

10 Steps Violin Practice

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Step 1 — Silent Finger Exercises

Such as *Ursstudien* (EXAMPLE 1a) (violists might avoid *Ursstudien* exercise 1B); *Dounis Daily Dozen* exercise 1 (EXAMPLE 1b). After a few moments spent with the bow-tilting exercise (EXAMPLE 1c), these could be done simultaneously with the Gingold anecdotal *One Minute Bow*.

Bow Tilting: Tilt the bow stick toward the scroll to reduce hair contact with the string. Practice rolling the bow with thumb and fingers from flat hair to tilted position (Capet's *roule* exercise). Use tilt at the frog to compensate for naturally louder sound, and flatten toward the tip. This controls tone color and enables smoother bow changes.

Step 2 — Long Tones

Played with smooth bow change exercise (EXAMPLE 2a) before a mirror to check bow's contact point, then various left-hand finger exercises played slowly for intonation accuracy, especially combinations such as 0-1, 0-2 etc., all with vibrato once intonation is secure.

Choose from materials such as *Sitt Practical Viola Method*, *Dancla School of Velocity op.74*, *Wreede Violaerobics* (EXAMPLE 2b), *Schradiack vol.1*, *Sevcik op.1 parts 1-3*.

Step 3 — Bowing

Bow stroke techniques: *detache*, *martele*, *spiccato*, *sautille*, *colle*, *ricochet*, *staccato*, *legato*.

Materials: *Kreutzer* (etudes 2, 7, 8), *Sevcik op.2* (School of Bowing Technique), *Galamian* scale routines with varied bowings.

Step 4 — Shifting

One-octave *Flesch Scale System* scales, arpeggios, broken thirds; *Sevcik op.8*, *Lukacs 10 Exercises in Change of Position* (EXAMPLE 4a), *Ricci Left-Hand Violin Technique* (EXAMPLE 4b), *Dounis op.12* (EXAMPLE 4c), *op.25 or Daily Dozen* (EXAMPLE 4d).

Step 5 — Strength / Stretching

Whistler exercise (EXAMPLE 5a), *Flor* exercise (EXAMPLE 5b), *Dounis Daily Dozen* exercise 1 (EXAMPLE 5c) through fourth position with very slow bow and drone.

Step 6 — Tone / String Crossings

Dounis Daily Dozen exercise 11 (EXAMPLE 6), or similar made-up exercises with different double-stops, played very slowly with vibrato, and with dynamic plan of crescendo from *pp* to *ff* on the down-bow and the reverse on the up-bow.

Step 7 — Scales

Three-octave scales with strategic bowing patterns and key signatures from repertoire. Vibrato work, different distributions, dynamic plan, prescribed articulation or rhythm, etc.

Materials: *Flesch Scale System*, *Galamian*, *Hrimaly*.

Step 8 — Double-Stops

Double-stops for intonation training (Simon Fischer approach).
Scales in thirds, sixths, octaves, and tenths.

Trott Melodious Double-Stops Books 1-2 (EXAMPLE 8a), *Sitt Technical Studies op.92 Book 3*, or *Double-Stop Etudes op.32*; *Chailley Vingt Etudes Expressives en Doubles Cordes*, *Schradielck vol.2*, *Korgueff Double-Stop Exercises* (EXAMPLE 8b), *Sevcik op.7 part 4* (EXAMPLE 8c) or *op.9*, *Dounis op.12* (EXAMPLE 8d), *Ricci* (EXAMPLE 8e).

Experience with a variety of intervals and key signatures is important.

Step 9 — Arpeggios

Three-octave arpeggios in all keys. Major, minor, dominant 7th, diminished.

Materials: *Flesch Scale System*, *Galamian*, one-octave arpeggios in 12 keys.

Step 10 — Strategic Etude / Bach

To address a specific problem, such as *Mazas*, *Kreutzer*, *Rovelli*, etc.
; materials of Step 2 played rapidly, or passagework from repertoire.

Bach: A movement from the *Sonatas and Partitas* (BWV 1001-1006).

Heifetz, Galamian, Auer, and Flesch all recommended daily Bach practice.

The polyphonic writing combines double-stops, shifting, and all bow strokes in a musical context. Rotate through movements to cover different techniques.

Suggested rotation: Fugues for polyphony, Sarabandes for tone and phrasing, Giges and Preludes for bow technique, Chaconne for comprehensive work.