

# Care & Maintenance of Your Saxophone

Woodwind & Brass Ltd.  
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## Assembly & Care of the Saxophone

Put the crook into the main body of the saxophone and tighten the screw in the collar. You will see that the top of the crook has cork around it. When the instrument is new, this cork must be greased with cork grease and any excess removed to avoid clogging. Push the mouthpiece onto the crook until about  $\frac{1}{2}$  centimetre of cork is showing. This distance may vary according to the tuning of the saxophone. If the saxophone sounds 'sharp' you will need to pull the mouthpiece out slightly. If the saxophone sounds 'flat' you will need to push it in more. The diameter of the cork can be altered, but unless you have done this before, you are strongly advised to seek professional repairer assistance. If you take the cork down too far, it will need to be re-corked. This is not expensive, but annoying...

Wet the reed and carefully put it on the mouthpiece (beginners should select medium-soft reeds, i.e. strength 11/2 – 2). Slide the ligature over the mouthpiece and tighten the screws quite firmly to hold the reed in position. Always make sure that this is done accurately (the reed is aligned with the side rails and end rail) in order for the reed to vibrate correctly.

When you have finished playing, always dry the inside of the instrument with a pull through or padsaver. With your instrument is a pull through cloth. This looks like a handkerchief with string attached to it, on the end of the string is a weight. Drop the weight down the bell and draw through. This needs to be done twice or until the bore is dry. Or, you can use a pad saver. While playing any woodwind instrument, the leather (or skin) of the pads will absorb moisture/spit/condensation and the inside (bore) of the saxophone basically gets wet. To prolong the life of the pads and the instrument and prevent the build up of "crud" this water really needs to be removed after each playing session. By inserting a padsaver into the bore of the saxophone you allow any moisture to be drawn up out of the centre of the instrument, and particularly the tone holes and into the centre of the padsaver, rather than leaving it to drip onto the pads and start the rot. The action of absorption happens slowly - not immediately - and thus the importance of leaving the padsaver insitu while the saxophone (or other woodwind instrument) is in its case. However, water isn't the only thing that the padsavers can absorb, particularly the good quality HW and Opticare ones.

Another less well know function and advantage of a saxophone pad saver, is that over time, a build-up of something we shall simply call "crud" (saliva, food...) occurs on the pads - little deposits which gradually dry and form a kind of crust. The padsaver may also act to absorb some of this while it is still wet and so again acts to prolong the life of the pads on the instrument. Lastly, the padsaver, again if good quality (some of the more fluffy, looser versions may be inclined to shed their fibres which is not good for the instrument) can work to clean the inside of the instrument when inserted and taken out again - this again helps to prevent a build up of these deposits in the bore and possibly the tone holes also. For the reasons given above it is a good idea to wash the padsaver (warm water with washing detergent) otherwise over time, it may simply be redepositing "crud" in your instrument.

Wipe fingerprints and moisture off the outside of the saxophone with a LACQUER CLOTH or SILVER CLOTH after each playing session. This should be done very carefully to avoid damaging the mechanism and catching on springs. Do not use metal polish of any kind as this will destroy the lacquer on a brass instrument. Silver polish may be used on silver plated instruments, but again, care is advised, especially not to allow a build up of polish - this will affect the mechanism.

Be careful not to leave the instrument out of the case in a place where it can be sat on or knocked by people or animals. You would be surprised how often large repairs are necessary as a result of such actions! Always use a SAXOPHONE STAND for your instrument. Always use a properly fitted case when transporting the instrument and make sure the case is closed properly before picking it up.



## THE EMBOUCHURE AND PRODUCING THE FIRST SOUNDS

The Embouchure is the position of the lips and teeth around the mouthpiece. Here is a brief description of the basics, which you can try out on the mouthpiece alone.

Drop the jaw and gently draw the red part of the lower lip over the teeth.

Insert the mouthpiece so that the upper teeth rest gently on top, approximately 1cm from the tip. Take a deep breath.

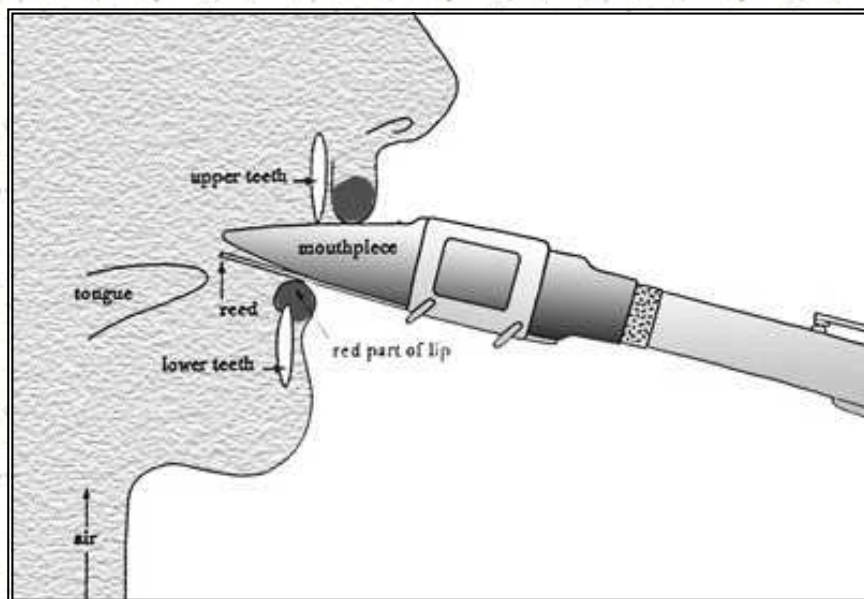
Close the lips to form a ring of pressure around the mouthpiece, smile and blow!

### TWO GOLDEN RULES

1. Do not puff out the cheeks.
2. Do not bite.

### CORRECT PLAYING POSTURE

When playing, always stand or sit in an upright position. Apart from looking good, it helps the breathing process. Always let the sling take the weight of the instrument and make sure it is adjusted to a comfortable height. Never bring your head towards the saxophone, always bring the saxophone towards your head. See the end of this booklet for suitable slings.



## THE EMBOUCHURE

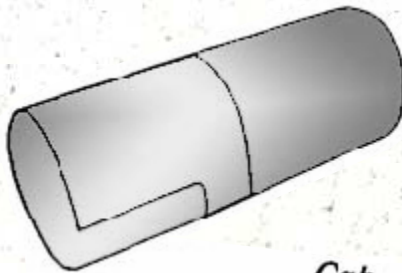
## Finding your way around the Instrument



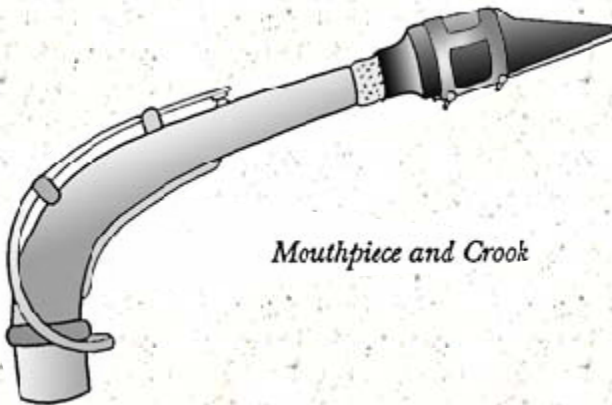
*Mouthpiece*



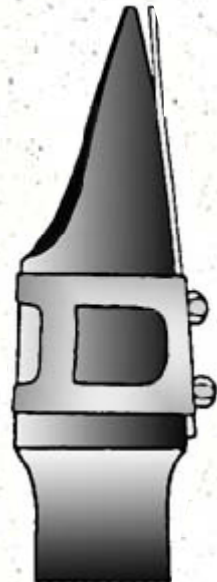
*Ligature*



*Cap*



*Mouthpiece and Crook*



[Reeds - Vandoren or Rico](#)

[Pull Throughs - Hodge or Vandoren](#)

[Pad Savers - HW or Opticare](#)

[Cases - Bam, Jupiter or Aquae Sulis](#)

[Saxophone Ligatures - Vandoren or Rovner](#)

[Strap - Neotech or BG](#)

[Metronome - Seiko or Wittner](#)

[Saxophone Mouthpiece - Vandoren or Yamaha](#)

[Music Stand - K&M](#)

[Corkgrease - Superslick or Vandoren](#)

[Saxophone Stand - K&M or Packastand](#)

[Tuner - Korg or Seiko](#)

[Saxophone Cap](#)

[Soundback Acoustic Monitor](#)

In fact there are a bewildering array of items you can get - but if you do need any of these items, click on them..... We've tried to make the site as user friendly as possible (See "User's Guide"). Please phone us if you cannot find what you want. We're usually very helpful...



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