

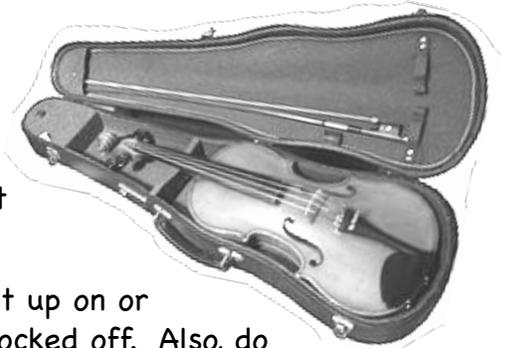
A Beginner's Guide to Orchestra

Violin and Viola



How To Care For Your Instrument

1. Always keep your instrument stored in its case and out of the way when you are not practicing with it, so younger children and pets can't damage it.
2. Pick up your instrument by the neck or the body. Never hold it by the pegs or the bridge, which could cause it to go out of tune or break.
3. Hold your instrument in rest position when you aren't playing to avoid dropping or bumping it. Be sure not to put pressure on the bridge while in rest position.
4. Never hang your instrument from a music stand or stand it up on or against a chair. It is too easy for it to be bumped and knocked off. Also, do not leave your instrument on the floor where someone can easily step on it or trip over it.
5. You should not turn the pegs until you are taught how, because you will risk putting your violin out of tune or breaking a string. (Strings can be replaced, though, if this happens!)
6. Extreme temperatures are harmful to string instruments! **NEVER, NEVER EVER** leave it in the car or outside for any length of time. The heat can permanently damage your instrument and cause it to go out of tune.
7. After each use, gently wipe your instrument with a soft dry cloth to prevent rosin dust from building up on your strings or varnish.



How To Care For Your Bow

1. **NEVER** touch the hair! If you do, the oils on your skin will cause the hair to become dirty and stop making sound.



2. Your bow is very easy to break. **NEVER** point with it, drop it, tap it, poke anything or anyone with it, swing it, or sword fight with it.

3. Your bow needs to be tightened before you play it (turn the screw "righty-tighty"). The middle of the bow should be about the width of the tip of your pinky finger between the stick and the hair. Make sure the stick still curves in toward the hair in the middle. If the stick becomes straight, or worse, bends outward (like a bow and arrow), you have tightened it too far!

4. Rosin is needed to make the bow hair sticky so it can make the violin strings vibrate. Apply rosin from frog to tip (approximately 6 swipes) for every 2-3 hours you have practiced.
5. Always loosen your bow (turn the screw "lefty-loosey") when you are finished playing so the hair doesn't stretch out and the stick doesn't warp. (If the hairs start to separate, you've loosened it a little too far.)

How to Practice

Learning to play the violin or viola is not something you can do in just two classes each week. You will need to practice regularly at home, too! It takes time and repetition to train your mind and muscles to play a musical instrument. Here are some tips to help you make the most of your home practice time.



1. When: Pick a time of day when you are most likely to be energized and able to focus. If you are unable to concentrate during your practice time, you are likely to make and reinforce mistakes. Be consistent and practice at the same time 5 or 6 days a week.

2. Where: Find a quiet room where you won't be disturbed. Turn off distractions like the TV or your iPod.

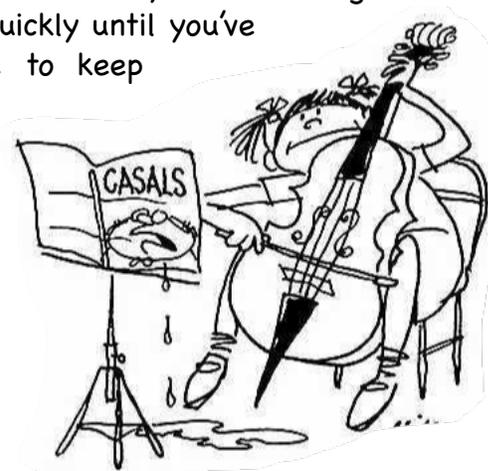
3. How Long: How you practice and how much you accomplish is more important than how much time you spend practicing. That said, assuming you are concentrating and practicing carefully, you should aim to practice at least 15 minutes per day.

4. Posture: How you hold your instrument and how you stand (or sit) while playing is the most important element of practicing. Proper posture will help you to play more easily and accurately, produce a better tone, and prevent playing-related injury. (Spend at least half of your practice time standing, preferably more.)

4. Focus on small chunks at a time. Carefully repeat a single technique, note, or measure several times before moving on to the next. Don't try to do too much at a time - only as much as you are able to completely focus on!

5. Tempo: Practice SLOWLY! Take your time and make sure you are doing everything the right way. Don't try to play anything quickly until you've mastered it at a slower tempo. Set a metronome to keep yourself steady!

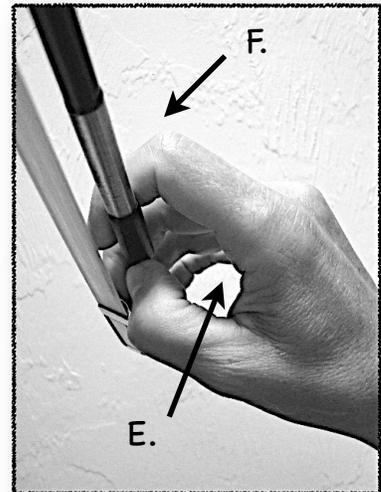
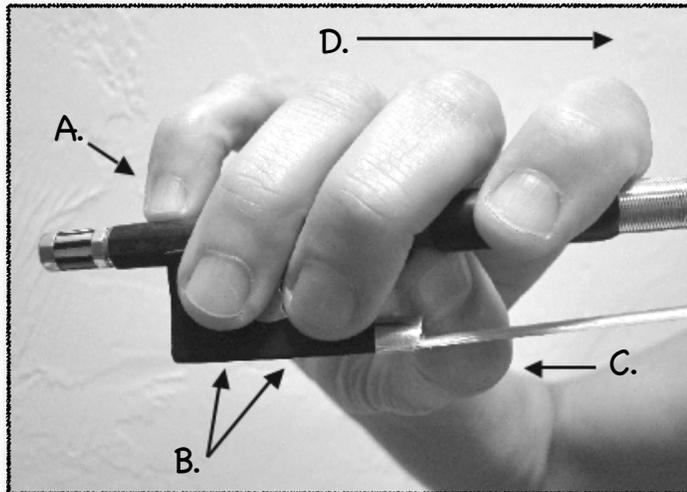
** If you don't have your own metronome, don't worry, there's one on the FYO website: <http://flagleryouthorchestra.org/your-metronome> or a simpler version at <http://a.bestmetronome.com/>. There are also several free metronomes apps out there for smartphone or iPod.



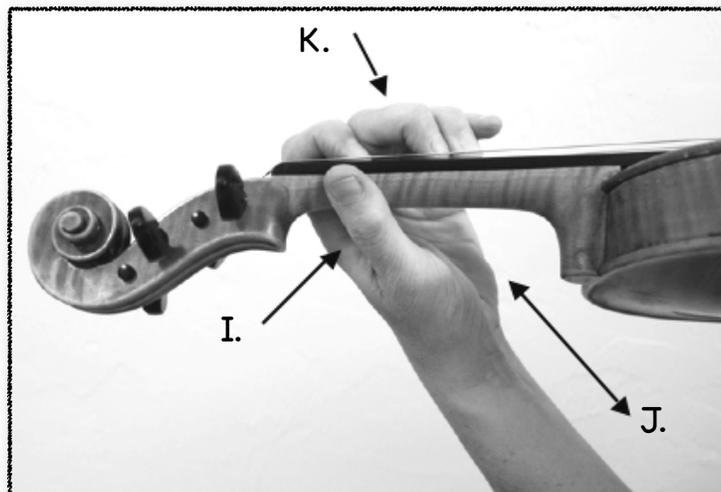
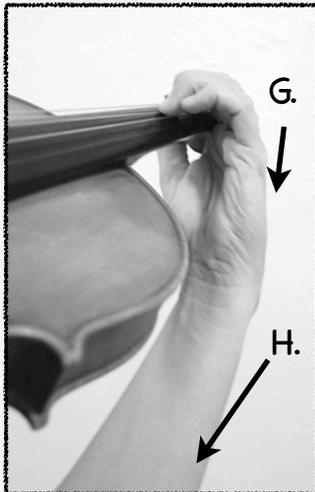
Guide to Good Posture

Violin and Viola

BOW HOLD



- A. Pinky is curved with tip of finger resting on the stick over the end of the frog.
- B. Ring and middle fingers (“huggers”) wrap over the frog at the first knuckle.
- C. Thumb is curved and the tip contacts the stick behind the middle finger at the bump of the frog (not in frog’s mouth!). It should not stick through to other side of bow.
- D. Knuckles are angled slightly toward the tip of the bow.
- E. Hand is relaxed and there is space between thumb and palm
- F. Index finger rests first knuckle on grip/stick. There is a small space between index and middle finger.

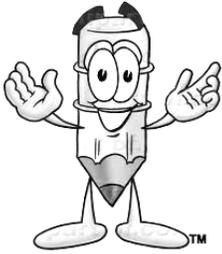


LEFT HAND

- G. Left hand and arm are aligned on right side of neck.
- H. Left arm is pulled under instrument towards right side.
- I. Relaxed hand and thumb. Do not pinch, squeeze or grab neck with thumb or first finger knuckle.
- J. Wrist and palm are a straight line without kinks. No pancake or hyper-extending wrists.
- K. Finger knuckles are fully curved into a box shape to create “table top” fingers. Strings are pressed down with the thumb-side of the tips so fingernails aim toward your face.

A Good Orchestra Student Always...

1. Arrives to class a few minutes early, ready to go!
2. Takes care of possible distractions like thirst, hunger, and bathroom breaks before getting to class.
3. Remembers to bring their instrument, bow, shoulder rest, and music to class!
4. Keeps their music organized in a folder, so it doesn't get mangled and can be found quickly during class.
5. Brings a pencil to class, so they can take notes and mark their music.
6. PRACTICES their music REGULARLY at home!
7. Pays close attention to the teacher, so they know what and how to practice at home.



For A Concert, You Should...

1. Arrive on time or early, never late!
2. Be sure to bring your instrument, shoulder rest, rosin, and music.
3. Dress appropriately:
 - Girls: Black or white blouse (dressy and modest) AND a long black skirt (below the knees) or black pants; OR a modest long black dress (also below the knees).
 - Boys: White collared shirt, black dress pants, black dress shoes (no athletic shoes, sandals, etc.) and black socks.
4. Show respect performers and audience and they will hopefully do the same for you!
 - Quietly stay seated and pay attention while performers are on stage. (Moving around and talking can distract performers from their playing and prevent fellow audience members from seeing and hearing the performance.)
 - Show your appreciation for performances by clapping when they end, but please save screaming and cheering for sporting events, not orchestra concerts. As musicians we don't want to hurt our ears and voices!

