

CLEANING AND MAINTAINING THE TRUMPET

The trumpet player should clean the instrument once a week!! It should be cleaned in a large sink or tub that is big enough to fully immerse the body of the trumpet. The following cleaning supplies are needed:

Mouthpiece brush
Valve brush
Flexible snake brush
Cleaning rod
Slide grease
Valve oil
Mild dishwashing detergent
Silver polish (for silver plated instruments ONLY)

To disassemble the trumpet for cleaning, remove the tuning slide, all valve slides, and bottom valve caps and soak them in warm water. Remove the three valves and set them aside on a soft towel. Place the body of the trumpet into the warm water and let it soak for a moment.

Take your flexible snake or valve brush and clean the valves in the warm water. Make sure your brush or snake cleans the ports (holes). Rinse with clean water and carefully dry with a soft cloth. Put the valve aside while cleaning the rest of the trumpet.

Use the flexible snake to clean each valve slide and the main tuning slide. Take care not to force the snake around the tight bend in each of the valve slides or it may become stuck. Flush the slides with clean water and dry.

Carefully run the flexible snake brush down each of the tubes of the bell of the trumpet, taking care not to scratch the inner wall of the valve casings when the brush comes out. The leadpipe naturally collects the most debris, and extra time should be taken in cleaning it.

Wrap a soft cloth around the cleaning rod and carefully swab out each of the three walls of the valves. Remember that the slightest dent or scratch can cause a valve to stick.

Reassemble the trumpet, starting with the valves. Be careful not to touch the valve itself; handle it by the valve stem or cap. Each valve should have a number on it. Be sure that you insert each valve correctly. (#1 valve in the 1st valve, etc.) in the valve casings. Coat each valve with a liberal amount of valve oil and align the valve guide with the corresponding groove in the valve casing. Do not screw the valves on too tightly.

Grease and reassemble each of the valve slides and tuning slide. To do this, place a small amount of slide grease on the slide and spread it on the slide with the fingers. Press down the appropriate valve so as not to build up any undue pressure, and put the slide into the trumpet. Wipe off any excess grease.

The mouthpiece should be cleaned every DAY with a mouthpiece brush using soap and water. It's a very personal piece of equipment. Keep the amount of germs down to a minimum. Also, this professor has found out that cleaning the mouthpiece every day reduces the chances of cold sores appearing.

The exterior of a lacquer-finished trumpet needs little maintenance. Wipe off gently with soap and water, too. For silver or nickel-plated instruments, use a nonabrasive polish to shine the finish.

Why should you teach your students to clean their horns regularly? It helps keep the horn blowing the same by keeping the inside diameter of the lead pipe and tuning slide the same.