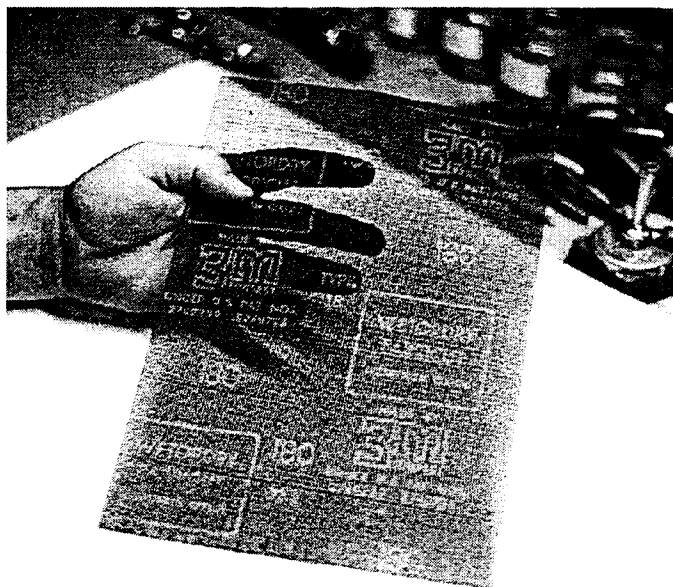


# INSTALLING A NECKPIECE CORK

by Lars Kirmser

1. **Remove all traces of the old neck cork.**
  - Carefully cut away the old cork with a single edged razor and carefully finish with #240 sandpaper.
  - Do not mar the lacquer finish below the cork line.
2. **Select a sheet of cork of the proper thickness.**
  - 1/16" (.0625") is usually the correct thickness.
  - Many manufacturers are now using the synthetic cork substitute for neck and tenon "corks". In my opinion, this material works very well, however, I would recommend that you continue to use cork on all professional instruments.
3. **Cut a strip of cork wide enough to cover the old cork marks on the neckpiece.**
  - The prescribed lengths are usually 1 1/4" for Soprano and Alto; 1 1/2" for Tenor and Baritone Sax.
  - Cut along the narrow (4") side of the cork sheet; to conserve cork.
  - It is best to allow about 1/2 to 1 inch extra wrap length (circumference) for safety.
4. **Cut a 30° bevel on the end of the cork strip.**
  - Use a single edge razor blade and sandpaper to achieve a smooth, even 30° bevel.
  - This process will eliminate a resulting bump where the cork overlaps itself.
  - To compensate for the neck's taper, you may want to adjust the shape of the strip to be slightly trapezoidal (esp on Selmer-type necks with the ring).
5. **Compress the cork strip firmly between two flat pieces of wood in a large vise.**
  - This step compresses the "pithy" cells of the cork structure together to eliminate some of its brittle tendencies.
6. **Apply an even coat of contact cement to one side of the cork strip as well as on the top of the bevel; allow the adhesive to dry completely (at least 10 minutes).**
7. **Apply an even coat of contact cement to the neckpiece and allow it to dry (at least 10 minutes).**
8. **Affix the cork strip to the back side of the neckpiece (starting with the beveled-end, with the bevel side up). Allow 2 or 3 mm's to extend beyond the end of the neck to allow for its taper. While exerting a firm pressure, wrap the cork around the neckpiece, overlapping the bevel.**



3M 'Fabricut' Material

9. **Trim the remaining cork and 'feather' the overlapped seam with a strip of (3/4" x 6") #100 sandpaper.**
  - Sand the cork to the desired taper so as to fit the particular mouthpiece that will be used on the instrument.
  - Some tech's use #180 "Fabricut" for this step. Avoid leaving deep cut lines from the Fabricut by smoothing the cork surface with #220 sandpaper.
  - The mouthpiece should fit on the newly sanded cork so that it meets resistance from the cork at the beginning of the neckpiece and be able to be adjusted throughout the tuning range of the instrument.
10. **Lubricate with cork grease.**
  - Prior to putting the final application of cork grease on, wipe the tenon completely clean with alcohol (on a soft cloth) to remove all cork dust and dirt that may have accumulated in the cork of recorking the neckpiece.
  - Do not allow the alcohol to contact the lacquer finish.

**NOTE:** The above technique may be applied to the recorking of bassoon bocals as well as oboe and English horn staples. I do not recommend the use of manufactured cork tubes (i.e. tapered sax neck tubes) or the use of shellac as an adhesive.