Guide notes

Guide notes are a secure way to find the correct note or hand position at the beginning of a phrase or after a rest. The fingers are placed silently, often rapidly, in order to move to a different area of the fingerboard.

There are always many different ways to reach a particular note, and each player will have their own preferred 'route'. The examples given below are intended only to illustrate the principle.



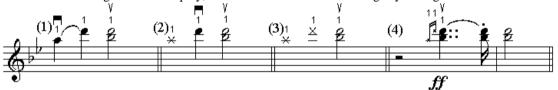
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Example

Suppose that Bruch had written this passage as follows:



This would be straightforward to play, but it amounts to the same thing if you finger the extra A - D silently:



- (1) Play the guide notes as though they were part of the passage.
- (2) Place the finger on the first guide note without playing it (written as an x-note), and then play on.
- (3) Place both guide notes without playing them, and play the 'destination note' only.
- (4) Place the guide notes like fast grace notes, without playing them, and then begin the passage.

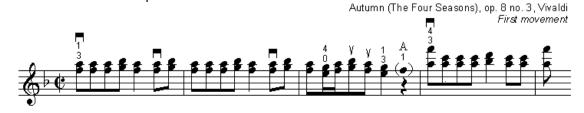


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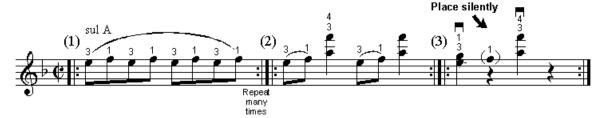
Example



• Practise as in Example 1.

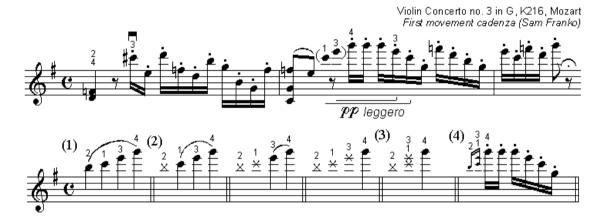


3



Example

- (1) Practise the shift to the guide note. Begin slowly and gradually speed up to as fast a tempo as possible.
- (2) Practise going to the F in the context of playing the double stop.
- (3) Play straight from one double stop to another, using the first finger F as a guide but without playing it.



- Play all the guide notes, using a B to help find the C.
 Begin slowly and gradually speed up to as fast a tempo as possible.
- (2) Place the finger on the first guide note without playing it (written as an x-note), and then play on; then the first two notes, and so on.
- (3) Place the first and third fingers together as a 'block' (as though playing a double stop on one string), without playing them. Then find and play the fourth finger G.
- (4) Place the guide notes like fast grace notes, without playing them.

When you have to go to a note very quickly it is often not possible to use guide notes. Then it is a question of memorizing the feel of the hand position:



- (1) Using this fingering the top G is an extension. The shift is to second finger D in 5th position. Practise going to the D alone. Memorise the feeling of the hand position.
- (2) Practise going to the D in the context of playing an extension fourth finger G. The hand position may feel slightly different.
- (3) Remembering the feeling of the hand position, place the second finger D on the string without playing it, and continue into the passage.

5

Example

6

Example

Next month's BASICS looks at how to shift to a harmonic