

A Beginner's Guide on [How to Tune a Violin](#)



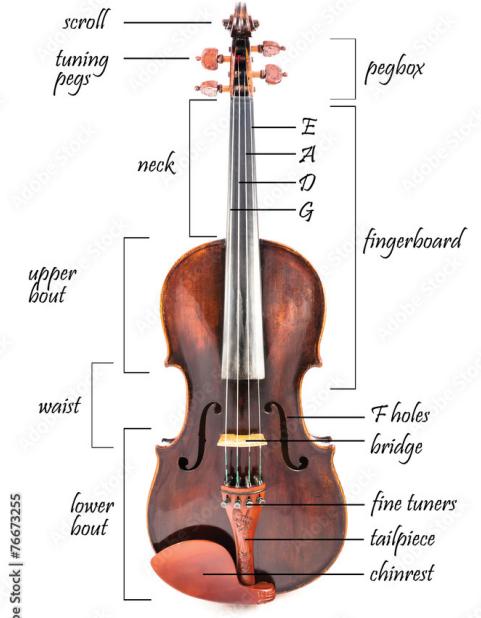
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Learning how to play an instrument can be fun and exciting but also a bit daunting. With the violin, there are so many basics to cover such as proper posture, bow movement, string notes, and tuning. Tuning is especially important because you can't practice a music piece with an [out-of-tune violin](#), right? Beethoven and Mozart would never approve of this!

As a beginner violin player, you might be wondering [how to tune a violin](#) properly. Even with instruments that are made for starting musicians (like [this Cecilio Violin](#)), tuning can seem like an overwhelming task. But don't worry! In this article, we'll give you a guide and some helpful tips on [how to tune your violin](#) using several different methods.

What Notes Are the Four Strings on a Violin?

Before you get started on learning [how to tune a violin](#), you should be familiar with the anatomy of the instrument. We provided an image of a violin below with each of the parts labeled for your reference, but for the purpose of this guide, you only need to focus on the strings, tuning pegs, and fine tuners.



[Image Link](#)

So, what are the four strings on a violin in terms of the notes that they play? From left to right, every violin has a G, D, A, and E string. The string with the lowest pitch is G while the string with the highest pitch is E. When indicating each of the string's scientific pitches, you'll also see the string notes written as G₃, D₄, A₄, and E₅.

To remember which string is which (from left to right), you can create a mnemonic for yourself or use the well-known one, **Good Dogs All Eat**. If you're not into mnemonics, simply note that G is the thickest string, followed by D, A, and E, which is the thinnest string.

How Are the Strings of a Violin Tuned?

When you're learning **how to tune a violin**, remember that the strings are usually tuned in what's known as "perfect fifths" in the music world. This means that each string is tuned to a pitch that matches the ones next to it. For example, if you played the D and A strings together and tuned them correctly, you shouldn't hear any dissonance; the two notes should sound like they belong together in harmony.

To help you visualize perfect fifths and what they are, below is an image of a piano with notes highlighted to indicate the term.



[Image Link](#)

On a side note, violin strings are usually tuned in this order: A, D, G and E.

Although there are several ways to tune a violin, we'll only cover the three main methods to keep things simple and beginner-friendly: using the [violin tuning pegs](#), [violin fine tuners](#), and an [electric violin tuner](#).

1. Violin Pegs

[Violin tuning pegs](#) are typically used to tune larger differences in pitch. If you find that a string's pitch is too low or flat, you should make it higher by tightening the string. If the pitch of a string is too high or sharp, then you need to lower it by loosening the string. To learn [how to tune a violin with pegs](#), follow the steps below:

1. Find the correct pitch of the string using a tuning fork, piano, pitch pipe, or online resource.
2. Place the violin upright on your lap so that the scroll is facing up. Make sure the strings are facing you.
3. With one hand, firmly hold the violin's upper bout.
4. With your other hand, grip a peg between your thumb and index finger.
5. To tighten a string and elevate the pitch, slightly turn the peg forward and away from you. To loosen and lower the pitch, slightly turn the peg backward and toward you. If you find the [violin pegs](#) slipping, push in a little as you turn them. Violins with geared pegs don't need to have their pegs pushed in because they function differently.



[Image Link](#)

2. Violin Fine Tuners

Violin fine tuners are usually used to tune small differences in pitch. However, not every violin has fine tuners for all four strings; in fact, you'll often see that professional violins only have one for the E string. But as a beginner with this instrument, you'll likely be using four fine tuners.

As we mentioned before, you need to tighten a string if its pitch is too low or flat and loosen a string if its pitch is too high or sharp. To use the **violin fine tuners**, follow the steps below:

1. Find the correct pitch of the string using a tuning fork, piano, pitch pipe, or online resource.
2. To tighten the string, turn the fine tuner clockwise. To loosen the string, turn the fine tuner counterclockwise. If you're not sure which way to turn the fine tuner, just remember the common saying, "righty tighty, lefty loosey."

At some point, you'll find that the **violin fine tuners** won't be able to turn anymore either in the clockwise or counterclockwise direction. If a fine tuner can no longer turn clockwise, you need to loosen it by turning it counterclockwise until the dial is loose enough to be used again. However, you'll need to use the **violin pegs** to tighten the strings. If a fine tuner can no longer be turned counterclockwise as it will fall out, you should turn it clockwise until it starts tightening the string.

When you use the **violin fine tuners**, you should always check to see how much distance is between them and the violin. For some instruments, the bottom of the fine tuners can

damage the surface of the violin when the dials are too tight and have been turned clockwise too much.



[Image Link](#)

3. Electric Violin Tuner

An **electronic violin tuner** (or more specifically, a **chromatic tuner**) can be useful if you're in a noisy environment, don't have a reference pitch, or want to tune to a specific note. Using a **violin tuner** of this kind isn't complicated at all; it listens to the pitch you play and lets you know whether it's too sharp or flat, or if you're perfectly in tune.

While many **chromatic tuners** are different, they all essentially work the same way:

- If a string's pitch on your violin is too low, then the line on the tuner will move left of the center.
- If a string's pitch on your violin is too high, then the line on the tuner will move right of the center.
- However, you won't need to do any tuning if you find that the line remains at the center of the tuner!

Whenever you use **chromatic tuners**, you should be wary of the fact that they tune to *any* note. For example, if you play the D string on your violin and its pitch is too flat, a **chromatic tuner** will indicate that it's in perfect tune and assume that you're trying to tune to another pitch (for example, a C# tune). However, some tuners have violin modes that limit the notes to G₃, D₄, A₄, and E₅ to avoid this confusion.

Feel free to check out [this Cecilio Violin](#). This violin kit comes with a **chromatic tuner** to easily start practicing tuning on your own!



[Image Link](#)

Common Tuning Questions

Although we've gone through some of the main methods used to tune a violin, you still might have some lingering questions about this topic. To help you get the information you need before you begin practicing your violin, here are a few common questions about tuning this kind of instrument:

How Do I Know If My Violin Is in Tune?

You can tell if your violin is in tune if the pitch of a string matches its corresponding reference pitch. To find the correct pitch your violin should be tuned to, you can use a tuning fork, piano, pitch pipe, online resource, or **electric violin tuner**.

How Often Should You Tune a Violin?

Did you know that temperature and humidity affect a violin's tune? As a musician, you should make it a habit to check if your violin is tuned before playing. Your instrument may not always need to be tuned, but the bottom line is to always check and make any necessary adjustments (especially if you practice often).

Is a Violin Hard to Tune?

Learning **how to tune a violin** may seem like a difficult task at first, but the more you practice and become accustomed to it, the easier it gets. In fact, as you tune your violin more regularly, you may find that you rely less on using reference pitches since your ears will be familiar with the correct string pitches!

How to Tune a Violin for Beginners: Extra Tips

Now that you know **how to tune a violin** properly, we'll leave you with a few extra tips when it comes to learning and practicing this essential skill:

- **Avoid over-tightened strings.** Tightening the strings too much can lead to increased tension and cause them to snap!
- **Always tune from a lower pitch to a higher pitch.** For example, if you find that a string's pitch is too high, start by lowering the pitch to below the correct note and then tune up. This gives you more control over tuning and prevents strings from breaking.
- **Turn the violin pegs in small increments (less than one millimeter per turn).** While it's true that violin pegs are used when there's larger differences in pitch, the smallest turn has a significant impact on the resulting sound. Be extra careful when using the pegs!

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