

**Musicare Inc.**



## **A Parent's Guide to Purchasing A New Band Instrument...**

### **How to shop and compare.**

- Questions you should ask.
- Why certain instrument brands cost more to repair than others.
- Sample problems, what to avoid.

### **Dear Mom and Dad...**

When it comes to purchasing a new instrument, finding the right instrument at the right price can be a challenge if you have little knowledge or experience in this area.



To help parents learn more about wind instruments, we asked our repair technicians to come up with a series of questions that were helpful but not overly technical.

### **How we sell...**

Musicare Inc. is a band instrument repair company where repair service is the mainstay of our business. Unlike traditional music stores where stocking decisions are based on numbers and sales-per-square-foot, we offer "one-on-one" personal service and concentrate on finding the right instrument at the right price for the player.

To do this properly, our repair technicians are also our sales force. This way, parents are speaking directly with people who have many years of "hands on experience and special training" rather than just a person hired to sell on commission.

### **How band instruments arrive...**



Band instruments are shipped by truck, train and ocean container.

Before leaving the factory, instrument keys are tied or wedged down and cylinder walls or slides are coated with anti-oxidizing lubrication.

When they arrive at a store, each new instrument requires a certain amount of time spent on professional setup as the keys must be untied or de-wedged, the cylinder walls and slides cleaned and re-lubricated with performing oils and the complete instrument adjusted throughout as a result of shipping vibrations.

Pre-servicing is a must. Before buying any band instrument, ask to make sure it has received the proper "American Standard 22P" pre-service checkup.

### **Musicare's pre-service plan...**

At Musicare, for each new instrument sold, our technicians perform a series of tests which include the complete "American Standard 22P", a "top to bottom" physical inspection, "key-pad-linkage" adjustments, fine tuning and play testing. This way, Musicare can guarantee that each new instrument sold will perform as it should the first time used.



We also document this pre-service inspection to help support any future warranty adjustment.

### **Musicare warranty service...**

In the Ottawa area, Musicare is the designated warranty repair center for a number of band instrument manufacturers. **See back cover.**

To comply with manufacturer requirements, Musicare maintains on hand a large inventory of several thousand new replacement parts to fit over 80 different wind and percussion instrument products.

 <p><b>C.G. Conn</b><sup>®</sup> <b>Selmer</b></p>	<p>By manufacturer appointment, Musicare Inc. is the sole authorized warranty repair center in Eastern Ontario and Western Quebec for the Conn-Selmer group of instruments including: Bach, Bundy, Buescher, Signet, Selmer Paris, Selmer USA, Ludwig, Musser, C.G. Conn, Artley, Armstrong, Emerson, King and Benge.</p>
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## Price vs Value...



**Sax  
"A"**



**Sax  
"B"**

**Children need help when learning instrumental music.**

**By substituting quality for price, a poorly made instrument has the ability to discourage a student and may cause a child not to practice and do poorly in music class.**

### Can you tell the difference?

To a parent unfamiliar with band instrument technology, all saxophones, trumpets or clarinets would probably look and sound the same.

Unfortunately, that is not the case.

Any repairman will tell you there are three categories of instruments:

- Student
- Step-up
- Professional

Now, because of "cheap" off-shore labour, a fourth category has been added and it is referred to as an "M.I.S.O."

M.I.S.O. stands for "Musical Instrument Shaped Object".

M.I.S.O.'s are inexpensive musical instruments that at first glance look like band instruments but unfortunately, the quality we've come to expect is not there.

M.I.S.O.'s are sold mainly in discount stores, those who sell everything from arm chairs to patio furniture, along with certain guitar & keyboard music stores, pawn shops and Internet operations.

Musicare's examination of several M.I.S.O.'s indicate they will not play for the long term if even the short term and to make matters worse, replacement parts are not available.

Parents who buy from discounters are most vulnerable as they do not believe they are buying poor quality, but rather feel they are making a good deal because of the low cost.

**Poor quality remains long after  
the low price is forgotten!**

**Everyone suffers...**

A poor quality instrument has the ability to discourage a student, frustrate parents, and prevent the child from enjoying the lifelong benefits of music participation.

Band directors agree that poor quality instruments may cause children to drop out of music for the wrong reasons; *"it could never be the instrument, it must be me"*.

A discouraged student who quits school music class early may not return.

When a parent buys a poor quality instrument and then finds out there is a problem, they are not likely to spend even more money to acquire the kind of quality instrument they should have bought in the first place.

**We suggest...**

If you are not sure about an instrument purchase, call our repair shop and ask for free advice.

**"Musical instruments should be deemed asset  
not disposable".**

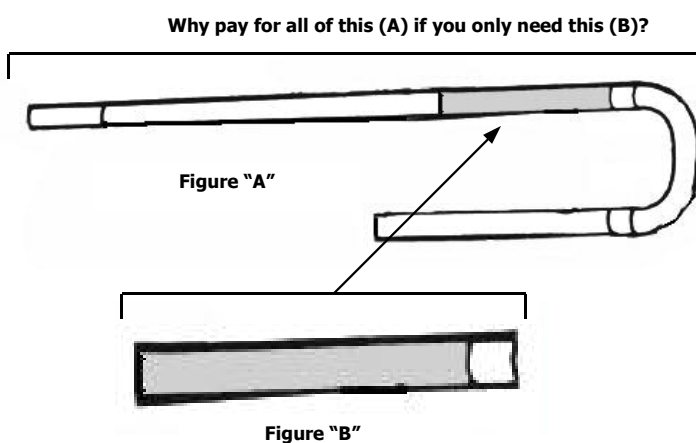


## Repair costs...

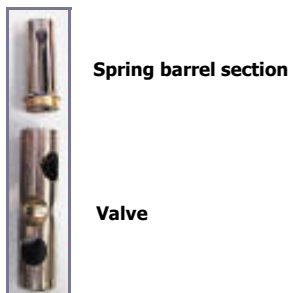
At Musicare, we choose (by repair experience) to sell only certain instrument brands, those that play well and have a lower cost ratio to repair. To help parents learn why other instrument brands are more expensive to repair, our technicians have diagramed three out of several problems common to other student grade instruments.

### Brasswind instrument tubing...

To reduce manufacturing costs, certain off-shore instrument manufacturers do not offer individual replacement parts. Instead, they only provide sub-assemblies. This unfortunately drives up the cost of repair as customers are required to buy parts that may not be needed.



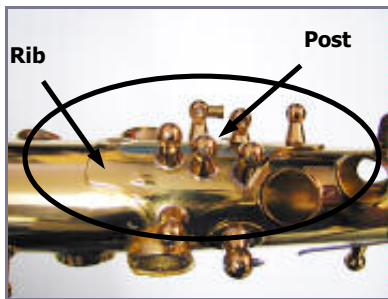
### Brasswind valves...



Good valve action in a trumpet is critical. If the valve is not designed and built correctly, it will not function properly.

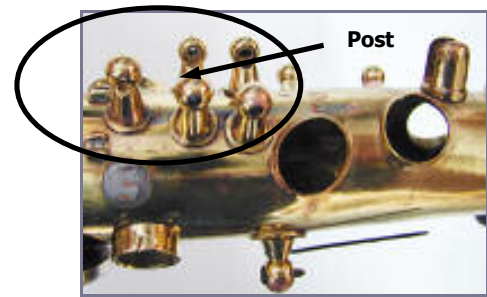
In the above example, the valve is held together by soft solder. If accidentally knocked, the spring barrel and push-rod section of the valve will easily bend causing the trumpet to stop playing.

## Saxophone bodies...



**Musicare Saxophone**  
(Rib design extra strong)

On Musicare brand and other top quality saxophones, the posts in the upper & lower stacks, palm keys and lower right hand keys are silver soldered to ribs and the ribs to the body to give extra strength and a better post to key-rod alignment ratio.



**Other Saxophones**  
(No rib. Weaker design)

With certain other brand saxophones, the posts are soldered directly to the body making for a weaker post to key-rod alignment ratio.

### **When comparison shopping, here is a list of important questions you should ask...**

- In what country is the instrument made?
- What is the warranty period in years and what is covered?
- Do you offer "in-house" repair service?
- Do you stock replacement parts for this instrument?
- May I watch and speak with a repair technician whenever my instrument is being repaired?
- Do you offer a free replacement loaner if my instrument stays overnight for repair service?
- Do you offer ultrasonic cleaning service when my instrument needs future cleaning?
- Is the case under warranty?

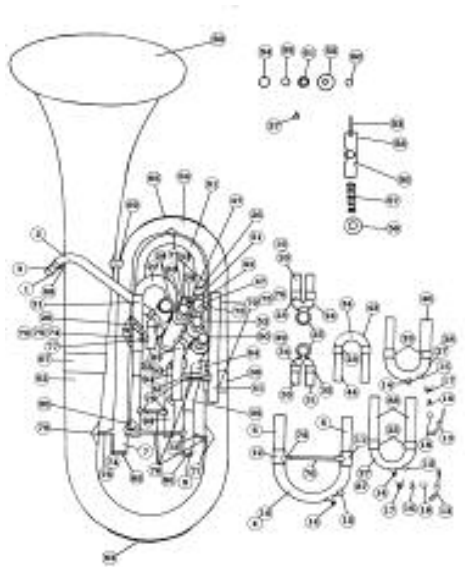
## Q & A section...

The following questions are more detailed and specific.

They are designed for parents who wish to know more technical information when comparative shopping.

At Musicare, our repair technicians would be more than pleased to answer any technical questions parents have regarding band instruments or perform any of the function tests as listed in the following Q&A section.

**Due to limited space, we have only listed a few instruments and questions. For instruments not shown, please call Musicare for more information on the instrument of your choice.**



**If buying a Trumpet, Cornet or Flugel Horn ask:**

- May I see a mechanical compression test performed on the valves?
- May I see the PSI values?
- How are the valves put together? **(If the spring barrel is simply soldered, this section of the valve will always bend causing the valve to stop working.)**
- What are the valves made of, brass with plating, monel or otherwise?
- What is the bore size and it's consistency.  
**(Too large or too small can affect how a child learns to play.)**
- What type of braces are used between valve and mouthpipe to body and main tuning slide to bell.  
**(Check for size, type and solder surface area. Too little or too much will effect sound projection and rigidity.)**
- What type of waterkeys are used, how are they mounted, what type of spring is used and what is the amount of "free play"? **(Sloppy waterkey action creates air leaks.)**
- What type of threads are on the top and bottom valve caps, internal or external? **(This can effect future repair.)**
- What type of valve guide is used? **(Poor guides create valve action problems.)**
- Is the lacquer air-dry or epoxy?
- Is the receiver matched to the lead-pipe?

**If buying a trombone ask:**

- For a slide compression test.
- How much "slack" is in the waterkey assembly? **(To much key-rod and rod to post-to-post play will cause excessive leakage.)**
- For a "bell-ping" test.

**If buying a larger brass instrument such as a Baritone, Euphonium or Tuba ask:**

- How many braces, where are they placed and what is the size of the bracing plates? **(You need to know this information for rigidity.)**
- Will the mouthpiece receiver accept standard American, British, European or other mouthpieces?
- Check for weak brass. Push your finger into the bell area. If it gives easily, the instrument will damage easily. If it is too hard and has no give at all, the sound will be dead.
- Check for design curves. If there are no graceful curves the resistance will increase thus causing the instrument to be less free blowing and require the player to work harder.
- What type of valve guides are used and are they supported with upper and lower metal tabs?

**If buying a Clarinet ask:**

- What kind of pads are used, bladder, Buffet style, single or double skin?
- Are the tone holes undercut?
- Is the bore tapered?
- Are the pivot screws, key rods and springs stainless?
- Is the scale A440 or A442?
- How are the key posts anchored?
- What is the body composition?
- Is there a 5 year body guarantee?

**If buying a Flute ask:**

- What kind of pads are used, single, double, yellow or white?
- On the head joint, which of the 5 embouchure cuts am I receiving?
- Are the posts anchored to ribs or the body?
- Are the adjustment screws machined or pressed?
- How many years is the silver plating guaranteed?

**If buying a Saxophone ask:**

- Are the posts soldered to ribs and then the ribs to the body?  
**(Rigidity issue.)**
- Is the G# lever attached to a single post or "U" shaped double bracket? **(Rigidity issue.)**
- Is the bell brace narrow or wide fixtured? **(Rigidity issue.)**
- Are the bumpers adjustable or fixed?  
**(Should be adjustable for accurate tuning.)**
- Is the thumb hook adjustable?  
**(To help children with smaller fingers and to readjust as the child grows.)**
- What is the design and rigidity of the neck socket?  
**(Will affect neck adjustment.)**
- What kind of pads are used?
- Are the pads equipped with metal or plastic boosters?  
**(This will affect the sound.)**
- Are the springs blue steel or stainless wire? **(Steel will rust and break.)**
- Are the rods stainless steel?  
**(If not, expect rust over time if not oiled consistently.)**

## Musicare's Special Pricing...

To help parents afford good quality instruments, Musicare offers a special \$1.00 a day or \$1.50 a day new instrument purchase program.

By choosing this plan, students have pride of ownership and can play effortlessly on a good instrument, one that costs less per day than the price of a hamburger, fries and drink. Call today and ask how your son or daughter can start right away with this program.



**Buys a new  
Trumpet  
Trombone  
Flute  
Clarinet  
Drum Kit  
Bell Kit**



Band  
instruments  
make the ideal  
Christmas,  
Graduation or  
Birthday gift.



**Buys a new  
Alto Sax  
Tenor Sax  
  
In lacquer or  
choose from 20  
different colours.**

## Musicare credentials...

At Musicare, we hold factory trained credentials and belong to a technicians guild recognized throughout the world.



**National Association of Professional  
Band Instrument Repair Technicians**

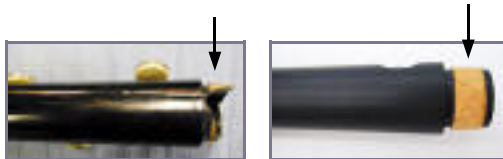
Musicare Inc. Canada's first serving  
member since 1978.

# Musicare's Band Instrument Repair Service...

Parents need after sale assurances.

At Musicare, we provide to all customers a comprehensive band instrument repair service covering all aspects of band instrument repair from "make it play" to "complex dent repair" and "repad—overhaul" work.

The following pictures show a cross selection of the many job applications performed at Musicare.



**Woodwind  
Clarinet Tenon  
Repair  
Before & After**



**Woodwind  
Tone Hole  
Repair  
Before & After**



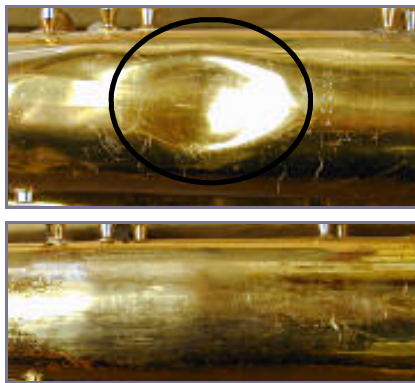
**Woodwind  
Bassoon Tenon Repair  
Before Repair**



**Woodwind  
Bassoon Tenon Repair  
After Repair**



**French Horn Bell  
Repair  
Before & After**



**Baritone Sax  
Body Dent  
Repair  
Before & After**  
**EBG technique  
Repair without  
disassembly**  
**Saves time &  
money**



**Tenor Sax Bell  
Repair  
Before & After**



**Trumpet Bow  
Repair  
Before & After**



**Baritone Bow Repair  
Before & After**

**EBG technique  
Repair without  
disassembly**

**Saves time & money**



**Tuba 3rd Branch  
Repair  
Before & After**

**EBG technique  
Repair without  
disassembly**

**Saves time & money**



**Baritone 1st Branch  
Repair  
Before & After**

**EBG technique  
Repair without  
disassembly**

**Saves time & money**





**Trombone Mouthpiece  
Ultrasonic Cleaned  
Before & After**



**Saxophone Body  
Ultrasonic Cleaned  
Before & After**



**The internal  
components of a wind  
instrument are subject  
to stomach acids,  
saliva and oil.**

**Musicare removes the  
harmful agents  
through state-of-the-  
art ultrasonic cleaning  
rather than acids or  
unfriendly chemicals**

**Tuba Rotors  
Ultrasonic Cleaned  
Before & After**

**Learn more  
[www.musicare.com](http://www.musicare.com)**



**Tuba Valves  
Ultrasonic Cleaned**

**Musicare is an authorized dealer, agent, warranty or repair center for:**

<b>Artley</b>	<b>Armstrong</b>	<b>Bundy</b>	<b>Holton</b>
<b>C.G. Conn</b>	<b>Selmer Paris</b>	<b>Buescher</b>	<b>Leblanc</b>
<b>King</b>	<b>Selmer USA</b>	<b>Emerson</b>	<b>Musicare</b>
<b>Benge</b>	<b>Bach</b>	<b>Ludwig-Musser</b>	<b>Yamaha</b>
<b>Fox</b>	<b>L.A. Sax</b>	<b>Vito</b>	<b>Jupiter</b>

**We stock repair parts for over 80 instrument brands and service all brands in the marketplace.**

If you are looking to purchase a good second hand instrument, may we suggest our web site, [www.musicare.com](http://www.musicare.com).

On the sales page, we offer a consignment listing of several instruments by price and condition.

Many parents use our site to buy and sell musical instruments for student musicians.

Thank-you for reading this publication. If we may be of service in any manner, please do not hesitate to call.



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