

# Violin Method

## Part 1 — Elementary

Maia Bang

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|---|-------|--|-------|
| Author's Preface.....   | 2-3   | Exercises for Gaining Experience in Legato<br>Playing During String Transfers..... | 49-51 |
| Autograph Letter from Prof. L. Auer.....  | 4     | Varieties of Bowing.....   | 52    |
| The Violin and Its Component Parts.....   | 5-6   | Correct Finger Action Across the Strings.....                                      | 53-54 |
| The Bow and Its Component Parts.....  | 7     | Preparatory Exercises for Establishing the<br>Exact Position of B and F.....       | 55    |
| How to Hold the Violin Correctly.....   | 8     | Six-Eight Time.....  | 55    |
| How to Hold the Bow Correctly.....  | 9     | Scale of A Minor.....  | 56    |
| How to Draw the Bow Correctly.....  | 10    | Notes of Different Time-Value in One Bow.....                                      | 57    |
| Illustrations of Correct Postures.....  | 11-14 | The Up-Beat.....   | 58    |
| The Simplest Rudiments of Music.....  | 15    | Scale of G Major.....  | 59    |
| Staff, Bars, Measures and Time.....   | 16    | Exercises for Crossing the Strings.....  | 60    |
| Notes—their Shape and Time-Value.....   | 17    | Detached Notes in One Bow.....   | 61-62 |
| Rests.....  | 18    | Skips Across One and Two Strings.....  | 63    |
| The Four Strings of the Violin.....   | 19    | Exercises for Change of Bow.....   | 64    |
| The Tuning of the Four Strings.....   | 20    | Exercises Across Two Strings.....  | 64    |
| How to Attach the Strings Correctly.....  | 21    | Dynamic Signs.....   | 65    |
| First Exercises for the Open Strings.....   | 22    | Duet (Pleyel).....   | 66    |
| First Exercises for the Combination of all Four Strings.....                          | 25    | Scale of E Minor.....  | 67    |
| Exercise for Gaining Firmer Control of the Bow.....                                   | 26    | Bowing Varieties.....  | 68-69 |
| Position and Action of the Fingers of the Left Hand.....                              | 26    | Scale of D Major.....  | 70    |
| Whole-steps and Half-steps.....   | 27    | Tempo Marks.....   | 71    |
| Additional Remarks Concerning Action of the Fingers.....                              | 28    | Rustic Dance.....  | 72    |
| Additional Remarks Concerning Use of the Bow.....                                     | 28    | Intervals.....   | 73-74 |
| First Use of the Fingers.....   | 29    | Exercises for Crossing the Strings.....  | 75    |
| First Finger on A and E Strings.....  | 29    | Minuet (Mozart).....   | 76    |
| First Finger on D and G Strings.....  | 30    | Bowing Exercises.....  | 77    |
| Second Finger on A and E Strings.....   | 31    | Scale of B Minor.....  | 78-79 |
| Second Finger on D and G Strings.....   | 32    | Sixteenth Notes.....   | 80-81 |
| Third Finger on A and E Strings.....  | 33    | Scale of A Major.....  | 82-83 |
| Third Finger on D and G Strings.....  | 34    | Staccato Bowing.....   | 84    |
| Fourth Finger on A and E Strings.....   | 35    | Combination of Legato and Staccato Bowing.....                                     | 85-86 |
| Fourth Finger on D and G Strings.....   | 36    | Happy School Days (Spohr).....   | 87    |
| Preparatory Exercises for Crossing and Gradual<br>Connection of the Four Strings..... | 37    | Scale of F# Minor.....   | 88    |
| Additional Exercises in Quarter Notes.....  | 37-39 | Dotted Eighth (Legato).....  | 89    |
| Two-Four Time.....  | 40    | Dotted Eighth (Staccato).....  | 90    |
| Three-Four Time.....  | 41    | Scale of E Major.....  | 91    |
| Four-Four Time.....   | 42    | Home, Sweet Home (Bishop).....   | 92    |
| The Scale.....  | 43    | The March of Spain.....  | 92    |
| The Minor Scale.....  | 43    | Daily Finger Studies.....  | 93    |
| Scale of C Major.....   | 44    | Scale of C# Minor.....   | 94    |
| Eighth Notes.....   | 45    | Tenth and Last Etude.....  | 95    |
| Dotted Notes.....   | 46    | Dear Old Mother (Grieg).....   | 96    |
| Legato Playing—The Slur.....  | 47-48 |  |       |

## — AUTHOR'S PREFACE —

Inspired by that most prominent of all modern violin pedagogues, Professor Leopold Auer, with whom I had the great opportunity of studying in Petrograd, I conceived the idea to write, as clearly as possible, a Violin Method wherein Prof. Auer's new and unconventional teaching principles would be set forth and thus made available for the teaching fraternity.

I have, ever since earliest childhood, had a rapt interest in that most marvelous of all instruments, the Violin. My constant desire to acquaint myself with every phase of violin playing led me to investigate a great variety of methods, and for many years, I devoted myself to the thorough study of the "German School" in Leipzig, the "Belgian School" and "French School" in Paris and Geneva, and finally the "Russian School" in Petrograd. To the latter I came at the most opportune time, when Prof. Auer's classes were attended by some of his most gifted young violin prodigies.

The opportunities to profit through the advice of this master, the intellectual uplift gained through personal contact and the remarkable results I achieved through his entirely original teaching proved a revelation to me and I realized 'ere long how much in advance his teaching principles those of all other pedagogues with whom I had studied.

When the great European war forced the Master to leave Russia and come to the United States, I grasped the wonderful opportunity to follow him as his assistant teacher; and it was here I wrote the "Maia Bang Violin Method," published in seven volumes. The work covers every phase of violin teaching and violin playing from the very beginning to the highest artistic realization. Into this method has been introduced Prof. Auer's most important instructive principles, not only as a developing feature, but so closely fitted to the exercise material as to prove of the utmost benefit to the student.

In arranging for a well-graded plan of development in this method, I followed one of the most important principles of my illustrious master: to combine purely technical with musical needs at all times by providing a liberal, progressive amount of technical material and relieving it with melodious little pieces designed to interest the pupil and accustom his ear to pleasing and gratifying musical impressions from the very start.

Practical experience proves to every teacher how irksome a task it is to teach the elementary principles of violin playing, and I have long since arrived at the conclusion that in order to succeed we must present every instructive principle and every technical problem in as clear and simple a manner as possible. To this end I would advise the following procedure of practice:

With exercises of pieces offering difficulties for both fingers and bow, *the task for mastering the technical details should be divided*, owing to the fact that it is a difficult problem for young pupils to *concentrate simultaneously* upon such different work as the right and left hand are called upon to execute. In other words: the entire attention of the pupil should be concentrated at first upon the *fingers of the left hand*—using a separate bow for each note—and only when comparative surety in intonation and finger action have been gained should he play with the marked bowings. For instance:

Practice at first with separate bow to each note:





Before closing I beg to refer in brief to the responsibilities and nerve-racking duties of our violin teachers. Only through their devotion and conscientious work can we look forward to the artistic development of our future soloists, discriminating amateurs, and last but not least, of those important members of symphonic organizations such as first and second violinists and viola players.

The violin teacher in truth is one of the fundamental pillars of musical development and if in the presentation of this new method I have succeeded in lightening his arduous and trying duties to even a partial extent, I shall find myself amply rewarded.

The admirable art of violin playing demands long, incessant and pains-taking application and in closing let me recall the old Latin proverb, applicable alike to violin playing as to all the other arts:

*Per aspera ad astra!*

(Through bolts and bars to the stars!)

MAIA BANG.

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## Preface to the Revised Edition

It is a great pleasure to offer this new, revised edition of my popular Violin Method, made possible through the courtesy of my esteemed publisher.

Naturally—nothing has been changed either in plan or general layout of my method—I have only brought it up to date and made it more accurate and concise.

More than 300,000 copies of this method have been sold—what a pleasure to see one's work so appreciated and used. I hope it may continue to be of great use and help to my dear friends, the violin teachers, in their strenuous and important work.

*Maia Bang*

*Erwin Music Studio*

270 RIVERSIDE DRIVE  
NEW YORK CITY

January 5<sup>th</sup> 1919

Dear Miss Bang,

I have read and re-read Your Violin-School with great interest and recognize with pleasure how thoroughly You have been guided by my own teaching principles and how completely and clearly You have presented them in the book. - I consider the method an excellent one for beginners and sincerely hope that it will find the deserved sympathy and support of teachers who, from the start, wish to lead their pupils along the real and sure road of violin playing.

Believe me Yours most sincerely

L. Quer

# THE VIOLIN

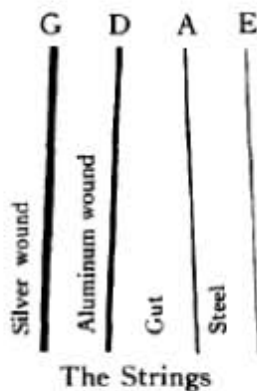
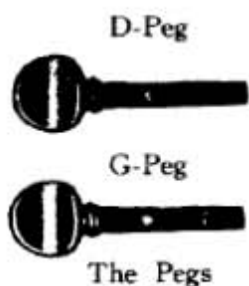
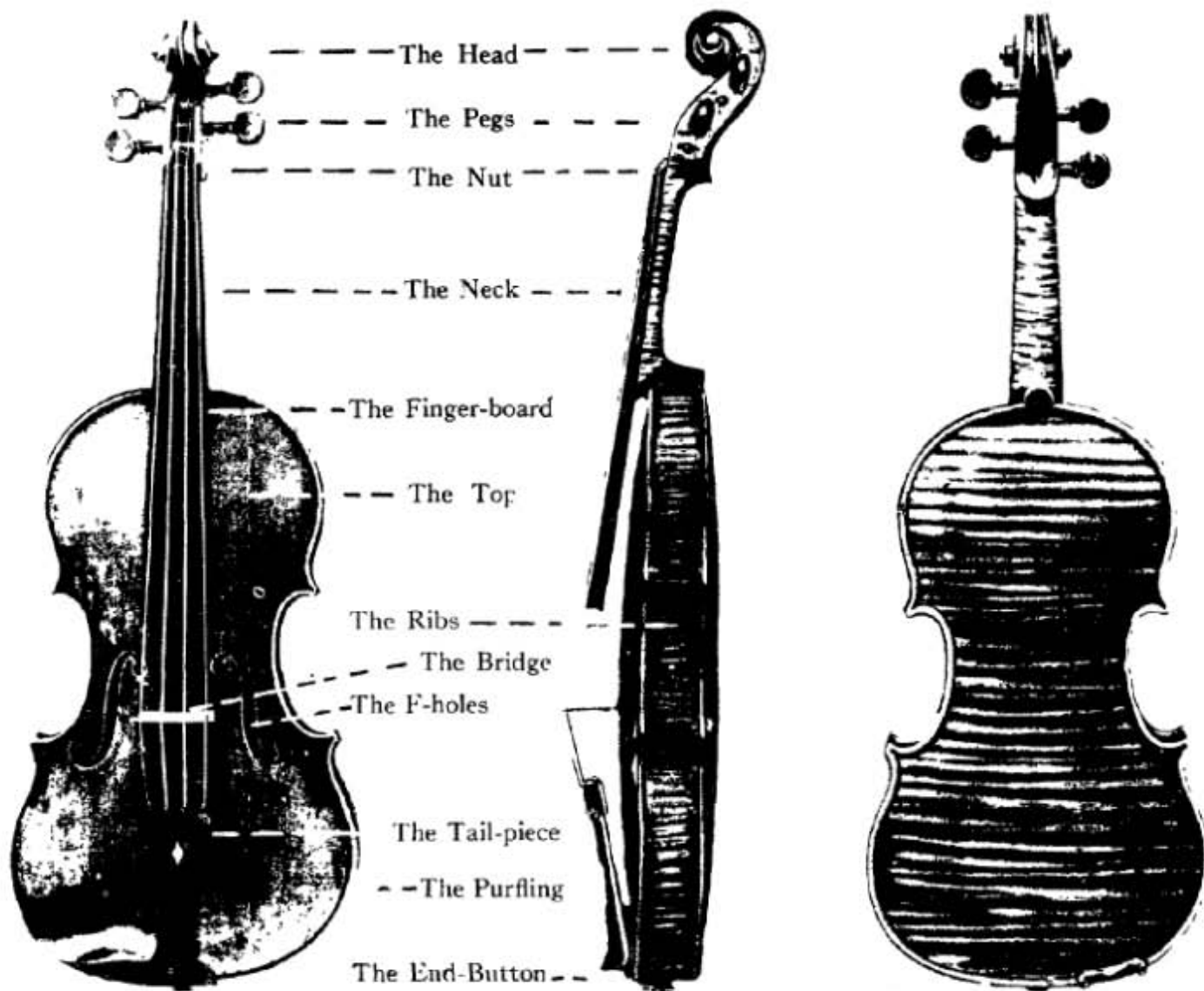
and

## ITS COMPONENT PARTS

Front View  
The Top  
(Made of Pine wood)

Side View  
The Ribs  
(Made of Maple wood)

Back View  
The Back  
(Made of Maple wood)





## COMPONENT PARTS OF THE VIOLIN (continued)



Inside of the Violin  
with Top removed



The Bass-bar  
(dotted line inside the Violin shows position of Bass-bar under the top)

THE INSIDE of the Violin is like an empty box with a number of small corner-blocks placed at the top, bottom and sides, stabilizing the different parts of the Violin.

It also has a lining which follows the contour of the instrument.

THE BASS-BAR is a narrow strip of wood glued against the inner surface of the top and running parallel with the outside G-string. It serves to strengthen the top under the heavy pressure of the thickest string on the Violin (the G-string) and equalize the vibrations.

THE SOUND-POST is a small round wooden prop set inside the Violin, between the Top and Back, just behind the right foot of the bridge. Its function is to brace the Top against the pressure of the strings, transmitting as well as regulating their vibrations. It is through this little prop that the whole body of the Violin is rendered resonant. Owing to its great influence upon the tone of the Violin it is rightly called "l'âme du Violon", (the soul of the Violin).



The Sound-post

THE END BUTTON sets in the lower end of the ribs of the violin and serves the purpose of holding the Tail-piece to which it is fastened with a strand of heavy gut.



The End-button

THE CHIN-REST should have two different purposes:

1. Its first purpose *should be* to enable the Violin player to hold the Violin firmly and securely.
2. Its second purpose should be to protect the top of the Violin from being touched by the chin of the player.



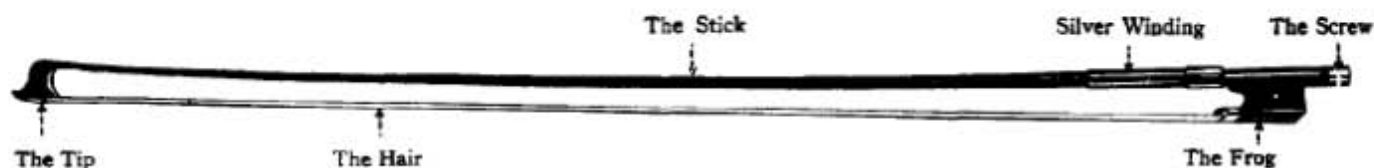
The Chin-REST

According to the latest scientific research, the Violin loses more of its tonal volume when being touched on the top than on the back.

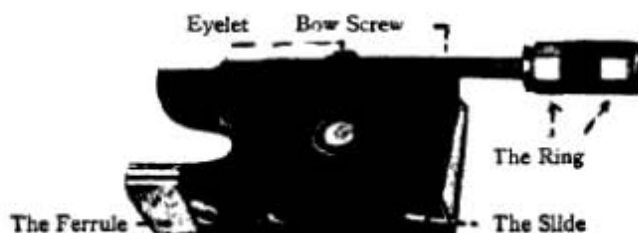
# THE BOW

## and

### ITS COMPONENT PARTS



THE STICK of the bow is made of *Pernambuco* wood. It is ordinarily round, but occasionally octagonal.



### THE FROG AND ITS PARTS

THE FROG of the bow is made of Ebony. Fine bows are mounted with silver or gold. *The hairs* are horse hairs.

Before using the bow tighten the hair by means of the screw in order to impart the necessary tension to the stick. This tension, however, must never be so great as to cause the stick to become straight; the latter should always remain slightly bent towards the hair. *Before playing*, the hair should be rubbed with a moderate amount of rosin, and *after playing*, the hair should invariably be loosened. When the hair becomes worn out, or shiny, and refuses to retain the rosin, it must be renewed.

## Always Keep Your Violin and Bow in Perfect Condition and Spotlessly Clean!

Great importance attaches to the size of the violin and bow with which a beginner starts. Both must neither be *too large* nor *too small* and a mistake in this respect is liable to increase the difficulties of the pupil to a very considerable extent. To make sure, the teacher should always select the violin and bow, as he or she is best qualified to judge of the practical needs of the beginner.

When you come for a lesson:  
"Don't Make Excuses!  
Make Good!"  
(Remark by Professor Leopold Auer)

The above is one of the first of Prof. Leopold Auer's teaching principles and remarks to be applied to the general instructive plan of this Method; others of equal importance are mentioned throughout this Method in his customary concise, authoritative manner and always signed with his initials: L.A.

The Authoress



# HOW TO HOLD THE VIOLIN CORRECTLY

1. Stand erect, with weight of the body resting on the left foot. (See illustration 12, p. 15)

*Stand erect, perfectly quiet, with freedom and ease, and always hold your shoulders well to the rear. Such a position will enable freer breathing and better tone production. L.A.*

2. Bend the *left arm* well toward the *right*, in order to enable your fingers to fall upon the strings from above and with the necessary surety and strength; in fact your elbow must be drawn under the instrument to such an extent that you can see a little part of it. (See Ill. 1, p. 13). Never hold the elbow towards the left. Also remember, that the Violin *should never* be held in position by the left hand—only by collar-bone and jaw-bone. The hand should always be free and independent for the purpose of playing.

3. Hold the violin in a *horizontal* and slanting position—the right side lower than the left, place it upon the collarbone and hold it firmly in position with the jaw-bone upon the chin-rest. (See Ill. 2, p. 13)

*Hold the Violin well up in front of you and in such a manner that the top of the instrument will face the listener. Such a position will enable the tone to leave the F holes in a direct line towards the listener, without detriment to its volume or quality. L.A.*

4. *Never* use your left shoulder to support the instrument and hold the latter *firmly in position* with aid of the collar and jaw-bone *only* (see Ill. 4, p. 13). In fact do not allow the Violin to touch your shoulder or use a cushion to support the instrument, as such methods will invariably muffle the tone.

*Drawing up of the left shoulder as well as the use of a cushion for supporting the Violin is absolutely wrong and both methods will tend to muffle the tone. A cushion will rob the Violin of a third of its tonal volume. L.A. \*)*

5. The *fore-arm, wrist and hand* should form a *straight line*. (See Ill. 7, p. 14) Do not bend the wrist either too far out or too far inward, so as not to touch the body of the violin. Hold the *neck* of the Violin between the first joint of the thumb and the third joint of the fore-finger and *never* forget that there must be a very noticeable space between the thumb and neck. (See Ill. 8, p. 14) In addition, do not *press* the thumb against the neck of the Violin.

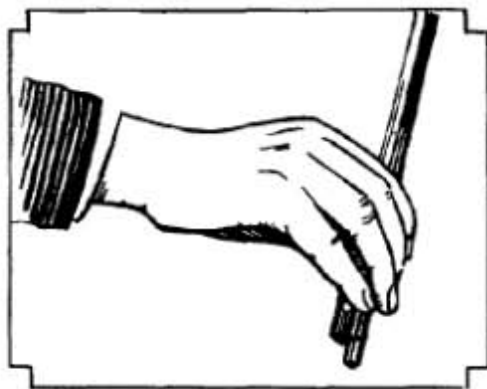
\*It should be remembered here that this remark by Prof. Auer was intended for his *artist pupils* of whom he always asked the height of perfection. Beginners and amateurs should not take this request too literally. Pupils' necks differ; a pupil with a short neck needs no cushion while a pupil with a longer neck does need one. Use your own judgment.

It also seems that Prof. Auer somewhat overestimated the harm of using a cushion. Modern scientific experiments show, that while the violin may be robbed a little of its tonal volume by using a cushion, this loss does not amount to as much as a third of its volume.

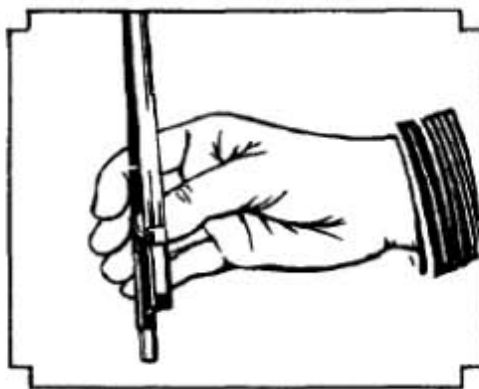


# HOW TO HOLD THE BOW CORRECTLY

1. Place the thumb of the right hand, slightly curved, close to the nut, beneath the stick and opposite to the middle finger, with the other fingers placed side by side on the bow within touch of each other.



(Also, See Ill. 5, p. 14)

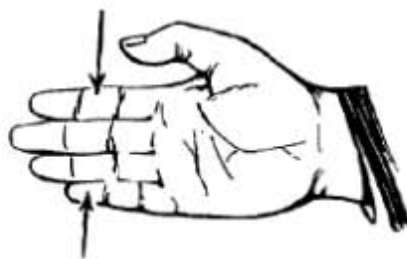


(Also, See Ill. 6, p. 14)

2. The thumb must be placed simultaneously against the nut and the stick at the point marked (X) on the bow:



3. The bow must lie in a slanting position between the first and second joints of the index finger and between the end and the first joint of the little finger. (*Russian School*).



4. Hold the bow firmly but in doing so, the thumb and fingers *must never be strained*, and should not touch the hair of the bow.

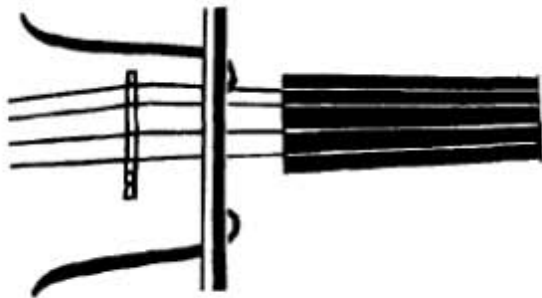


(End View of Bow position at the Frog)

5. Never forget that next to the fingers and the arm itself, the *wrist* is the most important factor for ultimate mastery of bowing. To play with a *stiff* or *cramped* wrist will not bring satisfactory results in violin playing as a *loose* and *flexible* wrist is one of the main essentials of correct and artistic bowing.

# HOW TO DRAW THE BOW CORRECTLY

1. The bow should be drawn *straight* across the string, *parallel to the bridge* and midway between the bridge and the fingerboard. It should be drawn evenly, touching only one string at a time.
2. The *wrist* should be entirely *loose* and *flexible*, capable of moving with absolute ease. In fact, the bow can not be drawn *straight* across the string without raising the wrist at the frog and lowering the wrist at the tip.



*A supple, flexible wrist enables the production of a beautiful, singing tone, while a stiff and inflexible wrist invariably produces a tone of harsh, unmusical quality. L.A.*

3. *The change of bow* should not be noticed but be done as inaudibly as possible, and here again a loose wrist is required. In fact, mastery of this most important requirement would be impossible without a flexible and pliant wrist.

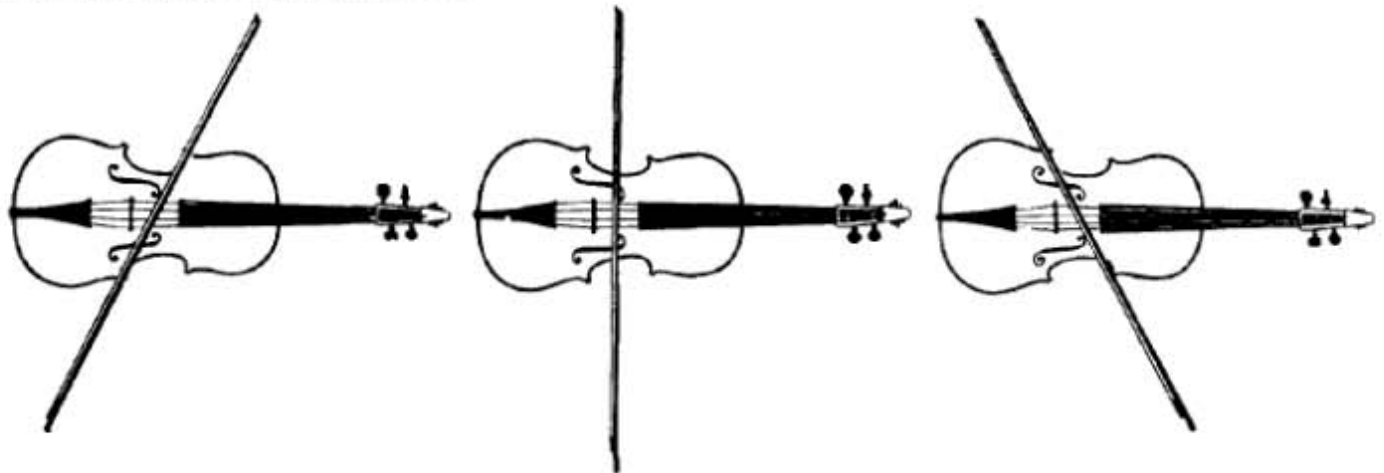


Fig. A—Incorrect

Fig. C—Correct

Fig. B—Incorrect

4. The bow should never be drawn in a direction *too far backward* (Fig. A) or *too far forward*, (Fig. B) but always in a straight line, parallel to the bridge. (Fig. C)

5. The lower arm and wrist should always be moved to and fro with natural freedom and simultaneous action. Do not hold the *elbow* too near the body and also beware of holding it too high. When playing upon the G string the elbow must always, and quite naturally, be held considerably higher than when playing upon the E string. The faulty method of forcing or pressing the bow with the aid of the shoulder in order to produce a more voluminous tone, will never result in anything else but scratching; and this method must be severely condemned.

6. And finally: The straining of muscles and ligaments of both the left and right hands, fingers, wrists, arms and shoulders, through stiff or cramped exertions on the part of the player, must be *absolutely avoided* and all movements must be carried out with natural freedom and pliancy. Remember: "*There should be no effort in art.*"



Photographic Illustrations  
-of-  
HOW TO HOLD THE VIOLIN



No. 1. FRONT VIEW  
Left arm bent inward.



No. 2. FRONT VIEW  
The violin held in horizontal position only by aid of the jawbone and collar-bone.

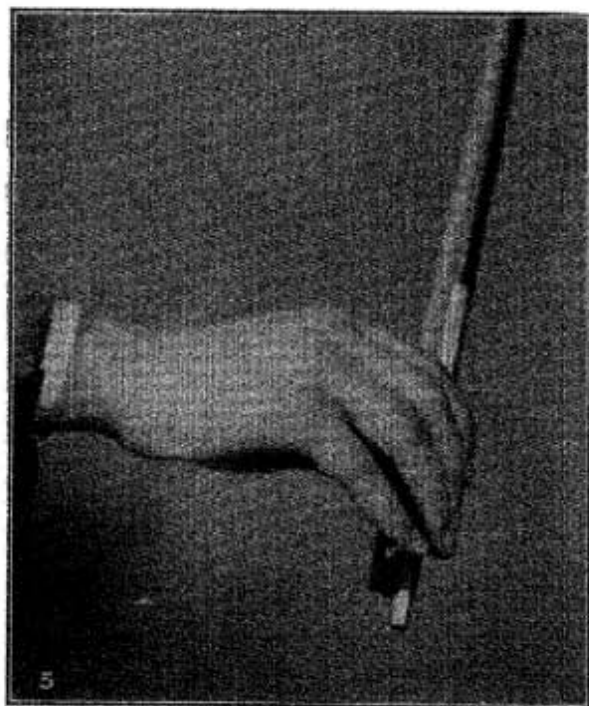


No. 3. REAR VIEW  
The violin held in correct position.

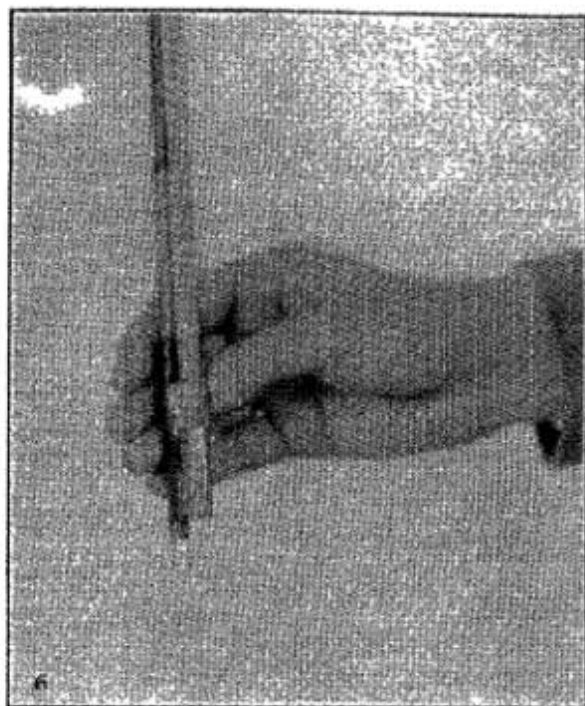


No. 4. REAR VIEW  
The violin, left arm and hand in correct position.

◆ HOW TO HOLD THE BOW ◆  
Left Hand and Arm Positions



No. 5. FRONT VIEW  
Right Hand holding the bow.



No. 6. VIEW from INSIDE  
Right Hand holding the bow.



No. 7. FRONT VIEW  
Left Hand and Arm forming a straight line.



No. 8. SIDE VIEW  
Open space underneath the neck, between the thumb and first finger.



## HOW TO DRAW THE BOW



No. 9. FRONT VIEW  
Correct position of the right hand while playing with the  
TIP of the bow.



No. 10. FRONT VIEW  
Correct position of the right hand while playing with the  
MIDDLE of the bow.



No. 11. FRONT VIEW  
Correct position of the right hand while playing at the NUT  
(Frog) of the bow.



No. 12. FRONT VIEW  
Correct position in general.  
The body rests on the left foot.



## HOW TO DRAW THE BOW



No. 13. CORRECT POSITION  
Viewed from the right side.



No. 14. CORRECT POSITION  
Viewed from the left side.



No. 15. CORRECT POSITION  
Rear view.



No. 16. CORRECT POSITION  
Front (face) view.



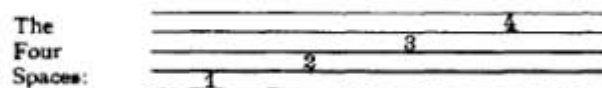
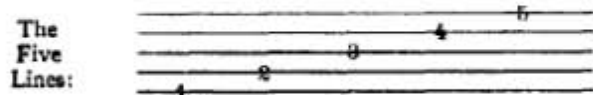
# THE SIMPLEST RUDIMENTS OF MUSIC

## Notes: Their Names and Notation

Musical sounds are represented on paper by means of *Notes*, named after the first seven letters of the alphabet:

A B C D E F G

These Notes are written on the five Lines and in the four Spaces of the *Staff*.



In addition the Notes are also written *upon* and *between* shorter Lines above and below the Staff, known as *Leger Lines*:



The G or Violin Clef is always placed at the beginning of the Staff. It encircles the second line (G) and establishes the pitch.

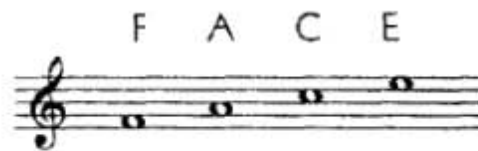


The Names of the Notes on the Five Lines:



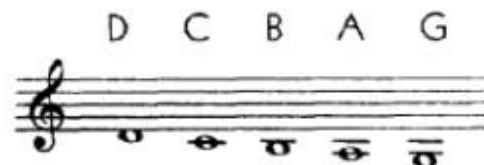
(Remember: Every Good Boy Deserves Fun)

The Names of the Notes in the Four Spaces:



(Remember: Face!)

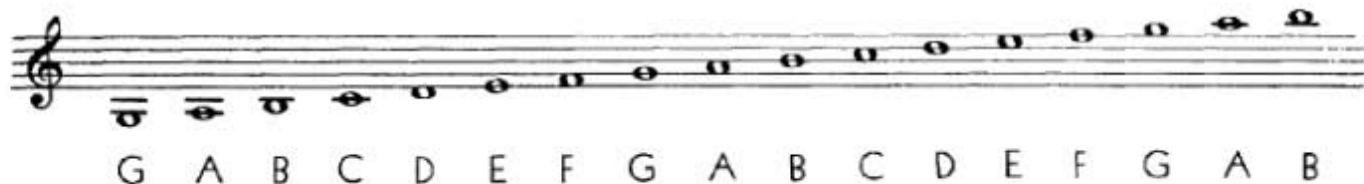
The Names of the Notes below the Staff:



The Names of the Notes above the Staff:



The names of the Notes in succession:



The Sharp (#) raises a note one half tone.

The Flat (b) lowers a note one half tone.

The Natural (♮) places a note into its original position.

# THE STAFF, BARS, MEASURES and TIME

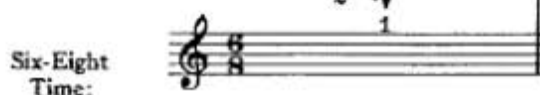
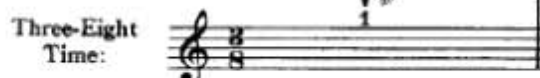
The **STAFF**:—the name for the 5 lines and 4 spaces.

**BARS**:—the vertical lines which divide the Staff into *Measures*.

**MEASURES**:—the systematized division of the Staff according to *Time*.

**TIME** is marked at the beginning of a piece of music in fractional numbers.

There are many different kinds of Time. The following illustrate some of the principal varieties.



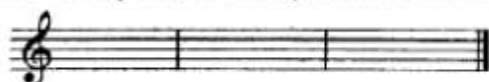
The arrows in each of the above diagrams indicate the Up, Down or Side movements, for beating time with the hand, just as the director of an orchestra would use.

The upper number, known as the *numerator*, establishes the *number* of beats in each measure.

The lower number, known as the *denominator*, establishes the *note-value* of each beat.

*Always count according to the Numerator. M.B.*

At the end of a piece, a heavy double-line serves as the sign of conclusion:



When necessary to repeat a part, or a whole section of a piece the repetition sign is used:

