



OBOE REEDS

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Young Oboists and Reeds

- Students should own 3 working reeds at all times. Oboe reeds get damaged and wear out regularly, and families should purchase 2 reeds/month.
- Oboe reeds change over time with various weather conditions. As the weather gets colder, reeds tend to close and vibrate less. This also happens in dry climates and at high altitudes.
- Buying reeds from a local oboist allows students to ask questions and ensures that reeds are hand-made, rather than machined (like those purchased through a music store). Most local oboists sell reeds for around the same cost of a store-bought one, and these reeds are created for use in local weather conditions.
- Oboe reeds cost \$18-30, and more expensive reeds tend to last longer, and have more resistance (tone) and response. If carefully stored and rotated with others while playing, a reed can last a month or more.

Reed Care and Maintenance

- Before playing, dip reeds in clean water and let sit on a safe surface for 2 minutes. Do not oversoak.
- Store reeds in a case with ventilation (mint tins, or purchase a 6-reed case at Etsy, eBay, Amazon)
- Flat or wild pitch? Blowing with the lips at the thread, the reed should "crow" 2 octave Cs. If you hear the pitch B or lower (machine-made reeds especially), you should clip the thinnest possible sliver off the end the tip (with a razor blade) to raise the pitch of the crow and stabilize the pitch of the reed.
- Is the reed too hard to produce consistent sound? Oboists scrape gently on the tip (top end) of both blades. Educators might gently insert a thin guitar pick into the reed tip, and scrape using a new razor blade, brushing *toward the opening only* to thin the tip and improve initial vibration.

Reed Suppliers

Wildflower Oboe Reeds

- <https://www.wildflowerreeds.com>
- \$25 (beginner, intermediate, and professional)
- Excellent tone, stability with immediate playability
- Subscription service option
- Texas-based reed maker

ReeDesign

- <https://www.reedesign.io>
- \$25 (student and professional)
- Warm sound, stability, immediate playability
- Subscription service option
- Seattle-based reed maker

Northwest Oboe Cane

- <http://nwoboecane.com>
- \$30 (professional)
- Nice big sound, good intonation
- Spokane-based reed maker