

## BOW RATING

“There are three important things to consider in choosing a bow,” renowned Parisian bow maker Stéphane Thomachot once told *Strings*: “No. 1 is sound, No. 2 is sound, and No. 3 is sound.” The first four characteristics listed in the chart below are the keys to evaluating the potential sound produced by a bow. The remaining items go into more detail, helping you to identify specific factors in producing that sound. Before you shop, take a moment to assess the strengths and weaknesses of your current bow and determine what you want your new bow to accomplish. And remember that no single bow is likely to be ideal for everything (solo work, chamber music, and so on) or to perform well in every environment (the sound qualities of performance spaces vary). So you most likely will need several bows to meet your various needs.

### A CHECKLIST FOR RATING BOWS

*Suggested rating scale: Poor = 1, Fair = 2, Average = 3, Good = 4, Excellent = 5*

ATTRIBUTE	YOUR BOW	TRIAL BOW
1. Strength/overall firmness		
2. Flexibility		
3. Weight		
4. Balance		
5. Stability (no shaking when played)		
6. Firmness (at tip, middle, and frog)		
7. Legato		
8. Staccato		
9. Ricochet		
10. Sautillé		
11. Overall sound quality (piano, forte, and so on)		
12. Ease of playing		
13. Appearance (aesthetic qualities)		
14. Condition (damage or wear)		
15. Value		
16. Other		
<b>TOTAL RATING (add points)</b>		
Notes:		