

## 1. Tuning your violin

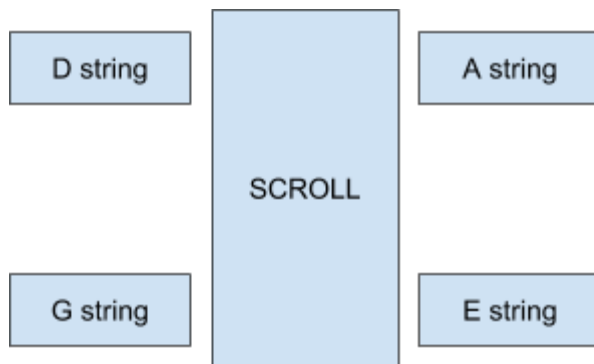
This is a very important first step, and something you will probably do each time you get your violin out to practice. If possible, find an experienced musician to help you your first few times, as it can be tricky to get the tuning just right. Use a keyboard or tone whistle to match each string with its correct pitch, or purchase an electric tuner.

### 1. Familiarize yourself with the correct notes of each string

From lowest to highest, your strings will correspond to the following musical notes: G, D, A, and E.

### 2. Turn the black pegs on the sides of the scroll

Check out the drawing below to see which peg operates which string:



Turning the peg upwards will raise (sharpen) the pitch of the string. Turning the peg downwards will lower (flatten) the pitch.

### 3. Adjust the pitch with the fine tuners

These little metal dials are found at the base of each string, right before it feeds into the tailpiece. They allow you to make minor tuning adjustments. Turn the fine tuners clockwise to sharpen the pitch, and counter-clockwise to flatten it.

## 2. Rosining your bow

Rosin allows your bow to glide smoothly over the metal strings of your violin, producing a pleasant sound. If your bow is brand new, it might need more rosin to properly work. You will need to rosin your bow every time you practice.

### 1. Hold your bow in your right hand

The bow hair should be facing towards the ground. Try not to touch the hair with your fingers, as doing so may transfer oil onto the hair and make it more difficult to play.

### 2. Rosin your bow

With your left hand, grip your rosin by its paper or cloth sides and rub the surface up and down along the length of the bow hair three or four times.

### **3. Holding your violin**

It's important to develop good posture when holding your violin. Slouching will dampen your tone, and put more pressure on your neck and back.

#### **1. Stand up straight**

Stand up tall with a straight back and your feet slightly apart.

#### **2. Put the violin into position**

Pick up the violin by the neck with your left hand, then rest the lower back of the instrument against your collarbone (left side)

#### **3. Hold in place with your jaw**

Ideally, you should be able to hold up your violin between your chin and collarbone, without using your hand or arm for support. If you are able to do this, it means you are holding your violin correctly and have good posture. Try to hold your violin up without using your hand for support, but make sure you have a teacher or friend nearby just in case it slips!

### **4. Using and holding your bow**

There are two main parts to a violin bow: the frog (which is where you hold the bow and tighten or loosen the hair) and the tip (the pointed part at the other end). Your bow is always held in your right hand, which should remain somewhat rounded, as though you are holding a small ball.

#### **1. Tighten the bow**

Turn the end knob clockwise until the space between the hair and the wooden stick is big enough to pass a pencil through cleanly from tip to tip. The hair should be neither too tight nor too loose; make sure the stick is curved slightly towards the hair.

#### **2. Place your pinky finger on the bow**

The tip of your pinky finger lies on the flat part of the stick near the base. Keep this finger slightly curved. It will act as a counterweight to the other fingers of your bow hand.

#### **3. Place your middle and ring finger**

Your two middle finger should curve around the frog with their middle parts in line with the tip of your pinky.

#### **4. Place your thumb**

Your thumb curls into the space between the bow hair and the stick. It should lie directly under your two middle fingers.

## **5. Place your index finger**

Your pointer lies gently on the grip, which is the padded part of the stick furthest away from the tightening knob.

## **5. Playing the open strings**

In order to produce a sound from your violin, drag the bow across the strings. For best results, make sure that the bow is positioned halfway between the fingerboard and the wooden bridge. You will learn through practicing exactly how much pressure to apply.

### **1. Place the bow between the bridge and the fingerboard**

As a general rule of thumb, if your bow is too close to the bridge it will produce a scratchy sound, whereas too close to the fingerboard limits your range of motion.

### **2. Start on the G string**

Tilt your bow downwards at a 45-degree angle until it rests on the lowest string. Start at the frog and drag your bow all the way to the tip, then back again. Try to keep your bow straight and maintain a uniform sound.

### **3. Move to the other strings**

Once you have tried the G string, tilt your bow upwards (the frog will dip downwards) to play on the D string, then the A and E strings. Keep practicing until you can play one string at a time.

## **6. Playing a scale**

Once you've perfected your open strings, it's time to start incorporating your left hand. In order to play a range of notes on each string, you will press down upon the fingerboard with your index, middle, ring, and pinky fingers. Before trying out any scales, go on Youtube and listen to some examples. This will help you find the correct pitches and finger positions.

### **1. Perfect your hand position**

Place your hand under the top part of the neck and support the violin so that the scroll is pointing out away from you. Hold it steady by resting the side of your thumb on the neck, and allow your four fingers to arch over the fingerboard.

### **2. Start on the open D string (second from the bottom)**

Play the open D string. Then place your index finger down, while keeping your other fingers in the air. This will produce the note "E." Check your pitch with an electric tuner or keyboard.

### **3. Place your middle finger and ring finger down**

Continue to bow on the D string, but now place your middle and ring fingers down above your index finger. You are now playing the notes "F" and "G."

**4. Continue until you have reached the "D" above the string you started on**

If you are playing a one octave D scale, this note will be played by your ring finger on the A string.