

# 從善如流

*cong2 shan4 ru2 liu2*

MTRC Ltd has relaxed size limits on musical instruments slightly. Some instruments such as the cello may now be carried on trains, which is very convenient for musicians and students.

A permit is needed, which is understandable as the company also has the more important duty of ensuring the safety of passengers. Barring unexpected problems, the arrangement should become permanent. The company is also looking at whether to relax luggage size for sports equipment.

The change comes in the wake of a public outcry after a music student was told not to bring their cello on trains. Some may feel the company is just succumbing (屈服) to public pressure, but we may also view its change more positively as “從善如流” (*cong2 shan4 ru2 liu2*).

“從” (*cong2*) is “to follow,” “善” (*shan4*) means “righteousness,” “good,” “satisfactory,” “如” (*ru2*) is “according to,” “as,” “like,” and “流” (*liu2*) means

## Idiom by Lon Yan

“to flow.” Literally, “從善如流” (*cong2 shan4 ru2 liu2*) is “follow righteousness like the flow.”

It means “to do good naturally and happily,” “to forge ahead in doing what is right.” The idiom describes someone who is willing to accept good advice, and swiftly follow the right path like going with the flow of water.

The opposite of “從善如流” (*cong2 shan4 ru2 liu2*) is “冥頑不靈” (*ming2 wan2 bu4 ling2*), which means “impervious to reason or advice.” When a person refuses to listen to reason and stubbornly adheres to a foolish course of action, we can say “You are “冥頑不靈” (*ming2 wan2 bu4 ling2*)!”

### Terms containing the character “善” (*shan4*) include:

善意 (*shan4 yi4*) – a good intention

善良 (*shan4 liang2*) – good and honest

善心 (*shan4 xin1*) – kindness

善用 (*shan4 yong4*) – to make good use of