# Left fourth finger

## Simple fourth finger exercise

- Raise and drop the fingers from the base joint so that the shape of the finger on the string, and in the air, is
  the same
- Drop the fourth finger more on its tip for it to be more rounded.
- Hold the first finger down as marked.

Example



• Play the same notes on the other strings in other positions:



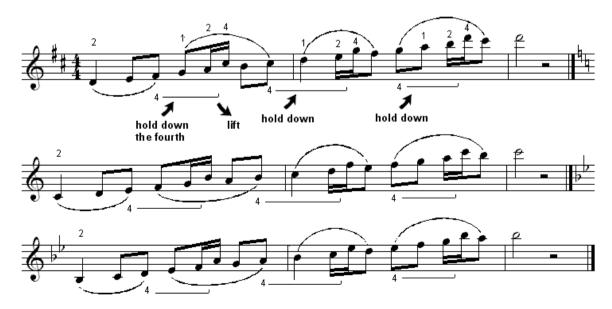
## Overlapping

During an ascending scale it is important that the fourth finger does not lift from the string too soon. Keep it on the string as the first finger plays its note on the next (higher) string.

This simple exercise exaggerates holding the fourth finger down until after the second finger has been played. After playing it a couple of times playing the scale normally with the fourth finger overlapping will feel entirely natural and automatic.

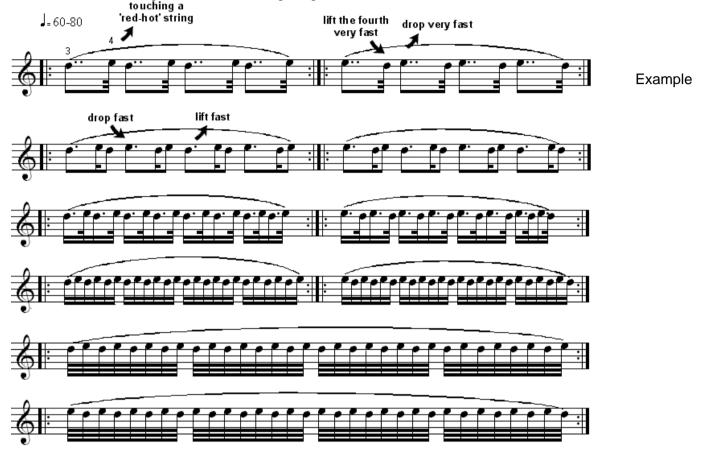
• First play slowly, and later speed up to a medium tempo:

Example



# Developing lightness and ease

It used to be thought that you did not have a good left hand technique unless you could hear the fingers banging on the fingerboard with a hard impact. While there may be good reasons sometimes to exaggerate the finger action, in general a fast finger action should be the norm rather than a heavy one. The fingers must move very quickly to create the different string-lengths, but always using minimum power and effort. A useful image for fast lift-off in the following exercise is of the string being red-hot: touching a



### **Extensions**

The extension of the fourth finger out of its perfect fourth 'frame' can be likened to a 'fifth' finger, essential in countless passages in the ordinary repertoire:



Extension exercises like these are very effective at building a clearer awareness of the geography of the fingerboard.

