

# Saxophone Care and Maintenance

## Updated 2013

### Supplies:

1. Reed and several extras
2. Reed guard or reed case
3. Cork grease
4. Saxophone Swab

### Before You Play:

1. Always rinse out your mouth with water
2. Make sure your hands are clean
3. Make sure the case has the correct side up when opening it.
4. Apply cork grease to the neck cork AS NEEDED. Too much may cause the mouthpiece to slip off, too little will cause cork to swell and make it hard to remove the mouthpiece.

### After You Play

1. After playing, take the reed off the mouthpiece (NEVER LEAVE IT ON THE MOUTHPIECE) and put it in the reed guard.
2. Take the mouthpiece off the neck and carefully shake out the moisture in both before putting them away in your case.
3. Using the saxophone swab, put the weighted end of the string down the bell until it comes out the top of the instrument. Pull the swab through ONCE to remove the moisture that has built up during playing. **Do this every time you are done playing and before you put the instrument away!**
4. If the pads get sticky, you may clean them with a dollar bill by putting the bill underneath the key, pressing the key onto the bill, and pulling the bill out from the key. It may take several cleanings to remove the sticky - ness.
5. Avoid the “pad saver” fluffy things... their nickname among band directors is “pad-killers”. They keep moisture in the instrument, the opposite of what you want.

### Once Every Two Weeks:

1. Clean the interior of the mouthpiece with cool water and a Q - tip. Avoid the mouthpiece brushes that are available - they can damage the interior of the mouthpiece with repeated use.
2. Clean off the excess cork grease that will build up on the joints with a Q - tip.
3. Hand wash the cleaning swab with mild soap to avoid mildew.

### Once a Year:

1. Take the instrument into the music store to have a technician re - align the keys, add key oil to the rods, and check for old or damaged pads.

### WARNING:

1. NEVER leave anything extra (book, papers, music) on top of your saxophone in the case when you close the lid. This can damage your instrument. Keep your music and book in its own folder.
2. NEVER leave your saxophone unattended - make sure it's in the case, resting on the chair, or on a saxophone stand.

*Taking proper care of your saxophone will keep your instrument playing well!*