

Valved Brass Instruments Maintenance Guide

This page covers Trumpet, Cornet, Flugelhorn, Baritone Horn, Tenor Horn, Tuba, Euphonium

- Wash the mouthpiece in cool water after playing and then dry it with a soft swab or cloth. Do not rub too hard as this can cause uneven wear of the mouthpiece or loss of silver plating
- Remove all moisture from the inside of the instrument using the water keys or "spit"- valves. You can also remove the tuning slides to help empty the water from inside. Allow the instrument to air dry for a few minutes in the case before closing the lid. If you have a swab, this can also be used.
- Always pass the swab through the instrument from top to bottom. Never bunch up the swab as you put it in – **it will get stuck inside if you do!**
- Periodically wash the cleaning cloth. Replace it if it becomes worn.
- Use a separate lint free, soft, dry cloth to remove oil, finger-marks etc, from the outside of the body
- The mechanism must be in good working order for the instrument to work properly. Ask your teacher to recommend a qualified instrument repairer to show you how to oil the valves and grease the tuning slides. Like any machine, your brass instrument needs regular servicing/ inspection (at least once a year) by a qualified repairer.
- **OILING THE VALVES:** Put a couple of drops of oil onto each piston before playing. You should clean the valve pistons by brushing and using warm water with detergent regularly in order to remove old oil and dirt which may have built up over time.
- **CLEAN THE WHOLE INSTRUMENT IN WARM WATER WITH DETERGENT** about once every couple of month. Remove the valves and tuning slides and place in a plastic tub or some similar container full of warm water with detergent. You can also run water from a hose through the instrument if it is too big to fit into such a tub. Do this outside! USE A "SNAKE" OR FLEXIBLE BRUSH to remove any corrosion, oil or built up dirt within the bore of the instrument. Allow to air-dry before lubricating and re-assembling it. The valve pistons and the valve cylinders are numbered to make re-assembly easier.
- Lubricate the tuning slides with a little slide grease. **TUNING SLIDES SHOULD BE MOVED EVERYDAY TO PREVENT THE BECOMING STUCK OR from Freezing**
- Changes in temperature will affect the tone and fundamental pitch of your instrument. As the instrument gets warmer, the air inside gets less dense and the pitch goes up (sharper). Conversely, as it cools it goes flatter. Move the tuning slides out to lower the pitch and in to raise it.
- Your instrument is designed to be played at room temperature (defined as 21 Degrees Celsius). Before performing, warm up by playing for at least 5 minutes. Use the water-keys very frequently to drain condensation from the instrument. If you think you are doing this too often, that's probably just about right.
- **NEVER** use oils, solvents or anti-corrosive products to clean your instrument

This is general information; please see the user guide for your specific instrument.