

## Home Learning for Beginner Viola Players!

Stuck at home? Don't say you are bored! Get out your instrument and PLAY. Share what you can already do with your family.

Make a little video of your favourite piece and then a piece you are currently working on. Each day play your instrument for at least 10 minutes. At the end of the first week, video the piece that you are working on again - how does it compare?

Keep doing this each week and include different pieces.

Start each session by playing some good quality long notes. Choose a nice, easy note. Can you use your whole bow really slowly? Keep it straight? Is it in between the bridge and fingerboard?

Can you play the note loudly? Now can you play it quietly?

If you are really confident, can you change the volume of the note whilst you play?

Keep a log of how long your note is in seconds each day. Is it getting longer every day?

*With adult guidance*, YouTube is an EXCELLENT resource, with hundreds of videos covering every aspect of playing an instrument, so whether you have forgotten what the strings are, how to hold the bow, or where your fingers are supposed to go, there are endless amounts available for free. You can also find millions of recordings of musicians playing everything from Bach to Bieber and Dvorak to Dua Lipa. Go exploring and see what you can find, you will always come away more inspired than you started!

I have included some recommended YouTube links below to help cover the basics. Here is a series of beginner lessons for the violin, but the ideas are the same for viola. Just remember, the strings are different!

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL6urkeK7KgD4C7c8UGV2X3cu76U4EJy0K>

*Have fun and good luck!*

Parents, if you have any questions please feel free to get in touch:

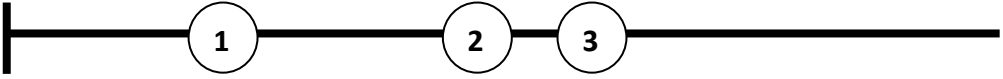
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## New Viola Music

Here are some notes to help you through the music we were planning to look at in the rest of the Spring Term and Summer Term. I have simplified some of the music and added notes/fingers to every tune. The pages are progressive, so please work through the tunes in order, not moving on until you are happy with the previous tune.

## Two Finger Tunes

The top line in your music shows you which note is produced by putting each finger on each string:

					
<b>A string</b>	B		C#	D	
<b>D string</b>	E		F#	G	
<b>G string</b>	A		B	C	
<b>C string</b>	D		E	F	

## Two Finger Warm Ups

Each of these warm ups should be practised slowly and several times on each string. Start with the D string. Make sure to put your left fingertip in the right place, and keep your first finger down when you add your second finger.

When you are happy with putting the fingers in the right place, try with the bow. If you need to revise the bow hold, I recommend this YouTube video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HcoOWGdIlgI>

*Remember: whole bows, keeping it straight and near to the bridge.*

## Hot Cross Buns and Merrily We Roll Along

Now on to the first tunes using both first and second finger. Approach these the same way you did the Warm Ups.

Step by step:

1. Feel the beat/pulse, and **clap** the rhythm.
2. **Pluck** the tune, first on the D string, then on all of the others.
3. **Bow** the tune, first on the D string, then on all of the others.

## Hot Cross Buns Rhythms:

2	1	0	-	2	1	0	-
<i>Fly</i>	<i>Fly</i>	<i>Fly</i>	<i>Shh</i>	<i>Fly</i>	<i>Fly</i>	<i>Fly</i>	<i>Shh</i>

0 0	0 0	1 1	1 1	2	1	0	-
<i>Spi-der</i>	<i>Spi-der</i>	<i>Spi-der</i>	<i>Spi-der</i>	<i>Fly</i>	<i>Fly</i>	<i>Fly</i>	<i>Shh</i>

## Other things to remember:

Hot Cross Buns - D String

- 1) **Alto Clef:** a special clef just for viola players!
- 2) **Key Signature:** tells you which notes are sharps or flats.
- 3) **Time Signature:** 4/4 tells you there are four beats in every bar (top number) and that each beat is a crotchet ('fly') long (bottom number)
- 4) **Bar Line:** these divide up each bar into groups of four beats.
- 5) **Final/Repeat Bar Line:** the bold line tells you we have reached the end. The dots tell you to repeat back to either the beginning, or the other dots.

You can then use these same steps to learn Merrily We Roll Along! Do not worry if you don't master it on the first attempt...

Practise little (10-20 minutes each time) and often (daily would be best!)  
and you can achieve anything!





## Three Finger Tunes

Start with the warm ups the same as before, learning them **plucking** then **bowing**. Can you play each one at least three times without stopping? Can you feel your fingers getting stronger?

With 'Jumps', make sure you put down finger 1, 1 **and** 2, then 1, 2 **and** 3, and remember there is a space between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> finger.

### Cowboy Chorus and Clown Dance

Both of these tunes contain a new note! They look like 'fly' notes but have a hole in. They are called Minims, they last for two beats and we are going to use the word 'bee' to remember them. I have also added semi-quavers (caterpillars) for later use:

			
Minim	Crotchet	Quavers	Semi-quavers
'Beeeee'	'Fly'	'Spi-der'	'Cat-er-pill-ar'
2 beats	1 beat	$\frac{1}{2}$ beats	$\frac{1}{4}$ beats

Cowboy Chorus is all on the D string.

Clown Dance is all on the G string.

### Bonus challenge!

Can you write these tunes out using letter names for every other string?

*For example:*

Cowboy Chorus on the G would start: B B B B C C C C...

Clown Dance on D would start: D E F# F# G - G - ...

The dash (-) after the G shows you that it is a **minim** and lasts for two beats.

## Bonus Music

This is where we start to put everything together, with a tune that everybody knows!

### Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

This tune uses the D and A strings.

Start by feeling the pulse and clapping the **rhythm** all of the way through.

Then learn two bars at a time:

- 1) Pluck the notes, making sure to put your fingers in the right place on the right strings.
- 2) Add the bow - remember, long, straight bows, near the bridge.

Then do bars 3 and 4. Then bars 1 - 4.

Then learn bars 5 and 6 (the second line). **GOOD NEWS!** When you have completed that, you have learnt the whole tune, because bars 7 and 8 are the same as 5 and 6, and the last line is the same as the first!

After a few more days practise you will be able to play Twinkle Twinkle Little Star confidently on your viola, well done!

### Kookaburra

*Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree, merry merry king of the bush is he.  
Laugh! Kookaburra, Laugh! Kookaburra, great your life must be!*

Now this is where things get a little trickier... Again, approach this tune two bars at a time, and repeat each step a lot!

- 1) Clap the rhythm x5
- 2) Pluck the tune x5
- 3) Bow the tune x5

Each pair of bars can be played as an ostinato (a repeated musical idea). If you find it *really* tricky, try a different ostinato.

I would recommend learning them in this order: 4, 3, 1, 2.

1		2	
3		4	

**New note alert!** The last note in ostinato number 4 ( ) is called a semibreve, and is four beats long. You need to count "1, 2, 3, 4" whilst playing it.

### French Folk Song

The last bonus tune you have is called French Folk Song.

The 3/4 at the beginning tells us that there are three beats in a bar. Can you practise this by counting to three over and over again whilst plucking the D string? Maybe you could practise it by going *stamp-clap-clap* or *clap-click-click*? Can you come up with your own actions to help feel three beats in a bar?

**Final new note alert!** The last note in bar 4 is called a dotted-minim ( ).

You need to count "1, 2, 3" whilst playing it.

This is a lullaby and should be played slowly, using the whole of your bow. Learn four bars at a time, not moving on to the next four until you are ready.