



*Samara's
Studio for
Strings*

Instruments and Supplies

Instruments can be obtained in several ways. You can either rent or buy your instrument from a trusted local shop (or shops further away often do mail order) or perhaps you have a friend or family member who has an instrument to spare! PLEASE DO NOT order instruments on Ebay or Amazon or Walmart etc.– there are often too many problems to fix with these which usually ending up costing more than just purchasing an instrument from a trusted shop.

Most families choose to rent their first few instruments and most shops have a rental program where most or all of your rental fees will go towards the purchase of an instrument down the road. This can vary from shop to shop so it is best to call ahead.

Brindley's Music Center

836 N. Arizona Ave
Chandler, AZ 85225
480-963-1468
www.brindleysmusic.com
www.johnsonstring.com

Milano's Music

38 W. Main St.
Mesa, AZ 85201
480-827-1111
www.milanomusic.com

Southwest Strings

1721 S. Cherrybell Stra
Tucson, AZ 85713
520-624-9390
www.swstrings.com

Arizona's Fine Violins

2663 W. Baseline Rd.
Mesa, AZ 85202
480-777-2277
Www.arizonafineviolins.com

Andrew's Fine Violins

1930 S. Dobson Rd., #2
Mesa, AZ 85202
480-820-0994
www.andrewsfineviolins.com

Johnson Strings Instruments

1029 Chestnut Street
Newton Upper Falls, MA 02464
617 964-0954 | 800 359-9351
www.johnsonstring.com

William Harris Lee Shop

Chicago, IL
www.whlee.net
1-800-447-4533

Potter Violin Company

Bethesda, MD
www.pottersviolin.com
1-800-317-9452

Lisle Violin Shop

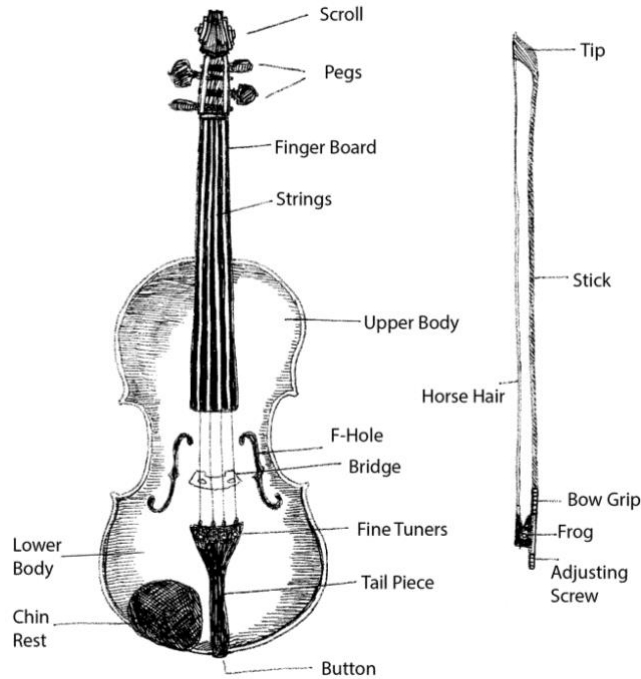
3 Locations in Texas
www.violins.com

Shar Music

Ann Arbor, MI
www.sharmusic.com
1-800-248-7427

Care and Maintenance of Your Instrument

Violin & Viola



All string instruments are VERY sensitive to humidity, temperature, and handling. Great care should be taken to make sure your instrument stays in good condition as any damage can greatly affect the tone.

Instrument Care:

- Do not store your instrument in extremely cold or hot temperatures or excessively low or high humidity. Extreme temps can melt glue and varnish and the cold can cause cracks.
- Always store the instrument in its case (shoulder rests off for violin/violas) don't forget the zipper!
- When the instrument is in its case, be careful to protect against hard knocks or jolts – this can cause the instrument to go out of tune, the bridge and/or soundpost to move, and cracking can occur as well.
- Always set violins and violas down with the bridge/sound holes facing up.
- Periodically check that the bridge is straight on the instrument (your teacher can show you how).
- Remove any rosin dust from the strings and the body of the instrument with a soft flannel cloth. **DO NOT USE FURNITURE POLISH!**

Bow Care:

- PLEASE DO NOT TOUCH THE HORSEHAIR! Oil and dirt can be transferred to the hair which deteriorates it quickly and greatly affects the tone.
- Rosin your bow every day.
- Be careful to not overtighten your bow hair before you practice (only the width of your pinky in the middle). After you play, your bow needs to be loosened before you store it in its case (just until the hair is slack)– if it is not loosened, the hair will stretch and warp the stick.
- The tip of the bow is most fragile – please refrain from leaning, poking siblings, or sword play.
- Due to normal play/practice time, the bow will need to be re-haired about once a year.

***Please do not attempt repairs yourself!
Consult your teacher first and then take it to a trusted shop if necessary.**

Why do we start with Foam/Box Violins or Violas (for those ages 3-7 years old)?

You may wonder why Suzuki students begin by using “fake” instruments that do not have any strings and do not make any sounds. There are many reasons for this and a few are listed here:

1. **Children must learn that the instrument is different from their regular toys**, and the foam/box instrument is a great way to teach them to respect an instrument that can't be damaged. If they can learn to respect a “fake” instrument, the real one will be taken care of, and you will minimize the cost and time spent taking the instrument to the shop to be repaired. Try to not allow the child to throw, bite, step on, or hit things with the foam instrument in order to teach them to respect the real one. When they respect the foam/box, they will be ready for the real instrument!
2. **Foam/Box instruments help children learn to focus.** We spend time in the first many lessons counting and standing/sitting still with the foam instrument. At first this may only be a few seconds, but each week we are gradually increasing the time that the child can be still and focus with their box instrument.
3. **Foam/Box instruments help children learn how to take a bow.** There are several steps to be learned in order for the children to take a bow. Bowing seems like common sense for adults, but children have yet to learn this skill, especially not while holding an instrument.
4. **Foam/Box instruments help children learn the difference between rest position and playing position.** Children have to learn how to hold the instrument when they are not playing (Rest Position) and when they are playing (Playing Position). Learning how to do both and how to go from one position to the other are skills that we learn with foam instruments since it is likely that they will be dropped in the process. In addition, the right and left hand perform different functions on the instrument and the child must gain a sense of coordination with each and between both before they can handle a real instrument.
5. **Foam/Box instruments help the children learn how to walk, sit, and stand with their instrument.** For violin/viola, children must learn to walk with their instruments and to hold them on the shoulder without dropping them. It's much better to start this process on an instrument that will not be broken when dropped because it will definitely happen!
6. **Fake Bows** allow the students to learn the skill of what a “good” bow hold is without worrying about the complexities of the hair and rosin.

So ... When is the student ready to “graduate” to the real instrument?

Every child will move through the Pre-Twinkle phase with their box/foam instrument/bow at their own pace. Please allow the student to learn these skills in their own time! Please note that this time in the Pre-Twinkle phase is important for establishing fundamental posture and can take anywhere from a few weeks to a few months. The Twinkle Variations & Theme can take anywhere from 6 – 18 months to learn. As Dr. Suzuki said, “Never hurry, never rest.”

In general, the following skills should allowed to be set before the student can graduate to the real instrument (please note it may be the case that the student graduate to the instrument and the bow at different times):

To Graduate to the REAL VIOLIN or VIOLA & BOW, the student should be able to complete ALL of these tasks with ease:

- Take a bow in rest position foam/box violin/viola
- Move from rest position to play position with foam/box violin/viola all by themselves
- Stand in play position while holding the foam/box violin/viola for the duration of 3 – 6 Twinkle Variations and/or Theme (determined by the teacher)
- Complete 100 bow holds on the stick
- Be able to move from rest position to play position with the stick all by themselves
- Be able to demonstrate the correct hand shape for the left hand over the fingerboard area
- Other skills: I.D. & clapping all Twinkle Rhythms correctly, able to follow directions from the teacher, attentive in the lesson

Again, please DO NOT rush this process!

When the child is about to graduate to the real instrument, the child will be measured and we can discuss options for rentals/purchases. After the instrument is acquired, it is recommended that the instrument be put up and away from the child until the “big reveal” in the next private lesson. It is a big moment to “graduate” to the real instrument and not only are we teaching instrument appreciation but delayed gratification as well.