

7. All Brass instruments have TUNING SLIDES, which require lubricating. If any of them are difficult to move, remove them, wipe them clean (if necessary you can use any solvent and/or gentle abrasive such as 'Brasso' but if you do make sure you remove *all* residues). Apply a little tuning slide grease, work the slide in and out to distribute, and then remove any excess. If any slide is really stuck you may damage the instrument in struggling to remove it. In this event, take it to your repairer who will have the correct tools.

8. About twice a year the entire instrument should be given a bath. Carefully take out the valves and place them on clean cloth or kitchen paper in number order (No. 1 being closest to the mouthpiece - valves and casings are usually clearly marked, *but not always!*). Slides should also be removed and carefully noted before washing-through. Washing-up liquid can damage the lacquer; instead use a capful of a mild disinfectant such as Milton fluid, or a very mild shampoo. Use plenty of clean warm water to rinse everything out. Long and flexible brushes can be obtained from your

Helpful Hint -

Make it a habit to move any component that should move, regularly. Pull slides out a bit when you put the instrument away, then push them back in before playing. Undo top and bottom caps a half-turn after playing, and tighten up again before playing.

music shop to clean the longer or more awkward tubes. Dry the instrument with kitchen roll or non-fluffy cloth. Water left inside the tubing can lead to limescale build-up, so leaving the instrument to fully dry in a warm place, such as an airing cupboard, helps. Finally, reassemble, lubricating all valves and slides as described above. Use slide grease on the threads of the valve caps.

Do not try to remove rotary valves!

9. Fingerprints and other marks may be removed from the body of the instrument with a clean soft cloth. The 'microfibre' types work well. If desired, lacquered instruments may be brought to a shine using a little silicone based furniture polish. Silver-plated instruments can be carefully polished with a silver cloth, which can be bought in most supermarkets. Do not use liquid silver cleaner such as 'Silvo' which is difficult to remove and can damage valves and slides.

10. Small dents in the instrument will not have a great effect, but larger dents, and any dents near the mouthpipe will alter the instrument's tuning. Your repairer can advise on this. Dents on the valve casings can cause major problems. Broken solder joints can weaken the instrument and should be repaired professionally.



BRASS

INSTRUMENT

CARE & MAINTENANCE



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LOOKING AFTER YOUR BRASS INSTRUMENT

Your instrument is a precision piece of engineering. If carefully looked after it will give many years of troublefree playing. Follow these guidelines for looking after your instrument.

1. When not in use, keep the instrument in its case. Most accidents happen when the instrument is left unattended and out of its case. Be wary of cheaper soft 'gigbag' cases which offer less protection than a traditional hard case.
2. The mouthpiece should not be pushed into the instrument with any force; a gentle twist is all it needs to stay in place. If it does become jammed in the instrument, take it to your repairer who will have a specialist tool for removing it



without damage. Trying to remove it yourself is a common cause of expensive damage!

3. Your mouthpiece should be cleaned often using a mouthpiece brush under running water. It tends to collect dirt which can be blown into the instrument,

eventually interfering with the valves and slides, and altering the tuning. Never eat or drink (except water) just before playing. It is not only unhygienic but can corrode the inside of your instrument.

4. On instruments with PISTON valves, the valves require regular lubrication with proper valve oil. One at a time, remove each valve by unscrewing the cap at the top of the valve casing and carefully lifting the whole piston out. Wipe clean with a non-fluffy cloth. Check inside the valve casing, if it looks dirty remove the bottom cap and pass a cleaning cloth through, being careful not to scratch the inside surface. (*Serious dirt and limescale build-up is a sign of poor maintenance and is probably a job for your repairer*). Replace the bottom cap, apply a few drops of oil to the valve and carefully ease the valve back into its casing. Turn gently until the valve-guide clicks into place and tighten up the top cap. Work the valve up and down a few times to distribute the oil and to check that the action is OK.
5. On instruments with ROTARY valves (mainly French horns and some trombones) the valves require regular lubrication with rotary valve oil. Remove the appropriate slide, drop a few drops down the tube and work the valve to spread the oil. Bearing oil can be applied to the spindle after unscrewing the domed valve cap. Do not attempt to dismantle a rotary valve, they are difficult to replace without the right tools and knowledge.



6. The action of a SLIDE TROMBONE requires regular lubrication to ensure a smooth action (and even the smallest dent will cause serious problems). To clean, remove the outer slide and wipe the inner slides with a clean non-fluffy cloth. Fill the outer slide with warm soapy water and work a long flexible cleaning brush up and down several times. Drain and repeat if very sludgy. Rinse with plenty of clean water (a shower hose without the head on is useful). If you use slide cream apply a little to the tops of the 'stockings' (the slightly larger section at the end of the inner slide), replace the outer slide (check the slide lock is the correct way round). Work the slide up and down to distribute the cream evenly. If you use different slide lubrication follow the instructions that come with it. For final lubrication, pull out the inner slide and spray liberally with clean water. Apply more water whenever necessary. When not being played always lock the slide to prevent accidents.

