

Ten Things About Teaching the Cello You Always Wanted to Know, But Were Afraid to Ask...

Dr. Catherine R. Hudnall

1. **The cello can fit beautifully!**
 - a. Sizing for the right fit
 - b. Fitting the cello to the body
 - c. Hug, baby, hug! 😊

2. **Seated posture is from the ground up** ↑
 - a. Feet flat on the floor
 - b. The importance of the endpin
 - c. Correct angle of the cello
 - d. Tall but relaxed
 - e. Shoulders over bottom

3. **The Thumb and Left Elbow are KEY!**
 - a. Free the Thumb!
 - b. Keep it to the left
 - c. ELBOW: Feel for the rain, Coat Hanger
 - d. Keep the elbow the same in lower & upper positions
 - e. It supports everything you do with your left hand...

4. **The Bow Hand is not Rocket Science...**
 - a. Curved, relaxed fingers
 - b. Placement of fingers
 - c. Corn patch, rubber bands, seat belts, markers - straws, glow-sticks, pixie sticks

5. **The skeleton of the shift is not spooky!**
 - a. *As you shift up, keep your thumb to the left*
 - b. Thumb carpet, Playing without thumb (taping, folding, or just releasing behind)
 - c. Find some way to measure shifts - - can be a finger that is not being used OR the shifting finger

6. **Fourth position is "home base."**
 - a. Keep the palm of the hand away from the shoulder of the cello
 - b. fourth position and first position etude

7. **The "Yumpa Yumpa" is good medicine for shifting**
 - a. This works for any instrument!
 - b. Shifting under slurs allows you to hear your destination before landing.
 - c. As with any instrument, sing the note in your head before you shift or as you shift

8. **The Bow stroke is really upside-down**
 - a. Wrist in and out
 - b. The contact point with the string(tunnel exercise)
 - c. Pulling the sound out of the instrument
 - d. The upside-down bowl

9. **Creating a big, beautiful sound takes pull...**
 - a. Less is always more!
 - b. Stealth motion in left hand
 - c. Fingers low to ground

10. **Thumb Position - the next great adventure!**
 - a. Thumb is perpendicular to the strings
 - b. Thumbnail faces the scroll
 - c. Pull thumb down with left elbow - think of your left arm as one big thumb!
 - d. Fingernails face strings to the right

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Reference

Matz, Rudolf (2000). *For Young Hands: 54 Short Etudes for Violoncello*, New York, NY: Dominus Music.

Contact Information

Cathie Hudnall; Brookwood High School; Cathie_hudnall@gwinnett.k12.ga.us; 678-639-3456