Instrument: Bassoon

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Article Title: Evaluating the Condition of a Used Bassoon

Author: Chip Owen

Summary (Outline form):

* + - A repair technician’s contribution
			* Take bassoon to repair technicians to have it checked before purchasing
		- Ask the private teacher
			* Teacher should play instrument and say how much work it needs
			* Also know which brands are bad
		- Age and provenance
			* Age relates to condition
			* Serial number is import-maker should be able to tell when and where it was made
		- Where has it been used in the past
			* Try to get instrument that has not been in schools and having been used by a pro is preferable
			* In the middle is amateur owners-not always bad
			* Watch out for instruments that are not regularly used
			* Old bassoons might need to be fixed
			* Check history of maintenance
		- First things to check
			* Is case clean? Not moldy? In decent shape? Does case work?
			* Look at instrument-ignore bocal for now
			* Check keys and posts, missing keys, whisper key and bridge key
			* Check all guards
			* Check screws and body locks
		- Keywork
			* Check for evidence of sloppy repair, make sure pads are there and keys are not bent
			* Check for noisy keys
		- Pads
			* Check/replace older pads
			* Clean pads with dry cloths
			* Check vacuum on pads and make sure tone holes close
		- The U-tube
			* Check u tube, by removing boot cap, place boot joint into bowl of water (don’t get on pads!!) close all pads and blow into joint watch for bubbles
			* Make sure it’s clean inside
		- Moisture Damage
			* Inspect boot joint/cap for moisture damage, check for dents on outside and inside (can show improper swabbing)
			* Make sure wood isn’t softer in some parts than in others
		- Tenons and Sockets
			* Tenons could be in thread or cork-either is fine
			* Watch out to make sure they have not been replaced with metal or plastic
			* Make sure tenons fit in sockets well and do not wiggle
		- General body condition
			* Look at wood in bore
			* Needs to be oiled periodically
			* Check for loose bands on the bell
			* Make sure bell ring is fine
			* Check for dents
			* Make sure tone hole facings are smooth
		- Plating
			* Nickel may be dull but silver can be worked with and polished
			* Not important to function of instrument
		- Bocals
			* Don’t worry if brands don’t match.
			* Make sure it does agree with instrument and that the fig is good and the cork is not ragged