

Clarinet Maintenance

Before You Play:

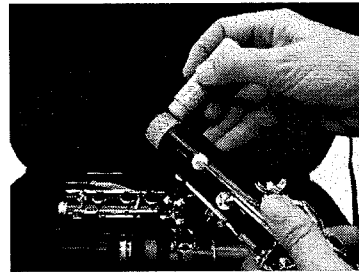
Do not consume sugary candy, gum or sodas. This is the biggest cause of sticky and waterlogged keys.

Always lay your case flat on the floor or on your lap before opening and closing your clarinet case.

Always soak your reed in your mouth while assembling your clarinet.

Proper instrument assembly is essential to good care of your instrument. Be careful not to squeeze the rods along the side of the clarinet when putting it together. The keys are delicate and you don't want to bend them. Always remove your clarinet from the case by holding the ends of each joint, not the keys.

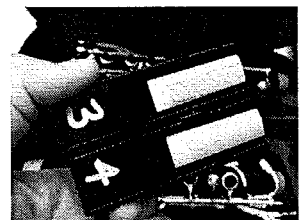
Use cork grease on the joints of the clarinet as needed to insure that assembly is easy. Putting your instrument together should never be a struggle. It is important to use cork grease, especially when the corks are new.



When tightening the screws on the ligature, make sure to not over-tighten them. This can cause the ligature to break.

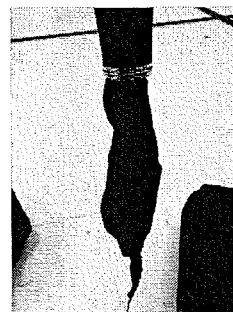
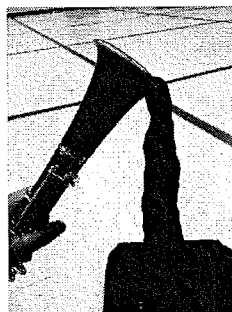
After You Play:

Take your reed off and store it properly in your reed guard. Labeling your reeds by number and rotating which reed you play on daily is recommended.



Always swab out your instrument after playing. Keeping your clarinet dry is the best thing you can do to take care of it. Listen to your teacher for very specific instructions on how to swab your clarinet.

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.



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

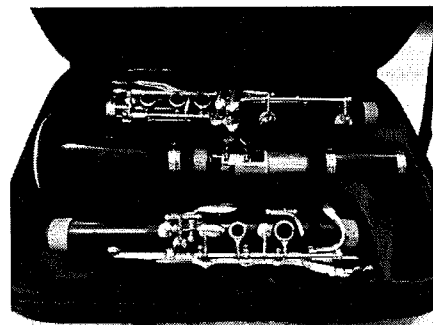


Storage:

Always leave your clarinet 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.

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 clarinet 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:

Check to make sure that there are no loose screws on your clarinet.

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.

Annual Maintenance:

If you own your clarinet, summer is a great time to take your clarinet 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.

