



String instrument care **and basic maintenance**

Guidance for Parents/Carers

With children not being able to see their regular music teacher we have put together a guide to help with understanding basic instrument care.

If you are in contact with the music teacher, they will also be able to help and advise you if you have any questions.

When the instrument isn't being used

- Care should be taken when it's lifted in and out of its case.
- The bow should always be slackened before it goes back in the case.
- Do not subject the instrument to extremes of temperature e.g. near radiators, in hot cars, very cold places, as this can damage the instrument.
- Always keep the instrument in its case when it's not being played.
- Make sure the case is securely fastened when you are transporting it.
- Do not store items on top of the instrument inside its case.

Cleaning

- After it has been played, **gently** wipe along the length of the strings with a soft cotton cloth to remove any rosin dust, dirt or grease.
- The outside of the instrument can be cleaned using a duster – be very careful to not get the duster caught in the tuning pegs, bridge, or around the strings, as it can damage the instrument if it gets stuck.
- Don't use a commercial furniture polish, water or wood cleaner as these may cause damage.
- Take care not to put excess pressure on the strings, as they can break.

How to replace a broken string

Over time the strings may snap. Replacing the string is fiddly at first but the process is fairly simple.

IMPORTANT – Only take one string off at a time as the others will hold the bridge in place and stop it from moving or falling over.

- 1) Remove the old string by unwinding the peg it's attached to. You may need to pull the peg out slightly to give you access to the hole the string goes through.

Pull the ball end out of the tailpiece, this may need to be wiggled around for it to line up and pull out.

- 2) Pull the peg out slightly and thread the ball-less end of the new string through the hole in the peg so that a small amount sticks out the other side.
- 3) Turning the peg away from you, start winding the string onto the peg. Try to wind the first loop over the end of the string to help “lock” it in place. Push the peg back in and keep winding, starting in the middle and winding so that the coils line up towards the outer edge of the peg box. This helps to stop the peg slipping when you are tuning.
- 4) While there is enough string available, attach the ball end to the tailpiece. Once it’s securely attached hold the string tense so that both ends stay secure.
- 5) Finish turning the peg **slowly** away from you. You’ll be able to feel when you can let go of the string when the tension is enough to hold it in place.

Things to note:

- If there is a small plastic protector on a string make sure it sits on the bridge to stop it from cutting into it.
- The bridge needs to sit flat on the body of the instrument and not be pulled forward by the strings. Watch the bridge as you wind the string, it is easier to adjust it slightly as you go, rather than try to straighten it when you finish.

There are plenty of videos on YouTube and step-by-step guides on the internet if you get stuck.

