

Chapter 1 : How to Clean and Polish a Flute

How to Clean and Maintain Your Flute. In this Article: Article Summary Cleaning Your Flute Storing Your Flute Caring for Your Flute Community Q&A Your flute is an expensive and valuable instrument that needs to be properly cleaned and cared for to remain in good condition.

Jewelry especially rings is a common cause of damage to flutes. In some cases the damage may not be able to be repaired, particularly to the surfaces in and around the embouchure hole. Zippers and buttons may also cause scratches. It is important to assemble and disassemble your flute with care. Do not grasp or hold the flute over the mechanism as this can cause the flute to go out of adjustment and possibly damage the mechanism. To properly assemble your flute: Grasp the body at the barrel with one hand. With the other hand, grasp the footjoint at the bottom below the keys. Put the two pieces together with a twisting not rocking action. Grasp the headjoint below the lip plate, and once again use a gentle back and forth twisting action to fit the body of the flute to the headjoint. Some technicians recommend turning the headjoint onto the barrel in only one direction. The Miyazawa flute is designed to be played with the headjoint pulled out approximately mm. The amount necessary to pull out should be adjusted to your preference depending on how you direct your airstream, temperature, and other individual factors. Your Miyazawa flute comes with a micro-fiber cleaning cloth, cotton swab and wooden cleaning rod. You can extend the life of your pads and reduce instrument maintenance by swabbing out the inside of your flute with a soft, absorbent cotton cloth such as the one provided after each time that you play. Fingerprints and surface oils can be removed by using a micro-fiber cleaning cloth on the outer surfaces of your flute. Do not use cloths that have been infused with a silver cleaning chemical as these powders can work their way into the mechanism of the flute or onto the pad surfaces. While we do not recommend using silver polish, some players wish to. Use silver polish only with extreme care and never use it on or around the mechanism or pads. Your instrument is best stored in its case when you are not using it. Keep your case clean, and do not store accessories inside the case. Headjoint and Tenon Care: The headjoint should not be too loose or too tight. Proper fitting can be done with a qualified repair technician. Gently wipe the tenon down after each use with a soft, cotton cloth to keep the area clean. Do not use products such as petroleum jelly, lip balm, or cork grease to lubricate the area as this will cause build up. The only product recommended for use when the tenon is too tight is paraffin wax. How to Use Paraffin Wax: Coat the inner tenon by rubbing it with a piece of dry paraffin wax, then assemble. Next, disassemble the two joints and wipe off both inner and outer tenons with a clean cotton cloth. The next time the flute is assembled, the tenons should join together with ease. Pads and their Care: Your flute may have been built with Straubinger Pads. You will find that these pads will stay in adjustment much longer than ordinary felt pads. As you clean your flute, be careful to stay away from the edges of the pads and key cups. The edges of Straubinger Pads are very firm and hard, and thus they are susceptible to wear if the edges are rubbed frequently. Traditional Felt Pads Your flute may instead have been built with premium felt pads. These pads are made with high quality pressed felt. You should treat these pads in the same way described above for Straubinger Pads. Retaining Rings and Plug Removal The retaining rings which hold the pads in the keys have a special design that allows for more stability and precision when pads are adjusted. This is a technically superior design; however, if a plug is pushed through the hole during removal, the retaining ring will also be removed. When removing plugs, please poke the plug with a pin and pull it up and out of the key while being careful not to scratch your flute. Recommendations for Maintenance Your flute should be cleaned, oiled and adjusted termed a COA appointment approximately once each year by a qualified flute repair technician. Regular annual maintenance by a qualified repair technician is essential in the care of your flute. Proper annual care by a professional will keep your instrument in top condition and uphold its value over time. Flutists who play several hours every day or who have a high acid content in their skin may benefit from more frequent service. Further detailed information about annual maintenance can be found in our Educational Articles. We enjoy hearing from our customers. Please feel free to contact us if we can be of service in any way.

Chapter 2 : Flute Maintenance and Cleaning - The Flute

Cleaning The outside is important because you don't want the flute to look gross or the silver plating (if you have that) to wear down. Inside: Your flute should come with a rod that has a long skinny hole at the end of it.

Can I wash my flute? Or how should I clean my flute? These are simple, self-care practices for your flute: Wiping it down with an absorbent, non-scratching cloth. There are many options in music stores. I like to use a microfiber cleaning cloth to wipe the outside of the instrument and silk on the inside of the instrument. And when you are finished cleaning the flute, do not leave the cloth inside the body: Keep it outside of the case and allow all moisture to dry. Dampening either a cotton-swab or all-cotton pipe cleaner with denatured alcohol and carefully cleaning between the keys and tone holes. Remember to only clean what you can see: There are many pieces of paper, felt, leather, and foam secured to your flute that can be dislodged if you poke too hard. If you have an open hole flute you can also clean inside the open keycup holes where dead skin and perspiration. Using pointed, wooden toothpicks either rounded or squared – the type used for picking up food and cleaning crevices. Rings and tone holes look and feel great after a cleaning. Dampening a facial tissue with denatured alcohol and cleaning inside your barrel, your headjoint tenon, your footjoint tenon, and the inside of your footjoint. In other words, clean the connecting points of your flute. My new, favorite, tarnish-cleaning method: It removes tarnish, does not leave a slippery coating on the instrument, and unlike red rouge polishing cloths does not shed a dust that clogs the mechanism. It leaves your flute looking terrific. It is a soft cloth impregnated with polishing agents, so you need to keep the cloth in its box or in some kind of bag. When you are ready to remove the polish, wipe it off the headjoint. Do not put the headjoint under water. And I do not recommend chemical dips to clean your instrument. If you are polishing the body, then I recommend only dampening the cleaning cloth slightly with polish, wiping it on a small area of the flute body, then quickly wiping it off. Do not allow the polish to dry on the instrument and risk getting particles of polish in your mechanisms. If you want to polish your key cups, put even less polish on the cleaning cloth and polish the tops of keys leaving no polish behind. DO NOT go near the mechanism tubing with silver polish. If the polish gets into the mechanisms, then you need to have the flute completely disassembled and cleaned and oiled. Keep your pads dry. This can best be accomplished by blotting your pads NOT dragging with either a cigarette paper or else a cold-permanent hair wrapper. You want to insert the paper under the pad, press down, release, and then remove the paper. If you have either Straubinger or felt pads, water will break down the pad membranes. When this happens, your pads will no longer seal properly. Flute and Piccolo Repair.

Chapter 3 : Flute & Piccolo Cleaning Instructions | Taylor Music

What do you use to clean the inside of your flute when you're done? I received a flute care package from Tom Lee with a silver polishing cloth and a plain cotten cloth. However, my teacher says to use a silk cloth for cleaning the inside of the flute.

It is very delicate having many keys that move up and down covering the the tone holes. These keys are made of soft metal and can easily be bent. The most common problem that occurs with flutes is bent keys. If a key is bent even just slightly it will not cover or seal the hole completely and therefore the flute will leak air. Consequently the flute will play poorly or not at all. Anyone can make a flute unplayable in a matter of seconds and they may not even know they are doing it. Also please remember that bent keys are Never Under Warranty. Do you know how to assemble a flute???. Anyone can assemble a flute you say. Surprisingly many players can not. Any flute can be put out of commission in a matter of seconds if the keys get bent and put out of alignment. The easiest way to bend the keys of a flute is to assemble and disassemble it the wrong way. Many players are not even aware that they are damaging their flute. All they know is that their flute is in the shop being adjusted all the time. The main purpose of assembling the flute correctly is to avoid touching the keys. Now then, here is the correct way. Forget the way you were taught and any bad habits you may have developed. Do it this way and you will never have to see a repair technician. This will save you much aggravation and money.

Assembly We must first know how to identify the 3 different parts of a flute. The largest piece with the most keys is the BODY 3. Take a moment and figure this out first. As mentioned above, the long part is the body of the flute. Pick up the body by the edges. Always pick up the pieces by the edges, never by the keys. Hold the body of the flute in your LEFT hand. Put your left hand where the writing or brand logo is. This is a good spot to hold it because there are no keys here. You can therefore squeeze it as hard as you want and you will not hurt the flute. Do not push it in as far as it goes. Leave about a quarter inch of the unplated part of the headjoint showing. This is where you tune the flute. So if you push it in all the way, you will be too sharp. Line up the embouchure hole with the keys, so that they are in line. Remember your LEFT hand does not move from its location. Turn the footjoint around and let gravity slide it down in your hand until you are clamping the two large keys by the edge of your palm. This is very critical. This is so that when you assemble the footjoint and your hand slips you do not bend the keys below your palm. If your thumb was wrapped around the footjoint you would bend the keys when you twist on the footjoint. In fact the C key on the footjoint is the most common key to get bent on a flute. Its usually bent 10 minutes after the flute is purchased. Here is the correct position of your hand over the footjoint. Line up the headjoint so that the post that looks like a little round ball closest to the edge of the footjoint lines up with the center of the closest key on the body of the flute.

Disassembly You disassemble the flute exactly the same way as you have assembled it but in reverse order. Reverse order means that whatever you did last you do first. Hold the flute again in your left hand where the writing of the brand-name is. Remember your left hand does not move from this spot during the whole operation. Clamp the foot joint with you right hand and your thumb on top. Turn the foot joint around in your right hand and place it in the case. Now, with your right hand you remove the head joint. Your left hand still has not moved form its original location. Your LEFT hand now holds the flute at the opposite end of the body. Place the body of the flute in the case. Well there you go. You have assembled and disassembled your flute without touching any of the keys on the body and only clamping the keys down on the footjoint. You have not bent any keys and your flute remained in perfect alignment. Now, practice this times and you will be an expert and if you do it this way every time then you will never have to spend money on flute repairs. The pads of a flute do not like moisture. Do this drying procedure after every time you play. So, take a cloth, I use a J cloth that is made for the medical industry but it can be any cloth as long as its not to big or not too small. I fold the cloth in half lengthwise and thread one of the edges through the hole in the cleaning rod. Wrap the cloth over the top of the rod so that you get the cloth all the way in as far as the rod can reach. Now wrap the cloth tight all the way down the rod and hold the cloth at the end of the rod in your RIGHT hand. This way the cloth will never bunch up and get stuck in your instrument. The most important part of the

flute to dry is the headjoint because it gets the most wet. Push the rod all the way in, twisting it as you move it in and out. If you play for a longer period then also dry the body of the flute by first inserting the cleaning rod from one side and then the other side. Unravel the cloth, fold it in half and then in half again. Now place it in the case on the headjoint side because there will be less keys on that side. Now you are all done. Time to watch TV. All you need is a rod and a cloth. The rod should always come free with your flute and you can find an appropriate cloth. You should never do any other maintenance to your flute. Never use any silver polish. It is abrasive like sandpaper and will either remove the silver plating on your flute or it will get into your keywork and grind away. You can use a silver polishing cloth, but why, as soon as you touch the flute, your fingerprints will be on it again. Remember it is normal for a silver or a silver plated flute to tarnish. You can have it de-tarnished by a repair technician when the pads are replaced every 5 to 10 years. You do not have to take your flute in for regular check ups. This is just a way some repair technicians pretend that they are doctors and ask you to come back for a visit regularly. They want to be as rich as doctors by having you return for no reason. Remember if your flute is not broken, it can not be fixed. First determine if your flute is indeed broken by getting a second and third opinion. You can be sure that anything you take to a repair technician will be considered broken. Just make sure you take care of your flute by assembling and disassembling it properly and never dropping it, banging it against furniture, hitting your brother or sister with it or sitting on it.

Chapter 4 : What to clean inside of the flute with? - Music: Practice & Theory Stack Exchange

Teaching video for Computers for Musicians class at the University of Houston.

Check new design of our homepage! How to Clean and Polish a Flute A flute has a very melodious existence in the world of music. Those who are learning to play or are flute artists, know how important it is to maintain the instrument to get the best sound. With a few tips in mind one can clean and polish a flute at home as well. A simple procedure is given below Melodyful Staff Last Updated: May 31, The flute is a delicate music instrument which apart from the basic ones, are complex, with keys, tone holes, and some which are made up of soft metal. Most of these make the flute a fragile instrument, so handling it with care is important, more so when you are cleaning, assembling or disassembling the flute. Just like learning the right notes, playing the flute is important, and so is maintaining it. Most artists have basic flutes in their learning stages and later get playing with the more advanced ones. During this whole process, the instrument needs to be at its best settings, which is why the need to keep the flute clean and maintained. Dust and moisture can give poor quality of music from the flute. It needs to be kept dry and clean from time to time. Regular maintenance includes keeping the flute dry, but most flutes need a yearly servicing which involves disassembling the flute. If the flute is not cleaned well, it may cause the pads to swell due to the absorption of moisture. Moisture gets trapped in the flute whenever it is played. Hence, they will not cover the tone holes properly. This moisture can also cause corrosion of the metal inside. This will give poor sound quality, intonation and articulation. A few tips and procedures on how to clean and maintain the flute are mentioned below. How to Clean a Flute at Home We will first understand the basics of cleaning a flute. Remember, it is spoiled every time it is played. So cleaning it with a dry cloth every time it is played is recommended. To clean a flute well, it is important to disassemble it first. You will get three parts of the flute: The head joint - this is the part of the flute with no keys, it has the lip plate, which is also called the embouchure plate, segment where the musician rests his lip and a mouth hole the musician blows air in the flute. The main body - this is where the keys, tuning slide, and tenons are located, and this part is in the middle, it connects the head joint with the foot joint explained below. The foot joint - the foot joint is the shortest of the three parts, and has some keys. Let us now understand how to clean the instrument in the following. To clean the flute you will need a soft cloth, and a rod. The rod will come with your flute, for the soft cloth you can use any spare cloth like a handkerchief, a scarf, etc. To clean the inside of the body joint and the foot joint, you can simply thread this cloth in the cleaning rod. Next, wrap the cloth around the rod completely. This will prevent the inside surface from getting scratches from the rod. Now slowly insert the rod in the head joint, clean with a slight twisting motion. Do not do this vigorously, it may damage the key pads. Clean the main body and the foot joint of the flute similarly. To clean the outer surface, you may simply clean it with a soft cloth, if it has not tarnished too much. Never use liquid silver polish or other polishing compounds on the flute. Never use water to clean the flute. You can use a micro fiber polishing cloth to clean the surface. This should get rid of the fingerprints and oily surfaces. One can use rubbing alcohol too, this will also sterilize the lip plate. You may try to use silver polishing cloth which is easily available in stores. You can also use a slightly damp cloth to clean the outer surface. Use these cloths away from the keypads. Never clean very harshly and do not apply pressure on the keys or other delicate parts. Also when cleaning the keys a little sound from opening and closing key pads is normal, do not panic. If you feel there is a need for oiling the keys, if the flute has not been serviced for a long time, you should take it to a professional to get it oiled and serviced. Changing and oiling the keys at home is risky as the oil tends to run on the pads. Moreover, there is a special lubrication on the keys to support smooth functioning. So if this lubrication gets wiped off or spoiled, there can be further damage. There are certain specifications when it comes to oiling the flute and its various parts. It is always better to take it to a professional who should service and clean it for you. For beginners, it is advisable to take help to clean the flute. Because any manhandling can create damages. Take care when handling, assembling and disassembling the parts of the flute.

Chapter 5 : Care and Maintenance of the Native American Flute

The cloth must be wrapped snugly on the edge of the rod so that you'll be able to clean the inside of your flute better. Wrap the rest of the cloth tightly around the rod and securely hold the end of the cloth and rod with your hand to avoid bunching up and getting stuck when cleaning the inside of the flute.

Everything you need to know about cleaning a flute. Tarnish control; links to flute cleaning videos; caring for a flute. I want to know how to clean my flute. I know how to clean it , but I want that my flute to be very clean can you please to answer me. It is normal for a flute to be oiled once a year, so the cleaning can be done at this time. The cost of a C. This is part of the normal cost of maintaining a working flute. Ask your flute teacher who they recommend to do this work. Cleaning the flute yourself is covered in the following information: You can wipe the flute very gently with a micro-fibre polishing cloth. These are light blue and sold in most hardware stores and music shops. This is a cosmetic cleaning only, just for keeping the fingerprints and caked-on grunge to a minimum. Over zealous too hard cleaning can lead to problems. Thin gold plating on a lip-plate can be wiped off over time, so be careful. Please avoid letting the cloth swipe the underside of the keys accidentally; abraded or roughed-up pad surfaces turn into pad leaks pads are covered with a thin membrane that is easy to accidentally abrade during finger print removal. Wipe the headjoint with isopropyl alcohol if you want to sterilize it between players. The alcohol is also called "rubbing alcohol" and is very cheap at the drugstore. Flutes also have a complex set of mechanical adjustments to keep multiple keys closing together precisely. Playing a flute that unbeknownst to the student, happens to have a pad leaking, forces the student to gradually press harder on one or more of the keys to make the notes sound well. Special lubricating oil in the moving parts applied by a qualified technician is required once a year to keep the flute in good mechanical shape. Lack of oil causes wear in the finely machined connections in the mechanic, and can eventually lead to slop or "play" in the mechanism. Make sure the parents understand that annual maintenance visits are part of owning a flute. A full flute care information webpage is here: Avoid using household silver polish; it removes too much silver plating, and gums up the moving parts, as well as creates sticky noises from off-gassing onto pad surfaces. A chemically treated flute polishing cloth made to remove tarnish is to be used minimally; once a year at most. A trained flute technician flute repair-person will fully clean and service a flute inexpensively and correct any mechanical adjustments. Ask your private flute teacher for recommendations for a reliable technician. Best, Jen An additional question came in just now: Dear Jen, we bought an Artley flute for our granddaughter, and I have been reading over what you say about how to clean it up for her, but my question is: Professional full time flutists usually have tarnish all over their flutes if you look closely. I saw for myself how Jean Pierre Rampal world-class flute player from s had a flute that was almost completely pitch black, especially between the keys. Some people have too much acid in their skin and tarnish a flute within weeks just by touching it. Others, like me, do not tarnish their flutes very quickly, but the flute tarnishes by itself just through oxidation and time. There is no way for the flute player to clean between the keys and remove tarnish without taking it to a flute technician and have them remove all the moving parts and dip the body in silver cleaner. This takes years of training. If you try to use home-use silver cleaner yourself here are some of the typical results: Any chemical off-gassing onto the pad surfaces lead to necessary pad replacements, just from closing the lid on a flute that is offgassing silver polish. This also leads to eventually having to replace all the pads to get rid of the "tick tack" noises. Over time this can remove layers of metal, creating "play" in the mechanism as it wears from the inside out. What you really want to do is protect the inside of the rods from being worn out. Have the flute professionally cleaned by a reputable repair person ask the flute teachers in town which shop is best and then later put 3M anti-tarnish strips inside the case to absorb future sulfur gases, so that the flute does not tarnish as quickly NEXT time. It will stay white-silver-coloured for about months depending on how much sulfur you have in your environment. But remember Tarnish is NORMAL, and professional flutists have tarnish all over their flutes until their once-per-year or twice-per-year cleaning. Students are the only people who seem to want shiny white-silver flutes. Find one with this help: This is KEY to the whole process. As a flute teacher, the saddest thing I see

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every September is a new student trying to play a flute that is malfunctioning, because no new flute player seems to know that the instrument needs to go to repair once a year at the minimum. What a frustrating way to start the first flute lesson: They have to start on a working flute! Non-musicians usually go by looks they see the silver like "jewelry" but remember a flute is created out of sound-creating silver, not a decorative silver to be looked at. Real musicians actually judge by mechanical action and stability, not by looks. Have a look at my flute teaching youtube videos for flute students:

Chapter 6 : How to Clean the Flute

To clean the inside of a flute, all you need is a cleaning rod and a cloth. A wooden or plastic cleaning rod is preferable to eliminate the possibility of scratching your instrument. However, it is possible to clean with a metal rod.

A blog for flute students, parents, and teachers. What a busy past few months! After lots of travel, I am happy to be back at home with my flute students and writing a new post! Cold season has hit my studio hard I went into full prevention mode disinfecting the music stands, doorknobs, and other heavily trafficked surfaces in my studio. I googled "flute disinfection" and came up with a few methods that seem a little Determined to get to the bottom of this mystery, I emailed my good friend and flute guru, Carolyn Nussbaum. You should take these steps if you recently have had a cold or illness or have been around others that might be contagious. Keep your cleaning swab the one that goes in the inside of your flute clean. I throw my in the wash once every 2 weeks or so with my white towels. Hot water, detergent, and a little bleach if your swab is white. When you put your flute back in the case, gently wipe down the headjoint, body, and mechanism with a clean cloth. You can also wash these cloths in the washing machine. If you have a treated anti-tarnish cloth like the one pictured, you can wash it but the anti-tarnish chemicals will be washed out. There is a cork at the top of your headjoint underneath the crown. Corks are porous and can easily absorb water. After using alcohol swabs, I always use a clean, soft cloth to remove any excess alcohol. Run a clean dry cloth attached to your cleaning rod through the inside of your headjoint. If you have a really contagious disease, it is possible germs could get inside of your headjoint cork and grow. If this is the case, you may want to have the cork replaced. This can dry the mechanism out and cause binding. Use a clean soft cloth to gently wipe down the body and keys. Thoroughly run a clean dry cloth attached to your cleaning rod through the inside of the tube. The cloth should not be so thick that it could potentially get stuck inside of your flute. **Hard Case** If your hard case is made out of hard plastic, use a Clorox wipe to wipe down the exterior of the case. If your hard case has a leather or wooden exterior, wipe it down with a damp soft cloth then immediately dry with a clean, dry cloth. If your leather case is in bad shape, you can treat it with a small amount of leather cleaner. Just a few squirts. Let the case dry out over night before putting your flute back in. **Outside Soft Case** Most soft cases have a tag on them with washing instructions. Hot water and drying machines can cause them to shrink and not fit over your hard case. **What About Sticky Pads?** Having sticky pads does not necessarily mean that your keys are loaded with germs. Moisture and minerals from your mouth and dirt and oil from your hands are absorbed into the pads on the underside of the keys. This can sometimes lead to the sticking sound. Wash your hands before you play, and make sure to swab out the inside of your flute and wipe down the outside before you put your flute away each day. If the sticking sound is still there, use thin cigarette paper unglued to absorb the stickiness. Put the cigarette paper between the pad and the body of the flute and gently press down. The moisture, dirt, and oil should transfer to the paper. Other small microfiber pad dryers like the one pictured above are inexpensive solutions that last longer than disposable cigarette paper. You can purchase one here. When in doubt, ask your teacher!

Chapter 7 : 3 Ways to Clean and Maintain Your Flute - wikiHow

In this video, Sandro demonstrates how to properly clean and assemble a flute. Massullo Music b Hastings St. Burnaby, BC, Canada racedaydvl.com

Avoid touching the keys when holding or assembling. With your left hand, insert the head joint into the main body with a slight twisting motion. The embouchure hole blow hole should be lined up with the first key on the main body. With your left hand, grab the barrel joint on the main body and hold firmly. The right hand should grab the lower joint just below the last key. With a slight twisting motion, fit the two joints together. The main key rod on the lower joint should be positioned to line up with the center of the last key on the main body. Insert the cleaning rod into the bottom of the head joint. The reference ring should be exactly in the center of the embouchure hole. Adjustments to reduce the distance are made by turning the crown counter clockwise. Back the crown off the distance you want the head cork to move. Push the crown down tightly against the head joint. To increase the distance, turn the crown clockwise. As you turn the crown, the head cork distance increases. Every 3 months, the head cork should be completely removed, cleaned and new cork grease applied. To remove, turn the crown counter clockwise until the crown comes off. Take your flute rod and push the cork down toward the embouchure hole. The head joint is tapered. Once the cork moves a short distance, it will fall completely out. Clean the cork with a cloth and rubbing alcohol. Apply new cork grease and drop it back into the bottom of the head joint. Using your flute rod, push the head cork back up so the reference ring on the cleaning rod is exactly in the middle of the embouchure hole. Avoid touching the keys. Slide the cleaning cloth through the open slot of the cleaning rod. Draw the cloth back and forth through the bore on all joints. Polish the keys and body with the polishing cloth. Give extra attention to areas where your hands hold and touch the instrument. A small duster brush can be used to clean the dust and dirt under the key shafts. Be careful not to force the brush into any areas and damage the pads. Clean the inside wall of the embouchure hole by dipping a swab in rubbing alcohol and running in an up and down motion around the hole. Vacuum the inside of the case to remove dirt and lint. Clean outer case with a wet rag. Vinyl cleaning polishes work well to clean and shine the outer side of your case. Food particles and sugar are difficult to dislodge and eventually will affect the playing qualities. If possible, rinse your mouth with water before playing. Never force the joints together. If they stick or go together hard, see a qualified repairman. If you stop for a break or end your playing session; put your instrument back into the case. Avoid laying the instrument down unprotected. Unless your case has a proper compartment, it is not advisable to carry books, music, papers or other large objects in the case. For Repair costs and estimates, please feel free to contact us.

Chapter 8 : Care & Maintenance of Your Flute - Miyazawa

To clean the flute you will need a soft cloth, and a rod. The rod will come with your flute, for the soft cloth you can use any spare cloth like a handkerchief, a scarf, etc., (use a cloth that is absorbent) at home or you can also buy a cloth specially made to clean flutes from any music store.

I want to clean my flute - what do I use to clean the inside of my flute? New flutes will come with a cleaning swab or gauze for cleaning the moisture from the inside of your flute. Any absorbent cloth is good for the job. You will need a cleaning rod too - it has a loop in one end through which to thread the corner of the cleaning cloth. New flutes also come with a cleaning rod, but either this or the cleaning cloth can be bought separately at most music stores. Why does my flute dribble? When warm moist air your breath comes into contact with a cold surface the metal of your flute , moisture forms. How do I clean the outside of my flute? Rubbing with a plain cloth is good for removing fingerprints and will brighten up the flute. I have known beginner flute students to rub toothpaste on the outside of their flute as it makes it shiny, however, this is not a good idea - toothpaste is an abrasive and will wear through the silver coating on your flute, so avoid this technique. Why does my flute turn black? How do I clean my flute to make it shiny again? Tarnish is the name given to the silver when it turns a little black or grey. The natural oils from your skin can tarnish a flute. Tarnish does not alter the sound of the flute. These strips are commonly used for instruments made of silver and also are often used for protecting silver jewellery from tarnish. If your flute is tarnished and you want it to look shiny again, a professional repair person is the best person for the job to remove the tarnish. Interestingly, if you live in a town with geothermal activity such as Rotorua in New Zealand or parts of Hawaii, your flute will tarnish a lot quicker due to the hydrogen sulphide in the air recognisable by the rotten egg smell. Can I leave my flute out of its case overnight? The only danger to leaving your flute out of its case for an extended period of time is that someone could knock it off its resting place or sit on it! One of my students had her flute lying on a bed, her sister jumped onto her bed and bent the flute practically in half. How do you lubricate the flute joints? You should never use cork grease or vaseline on the joints of the flute. The keys themselves should only be oiled by a professional instrument repairer. My head joint or foot joint is too tight. Firstly, when putting together or taking apart your flute , hold the pieces of the flute where there are no keys - to avoid accidentally bending any of the keys while twisting the head joint into the body. Rub a few stripes of the candle wax onto the joint on the headjoint then wipe off strongly with a rag. The candle wax picks up any dirt or grime that is on the joint and the rubbing with the cloth removes the wax and the grime. Now rub a few stripes onto the headjoint joint again and put your flute together. Careful where you hold the flute to still avoid the keys. It might feel very stiff but this is normal. Pull the head joint out again and rub the cloth strongly over the joints of the headjoint and stick your finger inside the cloth into the joint of the body of the flute to completely rub away all the wax. You can use the same technique for the foot joint. So there you go! I hope these tips will help you every time you think "how on earth do I clean my flute?! Come and learn some tiny adjustments, for FREE.

Chapter 9 : Jennifer Cluff: How to Clean a Flute

For cleaning the inside, first attach the flute swab to the flute cleaning rod. Next insert the cleaning rod into the flute twisting the rod into each section. After each section is swabbed, carefully dismantle the flute one section at a time (the footjoint first), while keeping the rod inside the remaining sections.

Wetting Out You pick up a flute and start to play. You hit on a great melody and play it over and over to learn it, refine it, and develop it into a song. Maybe a squeak, maybe a burble, but certainly not the sound of a flute. Moisture has condensed out from your breath and clogged the flue underneath the block: Cut-away image of a Native American flute, showing the SAC exit hole, airflow, ramp, flue, and splitting edge Cures You can do several things to cure a flute that has wetted out: Blow the moisture out. Put the flute in playing position, then rotate the entire flute so that the block is on the bottom. Breathe hard into the flute and the moisture should spray out from under the upside-down block. It will also make a loud sound, so you might want to carefully place finger in the area of the splitting edge and sound hole to disturb the normal sound-producing mechanism “ causing it to produce a wind sound rather than a tone. Shake the moisture out not recommended. This involves enthusiastically swinging the flute so that the moisture exits the breath hole. There are several downsides to this approach, including spraying moisture on people and things around you, hitting the flute against something hard and unfriendly, and having pieces of your flute like the block fly off and do some damage. This usually involves untying the lacing that holds the block in place. You can then let the flute dry out naturally. You might be tempted to simply go on playing. However, consider that a flute that has wetted out is still very moist inside the slow air chamber and in the flue. It will likely wet out much sooner the second time. Also, many flutes are not designed to be exposed to condensed moisture for extended periods. They could, potentially, develop a crack after extended exposure to high-moisture. So consider putting the flute aside until tomorrow and move to one of the other flutes in your collection. Causes Some flutes are more prone to wet out than others. Here are some guidelines to general factors that affect the wet-out tendency: Temperature plays a big role in wetting out. Think of your breath on a cold day: If your flute is physically cold, the moisture in your warm breath will condense onto the inside of the flute surfaces. So, a flute from a cold room will wet out faster than a warm flute. Have you ever seen a flute player breathe into the finger holes of their flute before playing? Sometimes they get up close to the microphone and use it as a wind sound during the introduction to a song. Aside from a cool sound, it is also warming up the flute. The materials used in the nest area play a bit part in whether a flute wets out. Dense, heavy woods, metals, and even plastics hold their cold temperatures much longer than light woods. This is one of the reasons that Western Red Cedar is a popular wood for flutes “ it is light and warms quickly to the temperature of your breath. For specific woods, check one of the web resources on wood density such as Wood Densities or Physical Properties of Common Woods. We just wet a flute faster than other players. One thing you can do is to swallow and try to dry your mouth out a bit just before you begin breathing into the flute. With experience, you will begin to hear the impending wet-out before it seriously disrupts the sound of the flute. Learn to hear that characteristic sound, and switch flutes or take some corrective action before the sound disappears completely. Unlike mass-produced musical instruments or instruments that are made to a common standard, most ethnic flutes are individual, one-of-a-kind instruments. Here are some general tips: Consider using one of the sturdy traveling cases designed for Native American flutes. They are generally constructed of cloth-covered PVC and provide light and strong protection. These cases are useful for carrying your instruments and for carry-on baggage on airlines, but I would not trust them for airline checked baggage. If you use any closed traveling case, consider placing something to absorb any extra moisture that may be in the flutes such as a flute that was not quite dried when you put it back into the case. Lorrie Sarafin recommends placing a braid of Sweetgrass into the case, to absorb moisture and provide a pleasant fragrance. If you need to check your flutes as baggage on an airline or use a shipping service, some serious protection is in order. Unlike musicians who travel with standard-sized instruments such as violins and trumpet, we have to improvise. I have had good experience and good luck using the cases by Pelican Products , in particular their model with velcro-edged dividers. This

allows me to pack a changing variety of instruments, flutes, and gear, and check it relatively worry-free. For special-case situations, the Calzone Case Company is experienced at creating cases specific to your needs.

Sharing Flutes Share your flute with someone else, and you share their germs. The tiny organisms that cause disease live on the instrument long after the person that donated them has stopped playing your flute. These include the Streptococcus bacteria, pictured at the right photo by Bette Jensen of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Several recent studies have confirmed that the issue is real, the microbes are long-lasting – see *Microbes in the Music* by Stephen Ornes. General advice on disinfecting mouthpieces see, for example, *Mouthpiece Hygiene*, often cannot be used on Native American flutes because of the closed design and their wood or bamboo construction. One innovation that has helped is the use of disposable plastic tubes placed into the breath hole of flutes. These are used at some flute festivals and flute circles in an attempt to provide a level of germ-safety. Exactly how to do that depends largely on the finish that was applied to the instrument. Since there are many, many kinds of finishes that flute makers use on their instruments, and since the maintenance for one finish can be a disaster for another finish, your only real choice is to ask the maker about how to maintain the finish or at least find out what the finish is.

Oiling the Bore Some flutes are designed to have oil applied to the bore at regular intervals. These are typically flutes where the maker has not applied a finish to the inside of the flute. The oil protects the wood from rapid changes in humidity that could stress or crack the flute. For flutes where the bore is oiled, the trick is finding the right oil. My personal requirements are that the oil is: My standard is that the oil is safe to eat. This eliminates most petroleum products Retards fungus, mold, mildew, and bacteria growth Does not go rancid. Oils go rancid when they chemically decompose, often as a result of bacterial growth or from simple oxidation. Bore oil is often mineral oil or petroleum oil and has a number of interesting characteristics. Second, it dries much slower [than other oils], and is much more immune to natural and man-made detergents, so it stays in the bore much longer. Personally, I avoid it. I used it, for example, to rule out the use of paraffin oil that had been recommended to me. It provided this description which I later found sourced in a number of documents of the Environmental Protection Agency, another good source of information: A complex combination of hydrocarbons obtained from petroleum fractions by solvent crystallization solvent deoiling or by the sweating process. There is not much detail on toxicity, but I would not consider using any petroleum distillate. I chose not to use linseed oil, since it dries after a while. The ideal combination seemed to be some edible variety of pure tree nut oil. There are various metrics to predict the resistance that a type of oil has to going rancid. Although the OSI method is useful for quality control of oils, it is not recommended for measurement of antioxidant activity for certain reasons. The high temperatures used do not allow reliable predictions of antioxidant effectiveness at lower temperatures.