

# Music of the World

## Chordophones - The Modern BOW

**Bows:** Instruments of the violin family use several techniques to vibrate the strings. One can strum, pluck (pizzicato) or bow.

The bow is made of wood and horsehair, essentially. Tension is made using the screw at the end of the frog. Rosin is applied to the horsehair to grip the string. There are numerous techniques and playing styles using the bow which take much practice and mastery.

Bows can be quite ornate sometimes embellished or inlaid with mother of pearl, silver, gold, or other ornamentation. Rare bows can be priced in the tens of thousands of dollars.

Choosing a bow can be as essential as choosing the instrument:

<https://stringsmagazine.com/a-guide-to-buying-a-bow/>

Right, the frogs are shown of the violin (top), viola (middle), and cello (bottom). Note that the violin bow is squared but the viola and cello bows are rounded.

Bass bows can be either French, shown on top (right), which is similar to the violin family (overhand) or German, below, which is played in handshake or “hacksaw” position.



