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THE ABSOLUTE INDEPENDENCE OF THE FINGERS

In Violin Playing on a Scientific Basis, Op. 15
Book I: The Absolute Independence of Three Fingers

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FOREWORD.

The ability to move freely a finger or a group of fingers according to the impulses of the will power, and without any sympathetic movement of the other fingers, is **ELEMENTARY INDEPENDENCE**.

ABSOLUTE INDEPENDENCE is the ability to move two or three fingers or groups of fingers, but in a **FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT WAY**.

As I have, already, said in my method *"The Artist's Technique of Violin Playing," there are four movements of the fingers :

- I THE VERTICAL OR FALLING movement (trill).
- II. THE HORIZONTAL OR SIDE movement (stretch, chromatic passages).
- III. The movement from LEFT to RIGHT (left-hand pizzicato).
- IV. The movement from RIGHT to LEFT and vice-versa (Chord-playing).

To acquire absolute independence of the fingers, not only each one of the above four movements must be thoroughly mastered, but one should be able to execute **AT THE SAME TIME** two, three or all four movements. This is obtained through a mental process only. The active co-operation of the brain in such exercises is imperative. Any so-called finger exercise for obtaining independence, which does not require mental co-operation, is worthless and it is absolutely impossible to produce lasting results.

The object of the following Exercises is the absolute independence of the fingers by combining all four movements. They are of such a nature as to demand constant mental activity and the utmost concentration of the brain. It is impossible to execute any one of them while thinking of something else. I could define the independence of the fingers as **MENTAL DISCIPLINE** over the fingers. The results obtained through the practice of these exercises are striking. The most unimaginable finger combinations become but child's play to every one who has practised them carefully according to the directions, and they will open new fields for dazzling technical feats.


THE AUTHOR.


DIRECTIONS FOR PRACTISING


First of all avoid any stiffness in any part or joint of the arm, hand or fingers. Vibrate as freely and as often as possible; a free vibrato being the only real test of holding and using the left arm, hand and fingers in a correct way. As soon as a tired sensation or a slight pain is felt in the hand or fingers, the playing must be stopped at once and resumed only after a few minutes, usually two or three, during which the arm should rest in a state of complete relaxation, so as to help restore the circulation of the blood to its normal condition.


The following Exercises should be practised daily from fifteen to twenty minutes. To obtain the best results in the shortest possible space of time, the following method of practising is recommended: each Exercise should be, at first, analyzed and the different movements practised separately. Afterwards the movements should be gradually combined and practised simultaneously.


EXPLANATION OF THE DIFFERENT SIGNS.

The notes written thus  should be stopped and held down firmly with the fingers, without being sounded with the bow.

The fingers stopping the round white notes  should execute the movement MUTEPLY, in the same way as if the notes were sounded with the bow.

A line after a note  means that the finger stopping that note should slide to the next one, without being lifted from the string.

This sign  indicates the left hand pizzicato, and the number below that sign shows the finger which should pluck the string.

Ex. Modification  of the first fundamental Exercise: *

* For convenience of reading all Exercises included in this Book are written on two staves.



Before attempting to practise the above Exercise as it is written, the Player should proceed to practice it in six different ways (a to f), as exemplified below. This is to enable the player to test and control each movement separately and to combine them gradually until all four movements are performed simultaneously





All Exercises contained in this Book should be analyzed and practised in the same way as directed above.

There are only four FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISES contained in the present Book.

FIRST EXERCISE . . .	1st, 2nd and 3rd fingers: ACTIVE.	4th finger: PASSIVE.
SECOND EXERCISE . . .	1st, 2nd and 4th fingers: ACTIVE.	3rd finger: PASSIVE.
THIRD EXERCISE . . .	1st, 3rd and 4th fingers: ACTIVE.	2nd finger: PASSIVE.
FOURTH EXERCISE . . .	2nd, 3rd and 4th fingers: ACTIVE.	1st finger: PASSIVE.

To understand clearly the plan of this work, and in order to help select the Exercises for the daily practice, so that all fingers may derive benefit, the following explanations are necessary.

Each FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE permits 19 MODIFICATIONS which are written in progressive order and numbered 1 to 19. Each one of these MODIFICATIONS, which, by the way, forms an independent exercise by itself, should be analyzed and practised as exemplified above for MODIFICATION (1) of the FIRST FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE. Furthermore, there are added 11 SIMPLE VARIANTS to each fundamental exercise, which in turn should be considered as FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISES and be subjected, every one of them, to all 19 MODIFICATIONS in the same way as the FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE.

To promote and develop the fourth movement, from RIGHT to LEFT and vice-versa (chord-playing), 23 BASIC VARIANTS are appended to every fundamental exercise; their object being to vary the setting of the fingers on the strings. Each one of these BASIC VARIANTS should serve as a substitute to the fundamental exercise and be practised accordingly. To explain better:—

After thoroughly practising the FIRST FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE with all its 19 MODIFICATIONS and all SIMPLE VARIANTS, every one, too, with 19 MODIFICATIONS, then the FIRST FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE, having been exhausted, should be substituted by the BASIC VARIANT (1), which will take its place and be practised as the FIRST FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE with 19 MODIFICATIONS and 11 SIMPLE VARIANTS. The above should be applied to all FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISES.

These Exercises are intended as a **lifetime study-companion** to every violinist. They are to be practised patiently, and without any haste to finish the Book, for they are not the kind of Exercises to be studied once and then put aside. Any violinist, from the most humble orchestra player to the finished artist and all pupils, except beginners, will derive extraordinary benefit from the study of these Exercises. And, let it be said, that those violinists, even the most distinguished, who consider themselves to be so musical, that their extreme musical sensibility does not permit them to practise technical exercises, are, in reality, the ones who practise them most, without acknowledging it for obvious reasons.

A careful and daily practice of the following exercises will develop the **strength, solidity, surety, pliability** and INDIVIDUALITY of the fingers of the violin player in such a phenomenal degree of perfection, that all difficulties inherent to the left hand technique, will automatically cease to exist—with the only exception of shifting which is treated in a separate work.

This Book—the first—treats of the absolute independence of three fingers. As we have only four different groups of fingers—hence four fundamental exercises—the best and most advantageous way of studying the exercises is to practise four different exercises a day, each one from a different group of fingers. Ex.

FIRST FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE: MODIFICATION (1) ..	} To be practised together the same day.
SECOND FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE: MODIFICATION (1) ..	
THIRD FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE: MODIFICATION (1) ..	
FOURTH FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE: MODIFICATION (1) ..	

The Exercises thus selected should be practised for so many days until perfect co-ordination of movement and a fluent and easy execution are assured. Then, and only then, new exercises can be taken up and practised in absolutely the same way. The usual recommendations to repeat each exercise many times—no definite number should be given as this varies according to individual requirements—and to alternate slow with rapid tempo, should be applied here as well. Wherever possible legato bowing should be used.

FIRST FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE

1st, 2nd and 3rd fingers: ACTIVE. 4th finger: PASSIVE.

NINETEEN MODIFICATIONS.

10 11

12 13

14 15

16 17

18 19

ELEVEN SIMPLE VARIANTS.

To be practised, each one, like the NINETEEN MODIFICATIONS of the FIRST FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE.

① ④ 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 ② ④ 3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3 ③ ④ 3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3

④ ④ 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 ⑤ ④ 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3

⑥ ④ 3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3 ⑦ ④ 3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3

⑧ ④ 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 ⑨ ④ 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 ⑩ ④ 2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2 ⑪ ④ 2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2

SECOND FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE

1st, 2nd and 4th fingers: ACTIVE. 3rd finger: PASSIVE.

NINETEEN MODIFICATIONS.

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13 14 15 16

17 18 19

ELEVEN SIMPLE VARIANTS.

To be practised, each one, like the NINETEEN MODIFICATIONS of the SECOND FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE.

1 2 3

4 5

Exercises 6 through 11 are presented in two rows. Each exercise consists of a treble and bass staff. Exercise 6: Treble staff has a sequence of eighth notes with fingering 0404040404040404; bass staff has quarter notes with fingering 1-1-1-1. Exercise 7: Treble staff has a sequence of eighth notes with fingering 0404040404040404; bass staff has quarter notes with fingering 1-1-1-1. Exercise 8: Treble staff has quarter notes with fingering 4-4-4-4; bass staff has eighth notes with fingering 0202020202020202. Exercise 9: Treble staff has quarter notes with fingering 4-4-4-4; bass staff has eighth notes with fingering 0202020202020202. Exercise 10: Treble staff has a sequence of eighth notes with fingering 0404040404040404; bass staff has quarter notes with fingering 2-2-2-2. Exercise 11: Treble staff has a sequence of eighth notes with fingering 0404040404040404; bass staff has quarter notes with fingering 2-2-2-2.

THIRD FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE

1st, 3rd and 4th fingers: ACTIVE. 2nd finger: PASSIVE.

The diagram shows a treble staff with a circled 3 indicating a triplet of eighth notes with fingering 4-4-4-4. The bass staff has quarter notes with fingering 0 3 0 3. Below the bass staff are four vertical stems with the number 1, representing the passive 2nd finger.

NINETEEN MODIFICATIONS.

Three modifications are shown in a single system. Modification 1: Treble staff has quarter notes with fingering 4-4; bass staff has eighth notes with fingering 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3. Modification 2: Treble staff has quarter notes with fingering 4-4-4-4-4-4-4-4; bass staff has quarter notes with fingering 0 3. Modification 3: Treble staff has quarter notes with fingering 4-4; bass staff has eighth notes with fingering 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1.

4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19

ELEVEN SIMPLE VARIANTS.

To be practised, each one, like the NINETEEN MODIFICATIONS of the THIRD FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE.

The image displays eleven numbered musical exercises, each consisting of two staves (treble and bass clef). The exercises are as follows:

- Variant 1:** Treble clef, 2/4 time. Top staff: quarter notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Bottom staff: eighth notes G3, A3, B3, C4. Fingering: 1, 1.
- Variant 2:** Treble clef, 2/4 time. Top staff: eighth notes G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5. Bottom staff: eighth notes G3, A3, B3, C4, G3, A3, B3, C4. Fingering: 3, 3.
- Variant 3:** Treble clef, 2/4 time. Top staff: eighth notes G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5. Bottom staff: eighth notes G3, A3, B3, C4, G3, A3, B3, C4. Fingering: 3, 3.
- Variant 4:** Treble clef, 2/4 time. Top staff: eighth notes G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5. Bottom staff: quarter notes G3, A3, B3, C4, G3, A3, B3, C4. Fingering: 1, 1, 1, 1.
- Variant 5:** Treble clef, 2/4 time. Top staff: eighth notes G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5. Bottom staff: quarter notes G3, A3, B3, C4, G3, A3, B3, C4. Fingering: 1, 1, 1, 1.
- Variant 6:** Treble clef, 2/4 time. Top staff: quarter notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Bottom staff: eighth notes G3, A3, B3, C4, G3, A3, B3, C4. Fingering: 1, 1, 1, 1.
- Variant 7:** Treble clef, 2/4 time. Top staff: quarter notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Bottom staff: eighth notes G3, A3, B3, C4, G3, A3, B3, C4. Fingering: 1, 1, 1, 1.
- Variant 8:** Treble clef, 2/4 time. Top staff: eighth notes G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5. Bottom staff: quarter notes G3, A3, B3, C4, G3, A3, B3, C4. Fingering: 1, 1, 1, 1.
- Variant 9:** Treble clef, 2/4 time. Top staff: eighth notes G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5. Bottom staff: quarter notes G3, A3, B3, C4, G3, A3, B3, C4. Fingering: 1, 1, 1, 1.
- Variant 10:** Treble clef, 2/4 time. Top staff: quarter notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Bottom staff: eighth notes G3, A3, B3, C4, G3, A3, B3, C4. Fingering: 3, 3, 3, 3.
- Variant 11:** Treble clef, 2/4 time. Top staff: quarter notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Bottom staff: eighth notes G3, A3, B3, C4, G3, A3, B3, C4. Fingering: 3, 3, 3, 3.

FOURTH FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE

2nd, 3rd and 4th fingers: ACTIVE. 1st finger: PASSIVE.

NINETEEN MODIFICATIONS.

13 0 2 0 3 0 3 0 3 2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2

14 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 2-2

15 0 3 2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2

16 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2

17 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 2-2-2-2

18 0 3 0 3 2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2

19 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2

ELEVEN SIMPLE VARIANTS.

To be practised, each one, like the NINETEEN MODIFICATIONS of the FOURTH FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE.

1 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 2-2

2 3-3 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2

3 3-3 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2

4 4-4-4-4 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2

5 4-4-4-4 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2

APPENDIX TO THE FOUR FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISES

TWENTY-THREE BASIC VARIANTS.

To be practised, each one, in the same way as the FIRST FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE with NINETEEN MODIFICATIONS and ELEVEN SIMPLE VARIANTS.

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7 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 1 1

8 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 3 3

9 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 3 3

10 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 4 4

11 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 1 1

12 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 4 4

13 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 1 1

14 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 2 2

15 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 2 2

16 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 4 4

17 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 1 1

18 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 3 3

19 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 2 2

20 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 2 2

21 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 1 1

22 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 3 3

23 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 1 1

TWENTY-THREE BASIC VARIANTS.

To be practised, each one, in the same way as the SECOND FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE with NINETEEN MODIFICATIONS and ELEVEN SIMPLE VARIANTS.

① ② ③

0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1

0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1

0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1

3 3 4 4 2 2

④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1

0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1

0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2

0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2

3 3 2 2 4 4 3 3

⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ⑪

0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2

0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2

0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2

0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2

4 4 1 1 3 3 1 1

⑫ ⑬ ⑭

0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3

0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3

0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3

4 2 4

15 16 17

18 19 20

21 22 23

TWENTY-THREE BASIC VARIANTS.

To be practised, each one, in the same way as the **THIRD FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE** with **NINETEEN MODIFICATIONS** and **ELEVEN SIMPLE VARIANTS**.

1 2 3

4 5 6 7

8 4—4 9 1—1 10 3—3 11 1—1
 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1
 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4
 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1
 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3

12 4—4 13 2—2 14 4—4 15 1—1
 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2
 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4
 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1
 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4

16 2—2 17 1—1 18 3—3 19 2—2
 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1
 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2
 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2
 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3

20 3—3 21 1—1 22 2—2 23 1—1
 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1
 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3
 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1
 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2

TWENTY-THREE BASIC VARIANTS.

To be practised, each one, in the same way as the **FOURTH FUNDAMENTAL EXERCISE** with **NINETEEN MODIFICATIONS** and **ELEVEN SIMPLE VARIANTS**.

1 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 2—2
 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 3—3
 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 3—3
 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 4—4
 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3

5 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 6 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 7 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 8 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1

9 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 10 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 11 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 12 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2

13 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 14 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 15 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 16 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1

17 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 18 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 19 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 20 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1

21 0 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 22 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 23 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2

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