

When is a Fiddle not a Violin?

Usually:

- If you play folk (fiddle) tunes, it's a **fiddle**.
- If you play classics (orchestra and tuxedo-music), it's a **violin**.

But it's also true that:

- Itzhak Perlman, one of the best classical players, calls his instrument '**my fiddle**'.
- Many well-known fiddle-tune players call their instrument '**my violin**'.

Go figure

The Differences

- **Fiddle players** like a flatter bridge, so they can play double strings easier.
- **Classical players** need a rounder bridge because their strings are thicker, and they lean more into the string with the bow.
- **Fiddle players** like steel-core strings to make the notes ZING through the guitar, piano and bass. Quicker response on the fast tunes, too.
- **Classical players** like a thicker string (synthetic or gut) to produce of deeper, more resonant tone.
- **Fiddle players** hold the bow and violin in many different ways.
- **Classical players** are generally agreed in how to do it, with some small variations.
- **Fiddle players** (mostly) keep the left hand in first position.
- **Classical players** spend years learning to play every possible note of the fingerboard.

Similarities

- **The instruments** are constructed the same way, inside and out.
- **Bows** are the same, though classical players agonize over how many ounces (grams) their bow weighs..
- **A talented fiddler** with no lessons will play **exactly the same tuning** as a classical player with thousands of dollars worth of lessons.
- **Fiddlers and Violinists** brings smiles and tears to many, many people, everywhere.

