

Flute Maintenance and Cleaning

Needed items

Handkerchief swab, tuning/cleaning rod, polishing cloth

Storing your instrument

When not using your instrument, keep it closed in its case to help protect it and to prevent the possibility of damage.

Do not store the instrument in areas of extreme temperature changes. Keep the instrument away from heating supplies or from windows where direct sunlight or other weather can cause damage.

Daily Maintenance

As you play, your flute collects moisture inside from the warm air coming out of your mouth. If you do not clean this moisture out after each playing session, it can accumulate in your keypads and cause air leaks. To clean the inside of your flute, take a corner of your handkerchief pull it through the slit of your cleaning rod. Twist part of the cloth around the top of the rod and carefully push it through each of the three parts of your instrument. Be careful to twist the rod as you clean, so that the metal of the rod does not contact the inside of your flute. The outside of the flute should be wiped off with a polishing cloth to remove fingerprints. This will stop your instrument from tarnishing and keep it in good working order.

Weekly Maintenance

Wipe off the tenons (the places where your flute joints fit together). They accumulate grease and dirt particles, which make it difficult to connect the joints of your flute.

If you have pads that stick as you play, take a sheet of cigarette paper and place it beneath the sticky key. Gently push the key down, but with a little more pressure than when you play the flute. Pull out the paper while being careful not to tear it. Repeat as necessary.

Yearly Maintenance

Have your instrument checked out at a music store. They will do minor repairs and replace worn pads. You may ask for an estimate for cleaning and repairs before having the work done. If you are renting an instrument, this work will be covered in the rental program. Early summer is a great time to do this.