More Life From Reeds

 To greatly improve the life of reeds alternate them. Use a reed guard (not the plastic cases that are shipped with the reeds from the manufacturer) that holds at least 4 reeds. I prefer the reed guard from Vandoren that holds 6 reeds in a small humidifier. Play a different reed every day. ALWAYS have at least 4 reeds that play *well.* If the pitch in the upper register of the instrument is flat, the reed is probably too old and/or too soft (reeds get softer as they are played). This of course doesn’t guarantee a good sound or pitch, but an old, over-played reed does guarantee a poor sound and poor intonation.