

THE BAND ROOM

STUDENT INSTRUMENT CARE CHECKLIST



1. Drums

- Inspect all drumheads — top and bottom — and replace them as needed. Beat marks (from drumsticks) are acceptable, but dents, tears and holes will negatively affect the drum's tone.
- Make sure all tension rods are present on each drum. (Tension rods are the screws that hold the drumheads in place.) If any become rusted, bent or damaged, they should be replaced. Otherwise, the drum cannot be tuned properly.
- Check the snare mechanisms to ensure they properly engage and release — or “throw” — the wires. Also, look for rust or missing strands on the wires to confirm that the cord or tape is in good condition.
- Wipe down the drums with a soft, dry cloth. [PRO TIP: Use a little of your preferred cleaning solution — such as Windex, Pledge, furniture polish or auto detailing products — to really make them come to life.]
- To check timpani tuning, lower each timpano's pedal to the floor, then use a tuner that matches the drum's lowest pitch. If any pedals are squeaky or stubborn, apply a small amount of lithium grease. Adjust the tension of any pedal that doesn't stay in place after being set.

2. Hardware

- Inspect all cymbal stands, tom stands, snare stands and mounting hardware for rust and/or corrosion. Each should have all its wing bolts and rubber feet.
- Ensure that each cymbal stand has a plastic sleeve, two felt washers and a top wing nut. These are the parts that keep the cymbal securely in place and help to minimize damage to the cymbal.
- Use a soft cloth and a little glass cleaner to give all your chrome hardware parts a refreshed look.

3. Cymbals and Miscellaneous Percussion

- Inspect all cymbals for small cracks and imperfections that could negatively affect their sound. Remove the top wing nut and felt washer so you can inspect the cymbal's center hole.
- Remove all dust and dirt from cymbals with a soft cloth. Use a small amount of glass cleaner if desired.
- Inspect all additional percussion instruments. For optimum performance, they should all be free from cracks and excessive dirt/dust.

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DRUMS + PERCUSSION

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4. Mallet Percussion

- Play each key of your mallet percussion instruments, ensuring every note rings true. Scratched or dented bars can alter the tone and/or pitch. Often, these bars can simply be individually replaced, saving money and the hassle of purchasing a new instrument.
- Inspect all resonators for dents, dust, rust and anything else that may affect the sound of the instrument.
- Check the pedal mechanism of any vibraphones. Vibes should have a short, dampened sound when struck and a long, full sound when the pedal is depressed. If this does not happen, small adjustments to the pedal, rod or dampening bar can be made.
- Plug in your vibraphone's motor and turn it on to ensure that the paddles turn within the resonators, as designed.
- Marimbas, xylophones and vibraphones have cords that run through the bars to hold them in place. These can fray and tear over time. Replace all frayed or torn cords.