### Violin-Viola-Cello Survival Guide by SCOTT LAIRD Director of Orchestras, North

## Caring for your Instrument & Bow

### Instrument care

- Always store and use the instrument at room temperature.
- Use a humidifier or the Planet Waves Two-Way Humidification System to avoid damage caused by humidity variations.
- After each playing session, use a soft cloth to remove rosin residue from the instrument.
- Keep the instrument safely inside its case when not in use.
- Strings should be replaced regularly to assure the best tone and response.
- Always refer any repairs to a qualified string instrument repair technician or luthier.





Humidify

Clean

### **Bow Care & Rosin**

- Avoid handling the bow hair directly with your fingers.
- Tighten the bow hair using the metal screw at the frog end of the stick, turning clockwise several turns.
- Do not tighten the bow too much. The stick of the bow should curve toward the hair.
- Always loosen the bow when you are finished playing, and before packing up your instrument.
- Never use the bow to hit or tap anything.
- Bow hair wears out and needs to be replaced about once per year, which can be done by your local luthier.
- Bow hair requires rosin. The best performing rosins are made of natural materials, formulated to a fine grain.
- Apply rosin by rubbing the rosin cake along the full length of the bow hair using 3 to 4 long strokes.
- Rosin will melt if it gets too hot. Do not store it where the temperature will exceed 100 degrees F.



Apply rosin

# Installing & Tuning Your Strings

### **Preparation / Set Up**

 Prepare by removing new strings from packaging and gathering a pencil and tuner.

### **Remove The Old Strings**

- 1. Only remove one string from your instrument at a time. The bridge may fall if additional strings are released.
- 2. Position the instrument safely, either with the top facing you or lying on its back.
- 3. Release tension. Remove string from the peg and



### Install The New String

- 1. Use the pencil to draw in the empty string grooves of the bridge and nut.
- 2. Insert the ball end of the new string into the tailpiece hole or fine tuner hook.
- Insert the opposite end of the string into the hole in the peg, pulling a quarter inch of it through the hole.
- 4. Begin gently twisting the peg away from you.
- 5. Wind the string neatly around the peg, wrapping in the direction of its handle.
- 6. Press the peg into the scroll slightly to secure. Check that the string is aligned with bridge and nut grooves.



### Tune Up The Correct Pitch

- 1. Be aware of what note you are aiming for. Play the open string and check your tuner for pitch accuracy.
- 2. Use the tuning peg to bring the string close to pitch. If needed, make small corrections with the fine tuner.
- 3. Check that the bridge is still straight after this process.
- 4. Repeat these steps for the other strings.



### STRING DURABILITY

String deterioration occurs as a result of both normal use and corrosion. Any string's tone will naturally degrade over time. Strings should be replaced regularly rather than waiting for them to break.

# **Parts of the Instrument**

# Scroll Peg Box Pegs Nut Fingerboard Тор (or front) Strings Sound post Bridge (inside instrument) **F-holes Fine Tuners** Tailpiece

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**Selecting the Proper Strings** 



### Prelude<sup>\*</sup> Strings

An ideal choice for students and beginners, Prelude strings have a solid steel core that makes them durable and very stable in pitch. Due to the unique damping technique, they have the warmest sound of any solid steel core strings and are easy to bow.



### **Ascenté Strings**

Designed to help players advance their craft, Ascenté strings have a wide tonal range, excellent pitch stability, and superior durability, making them a great choice for students and advancing players.



#### **Pro·Arté**<sup>\*</sup> Strings

Constructed with a nylon core to create a warm sound, Pro-Arté strings break in quickly and are an exceptional choice for both students and advancing players.



#### **Helicore**<sup>\*</sup> Strings

Helicore multi-stranded steel core strings produce a warm and clear sound with excellent pitch stability and short break-in time. They have a small diameter allowing extremely quick bow response.



### **Zyex**<sup>®</sup> Strings

Zyex strings are crafted with Zyex synthetic core material, providing the string with excellent pitch stability, fast break-in time, and a tone close to gut in density and richness.



### Kaplan<sup>®</sup> Strings

Kaplan strings are aimed at the most discerning musicians, providing a rich tone with quick playability. They provide clarity and warmth across registers, and versatility throughout the dynamic spectrum, allowing top-level players the control, expression, and worry-free playing experience they demand.