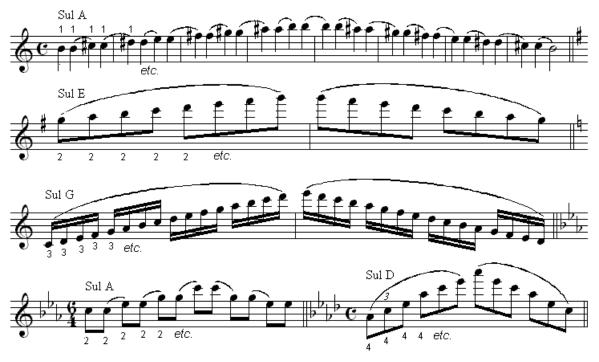
### **BASICS**

# Single-finger scales

To improve the accuracy of shifting in general, play single-finger scales and arpeggios as part of your everyday building work or warm-up routine:



Play slowly at first, using the overlapping bowing shown in the first bar. Hear the notes in your mind in advance of playing them, and listen carefully.

- 1) Stop each note with as light a finger as possible, without pressing the finger down hard into the string for each note.
- 2) Lighten the finger even more during the shift.
- 3) Keep the unused fingers close to the string, i.e. hover above the string with the fourth finger while shifting with the first finger.

The reason why practising single-finger scales and arpeggios is so helpful in shifting is because of the use of intermediate notes between the two actual notes of the shift. When a shift appears to be from one finger to another, in many cases the actual shift is really 1–1, 2–2, 3–3 or 4–4.



(1) Classical shift (known also as a Beginning shift because you shift on the finger you begin with).

The note you are shifting to, third finger  $F^{\sharp}$ , is in 3rd position. Shift with the first finger to 3rd position. This note, D, is the intermediate note. Having arrived there simply drop the third finger on  $F^{\sharp}$ . Although the sound of the shift is a perfect fifth, the actual distance of the shift is a minor 3rd, B to D played first finger to first finger.

(2) Romantic shift (known also as an End shift because you move the hand on the finger that ends the shift).

## **BASICS**

Having played the B with the first finger, place the third finger lightly on the string as if to play a harmonic. Shift with this finger on the string, sliding the finger into its note from below. Although the sound of the shift is again a perfect fifth, the actual distance of the shift is a major 3rd, D to  $F^{\sharp}$  played third finger to third finger.

#### Application to the general repertoire

The next step is to find the underlying finger pattern in passages of shifts. Isolate the finger that does the shifting and practise it separately. Afterwards the passage will feel much more secure.



#### Single-finger scales and children

Another use for single-finger scales is in teaching children how to play in high positions. The earlier high positions are introduced the better, but this does not mean that children have to be given pieces beyond their capability. If a child can sing a scale in tune (to 'la' or do, re, me) then often they can play a scale up the string in tune using one finger.

This means that at the same time as playing simple or elementary pieces in the lower positions, the student can also be practising single-finger scales right to the top of the string, i.e. the full two octaves. Then, the high positions do not seem extraordinary or daunting when they are encountered in the future; and confidence in shifting is dramatically increased as a small shift from, say, first to third position seems entirely insignificant after playing to the end of the fingerboard.