

Abergavenny Borough Band

Care of Brass Instruments

The band is pleased to provide you with an instrument on loan whilst you are a member. With over 50 playing members this represents a substantial financial commitment with some instruments costing over £8,000 each.

It is important, therefore, that you take good care of your instrument and ensure it is cleaned regularly and any faults reported to the band immediately.

All band instruments are insured by the band for loss, theft and accidental damage.

GENERAL CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF BRASS INSTRUMENTS

Should your instrument become damaged or develop a fault **DO NOT** attempt to remedy this yourself. Please report the problem to the Band immediately.

Here are a few general hints and tips on maintaining your instrument in a good playable condition.

- Flush out the instrument at least once a month with a mild soapy solution and luke-warm water. Then rinse with cold water and dry thoroughly. Don't use hot water as it may damage the finish.
- A flexible instrument cleaning brush should be used to clean out slides and tubing, but make sure this is renewed every six months to ensure it doesn't break inside the instrument.
- Use a valve cleaner to clean out the valve casings; do not use a standard flexible brush.
- Use a lint-free cloth, as a swab and to wipe the pistons, which should be removed and replaced very carefully, in the correct positions (when you replace the pistons ensure they are perfectly clean and dust free).
- Use only tuning slide grease or lanolin when lubricating slides and use a minimum amount of valve oil on the pistons. Use of other lubricants can slow the valves and seize the tuning slides.
- On completion of playing, loosen the valve caps. This avoids the trapped moisture causing corrosion in the screw threads. Also ensure you release any moisture in the tubing via the water keys before returning your instrument to its case.
- Make sure that mouthpieces are cleaned thoroughly with warm water and a mouthpiece brush. Build up of dirt in a mouthpiece or mouthpipe can be detrimental to the sound production & can cause the mouthpiece to seize.
- Care should be taken when polishing lacquered and silver plated instruments. Abrasives must be avoided and I recommended only soft cleaning cloths be used.
- Never expose the instrument to extremes of heat or cold (Don't leave in the back of a car).
- Always put your instrument back into its case on completion of playing to prevent it being damaged.
- Avoid standing the instrument on its bell as this can cause extensive damage and ensure that you use a stand for your instrument.

For trombones: -

- Fill the slide with warm soapy water and move the slide up and down several times. Remove the water and rinse thoroughly with cold fresh water.
 - The inner and outer slides should be separated and cleaned using a trombone flexible cleaner to make sure that the cleaner reaches the bottom of the bow.
 - A small amount of slide cream should be applied to the inner slide stocking and sprayed with clear water. If you use Trombone oil as a lubricant ensure that water is not sprayed on after the application of oil.
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