

How to care for your bow.

Your bow is as important as your fiddle, but more fragile. It is often said that when buying a fiddle and bow you should spend two-thirds on the fiddle and one-third in the bow. While student fiddles may not cost much, you may well end up spending £300 or more when you get better. That puts a bow at around £100-150 just for a basic one. Its worth looking after it at that price. A broken bow can often be repaired, but if the head or stick are broken that normally spells disaster. Treat your bow carefully. When it isn't in use the best place for your bow is in the fiddle case, kept in place by the holders provided. When its not in the case, always be careful. Take care not to bang it against anything and as you move about remember not to stab it in to walls, furniture, low ceilings or people.

NEVER LEAVE YOUR BOW WHERE IT CAN BE STEPPED ON, SAT UPON, OR KNOCKED TO THE FLOOR!

Loosen the bow hair when the bow is not being used. Bow hair stretches and shrinks with humidity. If your bow hair shrinks while the hair is tight, the head may snap off.

"Tighten to play, Loosen to put away"

Clean the stick when you finish playing by wiping it down with a soft cloth. Clean off the rosin dust, oil from your fingers and dirt from the stick and the hair.

If you have a good bow you should have it rehaired from time to time. Bow hair tends to wear out from the actions of playing. (If they don't you are not playing enough!) If too many hairs are lost from the bow it may result in uneven tension. This may result in a warped bow.

The ivory or bone tip on the bow's head plate should be replaced if it gets broken.

The finger end of the stick should be covered with a winding and leather grips. This protects the stick, provides balance and gives you a proper grip. If and when it gets worn, or if it is missing, the grip should be replaced.

It is a bad idea to use the bow for anything other than playing the fiddle. Waving it around or tapping it to attract attention or as a form of encouragement or applause is not advised. Many bows have been broken this way.

Do not poke anyone with your bow and when playing give plenty of room to others so your bow and their eyes, nose, ears or any other part of them do not make contact. Not only does that cause offence and makes a mess, it can also break the bow.