

Instructions - How to Use to make reeds perform with little or no "stiffness" ...

1. Make sure your reed is relatively dry, the Reed File is not stainless and may rust over time if used when reed is wet.
2. Place Reed File on flat steady surface (eg., table-top).
3. Place reed on Reed File with table (bottom) of reed touching the Reed File. Make sure the direction of the curvature of the tip of the reed matches the curves in the blades of the Reed File (see photo), otherwise you could ruin the tip of the reed by jamming it against the angled blades of the Reed File.
4. Secure Reed File from movement with one hand while placing two or three fingertips lightly on the rounded, unfinished "butt"-end of the reed. Then stroke the reed up and down the Reed File, lightly for three or four strokes, or until you feel less resistance from the reed on the Reed File. Less resistance, means the table/bottom of the reed has become more flat from the "planing-action" of the angled blades of the Reed File.
5. Lift the reed off the Reed File, brush off any shaving-dust with your fingers or a kleenex or cloth. Then wet reed with saliva and try playing the reed on your mouthpiece.
6. If reed still gives a "stuffy" sound, you can repeat the process from step 1 above.

The best way to test if your reed table/bottom is perfectly flat: "Seal the reed to the mouthpiece" by following these steps:

1. Place your reed on your mouthpiece (without the ligature), perfectly aligned so the rails are even,
2. Place your thumb on the reed to hold it in place, and wrap your fingers around the mouthpiece,
3. Place the "butt"-end of the mouthpiece on the palm of your free hand, and suck all the air out of the mouthpiece from the playing-end of the mouthpiece and reed, while licking the reed with your tongue to form a "saliva-seal".
4. Slowly draw your mouth away from the mouthpiece and reed while still sucking air out to form a vacuum inside the mouthpiece with the reed sealing to the mouthpiece with your saliva.
5. If the reed table/bottom is perfectly flat (and assuming the table of your mouthpiece is machined to be perfectly flat, and the rails of the mouthpiece are perfectly even), then the reed should form a seal that lasts for three to five seconds or even more. This will tell you the reed table/bottom is very flat, and should not require any more planing from the Reed File. It should play with little or no stiffness.
6. If the reed "pops" away from the vacuum in the mouthpiece almost immediately, the reed table/bottom might still not be flat, and might require more planing on the Reed File. Repeat the steps from 1, above, at the top of the page.
7. If, after many tries of sealing the reed, and planing the reed on the Reed File, you still do not have a sealing reed, then your mouthpiece might need to be re-surfaced by a professional. Occasionally, some people take longer to get the hang of "sealing" the reed on the mouthpiece.