## **BASICS**

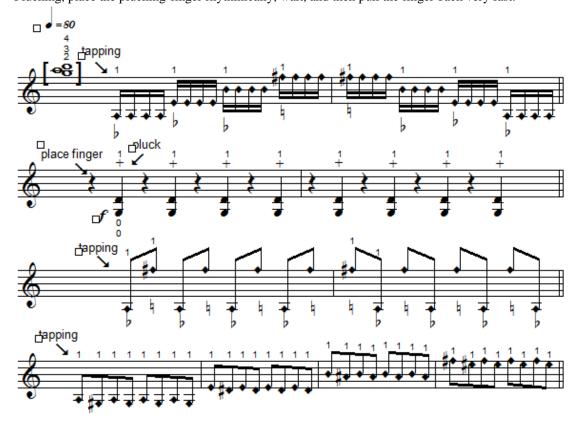
## Warming up the left hand

It is always useful to have a few quick warm-up routines that you know well, and that you can turn to whenever you want either to warm up or to get back into shape quickly after a period of not playing.

For example, this finger sequence quickly exercises the fingers in moving only from the base joints, and lifting, dropping and sliding:

Hold three fingers down silently. Tap the remaining finger with a feeling of down-down not down, up. Listen to the pitch of the note created by the impact of the finger.

Plucking, place the plucking-finger rhythmically, wait, and then pull the finger back very fast.



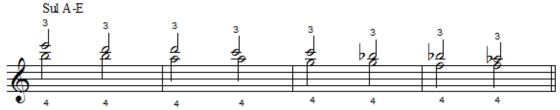
Repeat the same patterns with the second finger while holding down first finger F on the E string; then with the third and the fourth, holding the other three fingers down on their respective notes on the E string.

Exercise 2

Exercise 1

In many passages it is useful to have a feeling of balancing the hand on the fourth finger and reaching back with the lower fingers, rather than always being based on the first finger and reaching up to the higher fingers. The following exercise takes seconds to do, and at the same time encourages the hand to open up at the base joints.

Position the hand to favour the fourth finger, making sure that it is curved and relaxed. Then try to keep the same shape in the fourth finger as you extend back with the third:

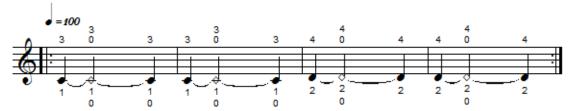


Also play the same pattern on the other pairs of strings.

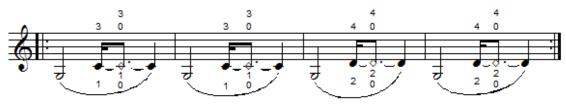
## **BASICS**

Remind yourself of the sensation of the springiness of the string:

Exercise 3

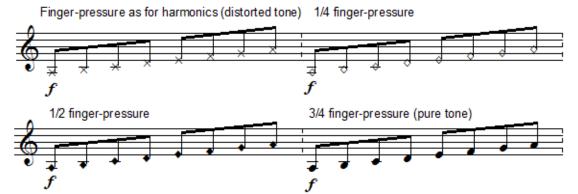


Quickly release to a harmonic. Then very slowly stop the string until the note is pure, experimenting to find the least possible finger-pressure:



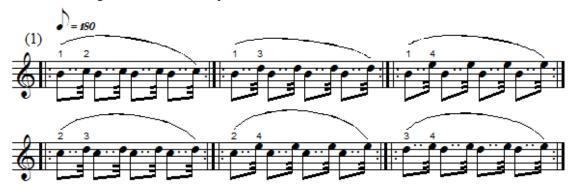
Another quick thing to do is to play a few notes heavily with the bow, but to start with too-light left fingers so that the tone is entirely distorted. Gradually add more weight in each finger until the tone is pure, but without the string ending up touching the fingerboard:

Exercise 4



Practise trills, setting the metronome to a quaver click:

Exercise 5



Continue the same finger pattern (12, 13, 14, 23, 24, 34) adding two, three and four notes to build the trills:



Next month's Basics continues with warming up the right hand and arm