

Cleaning Your French Horn

Materials Needed:

- Bathtub
- Cleaning snake
- Slide grease/cream
- Fine grain steel wool
- Liquid dishwashing soap

- 1) Remove all slides from the horn and lay them on a soft surface (i.e. towel).
- 2) Lay an old towel or rag in the bathtub (so that nothing will be dented). Then, fill the bathtub with a couple of inches of cool water and a little bit of dishwashing soap.
- 3) Individually take the slides and wash them in the water.
 - a. After you wet them, run the snake through them a couple of times. **BE careful! The snake will get stuck in the slides if you attempt to push it too far in.** (I would go until it feels snug. That should be plenty far enough.)
 - b. After running the snake through them, clean the **unfinished** part (the part of the slide that goes inside the horn) with the steel wool to remove any deposits. **DO NOT use the steel wool on the finished areas of the slides or it will remove the lacquer finish.**
 - c. Once you have completed steps A and B, rinse the slide with cool water, “spin” it several times to get the water out, and then dry the outside completely.
 - d. Allow the slides to lay out in a safe, open air place for about 24 hours so that the insides can dry completely.
- 4) Next, submerge the main horn body in the cool, soapy water. **Leave the valve caps ON during this procedure.**
 - a. Use the snake to clean out all of the valve slide openings, but once again, be careful to not get them stuck.
 - b. Run cool water through the horn to rinse it out.
 - c. Next, “spin” the horn several times to get as much water as possible out.
 - d. Once you have removed the horn from the water, you may take the valve caps off and wash them separately to remove the build-up of deposits. You can also use the steel wool on the inside of the caps as well.
 - e. Then you should dry the outside of the horn body with a soft towel and allow it to sit out in an out of the way, open-air area to dry for about 24 hours.
- 5) After the horn has had plenty of time to dry (about 24 hours), then grease all of the slides so that they can move easily and re-oil the valves. You can also use the polishing cloth to shine the outside of the horn. **DO NOT use any type of finishing or polishing solution on your horn.** It will damage the lacquer.
- 6) Run the **MOUTHPIECE** under water and use the mouthpiece brush to clean out deposits. Then it can be put in boiling water for several minutes. This will kill any germs. **AFTER** the water has cooled, remove the mouthpiece.

Make sure to be EXTREMELY careful during this process. This equipment is fragile and can be damaged easily. Make sure that when you leave it out to dry that you leave it in a position that normal house traffic or pets will not disturb it. Although this equipment is property of MISD, you are solely responsible for returning it in the condition that you received it.