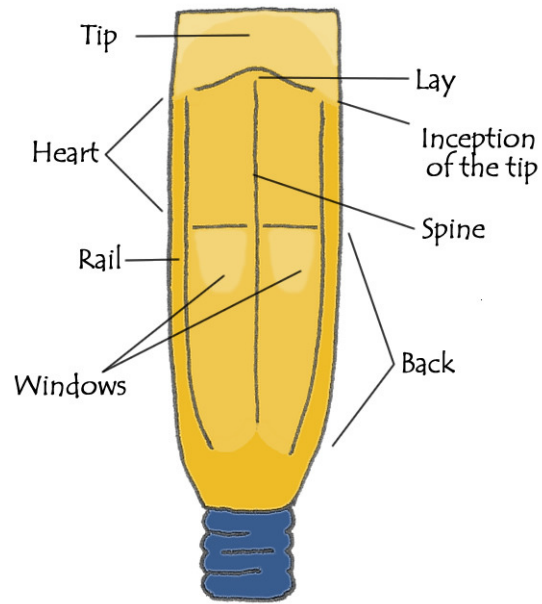


Parts of the Reed

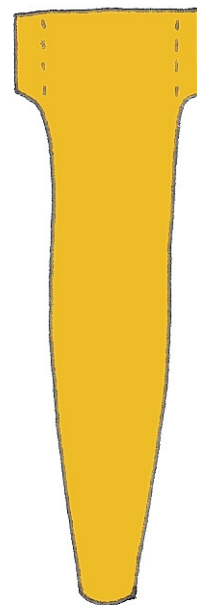


Soak cane for 30 minutes to 1 hour.

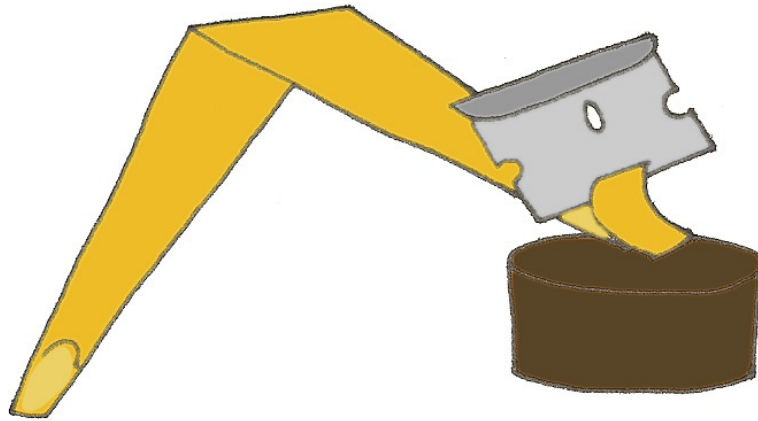
Fold in half if not folded already.

Remove the ears with your knife
(hold the cane like you are peeling an apple).

File until edges are smooth.



Taper the cane tips with a razor blade.

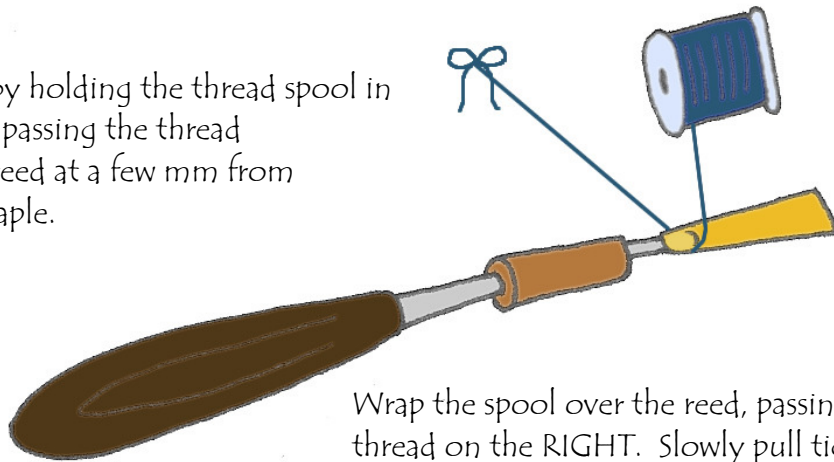


Tie the end of your thread to something sturdy. Rub beeswax on about 2 feet and wind it back onto the spool. Put the reed staple securely on the mandrel.

Fold the oboe cane in half again, slipping the top slightly to the right so the sides overlap.

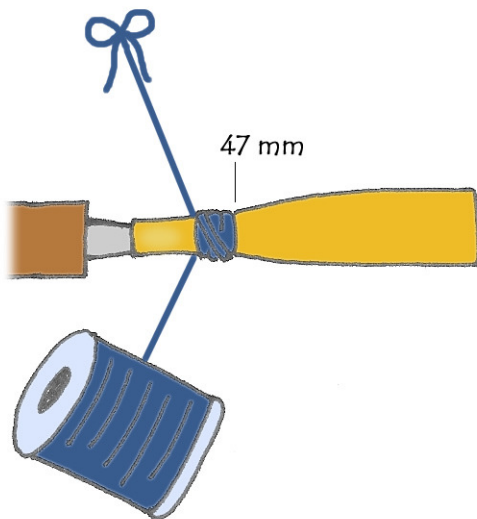
Hold the cane onto the staple so the overall reed length is 72 mm. Make sure the cane is centered and straight. The flattest part of the cane should line up with the flat side of the mandrel handle.

Begin wrapping by holding the thread spool in your right hand, passing the thread underneath the reed at a few mm from the end of the staple.

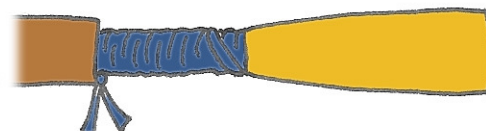


Wrap the spool over the reed, passing the tied thread on the RIGHT. Slowly pull tight, making sure reed is closing evenly on both sides. If not, loosen the thread and wiggle the reed until centered again.

Wrap a few more times to the RIGHT until you reach 47 mm (do not go over) and the reed is completely sealed on both sides. When measuring, try to hold the spool tightly with the last three fingers of your right hand and the ruler with your right thumb and index finger.



Cross the spool over your previous wraps to the LEFT, and continue wrapping LEFT until you get to the cork. Tie a knot or two at the end and clip the thread with scissors.



On a soaked blank, make long scrapes on either side of the reed, starting a few mm from the string. Avoid the center and extreme edges of the reed. This will create the spine and rails.

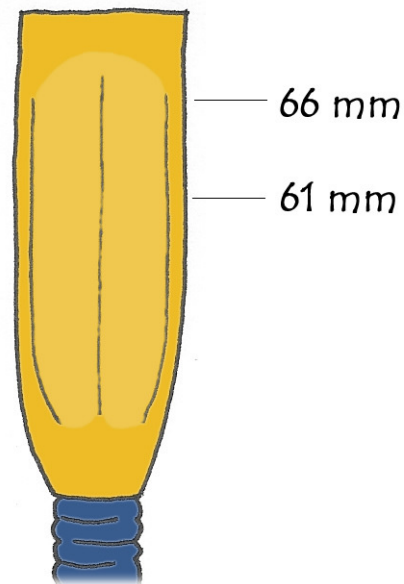
Keep scraping until you get past the pulp (the cane will turn from whitish to a darker yellow).

Sharpen your knife.



Mark both sides of the reed with a pencil at 61 mm and 66 mm, measuring from the bottom of the cork.

The space between these marks will be the "heart" of the reed.

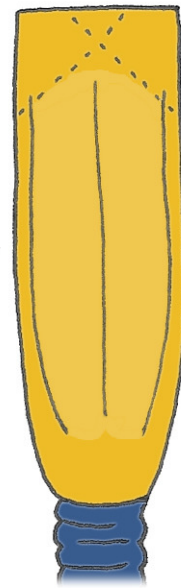


Support the back of the reed tip with your left index finger. Scrape both corners of the reed, creating a triangle with the top pencil mark and the corner of the reed.

Make sure your knife moves past the end of the reed to prevent cane build-up.

Scrape until you see an obvious change in thickness (a "drop-off") from the heart to the tip.

Sharpen your knife.

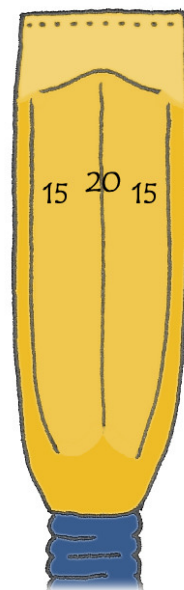


Clip the reed open using a razor blade and cutting block. Clip as little as possible, and press the blade hard until you hear a "click."

If you have access to a reed dial, the sides of the heart should measure "15," and the center of the heart should measure "20." Make sure to measure different areas within the heart.

If you do not have a dial, use a finished reed as your model, and look through the reed at a lamp to check for symmetry. In later steps, you can decide on where to scrape based on how the reed sounds.

Sharpen your knife.

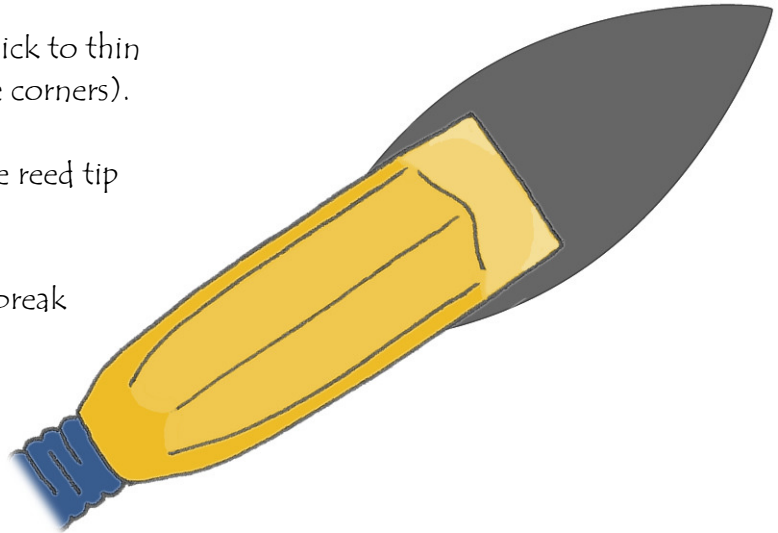


Carefully insert the plaque into the reed just far enough to expose the top pencil mark. Continue scraping the tip as before, only more delicately (think of a light brush stroke). You should hear the "click" of the knife hitting the plaque...this means you are scraping past the end of the reed.

The tip should slope slightly from thick to thin (the thinnest part being the extreme corners).

Make sure to support the back of the reed tip with your index finger.

This task may take awhile, so take a break and come back to it if you start getting antsy.



Try to make a sound.

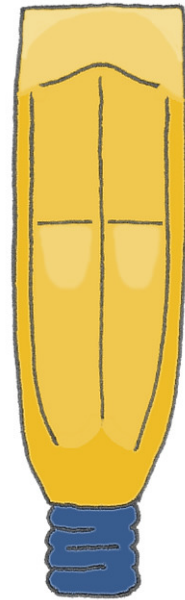
If you can't, make sure the reed is not too open (if it is, pinch it shut and try again).

Chances are the tip is still too thick. Keep scraping.

Scrape the back of the reed.

The thinnest part of the back should be immediately below the heart, and it should be slightly thinner than "15" on a reed measuring dial.

These thin sections are called "windows." Make sure you can see some light shining through them.



Crow the reed (blow with your mouth all the way up to the string). If you hear a "C," the reed should be in tune. Check intonation again on your oboe.

If the reed is flat, you can clip the reed after thinning the tip until the reed is 70 mm. Only clip small amounts at a time, and play the reed in between.

If the reed is sharp, you may scrape anywhere that needs it (usually the tip or back).