

Trumpet Cleaning

Your horn works best if it is clean.

Signs that your horn may need cleaning:

1. Sticky valves and slides
2. Poor tone or response
3. Bad smell while in case or when playing

“Quick” techniques to keep your instrument in top shape

1. DAILY: Oil the valves. The oil will help wash away gunk and prevent it from sticking in the valves. I recommend AL Cass brand.
2. WEEKLY: Wash the mouthpiece. This takes 30 seconds. Use regular dish soap and a mouthpiece brush.
3. WEEKLY: Pour warm water through the instrument from the bell end. Carefully see that the 1st valve slide does not shoot out into the sink. Also, be carefully that the “felts” under the finger buttons do not get wet. Blow the excess water out by blowing directly into the leadpipe.
4. AS NEEDED: Apply slide grease to the tuning slides. Remove the slides. At a sink, use a flexible cleaning brush (snake) to brush out the tubes. DRY the outside of the tubes completely and then apply a thin layer of slide grease to the ends of the slide. Then insert into the correct tube and rotate, if possible. I recommend Schilke slide grease.

“Full” Cleaning

Materials needed:

A tub large enough that the trumpet can be submerged in water
a wide-bottom plastic cup for the valves
enough lukewarm (not hot) water to cover the trumpet in you tub,
rubbing alcohol
Dawn dish soap
mouthpiece brush
cleaning “snake”
towels
valve oil
slide grease
paper towels

1. Carefully disassemble the trumpet, separating all moveable tuning slides and the valves (do not disassemble the valves themselves).
2. Fill the tub with water the water and add a couple tablespoons of Dawn and 1-2 cups of rubbing alcohol.
3. Place the trumpet body and slides in the tub so that all are submerged.
4. Dip water out of the tub with the plastic cup and put the valves in, only covering part with the holes. Do NOT wet the felts.
5. Allow everything to soak for 15 – 30 minutes.
6. Use brushes to cleaning tubing
7. Thoroughly rinse and dry ALL parts.
8. Reassemble the trumpet carefully, oiling and greasing as you go.