

The final shape of the bar

After the bass bar is glued in, it is carved to its final shape. Initially, a knife is used to speed up the work, later a small fingerplane is used. The final smoothing is done with sandpaper of different grits.

Because the shapes of the archings as well as the height and the thickness of the tops vary considerably, no final measurements can be given for the bar.

From practical experience some rules are known and may be used as a starting point:

- If the arching is very high, the bar needs less height.
- If the arching is rather flat, the bar needs more height.

The highest parts of the modern bars extend above the surface of the top a little bit. The length of the highest section depends on the shape of the arching.

The stiffness of the top and bar can be tested by slight, careful bending lengthwise. The upper part, between the bridge line and the upper edge of the top, should be a little stiffer than the lower part.

The bar decreases towards the ends to a height of 1.5 - 3 mm. In this matter various makers' opinions and experiences are very different.

After the final trimming the tap-tone of the belly will be the same as before the sound-holes were cut. The more material is removed from the bar the lower the tap-tone sounds.



The bar can be shaped in several ways:



Similar to a Gothic arch in the middle, and round at the ends (as Stradivari did)



Lentil-shaped