

# HARPS & HISTORICAL INSTRUMENTS

Your new Unicorn Gemshorn is made from a high quality elastomer and should last indefinitely given reasonable care. It is highly impact resistant and can be immersed and washed without harm. The most delicate part is the knife-edge, and extra care should be taken not to damage it. The instrument is tightly voiced to yield a soft, warm, and slightly buzzy sound with a firm breath pressure resistance. We feel these characteristics are distinctive and functional in consort with other medieval and early renaissance instruments.

The very thin windway channel allows for the maximum variation in breath pressure with minimum pitch change. However, the instrument will play well in tune with itself at strong, medium, and weak breath pressures to accommodate high, normal, or low tuning to other instruments. In addition, the leather tuning band may be moved slightly over the window edge to flatten the pitch.

Some players may experience difficulty with excessive condensation in the windway. This is also common with expensive recorders because of the tight voicing of better instruments. The usual solution is to apply a common detergent such as Kodak's Fotoflo or Duponol to the windway channel. The best method of clearing the windway channel of condensation is to cover all the fingerholes in the normal manner, place your mouth over the window and blow. All the condensation will come out the windway at the large end of the instrument and may be blotted with a tissue.

Acoustically, gemshorns belong to the globular flute class of instruments, and thus function differently than their cylindrical, conical, and inverted conical bore relatives. Tuning of such instruments is based primarily on fingerhole size and not location. We have achieved a fingering that is very similar to recorder fingering and yields a fully chromatic scale. To obtain the highest note, it is necessary to uncover all the holes. When this is done, the right hand little finger should shift slightly just below the bottom hole to support the instrument. (See fingering chart.)

Some newcomers to the instrument have difficulty with forming the lip embouchure around the windway opening and inadvertently block part of the windway with their lips. The resulting tone will be weak and thin and some notes may even fail to play. A little experimenting will quickly show the way to best results.

**WARRANTY:** Unicorn Gemshorns are confidently guaranteed against all defects in materials and workmanship. In addition, each instrument is guaranteed to be perfectly tuned and properly voiced. This warranty does not cover defects caused by intense heat or alteration of the knife-edge, windway, or fingerholes. If you are dissatisfied for any reason, the instrument may be returned within one year for replacement or full refund.

## FINGERING CHART

# BEN BECHTEL