

Viola Gauntlet: Day 1 (Monday): Scales & arpeggios

Key of the day: C major / C melodic minor

Three-octave scales and the Flesch arpeggio cycle in C, slow bows first, then faster slurs. The drone and a soft string chord sit under every scale so you can hear intonation, not just feel it. About 22 minutes with the video.

Every exercise starts with 2 bars of count-in clicks. Stretch items are marked: aim at them, don't force them.

1. Open-string long tones ~3.3 min

One unbroken tone per bow, in tune with the drone; middle sounding point, full even tone

Stretch: 12-beat bows with no audible bow change

♩ = 60
8-beat bows

13

23

36

12-beat bows: messa di voce pp < f > pp

interval ladder: hold the tonic, place each note against it

colour note

2. Drone intonation ~1.7 min

Each note rings with the drone - no beats; thirds low, leading note high

♩ = 66
listen for the beats to stop

11

17

interval ladder: hold the tonic, place each note against it

colour note

3. Fifths across strings ~1.8 min

One finger flat across two strings: a pure fifth means the hand frame is right

$\text{♩} = 60$
one finger flat across both strings - finger 1

finger 2 finger 3

finger 4 finger 1 finger 3

finger 4 finger 1 finger 2 finger 3 finger 4

mp *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp*

4. C major scale, 3 octaves ~2.5 min

Even tone and exact shifts from C3 to C6 and back; bow speed matched to slurs

Stretch: 16ths at $q=80$, 8 per bow, without rushing the top octave

$\text{♩} = 80$
whole bows, one note per bow

mf

2 per bow

4 per bow

8 per bow

again, 8 per bow

5. C melodic minor, 3 octaves ~2.5 min

Raised 6th and 7th going up, natural going down; keep the minor third low

Stretch: 16ths at $q=80$ with the top octave as clean as the bottom

$\text{♩} = 80$
whole bows, one note per bow

mf

11

21 *2 per bow*

29 *4 per bow*

37

43 *8 per bow*

46 *again, 8 per bow*

6. Arpeggio cycle (Flesch), 3 octaves ~2.4 min

Six arpeggios that all start on C: frame the hand, shift on the open finger

Stretch: 6 per bow at this tempo; land C6 in tune every time

C major - 3 per bow

$\text{♩} = 46$

C minor

4 *A flat major, 1st inv.*

7 *A minor, 1st inv.* *F minor, 2nd inv.*

10 *F major, 2nd inv.*

C major - 6 per bow

C minor

A flat major, 1st inv.

A minor, 1st inv.

F minor, 2nd inv.

F major, 2nd inv.

7. Seventh arpeggios, 3 octaves ~1.5 min

Four notes per octave: the hand frame changes shape, the shifts stay quiet

Stretch: 16th-note pass, 8 per bow, through C6

C dominant 7th - separate bows

C dominant 7th - 4 per bow

C dominant 7th - 8 per bow

C diminished 7th - separate bows

C diminished 7th - 4 per bow

C diminished 7th - 8 per bow

$\text{♩} = 66$

8. Broken thirds, 2 octaves ~0.9 min

Finger pairs land together; hear each third against the drone

$\text{♩} = 72$
broken thirds, 2 per bow

mf

6 *4 per bow*

11

9. Scales on one string ~1.2 min

A whole octave on ONE string: shifts by 1-2-3, 1-2-3-4, slow and slide-free

Stretch: the A string octave (A4 to A5) clean, no audible slides

$\text{♩} = 72$

mf *sul C: one octave on the C string* *sul G: one octave on the G string*

mf

sul D: one octave on the D string *sul A: one octave on the A string*

11 *mf* *mf*

10. Chromatic scale, 2 octaves ~1.0 min

Tiny, even half steps; the fingers move like a zipper, not a slide

$\text{♩} = 60$
4 per bow - slide fingers 1-1 / 2-2, no blur

mf

5 *8 per bow*

10

11. Performance pass, with a groove ~1.0 min

Play the scales like music: steady 16ths, big tone, locked to the bass

Stretch: all six passes at $q=84$ without a stumble

C major - detache, middle of the bow
♩ = 84
f

4 *C major - 4 per bow*
f

7 *C major - 8 per bow*
f

10 *C melodic minor - detache, middle of the bow*
f

13 *C melodic minor - 4 per bow*
f

16 *C melodic minor - 8 per bow*
f

18

The musical score is written for Viola Gauntlet. It consists of six systems of music, each with a bass staff and a treble staff. The first system is C major, detache, middle of the bow, with a tempo of 84 and a forte (f) dynamic. The second system is C major, 4 per bow, with a forte (f) dynamic. The third system is C major, 8 per bow, with a forte (f) dynamic. The fourth system is C melodic minor, detache, middle of the bow, with a forte (f) dynamic. The fifth system is C melodic minor, 4 per bow, with a forte (f) dynamic. The sixth system is C melodic minor, 8 per bow, with a forte (f) dynamic. The score ends with a double bar line at measure 18.