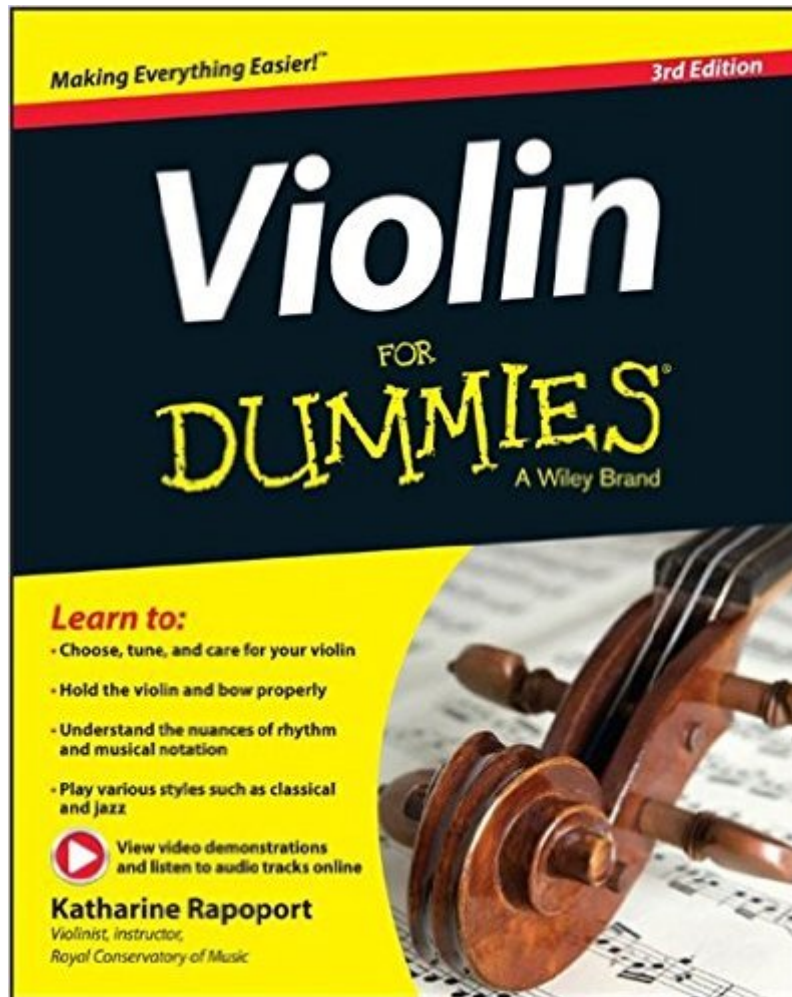


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# Violin For Dummies, Book + Online Video & Audio Instruction



## Synopsis

The beginner's guide to learning the violin for any musical style *Violin For Dummies* helps you teach yourself to play the violin, even if you've never read a note of music. From choosing the right violin for you to playing a variety of musical styles, this book has you covered. You'll start with the basics of posture and bowing technique, learn how to tune your instrument and keep it in beautiful condition with regular maintenance. You'll learn how to read and feel the music, and how to inject your own personality into whatever you play. Before you know it, you'll be playing classical, jazz, country, and more, as you become a bona fide violin player. The included audio and video instruction encourages you to play along as you learn, and allow you to hear, see, and imitate proper technique. The violin's small size, portability, and mimicry of the human voice have made it popular across cultures and throughout time. This book shows you how to teach yourself the basics so you can start playing quickly. Start with the basics of proper hold and bowing technique Learn how to properly tune and care for your violin Understand the nuances of rhythm and musical notation Play classical, jazz, and other popular styles of music The violin has a reputation of being difficult to learn, but the reality is that it's difficult to master. Anyone can learn, and practice over time will refine your technique and your musical style. You'll have fun, make music, and maybe even fall in love with this instrument that has inspired some of the world's best musicians and composers. Get started today, the easy way, with *Violin For Dummies*.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As a beginner, I've been trying to find just the right tool to teach me the violin, short of actually hiring a teacher. I've used "Dummies" books for years, going back to the olden days when I got a copy of "The Internet for Dummies." Later I learned how to use Adobe Illustrator from a "Dummies" book and was able to complete a huge marketing project because of it. I subscribe to an online violin tutor program but find that I'm constantly stopping and starting the videos. Plus, it's difficult to go back to and find lessons that answer simple questions. That's why this "Dummies" book is so helpful. Everything is laid out chapter by chapter. Some can be skipped, depending on one's knowledge of music. For example, I play the guitar and clarinet, so basic information about music, notes and tempo aren't needed. But, I know absolutely nothing about the violin so I need to learn every part of it, how to hold it, how to use the bow, and on and on. Also, clearly technical information is labeled so, if you're not a nerd, you can skip it. The good thing about a book is that you can mark important sections with sticky notes or simply use the table of contents or index. I go back and forth between the pages often, particularly to check diagrams. I've never been able to do that well with electronic means, either websites or an e-book reader. There's also an excellent online site that correlates with the lessons and tunes. It's well organized and complements both the listening and playing experiences. Once opened to a page, the binding allows the book to remain open. I don't need to put weights on each side. It stays open, which is exactly what you need while studying a page with your arms full of a violin and a bow. The only thing that I didn't like -- and this is probably just me -- is the corny jokes. I do love a good joke but some of these are just groaners. I suppose it's the "Dummies" style and a way to make learning the violin less daunting, but I think some of the jokes were a stretch. Not worth taking off a star or even a quarter of a star though. Good luck. Go out there and make some beautiful music!

If you're considering taking up the violin and seeing how far you can get on your own without a teacher there are things to consider if for no other reason to save yourself frustration, boredom and possible needless expense. What kind of music are you interested in playing? What excites you about the violin and what do you hope to accomplish with it? Can you read music and are you willing to learn if the music you wish to play requires it? How much time and effort can you reasonably hope to devote to practicing? Be as specific (and honest with yourself) as possible. 'Violin for Dummies' is ideal for adult learners who, like many adult beginners of varying pursuits, have a fascination with technique and learning the right way. In this case, classical violin technique with an emphasis on nuanced bow control, dynamics, expressive vibrato and reading from score. (Of course, as everyone soon discovers, there are

numerous "right ways" to do just about everything!). I think the book works best for those who enjoy learning from text and static descriptions supplemented with brief aural and video illustrations. It's not as picture-heavy as other beginner violin books, nor is it as dense with music examples as many classic methods. Speaking of musical examples, one disadvantage of virtually all Dummies titles that include written music is the near-uniform size of the books and the corresponding music font they often use. I've always found them difficult to position and hold down on a music stand, as well as read from a comfortable distance. There are alternatives such as lying the book on a desk and sitting before it with the instrument to meet that more of a "fiddle approach", practical and perhaps less fussy about traditional ways. If you're more interested in fiddle (bluegrass, Irish) or jazz I don't think this book is the best choice. While other styles are touched upon, the core here is classical technique and orientation. I didn't think I had anything more to learn about chin rests but the section on the four popular kinds and how they accommodate various body types (i.e. arm/neck length, jaw width/fleshiness) not to mention the advantage of a certain sitting orientation to the music stand - was fascinating and had me digging out my old discards to check if I'd missed something. A little disappointedly, the author doesn't go into quite the same detail discussing shoulder rests but there's plenty of text and video information available out there I'd encourage self-learners to seek out. Regardless of the music you're playing it's important to consider playing comfort and balance. String players (like pianists) are subject to a higher percentage of playing-related injuries than other instrumentalists. The reasons are complex (i.e. traditional techniques no longer appropriate for modern instruments, dogmatic teachers/methods, misunderstood body-use, inappropriate emulation of well-known players, misapplied athletic orientation to practicing). Older bodies are rarely as supple as they once were and if you have concerns or are simply fascinated by the physical mechanics - I'd recommend looking into body mapping and the Alexander Technique as applied to string playing. A particular book I enjoy is "What Every Violinist Needs to Know about the Body" by Jennifer Johnson. "Violin for Dummies" is fairly comprehensive and most of it is dedicated to playing technique with a large library of audio and video illustrations (downloadable and viewable online). There's a mix of exercises focused on particular technical points as well as generally short excerpts and arrangements of 'real violin music'. But the music in this case is really meant to supplement the technical training - it's not a book that's going to provide much in the way of 'easy or intermediate' piece with piano accompaniment. There's also quite a lot of solid information on buying and maintaining your

violin and seeking out a teacher to expand your learning if you choose to. Bottom Line: For classical orientation 'Violin for Dummies' is accessible and 'correct'. The author teaches at the Royal College of Music and writes very engagingly (with just the right amount of humor for my taste).

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