



# Choosing The String Instrument That's Right for *YOU!*

A Guide for the Beginning String Player  
From **Musical Innovations**



There are four basic instruments in the string orchestra - violin, viola, cello and string bass. The primary consideration in choosing a string instrument is the student's preference, as all of these instruments come in partial and full sizes so that all students can succeed on their chosen instrument regardless of their size. A teacher or your **Musical Innovations** representative would be happy to give you the opportunity to try all four of the string instruments, and to measure you to be sure you get the correct size.



**Violin.** The smallest and highest voice of the string family, the violin often plays the melody. If you enjoy higher sounds, you will like the sound of the violin! Violins have been around for nearly four hundred years. They are played by placing the instrument under the chin and holding it at the neck with your left hand; and either plucking the strings or using a bow with the right hand. All band and string instruments are the same whether the student is right or left-handed; there is no such thing as a "left-handed" violin, trombone, flute or cello!

**Viola.** The viola looks like the violin, but is the "alto voice" of the string family. Some call it the violin's "big sister." If you enjoy singing harmony and listening to lower pitches, you will probably love the viola! It is held the same way as a violin, but the viola reads the alto clef and plays lower notes than the violin can - it can play six half-steps lower, to be exact! While violins and cellos are measured in fractional sizes ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{3}{4}$  and  $4/4$ ), violas are sized in inches - 12", 13", 14", 15" and so on.



**Cello.** The cello is shaped like a violin or viola, but is larger and can play much lower notes. It is played while sitting down, held between your legs, and rests on a long metal rod on the bottom called an endpin. The cello is the "tenor voice" of the string family, and reads bass (and sometimes tenor) clef. People often enjoy the many roles the cello plays in the orchestra - sometimes it plays the melody, sometimes it plays harmony, and sometimes plays along with the bass line.

**String Bass.** Also called bass viol, or upright bass, this is the largest member of the string family and is often taller than the person playing it! Like the cello, it rests on the floor on a metal endpin. Its four strings are the same as the four strings on a bass guitar, and the music is written in bass clef. The bass player will either stand up or sit on a stool next to the instrument. But don't worry, it also comes in 1/4 and 1/2 size if the full size is too tall for you! If your ear is drawn to very low pitches, and you enjoy singing low notes, the bass may be the right instrument for you!



**Musical Innovations**

150-G Tanner Road at Butler, Greenville, SC 29607-5917

info@musicalinnovations.biz



(864) 28-MUSIC [286-8742]

www.musicalinnovations.biz

© 2017