

Care of your MYMS brass instrument

Your MYMS instrument case must be clearly labelled with your name, telephone number and / or address. Brass instruments look tough, but they should be treated as if they were made of glass. Brass instruments are easily dented, especially the larger ones and although some dents have little effect, one tiny dent in a trombone slide or valve casing can make the instrument unplayable.

Internal cleanliness and lubrication are the two most important factors in brass instrument care

1. **Twice a year**, thoroughly flush the instrument with warm water and several drops of washing-up liquid. Work the valves (or trombone slide) with water in the instrument, and rinse with cold water. **TAKE CARE NOT TO DENT THE INSTRUMENT ON THE BATH, SINK OR TAPS.** Dry the instrument carefully with a soft, clean lint-free cloth and oil the valves and grease the slide/s (see 3. below).
2. **Every three months**, a flexible cleaning brush should be used to clean slides and tubing.

Tuning slides (all brass instruments) These should be carefully removed one at a time while depressing the appropriate valve. Remove old grease from the inside AND outside of the tubing and replace with new slide grease or petroleum jelly. Keep the relevant valve depressed and carefully replace the tuning slide.

Rotary valves (horn, Bb/F trombone) **Never disassemble a rotary valve nor its linkage.** Your teacher will show you how to lubricate these correctly, using quality valve oil. Keep the valve caps lightly greased as for piston valves, and avoid bending the linkages (primarily by NEVER storing music in your French horn case).

Mouthpiece This is the single most important part of your MYMS instrument. Keep it spotlessly clean with a mouthpiece brush. Larger mouthpieces can also be cleaned by tightly twisting the corner of a handkerchief or similar cloth and pulling it through the mouthpiece. Put the mouthpiece in the instrument with a gentle turning action. Never try to remove a stuck mouthpiece (a special tool is required) – take it to your teacher or contact the MYMS Instrument Secretary. Your dishwasher can keep your mouthpiece clean and hygienic, but do not clean in the dishwasher more than once a month.

Piston valves - trumpet, euphonium, tuba. **Always remove and replace valves *one at a time*** (to ensure correct replacement) by unscrewing the top valve cap. Take care not to lose the valve spring as you lift the piston gently from its casing. Remove the cap at the bottom of the casing and carefully clean the piston spring (if present), caps and inside of the casing with a clean, lint-free cloth. Oil the piston lightly with a quality valve oil (not rotary valve oil) and carefully line up the piston's 'key' with the inner casing's slot as you carefully replace the piston. All valve cap threads should be lightly greased periodically, and the valve caps replaced with only finger tightness. 'Blue Juice' valve oil is recommended.

Trombone slide While holding the slide section *only*, carefully remove the outer slide. Wipe away all old lubricant with a soft, lint-free cloth. Every three months, clean the inside of the outer slide with a flexible brush. **NEVER try to run a flexible cleaning brush around the bottom of a trombone's outer slide.** Your teacher will advise whether cream and water spray, or slide oil is best, and how much to use (oil is only advised for younger players simply because it is easier to apply and less likely to result in damage). Replace the outer slide with care.

3. The outside of lacquered and silver plated Brass instruments should be wiped with a dry, clean cloth. **NEVER USE METAL POLISH** on MYMS brass instruments.
4. Store your Brass instrument at room temperature. When it is not being played, keep it safely in the case away from those who do not know how to care for it and well out of reach of very young children.



Valves and trombone slides must be lubricated at least once a week, BEFORE they stick, not after...

Dents, stuck mouthpieces and tuning slides need a technician's attention, so **PLEASE DO NOT ATTEMPT REPAIRS YOURSELF.**

After each playing session, empty the water and wipe the instrument before returning it to its case. Ask your teacher to demonstrate - where practical - all the above procedures before carrying them out at home.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, CONTACT YOUR TEACHER OR THE MYMS INSTRUMENT SECRETARY.