

A Guide to Adjusting Reeds

by

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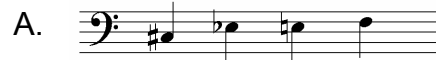
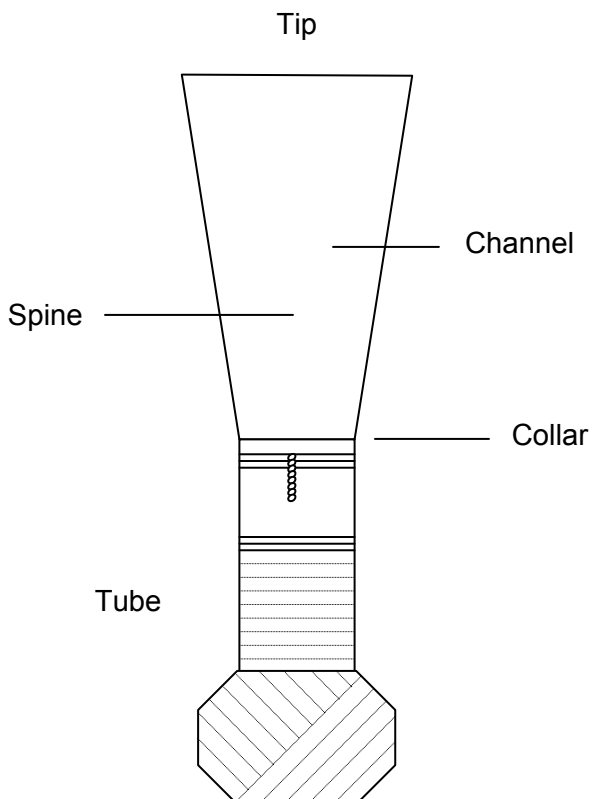
Here are some simple hints that might save that reed that is on its last leg, that new reed that is simply too hard to play, and all the ones in between!

Supplies:

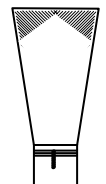
- ◆ Sandpaper (600 wet/dry)
- ◆ Sharp reed knife (for minor adjustments, sandpaper will do in its place)
- ◆ Razor blades
- ◆ Plaque or guitar pick
- ◆ Other helpful tools: Needlenose pliers, short mandrel, cutting block, fine flat file.

Technique:

- ◆ Always soak the reed before working on it to help prevent cracking.
- ◆ Always place a plaque or guitar pick carefully between the two open blades when sanding or scraping on the cane. This will support the blades and prevent them from cracking
- ◆ Squeeze wires before removing cane. You can always undo squeezing wires, but you can't undo removing cane!

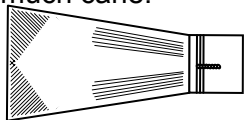


If these notes sink and are unstable, squeeze the first and second wires, making the tube rounder (squeezing from the sides, not from the top and bottom). Try the reed and see if this helped. If not, trim the tip with either sand paper or a razor blade, making the reed slightly shorter.



If these notes crack frequently, remove cane from just behind the tip. (Remember, ALWAYS remove just a little cane at a time and the try the reed to see if it works better.) Only after you try the reed should you continue to scrape.

C. If your low notes do not respond easily, squeeze the first and second wires from the top and bottom (not from sides) which makes the tube flatter. If this does not help, scrape or sand the back of the reed in the channels OR if the tip looks thick, scrape or sand the tip. If the reed still seems really stiff, scrape/sand the spine (the center of the reed) in the back. **BE CAREFUL.** The spine is the foundation of the reed, so don't take off too much cane.



D. If your reed is flat in pitch, squeeze the wires as in A above. If this doesn't work, trim the tip with a razor or sandpaper.

E. If your reed is sharp in pitch, squeeze the first and second wires from the top and bottom to make the tube flatter or take off cane in the same areas as C above.

F. The reed ideally should crow somewhere between "D" and "F."

Taking Care of Your Reed

- ◆ **DO NOT** store your reeds in an airtight container; they need exposure to air.
- ◆ If your reed begins to get dirty, **GENTLY** run a pipe cleaner from the bottom of the tube up through the blades. You may also soak the reed in hydrogen peroxide, but this may change the character of the reed.

Selected suppliers:

Arundo Reeds & Cane

503-647-0958

www.home.earthlink.net/~arundo/

Forrests - The Double Reed Specialists

1-800-322-6263

www.forrestsmusic.com

Jones Double Reed Products

509-747-1224

www.jonesdoublereed.com

Frederic H. Weiner

1-800-622-CORK

www.weinermusic.com

Notes



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