

BRASS INSTRUMENT MAINTENANCE

Instruments are to be looked after appropriately by Band Members. The best way to learn about general cleaning and maintenance is to have your tutor demonstrate.

Below are some simple tips to help you.

DUE TO THE COMPLEX AND DELICATE CONSTRUCTION OF INSTRUMENTS, NEVER ATTEMPT ANY ADJUSTMENTS OR REPAIRS ON YOUR OWN.

If there are any problems, please notify the Band Committee, and it will be fixed promptly. All school owned instruments are serviced over the summer holidays, the cost of this is covered in your instrument hire fee.

GENERAL:

KEEP IT CLEAN: Don't chew gum, eat, or drink soft drinks just before or while you play. Food particles, sugar and other foreign materials, when blown into an instrument, are difficult to remove and eventually will affect the playing quality. If you do eat before playing, rinse your mouth out thoroughly with water. The same policy applies to the outside of your instrument too.

AFTER PLAYING: wipe finger prints and other marks off the outside of your instrument with a players polishing cloth. It is necessary to remove perspiration as it has a damaging effect on wood, lacquer and metal.

- The valves on horns need to be maintained with Valve Oil. This is available for purchase at Mall Music Brookvale or Mona Vale Music. It is essential that valves are oiled regularly, failure to do so will cause the valves to seize up and repair can be costly. Have your tutor demonstrate how to oil the valves.

- It is normal for brass instruments to accumulate spit (there are spit valves). About once a month you will need to wash inside your instrument and clean the mouthpiece. Have your tutor demonstrate the best way to clean your instrument. A cleaning kit including a mouthpiece brush and a "snake" will be useful.
- All slides need to be kept lubricated with reputable slide grease only. **DO NOT USE VALVE OIL OR VASELINE.** This must be done correctly or the slides will seize up, have your tutor demonstrate.
- Never store your instrument with the mouthpiece inserted. If the mouthpiece becomes stuck, **DO NOT TRY TO REMOVE IT YOURSELF!** Let one of our band conductors or a committee member know. We can easily fix this using a special tool, doing this yourself can severely damage the instrument.
- Brass lacquered instrument finishes can be wiped clean by using a soft cloth. Silver plated finishes should be cleaned by using specially treated polishing mits or 'silver cloths', which can be purchased.

Just remember, learning to read music and play an instrument is a challenging and rewarding experience. If your instrument is cared for and maintained, the satisfaction you get will greatly increase.

BAND COMMITTEE