

Students' Guide for Cleaning Musical Instruments

The health and safety of everyone using school or personal instruments is a priority in Richland One. All of the school-owned instruments have been cleaned over the summer, but now it is your job to make sure your instrument is cleaned and maintained properly.

Orchestra Guidelines:

For every class or rehearsal:

1. All students should have their own instrument if possible.
2. All students should have their own bow if possible.
3. If instruments or bows must be shared, alcohol wipes or 70% alcohol solution or Sterisol germicide solution should be available for use between different people.
4. Wash your hands before and after you play your instrument.
5. Give your instrument a thorough cleaning once a week or as instructed by your teacher. Your teacher can help you with instructions for cleaning your instrument, or you can use these tutorials online: <https://tinyurl.com/yxzynadf>

As you pack up your instrument each time:

1. Wipe off the outside of your instrument, being careful to not get your cloth caught on any part of the instrument. Use only a soft cloth that will not scratch the instrument.
2. Wash your hands again after you pack up your instrument.

Concert Band and Marching Band Guidelines:

For every class or rehearsal:

1. All students should have their own instrument if possible.
2. All students should have their own mouthpiece.
3. All students and faculty sharing reed instruments **MUST** have their own individual reeds. Reeds should **NEVER** be shared.
4. If instruments must be shared, alcohol wipes or 70% alcohol solution or Sterisol germicide solution should be available for use between different people.
5. Wash your hands before and after you play your instrument.
6. Give your instrument a thorough cleaning once a week or as instructed by your teacher. Your teacher can help you with instructions for cleaning your instrument, or you can use these tutorials online: <https://tinyurl.com/yxzynadf>

As you pack up your instrument each time:

1. Wipe off the outside of your instrument, being careful to not unhook any springs or get your cloth caught on any part of the instrument. Use a soft cloth that will not scratch the instrument only.
2. Give your mouthpiece some extra attention as listed below.
3. Wash your hands again after you pack up your instrument.

Mouthpiece cleaning:

The mouthpiece (flute headjoint), bassoon bocal, and saxophone neck crook) are essential parts of wind instruments. Since these are the parts of the instrument closest to the mouth, these need the most careful cleaning. The following steps were published by the University of Nevada School of Music:

Cleaning a Flute Headjoint

1. Using a cotton swab saturated with denatured, isopropyl alcohol, carefully clean around the embouchure hole.
2. Alcohol wipes can be used on the flute's lip plate to kill germs if the flute needs to be handled by anyone other than the student.
3. Using a soft, lint-free silk cloth inserted into the cleaning rod, clean the inside of the headjoint.
4. Do not run the headjoint under water as it may saturate and eventually shrink the headjoint cork.

Cleaning a Bassoon Bocal

1. Bocals should be cleaned every month with a bocal brush, mild soap solution, and running water.
2. English Horn bocals can be cleaned with a pipe cleaner, mild soap solution, and running water. Be careful not to scratch the inside of the bocal with the exposed wire ends of the pipe cleaner.

Cleaning Hard Rubber Clarinet or Saxophone Mouthpieces

1. Mouthpieces should be swabbed after each playing and cleaned weekly.
2. Select a small (to use less liquid) container that will accommodate the mouthpiece and place the mouthpiece tip down in the container.
3. Fill the container to where the ligature would begin with a solution of half water and half white vinegar (50% water and 50% hydrogen peroxide works too). Protect clarinet mouthpiece corked tenons from moisture.
4. After a short time, use an appropriately sized mouthpiece brush to remove any calcium deposits or other residue from inside and outside surfaces. This step may need to be repeated if the mouthpiece is excessively dirty.
5. Rinse the mouthpiece thoroughly and then saturate with Sterisol germicide solution. Place on paper towel and wait one minute.
6. Wipe dry with paper towel.

Cleaning Saxophone Necks (Crooks)

1. Swabs are available to clean the inside of the saxophone neck. However, most saxophonists use a flexible bottlebrush and toothbrush to accomplish the same results.
2. If the instrument is played daily, the saxophone neck should be cleaned weekly (and swabbed out each day after playing).
3. Use the bottlebrush and mild, soapy water to clean the inside of the neck.
4. Rinse under running water.
5. Sterisol germicide solution may be used on the inside of the neck at this time, if desired (not necessary). Place on paper towel for one minute.
6. Rinse again under running water, dry, and place in the case.

Cleaning Brass Mouthpieces

1. Using a cloth soaked in warm, soapy water, clean the outside of the mouthpiece.
2. Use a mouthpiece brush and warm, soapy water to clean the inside.
3. Rinse the mouthpiece and dry thoroughly.
4. Sterisol germicide solution or 70% alcohol solution may be used on the mouthpiece at this time. Place on paper towel for one minute.
5. Wipe dry with paper towel.