

Choosing the Right Violin

SIZE

Selecting the proper size violin is extremely important, especially for new students. As you can see in the sizing chart below, violins come in many sizes to accommodate various sized violinists. Using the chart, determine the correct violin and bow size for the student and resist the temptation to go with a bigger size “to grow into”. Most rental programs offer provisions for sizing-up as needed.

BUYING or RENTING

It’s a good idea to rent or lease a violin for beginners and those who are still growing. Renting makes it easier, and less expensive, to resize and adapt to the student as needed. Once a student becomes committed to playing the violin and is full grown, or nearly full grown, you might then want to consider purchasing a good quality instrument. Buying a quality used violin can often turn out to be an excellent value and investment.

QUALITY

You *can* purchase cheap violins through online retailers, but it’s not wise. Just like using an improperly sized violin, poor quality instruments will have a negative impact on a student’s ability to learn and overall satisfaction. It’s much better to rent a quality violin (from a school or music store) than to buy an inexpensive instrument that’s poorly made.

Violin Sizing Chart

(in inches)

Violin Size	Player Age	Player Arm Length	Violin Length: Body / Total	Bow Length
1/32 size	1-3 years	Under 14"	7.5" / 13"-13.5"	15"
1/16 size	3-5 years	14"	8" / 14.5"	16.75"
1/10 size	4-5 years	15"	9" / 16"	17.75"
1/8 size	4-6 years	16.5"	10" / 17"	19.25"
1/4 size	5-7 years	18" – 18.5"	11" / 18.5"-19"	22.5"
1/2 size	7-9 years	20"	12.5" / 20.5"	24.5"
3/4 size	9-12 years	21.5" – 22"	13" / 21"	27"
7/8 size	Petite Adult	22" & small hands	approximately 13.5" / 22.5"	29.5" (4/4)
4/4 (full size)	11 yrs. & up	23" and larger	14" / 23"-23.5"	29.5"

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