathtub with luke-warm water and mild dish soap. Harsh soap or water that is too warm can deteriorate the lacquer on the instrument.
 - o Place instrument, bottom valve caps, and slides into soapy, luke-warm water and allow to sit 10-15 minutes.
 - o Use cleaning snake to clean all areas of the instrument except the valve casings. Never use anything to clean out the valve casings other than water. Leave this for the professionals.
 - o Drain water from tub
 - o Using a large cup, thoroughly flush out all parts of the instrument that were in the soap. It is very important to get all of the soap removed.
 - o Towel dry everything you can with an old towel (Do not use mommy's good towels ☺)
 - o Allow instrument to sit and air dry
 - o Re-assemble instrument, carefully greasing all slides, and applying fresh valve oil

Cornet/ Trumpet/ Baritone/ Tuba Upgrades

Mouthpiece – Cornet/ Trumpet - Bach 5C, 3C; Baritone – Bach 6 ½ AL; Tuba – Bach 24AW

Instrument - Cornet/ Trumpet/ Baritone/ Tuba students can choose to upgrade their instrument by finding an intermediate or professional level instrument. There are many good makes and models available. Baritone and Tuba students should consider purchasing 4 valved instruments.

Always consult with your band director before purchasing a new instrument. We will help you choose wisely! *8th grade students should obtain a trumpet before they arrive in the 9th grade.*

Trombone

- Empty moisture after every use
- Keep slide locked whenever you are not playing
- Consider purchasing a trombone stand for your use
- Tuning slide should be greased once a week
- Main slide should be lubricated regularly, and should move effortlessly
 - o Use a lint free cloth to remove any old chemicals from the inner slide if switching lubricants, or if you notice any build up (Do this with inner and outer slides separated)
 - o Reinsert inner slide into outer slide CAREFULLY.
 - o Apply trombone lubricant to inner slide (I use Slide-O-Mix) according to directions
 - o Work slide back and forth to get lubricant all around the slide
 - o Use a spray bottle with water if needed to keep slide moist
- Always be careful with trombone slides, they are more fragile than they appear. Trombone slides can easily become misaligned or dented, which can prevent the slide from moving freely.

Trombone Upgrades

Mouthpiece – Bach 6 ½ AL

Instrument - Trombone students can choose to upgrade their instrument by finding an intermediate or professional level instrument. Students will usually choose a trombone with an “F” attachment. There are many good makes and models available. Always consult with your band director before purchasing a new instrument. We will help you choose wisely!