

All Woodwinds

- 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 ☺!
- Never get your instrument wet
- Look over instrument regularly for dirty/ damaged pads, loose screws, damaged/loose springs

Flute

- Swab Bore after each use with silk, linen or cotton cloth
- Use tuning rod/ swab stick
- Be careful not to scratch the inside of the instrument or damage tenons
- Sticky pads can usually be helped with a CLEAN dollar bill
- Wipe of finish lightly after each playing – careful not to overdo it, as the finish can rub off
- Check springs, screws and tenons regularly

Flute Upgrades – Flute students can choose to upgrade their instrument by finding an intermediate or professional level instrument that is open-holed and has a low B foot. Always consult with your band director before purchasing a new instrument. We will help you choose wisely! Eventually a piccolo?

Oboe

- Small canister for water (old film case) needed to soak reeds properly
- Swab lower joint and bell w cloth swab. Use pheasant or turkey feather for upper joint. (feather should first be washed with soap and dried to remove natural oils)
- Take special care of reeds – keep in reed case!
- Blow out moisture from tone holes, and/or use a piece of coffee filter to absorb extra moisture between the tone hole and the key.
- Lightly wiping the keys off with a soft cloth is recommended.

Clarinet

- Take special care of reeds
 - o Always store in reed case, never on mouthpiece – they will warp and break sooner
 - o Reeds break easily, be careful not to brush them against anything, or slice them open with your ligature
- Swab clarinet after each use (3 times) – careful not to damage interior of clarinet with metal weight
 - o Do NOT swab the mouthpiece
- Mouthpieces can be cleaned by running warm water through them – be careful not to get cork too moist
- Use cork grease very lightly once a week to keep corks moist
- Sticky pads can usually be helped with a CLEAN dollar bill
- Tone holes should be cleaned every month or so using cotton swabs

Clarinet Upgrades –

- Reed Case – keeps 4 reeds in great condition at all times. Clarinets should always have 4 good reeds in their case, and they should rotate them so they always have reeds “broken in”.
- Reeds – Clarinet players should be playing on thicker reeds as they get more experience. If a student is taking private lessons, they should listen to their private lesson teacher. Consult your band director if you are considering changing reed thickness or brand. Generally I have found good results with the following:
 - o Year 1 – Rico 2.5
 - o Year 2 – Rico Royal 3
 - o Year 3 – Mitchell Lurie 3, 3.5, 4 (as one progresses through the year)
 - o Year 4 – Van Doren 3, 3.5, 4 (As student progresses through the year)
- Mouthpiece – Upgrading from a student mouthpiece is one of the quickest ways to help improve a student’s sound on their instrument
 - o Van Doren 5RV Lyre
 - o Van Doren B45

Instrument – Clarinet students can choose to upgrade their instrument by finding an intermediate or professional level instrument. Intermediate and Professional models are usually wooden. There are many good makes and models available. The Buffet E11 (intermediate) and the Buffet R13 (professional) have been industry standards for year. Always consult with your band director before purchasing a new instrument. We will help you choose wisely!

Saxophone

- Take special care of reeds
 - o Always store in reed case, never on mouthpiece – they will warp and break sooner
 - o Reeds break easily, be careful not to brush them against anything, or slice them open with your ligature
- Tip saxophone upside down to drain excess moisture
- Swab saxophone after each use (3 times)
 - o Do NOT swab the mouthpiece
- Clean neck of saxophone with cloth to keep it fitting easily
- Mouthpieces can be cleaned by running warm water through them
- Use cork grease very lightly once a week to keep cork moist
- Sticky pads can usually be helped with a dollar bill
- Exterior can be lightly polished with cloth

Saxophone Upgrades

- Reed Case – keeps 4 reeds in great condition at all times. Saxophones should always have 4 good reeds in their case, and they should rotate them so they always have reeds “broken in”.
- Reeds – Saxophone players should be playing on thicker reeds as they get more experience. If a student is taking private lessons, they should listen to their private lesson teacher. Consult your band director if you are considering changing reed thickness or brand. Generally I have found good results with the following:
 - o Year 1 – Rico 2.5
 - o Year 2 – Rico Royal 3
 - o Year 3 – Van Doren 3, 3.5 (as one progresses through the year)
 - o Year 4 – Van Doren 3.5, 4 (As student progresses through the year)
- Mouthpiece – Upgrading from a student mouthpiece is one of the quickest ways to help improve a student’s sound on their instrument
 - o Selmer C-Star

Instrument – Saxophone students can choose to upgrade their instrument by finding an intermediate or professional level instrument. 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!