

# **CLEANING INSTRUMENT MOUTHPIECES**

## **To Be Followed At Every Musical Petting Zoo Event Including Family Concerts**

The cleaning of all instrument mouthpieces must be followed for sanitation safety and health reasons. The Symphony Guild of Charlotte, Inc. wants to do the best job possible to keep bacteria and contagious diseases from spreading child to child on the mouthpieces that go directly into the mouth to play. Every instrument has three to four mouthpieces to alternate with in order for the mouthpiece to air dry after being sanitized.

### **Cleaning Procedures:**

- 1) Only adults clean the mouthpieces. No exceptions!
  
- 2) **TABLE SET-UP**
  - For the cleaning of brass mouthpieces, spread out two paper towels from the cleaning supply flat on a table. Place a "Dirty" sign on the paper towel on one side and a "Clean" sign on the paper towel on the other side.
  - For the cleaning of woodwind mouthpieces, spread out three paper towels from the cleaning supply flat on a table. Place a "Dirty" sign on the paper towel on one side and a "Clean" sign on the paper towel on the other side. Place a "Hold" sign on the paper towel in the middle.
  - The cleaning solution in spray bottles must be at least 70% ethanol (ethyl alcohol).
  
- 3) **CLARINET MOUTHPIECES**
  - The instructor will remove the dirty mouthpiece with barrel intact from the clarinet and place it in the "Dirty" sign area.
  - The 1<sup>st</sup> cleaner will pick up the mouthpiece with its barrel and take the reed out of the mouthpiece. Wearing rubber or latex gloves is recommended.
  - Spray the mouthpiece holding it by the barrel and hold the reed at the base to spray it with the sanitizing spray.
  - Place the mouthpiece upright in the "Holding" area between the "Dirty" and "Clean" areas, so air can circulate around it.
  - Put the reed in the "Holding" area as well.
  - The mouthpieces and reeds need to air dry for 10 seconds.
  - The 2<sup>nd</sup> cleaner, wearing rubber or latex gloves, will reassemble the cleaned mouthpieces with the cleaned reeds and place them in the "Clean" area.
  - The mouthpieces will be moved to the front of the "Clean" area on a rotation basis. For example, the last mouthpiece and reed put together will be placed at the back of the paper towel.
  - The instructor **MUST** take the mouthpieces in the front of the paper towel because the ones in the back are still air drying. The cleaner will move the back mouthpieces forward when there is room.

4) **SAXOPHONE MOUTHPIECES**

- The instructor will remove the dirty mouthpiece from the saxophone and place it at the “Dirty” sign area.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> cleaner will pick up the mouthpiece and take the reed out of the mouthpiece. Wearing rubber or latex gloves is recommended.
- Spray the mouthpiece by holding it at the base (on the cork) and at the base of the reed.
- Place the mouthpiece upright in the “Holding” area between the “Dirty” and “Clean” areas, so air can circulate around it.
- Put the reed in the “Holding” area as well.
- The mouthpieces and reeds need to air dry for 10 seconds.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> Cleaner, wearing rubber or latex gloves, will reassemble the clean mouthpieces with the cleaned reeds and place them in the “Clean” area on a rotation basis. For example, the last mouthpiece and reed put together will be placed at the back of the paper towel.
- The instructor **MUST** take the mouthpieces in the front of the towel because the ones in the back are still air drying. The cleaner will move the back mouthpieces forward when there is room.

5) **OBOE**

- Use four or more oboe reeds.
- The instructor will remove the dirty reed and place it at the “Dirty” sign area.
- The cleaner will hold the reed at the base to spray the sanitizer on the plastic or wood reed and will also use the eyedropper to put the sanitizer in the opening at the base of the reed to allow the sanitizer to get inside the reed.
- Then shake the reed downward so that the sanitizer will drain from the reed end of the mouthpiece as much as possible.
- Then place the oboe reed on a paper towel at the “Clean” sign area to air dry for 10 seconds.
- If the oboe reed is wood and has air dried for 10 seconds, put the wood reed in the jar of water until it is ready to be used again. FYI: A dry wood reed will not produce a sound; therefore, the wood reed **MUST** be soaked in water before the child can blow a sound.
- The cleaner **MUST** arrange the clean reeds so that the reeds cleaned last are at the back of the table and moved forward when there is room, except for the wood reeds, which are all in the jar.
- The instructor will have to be very cautious in picking up the clean reed since there is not a lot of space at the base of the reed to hold.
- The instructor **MUST** take the oboe reed from the front of the towel.

6) **RECORDERS**

- Use four recorders.
- The cleaner will spray sanitizer on the mouthpiece area and let it air dry for 10 seconds. The recorder will move from the "Dirty" area to the "Clean" area like the mouthpieces.

7) **FLUTE**

- The cleaner will hold the flute with the mouthpiece facing down and spray the sanitizer on the mouth area.
- Let the sanitizer remain on the mouthpiece for 10 seconds and wipe with a clean paper towel. The flute will move from the "Dirty" area to the "Clean" area like the mouthpieces.

8) **BRASS**

- The instructor will remove the mouthpiece and put it in the "Dirty" sign area.
- The cleaner will hold the mouthpiece at the base and spray the sanitizer and put it at the "Clean" sign area to let it air dry for 10 seconds. Wearing rubber or latex gloves is recommended.
- The instructor will pick up the clean mouthpiece by the base and insert it into the instrument without touching the mouth part.
- The instructor will also pick up the mouthpiece that is at the front of the paper towel and drying the longest. The cleaner will move mouthpieces from the back to the front as space is created.

9) **MOUTHPIECES – VERY IMPORTANT TO DO WHEN THE EVENT IS OVER!**

- PLACE THE DIRTY BRASS, CLARINET, OBOE MOUTHPIECES, RECORDERS & REEDS IN A BAG FURNISHED BY THE CHAIRMAN. THROW AWAY THE PAPER TOWELS.
- DO NOT PLACE THE DIRTY MOUTHPIECES, RECORDERS AND REEDS IN THE CLEAN CONTAINERS OR IN THE CASES!
- The MPZ Chairman will take the dirty mouthpieces, recorders and reeds home to hand wash them!

**ADDITIONAL INSTRUMENT GUIDELINES**

**VIOLINS & CELLO**

- Do not adjust the strings on the neck or the knobs unless you play these instruments. Please be sure all volunteers know this!
- Unpacking the violins and cello: Tighten the bow strings.
- Packing the violins and cello: Loosen the bow strings.

**SNARE DRUM**

- Keep the MUTE on the drum.

Updating Records

Initial record - per Julia Church & Lisa Phillips, Mentors for Musical Petting Zoo, 2010-2011

Updated November 5, 2012 – Julia Church

Updated August 9, 2016 – Julia Church

Updated November 13, 2018 – Larry Bennett & Julia Church

Updated February 9, 2022 – Larry Bennett & Adam Marino