

HOW AND WHY TO LISTEN

As Dr. Suzuki says, "Practice (and listen) only on the days you eat!" Listening to the Suzuki recording is as integral a part of your child's musical education.

Since the "mother-tongue" method is based on imitating what the child sees and hears, listening to the music that is to be learned is essential. No one can learn to speak a language without hearing it, and similarly, hearing the Suzuki recording is an essential ingredient of the child's learning environment. Just as language is a daily activity, so is daily listening an important part of the child's musical experience.

Listening should occur as part of the child's natural environment. It can be played during the day at play times, meal times, bed-time, and in the car. The student does not have to "sit still and listen"; they will absorb the pieces on the recording by daily listening. *Remember, it is the parent's responsibility to turn on the recording!*

Some suggestions for listening are...

- ♪ Focus on one part of the music such as tone, rhythm, tempo, or dynamics.
- ♪ Play, sing, clap the beat, or tap the rhythm along with the recording.
- ♪ Make up a story about the piece being played.
- ♪ Dance to the recording.
- ♪ Make a game out of listening to the recording.

Just as important as listening to the Suzuki repertoire is supplementing your child's education with recordings of standard repertoire by prominent recording artists. Suggested lists for supplemental listening have been provided by your teachers and can be found in the back of this handbook.

Never underestimate the ear. It can teach a child English, Japanese, Finnish, Bach, Mozart, or Tchaikovsky.

PARENT READING LIST

Shinich Suzuki., *Nurtured by Love*.

Edmund Sprunger, *Helping Parents Practice*, 2005.

William and Constance Starr, *To Learn with Love*.

Dawna Markova, *How Your Child is Smart*.

Jean Illsley Clarke, *Self-Esteem: A Family Affair*

Mel Levine, *A Mind at a Time*. Dorothy

Corkille Briggs, *Your Child's Self Esteem*

Shinichi Suzuki *Ability Development from Age Zero*

FAQs/FECs (frequently asked questions/frequently expressed concerns)

When is it time for my child to progress to the next size of instrument?

When is it time for my child to have a longer lesson?

What is that game/activity/exercise for?

Why isn 't my child progressing as fast as the others in his/her group?

How much should I be helping my child, or should I just let him try things first?

My child gets angry with me when I offer feedback.

Why is it that we must practice every day? Sometimes we need a break!

PARENT'S LEG OF THE SUZUKI TRIANGLE

Man is a son of his environment. Shinich Suzuki

Great oaks from little acorns grow.

Read, study, listen. Listen. Listen. Listen some more.

Care for yourself; model love and respect for the child's other adults.
This includes the Teacher!

Maintain the positive vision that your child will learn - in his own time. This process is like planting an oak tree. Choose the site; prepare the soil; dig the hole, plant the acorn. Tend it gently. Don't insist on digging it up to see whether it has germinated yet! Have faith; the process **always** works if the environment allows it. And the simile breaks-down here, because there are no "sterile" acorns in Suzuki!

Make a practice appointment, and keep it special; eliminate all possible interruptions and distractions.

Recognize and respect the child's learning needs and pacing.

Observe and control facial expressions and body language — children are wired to learn from those non-verbal clues.

Attend as many live performances as possible.

Ask questions at the end of the lesson or at an appropriate break; keep thorough notes; refer to them throughout the week.

Let the structure and pacing of the home practice reflect the lesson with the Teacher.
Work on one point at a time.

Attend group classes; enjoy the other children as well as your own.

Review faithfully and joyfully. Your child is probably NOT bored with it, even if you think that you are.

Offer specific, positive, honest feedback. "I really liked how..."

Keep your sense of humor.

Envision the long view!

Ways to Tell a Child "Very Good"

You're really working hard today. knew you could do it.

You're doing a good job.

You are doing that much better today.

Now you have it.

That's the right way to do it.

You are very good at that.

That's very much better!

I'm proud of the way you worked today.

You are learning fast.

That's RIGHT

THAT'S IT!

GREAT!

Good for you!

SENSATIONAL!

EXCELLENT!

PERFECT!

Couldn't have done it better myself

That's the best you have ever done.

Given to me by a parent several years ago, and have used it in my parent and teacher classes ever since.

Carol Tarr

Peaceful, Productive Practice

by Enid Wood

The Suzuki Method is most successful when it's an integral part of family life

- 'Practise only on the days you eat.' (This is Dr Suzuki's recipe for success.)
- Listen to your current Suzuki tape every day. Suzuki suggests that listening 50 times daily to the new song may be enough. Listen for twice as long as you practise each day.
- Review your old songs so that neither they nor the techniques in them are forgotten. Spend twice as much time on review as on new pieces.
- Attend group lessons, concerts, workshops, and special events.
- Master each small step thoroughly before going on to the next one. As Suzuki says, "Don't stop. Don't hurry." Remember that the Suzuki Method means each child moves at his own pace. The best players are often the slow starters.
- Repetition is the way that children learn most easily, unless an adult gives them the idea that repetition is dull.
- Tone can be motivating. Pay attention to tone in your practice each day and you'll find that your child will want to practise just so that he can hear those beautiful sounds!
- Relaxed, healthy posture is vital for rapid progress without pain.
- The Parent is the Home Teacher, taking careful notes at lessons so that he or she can help the child at home.

Practice means Progress

- Practising seven days per week is optimal. Less than five days' practice leads to discouragement.
- Make space in your life for daily practice.
- Whether or not you practise is a non-negotiable issue. You can negotiate the content of practice with your child, though you must ensure you accomplish what the teacher has assigned.
- Practise soon after the lesson to remember it well.
- Two short practices are often better than one long one.
- Link practice to an activity that is performed regularly, i.e. do it after breakfast, before watching a set television programme, after cleaning teeth, or upon waking.
- Spontaneous music-making is something that is an effective motivator in addition to regular practice. It mustn't replace regular practice.
- Technical exercises can be done spontaneously. Put the bow in an accessible place and make impromptu bow holds; practise your vibrato exercises in the car, or on the bus, etc.
- Children like to know and test out their limits. Establish the ground rules for practice, and set clear boundaries for behaviour. Know what you want in advance.
- Expect the best behaviour and playing and you're likely to get it.

Parent's role is not authoritarian. The parent is the child's assistant.

- Ask instead of telling.
- Listen to the child's valid opinions.
- Ask, "Which do you choose to improve? I'm not allowed to remind you!"

- Ask your child, "How could you work on this?"
- Try role reversal. Let the child teach you.
- Practise regularly yourself, so that you and your child can respect each other's efforts.
- The way your child corrects your mistakes may teach you something about how to correct his.
- Have the child notice and value your accurate observations.
- Reward the child for his honest assessment of his own playing.
- Say, "Show me the bow hold (or posture, phrasing, tone, etc.) of which you're most proud."
- Remember together the highlights of the last lesson before beginning your practice.
- Decide together which goals to achieve in the practice.
- Set aside some time in each practice for the child to play without interruptions from you.

Use positive language.

- Practise saying positive things first.
- Use a friendly tone of voice, with no trace of exasperation in it.
- Eliminate from practice the words 'WRONG', and 'NO' - they'll make your child want to stop trying.
- Pointing out something wrong does not necessarily mean that it will get better. Ask in *positive terms* for what is right. (Not: "You played a wrong note," or "You played a C sharp," but "Please play C natural," or better still, "Would C natural sound better here?")
- Encouragement is often more helpful than praise.
- "Nice try! Please play it again," "This time it will come right," or "You can do it," are all encouraging ways of asking the child to try again without anticipating failure.
- Make a tick in a notebook every time you remember to give positive comments to your child when you are practising. Reward yourself for any improvement in the ratio of positive to negative.

Praise

- Try to find thirty things to praise in your practice. Write them down once and tick when they are right in subsequent practices.
- Praise must be very specific, so that the child learns from it.
- Praise must be honest so that your child learns to trust what you say.
- Beware of praise containing value judgements.
- Don't evaluate your child's playing, just describe it.
- Your child desires your approval, but what is ultimately more important is his own pleasure in his achievements.
- Increase your vocabulary of descriptive words for how the child's playing looks and sounds, i.e. flowing, stoppy, pushed, scratchy, sweet, clear, ringing, hesitant, strong, muddy, etc.
- Increase your vocabulary of superlatives.
- Suzuki says, "Nothing improves hearing more than praise."

If practice is a battleground, your objective needs to change. Find enjoyment!

- Change your normal routine.
- Try having nothing but fun with your instrument for five consecutive days.
- Exercise your creativity; i.e. try The Banana Practice: Everything you do in your practice must relate to bananas in some way (tone not slippery like a banana peel, child's posture not sway-backed like the curve in a banana, etc), eat a bite of banana for each scale you play, path of the bow elbow when playing is the shape of a banana, etc. . . Or you can try the hamster practice, the kitten practice, etc.
- Relate practice to something that's important in the child's life right now.
- Ask other parents and teachers for their successful ideas and use them.

Separate the person from the behaviour or the action.

- Depersonalise corrections. NOT: "You played a wrong note," INSTEAD: "Third finger played in second finger's place that time."
- Give the child a part of himself to watch as an interested observer: "Play again and notice whether the finger stayed straight or curved."
- Avoid labelling a finger or a foot as "naughty." This may make uncooperative behaviour too convenient.
- Acknowledge the child's genuine efforts. They may not always result in success, but are of enormous value.

Begin practice with a positive attitude. Value yourself as a Suzuki parent. Use the following affirmations, or make up some of your own:

- I am not perfect. There is no such thing as a perfect parent.

● My child is not perfect. There is no such thing as a perfect child.

- I love my child.
- I am a good enough parent.
- I enjoy practising with my child.
- I am glad we both have the opportunity to share ~~music~~ together.
- I believe that we can both improve our skills.
- We are getting better at . . .

Choose a goal with certain success.

- Beware of grandiose goals far off in the future.
- You'll be happier if you can pick a tiny, achievable goal for today.
- Look back at what you've achieved this year, and feel proud of any improvement, no matter how small.
- Carefully checking notes, bowings, and technique in a short section is far better than learning the whole piece poorly.
- Celebrate reaching your goal by doing something music-related, i.e. you play a piece for him, listen to the radio together, go to a concert, etc. Reward success with further inspiration.

Our long-term goal is that the child enjoys making music, respects his own efforts, and feels pride in his achievements. Each practice session needs to be a tiny step toward this goal.

My article grew out of conversations this summer with Arnold Zelter, Lisa Liske, Sallie Cooper, and Rosemary Arrowsmith. Many of the above ideas are theirs, and I am most grateful.

MUSIC PRACTICE ~ A PARENT'S DAILY DOZEN

Name _____ For the week of _____

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. <i>Listening</i> : I played the recording _____ times today.							
2. <i>Setting a time</i> : We agreed in advance on a time for today's practice.							
3. <i>Preparing</i> : I prepared for today's practice.							
4. <i>Initiating the practice</i> : I gave my child warning before practice time.							
5. <i>"Bracketing" the practice</i> : We began/ended our practice with a bow.							
6. <i>Parent's priority</i> : I gave our practice time a high priority.							
7. <i>Encouragement</i> : I expressed sincere appreciation for my child's efforts.							
8. <i>Positive environment</i> : I created a positive environment for practicing.							
9. <i>Giving choices</i> : My child made choices about how/what to practice.							
10. <i>Tonalization</i> : Our practice included tonalization.							
11. <i>Review</i> : Our practice included review (I = partial, γ = complete).							
12. <i>Ending the practice</i> : We ended the practice on a positive note.							
PARENT'S SUMMARY: What was today's practice like?							
STUDENT'S SUMMARY: How did your practice partner do today?							
STUDENT'S SUMMARY: How did you do today?							

Practice Motivation Ideas

1. Pretend you are the student and let the child be the teacher for the day.
2. Turn practicing into a concert – mom/dad, relatives, pets, stuffed animals as the audience members.
3. When the practicing involves repeating something over and over, use games like tic tac toe or dot-to-dot. For every correct repetition of the exercise/activity, the child can make one game move.
 - a. An alternative is snacks (for every correct repetition, they can eat an m&m)
4. Change up the practice location. Try practicing outside. Try practicing with the lights off.
5. Create a reward system. For example, place a straw inside a cup every day they practice.

When there are 10 straws in the cup, the child can go to the toy store/ice cream store/etc.

However, be careful about associating cello too much with rewards. We want the child to enjoy playing for itself, not as a means to an end.

Weekly Practice Log

Next lesson date: _____

Assignments for the week:

1. Tonalization/scales: _____ Goal: _____
2. Note reading: _____ Goal: _____
3. Review piece: _____ Goal: _____
4. Working piece: _____ Goal: _____
5. Preview piece: _____ Goal: _____
6. Other: _____ Goal: _____

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Tonalization/scales							
Note reading							
Review piece							
Working piece							
Preview piece							
Other							

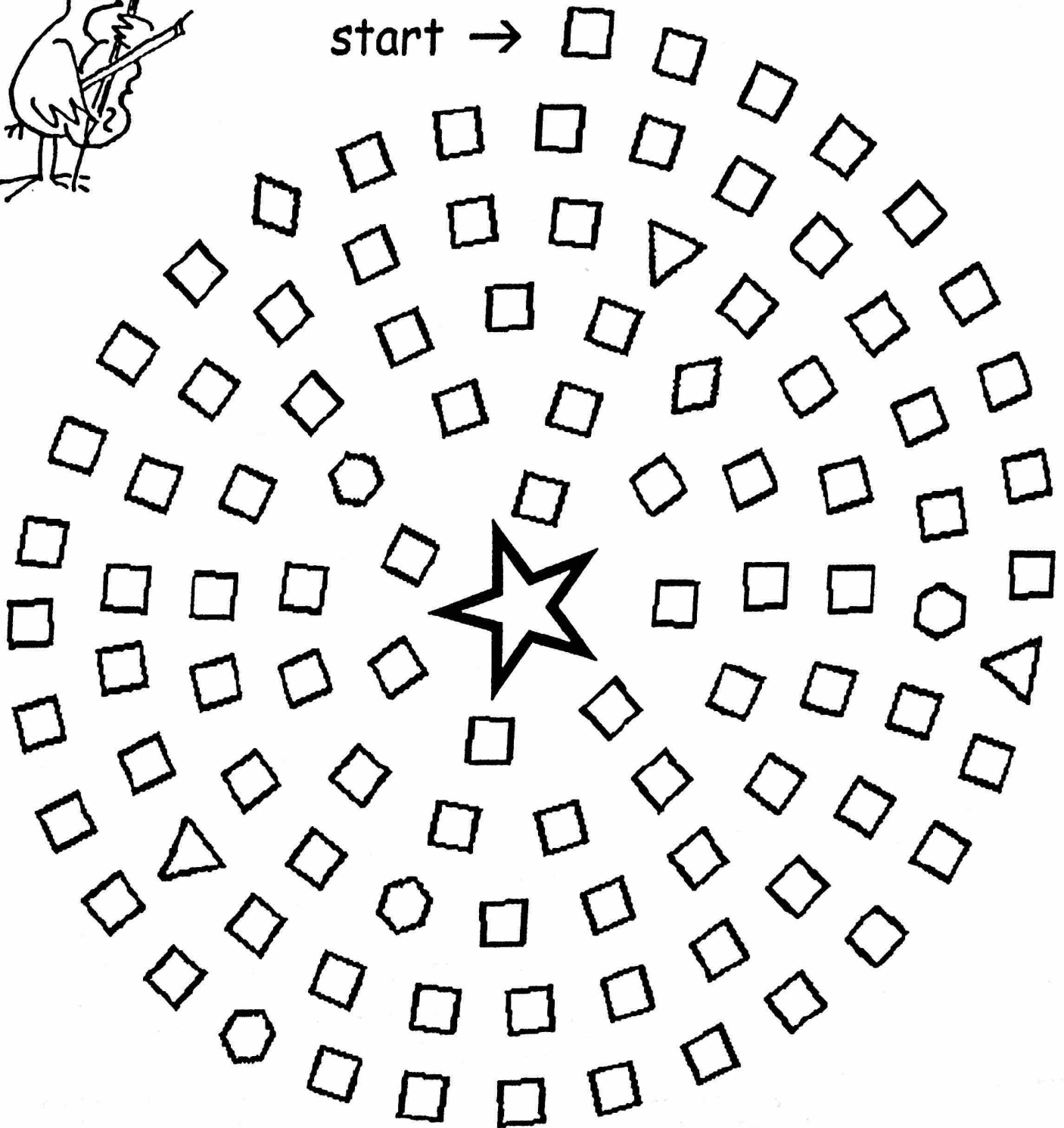
Notes/reflection:

The 100s Spiral

(Color in one shape for each repetition)



start →



Fledgeling's name _____

Start date _____ Finish date _____

Beginning Cello Equipment

Cello and bow: look into renting from a local string shop. Otherwise, purchase online (<https://www.sharmusic.com/Instruments/Cello/Beginning-Cellos/>)

Rock stop: https://www.amazon.com/Xeros-1007XC-Endpin-Anchor-Cello/dp/B002Q0WT4M/ref=asc_df_B002Q0WT4M/?tag=hyprod-20&linkCode=df0&hvadid=312150857943&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrnd=7463520383847074548&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9005779&hvtargid=pla-406823772914&psc=1&tag=&ref=&adgrpid=65054436154&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvadid=312150857943&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrnd=7463520383847074548&hvqmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9005779&hvtargid=pla-406823772914

Rosin: https://www.amazon.com/Rosin-Natural-Violin-Cello-Yellow/dp/B082FGJNWQ/ref=sr_1_2?dchild=1&keywords=cello+rosin&qid=1627079791&s=musical-instruments&sr=1-2

Beginner “twinkle” bow: <https://cellosviolin.com/twinklebow/>

Cello chair: proper chair height is essential for good playing posture. The child’s legs should be bent slightly more than 90 degrees (there should be a very slight incline from the knees to the hips). Feet need to be able to touch the floor firmly. If you don’t own a suitable chair/stool, these are some options...

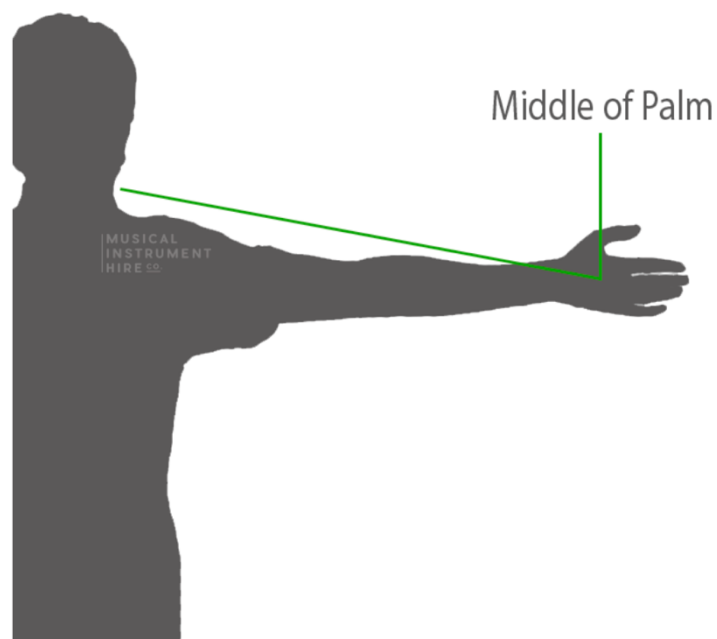
<https://www.etsy.com/listing/256533326/little-turtle-cello-bench>

https://www.schooloutfitters.com/catalog/product_info/pfam_id/PFAM32143/products_id/PR072582?sc_cid=Google_NOR-AUH1200AC&adtype=pla&kw=&gclid=Cj0KCQjwse-DBhC7ARIsAI8YcWkUq9oKCEoAlf7-HfFnGKi9VkOMXe364PhvMkB1oODU2tUe4rJ_1JAaAoGjEALw_wcB

Suzuki Book 1 (sheet music and CD recording): https://www.amazon.com/Suzuki-Cello-School-Part-Revised/dp/0739097091/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&gclid=Cj0KCQjw0emHBhC1ARIsAL1QGNfReTjpHE8Zb5fg2EjoWGZgikthoJfw2f48wb6w7X774Sn9ac8cCjQaArP3EALw_wcB&hvadid=409938557907&hvdev=c&hvlocphy=1014485&hvnetw=g&hvqmt=e&hvrnd=544635361067635394&hvtargid=kwd-22632156067&hydadcr=24632_11410077&keywords=suzuki+cello+book+1+cd&qid=1627081426&sr=8-1

Cello Size	Age
1/10 Cello	3 to 5 Years Old
1/8 Cello	5-6 Years Old
1/4 Cello	6-7 Years Old
1/2 Cello	8 – 10 Years Old
3/4 Cello	11-13 Years Old
4/4 Full Cello	14+ Years Old

Cello Size	Arm Length	Height
1/10 Cello	16" / 41 cm and under	3' / 91 cm and under
1/8 Cello	16" to 18" / 41cm to 46cm	3' to 3'6" / 91cm to 110cm
1/4 Cello	18" to 20" / 46cm to 51cm	3'6" to 4' / 110cm to 123cm
1/2 Cello	20" to 22" / 51cm to 56cm	4' to 4'6" / 123cm to 140cm
3/4 Cello	22" to 24" / 56cm to 61cm	4'6" to 5' / 140cm to 152cm
4/4 Full Cello	24"+ / 61cm+	5'+ / 152cm+



Sylvie's Cello Bench

General Construction notes:

- the bench can be constructed from pine but is stronger and more robust if constructed from some light-weight hard wood. My personal choice is mahogany (it usually doesn't cost much more than clear pine).
- all the edges are rounded with a router before assembly.
- I finish the bench with a penetrating oil finish.
- the height of the bench (and the length of the legs) is determined by the height of the bench the student is using currently. The upper and lower leg sections will each be about 2 inches shorter than the height of the bench currently being used.
- I usually draw the curves on the cross brace and bottom of the legs using the bottom of a paint can or other container because each bench is usually a slightly different size and the curves should be relatively proportional to the size of the bench.

Materials list:

Part	Size (W x L x T)
top	11 3/4" x 19" x 3/4"
cross brace	7 3/4" x 13 3/4" x 3/4"
upper leg (2 pieces)	9 1/2" x 12" x 3/4"
lower leg (2 pieces)	11 1/4" x 12" x 3/4"
bolts and nuts (4 of each)	1/4" x 2"
brass wood screws (4 needed)	#8 x 1 1/2"

Legs:

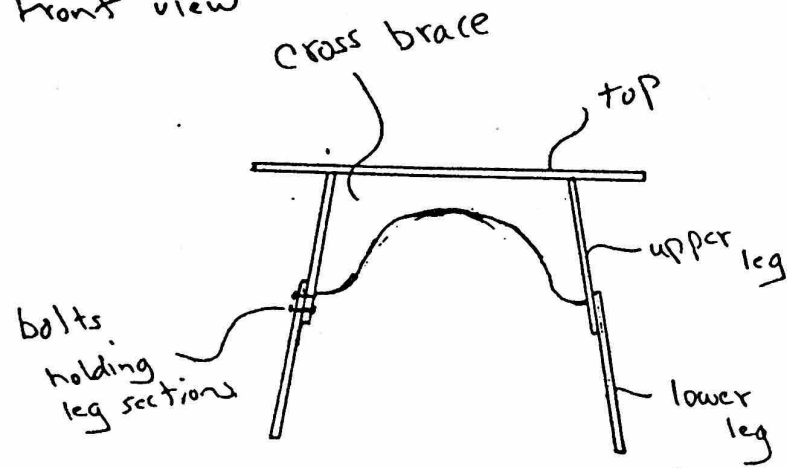
- the upper leg section is the same width for its entire length.
- the lower leg is tapered from the width of the upper leg section at its top to the width of the top of the bench at its bottom. The wider bottom gives the bench more stability when it is at its full height.
- the two rows of holes are 1 3/4" from the edge of the top section and are 1" apart. Drill the holes in the upper section first then use the upper section as a guide to drill the holes in the lower section.

Cross brace:

- the ends of the cross brace are angled at 10 degrees (100 degrees rather than 90). They

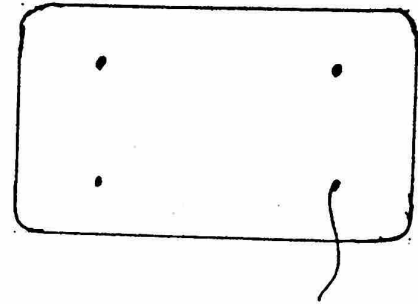
could be at 90 degrees but the slight angle increases stability and is more visually pleasing.
 - the cross brace can be attached to the legs by any of several joints (including a dowel joint or a mortice and tenon) but I prefer a sliding dovetail. It can easily be cut with a router and is very strong.

Front view



(D)

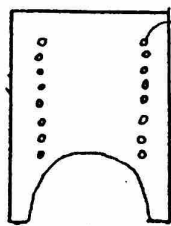
Top view



wood screw
 fixing top to
 leg (drilled at
 10° angle to match
 angle of leg)

(B)

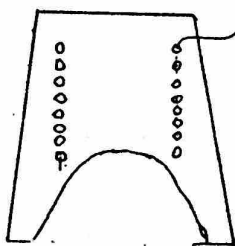
upper leg section



1/4" diameter holes
 (note: rows are
 parallel to edge)

(C)

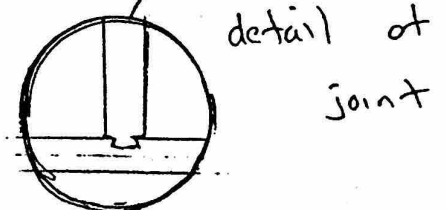
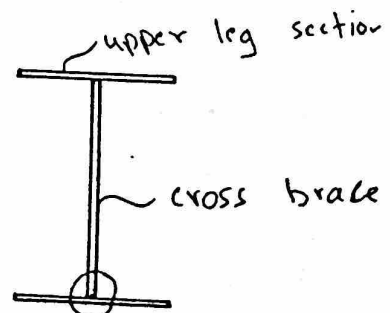
lower leg section



1/4" diameter holes
 (note: rows are not
 parallel to edge)

(E)

cross brace and leg section



detail of
 joint

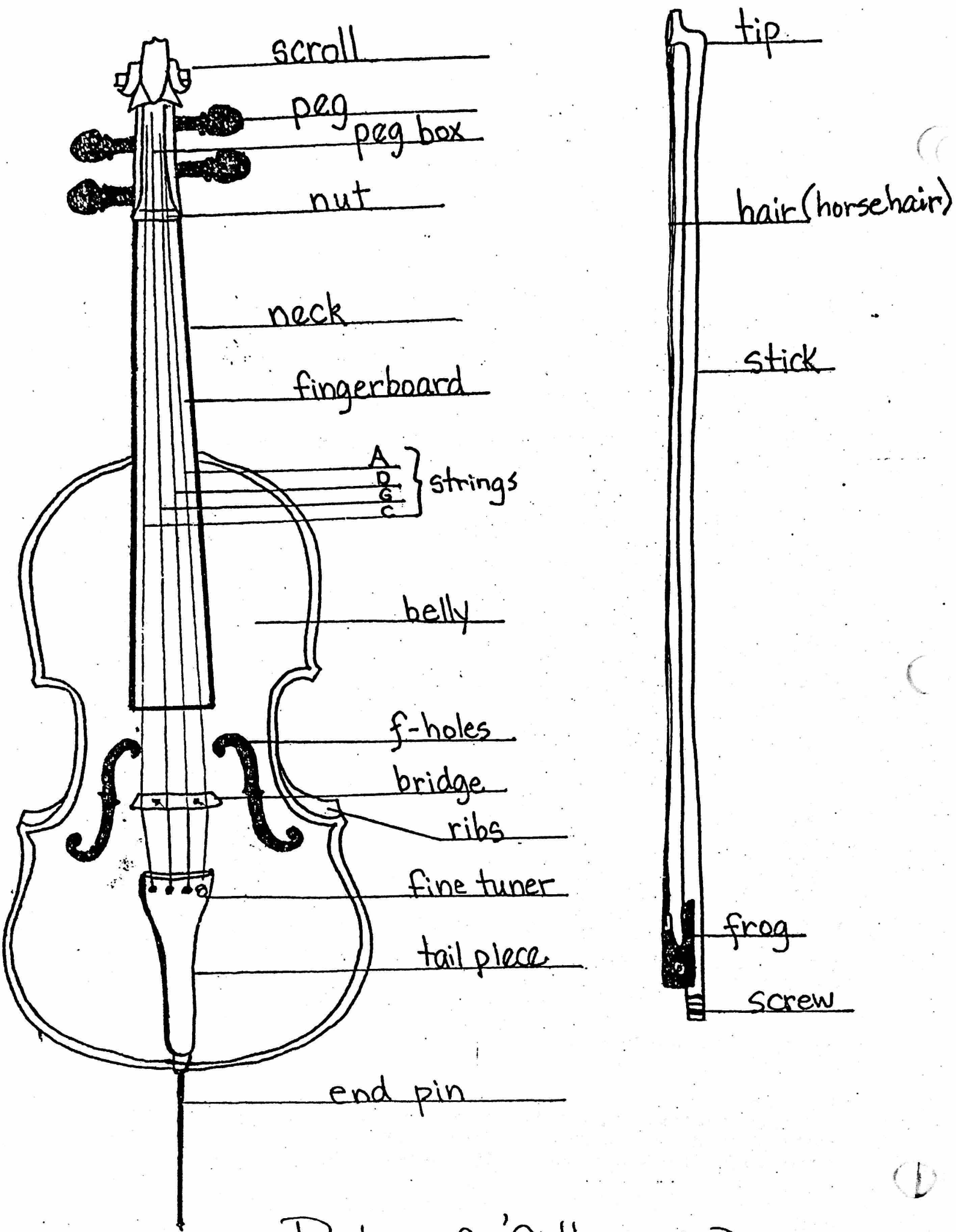
CARE OF YOUR CHILD'S CELLO

Your child's instrument is his or her responsibility, and your help and guidance in the early months will help to establish good habits to ensure that it will stay in good condition. Encourage your child to carry it carefully right from the start, otherwise you may still be carrying it when your child is 12!

- store instrument away from heat sources and out of direct sunlight.
- when not playing, leave the cello on its side with endpin in, never standing up.
- lie cello on its back when packing and unpacking, with endpin in.
- bow goes in last when packing, comes out first when unpacking.
- do not leave instrument for extended periods in a car in cold or warm weather. Remember that a car or car trunk exposed to sun can get very hot inside even when the outside temperature is not extreme. Not to mention the possibility of theft.
- for larger instruments: use a humidifier in your house or instrument storage room during winter months. Dampits (small humidifier devices placed directly in cello) are also available, although not as reliable as home humidifier.
- do not allow child to turn pegs or fine tuners until he/she has had adequate instruction about tuning. Ask for your teacher's guidance for tuning: strings or bridges can break if pegs are turned too far.
- keep an eye on the bridge for warping or leaning, and ask your teacher for advice if you notice any.
- clean excess rosin off instrument DAILY with a soft cloth.
- polish occasionally with a good quality instrument polish (not furniture polish).
- do not put stickers on instruments. Occasional markers may be put on by the teacher as teaching aids for young students, but these should be at the teacher's discretion.
- if you notice any cracks, or any seams that have come unglued, report them to your teacher. -- never try to glue or repair an instrument yourself: this is a job for a skilled repair person.
- always loosen bow hairs to take tension off the stick when it is not being played for a period of time. Do not over-tighten bow hairs. Don't worry if occasional bow hairs fall out or become loose, but don't pull out broken bow hairs -- cut them carefully right by frog and tip.
- do not touch bow hairs with fingers.

Insurance

- It is important to insure your instrument regardless of what size or value - repairs can be costly. If you are renting, please make sure you know whose responsibility is whose. If you own a cello, please check the coverage with your insurance company.



Parts of 'Cello and Bow

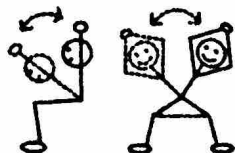
Fitness Frolics for Cello Players

by Tanya Carey and Robert Wear

Illustrated by Trina Carey Hodgson

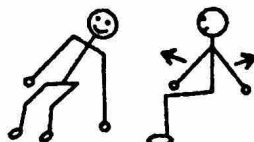
Twinkle A

Hoop
(forward and sideways)



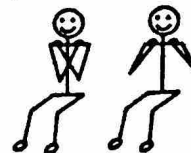
Twinkle B

Side Rock
Arm Swings



Twinkle C

Pat on the Back
(alternate across shoulders
and parallel arms to shoulders)



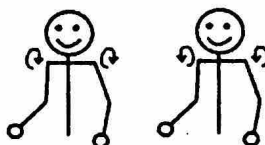
Twinkle D

Chair Wiggle
March in Place



Twinkle Theme

Shoulder Rolls
(forward simultaneously
and backward)



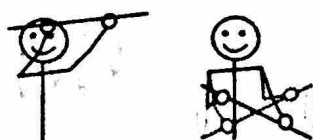
French Folk Song

Rock Side to Side
(arms behind back)



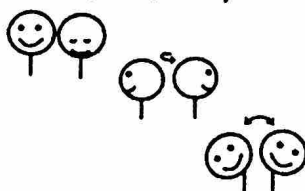
Lightly Row

Ferris Wheel
Figure 8 (bicycle stroke)
(With Dowell Stick or Bow)



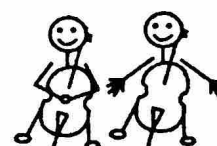
Song of the Wind

Yes, No, Maybe



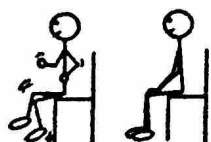
Aunt Rhody

Strum Strings



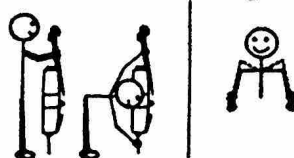
O Come, Little...

Run In Place
Sit In Cello Position



May Song

End Pin Touch
Shoulder Shrug



Allegro

March with cello
around room



Perpetual Motion

Singles: Your choice
Doubles: Sit in
cello rest position



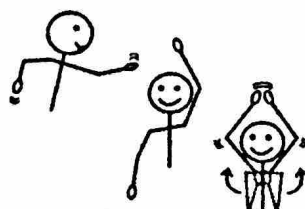
Long Long Ago

Slump Ups
Belly Button Push Backs



Andantino

Swim
(forward, back, breast)



Rigadoon

Back through Fingers

Finger Taps, Finger Flicks,
Thumb Flicks, Witches Spell



Swedish Cello Song

Courtesy of Anders Gron

Vamp: Slap legs alternately--Bow hand, Cello hand



Rosin Song

Yvonne Tait

Ro - sin ro - sin on my bow. If I ro - sin ve - ry slow,

5

then my hairs will be all white and my strings will spin just right.

Ants

pizz. sing pizz. sing

Ants Ants Ants dig ging in the Dirt Dirt Dirt go - ing un - der

3 pizz. sing pizz.

Ground Ground Ground all the way to China China China

Pop Goes the Weasel

pizz. V

8

12 pizz. V

Hickory Dickory Dock

pizz. V pizz. V

5 pizz.

See Saw

Yvonne Tait



See saw, see saw won der ful won der ful see saw. See saw, see saw lis ten to beau ti ful tone.

Chicken on a Fence Post

Wiggles



Chick-en on a fence post can't dance Jo - sie, chick-en on a fence post can't dance Jo - sie,



Chick-en on a fence post can't dance Jo - sie, Hel - lo Su - san Brown - i - o

Flower Song

Marilyn O'Boyle



See the pret-ty flow-ers grow-ing in the gar-den? See the pret-ty flow-ers red and pink and pur-ple.

The Donkey and the Duckling

Catherine Walker



"Hee haw" said the don key "hee haw"

"Hee haw" to the duck-ling "Hee haw"

5



"hee haw""quack quack" "hee haw""quack quack" "hee haw hee haw hee haw"

Monkey Song

Marilyn O'Boyle



See the lit-tle mon-key climb-ing down the lad-der climb ing way down low to eat a pink ba-na-na

5



See the lit-tle mon-key climb-ing up the lad-der climb-ing way up high to pick a pink ba-nan-na

Ding Dong Bell



Ding dong bell

pus - sy's in the well.

Who put her in?

4



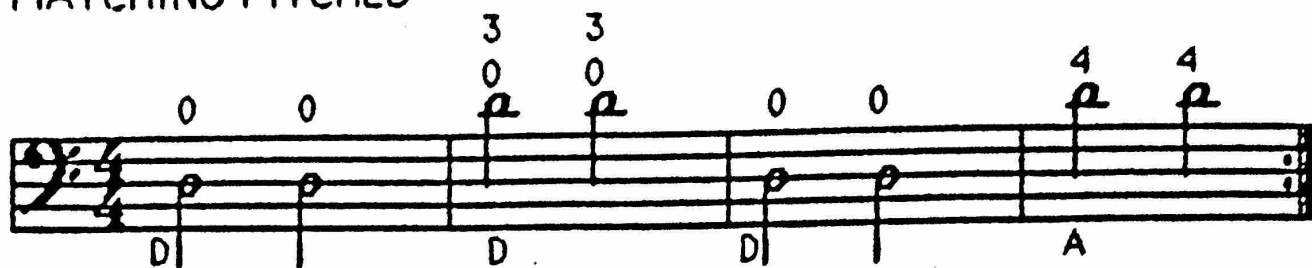
Lit - tle John - ny Green.

Who took her out?

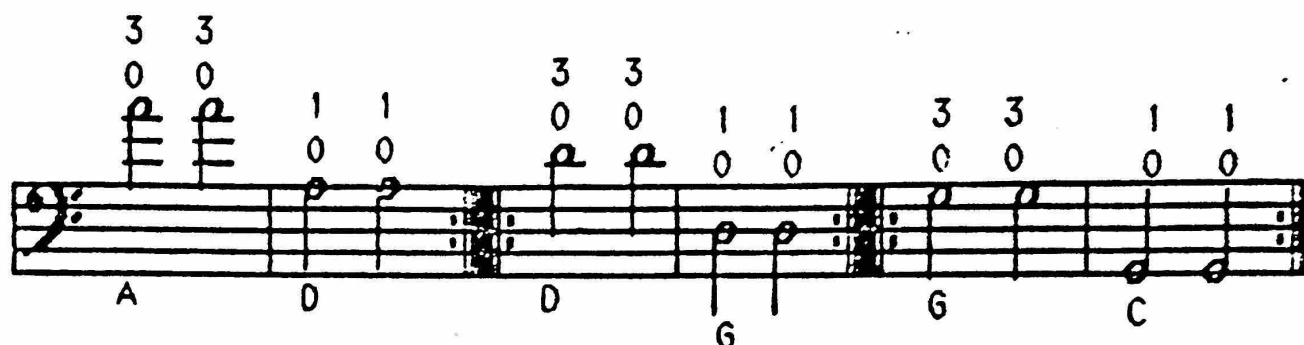
Lit - tle Bil - ly Stout.

BEGINNING TONALIZATION

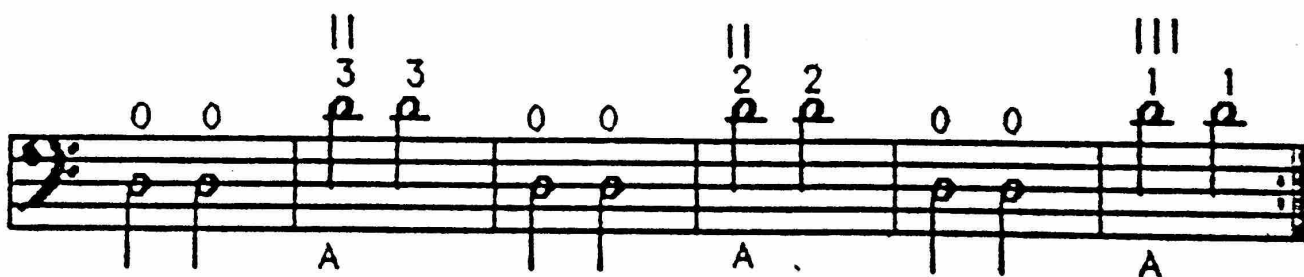
MATCHING PITCHES



TUNING HARMONICS



MATCHING PITCHES (SHIFTING)



"GHOST" TONES



Play each note until overtones ring on the other strings.
Hints: solid finger weight, exactly in tune, straight bow, lots of energy!!
Use as many bows as you need to hear the ringing--stop the bow on the string--and LISTEN!!