

Save Money with Band Instrument Maintenance Your Students Can Perform

With just over \$100 of materials, you can teach your students to maintain their instruments in top working order, reducing the amount of time instruments are in the repair shop and saving your program literally thousands of dollars in repairs. Including a quarterly instrument inspection allows you to look closely at each instrument, holding the student accountable for maintaining all moving parts, and lets you find problems before they become worse and much more expensive to repair.

Supplies List – Brass

Valve oil – 2 weights +
Trombone hand slide lubricant
Tuning slide grease*
Snake*
Mouthpiece brushes*
Valve casing brushes*
Trombone cleaning rod
Trumpet leadpipe brush
Polishing cloths – silver and lacquer*
Microfiber cloths
Mouthpiece disinfectant
Assorted peel and stick water key “corks”

*Part of a care kit

EXTRAS: Mouthpiece puller

Supplies List - Woodwinds

Pipe cleaners (cleaning around posts & keys)
Cotton swabs (cleaning inside holes)
Soft brush (removing case fuzz and dust)
Polishing cloth (polishing metal keys)*
Microfiber cloths (removing finger oils)
Mouthpiece brush (or old child’s toothbrush)
Cork grease*
Pad & Cork cement
Small screwdrivers (for screws parallel to body)
Spring setter (when springs get bumped off)
Bore oil, separate swab (wooden instruments)*

* Part of a care kit

EXTRAS: Bassoon bocal snake
Bari Sax neck swab

SUGGESTED MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

Brass

Daily: Empty water, wipe mouthpiece

Weekly: Clean mouthpiece with mpc. brush.
Wipe old oil from valves and apply new oil. Pull all slides and twist all caps to keep moving parts moving.

Monthly: Pull all slides; wipe off old lubricant.
Trombones – swab inner and outer hand slide. Clean the leadpipe. Wipe off finger prints with soft, dry (or polishing) cloth. Vacuum inside of case. Occasionally let case sit open in sunlight. Febreze (or similar) will remove smells. Let case dry thoroughly.

Yearly: Snake out all slides and rinse.

Woodwinds

Daily: Swab. Wipe moisture from reeds and store flat.

Weekly: Clean mouthpiece using mpc. brush or old toothbrush.
Apply cork grease as needed. Wipe instrument with soft, dry cloth to remove finger oils, etc.

Monthly: Check for ‘finger cheese’ in holes; remove with a Cotton swab or wooden toothpick. Use a small, soft brush or folded pipe cleaner to remove dust and lint from around keys and springs. Vacuum inside of the case. Occasionally let case sit open in sunlight. Use Febreze (or similar) and allow to dry thoroughly.

Yearly or bi-yearly: Have woodwinds checked by a repair technician who can adjust key tensions and replace pads as needed.

Percussion

Daily: Store all mallets and accessory instruments carefully. Put music away.

Weekly: Check all equipment for loose screws, missing parts and report to director.
Cover all large instruments. If instruments are in a sunny spot, cover when not in use.

Monthly: Check mallets and trim fuzzies. Wipe timpani heads; dust horizontal surfaces (snare heads, top of bass drum, chimes, cymbals, etc.)

+ For information on properly oiling rotary valves refer to [Brass Instruments: Purchasing, Maintaining, Troubleshooting and More](#) by David Fedderly and Sally Wagner (Meredith Music Publications). Information above is used with permission of Sally Wagner, author of [The Pursuit of Excellence: a Band Director’s Guide to Success](#) (Meredith Music Publications).