

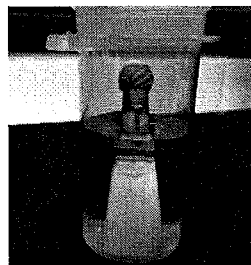
# Bassoon Maintenance

## Before You Play:

Do not consume sugary candy, gum or sodas. This is the biggest cause of sticky and waterlogged keys.

Always soak your reed in water prior to assembly.

Proper instrument assembly is essential to good care of your bassoon. Be careful not to squeeze the rods along the side of the instrument when putting it together. The keys are delicate and you don't want to bend them.



Use cork grease only when needed, making sure to not use too much grease.

## After You Play:

Take your reed off, remove the excess water and store it properly in your reed case. Labeling your reeds by number and rotating which reed you play on daily is recommended.

Remove the bocal and blow hard through the cork end to remove water.

Always swab out your instrument after playing. Keeping your bassoon dry is the best thing you can do to take care of it. Without proper moisture removal, your instrument could rot. Listen to your teacher for very specific instructions on how to swab your bassoon.

Silk, cotton and microfiber swabs absorb moisture well. Do not use flannel or felt swabs- they do not absorb moisture but instead, spread it around. Music stores sell swabs specifically designed for the bassoon. It is a good idea to purchase two- one for the boot joint and one for the wing joint. Do not use a stick/push swab for your bassoon as it could damage the U-shaped tube on your boot joint.

1. Boot joint: insert the swab through the big hole and come out the smaller hole on the other side. One pass through should be plenty.

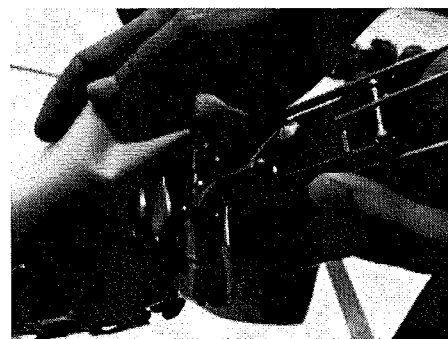
2. Wing joint: same as above. Remember to insert the swab through the big hole and pull it out through the smaller hole.

After swabbing, wipe down the outside of the bassoon with a clean, soft cloth.

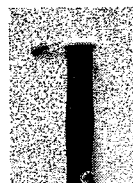
## Storage:

Always leave your bassoon placed properly in its case when it is not being used. Never leave it on the ground, a chair or a music stand. Always keep it in your hands or in its case.

Always lay your case flat on the floor before opening and closing your bassoon case.

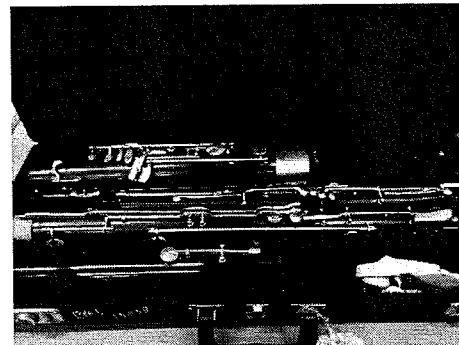


Before carrying your instrument around the room, remove the bocal and place it in the bell.



Do not put music and other items in your case unless there is a space or compartment designed for it. Loose items can damage your instrument.

Never store your bassoon in extreme hot or cold temperatures. While running errands, never leave your instrument in the car. Extreme temperatures can damage the wood, plastic, pads and corks on your instrument.



When carrying your instrument, double check that the latches are closed securely. It is a good idea to carry the LID of the case against your leg.

## **Weekly Maintenance:**

Wash your swab in warm water and a mild detergent once a week (or at least once a month depending on use). Let it dry completely.

Using a soft, clean cloth, carefully wipe keys one at a time, being careful not to snag any springs.

## **Monthly Maintenance:**

Always check to make sure that screws at the ends of the rods are not sticking out.

Check rods and keys for dust and dirt. Use a natural bristle brush (water color brush or makeup brush) to carefully remove dirt when needed.

Check to make sure that pads are in good condition and that corks and felt bumpers are in place. If they are missing, you will hear a metal on metal sound when you play your instrument. This should never be heard on an instrument that is playing properly. If this happens, take the instrument to your local music store.

Clean the bocal once a month with hot water and a bocal brush to remove any debris that has collected inside.

Lubricate tenons when needed. If your bassoon has cork tenons, cork grease works well.

## **Annual Maintenance:**

If you own your instrument, summer is a great time to take your bassoon to a local music store for an annual check-up. Yes, musical instruments need "check-ups" too! The store will do minor repairs such as replacing worn pads or corks. If you are renting, this maintenance is usually covered in the rental program.

