

Changing the strings on your fiddle.

1. **ONLY DO ONE STRING AT A TIME!** If you do this, it is very hard to mess up, because you will be able to see how the old string was installed. Also, removing all of the strings at once may cause the soundpost to fall. The soundpost is a little stick inside the fiddle that goes from top to bottom. It is held in place by the pressure from the strings. If it falls over you must have the fiddle fixed professionally or it could be seriously damaged. It is best to change the strings one at a time over several days if you can. Keep your old strings as spares in case one breaks later.
2. **Remove the old string.** Loosen it by twisting its tuning peg in the appropriate direction, and pull the string out of the hole in the tuning peg. Then unhook the other end from the fine tuner, or from its hole in the tailpiece if there is no fine tuner.
3. Raise each of the fine tuners at the tailpiece all the way before you remove the string (again do this one at a time.) You'll use the fine tuners later after you have brought all the strings up to pitch with the winding pegs. New strings generally stretch - some types more than others, so expect them to go flat and need retuning for the first day or so. (Flat – note is too low, string is not tight enough. Sharp – the note is too high, the string is too tight.)
4. **Install the new string.** Insert the ball-less end of the string into the hole in the tuning peg, and push it all the way through, so that about 2 cm of it sticks out the other side. Bend this end back, so that the string does not come out of the hole easily. Place the ball end of the string into its fine tuner, or the hole in the tailpiece.
5. **Make sure the string is in the proper notches in the bridge and the nut, and begin to tighten the string with the tuning peg.** Tighten it until it is approximately at the pitch it should be. As you tighten the string try to wind it neatly on the peg (no criss-crossing) and as it winds round the peg make sure it gets closer and closer to the outer edge of the box (nearest to the part of the peg you hold on to.) If you can get it right to the edge this helps to stop the peg from slipping.

With the A and the E string, a small plastic tube is usually included on the string near the bottom of the string. This tube goes over the bridge, with the top edge of it just meeting the point where the string crosses the bridge into the bowed area.

6. **Do this for the rest of the strings.** It is best to wait a day before changing the next string. As you bring each string up to pitch, you'll find the ones that you already thought you tuned, will go flat in pitch. That's because the pressure on the bridge is gradually becoming stronger and squishing it down. You can retune them when all the strings are on.
7. **Continually check the bridge!** Since you will be tightening the new strings a lot with the tuning pegs, your bridge will start to lean toward the fingerboard. Just straighten it out by gently pulling the top toward the tailpiece.
8. **Tune the new strings.**
9. **Stretch the strings.** After you have tuned your new strings, stretch them back and forth rapidly and vigorously (be careful when stretching them if they are not dominant strings). Then, tune them again. You should notice that they have gone flat. This is because they have stretched. Repeat this process until they will not stretch any more. This will make your instrument stay in tune much better.
10. **Test your new strings!**