

# Shifting

## Slow arrival speed in 'End' shifts

End shifts (also known as Romantic shifts) are those where the hand moves on the finger that ends the shift.

Long shifts such as an octave may feel more accurate and reliable if the speed of the shift is fast-slow: the finger travelling fast up the string until a little below the new note, and then slowing down into the note. (The same principle often applies to shorter-distance shifts as well.)

However, instead of thinking of 'fast-slow', and of the whole length of the shift, think of the shift as being 'slow' and a very short distance, beginning only a centimetre or half a centimetre below the new note.

In other words, having played the lower note move the hand/finger quickly to just below the note you want – do not think of this as a 'shift', but as relocating the hand elsewhere – and then from that position shift into the new note slowly.

### Example 1

Nigun, Bloch  
Bar before Fig. 11

### 1 – The end of the shift

*Use no more than one centimetre of bow, with almost no bow pressure whatsoever ('ghost' the bow-stroke).*

- After playing the 1st finger A<sub>4</sub> lift the finger off the string.
- During the rest, move the hand quickly to some point just below 3rd finger B<sub>4</sub>.
- Place the 3rd finger lightly on the surface of the string (shown as an x-note A<sub>4</sub>) and slowly slide into the B<sub>4</sub>, the finger gradually going more heavily into the string as it slides into the note.

### 2 – The beginning of the shift

*Use no more than one centimetre of bow.*

- After playing the first finger, leave the bow on the string at the end of the bow stroke.
- Place the 3rd finger lightly on the string (as if to play a harmonic) somewhere around C<sub>4</sub>.
- Move the finger quickly and lightly up the string to some point just below 3rd finger B<sub>4</sub> (shown as an A<sub>4</sub>). Leave the finger resting on the string as if playing a harmonic.

### 3 – The beginning and the end of the shift joined together

*Use no more than two centimetres of bow between the lower and the higher note.*

- After playing the 1st finger A<sub>4</sub>, place the 3rd finger lightly on the string.
- Move the finger quickly up to some point just below the arrival note, leaving the finger on the string as if for a harmonic.
- Slowly slide into the B<sub>4</sub>, the finger gradually going more heavily into the string as it slides into the note.

Example 2

Sonata, Franck  
Second movement, bar 134

Shifting to the same note – ‘substitutions’

Example 1

24 Caprices, Rode  
No. 11, bar 84

Play *ppp* to encourage the left hand to be light:

Example 2

Concerto no. 4 in D, K218, Mozart  
First movement, bar 49

Example 3

42 Etudes ou caprices, Kreutzer  
No. 35