

# Piccolo Care & Maintenance

JUST  
*Flutes*

Knowing how to look after your piccolo can ensure a lifetime of playing enjoyment. Here are our top tips.

## Assembling your piccolo

1. Make sure that the tenon cork is well lubricated with cork grease. Cork grease helps the headjoint go on easily, but also helps create a good airtight seal.
2. Hold the body on the tube above the mechanism, holding the headjoint below the embouchure hole. Line the pieces up straight and put them together with a twisting (not rocking) motion.

*Be careful not to put any pressure on the mechanism as you put the pieces together: the majority of repairs our workshop see are due to bent keywork caused when putting the instrument together.*

## Recommendations for maintenance

Your piccolo should be cleaned, oiled (both the wood and mechanism) and adjusted once a year by a qualified repair technician.

Your instrument is best stored in its case when you are not using it - do not store cleaning accessories inside the case. If your piccolo has a tenon cap, put this on the piccolo as it can help protect the cork.

## Cleaning your piccolo

We recommend using a silk or microfibre swab with a cleaning rod to remove the moisture from the inside of your piccolo. By drying out your piccolo after each use you will extend the life of your pads and reduce secondary instrument maintenance.

Remove fingerprints from the mechanism using a soft polishing cloth. Never use liquid silver polish, as this can severely damage the mechanism.

## Avoiding Cracks

A wooden instrument can crack, and while there's no surefire way to prevent it from cracking, there are some things you can do to reduce the risk of it happening.

"Blow in" your instrument to gradually condition the wood to the changes of humidity and air temperature. Keep playing to a maximum of 15 minutes a day initially, and increase by 5 minutes per week.

Protect your piccolo from temperature extremes, for example when you are going between warm buildings and the cold outside. It's a good idea to keep the case in an insulated case cover, and to never store the instrument next to a radiator or by window.

Warm up the piccolo in your hands before blowing into it. This is especially important if playing in a cold environment, as a quick change in temperature can shock and crack the piccolo.

