

Care & Maintenance



We're confident that you will enjoy your new Gemeinhardt flute or piccolo. Your instrument was designed by master craftsmen to give you quality sound and maximum performance potential. You can help maintain your flute in "like-new" condition by following these tips on cleaning and suggestions for general care.

Flutes

Ten Flute Care Imperatives:

1. Do not play with anything in your mouth (i.e. crumbs, bits of nuts, etc.) or after eating candy. Rinse your mouth before playing if necessary
2. Always play with clean hands
3. Do not slam the keys down when playing
4. When putting the flute together carefully grab the flute around the keys and twist the pieces together (vs. rocking them). Do not apply too much force to the keys to prevent from bending them, which will cause them to not seat properly
5. Clean the interior and exterior of the flute daily
6. If you place the instrument down, do so onto a stand to let the interior drain
7. Do not ignore any problems, but take care of them right away (for instance, if the pads are sticking, dry them with a powder paper or clean them with alcohol)
8. Do not turn any of the screws on your flute, including the screw on the head joint.
9. Do not leave your instrument on the floor under any circumstances
10. Never put your flute in water to wash it

Storing your instrument -

When not using your instrument, keep it closed in its case to help protect the finish from unnecessary exposure to impurities in the air, especially in geographic areas affected by salt or sulfur content. Also, keeping the instrument in its case helps prevent the possibility of damage by dropping it accidentally.

Do not store the instrument in areas of extreme temperature changes. Keep the instrument away from radiators or from windows where direct sunlight can cause extreme heat.

Putting your flute together -

Before assembling the instrument, wipe the tenons (ends) clean. Remember that even under normal circumstances, slight scratches on the tenons will appear after time since metal is rubbing against metal. Never use grease, oil or silver polish on tenons. When assembling the instrument, avoid grabbing the key mechanism. Carefully, but firmly, hold the main body and insert the tenons in the receivers with a twisting motion. Align the embouchure hole on the head joint (the section without keys) in direct line with the first (closest) key on the front of the main body (longest section). Align the rod on the foot joint (shortest joint with keys) exactly in the center of the last key on the main body. If you have any questions, your teacher will be glad to be of assistance.

Putting your flute away -

After you have played your instrument; clean it before putting it away. Moisture left inside the flute can cause faster pad deterioration. Cleaning the inside can be done by threading a pre-washed flannel cloth through the slot on the cleaning rod (wrap the cloth around the rod) and running the rod through the inside of the flute. The outside of the flute may be wiped with a plain damp cloth to remove finger marks.

Tarnish prevention tips -

A silver polishing cloth will remove tarnish and help retain the original beauty of your instrument. *A word about body acids:* Perspiration or body acids can cause more severe tarnishing. More frequent use of the polishing cloth will keep the finish looking better. ***Under no circumstances should you use any commercial silver polish on the instrument.*** Silver is a soft metal and prolonged usage of an abrasive polish will cause signs of wear on the finish.

Key mechanism -

Periodically use a soft makeup brush or paintbrush to clean dust from around the keys. Do not oil your keys unless instructed by your band teacher. Oil the key mechanism sparingly. The oil should be applied with a special key oiler to prevent excessive application. Wipe off any excessive oil carefully.

Pad care -

Pads may be dried with power paper. Pads will get dirty and sticky even when you do your best to keep them clean. Pads may be cleaned using a small amount of alcohol on cleaning paper, or by using an alcohol swab. Do not use water since it will cause pads to swell and ruin proper pad seating. Dab some rubbing alcohol on a cleaning paper, or use an alcohol swab, and gently place it under the sticky key pad. Push the key down several times. Make sure the key is up and pull out the paper. Be very careful when doing this, if you pull out the paper the wrong way you can tear your pads.

Repair and maintenance -

Worn felts, worn corks, loose pads, bent springs or keys can result after a period of continuous use (usually six months or more). Repairs should be done by competent repair person. Performing the recommended cleaning and careful handling will keep the instrument in top playing condition.