

# HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOUR TUBA...

## Each time you play

- Make sure you haven't eaten any food, sugary drinks or sweets before you play. This might clog up or damage your instrument.
- Check that the valves have enough oil on them to move smoothly and freely.
- To lubricate your valves:
  - Undo the cap screw in the valve casing and slowly extract the piston upwards halfway, without allowing it to rotate.
  - Apply two or three drops of piston oil to the piston.
  - Re-tighten the cap screw and move the piston up and down two or three times to work in the oil.
- Although tubas are highly resistant to rusting, it can still happen over time if you do not keep your instrument clean and dry.
- To remove moisture from the slides:
  - Remove each slide carefully while holding down the corresponding piston (a popping sound indicates that you are not removing the slide properly)
  - Empty the moisture from the slide which you have removed
  - Empty all of the water from inside the tuba and give it a wipe down with a lacquer cloth to remove any sweat or moisture from the surface of the instrument.
- Check the instrument over. If something looks out of place, ask your teacher to have a look at it, as it may need repairing.



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## Every 2-3 weeks

- Remove the valve from its casing and give it a gentle wash with warm soapy water, removing any residue.
- Wipe down the internal casing with a damp cloth and a cleaning brush.
- When everything is dry, put a few drops of valve oil on the bottom section of the valve and turn it to ensure the surface is covered with a thin, even layer of oil.
- After this, replace the valve and repeat the process with the other two!
- Make sure you twist the valves into the correct position to allow the flow of air through the instrument.
- You will also want to give your mouthpiece a good wash in warm soapy water.
- Every now and then (2-3 months) you will need to give your instrument a more thorough cleaning. Just fill your bathtub with enough warm soapy water to submerge (or partially submerge) your instrument. Remove the mouthpiece, valves, valve caps and tuning slides and soak those in there too. After about 20 minutes you can remove the pieces and give them a gentle, thorough scrub with a cleaning brush.
- Give the body of the instrument a very good rinse, make sure there is no soap left inside or outside.
- Dry off the pieces and the body of the tuba. Leave the inside of the instrument to dry naturally. When it's all dry, you can put the instrument back together. Don't forget to oil up the valves and grease the slides as you do so!