

Protecting Your Instruments

We have seen an uptick in stolen instruments over the past two years, so we encourage flutists to take extra care with instruments and other valuables. In addition to taking steps to help prevent loss and facilitate action should a loss occur, flutists also can check this [listing of lost or stolen instruments](#) submitted by NFA members.

An Ounce of Prevention

The National Flute Association has a partnership with [Anderson Musical Instrument Insurance Solutions](#), through which members are eligible to purchase insurance at a discounted rate. Instrument insurance is inexpensive and provides valuable peace of mind. The NFA also recommends that flutists obtain an appraisal yearly (or at least whenever renewing policies), especially for handmade instruments, which appreciate in replacement value, to ensure that instruments are not underinsured.

Records regarding the instrument's provenance should also be maintained in a safe place. This includes pictures of the instrument with the serial number visible, purchase records with instrument specifications, and any other identifying information. Some sources recommend that engraving some type of identifying marking in intermediate models or instruments without serial numbers. When purchasing an instrument through a private sale, it is recommended that the owner request documentation to this effect: "On this date (insert date), I sold (insert equipment), serial # (insert serial number), to (buyer's name) for the amount of (insert price)."

Depending on home location, instrument values, and travel frequency, flutists might want to consider anti-theft measures in the home, office, and/or vehicle. Some people choose to have a safe or some form of home security system ranging from simple video surveillance to full security systems. With office space that is shared or to which multiple people have access, a locking cabinet to which only the owner has access might be warranted. Travelers might want to carry a nondescript bag that does not advertise its contents. Tracking apps also can sometimes successfully recover stolen instruments.

Active Steps to Deter Theft

Instruments are most frequently stolen from vehicles, so the best option is to avoid leaving them there. When this is not possible, instruments should be kept out of view, the alarm system should be used, and the vehicle should be parked in a well-lit or monitored area.

While traveling, flutists should monitor and secure luggage so that it is not inadvertently left in a taxi or on other public transportation.

After a Theft of Loss

If the worst happens and an instrument is lost or stolen, the owner should take immediately steps to recover the instruments, if possible, and to begin the process of obtaining replacements.

- File a Police Report. This will be necessary for filing an insurance claim and facilitating assistance from the police in investigation and recovery efforts.

- Contact the insurance company to begin the claims process. Insurance allows owners to obtain replacement instruments at little or no cost. Most companies offer a means to purchase instruments if it is recovered after obtaining a replacement.
- Contact all pawnshops in the area and monitor EBay, Craigslist, and any local Facebook sales boards in the area the instrument was stolen.
- Report the instrument stolen on the [NFA Instrument Notices](#) and other websites that record stolen instruments. Many reputable instrument dealers monitor these sites to help them detect stolen instruments. These include:
 - <http://www.larrykrantz.com/stolen.htm>
 - [https://www.fluteworld.com/Stolen Flutes.html](https://www.fluteworld.com/Stolen_Flutes.html)
 - <http://www.flutenet.com/stolen.htm>

—Ashley Shank, Instrument Notices Coordinator