



ETHOS MUSIC ACADEMY

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO INSTRUMENTS

BAND & ORCHESTRA

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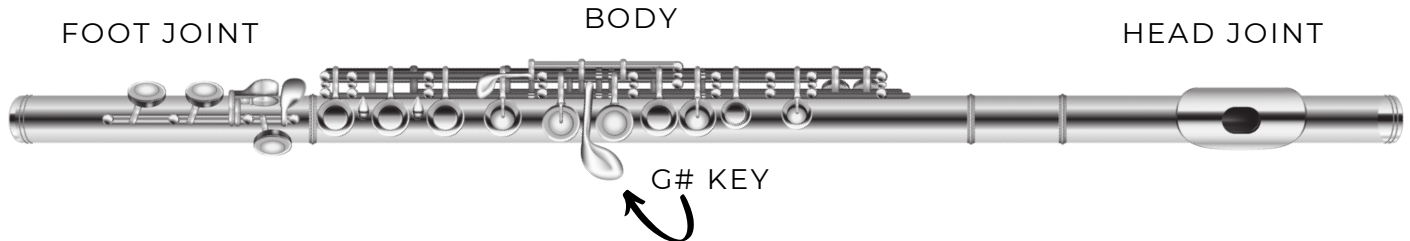
CONTACT US:
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A PARENT'S GUIDE TO THE... FLUTE



ETHOS MUSIC ACADEMY



ASSEMBLY

- 1 Don't hold onto the keys! Keys are easily bent or misaligned by too much pressure. Instead, hold only the very top of the body as you connect the foot joint, and hold onto the connection between foot joint and body as you connect the head joint. The joints should easily slide together.
- 2 The arrows on the collar of the foot joint should align with the arrows on the body. The rods or knuckles of the foot joint should align with the keys on the body.
- 3 The arrows on the collar of the head joint should align with the insignia on the body. The hole of the mouthpiece should align with the keys on the body.

CLEANING AND STORAGE

- 1 After disassembling the instrument, use the cleaning rod that comes in your case, along with a thin, soft cloth, and swab the inside of the foot joint, body, and head joint to absorb excess moisture.
- 2 The cleaning cloth should be stored *under* the instrument in the case, not on top of it. Alternatively, it can be stored in a separate area, such as an outside pocket of a soft case.
- 3 In the case, the rods or knuckles of the keys should be closest to the outermost edge of the case. If the pieces are not aligned in the case properly and it is closed, it could damage the keys.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Below are some common problems students may come across.

For the best diagnosis on your instrument, be sure to ask your music teacher.

- 1 **PROBLEM:** All keys are down to play a low C, but the instrument doesn't play a low C.
You likely have an air leak on one of the keys. This could be caused by a key being misaligned so that the pad doesn't completely cover the hole.
- 2 **PROBLEM:** The G# key is bent.
Since this key sticks out from the body, it is easier to damage by dropping the instrument or knocking it against something, or by simply manhandling the instrument.
- 3 **PROBLEM:** The flute won't assemble.
This is most often caused by a dent (from dropping) or some similar issue in the collar where the joints attach to the body, and normally occurs with the foot joint. It can also be caused by too many incorrect assemblies (too much wiggling or torquing the instrument to try and get it to slide together).
- 4 **PROBLEM:** The foot joint is stuck.
This is sometimes due to dirt building up on the collar or a dent. Either way, do NOT try and unstuck the foot joint yourself if it is stuck. Doing so could result in further damage to the instrument.

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO THE... CLARINET



ETHOS MUSIC ACADEMY

ASSEMBLY

LIGATURE

MOUTH
PIECE

BARREL

UPPER
JOINT

LOWER
JOINT

BELL



REED

- 1 Start by assembling the mouthpiece and ligature, and attaching it to the barrel.
- 2 Moisten reeds with saliva or water before attaching to mouthpiece.
- 3 Line up the flat parts of both the reed and the mouthpiece.
- 4 The wide part of the ligature goes on first. The ligature should go farther than the curved part of the reed. On a metal ligature, the screws should be against the reed. Tighten just enough so the reed doesn't move when the mouthpiece is shaken. Don't over-tighten the ligature.
- 5 Don't hold onto the small, delicate keys at the top or bottom of the upper joint, as they are easily damaged. Instead, hold onto the area with fewer keys on the top. On the lower joint, hold onto the area at the bottom with fewer keys.
- 6 Always apply cork grease and wiggle the pieces back and forth to assemble.
- 7 Line up the bridge keys that cross the upper and lower joints (just like puzzle pieces) without clashing the keys on the sides.
- 8 If your student needs to leave their clarinet during band they should separate the upper portion from the lower. Avoid leaving it on the floor so it doesn't get knocked over.

CLEANING AND STORAGE

- 1 Take the mouthpiece and barrel unit off. Invert the instrument and drop the weighted end of a pull-through swab into the bell end. Pull the swab up through the instrument so that it doesn't catch on anything. Do this two or three times.
- 2 Always take the reed off of the mouthpiece and dry it off before storage. Store reeds in a flat case to keep from warping.
- 3 Practice good reed rotation. Use a different reed each day for four days, then start over with the first reed. This allows them to strengthen between uses. To help with the rotation, you may also number your reeds on the flat or back side.
- 4 If reeds show signs of mold, or have any cracks or chips, they are trash. Throw them away immediately so they don't get confused with good reeds.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Below are some common problems students may come across.

For the best diagnosis on your instrument, be sure to [ask your music teacher](#).

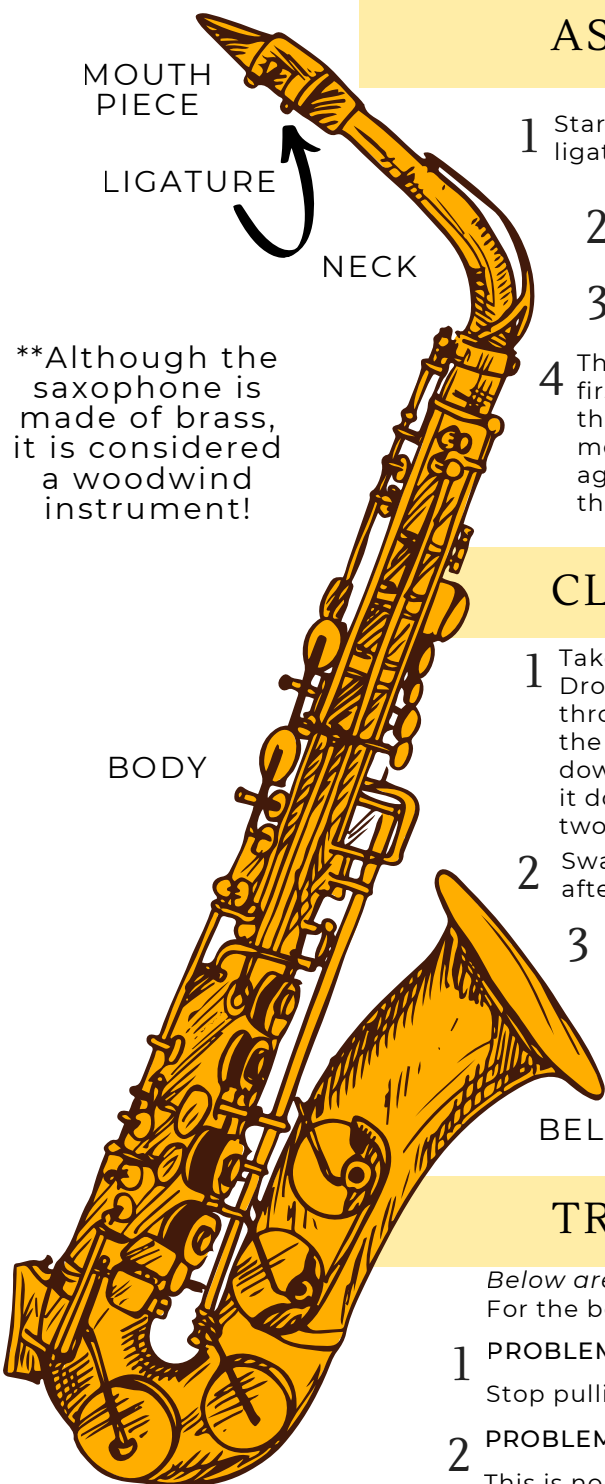
- 1 **PROBLEM: The swab got stuck.**
Stop pulling immediately to avoid damaging anything.
- 2 **PROBLEM: The bridge keys are bent.**
These are the keys that stick down below the upper joint and above the lower joint to connect the two pieces and allow you to play notes across the body of the instrument. Since they stick out, they are easily bent if the pieces are dropped or knocked against something. On Buffet clarinets, this area also has a small nylon pin that can be snapped off if dropped.
- 3 **PROBLEM: Some notes won't play properly.**
This is most often caused by air leaks, which are attributed to bent keys, which are mainly caused by dropping the instrument or gripping it in the wrong place during assembly.

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO THE... SAXOPHONE



ETHOS MUSIC ACADEMY

ASSEMBLY



- 1 Start by assembling the mouthpiece and ligature, and attaching it to the neck.
- 2 Moisten reeds with saliva or water before attaching to mouthpiece.
- 3 Line up the flat parts of both the reed and the mouthpiece.
- 4 The wide part of the ligature goes on first. The ligature should go farther than the angled part of the reed. On a metal ligature, the screws should be against the reed. Don't over-tighten the ligature.
- 5 Attach the neck/mouthpiece unit to the instrument. Tighten the screw.
- 6 When attaching the neck strap, make sure it will hold before letting go of the instrument.
- 7 Adjust the neck strap up and down until the mouthpiece is at a comfortable height. Your student shouldn't be reaching for the mouthpiece.
- 8 Let the neck strap do the work of holding the instrument.

CLEANING AND STORAGE

- 1 Take the neck/mouthpiece unit off. Drop the weighted end of a pull-through swab into the bell end. Invert the instrument and pull the swab down through the instrument so that it doesn't catch on anything. Do this two or three times.
- 2 Swab the neck with a smaller swab after removing the mouthpiece.
- 3 Always take the reed off the mouthpiece and dry it off before storage. Store reeds in a flat case to keep from warping.
- 4 Practice good reed rotation. Use a different reed each day for four days, then start over with the first reed. This allows them to strengthen between uses.
- 5 If reeds show signs of mold, or have any cracks or chips, they are trash. Throw them away immediately so they don't get confused with good reeds.
- 6 Never store books on top of or under the saxophone in the case. This can result in damaged keys, which are costly to fix.
- 7 Always hold the instrument by the bell to take it in and out of the case to avoid damaging any keys.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Below are some common problems students may come across. For the best diagnosis on your instrument, be sure to ask your music teacher.

- 1 **PROBLEM: The swab got stuck.**
Stop pulling immediately to avoid damaging anything.
- 2 **PROBLEM: The keys are bent/the bell looks off-center.**
This is normally the result of dropping the saxophone. Lots of damage can occur from a seemingly innocuous drop or knock, so be careful when setting it down or when taking it on and off the neck strap. It could also be from grabbing the instrument near the top instead of by the bell when taking it in and out of the case. Delicate keys can be easily bent from manhandling.
- 3 **PROBLEM: Some notes won't play properly.**
This is most often caused by air leaks, which are usually attributed to bent keys, which are caused by dropping the instrument or gripping it in the wrong place during assembly or storage.

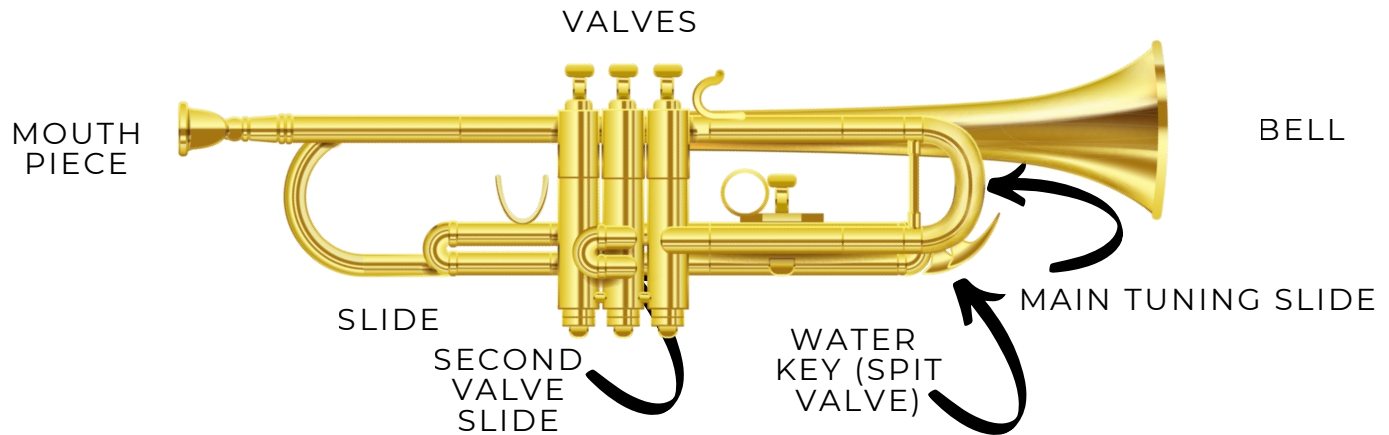


REED

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO THE... TRUMPET



ETHOS MUSIC ACADEMY



ASSEMBLY

- 1 Insert the mouthpiece, being careful not to jam it in. A light twist will suffice.

CLEANING AND STORAGE

- 1 Grease tuning slides weekly. Simply pull the slides out, rub some slide grease on them, and reinsert.
- 2 Oil valves daily, ideally at night after the day's practice is finished.
- 3 Always set the trumpet down so that the second valve slide is facing up.
- 4 Give the trumpet a bath every three months in warm soapy water to clean it thoroughly.
- 5 To oil the valves, set the trumpet on a table for stability. Oil one valve at a time. Take the valve out, noting the direction the number etched into the piston is facing. Put oil on all sides of the piston, reinsert it about 90% of the way and spin it around once or twice to get oil distributed on the interior of the valve chamber. Take the valve out again, put oil on it a second time, and reinsert it into the valve chamber fully, making sure that the number is facing in the same direction as when you removed it. Tighten the valve cap and listen for the click that tells you it's locked in.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Below are some common problems students may come across.

For the best diagnosis on your instrument, be sure to [ask your music teacher](#).

- 1 **PROBLEM: The mouthpiece got stuck.**
This can happen with too much pressure or force. The mouthpiece should glide in without excessive force.
- 2 **PROBLEM: The valves/slides are sticky (i.e. they don't spring up after you push them, but they're not outright stuck).**
This is normally the result of a lack of regular maintenance (lack of oil). Spit and oil can build up and calcify in the valves, making it hard for the piston to travel along the chamber. Remove all slides and valves and give the trumpet a soapy warm water bath, then grease all slides and oil the valves properly. This should resolve the issue.
- 3 **PROBLEM: The valves/slides are stuck.**
This is most often caused by dropping the instrument or knocking it against something. Dented valves can make it difficult or impossible for the piston to travel along the chamber, and a dented slide can make it difficult or impossible to remove the slide. On the second slide valve especially, a dent can cause a waterfall of problems throughout the instrument. If you have been cleaning the instrument regularly, check the slides and valves for any dents, which are a tell-tale sign that the instrument has been dropped or knocked against something.

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO THE... TROMBONE



ETHOS MUSIC ACADEMY



ASSEMBLY

- 1 Insert the mouthpiece, being careful not to jam it in. A light twist will suffice.
- 2 Hold the bell section in the left hand and the slide section in the right hand. The trombone should look like a 90 degree V when assembled correctly.
- 3 Slide the bell side and the slide side together. Apply a little pressure to get them to connect. Tighten the collar so they don't accidentally fall apart.
- 4 Keep the slide lock engaged when not playing. Try to develop the second nature instinct to flip the lock over automatically.

CLEANING AND STORAGE

- 1 Oil the long slide daily, ideally at night after the day's practice is finished. To oil the slide, take the inner slide almost entirely out of the slide chamber. Be careful not to take it completely out! Using your fingers, spread cream evenly along the inner slide. Run the slide back and forth a few times to distribute the cream evenly throughout the slide chamber. Pull the inner slide back out and spray water along the length of the slide. Put the slide back together and it is ready to go.
- 2 You may find that the slide slows down throughout rehearsal. There is no need to re-oil it at that point, just spritz some water on it (a couple of spritzes will do).
- 3 Grease the tuning slide weekly. Simply pull the slide out, rub some slide grease on it, and reinsert.
- 4 Give the trombone a bath every three months in warm soapy water, using the brushes that come in your maintenance kit, to clean it thoroughly.
- 5 When playing, water will build up inside the tubes. To release, press the water key and blow into the horn without buzzing your lips.

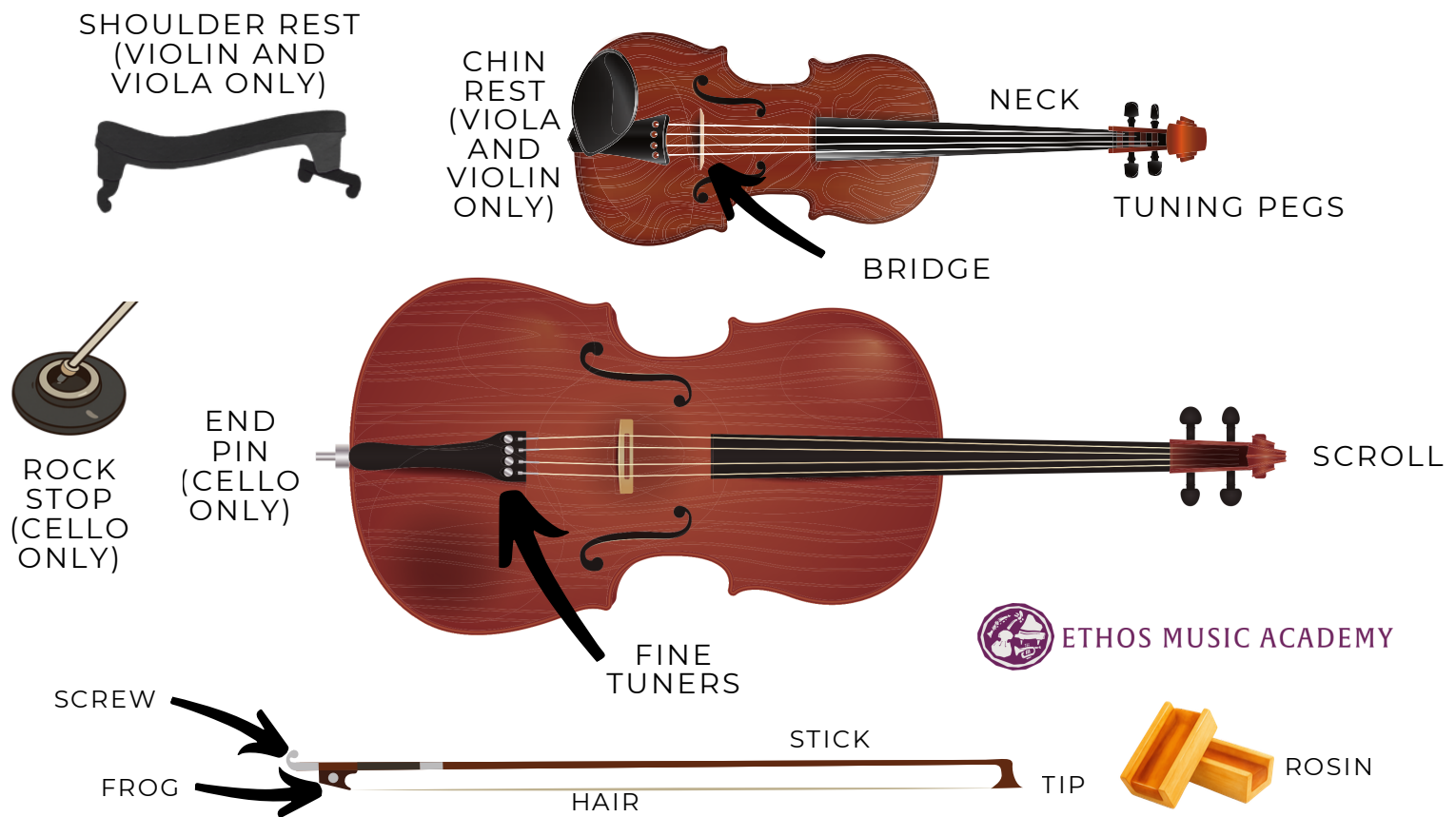
TROUBLESHOOTING

Below are some common problems students may come across.

For the best diagnosis on your instrument, be sure to ask your music teacher.

- 1 **PROBLEM: The mouthpiece got stuck.**
This can happen with too much pressure or force. The mouthpiece should glide in without excessive force.
- 2 **PROBLEM: The slides are sticky.**
The slides need to be oiled (long slide) and greased (tuning slide) (see instructions above).
- 3 **PROBLEM: The slides are stuck.**
Check the slide lock to be sure that it is unlatched. If it is free but the slide still isn't moving, check the bottom of the U on the long slide for a dent. That area can be dented by setting the trombone down too hard. If there is a dent there, bring the trombone in so we can have it fixed. If there is no dent there, the inner slide could be dented; the tubes are very thin and fragile.

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO THE... STRINGS (VIOLIN, VIOLA, CELLO)



ASSEMBLY

- 1 The concave side of the shoulder rest should be under the chin rest. The feet of the shoulder rest should grip the outer lip of the back of the instrument. It should mimic the curve of the shoulder and make a rainbow or frowny face on the back of the instrument.
- 2 Extend the end pin on the cello approximately a hand and a half's length from thumb to pinky.
- 3 Tighten the bow before playing, just enough so that your pinky can snugly fit between the bow hair and the stick. The stick should still have its natural curve while tightened. Always loosen the bow before putting it in the case. Never touch the bow hair with your fingers.
- 4 Rosin the bow as needed. To rosin the bow, make sure it is tightened to playing tension. Start with the rosin cake at the frog and slowly move the bow across the cake towards the tip. Run it back down towards the frog. Repeat as many times as necessary so that the bow hair is evenly coated.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Below are some common problems students may come across.

For the best diagnosis on your instrument, be sure to ask your music teacher or contact Ethos Music Academy.

- 1 **PROBLEM: A string broke.**
Changing and tuning strings can be tricky, so if you're new to the instrument, we advise that you bring it in for us to help you. As your child is tuning their instrument for orchestra, they should only be using the fine tuners at the bottom of the instrument.
- 2 **PROBLEM: The bridge fell over/the bridge snapped.**
A fallen bridge is fairly easy to fix, but a snapped bridge will have to be replaced completely.
Please note that the bridge is **not glued on.
- 3 **PROBLEM: Something is buzzing or rattling around in the instrument.**
Most often this is from debris, dust, or a loose part. It may also be from the sound post being knocked out of place by dropping the instrument or dropping the case.