

# **TROMBONE REPAIR, CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE**

## **1. REPAIR**

### **REPAIRS YOU CAN DO**

- Pull a stuck mp (use a mouthpiece puller)
- "Round" bent mouthpiece shank (use a mouthpiece trueing tool)
- Replace spit valve "cork" (they are all synthetic now)
- (Maybe) pull a stuck tuning slide (requires a quick tug with a cloth and nerves)
- Adjust bent spit valve (bend it back with caution)
- Tighten the spit valve's post screw
- Re-string a rotary valve. However, string valves on trombones are quite rare.

### **REPAIRS YOU CAN'T**

- Any dents whatsoever
- Warped, torqued, bent etc. slide
- Broken spit valve spring (this is under quite a bit of pressure)

## **BASIC REPAIR TOOLS FOR THE INSTRUMENTAL TEACHER**

- MOUTHPIECE PULLER (\$60)  
Essential in every school for stuck mouthpieces.  
Best is the *Bobcat* model; others will also work
  
- MOUTHPIECE TRUEING TOOL (\$25)  
Fixes bent mouthpiece shanks
  
- SPIT VALVE CORKS (\$2 - \$4 per dozen)  
All sizes are needed. Get synthetic "corks" with adhesive built on.
  
- SCREWDRIVER SET (\$10 per set)  
All sizes are needed. Use for spit valves, rotary valves, etc.
  
- HORN (ROTARY VALVE) STRING (\$5 per 10 yards)  
Either buy this or use heavy test cloth (not nylon) fly-casting fishing line  
For a trombone F attachment that has a string (not ball-bearing) valve

## **2. MAINTENANCE & CLEANING**

### **MATERIALS NEEDED**

1. Slide cream (*Superslick*; *Trombontine* are good) \$3
2. Slide silicone treatment (*Superslick* and others) \$3
3. Slide spray bottle (any brand) \$4
4. Mouthpiece brush \$5
5. Rotor oil for F attachment trombones - **NOT** piston valve oil (any brand) \$5
6. Trombone (not trumpet) Cleaning Snake (\$10)

### **MOUTHPIECE CLEANING (once per week)**

1. Clean out your mouthpiece with the mouthpiece brush and soap.
2. If the mouthpiece starts looking dark, clean it with Wright's Silver Polish.
3. Gold-plated mouthpieces can be cleaned with soap and water.

Cleaning your mouthpiece once a week keeps your horn cleaner.

### **LUBRICATING THE SLIDE (every 2-3 days)**

First, go somewhere where you are alone and can put the slides on a level surface!

1. Wipe off the inner slides with tissue.
2. Put a **SMALL AMOUNT** of slide cream on each stocking and spread around the bottom half of your inner slides. If you see white all over the slide you've put too much on. After endless years of trial, I find that the best cream is *Superslick* - it is the least greasy and cleans off the best.
3. Put one drop of silicone treatment on each slide.
4. Spray with water and put the outer slide back on.

## **CLEANING THE SLIDE (once per month)**

Go somewhere where you are alone, can put your slide and bell on a level surface, and have access to a sink. Always use warm, not hot, water. Hot water will peel the lacquer off your horn.

1. Disassemble the slide. Take a trombone cleaning snake, put some soap on the brush and clean out the inner slides.
2. Do the same for the outer slide.

## **CLEANING THE BELL/ROTARY VALVE (as needed)**

All you need is a clean towel and soap and water. Do not ever use a “polishing cloth”; these have silicone impregnated in them and will actually put small scratches in your lacquer.

1. Run water through the inside and outside of your bell. Use some soap if it’s really dirty. Wipe off with a towel. That’s it!
2. Run water through the rotary valve to clean it. Then put 5-6 drops of *rotary* oil through the tuning slide so it runs into the valve (flip the valve while you are doing this).
3. Oil all the ball-bearings and moveable joints on the valve.
4. Put 2-3 drops of oil on the valve spring. Also do the same for your spit valve spring.