



The Reedery

Lakewood, CA 90715
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Bassoon maintenance and repair at home

Contact me with any questions, or see additional pictures/videos

- www.reedery.com
- Instagram: thereedery
- YouTube: The Reedery Woodwind Repairs
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCi2W0nlOCbVLRBXoqUYiLCw>

Recommended Supplies

- Swab: look for a swab with a generous amount of fabric to really get all the water out. You will need two swabs, one for the wing joint and one for the boot joint.
 - Albion Silk Bassoon Swab (Item #O-18) <https://www.forrestsmusic.com/index.htm>
 - ~OR~
 - <https://www.foxproducts.com/Microfiber-Bassoon-Boot-Swab.item>
 - <https://www.foxproducts.com/Microfiber-Bassoon-Wing-Swab.item>
- Bassoon stand
- Screwdriver: 3.0mm and 2.0mm flat head (slotted)
 - <https://www.wihatools.com/screwdrivers/precision/slotted/precision-slotted-3-0-1-8-x-100mm>
 - <https://www.wihatools.com/screwdrivers/precision/slotted/precision-slotted-2-0-5-64-x-40mm>
- Teflon plumber's tape and/or dental floss
- Tenon thread: size 30 cotton thread, traditionally in red (but have fun, get any color)
 - <https://creativeyarnsource.com/product/crochet-cotton-10-20-30/>
 - <https://www.foxproducts.com/Bassoon-Tenon-Wrapping-Kit.item>
- Paraffin wax
- Small soft paintbrush or makeup brush
- Pipe cleaners
- Pad paper or cigarette paper
- Yamaha powder paper
- Key oil
- Spring hook
- Duck bill pliers
- Parallel pliers

Prevention

PREVENT BOOT ROT and CRACKS:

- Swab! Even if you don't have time! Much better than irreversible damage ☺
 - Swab your wing joint. Be very careful that the tail of the swab is not folded up before putting it through the wing joint.
 - Pour any water out of your boot joint via the SMALLER side.



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- Swab your boot joint. Put the swab into the LARGER side, let the chain or weight fall around the U-tube, pull the swab out the smaller side.
- Never put your bassoon away with water inside – mold, mildew, rot, etc.
- Store your bassoon in its case with pad paper or cigarette paper underneath the low Ab pad(s).
 - There will be an Ab pad near the bottom of the boot on the front side
 - Some bassoons have an additional one on the back side
- Avoid laying your bassoon down- use a bassoon stand

PREVENT BENT KEYS:

- Be aware of the whisper key pad that sticks up from the top of the wing joint. This key gets bent all the time.
- Be aware of the whisper key bridge on the bottom of the wing joint, especially while assembling the wing joint into the boot.
- Make sure the joints aren't too hard to assemble, or even get stuck/are difficult to disassemble.
 - Unwind a little bit of string
 - Use cork grease if your joints have cork
 - Use paraffin wax if your joints have string
 - Visit a bassoon repair specialist if the issue persists
- Avoid laying your bassoon down- use a bassoon stand

BOCAL CARE:

- About once a week, run hot tap water through your bocal.
- Have your bocal professionally cleaned once a year.
 - Alternatively, use a bocal brush and soap and water.
 - <https://www.foxproducts.com/Bocal-Brush2.item>
- Assemble and adjust the bocal into the wing joint by gripping close to the bocal cork, avoiding the tip of the bocal
- Avoid touching the bocal once it is assembled into the wing joint, even the weight of your hand can bend it

Yearly inspection and maintenance

- Use a small soft brush to dust all around the key work
- Clean the finger holes with a clean, dry Q-tip
- Check for any loose pads, corks, screws
- Look for any rods, keys, or parts that look bent or "off"
- Clean the tenons with a clean, dry washcloth to wipe off old grease and residue
- Clean inside the sockets with a Q-tip dipped in plain water
- Make sure the tenons are fitting snug- not too loose, not too tight, not wobbly
- Waggle all the keys and check for excessive key noise
- Check the wing and boot joints for suction
- Check the bocal for suction and for visible cracks, dents, and damage
- Tidy your case and vacuum the inside

Quick Fixes

- Temporarily repair loose, torn, or missing tenon/bocal cork:
 - Use Teflon plumber's tape or dental floss to wrap around cork tenons



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- Use cotton thread to wrap around string tenons
- Sticking pads
 - Place pad paper underneath the sticking pads after swabbing. Store your bassoon in its case with the paper under the pad(s)
- Whisper key won't close with the E pancake key, or E pancake key won't close
 - Use duck bill pliers to bend the whisper key bridge at the bottom of the wing joint
 - Bend it down toward the instrument for more closure of the whisper key
 - Bend it up away from the instrument for more closure of the E pancake key
- Pad fell off
 - If possible, gently heat the key and reapply the pad.
 - You will need to visit a bassoon repair specialist to install a new pad.
- Key flops around – spring came off
 - Use your spring hook to push or pull the end of the needle spring back onto the key
- Key doesn't spring very well
 - Can be a twisted post, bent hinge, gummy/dirty hinge, or binding push rod
 - If you remove the screw you can sometimes repair this.
 - Clean the screw with alcohol on a paper towel
 - Clean inside the key hinge with alcohol on a pipe cleaner
 - Apply a drop of key oil to the end of the screw and reassemble
 - If a post is visibly twisted, use duck bill pliers to rotate the post. You might need to apply a small drop of super glue where the post attaches to the body of the bassoon.
 - Commonly needs to be professionally repaired – make an appointment with a bassoon repair specialist

Deep cleaning

- Most commonly, deep cleaning should be done by a bassoon repair specialist. Visit www.reedery.com to schedule.
- If you wish to disassemble and clean your bassoon, be aware of risks – do not lose any parts, and be aware that your instrument might not play correctly after being disassembled and reassembled.

Stuck swab

- Put the bassoon back in its case and schedule an appointment with a bassoon repair specialist.
- Back away from the bassoon. Do not make any attempts to remove the swab. You can only make it worse and you can possibly do irreversible damage to the inside of your bassoon.
- Borrow another instrument to use until your repair appointment.