

## Flute Care Checkup



**N**ever put your flute on a music stand after you finish playing. Somebody can knock it off, and it will crash to the floor. The result: dents, bent keys, and an unplayable flute.

Many students leave their flutes out of the cases after practicing at home. Sometimes it is easier to leave a flute on a bed or a dresser than to take the time to put it away, but nothing good will result from this laziness. You may forget that the flute is on your bed, and you may sit on it accidentally. A crooked flute won't play.

During rehearsals when you have rests in your part and the band director is working with another section, do not twist the crown of the flute. This will cause the cork to move and change the intonation. Over time, the screw threads will become worn and you may lose the crown.

We do many things unconsciously to our flutes while we listen to the music or the director's instructions. Sometimes we fiddle with the springs, but this will cause them to lose tension and the keys will not operate correctly. Springs can even pop off or break. This means a trip to the nearest repairman!

Always put your flute away after playing it. Swab out the moisture with a soft cloth threaded through the cleaning rod and then fold the cloth and put it inside your case cover. Do not leave the damp cloth and rod inside the flute because the moisture is not good for the pads. Take the time to wipe the fingerprints off the metal before you put it away. The dust under the key rods can be cleaned out by brushing it with a new, soft paintbrush. From time to time it also helps to vacuum out the dust from your flute case. A shiny, clean flute is always more fun to play.

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