

Key bowing patterns (1)

The number of bowing variations is infinite, so it is clearly not possible to practise every single one. However, complex or awkward bowing patterns are nothing but several simple, basic patterns joined together into one sequence. These basic patterns are relatively few in number. Since all other bowings are derived from them, practising them produces dramatic all-round improvement, since all *combinations* of the basic patterns improve at the same time.

- ❖ Play at the heel, middle and point. Keep the bow smoothly sustained, playing deeply into the string.
- ❖ Bowings are not completely mastered until it is possible to play them extremely fast, so always work towards pushing your comfortable upper speed limit faster and faster. The speed limit will vary according to which part of the bow is used. For instance, most patterns will have to be played more slowly at the heel.

Near the heel: the frog makes small movements; the point makes large movements.

Near the point: the point makes small movements; the frog makes large movements.

- ❖ How much bow to use depends on the tempo. Use a lot of bow at slower speeds, and little bow at faster speeds; but at each tempo *always use as much bow as possible*. Even if a particular pattern feels awkward in a certain place in the bow, and would not normally be played there, it is still important to practise it there to improve overall control.
- ❖ Play with a metronome, starting at a comfortable tempo and gradually speeding up. Work each bowing pattern until:
 - 1 It can be played very fast
 - 2 The sound is entirely pure whatever the speed
 - 3 The rhythm is even
 - 4 It feels *easy*

Exercise 1

- ❖ Play the bowing patterns using the notes of the double-stop sequence, as shown in the example.
- ❖ Start each pattern down-bow.

079'1

EXAMPLE

079'3

BOWING PATTERNS

079'2

1 2 3 4 5 6

7 8 9 10 11 12

13 14 15 16 17 18 19

20 21 22 23 24 25 26

Exercise 2

- ❖ Repeat each variation four times, using the notes of the chord sequence.
- ❖ Start up-bow as well as down-bow.
- ❖ Also play spiccato.

1 2 3 4 5 6

Exercise 3

- ❖ Play the bowing patterns using the notes of the chord sequence, as shown in the example.
- ❖ Begin each pattern down-bow.
- ❖ Also play 1, 7, 13 and 19 spiccato.

EXAMPLE etc.

BOWING PATTERNS

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24