



ABOP Podcast Episode 28

PERCUSSION INSTRUMENT MAINTENANCE

with
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Program Notes

Introduction

Whether the instruments are from your personal collection, borrowed, or from your school, keep them in optimal condition. The sound that you create on them is a reflection of you; good or bad. Instruments sound better when they are well maintained. Regular maintenance saves time and money and helps diminish on-the-job surprises.

General Maintenance

- Regularly check on the condition of the instruments and equipment.
- Take care of any issues ASAP (noises, bad heads, etc.). You never know when you will need that instrument—have it ready to go.
- Be prepared for issues to arise and have a plan (i.e., back-up heads and parts available).
- All gear should be stored in a safe, clean space with protective covers, cases, or trunks.
- Many issues arise when instruments are not transported with adequate protection (damaged, dents, squeaks, buzzes, etc.); make sure the instruments are in dedicated trunks or cases.
- If the equipment you are using belongs to a school, friend, etc., let them know of the problem and offer some solutions.

Instruments and Equipment

Snare & Field Drums

Hard/soft case, calf/plastic heads, fine-tuning (clearing) the heads, replacing batter-side head, snare-side head, snares, snares on when not in use, tension rods

Tom-toms

Hard/soft case, fine-tuning (clearing) the heads, replacing heads, mount to stand, tension rods

Bass Drum

Hard case, fine-tuning (clearing) the heads, replacing heads, stand, tension rods

Timpani

Trunks/covers, playing range, fine-tuning (clearing) the heads, replacing heads, gauges, pedal mechanism, lubrication, frame, casters

Marimba

Hard/soft case, retuning, restringing, suspension posts, insulators, resonators, stand, condition of bars, casters

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Xylophone

Case/cover, retuning, restringing, suspension posts, insulators, resonators, stand, condition of bars, casters

Vibraphone

Hard case/cover, retuning, restringing, suspension posts, resonators, dampening system, stand, motor, fans, casters, condition of bars

Glockenspiel

Hard case, retuning, restringing, suspension posts, insulators, resonators, stand, condition of bars, casters

Chimes

Cover, retuning, restringing, suspension posts, stand, condition of tubes, casters

Triangle

Bag/case, clips, suspending cord

Cymbals

Bag/case, straps, stand

Tambourine

Bag/case, head, heating pad

Tam-tam

Rope, stand, casters

Hardware (stands)

Wing nuts, insulators, felts, rubber feet

Bongos, congas

Heads, stands

Calf skin heads

More TLC, tuning, and weather conditions

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Recommended Supplies with Amazon Links

- Superior Lubricant: <https://a.co/d/3eD0nYq>
- TRI-FLOW Teflon Lube: <https://a.co/d/eogXY9t>
- White Lithium Grease: <https://a.co/d/fBj3avO>
- High Performance Dry Lubricant: <https://a.co/d/d8pEj4s>
- Turtle Wax Chrome Polish: <https://a.co/d/cMJYd6c>
- Carnauba Wax: <https://a.co/d/0PBRR4w>
- 40lb - 60lb Monofilament Fishing line: https://www.amazon.com/s?k=40lb+-+60lb+fishing+line&crid=36FNI31NHJJVP&srefix=40lb+-+60lb+fishing+line,aps,233&ref=nb_sb_noss_1
- Folding Adjustable Equipment Carts: https://www.amazon.com/s?k=music+instrument+cart&crid=5LA2I1HVU43T&srefix=Music+Instrument+cart,aps,227&ref=nb_sb_ss_p13n-expert-pd-ops-ranker_1_21

Where to go for assistance

- School: teacher, professor, colleagues
- Professional: Principal
- Local drum shop, music store
- Online

Closing

- Invest in your future by investing in your instruments—make smart purchases in quality equipment.
- Nourish your investment by properly maintaining your instruments.
- Ask for help.
- It's okay to make mistakes; learn from them.

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