

A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE BENT ENDPIN

by

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The bent endpin was developed for me by the luthier Horst Grünert. Its purpose is to change the center of gravity of the double bass so that a standing player will feel less weight on the thumb supporting the neck.

In my approach to the instrument the left hand has access to both ends of the fingerboard and the bow arm can apply weight equally on the four strings without the necessity of turning the instrument. The bent endpin encourages an “opening” of the face of the bass and obliges the player to stand erect. Since the bass is at a steeper angle to the player it is automatically natural to apply the weight of both arms, especially the bow arm, with relaxed weight rather than muscular pressure. Notice also that the sound of the instrument is projected more efficiently at this angle.

HOW TO MAKE A BENT ENDPIN

Any steel rod may be bent. Grünert uses the Götz endpin assembly which has a sufficiently thick rod (10mm). If a thinner rod such as is found on cheaper endpin assemblies is bent it will tend to wobble. It is possible to bend hollow endpins such as the Ulsa model but the procedure is more complicated. The rod is bent at a 44° angle. For maximum effectiveness, establish the length of a straight endpin with the bass in playing position and bend the rod at the point where the rod leaves the socket.

The bass cannot be carried around with the non-retractable bent endpin sticking out, so a short rod with a rubber tip (or a wheel) is a necessary piece of equipment.

Equipment:

- Mapp Gas torch. Propane will work but more slowly.
- Vise.
- Bucket of water.
- Grinding wheel or hand file.

How to do it:

The endpin will be bent at the point where it leaves the socket when it has been adjusted for playing.

Clamp it vertically in the vise and heat the bending point to incandescence.

Wearing a glove, pull the endpin back to the desired angle.

Remove it from the vise and plunge it into a bucket of water to temper the steel.

Grind a flat spot on the pin just above the bend. This is where the screw will hit when it is installed. Without this flat spot the endpin would twist in the socket.