

Preparing for the Bow

Flexibility

We need lots of **flexibility** in our right hand when playing with the bow.



Before we pick up the bow for the first time, we need to make sure that our hand is **flexible, relaxed**, and in the right **shape**.

The rest of the bow arm - including the wrist - needs to be flexible too. The wrist should never lock in one position.

Here are some activities for you to practise *without* the bow. They will help you to find good **hand** and **arm shapes**, so that when you begin to play *with* the bow, you will already be really flexible and relaxed.

Activities

1) Shoulder Shrugs

Centre your body, and make sure your posture is balanced. **Breathe** in deeply, and **raise** your shoulders to your ears. Hold them there for a couple of seconds, then breathe out fast (make a big sighing noise!) as you **drop** your shoulders.

2) Air Violin

Keep your shoulders relaxed, and raise your arms up to playing position (where the violin would be). Pretend to play with the bow - first, move from the elbow, without raising your shoulders. Keep the wrist free too!

3) Find the Rabbit Shape

Make a rabbit shape with your right hand: curve your thumb, then drop the second and third fingers over the thumb to make the rabbit's teeth! Wiggle your 1st finger and little finger to make the ears of the rabbit!

4) Bounce the Invisible Ball

Bounce an imaginary ball down to the ground and back, whilst keeping your hand in the 'bow hold' (rabbit) shape. Keep the wrist relaxed and free as you bounce, but don't wiggle it too much!