HELP! MY INSTRUMENT DOESN'T WORK!!

Before approaching the sacred space and time of the podium or director

- **1)**Check this sheet first and read it all the way through!
- 2)Ask 3 before me
- 3) Wait until class is over and airplay so
- we don't waste anyone's time.

QUICK CHECK FOR WOODWINDS

- Have someone else put their mouthpiece on your instrument and play it. Work? Yes - it's you, your reed or ligature.
- Did you drop it?
- Check the reed soaked, dry, too wet, chipped, too high, too low? When was the last time you used a different reed?
- Check ligature (clarinet/saxophone) snug, too loose or too tight? Too high, too low?
- Embouchure lips/teeth biting the reed, too relaxed
- Air are you using enough?
- Any screws or springs look odd/out of place? Any missing?
- Did you drop your instrument?
- Any keys rubbing each other/bent?
- Sticky pads? Use a dollar bill or clean piece of paper. Stick underneath pad, push pad/key down lightly and then pull bill/paper out slowly without tearing.

NO MATTER WHAT, CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE BY AIRPLAYING AND WAIT UNTIL PACK UP TIME! *This page is intentionally left blank for double sided copying *

Detailed Check - FLUTE

- **Springs and Screws** make sure they look correct. If you can't get it back in, wait. Don't mess with it if you don't know. Ask after class and airplay.
 - Only fix screws on main rods.
 - I don't know if it is right! ---Ask to see another person's instrument to compare. Ask them if they see anything wrong.
 - Don't want to fix it yourself? Wait until the end of class.

• Embouchure Check and Tone Hole Position

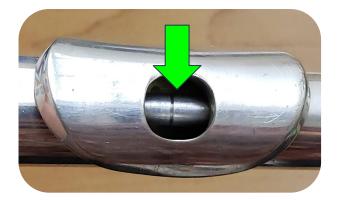
- Tone hole should be lined up with body keys, foot joint rod lined up with body kyes
- Think "pooh" and corners in. Edge of tone hole should touch bottom line of your lower lip.
- Higher note = aim air higher (low lip forward) Low note = aim air lower (low lip back)
- Still not doing it have a friend play your flute, and then wait until the end of class to ask

• Pads and Crown

- If D, Eb, E, and F are not playing, a pad is not sealing. Why? You bent a key, the alignment is off or a screw is loose. Wait until class is over.
- Sticky? Use a dollar bill or clean piece of paper. Stick underneath pad, push pad/key down lightly and then pull bill/paper out slow.
- Make sure the crown is screwed in and check with your cleaning rod.
- Find the notch (by the eye or on the end) and make sure it is centered in your tone hole. No? Wait until end of class

• Fingers

- Are your fingers on the right keys? Ask a friend!
- If you have an open-holed flute, make sure your fingers are completely covering the holes.
- Check your hand shape
 - Fingers should have a nice curve and not flat/collapsed
 - Right thumb should be between your first and second finger.



Line on cleaning rod should be in the middle of the the tone hole



Example of a sealed pad.

Not sealed. Space between pad and riser.





Examples of springs that are out.

Springs are behind post or securely held by the post



Detailed Check - OBOE

- Springs and Screws make sure they look correct.
 - Only fix screws that are on main rods. Don't mess with the screws if you don't know!
 - I don't know if it is right! ---Ask to see another person's instrument to compare. Ask them if they see anything wrong
 - Don't want to fix it yourself? Wait until the end of class.

• Reed (should have 5 playable reeds at all times)

- Too closed, too open, chipped? Wait until the end of class, airplay OR use a different reed.
- Be sure it is pushed ALL the way in. Use cork grease if needed.
- Thread crossing should be facing the back of the oboe/your chin
- When was the last time you used a different reed?

• Embouchure Check

- Lay the tip of your reed on your lower lip. Slightly roll in and bring top lip down as if to say "em." ¹/₃ of reed should be in your mouth, keep corners in
- Too little reed =airy or choked sound, too hard to blow through Too much = squeak and have a loud, spread out sound.
- Thread crossing should be facing the back of the oboe/your chin

• Keys, Pads

- Check for bent keys and if they are rubbing on something. This will affect your pads and if they seal all the way down. Airplay and wait until pack up.
- Be sure all your bridge keys are lined up properly.
- Check pads
 - Make sure they are sealing all the way down.
 - Sticky? Use a dollar bill or clean piece of paper. Stick underneath pad, push pad/key down lightly and then pull bill/paper out slowly without tearing.
- Did you drop it?

• Hands and Fingers

- Hands are in a relaxed "C" shape not bumping other keys.
- Use half hole for only D/Db/Eb.

Reed wrap faces your chin. Check that the reed is pushed ALL the way in. Use a small amount of cork grease if needed



Watch finger positions! Make sure holes are covered and you are using half/full hole correctly.



lined up on BOTH sides and on the bell

Bridge keys must be

Screw out? Only fix those on rods. Any others - no touchy! Not sure? NO TOUCHY! Ask your director!



Detailed Check - BASSOON

- **Springs and Screws** make sure they look correct. If you can't get it back in, wait. Don't mess with it if you don't know. Ask after class and airplay.
 - I don't know if it is right! ---Ask to see another person's instrument to compare. Ask them if they see anything wrong
 - Don't want to fix it yourself? Wait until the end of class.
 - Also check posts that lift keys and that they are intact.

• Reed(should have 5 playable reeds at all times)

- Too closed, too open, chipped? Wait until the end of class, airplay OR use a different reed.
- Thread/wire crossing should be facing downward or the back of bassoon
- You should have more contact on your upper lip than lower. Check your seat strap and adjust as needed.
- Thread/wire crossing should be facing the floor/back of bassoon
- Too soft reeds = squeak a lot, too easy to play.
 Too hard= airy sound.
- When was the last time you changed reeds?

• Embouchure Check

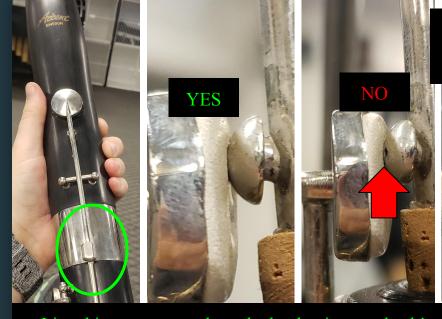
• Place reed on bottom lip and then say "em." You should have more contact with upper lip than lower.

• Keys and pads

- Check the bridge key on the bell for alignment.
- Check the bocal hole
 - aligned with the whisper key so that the hole is being sealed
- Check pads
 - make sure they are sealing all the way down then wait until the end of class
 - Sticky? Use a dollar bill or clean piece of paper. Stick underneath pad, push pad/key down lightly and then pull bill/paper out slow.

• Fingers!

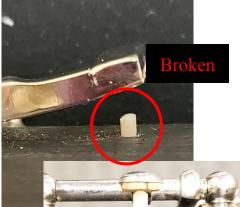
- Check to make sure you are covering holes completely
- Check your thumb fingerings to be sure you are holding the correct keys

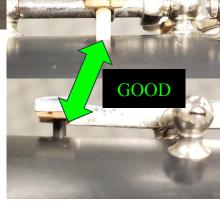


Line things up correctly and take the time to check! Bridge key on bell and whisper key with bocal.

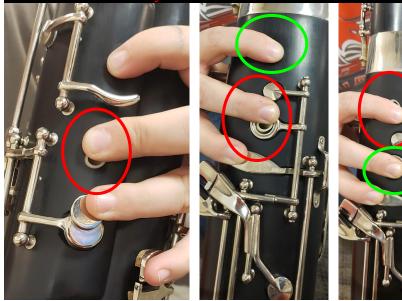


Example of spring being out on an instrument Be sure to check the key lifting posts. Make sure they are not broken





Check that all your fingers are covering the holes correctly and only use half hole when needed.



Detailed Check - CLARINET

- Springs and Screws make sure they look correct.
 - Don't mess with the "A key" screw. Ask after class.
 - I don't know if it is right! ---Ask to see another person's instrument to compare. Ask them if they see anything wrong
 - Don't want to fix it yourself? Wait until the end of class.
- **Reed and Ligature** (Should have 5 working reeds at all times)
 - Chipped, cracked? Throw away and use another. Don't have one? Throw your bad reed out and airplay.
 - Tip of the reed should be matched up with the curve of the mouthpiece.
 - Too soft reeds = squeak a lot, too easy to play.
 Too hard= airy sound.
 - When was the last time you changed reeds?
 - Ligature below the 1st line on mouthpiece or the cut of the reed. Make sure it is only snug and not tight/loose. Screws should be on the right.

• Embouchure

- Corners in, like you say "ew" or you are having a thick milkshake.
- Too little mouthpiece =airy or choked sound,
 - Too much = squeak and have a loud, spread out sound.
- Teeth on top of the mouthpiece, bottom lip curled over teeth. Your lip should be around where the reed meets the mouthpiece (do the paper trick).
- Make sure you are using enough air.

• Check pads

- Make sure they are sealing all the way down. Take upper tenon/lower joint off, block bottom with one hand and suck out air. If you can't make a vacuum, a pad isn't sealing.
- Sticky? Use a dollar bill or clean piece of paper. Stick underneath pad, push pad/key down lightly and then pull bill/paper out slow.

• Fingers!

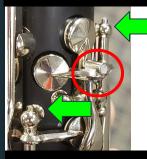
- Relaxed C shape, not bumping other keys
- Thumb rest should be resting by the cuticle of your right thumbnail
- All fingers seal the holes
- Upper register make sure F hole is covered while using the register key



Two types of bridge keys - both lined up Foot of the bridge is underneath Side/pinky keys are spaced out and not bent/rubbing against each other Bottom lip should be placed where reed meets mouthpiece



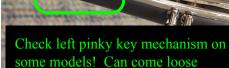
Use a piece of paper to help judge where that is



Leave A key screw! Screws on posts - fix

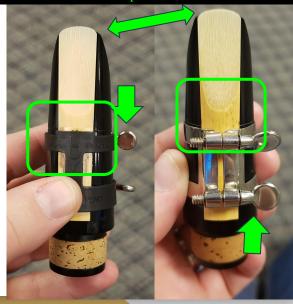


Cover holes completely



Screws are on the right, ligature is below the cut of the reed, reed is lined up with curve of

mouthpiece



Check your left thumb position! Should be at one to two o'clock position and during register jumps, it stays sealing the F hole

Detailed Check - SAXOPHONE

- Springs and Screws make sure they look correct.
 - Don't mess with it if you don't know. Ask after class and airplay.
 - I don't know if it is right! ---Ask to see another person's instrument to compare. Ask them if they see anything wrong
 - Don't want to fix it yourself? Wait until the end of class.
- Reed and Ligature (should have 5 playable reeds at all times)
 - Chipped, cracked reed? Throw away and use another. Don't have one? Throw your bad reed out and airplay. Remember, you should have 5 working reeds at all times
 - Tip of the reed should be matched up with the curve of the mouthpiece
 - Too soft reeds = squeak a lot, too easy to play.
 Too hard= airy sound.
 - When was the last time you changed reeds?
 - Ligature below the 1st line on mouthpiece or the cut of the reed.
 - Ligature is snug, not tight. Screws on the right.
- Embouchure Check (also check neck strap length)
 - Think "ooh" and pull lips around like a drawstring on hoodie, corners in.
 - Too little mouthpiece =airy or choked sound,
 Too much = squeak and have a loud, spread out sound.
 - Teeth on top of the mouthpiece, bottom lip curled over teeth. Your lip should be where the reed meets the mouthpiece (do the paper trick).
 - Make sure you are using enough air.

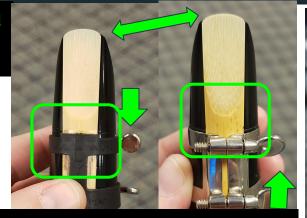
• Neck Piece, Keys, Pads

- Make sure the octave key post is UNDER the curve, not on top!
- Check to see that the octave key opens the pad when you finger above high G. No? Wait until after class and airplay.
- Check for bent keys and if they are rubbing on something. This will affect your pads and if they seal all the way down. Wait for a fix after class. Airplay and continue to participate!
- Sticky? Use a dollar bill or clean piece of paper. Stick underneath pad, push pad/key down lightly and then pull bill/paper out slowly without tearing.

Bottom lip should be placed where reed meets mouthpiece



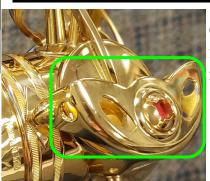
Use a piece of paper to help judge where that is



Ligature screws on the right, below the cut of the reed, reed is lined up with curve of mouthpiece

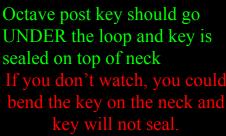


Watch for springs out



Check screws around key braces and felt posts. If the brace is loose, a key may be lifting and unprotected.





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QUICK CHECK FOR BRASS

- Have someone else in your section play your instrument to see if it works. Yes, it's your embouchure, air or fingerings/position
- Oil the valve use one type of oil (synthetic or natural, don't mix)
- Grease for tuning slides
 - Trombones clean playing slide and maintain (use trombone slide grease or slide oil, or the 3 step system whatever director taught you)
- Airy, back pressure or no air goes through
 - Tpts/Euph/Tuba check valve numbers and that they are in correct casing
 - Is there anything in your shaft or bell? Don't force it out.
- Check water keys (sealing, intact, present)
- French Horns check strings/attachments, slides are in correct spots and right hand is in correct position in the bell.
- Check embouchure and how much air you are using
- Did you drop it? You may have bent/dented a valve casing or slide.

NO MATTER WHAT, CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE BY AIRPLAYING AND WAIT UNTIL PACK UP TIME!

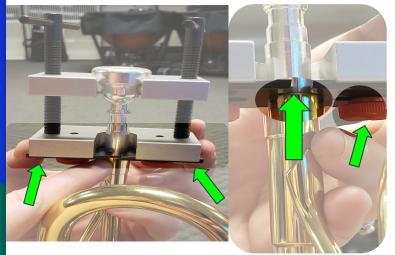
THE MOUTHPIECE PULLER HOW-TO GUIDE

(2)

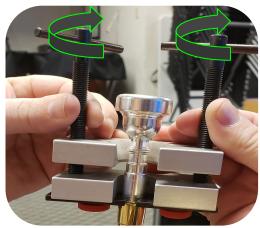
- 1) You do NOT need this until the end of class
- 2) Make sure you return the puller to its original setting and put it back.
- 3) Never force a mouthpiece out or have a friend hold one end and pull.
- 4) Don't put your instrument away with the mouthpiece still attached! Ask!

Place cup shape under mouthpiece. Push in on holding plates to secure the puller. Tighten in place with screws on bottom. Make sure the plates are on the TOP of the shaft.

(1)



Once secured, twist both lifters clockwise at the same time. Make sure the lower plates stay on top of the shaft as you raise the top plate.



(3) As the plate raises, be sure the lower plates stay on the shaft! Once it becomes tight, turn each one, individually, a little at a time until the mouthpiece pops out.

(4)

Once mouthpiece is out, return the puller. Make sure you lower the top plate by twisting the lifters counterclockwise at the same time. It's kind to have it ready for the next person needing it

If the plates move off the shaft, loosen, retighten and try again. If it still does it, you need a director's help! Ask after class and do not put your instrument away with a stuck mouthpiece.

Detailed Check - TRUMPET

• Embouchure

- Relaxed but firm band face with no puffy cheeks
- Avoid the "red" do you have the red part of your lips showing? If so, make sure your lips are in the mouthpiece and not pouting out into the mouthpiece.
- 50/50 with top and bottom lip and mouthpiece is close to centered on lips. This will be a little different depending on your mouth/teeth shape but avoid too high, too low or too far off to one side.
- Keep chest and throat relaxed through all registers using good air support and keep teeth from clenching.

• Check your water keys

- They should seal completely and let no air out when they are closed
- If missing one or it is not sealing, wait until pack up time. Airplay through rehearsal

• Gurgle sound

- Open water keys and gently blow to get your condensation out
- Push down all valves and take out slides to dump out trapped condensation.
- Your buzz isn't focused. Make sure you know exactly what note you want with the correct fingering.
- Still does it? Wait until pack up time and participate your best through class.

• Hard to blow through or pressure

- Check the bell/shaft of your trumpet. If you can't get it out, wait. Don't force it out or you may damage your instrument. Airplay and participate
- Turn the tops of your valves clockwise without unscrewing them. If they are not moving, they are "locked in." If they twist, turn until you feel them "lock in." If they continue to spin, loosen the cap to pull out your valve slightly, turn until it "locks."
- Loosen your valve screws and slightly pull out the valves to see the numbers. Make sure they are in the right casing. Valve one should be closest to your mouthpiece, two in the middle and three closest to the bell. If incorrect, move them to the correct casing.
- Make sure the button of your valve is connected to your actual valve. If the stem and button wiggle a lot, carefully undo the cap and reattach it to the valve
- Check the plastic piece on your valve. If it looks out of place, wait until pack up time and airplay.

• My valves/slide won't move

- Don't force it!
- If the valve won't come out, wait until pack up. Airplay if needed.
- Before reaching for the oil/grease again, wipe off all the oil/grease with a paper towel/cloth that won't leave debris. You may have too much. Then, oil each valve with only a couple drops and use very little grease on slides.
- Make sure your fingers are in a gentle curve and you are pressing the valves straight down. If you are pushing at an angle, this may cause a valve to stick.



Valves move naturally, able to do faster movements, push straight down

Valves may rub and stick, fingers are slower when pushing/pulling slightly down





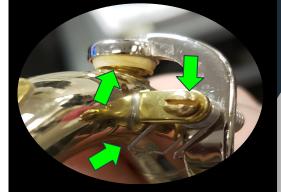




If this happens, slowly unscrew the caps, push valve out from bottom while holding the spring in place. If able screw top stem and button back in,

1 - Plastic 2 - Spring Screw in top stem



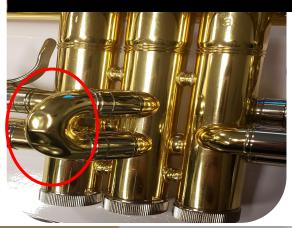


*Water keys are sealed and intact *Screws for water keys are secured *Springs for levers are in proper place, intact and help cork seal.



Make sure valves are in order Only put oil on main part of valve. You only need a couple drops. Use one type of oil - natural or synthetic.

If you dropped it and dented a slide or other part, you may have bent the casing = Shop repair



Detailed Check - FRENCH HORN

• Embouchure

- Make sure you have a relaxed but firm band face. No puffy cheeks
- Avoid the "red" do your have the red part of your lips showing? If so, make sure your lips are in the mouthpiece and not pouting out into the mouthpiece
- 2/3 top and 1/3 bottom lip and mouthpiece is close to centered on lips. This will be a little different depending on your mouth/teeth shape but avoid too high, too low or too far off to one side.
- Keep chest and throat relaxed through all registers using good air support and keep teeth from clenching.

• Gurgling Sound

- Remove mouthpiece and rotate counterclockwise (if your right hand is on the bell, start moving that hand up) to dump any condensation out. Keep turning a couple times.
- Push down all valves and take out slides to dump out trapped condensation. Keep rotating horn.
- Your buzz isn't focused.. Make sure you know exactly what note you want with the correct fingering.
- Still does it? Wait until pack up time and participate your best through class.

• Hard to blow or pressure

- Is there anything in the bell or shaft of your horn? Check. If you can't get it out, wait. Don't force it out or you may damage your instrument. Airplay and participate.
- Check your hand position in the bell! Make sure your hand isn't closing off air.

• My slide is stuck

- Don't force it! Wait until after class and leave it alone.
- Before reaching for the grease again, wipe off all the grease with a paper towel/cloth that won't leave debris. You may have too much. Then, use very little grease.

• Key won't move

- When was the last time you oiled your rotary valves? Remember, all you need is one or two drops.
- Check your strings or connectors.
- Check for bent keys.
- Check screws/end caps that hold your keys in place!
- If something still doesn't work, participate to your best ability by airplaying and wait until pack up time.

To empty, turn it counterclockwise. It will be clockwise to people facing you. Bell hand moves up to start correct rotation.





Make sure your slides are in the correct spots!

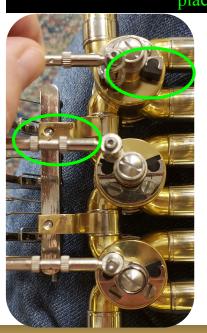
Watch this long screw that holds your keys in place. Keep track of those end caps!

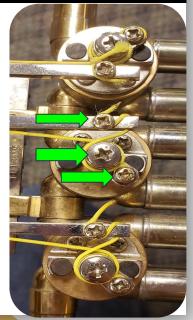


This is the only spot your rotary valve oil goes.



Two different types of connections from fingers to rotary valves. Check your "bumpers," string quality and rods that connect. Make sure screws holding string are secure and holding string in place.





Detailed Check - TROMBONE

• Embouchure

- Relaxed but firm band face with no puffy cheeks
- Avoid the "red" do your have the red part of your lips showing? If so, make sure your lips are in the mouthpiece and not pouting out into the mouthpiece
- 50/50 with top and bottom lip and mouthpiece is close to centered on lips. This will be a little different depending on your mouth/teeth shape but avoid too high, too low or too far off to one side.
- Keep chest and throat relaxed through all registers using good air support and keep teeth from clenching.

• Gurgling Sound or Airy

- Open water key and gently blow to get your condensation out.
- Your buzz isn't focused. Make sure you know exactly what note you want with the correct position.
- Water key may be damaged, missing or not sealing. Keep participating and wait.
- Still does it? Wait until pack up time and participate your best through class.

• Hard to blow or pressure

• Is there anything in the bell or shaft of your trombone? Check. If you can't get it out, wait. Don't force it out or you may damage your instrument. Airplay and participate

• My slide is stuck

- Did you unlock your slide?
- Before reaching for the slide oil again, wipe off all the oil with a paper towel/cloth that won't leave debris. You may have too much. Then, use very little oil: two to three drops on each fork of the slide. (Make sure you are using TROMBONE SLIDE oil and not valve oil)
- If your slide sticks in a particular place it either needs a bath (ask director) or something is bent/dented which will need professional repair. Discuss after class and participate your best.
- Tuning slides don't force it! Leave it be until after class and continue to participate.

• Slide Lock is stuck or won't lock

- You may have tightened it to much. Righty tighty, lefty loosey. Seek director's help after class.
- Won't lock? You may have bent it. You need director's help after class.

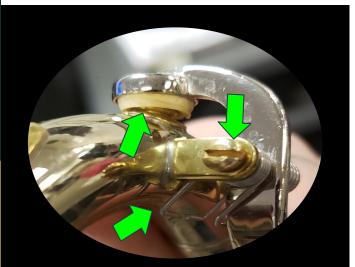
• Thumb key won't move (if you have one)

- When was the last time you oiled the rotary valve? Remember, all you need is one or two drops.
- Check your string or connectors.
- Check to make sure your key isn't bent
- If something still doesn't work, participate to your best ability.

The lock should not be touching the inner or outer slide when unlocked. It also should not be bent back to where it doesn't latch.

This is the part that tightens/loosens the lock. You may have to do one or two rotations to loosen it so it doesn't become stuck.





*Water keys are sealed and intact *Screws for water keys are secured *Springs for lever is in proper place, intact and makes cork seal. This is the only spot your rotary valve oil goes for thumb key.



Detailed Check - EUPHONIUM/TUBA

• Embouchure

- Relaxed but firm band face with no puffy cheeks
- Avoid the "red" do your have the red part of your lips showing? If so, make sure your lips are in the mouthpiece and not pouting out into the mouthpiece
- 50/50 with top and bottom lip and mouthpiece is close to centered on lips. This will be a little different depending on your mouth/teeth shape but avoid too high, too low or too far off to one side.
- Keep chest and throat relaxed through all registers using good air support and keep teeth from clenching.

• Check your water keys

- They should seal completely and let no air out when they are closed
- If missing one or it is not sealing, wait until pack up time. Airplay through rehearsal

• Gurgling Sound

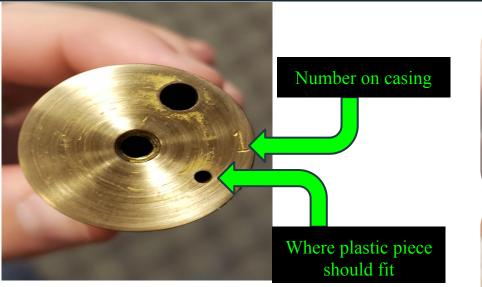
- Open water keys and gently blow to get your condensation out.
- Push down all valves and take out tuning slides to dump out trapped condensation.
- Your buzz isn't focused. Make sure you know exactly what note you want with the correct fingering.
- Still does it? Wait until pack up time and participate your best through class.

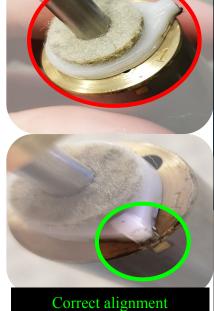
• Hard to blow or pressure

- Is there anything in the bell? Check. If you can't get it out, wait. Don't force it out or you may damage your instrument. Airplay and participate
- Look at valve numbers and make sure they are in the right casing. Valve one should be closest to your mouthpiece, two in the middle and three is your ring finger (four is your pinky).
- Make sure the button of your valve is connected to your actual valve. If the stem and button wiggle a lot, carefully undo the cap and reattach it to the valve
- Check the plastic piece on your valve at the top. You should clearly see the number and it should be connected into a smaller hole. If not, wait until pack up time.

• My valves/slide won't move

- Don't force it! If the valve won't come out, wait until pack up. Airplay if needed.
- Before reaching for the oil/grease again, wipe off all the oil/grease with a paper towel/cloth that won't leave debris. You may have too much. Then, oil each valve with only a couple drops and use very little grease for slides.
- Make sure your fingers are in a gentle curve and you are pressing the valves straight down. If you are pushing at an angle, this may cause a valve to stick.
- Did you drop it? You may have bent a valve casing = Shop Repair!
- *Opposite if your valves are spinning, the plastic piece on top of the slide may be broken.*

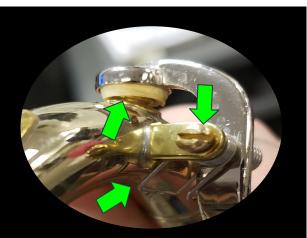




Valves move naturally, able to do faster movements, push straight down

Valves may rub and stick, fingers an slower when pushing/pulling slightly down





*Water keys are sealed and intact *Screws for water keys are secured *Springs for lever is in proper place, intact and makes cork seal.

If you have a rotary valve TUBA, this is the only place your oil goes!



HELP! MY INSTRUMENT DOESN'T WORK!! PERCUSSION CHECK

• Snare Drum

- Check that the snares are free of where your snare stand holds the snare.
- \circ \qquad If the snare is "on" and not making a snare sound
 - Throw off lever should be up
 - Snares could be too tight and you need to loosen them
 - Snares could be too loose and not engaged on the bottom head
- If the snare is "off" and not making the tom sound
 - Throw off lever should be down
 - Snares on bottom head are too tight and need to be loosened until it makes the tom sound
- Drum head may need repair, to be tightened or loosened
- If you can't figure it out, do your best and continue to participate. Let your director know during pack up or if asked.

• Mallet Instruments

- Buzzing sound? A bar is touching something, string is too loose, or other. Make a quick check. Continue to participate and let your director know during pack up or if asked.
- Bell kits if the unit is unstable and wobbles, check to make sure you have locked it and placed keyboard correctly on top of it's base.
- Check to make sure the bars are not damaged. Avoid any damaged bars and let the director know immediately with a raised hand.

• Timpani

- Pedal doesn't change pitch, stays up or down? Let your director know during pack up or when asked. The tension rod connecting the pedal to the adjusters needs repair.
- Make sure you are using the correct mallets and you are striking the head within a dollar bill width of the edge and not the middle.

• Other equipment

- If anything is damaged, let the director know immediately so you don't get blamed. If it was you, be honest! We can learn from mistakes if we are honest and your director won't be nearly as mad :-)
- If you don't know how to use it, ASK AND DON'T PRETEND!

• Stick broke

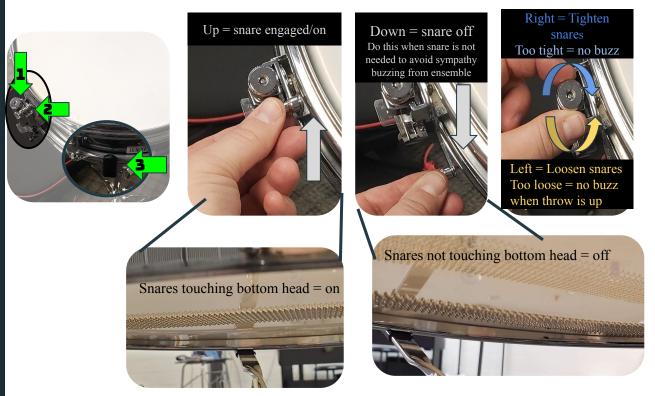
• If available, grab another or borrow. Let your director know if asked or wait until pack up.

NO MATTER WHAT, CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE BY AIRPLAYING AND WAIT UNTIL PACK UP TIME.

The only time you can interrupt is if the instrument is damaged. Honesty is the best policy!

SNARE

- 1 Adjusts tightness of snare
- 2 Throw-off switch (snare on or off)
- 3 Clasps on snare stand away from strainer and snares on bottom head

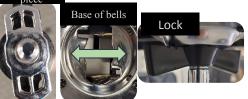


MALLETS

When stand is connected to base of bells, turn bells so the stand piece lays across opening. Twist lock up to secure.

If it won't stay up, threads may be damaged.

Bell stand



Some kits have an "X style" stand (preferred style). Picture shows correct position of bell set to put on stand. Once on, slightly push up on X and tighten to make bells solid.



On kits, make sure you have a rubber post around the screw and an intact felt piece under the bell. Screw should be flush with bell



Be sure your string is around the posts and in brackets. String should be fairly tight when connected so bars resonate when suspended.



