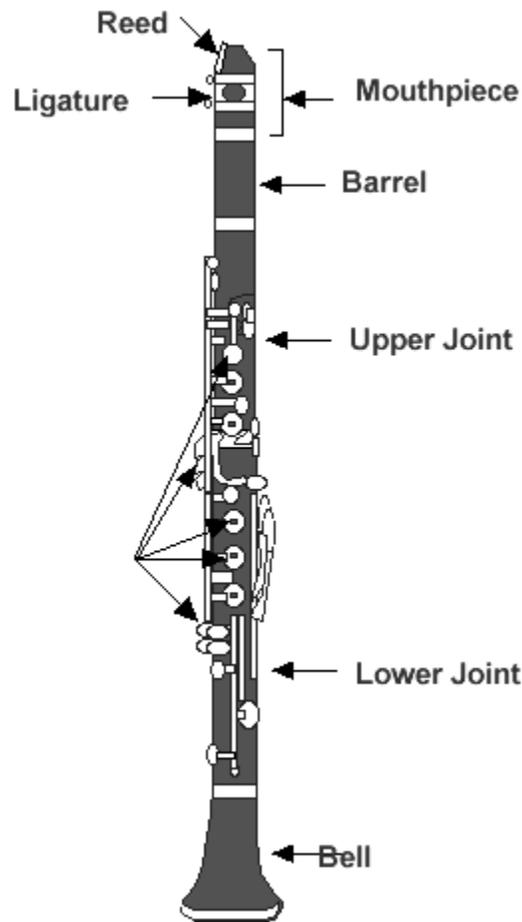


CLARINET CLEANING



Congratulations on purchasing your first clarinet! A good quality instrument can last a lifetime – if it is well maintained. This includes regular check ups at the Senseney Music Repair Center and a regular home cleaning routine.

How do I clean my clarinet?

This is a critical question since improper cleaning can damage your instrument. If you follow these instructions carefully you should have no problems.

Tools: (The first four of these are contained in the Senseney Music clarinet care kit.)

1. Swab – cloth attached to a long string with a weight on the end
2. Mouthpiece brush – round tapered brush with handle
3. Cork grease – small tube
4. Polish cloth - untreated

The most delicate parts of your clarinet are the pads. They are made from felt that is covered by a thin layer of fish skin. If this skin is punctured, torn or scuffed the pad can no longer seal and your clarinet will leak which makes it harder to play. Pads will also become hard and brittle with age which also causes leaks. Keeping moisture and sharp objects away from the pads will prolong the life of the pad and keep away costly repairs.

Daily Care:

I. **Assembly**

- a. It is best to wait to assemble your clarinet the first time with an experienced teacher.
- b. Before assembly check to see if the corks between the joints are dry. If they feel dry you need to apply cork grease. Open cork grease tube and apply to cork. Use fingers to thoroughly cover the cork. **NOTE:** Do not over grease the corks – this can cause cork damage.
- c. The two largest joints must be assembled with care. It is very easy to bend a key when assembling these sections especially since they contain the “bridge key” which connects the keys from one joint to the other. When you press on the ring (circular) keys on the joints the bridge key will raise. The upper (smaller) joint must be held so that the ring keys are pressed down and its bridge key is up. The lower (larger) joint must be held so that the ring keys are **not** pressed down so that its bridge key is down. When the two joints are properly assembled the upper joint bridge key will lay squarely on top of the lower joint bridge key. When the lower ring keys are depressed both bridge keys should move at the same time.
- d. The barrel of the clarinet is placed on the top of the upper joint. The bell is attached to the bottom of the lower joint. The mouthpiece is attached to the top of the barrel.
- e. The clarinet reed is attached to the mouthpiece with a clamping apparatus called a ligature. Lay the flat side of the reed on the flat side of the mouthpiece with the curved end of the reed even with the curved end of the mouthpiece. Have your instructor check your reed assembly the first few times you play the instrument.

II. **Cleaning**

- a. After playing your clarinet there will be moisture in the mouthpiece and bore that must be removed. First remove the ligature and reed and disassemble the clarinet.
- b. Start with the bell section and drop the weighted end of the swab string down the center of the bell. Pull the cloth through.
- c. Repeat for the lower joint and barrel.
- d. Before cleaning the upper joint look down it's bore and notice the post that sticks down from the register key. Position the joint so that the register key is on the top side of the instrument and carefully drop the weight of the swab down the bore starting at the end furthest from the key. Pull through slowly making sure the cloth is not wadded or twisted before it enters the joint.
- e. Pull the swab through the mouthpiece. If a sink is available put the mouthpiece under running water and use the mouthpiece brush to thoroughly clean. Dry the mouthpiece and cork.
- f. You may need to use a polish cloth to wipe fingerprints and grime off your clarinet body and keys. Be very careful not to rub near the edge of the pads as this can cause them to become scuffed or frayed and destroy the pads.

III. **Home Repairs**

- a. Do not try to repair an instrument yourself. This is a fragile, expensive instrument and can easily be damaged even by well meaning hands. If your instrument is not working properly, bring it to the Senseney Music Repair Center as soon as possible.
- b. Repairs done by anyone but the Senseney Music Repair Center will void any maintenance agreement connected to that instrument.