





Looking after your Instrument

**Welcome to your new instrument! We hope that you'll enjoy your time learning it and want to play it all the time!
To keep your instrument working as well as possible, we've put together a few handy tips for you.
If you have any questions or worries though, please just ask your teacher.
Happy playing!**

General

- Instruments are not always as strong as you think and are often affected by heat. Leave them out of the sun and in a place where they won't get wet, sticky, or dusty.
- Keep your instrument in a safe place, where it won't be knocked and in an appropriate case. Hard cases are stronger and offer better protection but please don't sit on them!
- Tell your teacher if anything seems not to be working properly.
- Do not turn the pegs or touch the pads and keys on your instrument.
- Keep a duster in the case to keep the instrument clean.
- Please don't use stickers or marker pens on any instrument.
- Wash your hands before you play so your instrument doesn't get sticky or dirty.
- Don't force the keys, buttons, switches, or connectors – ask your teacher if something isn't working.
- Leave some time after eating or drinking before you play your instrument – especially wind and brass instruments.
- Consider insuring the instrument whilst it's in your house.
- This is your instrument – please don't share it with friends, especially if it is one you put in your mouth to play.
- **Never attempt to repair instruments yourself or let anyone try for you. All of our repairs are done by specialists.**

<p>Violin/Viola</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always open the case on a flat surface and pick up the instrument by its neck. • Ask the teacher when it is right to use rosin • Your teacher will show you how much to tighten and slacken the bow and when to do it • Never touch the hairs of the bow • Never put the violin down on its front: this may damage the bridge. • Always take the shoulder pad off before closing the case. • Do not keep music in your case: use a folder or music case. • Make sure the case is shut properly before carrying it.
<p>Cello</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always lay your cello down on its side. • If you are leaving the cello, even for a few moments, push in the end pin. • Never try to stand the cello up leaning against anything. • Be careful with the neck of the cello when you are carrying it: it can easily be broken off. • Keep your cello held high when you're carrying so it doesn't drag on the ground.

<p>Classical and Steel-String Acoustic Guitars</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure your guitar is somewhere it can't fall over, as switches, necks, headstocks and tuning keys are easily damaged. A case or on a guitar stand is best. • Wipe down your guitar regularly with a dry or very slightly damp duster – never use any polish other than those designed for guitars. • Never fit steel strings to a classical guitar as this could seriously damage the instrument.
<p>Electronic Keyboard</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove batteries when you are not going to use the instrument for a long time. • Adaptor: ensure you have the correct adaptor if using mains electric; make sure that you put the plug into the mains socket LAST, before switching on; unplug the power adaptor when not in use or during electric storms. • Do not mix old and new batteries.
<p>Woodwind – General</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insure your instrument to avoid big bills for loss/damage. Woodwind instruments are the most expensive to replace. • Dry it out properly every time: your teacher will show you how. • Do not stand the instrument up on its end or rest the instrument on a music stand, even if it will balance like that. • Do not let friends play it: it's unhygienic and may get broken. • Do not keep anything in the case on top of the keys, it will damage the keys.
<p>Flute</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry it out properly every time. Your teacher will show you how. • Clean the joints with a cloth so they fit together well and be careful with the thin metal ends of the joints. • Do not use Vaseline or grease on the joints, as this can damage the instrument. • Don't keep anything in the case on top of the keys.

Clarinet

- Dry the mouthpiece every time you play.
- Keep the cork joints greased regularly – your teacher will show you how.

Brass

- Weekly: Check all tuning slides, move, and apply fresh Vaseline if necessary.
- Wash mouthpiece in warm, soapy water.
- Remove valves, one at a time, wipe clean and apply fresh valve oil.
- Check all tuning slides, adding fresh Vaseline if you need to. Ask your teacher if you can't remember how to.
- Be gentle when opening water keys, as these can break and bend very easily.

Trombones

- Remove slide, wipe clean and apply fresh slide cream and water weekly.
- Remove all slides, wash thoroughly and apply fresh Vaseline.
- Wash inside instrument with warm, soapy water and rinse thoroughly.