

FIG. 1.

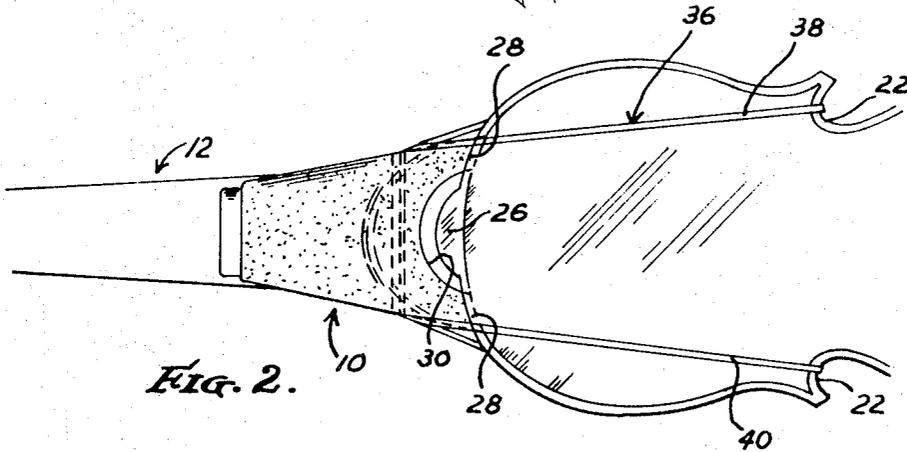


FIG. 2.

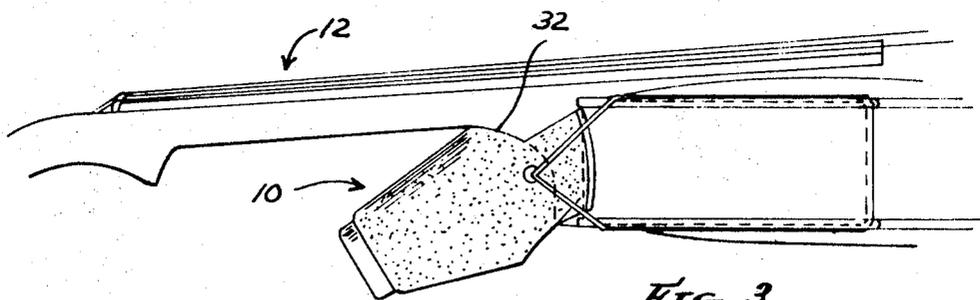


FIG. 3.

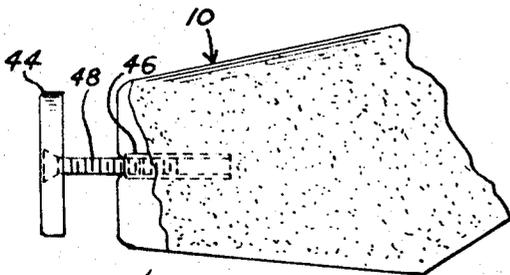


FIG. 4.

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## HAND-POSITIONING DEVICE FOR VIOLINISTS

This invention relates to a hand-positioning device for use by violin students, chiefly beginners, the object being to assist the student in maintaining the hand in which the violin is held, in an attitude and position which will facilitate and encourage movement of the finger tips of that hand fluently and habitually, directly toward and from the strings. This technique is of general importance, but it is of especial importance in enabling and training the student to execute the vibrato effect.

It is an object of the invention to provide a device of the character stated which includes means for attaching and holding it to the violin stably and dependably but in a gentle and yielding manner, so that all liability of marring or crushing the violin body is avoided. The elastic means through which this object is attained acts under tension to draw the device toward the body and neck of the violin, desirably has a considerable range of stretching, is normally stretched to a degree considerably short of its limit, and may be of limited strength so that it will break before any damage can be done to the violin by or through the device. It is a feature that the elastic means extends from the body of the hand-positioning device as two band-formed loops, which loops are adapted, respectively, to extend under tension around opposite sides of the outer body portion of the instrument, and to be removably detained in the hollows provided at opposite sides of the waist portion of the instrument.

It is a further object to construct the body of the device of soft but firm and very light for example, cellular plastic material, such as Styrofoam or soft wood. This material is non-resonant, is nonabrasive, and is so light that it does not materially alter the feel and balance of the instrument. The body of the device can be readily ground, filed or sanded away to readjust just the slope of the surfaces that bear against the violin body and the neck anchor, thus enabling the device to be adjusted with nicety to the individual needs of the user.

It is an object to provide further for adaptation of the device by including means for increasing and diminishing the effective length of the device.

It is a still further object to keep the device clean and presentable by making the actual hand-engaging portion of the device include a hand-engaging button or body of a light, smoothly polished, dense materials which does not tend to pick up and accumulate dirt, and which can be readily cleaned with a damp cloth.

It is still another object to provide a device of the kind referred to which consists of few, simple and inexpensive parts, and which can be fabricated and assembled with little labor cost.

Other objects and advantages will hereinafter appear.

In the drawing forming part of this specification,

FIG. 1 is a fragmentary view in side elevation of a violin held in the left hand of a violinist in a typical, correct playing attitude, and having applied to it a hand-positioning device which constitutes a now preferred, practical and advantageous embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 2 is a fragmentary bottom plan view of the violin and the applied hand-positioning device;

FIG. 3 is a fragmentary view in side elevation of the violin and the applied hand-positioning device; and

FIG. 4 is a fragmentary view in side elevation of the hand-positioning device, but showing the device elongated by adjustment of the hand-engaging member.

The term "violin" as used herein is intended to include any member of the violin family which is small and light enough to be supported between a hand and the neck of the violinist when being played.

A novel hand-positioning device 10 is shown in FIGS. 1 to 3 as applied to a violin 12 of conventional construction. As usual, the violin includes a body 14 having an inner end 16, an outer end 18 and an intervening waist portion 20, so that recesses 22 are formed at opposite sides of the waist portion. A neck portion 24 is fixedly secured to the outer end of the body through a neck-anchoring member 26. The neck-

anchoring member 26 forms an outward bulge at the outer extremity of the body, and serves to secure the neck rigidly to the body, making it unitary with the body. The violin parts thus far referred to, like those shown but not mentioned, are always present in a violin, but the mentioned parts, of necessity, enter into the following description and explanation of the novel hand-positioning device 10.

The body of the device 10 is generally and desirably of truncated conical form, but with certain portions omitted in order to adapt the device to fit snugly and stably against the outer extremity of the violin body 14, to fit around and embrace the neck-anchoring member 26, simultaneously to bear firmly and stably at each side of the neck anchor of the violin against portions of the end of the violin body which are widely spaced vertically from one another and simultaneously to engage the lower side of the neck immediately adjacent to the neck-anchoring member and at a substantial distance outward therefrom. To this end, the base of the conical body of the device 10 is formed with concave surfaces 28 which bear against the violin body alongside the anchoring member 26, with a groove or channel 30 which receives, and may fit, the anchoring member 26, and with a notch 32 in which the lower portion of the inner end of the neck fits.

All of the bearing surfaces referred to are sloped to harmonize with the attitude of the device 10 as shown in FIGS. 1 and 3, —in other words, to cause the axis of the cone to incline downward and outward, relative to the body of the violin at an angle of the order of that indicated in FIGS. 1 and 3, to wit, in the neighborhood, roughly, of 20° to 30°.

A bore 34 is provided through the body, the bore extending crosswise of the device and preferably at right angles to the cone axis. As shown, the bore intersects the cone axis, but this is not an essential relationship. An elastic member 36, desirably consisting of a single rubber band, or a pair of connected rubber bands, may have a midportion thereof lodged in the bore, and the looped ends exposed at opposite sides of the conical body. One of the loops 38 is passed under tension around one side of the outer end of the violin body and is caught in one of the recesses 22, and the other loop 40 is passed under tension around the opposite side of the outer end of the body, and is caught in the other recess 22.

With this arrangement, the body 10 is firmly and dependably, but yielding, maintained in the position in which it is shown in FIGS. 1, 2 and 3. The elastic member puts the body of the violin under no pressure which can damage or seriously mar it. Should the body 10 snag on, or be hit by, an extraneous object, the elastic member 36 will stretch, or even break, before any damage to the violin can occur.

The tensed elastic bands are incapable of applying a crushing force to the body as a positive pressure clamp in inexperienced hands might do. Neither is the tone of the instrument detrimentally altered, as it would be by a positively acting clamp applied to the outer margin of the violin body.

The body 10 is desirably composed of a soft, nonabrasive, nonresonant, but firm material which can be efficiently and effectively molded or otherwise formed to the desired shape. For this purpose a cellular, thermoplastic material such as Styrofoam is admirably suited. The Styrofoam body can not only be readily molded to the desired shape, but it also has the merit that it can be readily filed, sanded or ground to modify the slope of the violin-contacting surfaces as may be required for adapting the device to the needs of a particular individual.

While Styrofoam is sufficiently soft to be characterized as nonabrasive, it may, if applied many times to a violin in a bare condition, tend to mar the finish somewhat. Accordingly, pads 42 of felt may be removably adhered to the surfaces which press directly against the violin body.

Contact with the hand is substantially confined to the outer end of the device. Since Styrofoam will become soiled by dirty little hands, and will pick up body oils even from relatively clean hands, a button 44 of relatively dense, polished, non-absorbent material is desirably provided. The button can be readily wiped clean with a damp cloth.

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The length of the device should vary with the size of the user's hand, and provision is made for such variation. The body is molded around an internally threaded sleeve 46, the sleeve being disposed to extend axially of the body or at any desired angle to the axis. The outer end face of the body 10 is desirably formed to extend at right angles to the axis of the sleeve. The button 44 is provided with a threaded stem 48 of substantial length, which stem is screwed into the sleeve 46 to any desired depth, and may be adjusted in and out by rotation of the button 44.

It is not essential, of course, that a single model be made adaptable to all violins and to hands of all sizes, but the device as shown and described is sufficiently adaptable so that all needs can be satisfied by a very restricted number of models.

I have described what I believe to be the best embodiment of my invention.

I claim:

1. A hand-positioning device for violinists, designed for firm and stable, but at the same time for yieldable and separable, attachment to a violin comprising, in combination, a body of light but firm material shaped at one of its ends simultaneously to bear firmly and stably at each side of the neck anchor of the violin against portions of the outer end of the violin body which are widely spaced vertically from one another, and simultaneously to engage the lower side of the violin neck in an area well removed from the body, and at its opposite end to form a hand abutment, and elastic, violin-attaching means which include opposed loops, said means extending from opposite sides of the body of the device at points nearer to the violin-engaging surfaces of the device than the hand-engaging

surface is, said means, including the loops, being long enough when stretched for the loops to extend under tension around opposite sides of the outer end of the violin and to be caught and anchored in the waist portion of the violin.

2. A hand-positioning device for violinists as set forth in claim 1 in which the outer end of the device, designed to bear in the palm of the hand, is equipped with a light, firm, solid and smooth hand-contact member which resists the accumulation of dirt and is readily washable.

3. A hand-positioning device for violinists as set forth in claim 2 in which the body of the device has fixed within it an internally threaded member, disposed to extend axially of said body, and the contact member has included, as a unitary part thereof, a threaded stem constructed and arranged to be screwed into and out of the internally threaded member for diminishing and increasing the effective length of the device.

4. A hand-positioning device for violinists as set forth in claim 1 in which the body of the device is formed with a transverse passage through which the stretchable band material, designed to be looped in a stretched condition around opposite sides of the violin, in the waist portion thereof, extends.

5. A hand-positioning device for violinists as set forth in claim 1 in which the body of the device consists chiefly of a soft, molded, cellular plastic material which may bear directly against the body and neck of the violin in a firm and dependable manner without scratching or otherwise damaging the body or neck.

6. A hand-positioning device for violinists as set forth in claim 5 in which the cellular plastic material is Styrofoam.

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