

Clarinet Tech Tip #1

Maintaining your clarinet is as important as a good reed. Here's some advice from expert service technician Mike Lutley at the Yamaha Custom shop.

Swabbing- This is one of the most important ways a woodwind player can keep his or her instrument playing at its full potential. Pulling-through a cloth-type swab or brushing out the bore of the instrument with an absorbent wand swab periodically while playing (even 3 or 4 times per hour) is helpful in the following ways:

- prevents excessive moisture buildup in tone holes and absorption into pads resulting in fewer gurgling notes, and yielding longer pad life.
- in wood instruments, helps the wood's moisture content to remain stable, lessening chances of cracking. Bore shape remains more stable. Swabbed sockets cause less end-grain water absorption.
- Non-functioning notes are prevented. (what happens with large, complete water bubble! Hands stay dryer (usually saxophone))
- laying a damp swab (unfolded) across the top of a clarinet or oboe, or in the accessories compartment of the case---along with an instrument case humidifier during the heating season, will help maintain the correct humidity level while the instrument is not being played.
- **note:** swabs will not wear-out the bore of the instrument, but do give off lint. Proper vacuuming of wand swabs and cleaning/inspecting of tone holes at pad-change intervals is a good preventative measure as well.

Remember to store the moist swab **OUT** of the bore of the instrument, to dry over time, and **NEVER** pull harder on a very tight swab---it will only get stuck! (try to pull the opposite end out slowly, gently or get assistance!)

Remember... "Swab with care, More great music to share!"



Yamaha clarinets and saxophones come equipped with Rico reeds

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