

# Bocal Majority

W O O D W I N D S

## Oboe Reed Care

### How to make the most out of your reed:

- Do not handle the reed at the tip – only handle it from the string or the glue at the bottom. The tip is thin and could break or bend.
- Always soak your reed for about in a cup of room-temperature water before you start to play  
Soak oboe reeds for 1 minute – only soak the tip / wood of the reed (not the string or the cork part)  
Do not oversoak the reed. Soaking for a longer time could make the reed feel harder to play.



### Tips for protecting the reed:

- It's a good idea to keep your eyes on the reed as much as possible when in use. When the reed is not in your mouth, make sure that you are aware of where it is so that the tip does not get chipped or otherwise damaged. This will ensure that the reed lasts longer.
- A good reed case is a must. The plastic tubes/vials that the reeds come in are not suitable for storing reeds and will result in molding.
- Make sure reeds are flat and not angled in the reed case (the sides could get damaged). Wipe off the excess water at the end of your practice/lesson/class and blow the extra water out of the reed before storage to help avoid mold.
- Never store your reeds in the water soaker overnight.
- When it's time to put away your instrument, remove the reed first.

### Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: How long does each reed last?

A: Every reed is different. Reeds are made of an organic substance and they will eventually wear out naturally. A realistic expectation of a life span of a reed is about 4 weeks (depending on amount of time spent playing it). Damage to the reed also contributes to reeds wearing out or otherwise breaking. If the reed is physically damaged it will not last as long. A reed considered worn out or broken if it is cracked, chipped or molded.

Q: What if I don't like the reed I got?

A: You might get a reed and you might love it! 😊 Or you might not love it. ☹️ Why? All reeds from Bocal Majority are handmade by professional musicians. Each of our reeds is made in a slightly different style. Each player may develop preferences or specific needs over time. If you get a reed that you don't prefer, consider a different style or ask us for advice on what you might like instead.

Q: What do I do if, when the reed arrives, it is chipped or broken?

A: Right away (within 24 hours of receipt) email us and send pictures of the problem. Email: [jason@bocalmajority.com](mailto:jason@bocalmajority.com)

Would you like to learn more about how to do common reed adjustments?

This is a link to a video by Sally Bohls and Jennifer Auerbach on basic oboe and bassoon reed adjusting:



## Which Reed is Right For Me?

### Basic Oboe Reeds

Basic oboe reeds are made to be easy enough to make a sound by first year players. They can be considered “soft” or “medium soft.” When the player has learned the notes in the second octave of the oboe and plays in that octave routinely, they will likely be ready for and need a reed with some additional resistance in order to play in tune in the upper range.

### Intermediate Oboe Reeds

Most players hang out with our intermediate oboe reeds and stick with these for a long time or for the entire time playing. The letter stands for the initial of the maker (for example, Intermediate “S” – stands for “Sara” who makes these reeds). Here is a chart where you can see our gradations. If the reed you’re getting is too soft or hard, try a different style – it may be a better fit for you.

Recommendations:

**Intermediate S+ (plus)** – Plays in tune in the second octave, is easy to blow into, but still has an in control sound. This is our most popular reed. Tends to be in stock.

**Intermediate G** - Lovely tone, nice medium strength, and a medium tip opening. Tends to be in stock.

**Intermediate F** - If you like a larger tip opening, go for the Intermediate F reed. This reed has a warm, dark tone, but you shouldn’t need to bite or pinch reed to make the sound. Slightly smaller diameter tube cane used for a slightly more open tip. Tends to be in stock.

### Pro Oboe Reeds

Our pro oboe reeds are each made with a specific type of nuance. You don’t have to buy a pro reed to get a great reed, but you’re always welcome to try our pro reeds, which are also excellent reeds.

**Pro I (“eye”)** – A sophisticated pro reed featuring a tip with a more blended scrape, this reed is free blowing, but has a lovely tone. Small to medium tip opening.

**Pro T** – More prominent tip definition for a present, soloistic tone.

**Pro NTX** – One of the most resistant reeds in our lineup (“hard” if we used that word, which we don’t).

Basic	"Soft/Medium Soft" On a scale of 10: 1 out of 10
Intermediate S	"Medium Soft" On a scale of 10: 2 out of 10
Intermediate S plus	"Medium Soft" On a scale of 10: 3 out of 10
Intermediate A	"Medium Soft" On a scale of 10: 4 out of 10
Intermediate O	"Medium Soft" On a scale of 10: 5 out of 10
Intermediate D	"Medium Medium" On a scale of 10: 6 out of 10
Intermediate Z	"Medium Medium" On a scale of 10: 6 out of 10
Intermediate G	"Medium Medium" On a scale of 10: 7 out of 10
Intermediate B	"Medium Hard" On a scale of 10: 8 out of 10
Intermediate F	"Medium Hard" On a scale of 10: 9 out of 10
Pro I	"Medium Medium" On a scale of 10: 6 out of 10
Pro T	"Medium Hard" On a scale of 10: 8 out of 10
Pro NTX	"Hard" On a scale of 10: 9 out of 10