

HELP, my valves are stuck!

We would normally advise that teachers fix instruments during your child's music lesson. As we can't currently do this, and we want to encourage children to play at home, here are some tips to fix stuck valves.

Every instrument is slightly different but I will try and cover the basics. Adults should help children at all times.

Please note: If you do have valve oil, or decide to purchase some this should be kept out of reach from small children as it is poisonous.

1. Only unscrew one valve at a time. On most instruments, the valves are numbered but some are not and you don't want to mix them up! Be careful not to lose the spring below the valve on larger instruments.
2. Place valve oil on the silver part of the valve. If you don't have valve oil, running it under the cold-water tap will work fine. Nothing else though, no cooking oil or WD40! Sometimes if you use too much valve oil, the valve can go slower and the valve may need a wipe clean with a cloth.
3. Place the valve back in, and turn it until it clicks. On bigger instruments like baritones there may be a plastic guide which will mean the valve will only go back in fully when you line up the guide with the slot on the instrument.
4. Once fastened up, check that the instrument will still blow. If you can't make a sound, then the valve is probably in the wrong way around. Open up the valve, and turn it round until it clicks again.
5. If you can't undo the valve top, you could turn the instrument upside down and place valve oil through the hole underneath the valves. If you don't have any valve oil, you could use a Calpol style syringe to suck up water and place it through the hole.

Trombone slides

If slides feel like they are getting slow you could wipe them with a cold-water cloth. A spray bottle filled with water can also be used on the slide.

There are lots of videos to try and help you fix stuck valves but this is one that may help:

<https://youtu.be/p58302BkJ2M>