

VIOLIN

INTRODUCTORY / BEGINNER COURSE

The Courses for those who are new to Violin, or who are in the beginning stages of learning Violin. It introduces the student to the beginning essentials as well as building a foundation upon which learning violin will be made easier. special attention to ear training, and other techniques that enable the student to play styles other than just classical music are also discussed.

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ABOUT THE VIOLIN

Violins are used in a wide variety of musical genres. They are most prominent in the classical tradition, both in ensembles (from chamber music to orchestras) and as solo instruments, however they are also important in many varieties of folk music,

including country music, bluegrass music, and in jazz. Electric violins with solid bodies and piezoelectric pickups are used in some forms of rock music and jazz fusion, with the pickups plugged into instrument amplifiers, speakers, and even effects processors like electric guitarists use to produce sound. The violin has come to be incorporated in many non-Western music cultures. The name fiddle is often used for violin. There is no actual difference between a violin and a fiddle, except that sometimes some people call it a fiddle when it is played in certain types of music like country or bluegrass or square dance music for example. Fiddle therefore is really just a slang term for violins. Many fundamentalists like to keep the violin strictly to classical music and classical teaching techniques, However the violin is ever expanding, and very talented violin players exist in all genres of music at this point in time.



Using a tape measure or yardstick, measure the distance between the middle of the left-hand palm and the player's neck. Ensure that hand is fully extended and the arm is perpendicular to the body.

For players in between sizes, select the smaller size.

GRADE	AGE	ARM LENGTH	SIZE	NOTES ON TRANSITIONAL SIZES
K	5-6	min. of 16"	*1/8	
1	6-7	min. of 18"	1/4	* If child is tall as an average 1st grader with arms longer than 18", choose 1/4 size.
2	7-8	min. of 18"	*1/4	
3	8-9	min. of 20"	1/2	* If child is tall as an average 3rd grader with arms longer than 20", choose 1/2 size.
4	9-10	min. of 20"	*1/2	
5	10-11	min. of 22"	3/4	* If child is tall as an average 5th grader with arms longer than 22", choose 3/4 size.
6	11-12	min. of 22"	*3/4	
7-Adult	12 +	min. of 23"+	4/4	* If child is tall as an average 7th grader with arms longer than 23", choose 4/4.

Violinists and collectors particularly prize the fine historical instruments made by the Stradivari, Guarneri, Guadagnini and Amati families from the 16th to the 18th century in Brescia and Cremona (Italy) and by Jacob Stainer in Austria. According to their reputation, the quality of their sound has defied attempts to explain or equal it, though this belief is disputed. Great numbers of instruments have come from the hands of less famous makers, as well as still greater numbers of mass-produced commercial "trade violins" coming from cottage industries in places such as Saxony, Bohemia, and Mirecourt. Many of these trade instruments were formerly sold by Sears, Roebuck and Co. and other mass merchandisers.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paul Porceddu uses the renowned Suzuki classical violin teaching method which has shown to produce the best results when it comes to precision and accuracy . He further expand on the Suzuki method with his own style of teaching which incorporates ear training and specialized training and other genres of music, including playing an electric violin through effects and amplification.

ABOUT THIS COURSE

This violin course was designed to allow the student to acquire proper classical violin technique, while simultaneously acquiring the knowledge in various aspects of violin proficiency that would otherwise not be available to strict classical violin instruction types of courses. Classical violin technique will be the foundation of your violin journey through this course, however other styles of music, various techniques and styles will be discussed briefly, since I have developed specialized courses for styles other than Classical Violin. This course is also intended to provide a strong enough basis in general musical theory so as to allow the violinist to thoroughly understand and sight read music, but also is designed to benefit those interested in improvisational and creative expression. The written material in this course is designed to compliment the videos so as to offer further reinforcement of the topics covered as well as a quick reference source for information. The written information may have additional information that is not covered in the free videos that is best used with my private or group lesson settings, as well as lots of other useful and interesting information. In the basic course all objectives build on one another while introducing other objectives at a comfortable pace. Practice exercises, songs, and exams that are to be taken and self-assessed at the end of each objective aid in making this course highly effective. Private, Semi-Private, and Other course options are available by visiting unusualviolin.com

PICKING OUT A VIOLIN

Violins are an item with great real value typically, meaning that as long as you seek out a good deal when purchasing which is easy when you know what to look for, you will most likely be able to get close to what you buy the violin for when selling it, and sometimes even get more or quite a bit more than you paid. A beginner is going to be having difficulty getting a great tone out of the violin at first until they get better at some of these beginning objectives and therefore it is recommended to not just get the cheapest violin that you can, thinking then if it doesn't turn out that violin is for you that you didn't waste too much money. This mindset is not good for 2 reasons. Number 1, these violins won't have a good resale value and although you may not have spent much, it still may be a pretty worthless violin. The other reason is because you want a violin that at least sounds decent when played properly, otherwise where is the reward for your efforts. Many beginners quit for this reason. The following are things to ask or find out when buying your first violin:

Sizing - Adults over 5' tall will most likely all use a full size violin, sometimes referred to as a 4/4 sized violin. Smaller violins are necessary for adults that have shorter arm lengths and most children. If you are purchasing a violin and need to know what size to buy, you can use the chart on the previous page to see what size is needed. Stand with your left arm stretched out in front of you and even with the floor. Then measure the distance from the neck to the middle of your palm facing up.

Accessories - Items that should be purchased along with the violin are as follows and will be discussed later in this introductory section : 2 tuners, one that is a clip on tuner that recognizes the notes played and displays them and how close the note is to being in tune on a small screen. The other tuner that you will need as a beginner is a violin tuner that you blow into so that you can hear the notes corresponding to the violin strings. This way you can train your ear to recognize the notes and tune your violin by ear and develop your note precision better. You will also need some Rosin which is applied to the bow, which is needed to produce sound from the bow. I also recommend getting a shoulder rest that is adjustable for both height and angle, and fitted to the correct size of your violin. Also a violin case, a spare set of strings, and a cleaning cloth.



Clip on Tuner



Violin Strings.



Violin Case.



Violin Tuner/Pitch;ipe



Cleaning Cloths



Rosin



Shoulder Rest

VIOLIN QUALITY

As I mentioned earlier, you should start with a decent quality violin so that it will sound half way decent when played correctly. It doesn't serve you to try to cut costs on the violin. That being said, you should be able to find one that is decent for around \$400-\$500. If you are set on trying to get a cheap one to start, there are a few that are available on Amazon that are ok at around \$100 to \$150, but you will want to sell it to get better sound most likely before a year is up. /things to consider when getting a decent violin.....get one made from real wood and not particle board. Good violin woods are spruce, and maple. Don't get mass produced violins, instead opt for hand made varieties. If you are unsure, ask. Generally speaking violins that have a 2 piece back are better than 1 piece backs. You can identify this by looking to see if there is a seam down the back side of the violin body. The Fingerboard should be made out of ebony which is black, and not merely wood that is painted black, because that will fade and wear off and look bad. As a beginner, you will struggle at first possibly with the violin sounding shrill or screechy sounding until your technique improves, so to keep this to a minimum, you should get a violin with a slightly darker/deeper tone and not one that sounds very high pitch when played. Ask the person selling it to play a few so you can pick the one with the darker/deeper tone. Also, although not absolutely necessary, you should get fine tuners installed on the tailpiece or get a tailpiece that has all four tuners built into the tailpiece. This will make tuning the violin quicker and easier, and makes the violin require less maintenance. Violin's range in price from a low of about \$49 to a high of \$16 million. The biggest differences in sound occur on the low end of the price spectrum. Once you surpass around the \$10,000 point it's pretty much indistinguishable with the human ear to hear any quality improvements. At that point you start paying for the rarity and the popularity of the type of violin. I personally noticed very little difference from a \$2000 Violin to a \$10,000 Violin as well. I have found Violin's that I would be perfectly happy playing that cost in the \$650 range, and I have been playing my entire life, so don't get overwhelmed by the cost of these things, since they can be bought fairly reasonably.

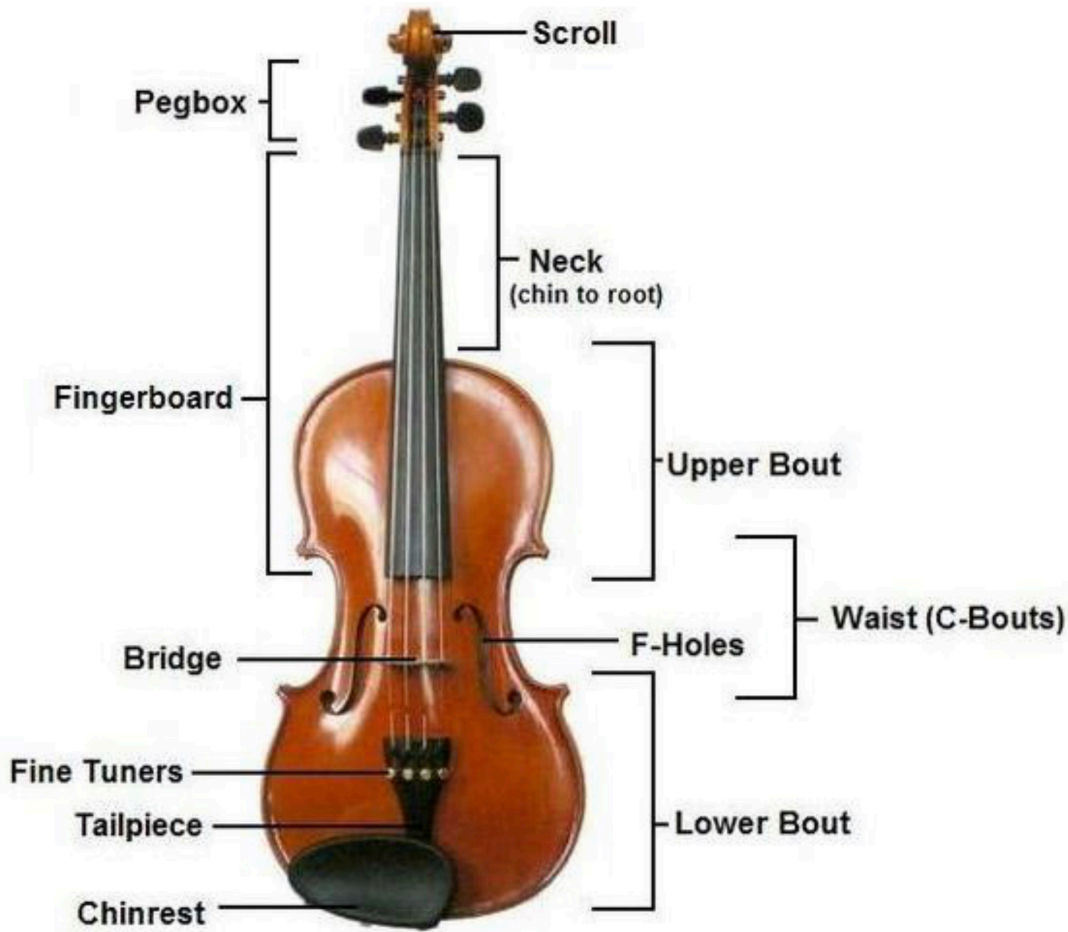
PICKING OUT YOUR BOW

For a beginner, picking out a bow is not as important as the violin, since there is only a couple criteria. Cheaper violins often will come with a bow and as long as the hair on the bow is made from real horsehair you can't go wrong. There are some bows with synthetic hair and those sound horrible, so avoid those at all cost. Ask if you are unsure when purchasing. There are different colors of horse hair and this is generally a personal preference on the type of sound that you want, but probably way more than 99% of all violin bows just use white horse hair. Black horse hair is available for bows and offers a harsher sound and more volume. Not the best for classical music, but may be considered for a violin in a rock band for example. Finally you can get what is called salt and pepper hair on the bow which is a mix of white and black hair attempting to create the best of both worlds with the tone, but honestly I can't see any benefit of that type since it just offers less of each type of sound quality. Also, make sure the bow is the right size for the violin, since smaller violins also should use smaller bows. Lastly, make sure that all the hair is on the bow and that it has not lost a lot of hair, and that the bow is straight and not bent where it's not supposed to be. Again, if unsure ask.

THE STRINGS

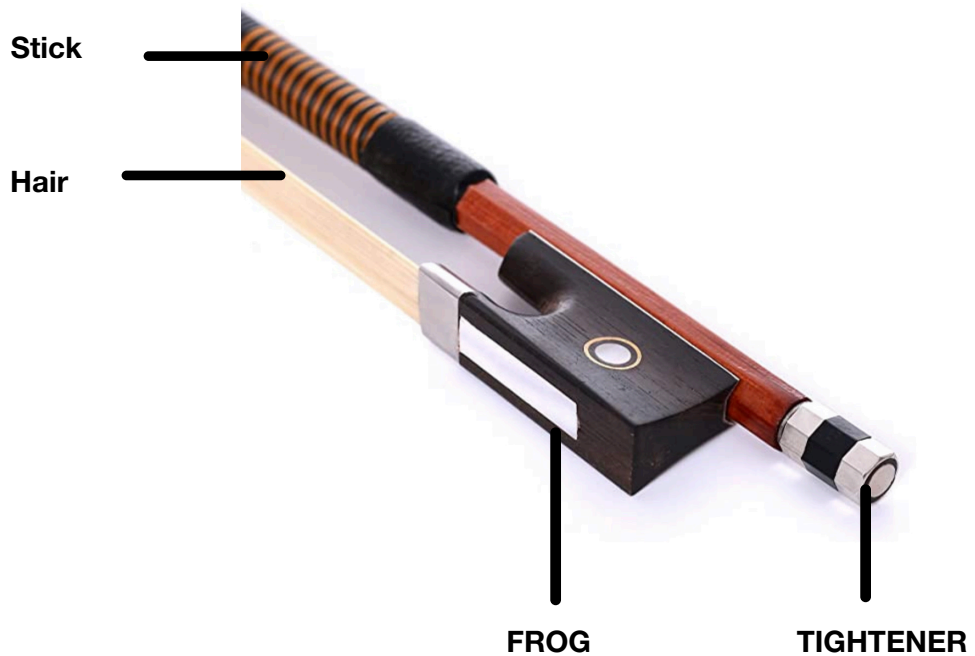
The standard violin whether it is an acoustic or an electric violin has 4 strings, and the names of the strings from the right to the left or from the highest sounding/pitch to the lowest pitch string is as follows : E A D G. it may be useful to create an acronym to help you memorize these strings names at first by taking each letter and making it into a word in a funny phrase like Eat (E) At (A) Dads (D) Garage (G). These are called musical notes and will be discussed in great detail throughout this course. There are violins with more strings.....I have even seen violins with 8 strings. I personally own 4, 5, 6, and 7 string violins. The violins with more strings are not used in Classical music when reading music since music reading is based on the standard violin, but rather are used for improvisational, or more creative use of the violin, and increase the range of notes that the violin can play. All violins typically have the EAD and G strings, but then to add greater range they can have deeper sounding notes like those of a viola, cello, and even bass. The strings from high to low for all violins are as follows depending on how many strings you have : E A D G C F Bb and Eb for an 8 string violin for example. I recommend having a spare set of strings on you at all times, since occasionally strings break, particularly when they are old. Strings should be changed regularly to have the best sound quality based on how much you play the violin. Infrequent users may get away with changing their strings every year or 2 to frequent players wanting to change their strings every 3 months or so. There are many different types of strings from low quality to high quality with different tone qualities and prices, but as a beginner, you probably can get by with just getting cheap strings or the ones that come on the violin will do as long as they are not old. If a string ever starts unraveling or gets frayed, then it definitely needs replaced.

PARTS OF THE VIOLIN & BOW



GETTING FAMILIAR WITH THE BASIC PARTS OF THE VIOLIN & BOW

Here is a list and description of the parts of the violin that you will need to become familiar with at first, followed by the illustration showing those parts and other less important parts to know.



THE VIOLIN

Fingerboard - This is the part of the violin directly under the majority of the strings. It is where your fingers press on the strings to make different notes. It is usually black in color and made of ebony, or at least should be if the violin is of good quality.

Bridge - This is the wooden piece that the strings rest on top of after the strings clear the fingerboard and before the next piece that the strings attach to

Tailpiece - This is where one end of the strings attach. the part that is closer to you.

Chin Rest - This is where your chin will rest and is located on the left side of the base or rounded part of the violin to the left of the tailpiece (On right handed violins) Most Violins have this, and it is recommended that yours have it installed if there is not one present.

Shoulder Rest - This is a separate piece that does not stay installed on a violin, except on certain electric and specialty violins but can be added on before playing to make it easier to hold and play the violin. There are different thoughts on whether a beginner should use one or not, but I recommend using one in certain instances that will be discussed in this course. To begin with however I simply recommend purchasing one to have on hand that is adjustable both in height as well as angle. It should also be the correct size as they do make smaller violins for those that are either younger violin players or those under around 5' tall.

Tuners - There are different types of tuners on violins but for the purpose of this course we will be focused on the two main types that can exist on acoustic violins. For more detailed information on tuning your violin, please see the section on tuning. The two main types of tuners for acoustic violins are the major and the fine tuners

Major Tuners - These are the black key shaped pegs that are located at the end of the violin. These are used when putting on new strings or for when the violin is pretty far out of tune, at least a different note than desired for that string as opposed to a note that is the right note but just a little out of tune.

Fine Tuners - These tuners may or may not be present on your violin when purchased, or sometimes you may only have 1 of these tuners instead of all 4 and typically just on the E string. These can be purchased very cheaply and installed either individually or an entire tailpiece that contains all 4 Fine Tuners may be built into the tailpiece. If these types of tuners are desired, then I recommend the tailpiece that comes with all 4 built in as opposed to getting the 4 tuners separately then installing them to the tailpiece, since those types can tend to rattle and also they don't look very good on the violin. These are located on the tailpiece which is behind the bridge and are used for making fine adjustments to a note that is tuned to the correct note but not perfectly in tune. Although you can make fine adjustments with the major tuners it is considerably harder to do so, typically takes more time to tune with just the major tuners and the major tuners on your violin need to remain in constant maintenance by a luthier (a person who works on violins and other stringed instruments) in order to keep them from sticking and making them hard to make fine tuning accurate enough.

THE BOW

The Stick - Self explanatory.

The Hair - Also self explanatory.

The Frog - This is a weird name, but it's what the part of the bow where you hold it is called.

The Screw - The metal tip at the end of the bow next to the frog, used to add or remove tension from the bow hair, described later in this lesson.

PREPARING TO PLAY THE VIOLIN

In this section you will learn how to properly hold the violin and the bow as well as how to tune the violin and get the violin ready for playing as well as getting the bow ready for playing, how to care for the Violin and maintenance of the Violin and strings and the bow, how to put your violin and bow away and store it properly when not in use and other useful pieces of information.

PREPARING & CARE FOR THE VIOLIN

When you first get your violin out of the case, inspect it to see that the strings are all intact and in place. If there is excessive rosin on the strings, you may choose to wipe some off with a cloth or not.....it shouldn't matter unless it's real bad. The next thing that you must do is tune your violin, and there is a lot more to this than meets the eye, because in learning to tune your violin, you are also training your ear to hear smaller and smaller differences when notes are in or out of tune that will help you not just with tuning your instrument but in playing more in tune in general. Sure, you can skip this step and just use one of those clip on tuners only but then you won't benefit from this entire training topic. I recommend having both of these types of tuners: a clip on tuner with a screen showing you what note you are playing and how close to in tune it is and in what direction, as well as a pitchpipe type tuner that you blow into that produces the violins open string notes which are GDAE.

MAJOR TUNERS

These are the tuners that are located in the peg box (see diagram). They are black and look somewhat like keys. They are pushed into the pegbox and stay in place with friction from pushing them into the peg box hard enough for them to hold. They are harder to use than the fine tuners and for this reason, I recommend using them only if the string isn't anywhere near in tune. In order to use them, you need to hold the violin firmly and while pushing in with the peg turn them very small amounts at a time and recheck the note, because you can easily over turn these and break the string if you create too much tension by going too far past the note. These major tuners/pegs make a pretty big change in the note pitch with just a little amount of turning, and remember to keep pushing the peg in at the same time while turning so they stick and this also helps prevent turning them too much at a time.

FINE TUNERS

These are the tuners that are located on the tailpiece (see diagram). I recommend using these if the note is close to being in tune, but just a little off. They don't make nearly as much difference in the note as the major tuners located in the peg box. Also if you are tightening them to make the note go to the next note, you may reach the end of how far it will turn. When this happens, you should loosen it to at least half way by turning it counterclockwise, then using the main/peg box tuners to get the note as close as possible before fine tuning it with these tuners. If your violin doesn't have fine tuners installed on all strings, you are definitely going to want to get them added as soon as possible otherwise tuning will be very hard for you as a beginner. They can be bought separately then added to the tailpiece or better yet, a tailpiece can come with them built into the tailpiece. These types look better as well as function better.

OTHER TUNER TYPES

Electric violins may have geared tuners, or other types, which don't need any special mention as they are easy and self explanatory to operate. A special type of tuner does exist for wooden violins that replaces the major/peg box tuners with **Hybrid Major/Fine Tuners** - These are what I have on one of my violins, and I highly recommend them. They are installed in place of the Major tuners and have gearing inside of them so that the peg doesn't have to be serviced in order to make fine tuning as well as major tuning easy since the pegs don't need to work by friction.

TUNING & EAR TRAINING EXERCISE

This exercise will help your ear get used to certain notes and get better at tuning the violin as well as recognizing out of tune notes when playing violin. Clip on the clip on tuner to the violin at the scroll in a way so that the screen of the tuner is facing you and turn it on. Then blow into the pitch pipe tuner on the A note. Look at the peg box and locate which peg the A string is wound around. See the diagram if you don't remember which one is the A string. It is the second one from the right. As you hear the A note on the pitchpipe tuner pull the A string with your finger then release it. Compare that to how the tuner sounds and ask yourself, does the string sound lower or higher pitched than the A blown through the pitchpipe ? Then use the major tuners if it sounds way off, or the minor tuners if it sounds close to in tune. If the strings sounds too low, then turn either the major or minor tuners clockwise depending on how far out of tune it sounds to you. Then check the screen on the clip on tuner after you do this to see how close you got by ear. Then from there use the clip on tuner along with the major and minor violin tuners as needed until the screen on the tuner shows the correct note "A" and the line is in the middle of the tuner showing that the note is in perfect tune. If by chance your ear still seems to think that the string is still very slightly out of tune, then congratulations....your ear may be better than the technology in the clip on tuner. In which case use the fine tuners until you feel a perfect match. This is unlikely however unless you have played another instrument for many years, so just get it so the note is registering perfectly in the middle on the clip on tuner. Then next tune the E string, then the D and G strings by repeating the procedure above by trying to get as close as possible by ear first using the pitchpipe tuner first. After tuning all the strings, depending on how long it took you to do so, they may have gone somewhat out of tune during that time, which can be frustrating. This happens because when there is uneven tension on all the strings it can cause the others to go out of tune. After you can tune your violin faster, this happens less than less until you can tune your violin so fast that it doesn't happen at all. The goal is to be able to tune your violin in less than a minute if it is relatively close to being in tune. I can tune it usually within less than 10 seconds personally. so for now, you will need to recheck and retune all the strings over and over until they all show that they are staying in tune. Each time you do this, there will be less and less tuning that you will have to do though. If your violin won't hold a tuning however, it may need to be serviced. This is rare though, unless either it got damaged or it is a low quality violin.

PREPARING & CARE FOR THE BOW

As you get the bow out of the case, you should never touch the bows hair because the oils that your skin has in it will make the bow hair not hold the rosin that needs to be put on it to make sound come from the bow. So touching the bow hair in the same place over time will ruin the bow hair in that area making no more sound or bad sound coming from that area. Luckily, you can get your bows re-haired cheaper than buying a new bow.

ADJUSTING THE BOW HAIR TENSION

When playing the violin the bow hair needs to have tension on it, while storing the violin bow after playing, the bow hair should have very little or no tension on it to protect its lifespan. So as you take your bow out of the case to use it, locate the round metal piece at the end of the bow near the frog. Turn it clockwise and watch as the bow hair gets tighter on the bow. Without touching the bow hair, notice the hair pull away from the stick part of the bow until the distance from the hair at the center of the stick to the stick is around 1/2 inch or so. The stick part of the bow should not be straight or close to straight. If so, you have over tightened the bow, since it needs some bend in it with the hair having enough tension on it.

When putting the bow back in the case, loosen the tension screw by turning it counterclockwise until the bow hair has very little tension and the bow hair begins to slightly touch the stick part of the bow. Don't over loosen, just so the hair doesn't get tangled on things, but it is better to over loosen then to not loosen enough. This helps make the bow hair and bow last longer, saving you problems in the future. When putting the bow back in the case also make sure that the bow clip or fastening device is fastened correctly, so that the bow doesn't fall on the violin and damage it while carrying it in its case.

CLEANING & BOW MAINTENANCE

There is not really much of a need to clean the bow. Some rosin may get on the stick but it doesn't affect the sound or the function of the bow. If you do decide to wipe the rosin off of the stick which makes it look better, then you need to be very careful to not accidentally touch the hair on the bow like I mentioned earlier. You can use a damp cloth followed by a dry cloth on the stick. The other thing to notice is that sometimes 1 or more of the bow hairs may break off at one end and just be hanging from your bow. This happens pretty often, and you need to just pull it off carefully or clip it if you want as close to where it is attached as possible. It is perfectly fine to keep using your bow after losing some hair, but if it gets to where a large amount of it is missing the bow should then be re-haired. A bow should last before needing re-hairing about 5 years but I guess that depends on your playing style and bow care by loosening it before putting it up.

As far as cleaning the Violin, be careful what you use since you don't want the wood to absorb any water and you don't want to remove any varnish that is on the Violin. It is advisable to use a cloth to wipe off the rosin and every time you put it away, if you use a mildly damp cloth and then wipe it off immediately that's OK. As far as deep cleaning, it is advisable to ask a Luthier or a Violin store for a product to use so that you don't damage the quality of your violin.

ROSIN FOR THE BOW

Rosin is what you rub on your bow hair to create sound from the instrument. The bow hair does not have the ability by itself to grab the string enough to produce good sound without having enough rosin on the bow. Rosin is usually available in a small rectangular, square or round shaped hard block. There are many types of rosin, but for a beginner you probably won't go wrong getting any of them, because there are very few subtle differences between them and the quality of sound that they produce. I personally like to get the one that comes in a hard case where I can hold the case while I apply the rosin so I don't get the rosin much on my fingers and I'm able to have a good grip on the rosin as I apply it to the bow. If you put too much rosin on the bow, the worst thing that will happen is that the excess rosin will come off on the violin. This won't harm the violin, as long as you don't leave it on for a very long time like months, and it can be cleaned off which will be explained in the violin maintenance section. However, if the bow doesn't have enough rosin on it, then the sound quality won't be good. As a beginner, it is hard sometimes to tell whether you are doing something wrong to make the violin sound bad, or it may be that the bow just doesn't have enough rosin on it. For this reason it is very important to make sure that there is enough rosin on the bow.

APPLYING ROSIN TO THE BOW

If this is a new cake of rosin (slang) the rosin is not prepared to come off good yet on the bow. What I do is take a key, and scratch the rosin with several lines going in each direction. Don't push too hard, so that you don't crack the rosin, just enough to rough up the surface. This only has to be done once with a new cake of rosin. Now grab the rosin in one hand and the bow stick above where you are rosinning the first 4 inch section of hair, you will need to push down some on the stick to make sure the rosin comes off enough on the hair. While applying pressure move the bow back and forth across the rosin trying to keep the hair in the same place on the rosin which will eventually make a groove in the rosin which will make it easier to rosin the bow in the future with that rosin. Then move your hand further down the bow stick to the next 4 inch section of the hair and repeat the procedure for that section. Keep going until you have done that with the entire bow hair. You will need to spend maybe 10 seconds per 4 inch section if it doesn't have much rosin on it, or less if it does. The amount just depends on how much it needs, but most beginners don't put enough rosin on, so make sure to put enough on. The bow hair should get whiter looking if it has enough rosin on it. Once you have done the whole bow in 4 inch sections, then I hold the rosin in 1 hand while I move the bow hair across the entire length of the hair several times to help even the rosin out so that the bow has enough rosin on all sections of the hair.

PUTTING ON A SHOULDER REST

A shoulder rest can be added to the violin in order to make it more comfortable to play. It is absolutely not needed however, and can hinder your ability to learn how to hold it properly in the beginning, so you should at least only use it part of the time. Make sure that you get a shoulder rest that is adjustable both in height on each end of the shoulder rest as well as its tilting to adjust the angle as well, since people are all built different and it should fit perfect. The contour of the shoulder rest should fit the contour of your shoulder, and feel comfortable otherwise don't bother with using one since their purpose is to make playing easier and more comfortable. To install it, the outward curved side of the shoulder rest should go opposite of the curve of the lower bout of the violin. Then adjust the height and the angle as well as where you fasten it on the bout until you achieve a comfortable fit for your neck and shoulder. The shoulder rest will also help with learning some of the skills of playing the violin, however once these skills have been learned with the shoulder rest on, they must also be learned with the shoulder rest off in order to really be able to say you have mastered those skills.

HOLDING THE VIOLIN

Holding the Violin properly is vital to good quality sound. Even though you may see certain people play the violin over their head or between their legs sometimes on stage with certain bands that is because they have developed that capability, but there is no way to learn how to play the violin properly from the beginning unless you learn how to hold it the proper classical way. It is advisable to watch the video while reading this as a reference later since proper holding of the Violin is difficult to express in words and better with the video. You may however, use this as a reference. Now, in order to hold the Violin properly, as far as your left hand goes, make a V shape with your thumb and index finger. Now you will hold the violin with your left hand all the way back at the end of the neck near the scroll by pinching the neck between the first knuckle on your thumb and the first and second knuckle on your index finger. Now put your chin on the chin rest of the violin and position the violin so that it is parallel to the floor, not tilted up or down and about 45° from pointing straight ahead and pointing all the way to the side, don't hold your head in this position, however rather tilt your face so that the left side of your chin and lower part of your cheek rests comfortably on the chin rest.

HOLDING THE BOW

Again, watching the video is advisable in addition to the instructions below, or better yet private lessons. Bend the thumb on your right hand and place the tip of your thumb on the frog, right where the frog meets the bow stick. Now let your other four fingers drape over the top of the stick next place the tip of your pinky finger pointing down on the stick with the other four fingers draped over the stick, separate your fingers so that it covers the frog and then some for better control and comfort. The amount of gapping between fingers will differ, depending on your hand size. Lastly tilt your finger slightly towards the frog direction or towards the tip of the bow.

Now it's time to place the bow onto the violin. Place the bow halfway between the bridge and where the fingerboard starts so that it is perfectly parallel to the bridge and the fingerboard. While playing the violin, this parallel nature needs to remain constant so as to not screech. Since the next lesson will involve making your first bow stroke, you will want to place the bow on the violin so that the bow hair that is touching the string is near the frog to allow you to make a full bow stroke, also place it so that it rests just on one single string and not touching two strings at a time.

That is all as far as holding the violin properly goes, from this point it is advisable to schedule some lessons so that mistakes are caught early and the learning process is easier and more accurate than just purchasing the notes and the videos, although one could progress with just the notes and the videos if they are gifted, I suppose. Students in school that take orchestra are advised to take my private lessons.

CARE & MAINTENANCE FOR YOUR VIOLIN

The first thing to mention is that violins don't like big extremes in temperature or humidity. Don't leave your Violin in a hot car for several hours for example. It won't destroy it, but the violin will get horribly out of tune and until it cools down it won't really hold its tune very well. Of course this is variable because each Violin is different but I have noticed this happens. To clean the Violin, which should be done from time to time because the rosin will build up especially around the center part of the violin and edge of the fingerboard. Use a damp cloth followed by a dry cloth, avoid harsh chemicals. There are violin polishes that can be used to beautify the instrument and in my experience after the Violin has one applied, it not only looks better but sounds better. It is my belief that the wood becomes a little bit absorbed with the polish and less brittle and produces a fuller richer sound. When the violin is put up make sure that the neck is secured properly in the case and that the bow of course is secure so it won't fall on the violin. The major tuners should be serviced every once in a while so that they are not too hard or too easy to turn and slip. This makes it easier to tune the violin with the major tuners. There is a sound post that is inside the violin that can be adjusted by a Luthier (a person who works on stringed instruments) and by moving the sound post it can alter the sound of the violin making it have more deeper notes or brighter notes. A Luthier can also affect the sound of the violin in other ways as well so if you're not 100% happy with the sound of your violin you can take it to a Luthier and for a small fee it can be altered to be exactly the way you like it. Not many people know that.

TESTING AREAS

- This course is designed to teach about reading and understanding music at the same rate as your violin talents increase, therefore it is important that you don't proceed too fast through the objectives. You should ask yourself these questions before going to the next objective.....
1. Did I check my answers and go over the ones that I got wrong so that I can better commit them to memory ?
 2. When comparing myself to the instructor playing the objective, am I in tune, in proper timing, and is my quality of sound good enough, or do I need work on any of these areas ? (If you have the video course addition)
 3. If you chose the online or in person lessons as part of your violin learning package, have you been cleared with enough proficiency to be able to go forward ?
 4. Although the video and written form of the lesson combined can serve as a course in and of itself, due to the complexity of the Violin, it is advisable to have my private tutoring at least until a more solid foundation is formed.

Written Test #1

Objectives : introduction to the violin & accessories, parts of the violin, intro to music, preparing the violin and the bow for playing, care for the violin and bow.

1. What is the second string from the left on the violin ?
2. In what century was the violin first created ?
3. True or false, it's better to put too much rosin on the bow, as opposed to not enough
4. True or false, musical notes are named A through J
5. How many strings does the standard violin have ?
6. True or false, always put the shoulder rest on the violin before playing
7. How many quarter notes are there in a half note ?
8. How many eighth notes are there in a whole note ?
9. True or False, it is more important that the note is the correct note and in tune then the timing of the note
10. What tempo would 100 beats per minute be ?
11. What is the space between 2 vertical lines on the music staff called ?
12. True or false, treble cleff indicates that it is the appropriate type of music for the violin
13. Where you put your fingers of your left hand when playing the violin ?
14. Where the major tuners are located on the violin
15. Why are fine tuners recommended ?
16. Why is a pitchpipe tuner recommended ?
17. What is the wooden piece around the center of the violin that holds the strings up called
18. True or false, the shoulder and the chin rests must be removed before storing the violin in the case
19. True or false, if a few strands of the hair on your bow starts to break or fall out, it is important to replace the bow since it is defective
20. What possible solution is there if the major tuners are slipping and not staying in place ?
21. What part of a note tells you on a music staff what the note is ?
22. True or false, it may be useful to leave the bow somewhat tightened so that when it's time to play the violin it will be quicker to get started playing.
23. True or false, frog is a slang term used by instructors for people that hold the bow wrong.
24. What is a violin sometimes called when certain types of music are played on it ?
25. What are the strings on the violin from right to left ?
26. True or false, let the Violin rest at the bottom of the web between your thumb and index finger with the end of the neck near the scroll.
27. True or false, let your four fingers drape over the violin stick near the frog and your thumb bent and placed where the stick meets the frog.

ANSWERS TO TEST #1

1. D String
2. Italy
3. True
4. False
5. 4
6. False
7. 2
8. 8
9. False
10. Andante
11. Measure
12. True
13. Fingerboard
14. Peg Box
15. To speed up tuning, and to make it easier
16. To get your ear used to hearing certain notes
17. Bridge
18. False, just the shoulder rest
19. False
20. Push them into the holes harder, if still slipping take the violin to the luthier
21. The Head
22. False
23. False
24. Fiddle
25. EADG
26. False
27. False