Finger Action/Shoulder Swing Exercises

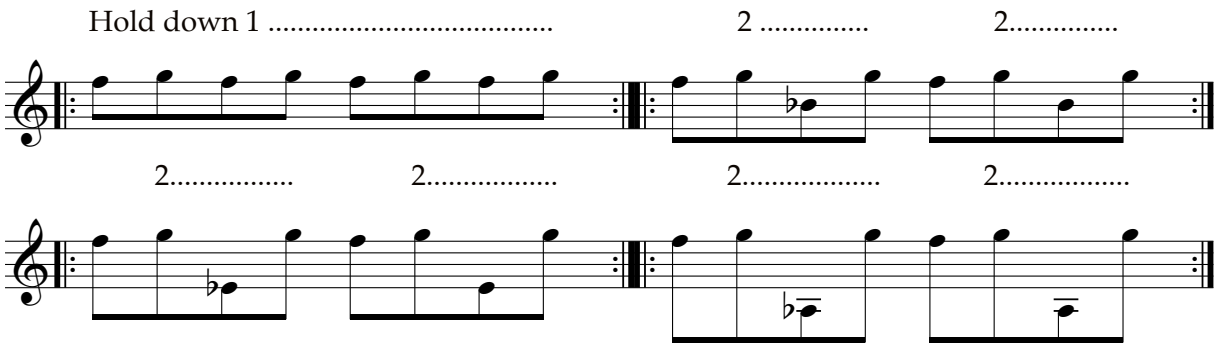
Building Finger Strength and Independence

Do the following exercises without the bow. Focus on lifting and dropping the finger from the base joint. Make sure the left shoulder is relaxed so that the elbow can gently swing to accommodate string changes. Repeat each exercise several time

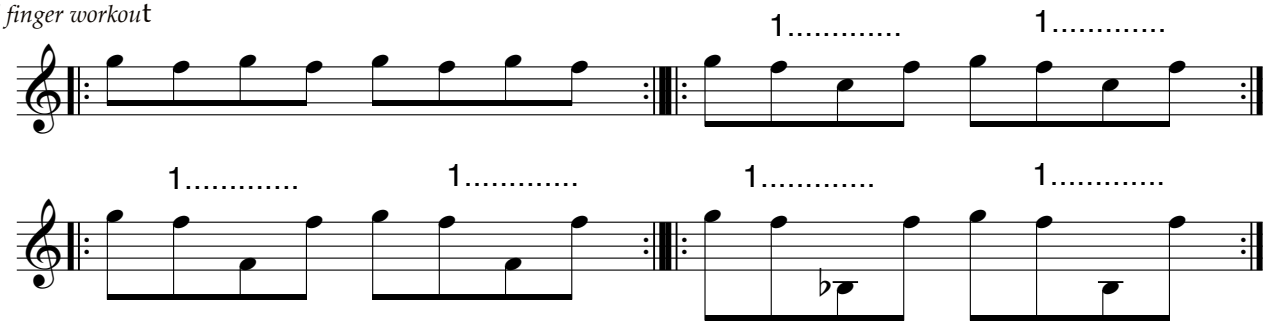
Building Strong Finger Action

From Gaylord Yost Studies in Finger Action and Position Playing

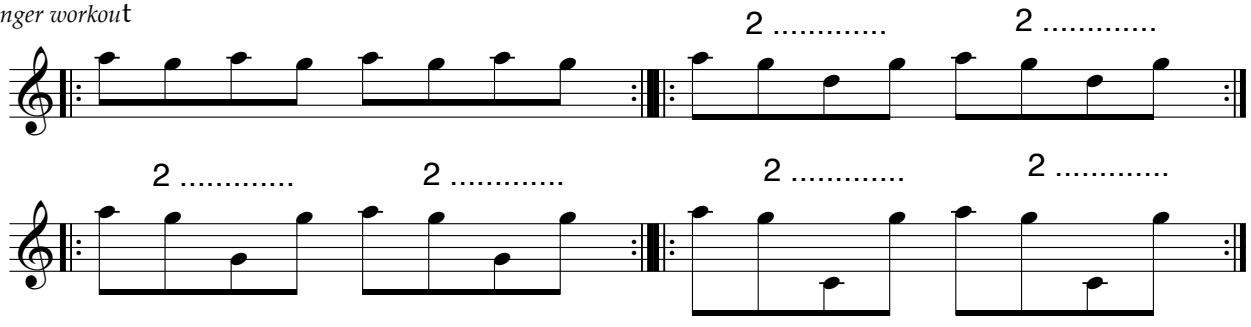
1st finger workout



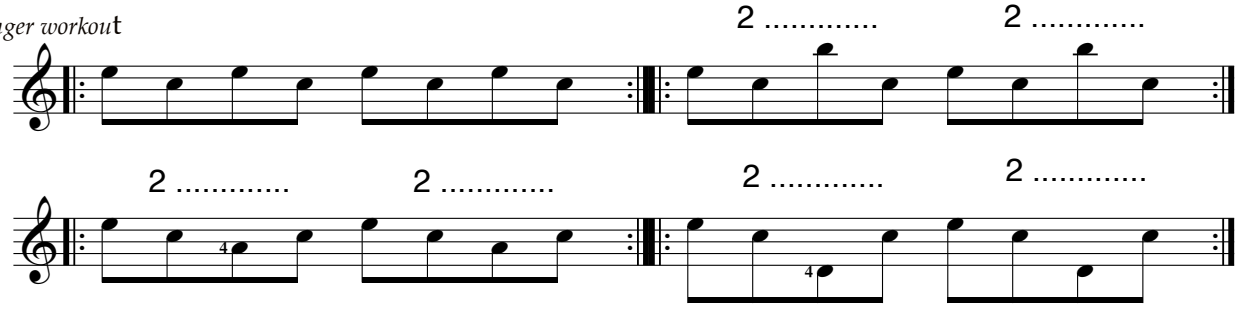
2nd finger workout

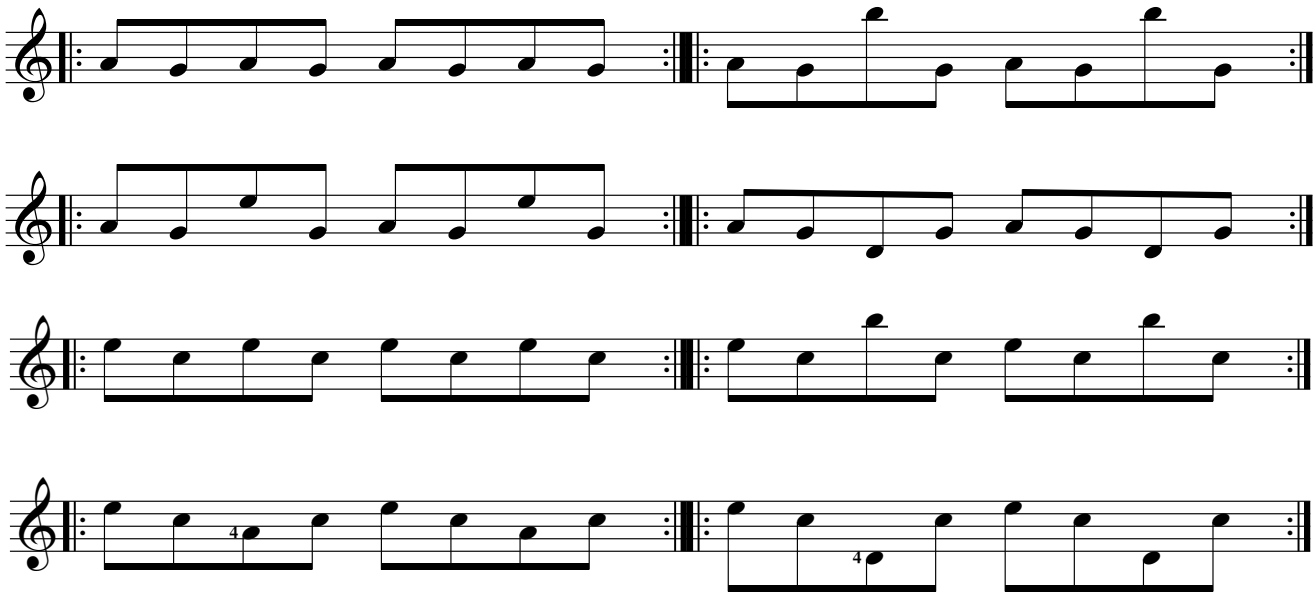


3rd finger workout



4th finger workout



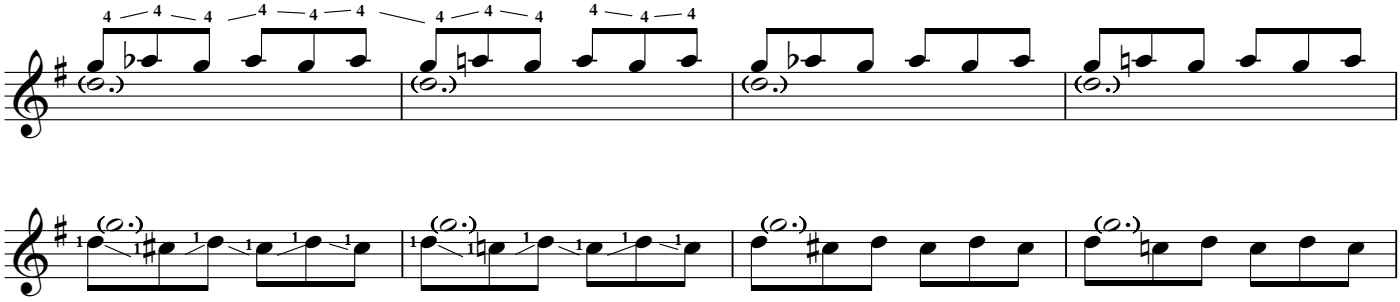


2 Stretching the Hand Frame

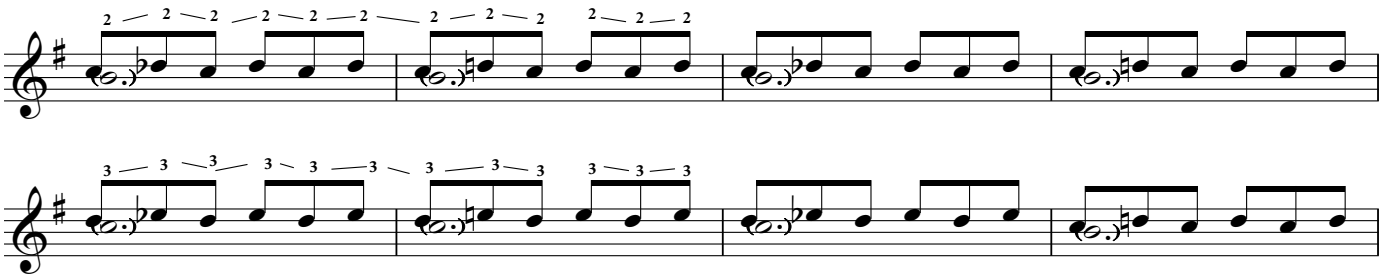
In the following exercises, slide fingers back and forth, expanding and contracting from the base knuckles. In other words, don't stretch by only lengthening and arching the fingers.

Level I: Do without the bow

Level II: Do with the bow



Stretching interior fingers

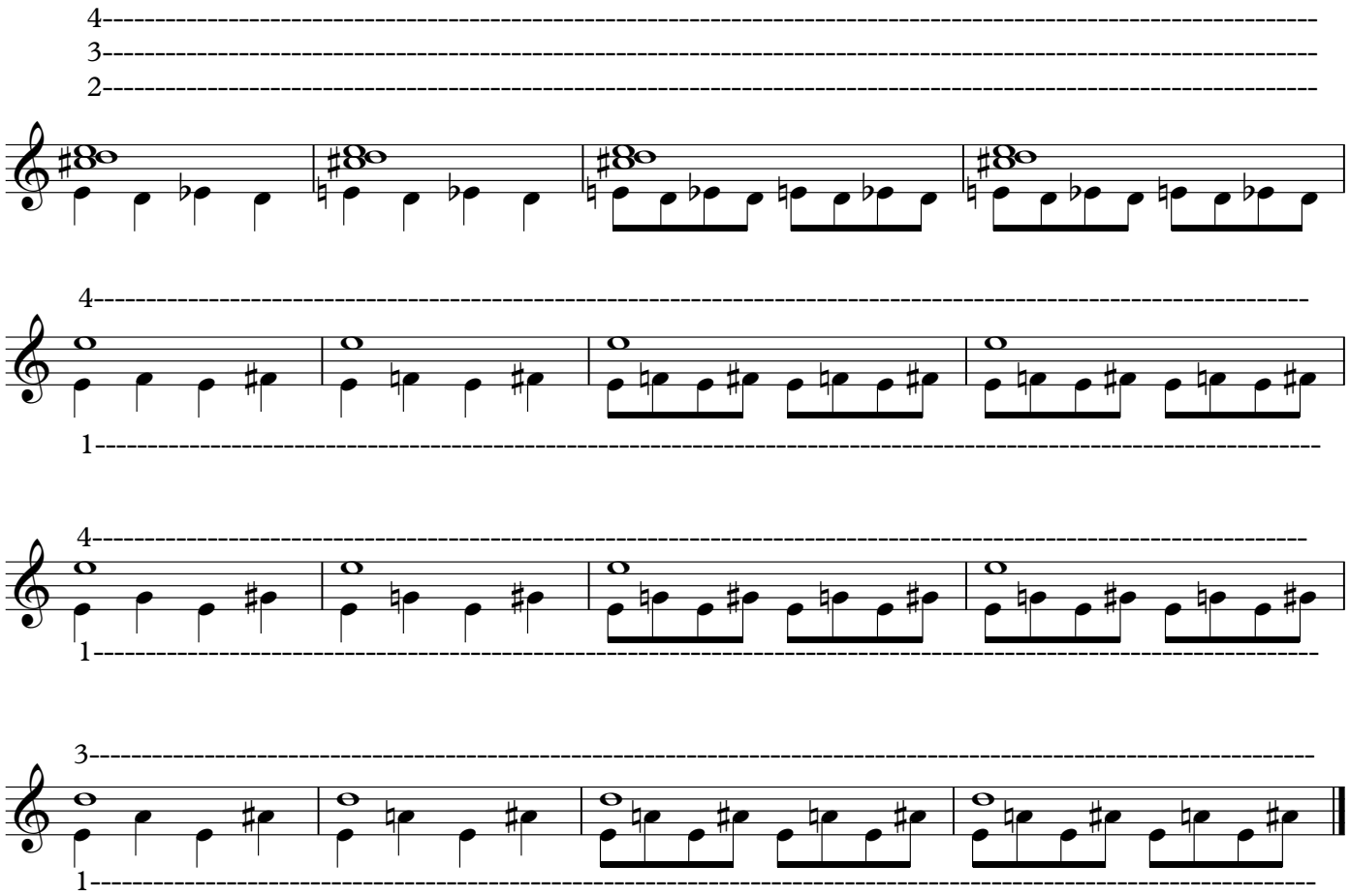


3 Finger Movement Exercises

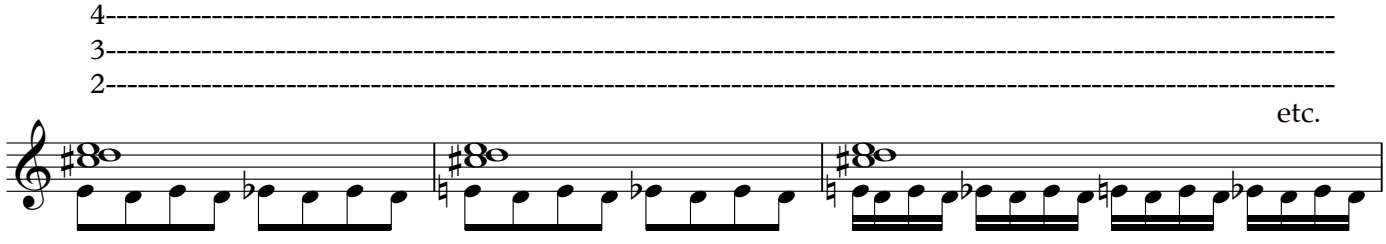
The finger numbers with the long lines indicate to hold down those fingers lightly on the string. This builds more independence with the moving finger.

As you lift and place the moving finger, try and stretch from the base knuckles.

Level I

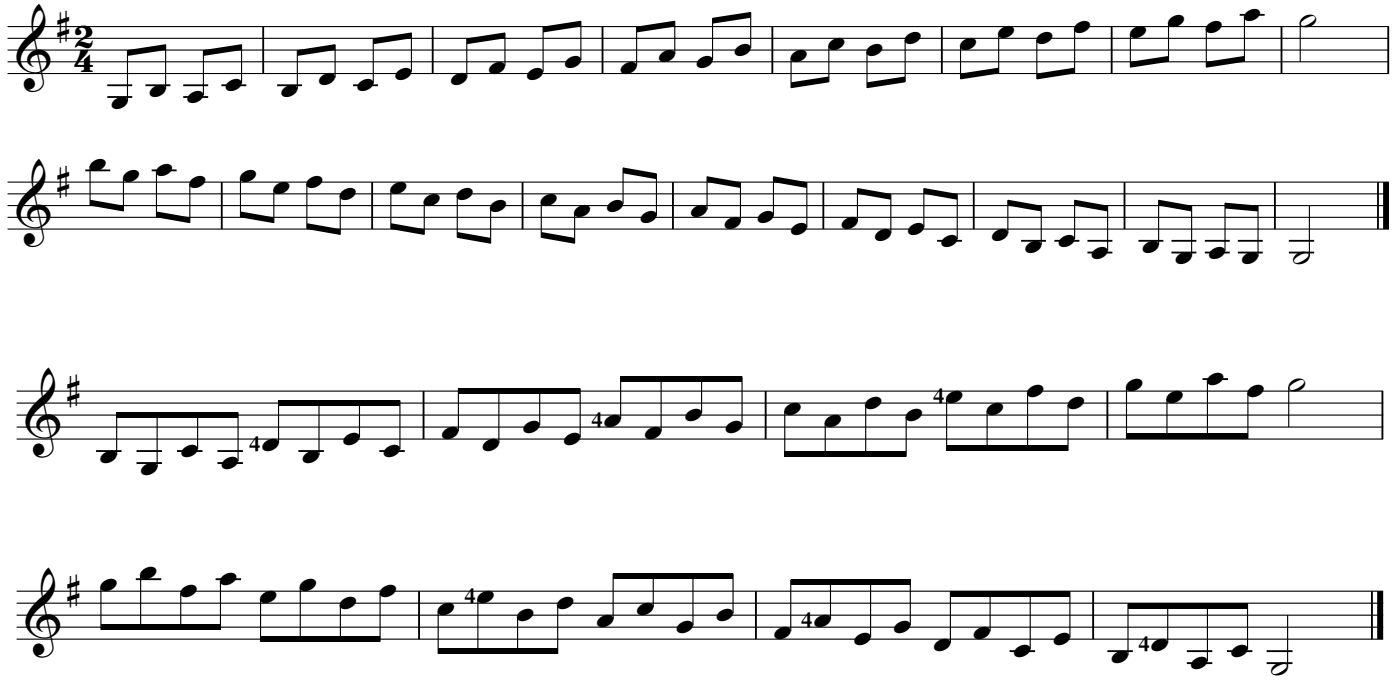


Level II: Do double Taps

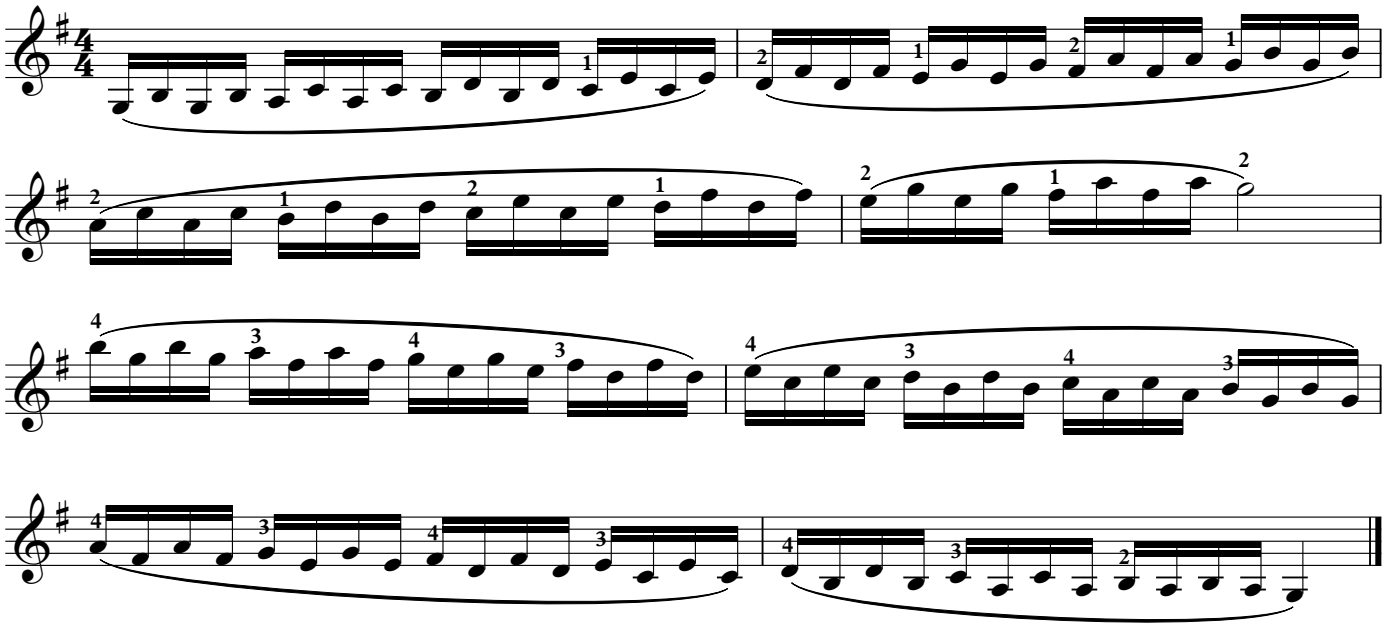


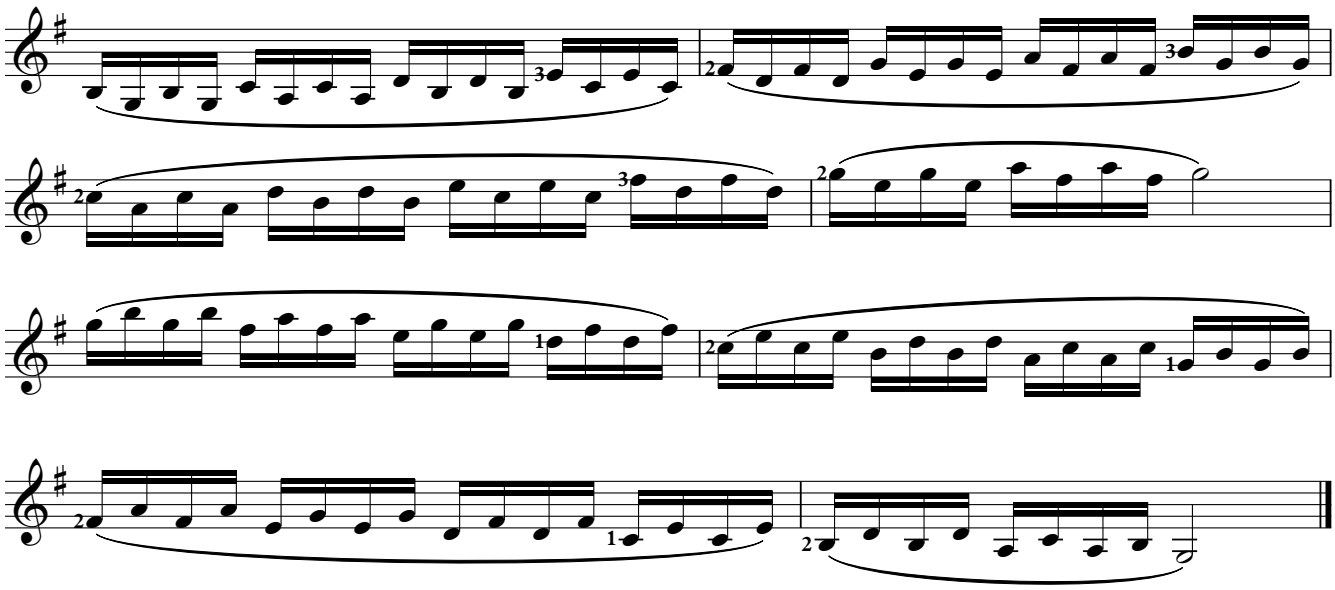
4 Broken Third Patterns

Level I



Level II





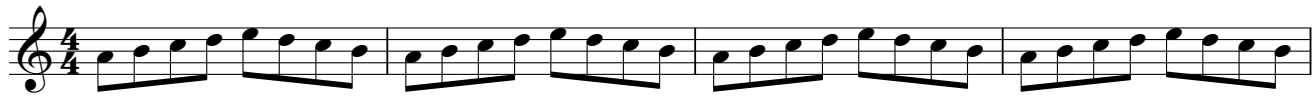
5 Finger Action Exercises

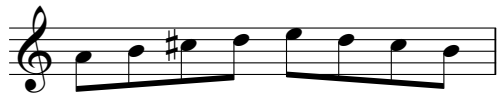
From Schradieck School of Violin Technique

Beginning on Open Strings repeat on all strings

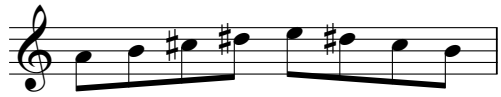
1-2 Spacing Pattern

1

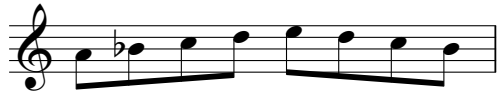




2-3 Spacing Pattern

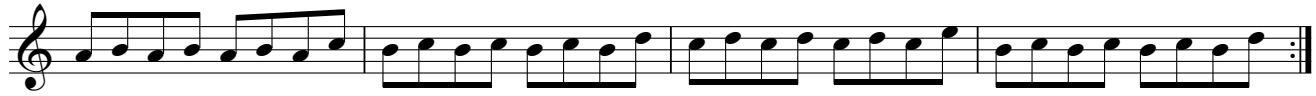


3-4 Spacing Pattern



All Spaces

2



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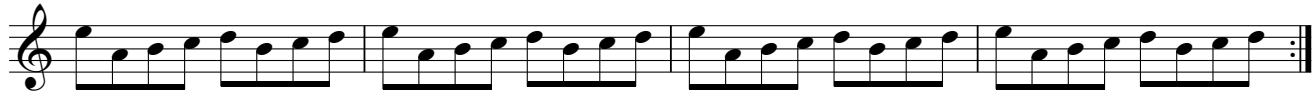

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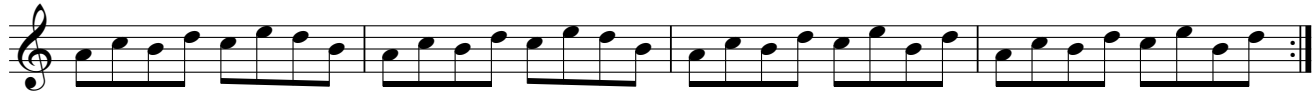

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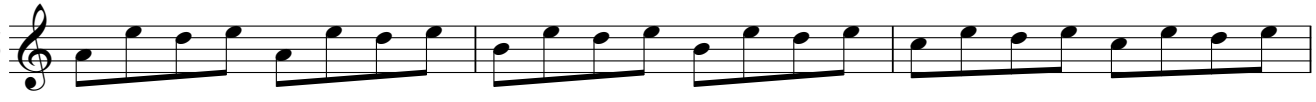
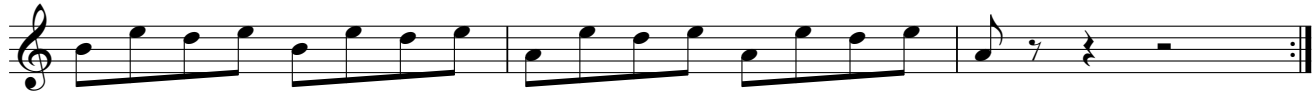
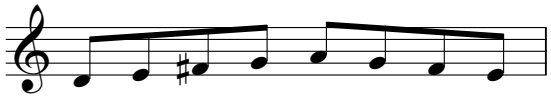


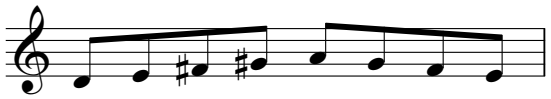


1-2 Spacing Pattern

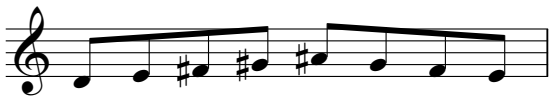
6



2-3 Spacing Pattern

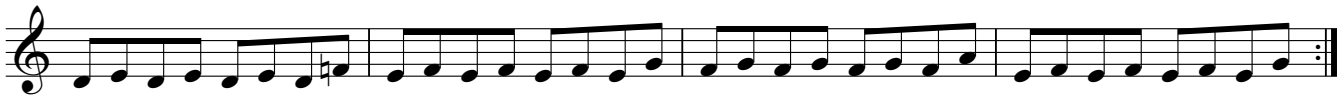


3-4 Spacing Pattern



All Spaces

7



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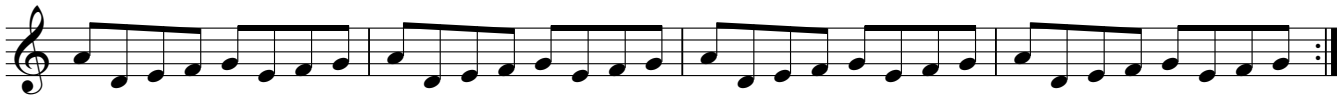

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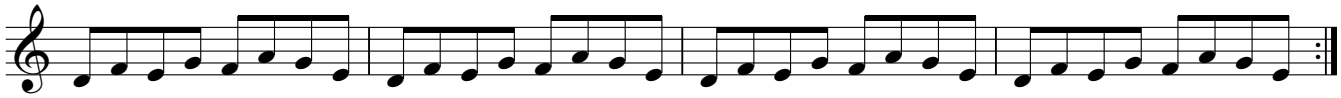

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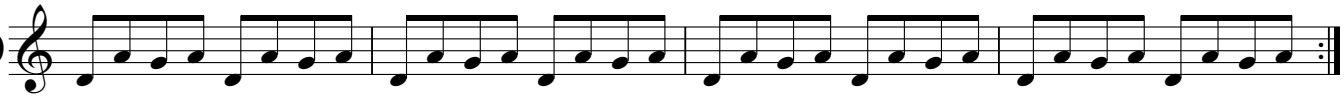
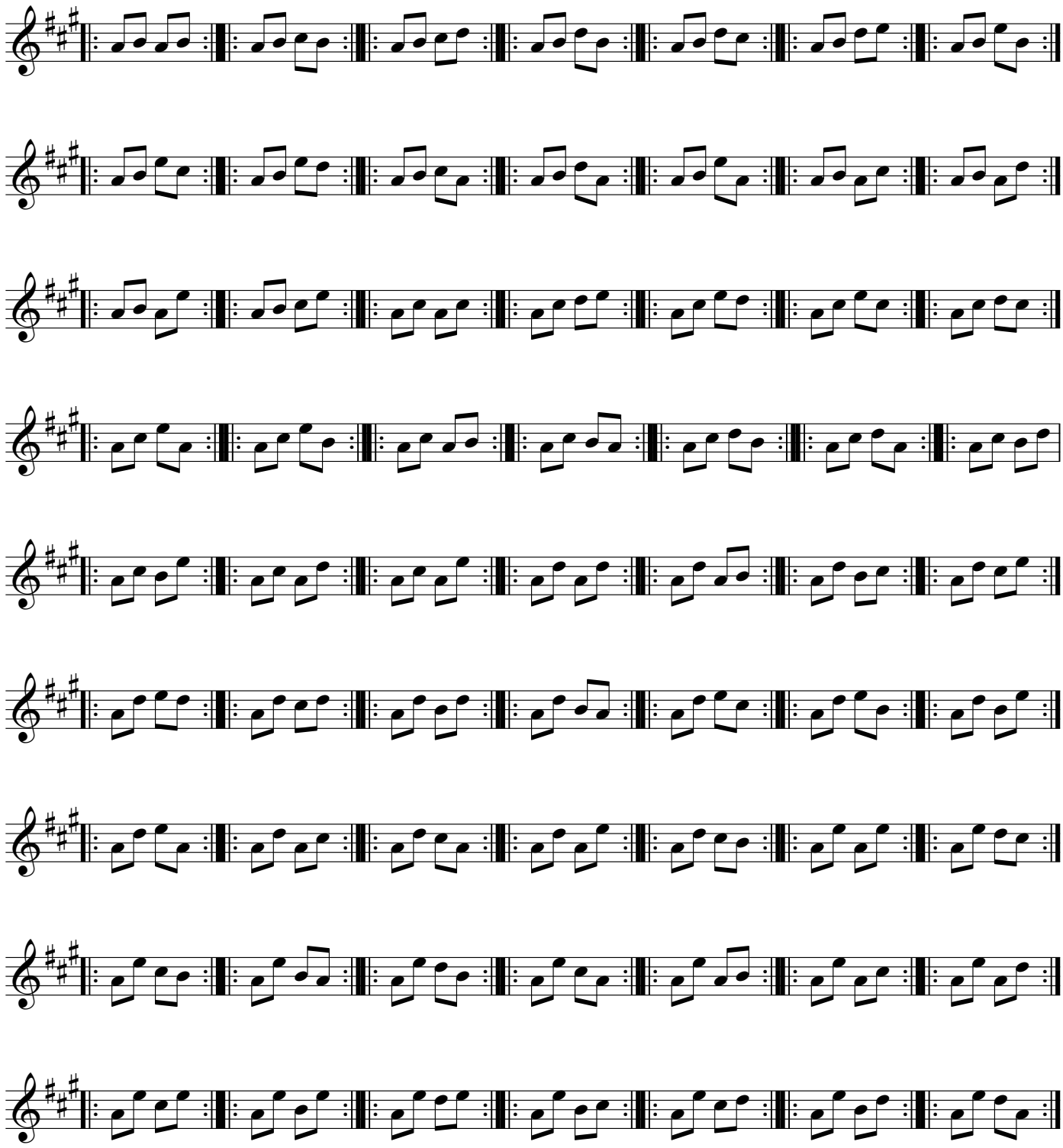


8

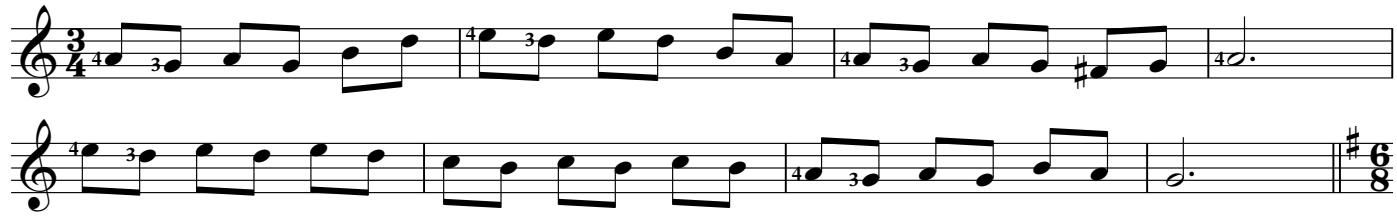
6 Melodic Cell Patterns

From Yost System: Studies in Finger Action



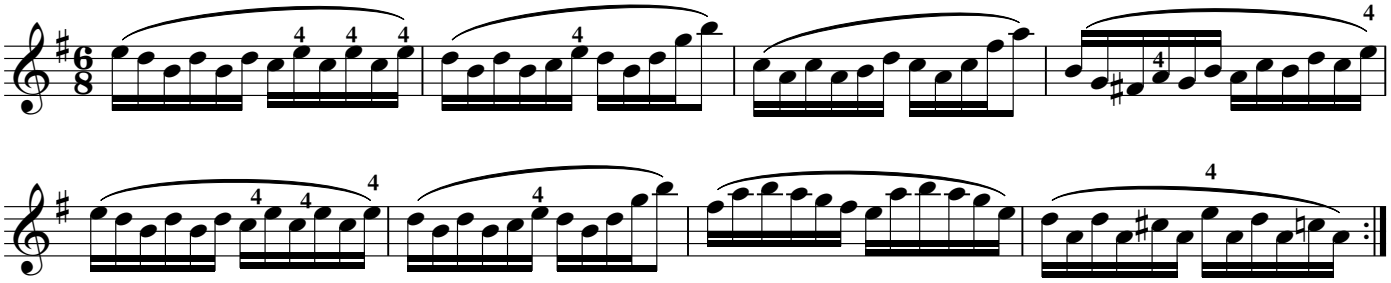
7 Strengthening Exercises for 3rd and 4th fingers

Level I

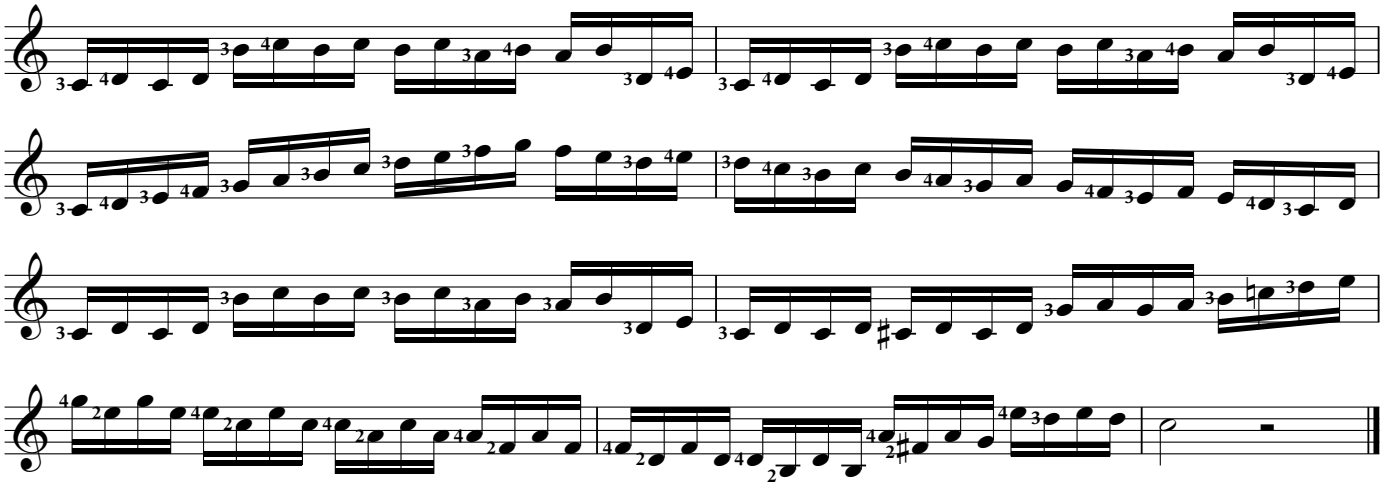


Level II

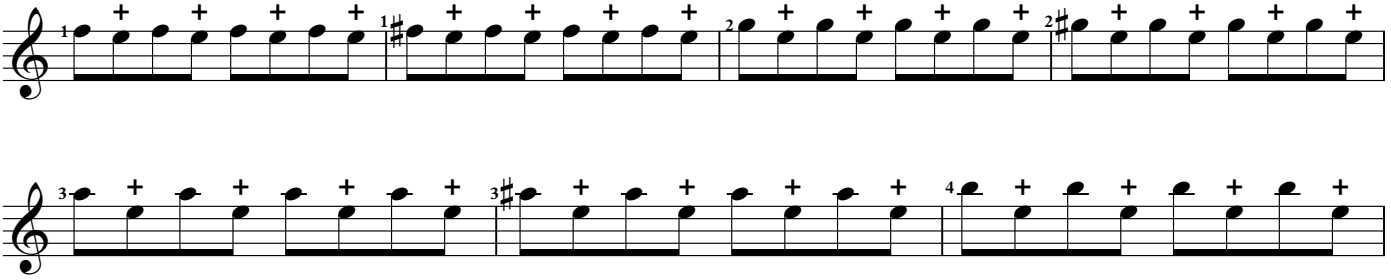
Wohlfahrt op.45



Level III



8 Left Hand Pizzicato

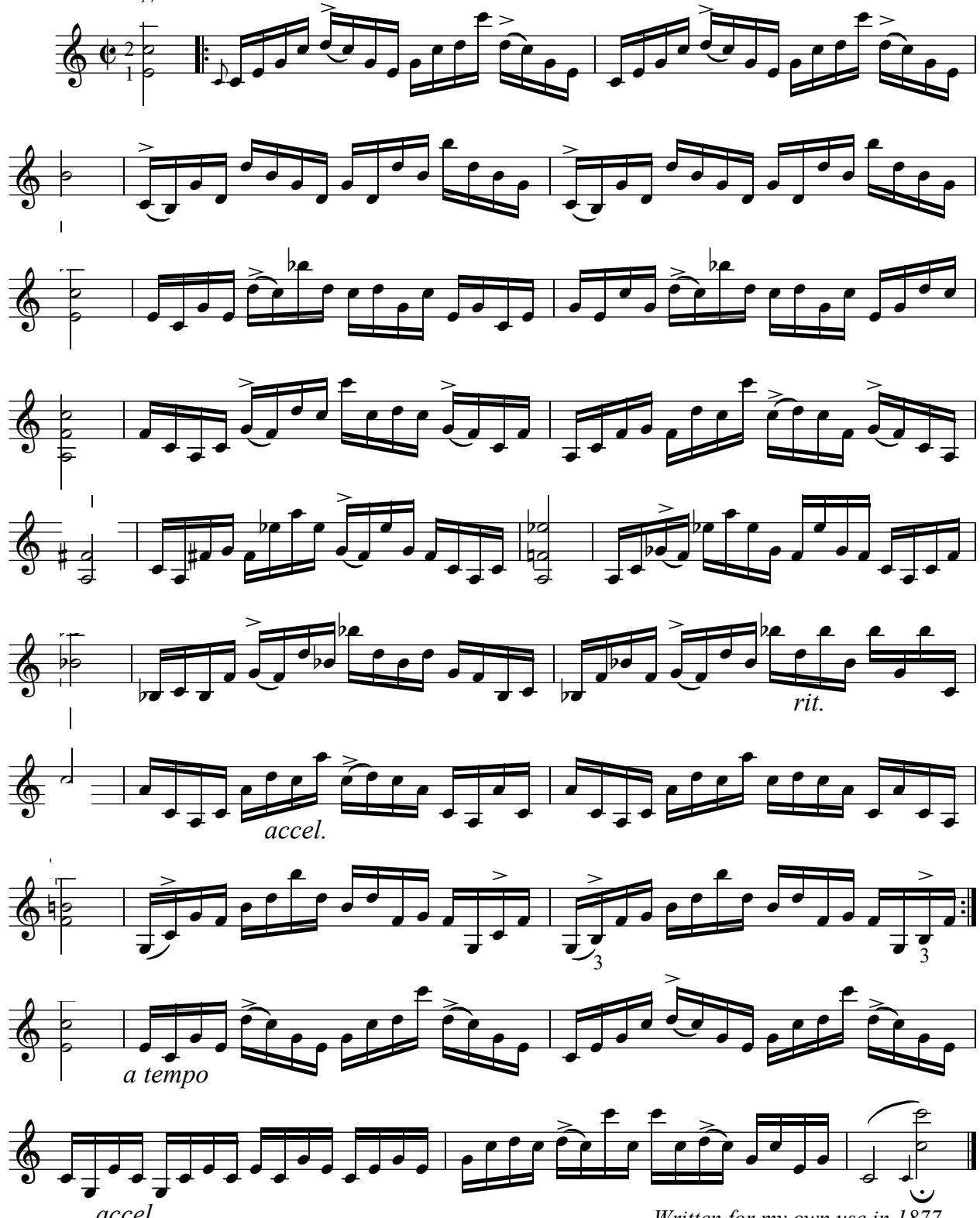


EXERCISE FOR THE 3rd FINGER.

9 *The chords are not to be played: the 1st, 2nd & 4th fingers remain fixed in the positions indicated.*

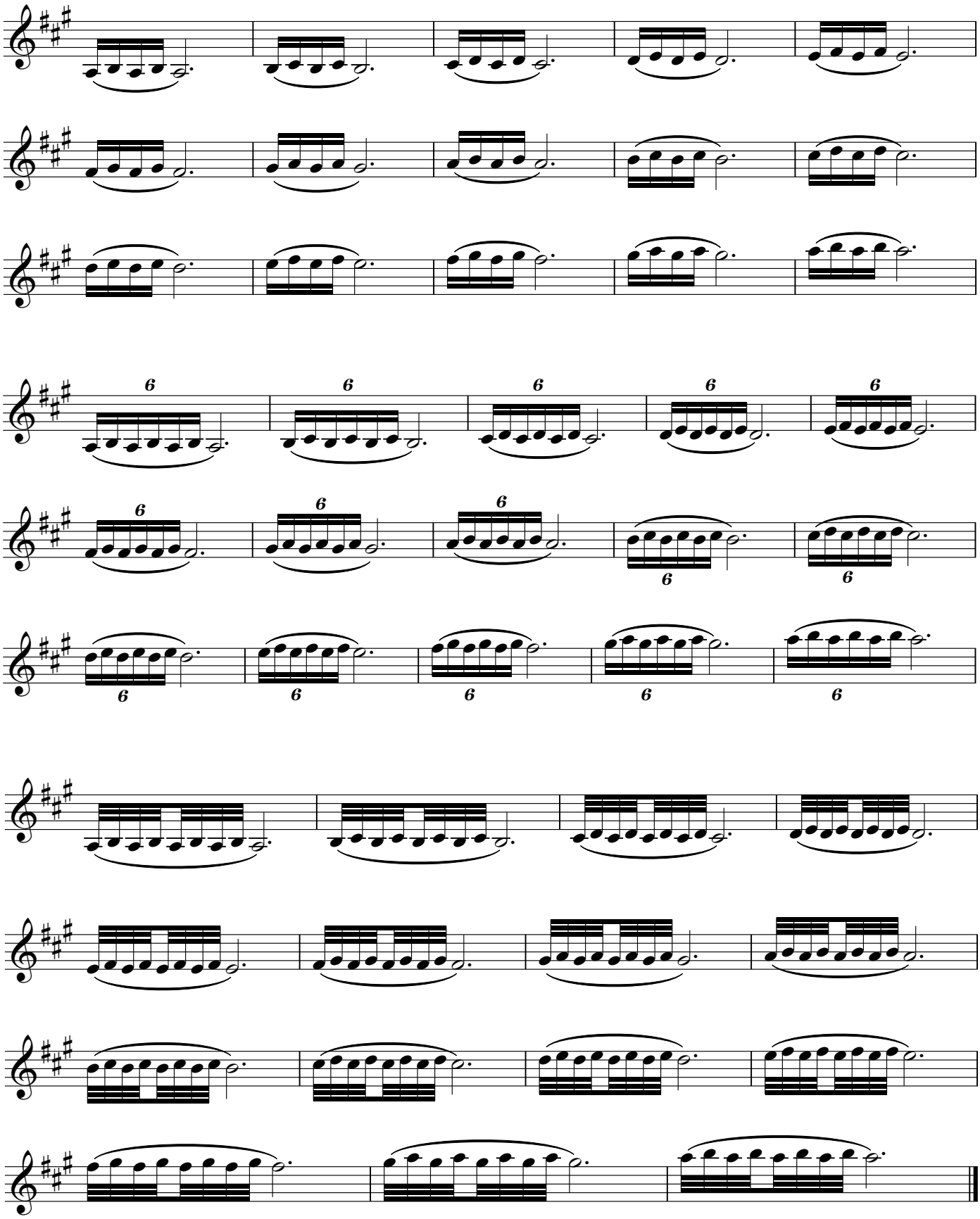
Edward Elgar.

Allegro.



Written for my own use in 1877.
Copied for Mr Jascha Heifetz
at his request November 1920.
Edward Elgar.

10 Trills



1 Right Hand Exercises

The ability to control the bow with the small muscles of the right hand is how we make nuanced articulations and dynamics. Exercising the fingers of the right hand will put you on the fast track to developing those fine motor skills. As most of us are right-handed, we don't feel the necessity of needing to warm up our bow hands. Once we "warm up" the left-hand, we feel ready to go. Although the large muscles of the right arm don't require much in the way of warming up, the smaller muscles of the hand do. Find a couple of these exercises that you really like and do several repetitions before playing. By doing this, you will experience better bow control.

1. Rock and Roll

    Step 1: Place the bow on top of the bridge.

    Step 2: Make a See-Saw motion to the left (letting the tip of the bow drop) by leaning on the index finger and letting the 3rd finger and pinky curl.

    Step 3: Make the See-Saw motion to the right (raise the tip of the bow) by straightening the 3rd and pinky fingers and releasing weight from the index finger.

2. Edward Scissor Bow

    This is a See-Saw motion on the horizontal plane.

    Step1: Use the pinky to push the frog away from you. The tip will move toward you.

    Step 2: Use the 2nd and 3rd fingers to pull the frog into the hand and the tip will move away from you.

3. Lift and Place with Fingers:

    Hold the bow on the string near the frog. With the fingers ONLY, lift the bow off of the string about an inch, then gently place it back, using ONLY fingers.

4. Windshield Wipers:

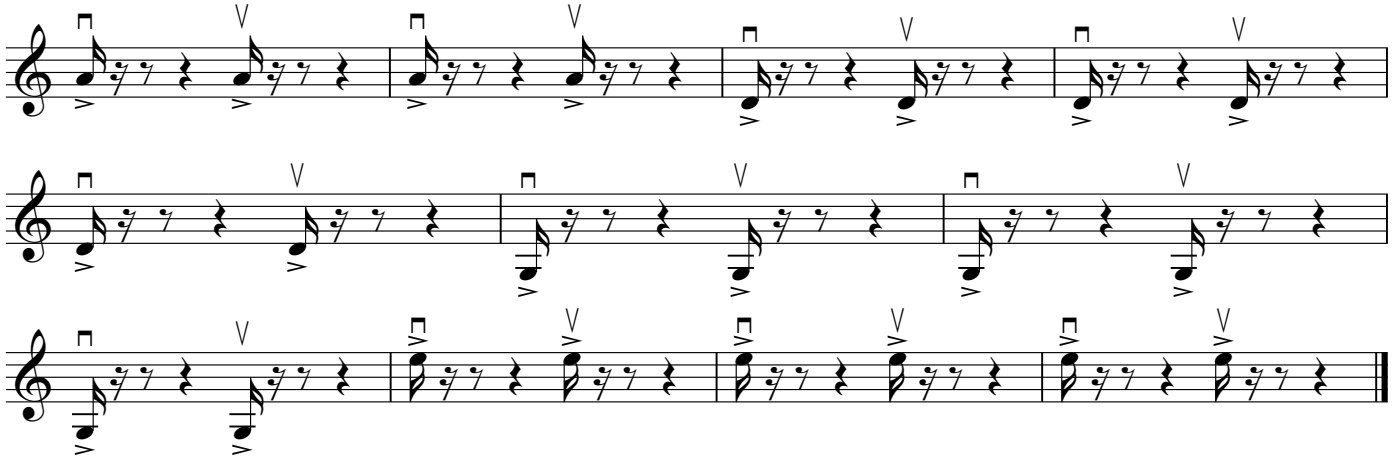
    Hold the bow vertically and let it drop to the strings. Use the pinky to lift it back to a vertical hold. Repeat several times.

5. Munching Caterpillar:

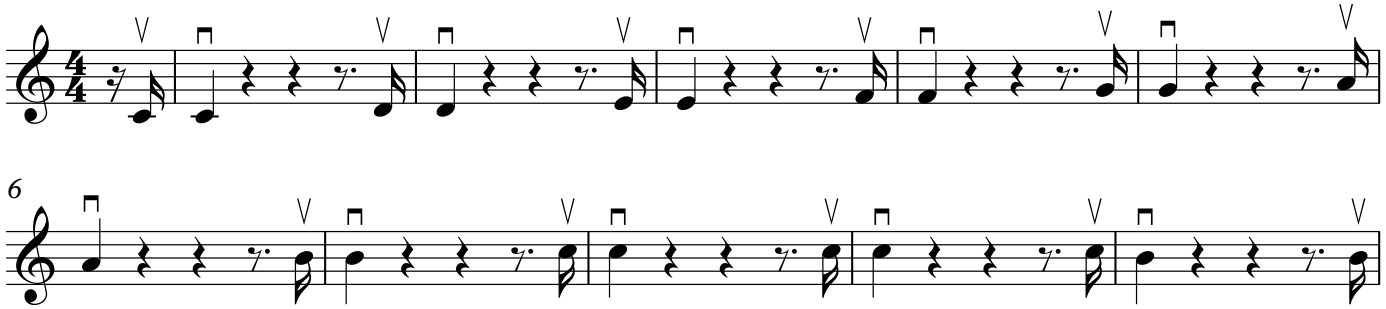
    Lean in with the index finger to grab the string. Let go while ever so slightly doing an up bow. Repeat. You should get little crunchy sounds. (this is up bow staccato training).

2 Collé

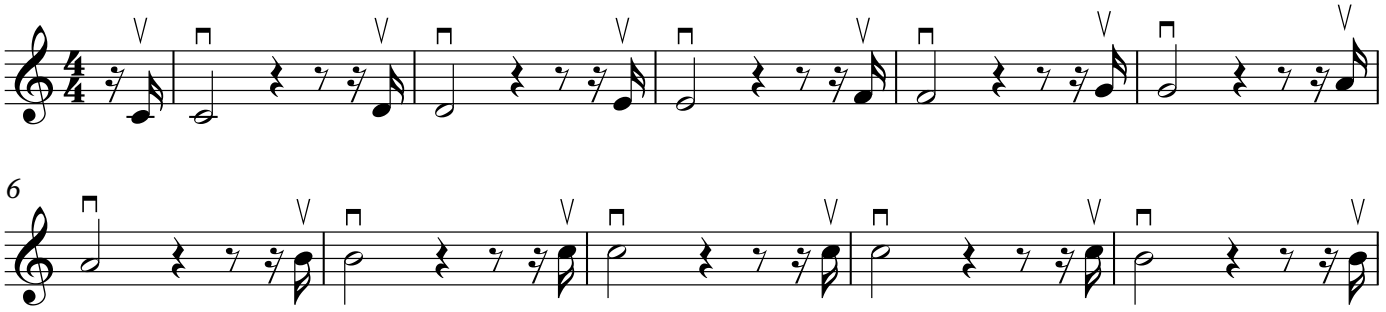
Play at the frog, using the fingers only to move the bow.



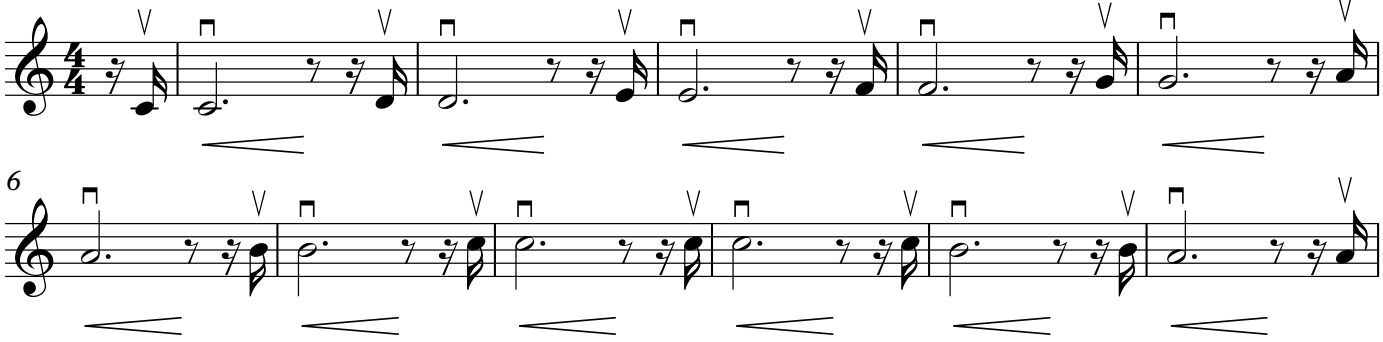
Level I: Initiate stroke with the fingers, by curling them into the hand. After the down bow, lift the bow and place back at the frog for the next stroke.



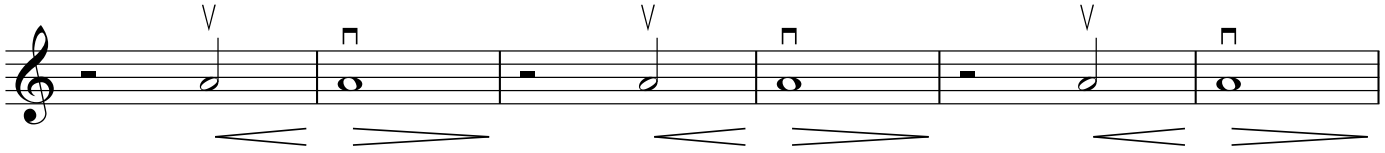
Level II: Execute the same as before, but hold the bow longer before lifting and placing it back at the frog.



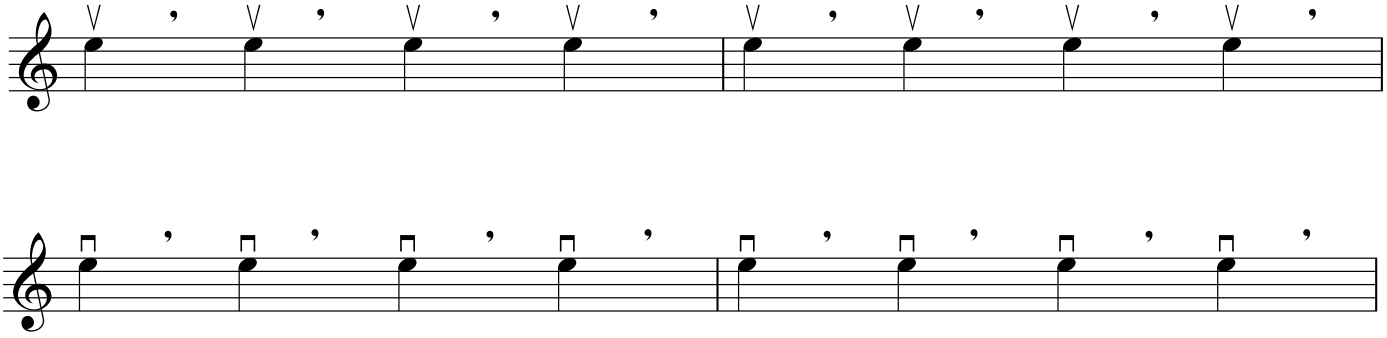
Level III: Execute the same as before, but sustain the bow, making a crescendo to the tip. The retake back to the frog will then be very quick.



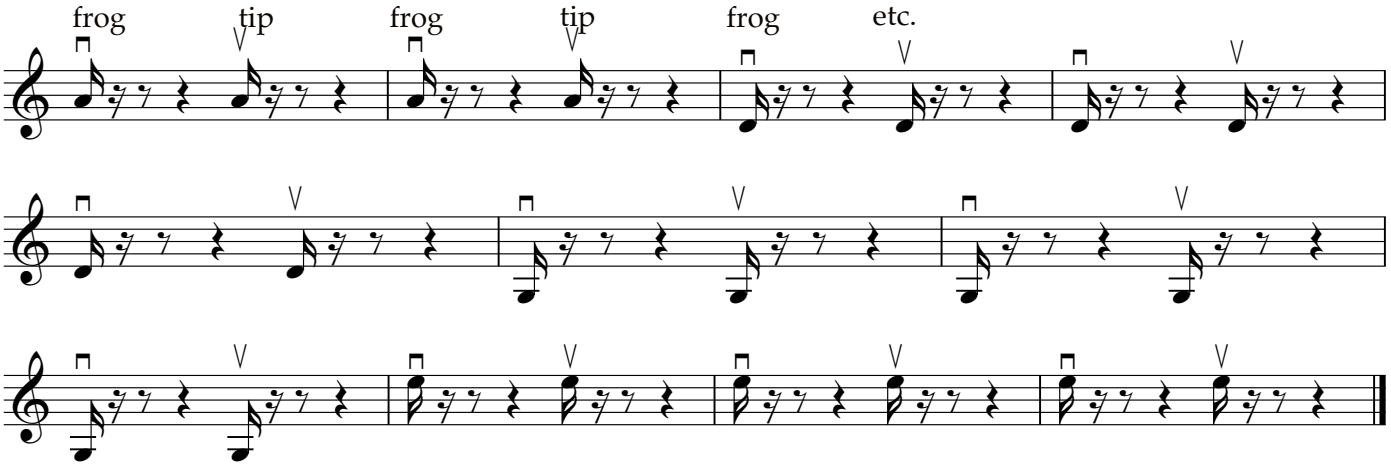
3 Finger Motion Exercise



4 Clean Placements



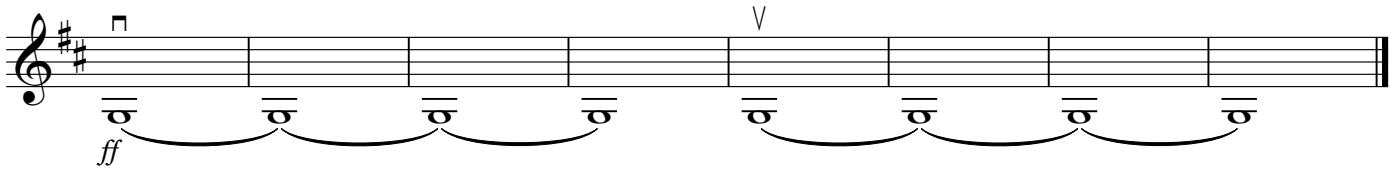
6 Straight Bowing

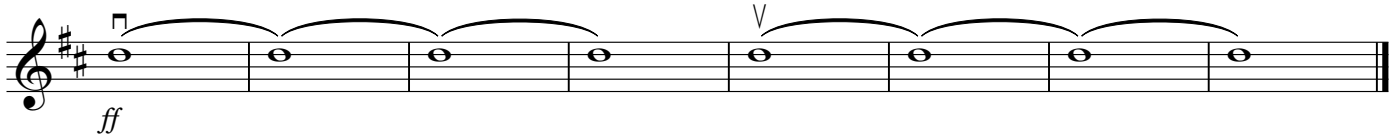


Focus on the unique shape of the hand when it is at the frog and the tip. Don't think about whether the bow is traveling straight in the air, just focus on placing the bow in the same sounding point, with the same hand shape, at the same part of the bow each and every time.

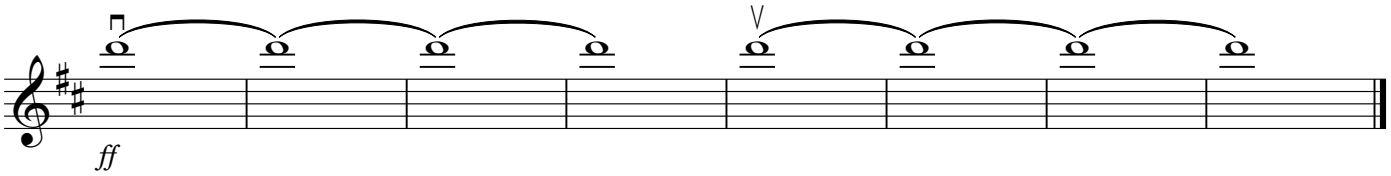
7 Super Long, Slow and Loud Bow Strokes

Level I





Level II



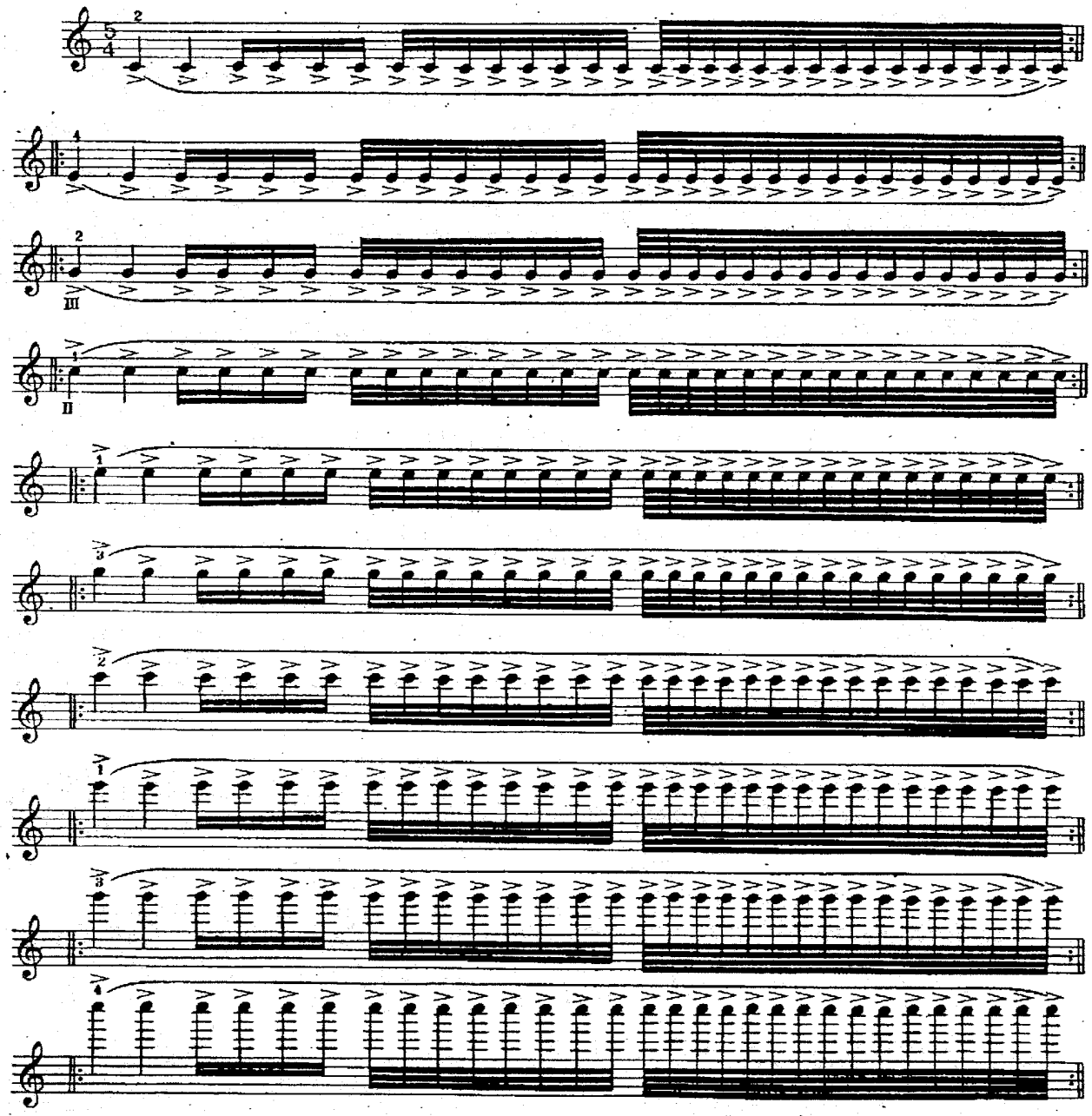
8 Bow Pulse Exercise for Sustaining Bow

From Dounis Daily Dozen

ELEVENTH EXERCISE
FOR TONE PRODUCTION

Ⓐ TO DEVELOP A BEAUTIFUL AND SINGING TONE

DIRECTIONS FOR PRACTISING.- Accentuate every note as indicated by imparting added pressure to the bow for each note. This pressure should come from the right hand fingers and it should in no way interfere with the even drawing and pushing of the bow. Accent the notes exactly as indicated i. e. $f > p$ $f > p$ etc. Do not stop the bow; there should be no pause between the notes.- Practise very slowly and with full tone.—

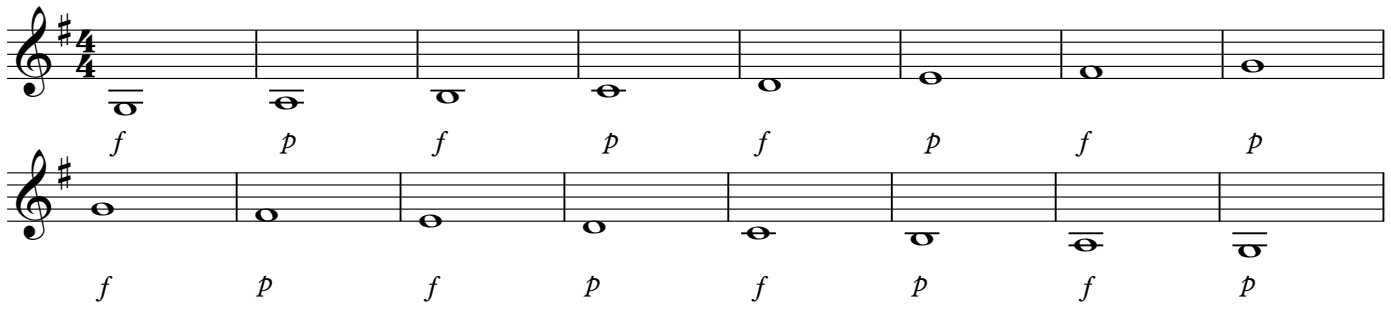


It will be found benificial to practise a new chord every day in exactly the same manner as the above one.- Repeat each bar twice.—

7333-14

9 Dynamic Contrast Exercise

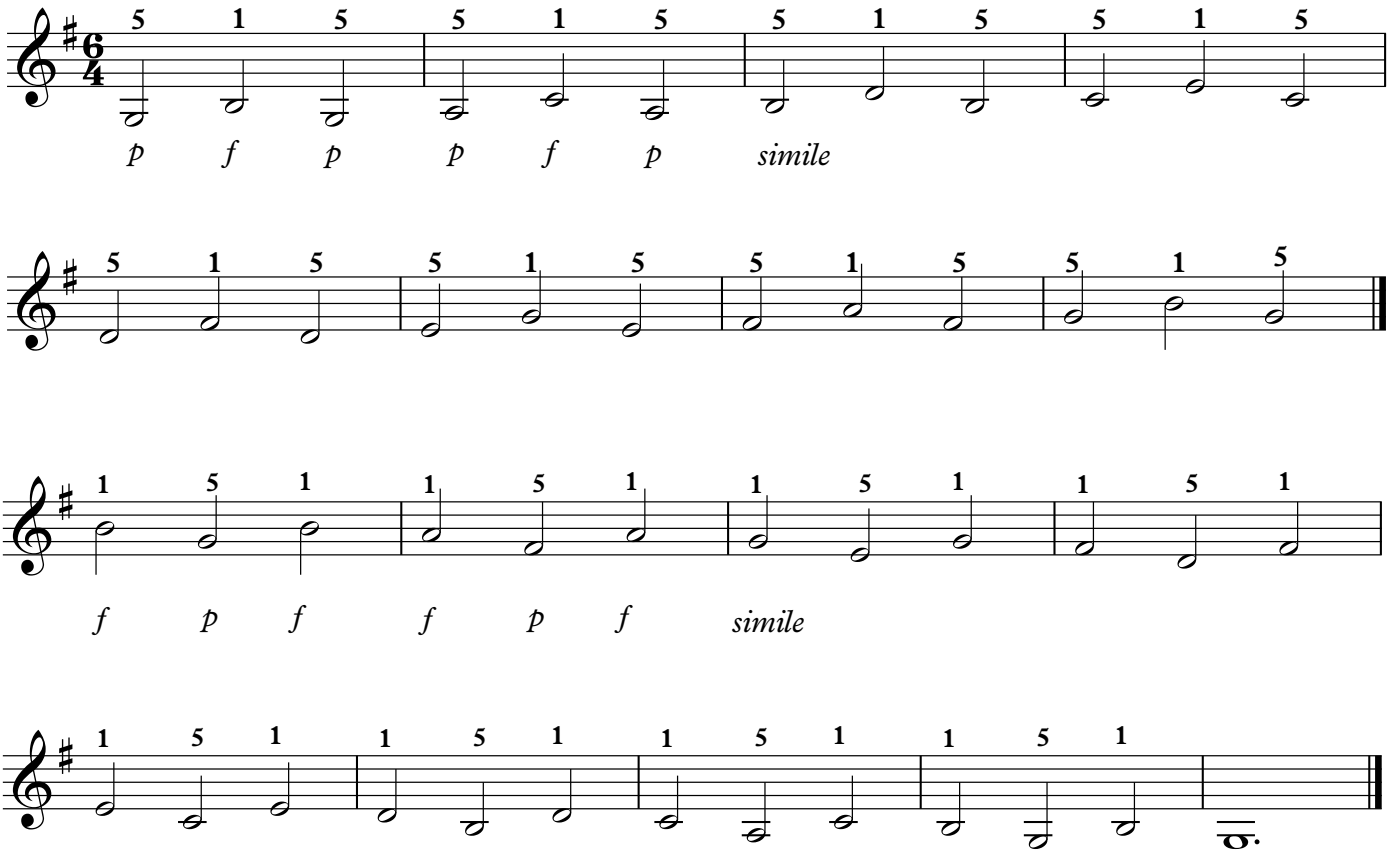
Down bows: Use heavy pressure and flat hair close to the bridge. Up bows: Use light pressure, tilted hair in the middle sounding point.



Changing Sounding Points in a Single Bow Stroke

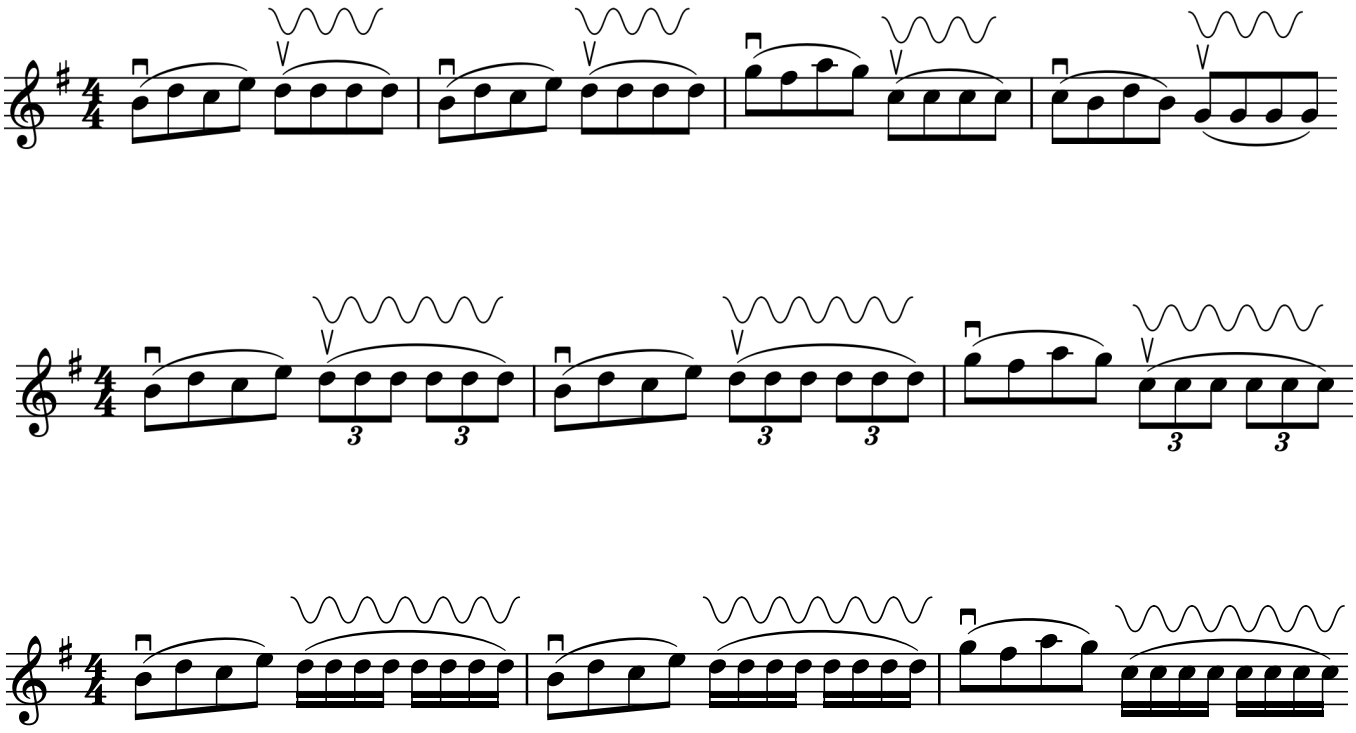
5 = near fingerboard

1 = near bridge

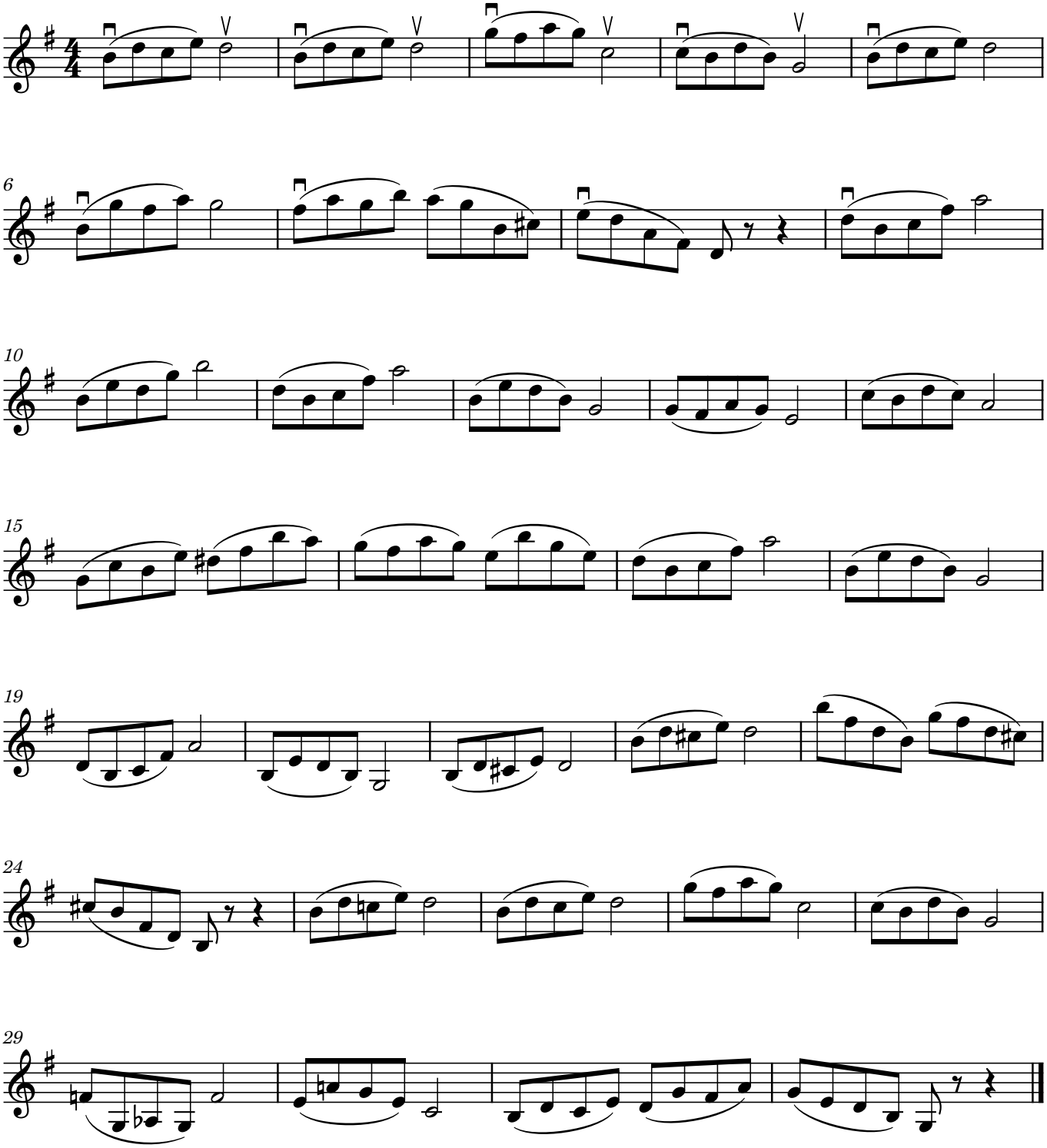


Vibrato Practice

Practice the Wohlfahrt etude on the following page, measuring vibrato subdivisions on the half notes. With each repetition, increase speed of vibrato by subdividing into smaller note values, like in the examples below.



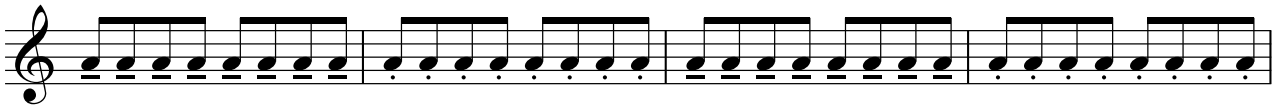
Wohlfahrt Op. 54. no. 2



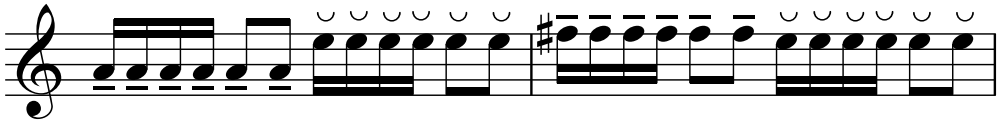
Off-the-String Warm Ups

1. Controlling the alternation of on and off-the-string patterns

Feel the difference in elbow height when playing on vs. off the string. The arm is elevated for the spiccato stroke, but should still feel like it's resting on an imaginary shelf. Because you are at the balance point, the majority of the bow weight is to your left. The arm balances the stroke, and allows the frog and tip to stay in balance.



Do the same alternating pattern with a scale or Mississippi HotdogTwinkle

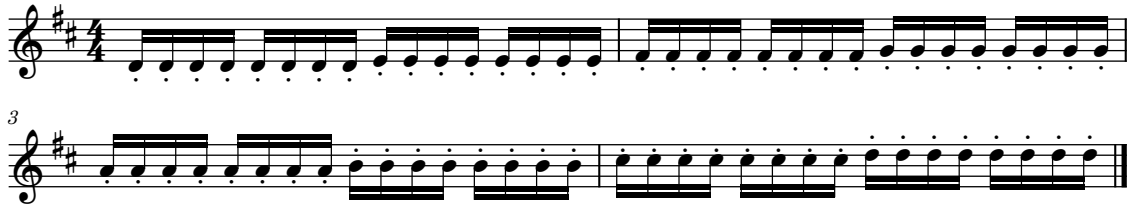


2. Transitioning into left hand activity

The 8-4-2-1- method. Gradually Reduce number of strokes per note.

In addition to scales this can be employed with any Schradieck or Wohlfahrt Etude that has a steady flow of note values (eights, sixteenths)

8



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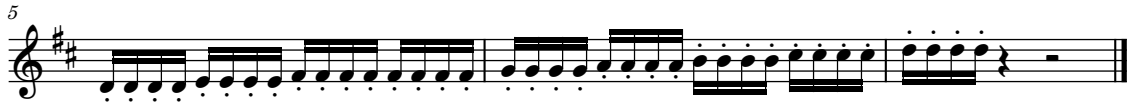

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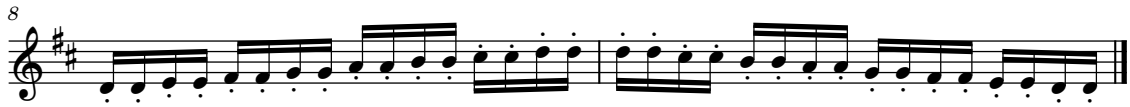

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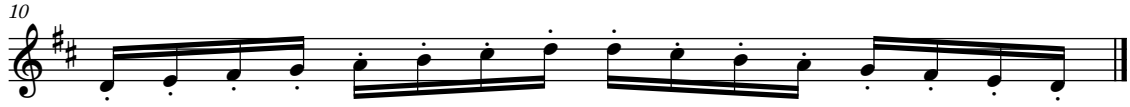
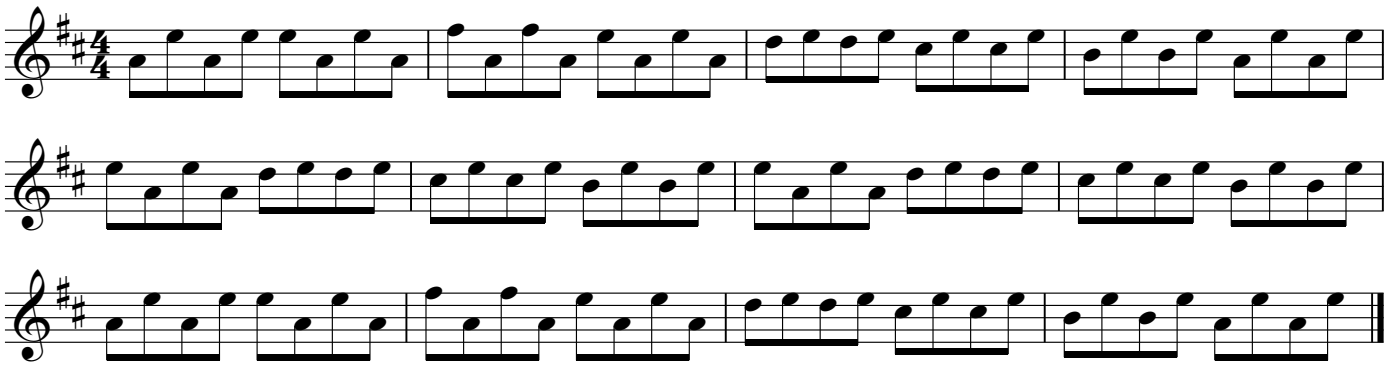
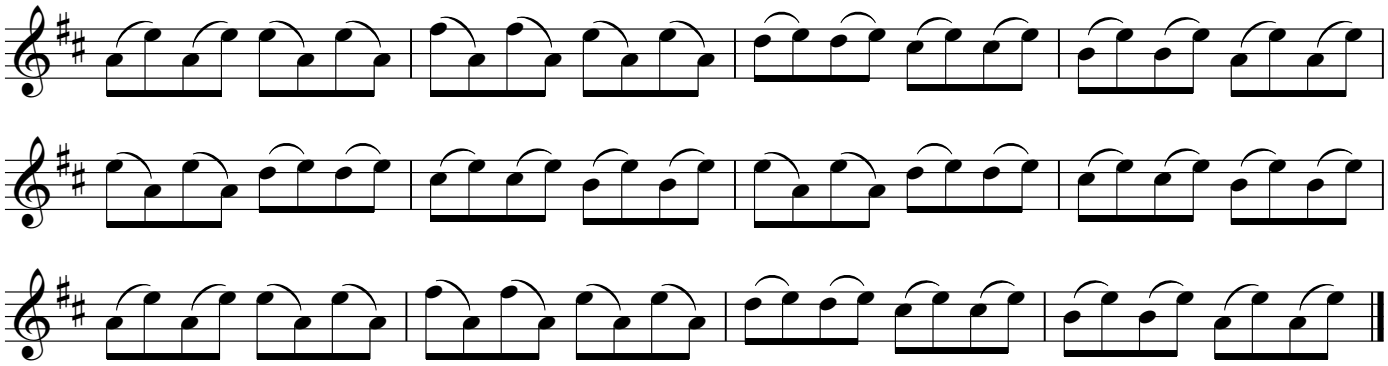


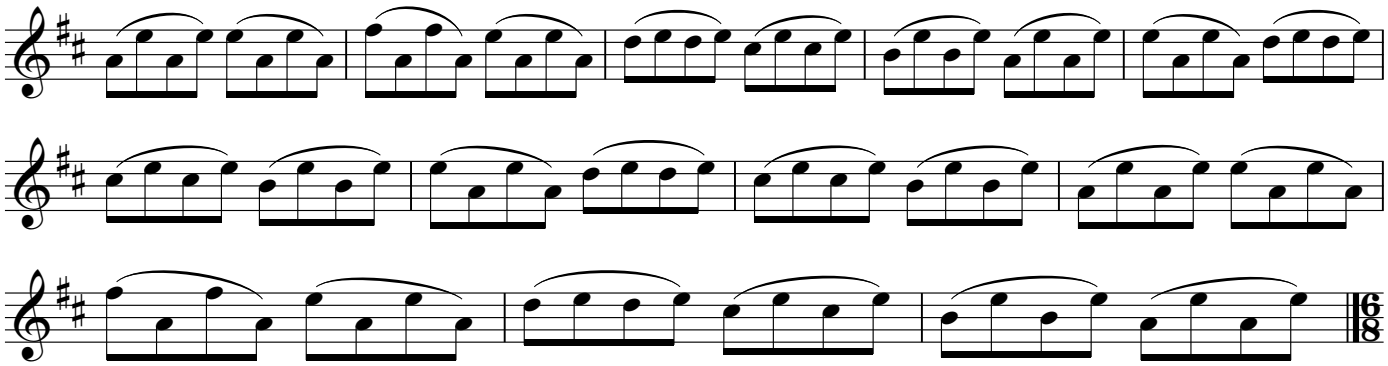
Twinkle String Crossings

Exercise 1

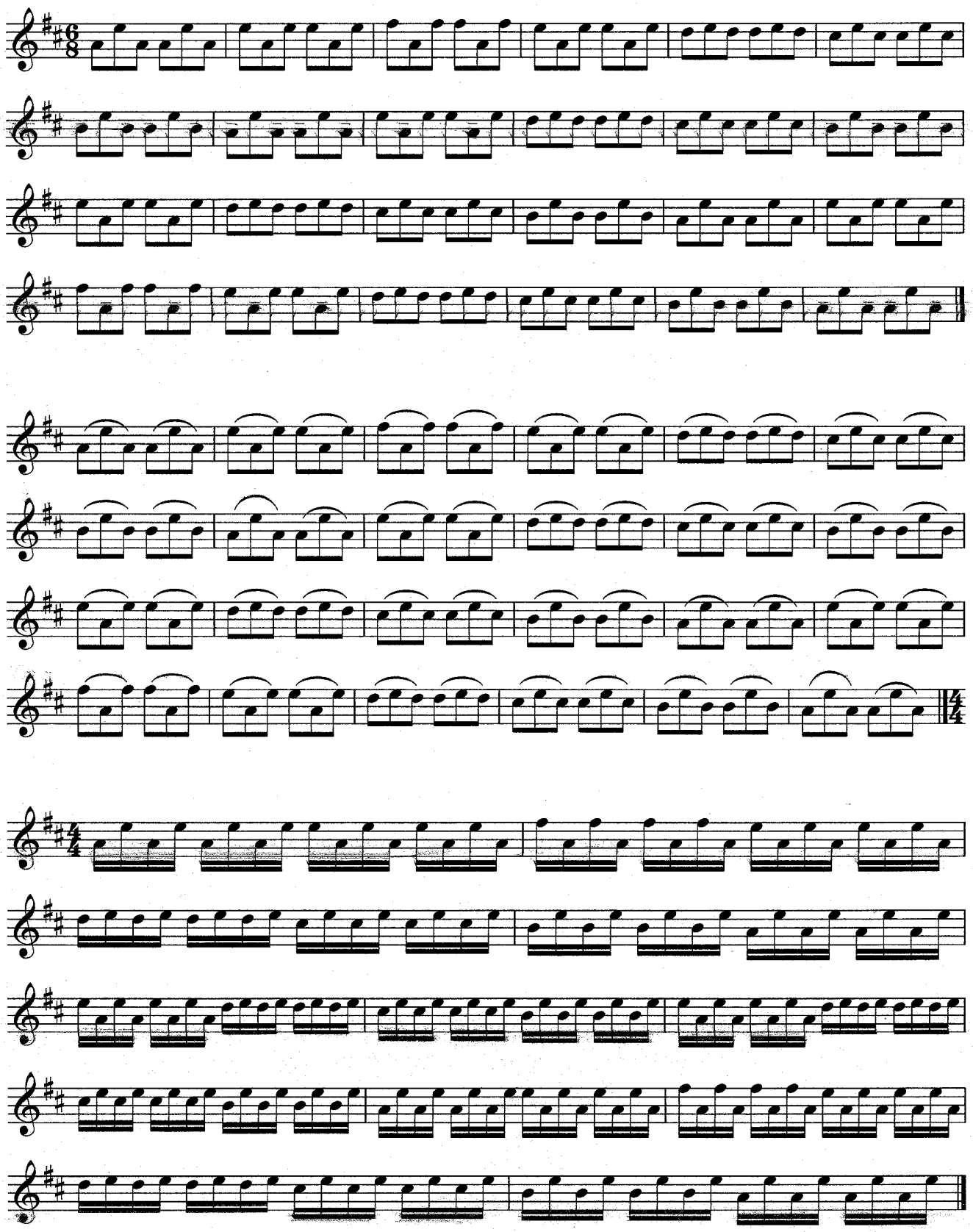


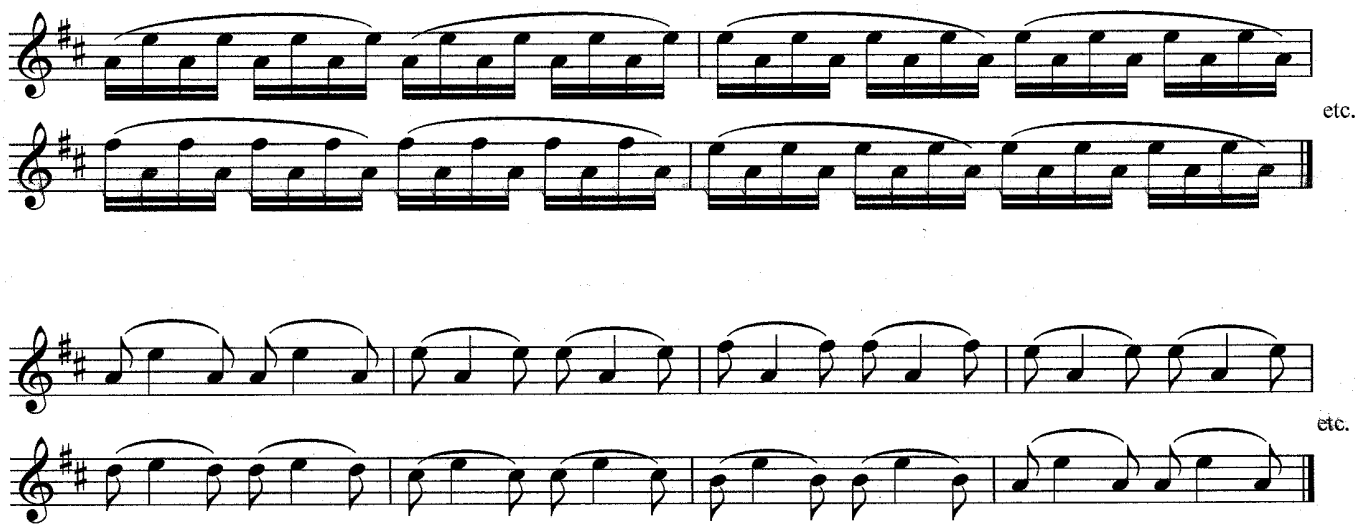
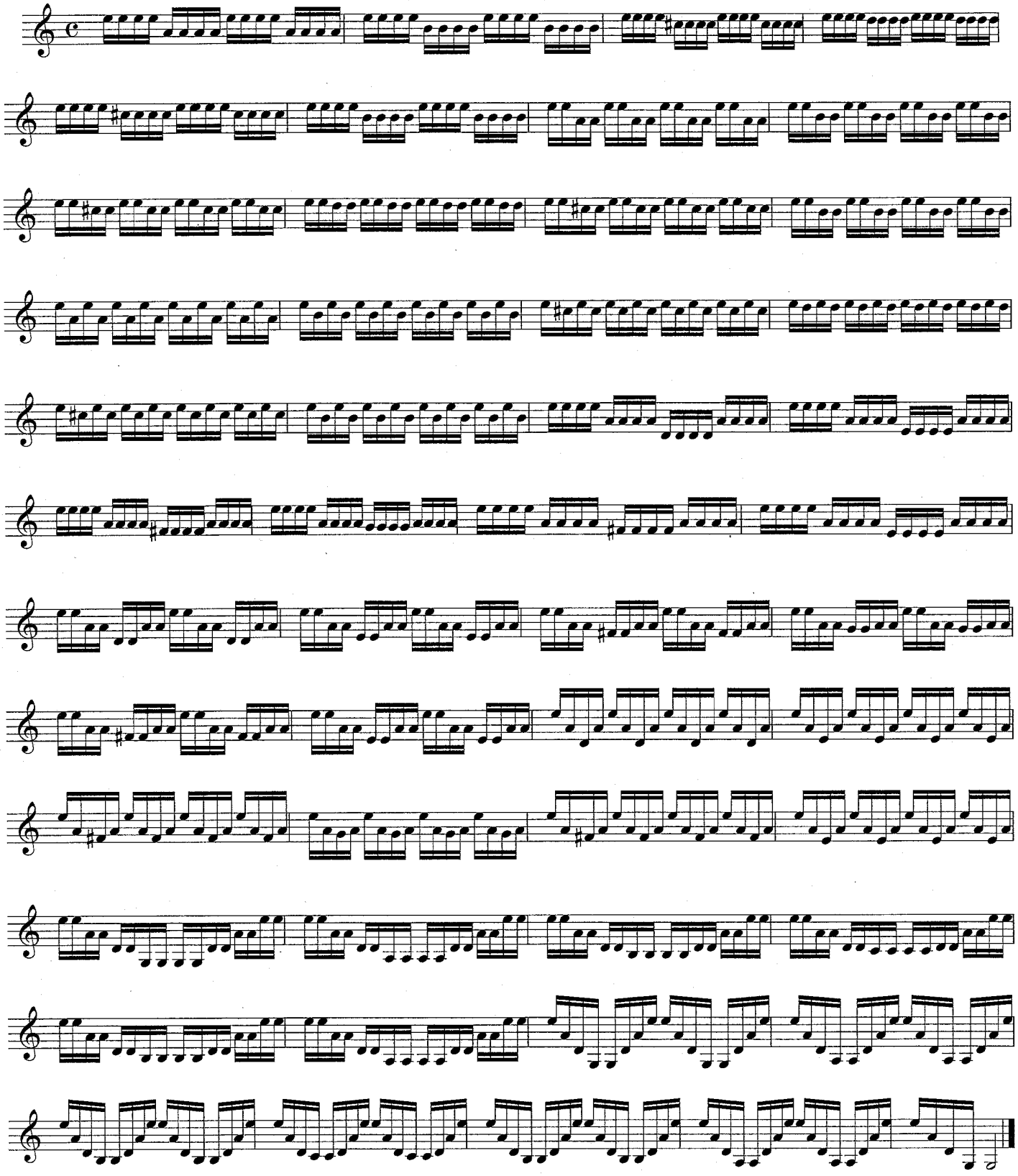
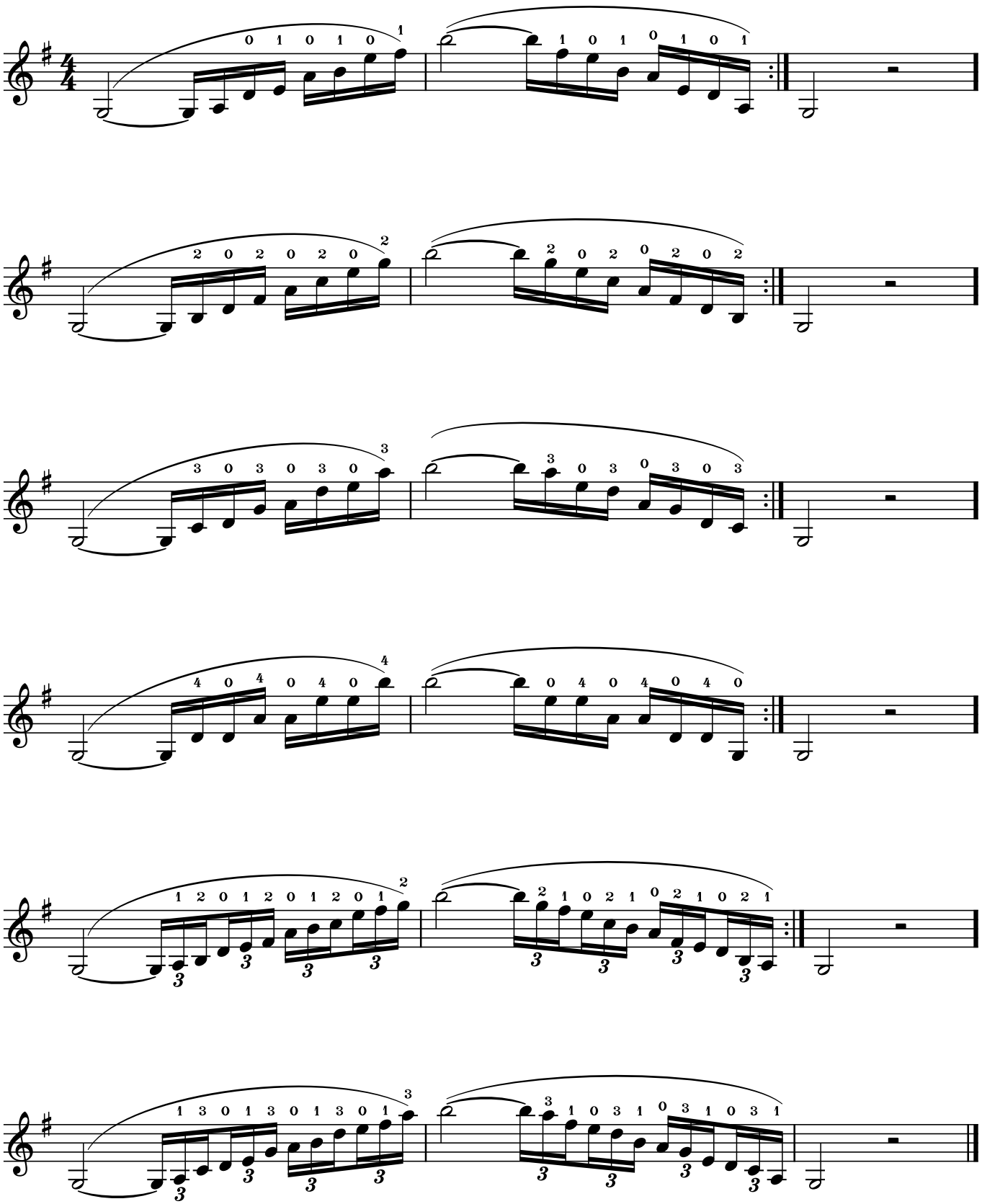
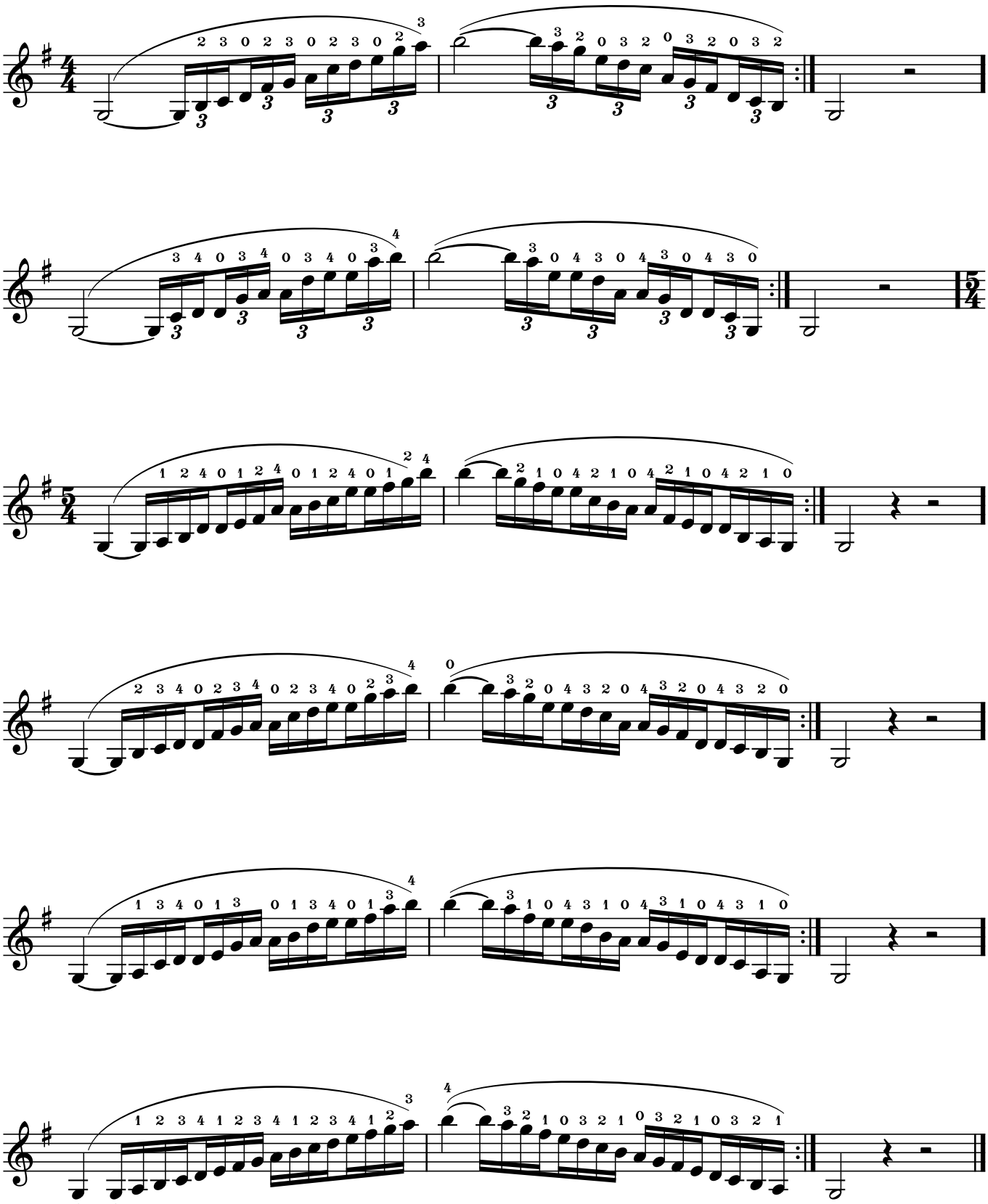
Exercise 1





2




etc.
etc.

Detaché Bowing Exercises