



Cecilio Viola Owner's Manual

Congratulations on your purchase of a Cecilio Musical Instruments Viola! Please read through the manual below to familiarize yourself with your new instrument.

READ THIS FIRST

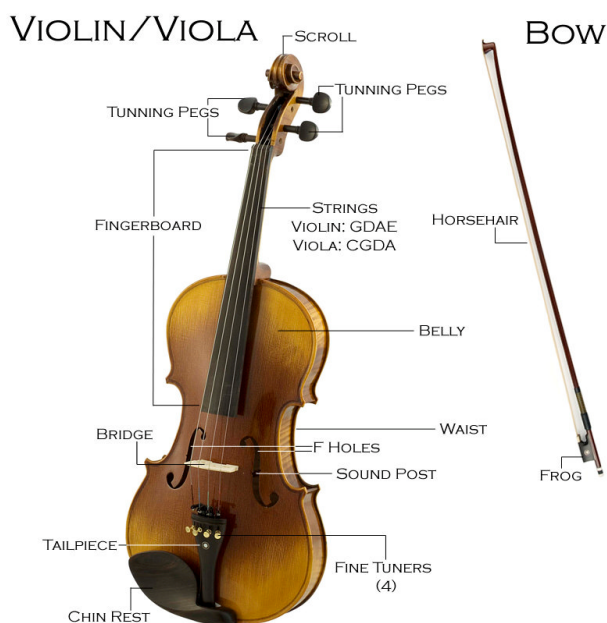
All of our instruments are inspected upon arrival to our distribution center and again prior to shipping. We can not accept responsibility for merchandise arriving in damaged condition. It is the dealer's and the end user's responsibility to inspect merchandise upon receipt and report any damages. Please **inspect** your viola immediately. Merchandise can be damaged in transit even though there is no outward evidence of rough handling. (Concealed damage)

If damaged goods are found please contact your place of purchase within 24 hours of receipt of package to have a claim filed with the carrier. You must save the cartons and packing material until the claim is resolved.

Take extra care to prevent exposure to sudden changes in temperature and humidity. Avoid direct, extended exposure to:

- Sunlight
- Rain
- Heaters
- Air Conditioners

Cecilio violas are hand crafted instruments and are tested at our factory. Prior to shipping each instrument is inspected by skilled technicians at our Los Angeles distribution center. However, because violas are fragile instruments they can get out of adjustment in the shipping process. If this occurs you may need to get your new instrument adjusted by a local technician.



Getting Started

Viola Bridge

The bridge is very important in transmitting the sound of your viola. It serves as the conduit between the strings and the body of the instrument. Many advance players prefer to have their bridges "customized" by viola luthiers in order to draw out an even better tone from their instrument. If you desire this please visit your place of purchase or your local viola repair shop for information.

The bridge is not in a fixed position. It is held in place with the tension of the strings over the top edge. Your bridge may not be set. If it is proceed to the tuning section

If your bridge is not set you will need to set it by following the simple instructions below:

- Loosen strings if necessary. You will need some tension on the strings in order to keep the bridge in place.
- Position the bridge so the higher side of the bridge is under the low strings (C string side).
- Align the feet of the bridge with the two notches on the inside of the "F" holes and evenly with the fingerboard.
- Tilt the bridge up under the strings toward the tailpiece and set at a 90-degree angle. If you cannot tilt the bridge up because the strings are too tight, loosen them slowly and just enough so you can hold the bridge in place.
- Align the strings so they are evenly spaced on the bridge
- Tighten the tuning pegs by turning the C - G strings clockwise and the D - A strings counter clockwise and pushing in towards the peg box in order to hold the bridge in place
- If the pegs are slipping please refer to **Pegs** section below for simple solutions
- If the bridge begins to tilt forward you can very carefully pull it back with both hands while resting the lower bout of the viola on your stomach

Keep in mind that not all players have the same size hands and fingers. Some violas come with the bridge not at the correct height for the player and need to be adjusted. If this is the case then a professional luthier should adjust the bridge to get it easiest to play. Cost should be minimal unless the pro wants to do more work on the viola. Tell them to only do what is vital to allow the viola to be played easily, not an extensive setup to maximize its sound quality - unless you're ready to spend that money.

Sound Post

The sound post is vital to producing any sound from your new instrument. It serves as the conduit between the bridge, strings, and body of the instrument and is located in the inside of the body, visible through the "F" holes. The sound post on your instrument has been set in the correct position prior to shipping by our skilled technicians using special tools. It is not in a fixed position but is held in place by being custom fit to match the curvature of your instrument. During shipping it is possible for the sound post to come loose or dislodge itself. If this happens, please see a local luthier or repair technician. Harm can be done to your viola if the sound post is set improperly that is not covered by Cecilio warranty.

Tuning

Once the bridge is set you are ready to bring your viola up to pitch.

If you are new to the viola we suggest you have your instructor assist you with tuning. The strings are delicate and if tightened too tight can snap and cause damage to your new instrument.

As you are tightening the strings to correct pitch keep pulling the top of the bridge back toward the tailpiece. It will tend to lean toward the fingerboard as you tighten the strings. If you let it lean too far it will SLAM down and could result in damage to your instrument.

- The viola notes are C-G-D-A from low to high
- Use a pitch pipe or an electronic tuner for reference
- Start by tuning the C string first. The C string is the first string from the left as you are looking at the viola.
- If you are using a pitch pipe blow into it to produce a C note
- Pluck the string and adjust the tension of the string with the peg to get relatively close to the pitch. You will need to push the pegs in toward the peg box
- You will need to continue to pluck or play the string, all the while keeping the C pitch in your ear or blowing into the pitch pipe in order to get the pitches to match, or pluck and play until your tuner shows that you are close to pitch.
- Once you are close you can use the fine tuner that is located on the tailpiece to get an exact match of pitches.
- Repeat the steps above to tune the remaining strings in the following order: G, D and A.

Things to keep in mind

- Adjust the pegs to make larger adjustments and the fine tuners to make smaller adjustments
- Tighten the tuning pegs by turning the G clockwise. You will need to push the pegs in towards the peg box in order to lock the strings in place.
- Depending on the weather (temperature and humidity level), as well as the amount and type of playing, you may need to retune the instrument frequently (for example, every 15 minutes to a half an hour). In ideal conditions, this will not be necessary, but do check periodically to see that your viola is still in tune.
- Strings take some time to wear in. New strings tend to lose their tension more than older strings. When you get your new strings to pitch you may want to slightly pull on them to help them stretch out and settle in. After pulling on the string you most likely will need to re-tune it.
- It is easier to arrive at the desired pitch from below the note. If the string pitch is sharp (high) loosen the string slightly until the string pitch is flat (low). Slightly tighten the peg until you arrive at the desired pitch.
- It will take some practice going back and forth before you can quickly tune a string, but in time, you will master the slight adjustments needed instinctually and be able to tune the instrument without thinking it through step by step

Pegs

If the pegs are slipping you can do the following:

- Be sure to push the pegs in as you tune the strings up to pitch. This ensures that the pegs hold tighter as the tension of the string goes up.
- Use peg compound to help lock the pegs in place. You can also apply chalk onto the pegs where it is inserted into the peg box.
- New strings will require some stretching before they settle in and hold pitch. Try pulling the strings slightly upwards after tuning to pitch. This can take some of the slack out of the strings and help accelerate the settling in process for new strings.

Bow

The bow must be tightened and rosined in order to produce a sound with it. To prepare your bow follow the steps below:

- Use the screw to tighten the frog so that the hair has tautness.
- Be careful to not over tighten your bow. The hair should have a slight bounce to it without touching the stick after placing it on the strings. Usually about 1/4 of an inch distance from the low point of the curve to the hair is ideal. For some it is more and some it is less depending on how the player plays.
- A new rosin cake will be too slick to apply to the hair. To correct this, take a small pocketknife and cut three or four parallel lines in the rosin so that there will be some texture to the cake. You can also roughen the surface of the rosin cake with some sandpaper.
- Slowly draw the hair over the rosin cake from the frog to the tip of the bow. Be careful not to draw the bow too quickly, which would cause some friction.
- On a new bow, you may have to repeat this process approximately 5-10 minutes...test the bow to determine if the rosin is adhering to the hair.
- If it is, you'll start to hear a clear pitch emitted as the bow is drawn over the strings.
- Try placing the bow on your strings and play a few notes open.
- If there is no tone or volume emitting from the strings the bow is not grabbing the strings enough to generate a tone, try applying more rosin.
- Follow this process repeatedly until the bow no longer slides on the strings, and you're getting a clear tone.

Things to keep in mind

There's a happy medium you're trying to attain when applying rosin. Listen for a nice clear tone as the bow draws on the strings. If there's a whispering tone or no tone at all, add more rosin. If there's a clear tone, you should have the optimal level of rosin on the bow. If there's a scratchy tone, stop applying your rosin and start playing.

If you start to hear a scratchy tone, instead of a nice clear tone, you may have applied too much rosin. If so, simply play until the rosin slowly wears off.

When your practice session is over loosen the screw so that the hair is no longer taut and return your bow to its case. This will help you prolong the life of your bow.

Never touch the horsehair on your bow. The oils from your skin will damage the hair and take away its ability to grab the strings.

Shoulder Rest

To attach the shoulder rest:

- Adjust the feet so that the shoulder rest will clamp on the edges of the lower bout
- Gently spread the feet to fit over the edge and snap in.
- Inset image

Maintenance

Always keep your instrument and bow in its case with the lid closed when not in use. Also, be sure that you securely lock the bow in place and remove the shoulder rest or pad before closing the case. Careless accidents could leave your instrument seriously damaged.

Pegs

If pegs start to slip push the peg in towards the peg box to get a better grip.

Use peg compound to help lock the pegs in place. You can also apply chalk onto the pegs where it is inserted into the peg box. You should apply peg drop every couple of months.

Over time, all pegs and the peg box become worn. When this happens, it is time to bring the instrument to a professional repairperson for refitting.

Body

Never use furniture polish or alcohol to clean your instrument

Always clean your viola after playing. Keep a lint-free cloth inside your case and wipe off all the rosin dust and dirt from your instrument after each time you play. Pay particular attention to the fingerboard and the top of the instrument. If rosin dust accumulates and is not wiped off it will fuse with the varnish, and become impossible to remove without damage.

Be careful not to knock the bridge out of place while cleaning.

The Bow

The bow should not be used on anything or for anything other than the strings of a stringed instrument.

Never touch the horsehair on your bow. The oils from your skin will damage the hair and take away its ability to grab the strings.

Rosin the bow regularly. For students it is probably sufficient to rosin the bow once a week. Too much rosin will produce a harsh tone and cause an excessive build-up of white rosin powder on the instrument.

When your practice session is over loosen the screw so that the hair is no longer taut and return your bow to its case. This will help you prolong the life of your bow. You should loosen the hair completely then bring it back with just a single turn of the screw. The goal is to “keep the hair even but allow the bow to relax.”

Bows must be periodically rehaired. This should be performed by professional repair technicians. Rehairing is done when too many of the hairs are broken, or the hair is dirty, or has lost its friction. Sometimes changing the whole bow can be easier and cheaper than rehairing the old bow, especially with small fractional sized bows.

Bows sometimes lose their correct camber and need to be recambered using the same heating method as is used in the original manufacture. This should be performed by professional repair technicians.

A bow stick should be wiped clean after every use. A soft, non-abrasive, clean cloth (lint free) with no oils or chemicals of any kind, should be used. There are special untreated cloths marketed for

the cleaning of instruments and bows; there are also many types of cleansers and polishes for stringed instruments that can be used on bows. If the bow is wiped properly after every use, cleansers and polishes are pretty much unnecessary. (If you feel the need to polish your bow stick, first use a drop on a small area of the stick to make sure it won't damage or discolor your finish.) Never use any kind of commercial cleanser on a bow (or stringed instrument) and keep all chemicals, cleansers etc. away from the hair.

Grip or winding of the bow must occasionally be replaced to maintain a good grip and protect the wood.

Strings

Always clean your viola strings after playing. Keep a lint-free cloth inside your case and wipe off all the rosin dust and dirt from your strings after each time you play. This will make a striking difference to the sound.

Strings will slowly deteriorate. Usually, within six months they start to lose much of their tone quality and begin to sound dull and dead. This occurs even if the viola is not being played.

Old strings are lifeless and dull sounding. They should be replaced with new strings. The finest instrument will not sound good with poor strings. The strings should be replaced one at a time.

When you need to change an entire set of strings, **do not** remove all of the old strings at one time. This will cause you to lose the correct bridge placement and the lack of tension can cause the soundpost to fall over.

To change your strings follow the steps below:

- Adjust the fine tuner so that it is in the middle of its range.
- Insert the ball end of the string around the hooks of fine tuner and lightly pull
- Insert the other end of the string through the hole in the peg and wind it by turning the peg clockwise. Align the string on the bridge by running it through the groove that was made from the old string.
- Wind the string evenly from the center of the peg to just before the edge of the pegbox.
- Tighten the string until you get close to the desired pitch.
- Use the fine tuner to lock the string into pitch
- Check the bridge's adjustment, guarding against the top edge being pulled toward the fingerboard excessively while bring the new strings up to pitch gradually.

Things to keep in mind

- New strings may break after installation. If this happens be sure to take note of where the string broke. This can be caused by a variety of reasons:
 - A viola can develop a rough spot at the peg, the nut, or the fine tuner if the winding of the string is too close to the wall of the pegbox.
 - It may be under too much tension and stress, causing it to snap.
- If you are suffering from either slipping or tight pegs please see above for details of how to remedy the problem.
- Remember that after you have put them on, strings will slowly deteriorate. Usually, within six months they start to lose much of their tone quality and begin to sound dull and dead. This occurs even if the viola is not being played. Even unused strings. In their packages lose their quality after a while.

- Often, trying different strings can make a significant contribution to improving the sound of your Instrument.

Your viola is a fragile instrument and requires service on a regular basis. We recommend that you visit a skilled repair shop at least twice a year to have your instrument checked. An inexpensive, early repair can save you the expense of a major repair or overhaul.

Cecilio Musical Instruments Warranty Information

The terms and conditions listed here will govern all warranty claims for Cecilio Musical Instruments products.

These terms and conditions cover all instruments manufactured and distributed by Cecilio Musical Instruments. There is no additional warranty, express or implied.

Cecilio Musical Instruments warrants its instruments to be free of defect in material and construction **for 1-year from the date of purchase**. Warranty excludes accessories and cases. Please see below for limitations and restrictions to this warranty. Cecilio Musical Instruments will, at its option, repair or replace any item found to have been defective in materials or manufacture under the terms stated here. Cecilio Musical Instruments shall be the sole arbiter of eligibility for warranty repair or replacement. Cecilio Musical Instruments liability is limited to repair or replacement of defective items.

To be eligible for warranty coverage, the original purchaser of the item must present the defective item, together with the original receipt of purchase, to the dealer from which it was purchased. The dealer will then make arrangements with Cecilio Musical Instruments for repair or replacement of the defective item.

Cecilio Musical Instruments reserves the right to make changes to this warranty. The policies in place at the time of purchase will be honored.

Restrictions:

- 1-year warranty applies only to original purchaser of instrument
- Warranty does not cover strings, reeds, cases or other free accessories
- Damage caused by neglect or misuse of instrument is not covered
- Delicate instruments are affected by climatic conditions. Exposure to excessive heat, cold, dryness, or moisture is considered neglect
- Instrument adjustment is not covered by this warranty
- Normal wear caused by normal use of items is not covered by this warranty
- Natural products, such as wood, cannot be guaranteed against cracking, seam separation, warping of fingerboard or chipping