

### Instrument Check-Out

Students are permitted to check out their instruments for practice at home. High school students are expected to practice regularly outside of class. All students who wish to check out their instruments must agree to the following:

1. **Instruments must be returned before school the following day.** (Instruments checked out on Friday must be returned before school on Monday.)
2. Instruments must be properly cared for and returned in the same condition they are received. **They should never be used by anyone except for the music student:** brothers, sisters, and parents should not be touching the instrument. It is not a toy.
3. Students and parents are responsible for all damage that occurs to the instrument outside of the school. (This does not include damage that occurs owing to a faulty instrument.) Any loss or damage must be reported immediately upon return. **Do not attempt any repairs yourself.**
4. Students will practice conscientiously on their instruments at home.

Due to their size, all cellos and basses must be transported home by car (unless the student lives nearby), usually on weekends. Where checking out an instrument is not possible, the Music room is also open for practice several days a week during lunch, and Mondays and Thursdays after school.

To obtain permission, parents and students must sign and detach the bottom of this form. Keep the top for your reference. Some additional Instrument Care Tips are listed on the back.

In Stewardship,



Eric Shieh,  
Music Teacher

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I, \_\_\_\_\_ (student's name), have read the conditions for checking out my instrument, and agree to take proper care of my instrument, return it on time, and practice carefully at home.

Signature of student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I give permission for my child to check out his or her instrument this year for practice. I have read the conditions, and agree to take responsibility for proper care of the instrument and any damage to the instrument while it is in the possession of my child.

Signature of parent/guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Instrument Care Tips

1. **Keep your instrument out of the heat or cold.** AVOID rapid temperature changes: if you bring your instrument from a cold area to a warm area, leave it in its case for a while. NEVER leave it in a car except when transporting it.
2. **Keep your instrument in its case** when you are not using it, and away from young children. Set cellos and basses on their *side*.
3. **Do not tune the instrument.** If it falls out of tune, you may still practice on it, but wait for Mr. Shieh to tune it when you return it to MELS. (Eighth-grade and high school students who have passed their tuning test may tune at home.)
4. **Always loosen the bow** when you are not using it.
5. After you are finished playing remove any rosin and hand oils from the instrument with a soft cloth. Don't let rosin build up on your instrument. The cloth should not be used on the bow.

## Practice Tips

- **Quality, not Quantity:** *Playing through* and *practicing* your music are two different things. To practice, focus on the hard spots and get to work! Slow it down, change rhythms, change dynamics, sing, count rhythms, play for a friend, etc. Don't ever let yourself play anything wrong!
- **Materials:** Music, a pencil, and stand are essential. Metronome and mirror are recommended. A quiet place free from distractions is priceless.
- **Set goals:** Ask yourself "what do I want to accomplish today?" This could be anything from slowly learning a new piece to fixing some problem spots or even working on technique.
- **Warm-up:** Each practice session should begin by strengthening your fingers and arms through scales, exercises, or easy songs. This is a great time to focus on the basics: posture, bow-hold, right-hand technique, and left-hand technique.
- **Write it down:** mark up your music. Write in reminders, circle dynamics, and place an "X" next to problem spots.
- **Fun time:** At the end of each practice session, it's always fun to sit back, relax, and enjoy playing through a piece with your phone/CD/device-thing. Or to jam along to Green Day.