

INSTRUMENT CARE

General Musical Instrument Care

- Always keep your instrument in its case when not in use. Make sure case handles, hinges, locks and zippers are working properly.
- Don't leave your instrument in extreme temperatures, as fluctuations can warp and damage your instrument.
- Don't leave your instrument in a car, where it's susceptible to hot/cold temperatures as well as humidity fluctuations.
- Don't leave your instrument unattended, whether inside or outside of its case.
- If your instrument is being brought inside from colder temperatures, allow it to warm up to room temperature before playing.
- Keep your instrument clean of fingerprints and everyday dust and residue. Do this by wiping your instrument down with a clean, soft cloth.
- Never attempt to repair an instrument at home. If a repair is needed, take your instrument to a trained instrument repair technician.

Caring for Strings Instruments (Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass)

- Take care that jewelry, zippers and buttons don't come into contact with your instrument.
- Always set your instrument down string-side-up, even when in the case.
- If your strings are breaking repeatedly, take your instrument to a technician to inspect the nut and bridge grooves and make necessary adjustments.
- Use the tuning pegs to tune your instrument first with fine tuners OUT, then make minor adjustments with the fine tuners. Peg drops can keep tuning pegs from slipping.
- Take care with your bow! Don't touch the hair of your bow, as finger oils can keep rosin from sticking. The bow also is fragile, and it may shatter if care isn't used.

- Always LOOSEN the bow when not in use. Do not over tighten. Tighten enough to fit a pencil through it.

Caring for Wind Instruments (Flute, Clarinet, Oboe, Saxophone)

- When placing your instrument back into its case, make sure it fits all the correct indentations. Do not force your case closed, as it most likely means the instrument isn't properly placed.
- Remove neck straps from your instrument before putting it in its case.
- Only pick your instrument up by the bore, never lift by the keys. Also be careful not to bend keys while assembling your instrument.
- Avoid eating, drinking sugary liquids or chewing gum immediately prior to playing your instrument. Rinse mouth with water first.
- Internal moisture can cause cracks or mildew. Always pull a clean, dry swab through your instrument to remove any moisture prior to storage. So after you play, run a dry cloth through the inside.
- Gently wipe key pads of moisture prior to storage.

Caring for Brass Instruments (Trumpet, Trombone, Horn, Tuba)

- When placing your instrument back into its case, make sure it fits all the correct indentations. Do not force your case closed, as it most likely means the instrument isn't properly placed.
- Make sure your instrument is completely dry prior to placing it in your case. Drain water after playing and wipe your instrument dry with a clean, soft cloth.
- Avoid eating, drinking sugary liquids or chewing gum immediately prior to playing your instrument. Rinse mouth with water before playing..
- If your mouthpiece is dry, apply a thin layer of valve oil to the bore to keep it from getting stuck.

- If your mouthpiece does get stuck, use a designated mouthpiece puller to remove it. Never forcefully twist your mouthpiece.
- Unscrew trumpet valves, wipe clean, and place a drop of valve oil, coating the entire valve. Apply oil to valve cap and bottom cap.
- Apply slide oil to your trombone at least once a week by placing hand slide into third position and adding oil to each slide.
- Use lanolin or similar oil to lubricate tuning slides.
- Never try to hammer out dents at home, take your instrument to a licensed professional.

Adapted from: musicnotes.com