

CARL FISCHER ORIGINAL STUDIES

Janice
Tucker Rhoda
Complete Technique
for Viola

Book 1

400 Exercises include 45 Musical Studies in Positions 1 through 5



from the author of the popular series

The ABC's of Strings®



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Janice

Tucker Rhoda

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Table of Contents

Preface	2	Key of E \flat Major	29	Study in C Minor	42
FIRST POSITION		Slur Study in E \flat Major	30	Ballet of Shifting Exercises	42
Memorize the Notes	3	Key of F Major.....	30	Check Octave, Unisons	
Key of D Major.....	4	Study in F Major.....	31	and Fifths Exercises	42
Check Intonation with		Martelé Bow Stroke Study	31	Check Thirds and Sixths.....	43
Double-Stop Octaves.....	10	Chords.....	32	Double-Stop and Chord Study	43
Legato Slur or Smooth Slur.....	10	Chord and Double-Stop Study.....	32	Harmonics and Fourth Finger Extensions...	43
Slur Study in D Major.....	14	Key of E Major	33	Harmonic Study	43
Staccato and Legato Slur Study	16	Study in E Major	33	Second Position	44
Duplets and Triplets Study	19	Advanced Hammock Swing Technique	33	Shifting Exercises	45
Improvisational Mary Had A Little Lamb.	19	Study in D Minor		Study in F Major.....	46
Improvisational Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star..	19	Gypsy Study in C Minor		Concerto Study in C Major	48
Improvisational Go Tell Aunt Rhody.....	20	Study in G Minor.....	34	Concerto Study in G Major	48
Key of G Major	21	Key of A \flat Major	35	Study in E \flat Major	49
Bowing Study in G Major	22	Spiccato Study in A \flat Major	35	Concerto Study in B \flat Major	50
Key of C Major	23	Key of D \flat Major	35	Half Position Study.....	51
4 th Finger Strengthening Exercises	24	Spiccato Study in D \flat Major	35	Study in D Minor	53
Hammock Swing Technique for Left arm		ADVANCED POSITION WORK		Concerto Study in G Minor	53
and Bow Arm.....	24	Third Position	36	Study in A Major	54
Quick Fingers Exercise.....	24	Octave Study in F Major	37	Fifth Position	55
Slow Bow Control Exercise	24	Study in C Major.....	37	Study in B \flat Major	57
Advanced Straight Bow Balancing		Détaché Study in G Major	38	Concert Study in E \flat Major.....	59
Exercise	25	Syncopation Study in D Major	38	Study in A \flat Major.....	60
Octave Study in C Major.....	25	Martelé Study in F Major	39	Fourth Position	62
Double-Stops Exercises	26	Spiccato and Martelé Study in C Major....	39	Arpeggio Study.....	63
Spiccato Study in D Major.....	27	Dynamic Study in F Minor	40	Octave Study in 1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd , 4 th ,	
Spiccato Study in A Major.....	28	Concerto Study in G Minor	41	and 5 th Positions	63
Key of B \flat Major	28			Fiddle Study in A Major	64
Détaché and Staccato Study in B \flat Major	29			Concerto Study in 1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd , 4 th ,	
				and 5 th Positions	64

Memorize the Notes exercises like page 3 are also on pages 21, 27, 28, 29, 33 and 35

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Preface

Complete Technique for Viola suits the advanced beginner to upper level student wishing to learn or improve skills starting in first position, and proceeding carefully and methodically through higher positions. The order of learning the positions is traditional. Begin with First Position (I) for stability of basic left-hand and right bow-arm skills, and follow with Third Position (III), which has easy first finger Octave and second finger Unison exercises. Progress to Second Position (II), Fifth Position (V), and Fourth Position (IV). While shifting up the fingerboard, fingers look and feel closer together. This naturally occurs when the pitches are in tune. If fingers are placed too far apart, the pitches will sound sharp.

The first finger and thumb guide the left hand while shifting from position to position. The D-string is the most natural-feeling string, therefore, this book focuses on learning each new position on D-string, then A-string, G-string, and lastly C-string.

Hammock Swing Technique, utilized throughout, develops flexible body movements. See page 24. Solely stretching left-hand fingers to reach G- and C-string notes can put unnecessary, undue strain on the left hand. Freely moving the arms creates a comfortable balance while playing. Many movements are controlled in string instrument playing, but supple muscle action is paramount.

The four most important key aspects of disciplined concentration are: precise playing of pure intonation (playing in tune), steady rhythm, beautiful timbre (sound quality), and stable and secure posture.

Pure Intonation

In addition to Checking Octaves, Playing Preparations is a developmental tool to use regularly. See page 20.

Be sure your viola is well-tuned before every practice session. Tuning the strings before placing it in the case after sessions helps keep it reliably in tune.

Quality Practice versus Quantity Practice

Play slowly and accurately daily with a metronome. Progress through the suggested tempos as your technique develops. See page 4.

Patient, accurate repetition is the key to developing correct, lasting, quality playing. Hasty, inattentive repetition instills mistakes and habits difficult to rectify later. It is most advantageous to practice perfectly for 30 minutes, rather than 60 minutes with imperfections.

400 Exercises with 45 Musical Studies

Strengthen left-hand fingers, and improve dexterity of both left-hand, and right-hand and bow-arm techniques. Exercises for double-stops, quick fingers, rolling fingers, bow balancing, slow bow control, finger substitution, left-hand pizzicato, ballet of shifting, all incorporate valuable steps in development. The studies include expressive text and dynamics, and prepare students for solo student concertos, sonatas, and show pieces.

In dedication to my publisher, teachers, colleagues, students, and family.

—Janice Tucker Rhoda,
Author *The ABC's of Strings*

FIRST POSITION

Notes in measures 3 and 4 are exactly the same as measures 5 and 6.

SECOND POSITION

THIRD POSITION

FOURTH POSITION

FIFTH POSITION

BF95

Play with a Metronome. ♩ = 50, 60, 72, 80, 92, 100

D Major Scale

② Place down bow in the middle. Move towards upper part of bow. Use six inches of bow on quarter notes.

③ Open at elbow going towards tip. Use twelve inches on half notes. (Full size Bow measurement)

④ Play longer strokes on half notes.

⑤

⑥

Use entire bow on whole notes. Concentrate on straight bow in upper part.

*On down bows: Play with a straight bow going towards the tip by opening your right arm wide at the elbow. Your arm extends in a straight line. Place the bow halfway between the bridge and the end of the fingerboard to begin an exercise. The bow should be parallel to the bridge; perpendicular to the string through the entire stroke.

8 Lift bow at rest. Gently reset down bows in lower part of bow.

Count: 1 2 3 4
Or say: "1 rest 3 rest" or "1 lift 3 lift" or "D rest D rest"

9

Count: 1 + 2 + 3 4
Say: "one and two and three four"

Use supple movements of the right-hand fingers, wrist and forearm.

10

Count: 1 2 3 + 4 +
Say: "one two three and four and"

11

Count: 1 2 + 3 4 +
Say: "one two and three four and"

Advanced Straight Bow Balancing Exercise

♩ = 40 - 60

115 Eight down bow staccato notes from frog to tip. Tremolo at the tip strengthens the index finger. Eight up bow staccato notes from tip to frog. Eight spiccato notes near Frog strengthens the pinky.

Count: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Straight bow moving towards the tip. Press with the index finger. Spiccato bowing produces a lighter touch near the frog. Lift bow off string. Curve pinky on bow. Shift bow balance to weight in pinky.

116 Play full, straight bows from frog to tip.

Begin at frog Begin at tip

117

Octave Study in C Major

118

mf *energico*

Check Octaves Exercise

119

Double-Stop Exercises

120 Key of C Major

121

122

Give Open G String clearance. Move left elbow over.

123

124 Key of G Major

ADVANCED POSITION WORK

Third Position

179

On D and A strings

III *restez (stay in position)*

G F# E D

180

III

181

III

restez

182

G Major Scale and Arpeggio

III

183

III *restez*

184

On G and D strings

III

restez

185

C Major Scale and Arpeggio

III

186

III

187

Broken Thirds

III

This is the advanced section of the book. Down bow signs will no longer be shown at the beginning of each exercise.

224

Check Thirds and Sixths

225

Double-Stop and Chord Study

Harmonics and Fourth Finger Extensions

226

Play an "extended solid 4" or a feather light Harmonic Extension

227

Harmonic Study

228