

Band Instrument “Quick Fix” Repairs

*Save time and money by
“doing it yourself”*

Presented by
Gregory Biba



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- At all performances, including concerts, recitals, parades, etc., have an emergency repair/accessories kit, incl. spare reeds, valve oil, disinfectant spray, masking tape or dental floss for emergency tenon cork replacement, spring hook, screwdrivers/needle-nose, Phillips, straight, Valentino replacement pads & corks, water key corks, pad cement, feeler gauge, French horn string, misc. nuts & bolts when on parade route/for marching harnesses, piece of leather belt/rubber pad for stuck valve caps, pliers, Band-Aids

BRASS GENERAL CARE

MINIMUM ESSENTIAL TOOLS & ACCESSORIES

- Mouthpiece puller
- Mouthpiece brushes
- Rawhide mallet
- Pliers (needle-nose/round-nose)
- Screwdrivers (large & small)
- Mouthpiece truer

Piston Valve Instruments

- Tools (valve brush)
- Accessories incl. valve oil, assorted valve stem felts, Valentino water key corks, trumpet mouthpiece “Jam Stopper” (G&D Enterprises) (prevents mouthpieces from getting stuck)

Rotary Valve (French horn)

- Tools (screwdriver with thin-tipped blade)
- Accessories (rotary valve oil, several feet of braided 30-lb. test fishing line)

Slide Instrument (trombone)

- Tools (trombone snake or brush)
- Accessories incl. slide oil, SuperSlic Kit, Trombotine, SlidoMax, Valentino water key corks, trombone Slide “Bow Protector”
Deg Music (prevents crook/bow from getting smashed)

STUCK MOUTHPIECE

- Materials needed incl. small rawhide mallet, mouthpiece puller, trumpet mouthpiece “Jam Stopper” (G&D Enterprises)
- Pliers

Student’s helpful parent and stuck mouthpiece don’t mix

CLEANING MOUTHPIECE

- If the mouthpiece gets mold inside, it can be softened and removed by soaking the mouthpiece in vinegar for half an hour or longer.

MATERIALS NEEDED FOR FROZEN VALVE CAPS

- Pliers
- Piece of leather belt
- Rawhide mallet
- Tuning slide grease

VALVES

2nd valve damage (procedure)

- After removing valve, try putting it in another valve casing to see if it goes up/down smoothly
- If valve gets stuck in another valve casing, it is the valve. Find a qualified technician.
- If 2nd valve is not going up/down, 2nd valve tuning slide could have a small dent.
- Try flexing/bending 2nd valve tuning slide out & away (toward 3rd valve).

TROMBONE (hand slide trouble)

- The most common problems with the inner & outer portion of the slide occur when a musician forcefully sets the crook portion of the slide on the ground when not playing. If the slide still drags after cleaning, a competent repair person should be consulted.

Testing Slide Problems

Procedure (preferred method)

- Balance the hand slide on the ground & lift up on the inner slide. If the outer slide remains on the floor without jerking up, the action is smooth. If it sticks, you can tell where the problem is & have a certified repair technician fix it.

Smashed Trombone Crook (preventive maintenance)

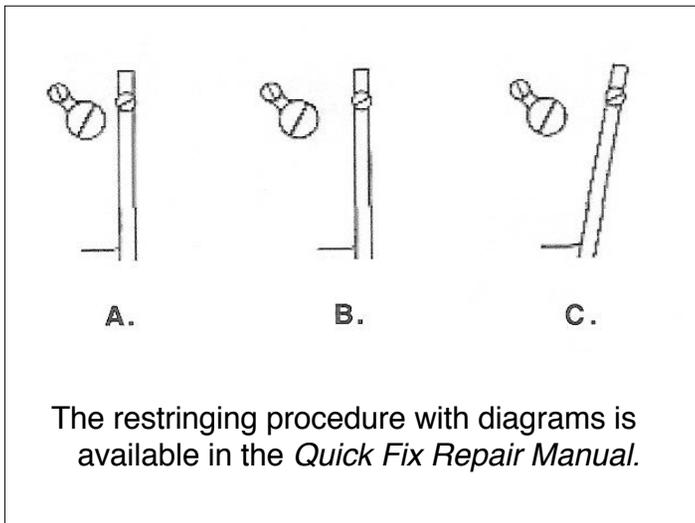
- As previously mentioned, remind students that the bow (crook) area of the slide is one of the areas where much damage occurs. Do not forcefully rest the bow on the ground when not playing.



FRENCH HORN Rotary Valve

Broken valve string:

- When there is a broken valve string, which is a very common problem, it is often because a valve stuck and the musician forcibly depresses the valve key.



WOODWIND GENERAL CARE

MINIMUM ESSENTIAL TOOLS & ACCESSORIES

- Needle-nose pliers
- Screwdrivers (assorted sizes)
- Mouthpiece brushes
- Razor blade
- Feeler gauge
- Spring hook
- Tweezers

WOODWIND GENERAL CARE

TOOLS & ACCESSORIES (cont.)

- Valentino replacement cork & pads
- Pad & cork cement
- Cork grease
- Contact cement
- Felt bumpers
- Prick punch
- Emery board

TENON RECORKING (Emergency Procedures)

- Valentino cork (have an assortment of sizes for clarinet & saxophone)
- Reseating cork with cork grease & flame
- After greasing the tenon with cork grease, rotate the tenon over a small flame. Keep the tenon rotating so it does not burn. The grease & heat combination will cause the cork to swell. BE CAREFUL. Wood burns and plastic melts even easier.

LOOSE SPRINGS

Procedure:

- Sluggish key action results in a key that flops or bounces.
- Start by unhooking the needle spring.
- If the key moves freely, continue.
- Using a spring hook, push the weakened needle spring in the opposite direction slightly. (This will give the additional tension needed to make the key more responsive.)

STUCK SWAB

Procedure:

- Work the stuck swab backwards.
- Use a long tool such as a wooden dowel. (Be careful not to scratch the inside of the instrument.)
- Twist the swab onto the long dowel or button hook, and work it backwards.

LOOSE PAD (emergency)

- Use a small amount of chewing gum to act as pad cement).

OBOE (troubleshooting)

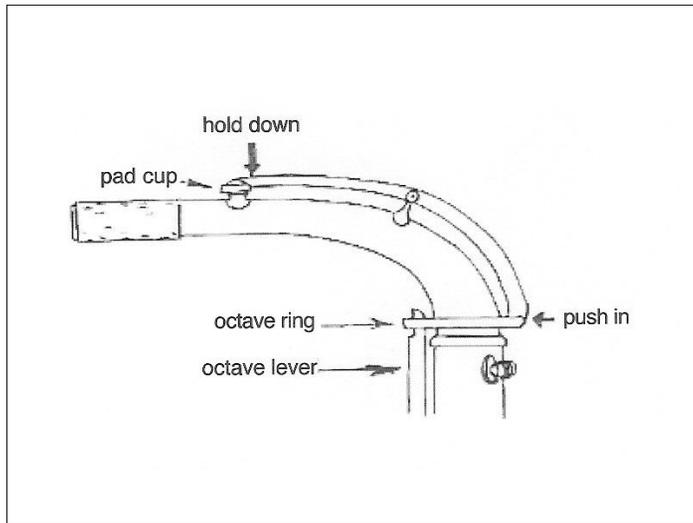
- The notes A & G are stuffy.
- One possible solution is to re-glue the loose pad above the left-hand first finger.

OBOE (troubleshooting)

- A-flat sound is garbled & stuffy.
- One possible solution is to look for a pad falling away from a cup & re-glue (check with feeler gauge).

SAXOPHONE (testing for leaks)

- First check the reed & ligature placement.
- Start playing on B-natural (middle of the staff).
- If this tone cannot be played, the leak is above this in the left-hand palm keys.
- If the B-natural sounds, work your way down using a feeler gauge or leak light.



SAXOPHONE (troubleshooting)

- Low register not speaking/wobble (wa-wa-wa).
- Look for low B-flat not sealing. This could have been bumped off of the tone hole.
- If so, bend it back & center it over the tone hole. Check for leaks with the feeler gauge and test for drag, or use a leak light.

FLUTE (troubleshooting)

- Low C key not sealing.
- Put thin Valentino Cork as a shim under the roller key.

ADDITIONAL BRASS INFORMATION

- Oil valves every day.
- Grease tuning slides once every two weeks.
- Oil trombone slides every day when using slide oil, or consider using SuperSlic Kit system.
- Storing valve instruments
(wet valves vs. dry)

ADDITIONAL WOODWIND INFORMATION

- Do not use silver polish on flutes.
- Use cork grease every day or as needed.
- Use pad savers only after swabbing.

SUGGESTIONS

- When sending an instrument to a professional repair technician or describing a problem area to the repair tech over the phone, it is helpful & important to identify the part(s) of the instrument that are the issue. Quicker diagnosis means less on the repair bill.
- You should know or have access to a picture of all of the parts to instruments.
- Available through *Quick Fix Repair Manual*.

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Band Instrument “Quick Fix” Repair Solutions

Written by a Band Director for Band Directors

Gregory Biba

Save time and money and end frustration with these quick fixes!



The next time you encounter a stuck trumpet mouthpiece, trombone hand slide trouble, or a fuzzy-sounding clarinet, skip the long drive to the repair shop and the associated service fees—and consult *Band Instrument “Quick Fix” Repair Solutions* instead.

In an easy-to-follow and intuitively organized format, this manual provides essential repair techniques and instrument maintenance suggestions. Many repairs are so easy

that you and even your students can perform them with basic knowledge and instruction. The condensed and simplified instructions in the manual guide you through each repair step by step.

The instructions are supplemented by 60+ photos and illustrations and are organized in a convenient spiral-bound flip-book format. Each instrument discussed in the guide is thoroughly labeled in the appendix. Written by a K–12 band director with many years of emergency instrument repair experience, this is a must-have reference for all band directors.

Gregory Biba is Director of Bands in the Waupaca (Wisconsin) Public Schools.

G-6901 Spiral-bound flip book, extensively illustrated, 136 pages.....\$26.95

Band Instrument “Quick Fix” Repair Kit

- Six-piece screwdriver and awl set with handle
- Small/large spring hook
- Leak light with battery
- Key and rotor oil with pin-hole attachment
- Assortment of eight replacement water key corks

G-7052 Kit in resealable, see-through container with handle\$59.95

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