



OPENING MEASURES PRACTICE COMPANION



A Cellist's Monthly Guide for Discovering
Mastery Between the Notes

PRACTISING SCALES & ARPEGGIOS MUSICALLY

TENTH EDITION



DR. SOPHIE'S CELLO LAB

the PRACTICE ROOM

WELCOME



HELLO, CELLIST AND WELCOME TO

the PRACTICE ROOM

Whether you're brand new to the Practice Room or returning for another topical training, I'm so glad you're here.

This practice companion is your musical sandbox for the month: a place to explore, stretch, refine, and occasionally laugh at the strange things our hands do when we aren't paying attention.

You'll find a mix of technical focus, real-world application, and gentle prompts to help you listen more closely as your practice — not just to your cello, but to the areas that help us in connecting more intuitively with our wonderful cellos.

Here, we care about tone and tension, yes — but we also care about joy, curiosity, and the kind of attention that leads to lasting growth and artistry.

This is not about checking boxes. It's about showing up with your whole self (awkward shifts and all) and making real progress between the notes.

Take your time.
Bring your experience.
Invite curiosity.
Leave room for lasting discovery.

Let's begin. *Sophie*

“Every note has meaning rather as a look or a touch does;
the resulting conversations she has with the music are endlessly absorbing
~LAURENCE VITTES | GRAMOPHONE ”

WELCOME

ABOUT SOPHIE AND THE CELLO LAB

SOPHIE WEBBER



Dr Sophie has performed across the States and in the UK, has received numerous awards and prizes for her playing, and has released three critically acclaimed albums.

With over 25 years of teaching experience, she is a sought-after pedagogue and is frequently invited to give masterclasses across the USA and beyond.

She is also the Founding Artistic Director of Fused Mused Ensemble, a music and mixed media non-profit organization with a mission to amplify voices too often left unheard.

THE CELLO LAB



Inside the Cello Lab, you'll find two distinct paths to grow your playing and artistry: one for deep, foundational focus (*the PRACTICE ROOM*), and one for expressive exploration with high-level support (*the INNER STUDIO*).

the PRACTICE ROOM: For cellist of all levels seeking fresh, focused and foundational exploration for their “practice room” with access to a community of other adult cellists.

Offers monthly themed practice companions, topical trainings, live Q&A interactions, a supportive community, as well as community cello chats.

the INNER STUDIO: For cellists ready to explore artistry, expressive themes, score analysis, interpretations along with foundational focuses.

Offers a creative growth space in a professional online studio environment that includes master classes, small group instruction, private lessons and performance opportunities.

DAILY PRACTICE TRACKER

PRE-WARM-UP:

Mindset and physical warm-up away from cello
(see "Warm Up Preparation")

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UNIVERSAL FINGERINGS: Each day, spend a few minutes familiarizing yourself with the universal fingering pattern appropriate for your current level (2, 3, or 4 octaves). Regularity is key to learning these quickly and effectively

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NOTES & REFLECTIONS:

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TECHNIQUE EXERCISES: Intonation; Tone Production; Coordination between the hands

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NOTES & REFLECTIONS:

EXPLORE/LOOK UP SOME RESOURCES: past notes, online videos, etude books, other. (also see "Additional Resources")

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REPERTOIRE APPLICATION (optional): Apply one of the Technique Exercises (Intonation/Tone Production/Coordination between hands) to a short passage from Bach's C Major Prelude, BWV 1009

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NOTES/REFLECTIONS:

(optional) LISTENING INTEGRATION: 1 x YouTube performance (of your choice).....

(optional) NOTES/OBSERVATIONS: other observations/ any Aha moments:

TIP: Do keep in mind the immense value of taking breaks... standing up, a quick stretch, brisk walk or cup of tea can do wonders for recentering our focus and gaining a fresh perspective

OPENING REFLECTION

Musical Focus in Scales & Arpeggios



Scales and arpeggios are everywhere in music! The underlying intervallic and harmonic structure of scales and arpeggios are at the very heart of music. Not to mention that they give us immediate access to explore **the full geographical range** of our instruments, to learn and integrate **pattern work** into our playing, and to better understand the nature of **melody and harmony**. Suffice to say, they have great significance!

Yet so often, we fall into one of the following categories. Perhaps one of these attitudes sounds familiar?

“I used to practise scales, but **they’re so boring** and **I’ve basically “done” them** so now I just work on other more interesting things”

“I play my scales every day as part of my *go to warm-up routine* (always the same). **About half my practise time is dedicated to scales. I don’t really focus on anything in particular**, just making sure I’ve earned my “scales stripes” playing them through each day.”

If it does, you’re not alone! People often either completely ignore scales or binge on them mindlessly. Obviously, neither approach is a good one.

In this month’s ***Practising Scales and Arpeggios Musically*** companion, we look at how to practise scales and arpeggios **with a specific focus** that really **serves the music** we are playing.

Identifying a **clear goal** as you practise is essential. Scales and arpeggios can be **an excellent playground for all sorts of music-serving topics**. In this companion, our main music-serving topics (to be applied to sections of Bach’s C Major Prelude), are **Intonation** (seeking maximum resonance and centered pitch), **Tone Production** (understanding nuances in weight and speed across the four strings for even tone with core), and **Coordination Between the Hands** (for correct sequencing of actions and cleaner playing).



OPENING REFLECTION

Let's set your intention and mindset for the month.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR CURRENT RELATIONSHIP WITH SCALES & ARPEGGIOS?

IN WHAT AREAS DO YOU WANT TO IMPROVE THE WAY YOU PRACTISE SCALES & ARPEGGIOS?

NOTES AND REFLECTIONS:



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Expanding Your Range with Scales and Arpeggios.

Welcome to expanding your range across the cello.

It's time to **expand your range across the cello** — not just physically, but in **how you understand and navigate the fingerboard**.

Let's allow the fingerboard to feel less like separate places, and more like one connected space; a single continuum. This allows scales and arpeggios to become more than patterns to play.

They become a way to organize the fingerboard, to build clarity in movement, and to develop consistency in sound across registers.

Rather than approaching each position as something separate, you'll begin to connect them, **moving across 2–4 octaves with greater awareness of spacing, shifting, and coordination**.

Each pattern reveals something: where intonation needs to settle, where the hand needs to adjust, where the bow must support the sound. As these elements come into focus, **the fingerboard begins to feel less fragmented and more continuous**.

You will not be just “covering more ground,” you will be developing an understanding of the ground you cover.

We will focus on **developing more fluidity and confidence** that:

- Allow shifts to connect positions with ease.
- Reinforce patterns so they feel familiar across the instrument
- Maximizes your instrument's resonance and depth



Over time, you may notice a shift in how you move and how you hear — not just within a scale, but across your playing as a whole.

The fingerboard begins to feel mapped, connected, and increasingly familiar.

Ready? **Let's begin.**

Incorporating This Companion Into Your Practice Routine

To get the most out of this companion, approach it with a sense of curiosity and patience.

Treat each section as a building block in your tool kit development. And keep **the value of taking breaks** in mind.

Sometimes the best insights come from those very moments

—because when you pause to reflect and discover what you are actually doing, you allow what you are focusing on to fall into place.



WARM-UP PREPARATION

Preparatory Tips for Body Awareness:

- ♪ Breathe (long, slow breaths out)
- ♪ “Soften” your body (relaxed stomach, arms, neck)
- ♪ Stretch (eg. windmill arms, wriggle fingers, rotate wrists and forearms back and forth, squats, light jogging on spot --get circulation going!)
- ♪ Shoulders should be low and passive throughout the full length of bow (TIP: be especially cognizant of this in the upper half!)
- ♪ Feet should be grounded (like the roots of a tree!)

Tips for Tone Connection:

- ♪ A firmer approach will generally give you a better tone. This tends to mean A LITTLE MORE WEIGHT and, often, A LITTLE LESS BOW
- ♪ Explore finding a NATURAL WEIGHT (vs “pressing down”) with passive heavy shoulders and arms. The bow should feel like it is sinking into the string.
- ♪ We are looking for an “ENGAGED” SOUND rather than a superficial/skating one where the bow is too fast/too light.
- ♪ Careful your bow direction is parallel to the bridge and not moving up and down.
 - On the A string, the point will move a little closer to you (while your arm moves a little further from your body).
 - On the C string, the point will move a little further away from you (while your arm moves a little closer to your body)



UNIVERSAL FINGERINGS

SCALES

RULES FOR UNIVERSAL FINGERING PATTERNS

For TWO OCTAVES:

- **1st finger plays the first of each group of three notes.** The two exceptions are scales in the mode of C or G, when the fingering starts with 0-1-3 or 0-1-2.
- **There are no open strings** with the exception of scales in the mode of C or G which start with an open C or G string.

For THREE & FOUR OCTAVES*:

In the interest of a fluid progression from three to four octave scales, the universal fingering I give for three octaves *is the same* as the first three octaves of the four octave scales.

- For both three and four octave scales, **start with 1-3, followed by the 1st finger playing the first of each group of three notes.** The two exceptions are for scales in the mode of C or G, when starting 1-3 is substituted with 0-1.
- **There are no open strings** with the exception of scales in the mode of C or G which start with an open C or G string.

***For Three and Four Octave Scales, see Stretch Zones A and B**

THREE MINOR SCALES: NATURAL, HARMONIC AND MELODIC

For all three minor scales, the 3rd scale degree is always lowered.


The three types are differentiated by the **variation of the 6th and 7th scale degrees.**


In a Natural Minor , scale degrees 6 and 7 are lowered.	In a Harmonic Minor , scale degree 6 is lowered , and scale degree 7 is raised (making an augmented 2 nd interval)	In a Melodic Minor , scale degrees 6 and 7 are raised going up , and lowered coming back down.
↓6, ↓7	↓6, ↑7	ascending = ↑6, ↑7 descending = ↓6, ↓7



UNIVERSAL FINGERINGS

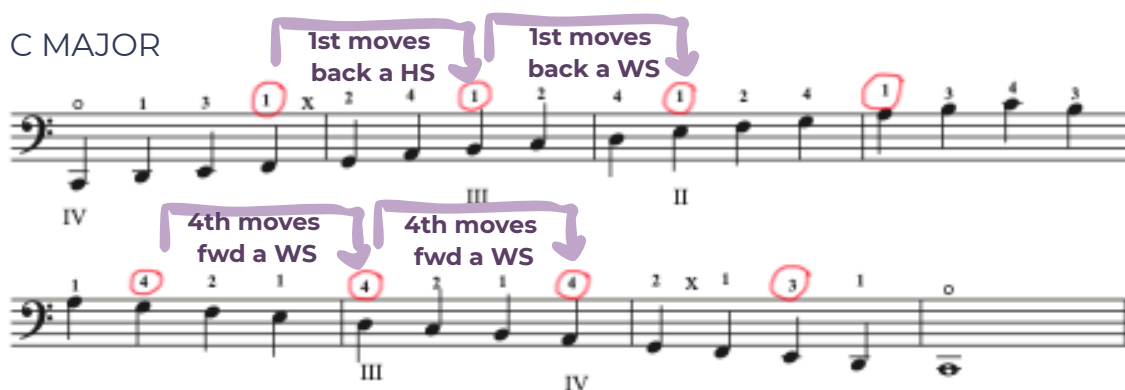
TWO OCTAVES

 = Distance moved by shifting finger within a hand position

 = Shift into a new position
 x = Extension

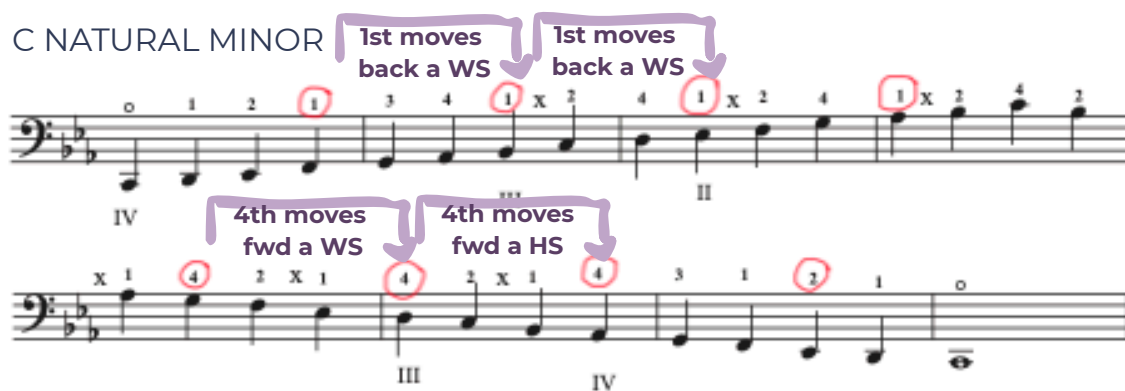
[\[C MAJOR 2 OCTAVE PLAY-A-LONG VIDEO\]](#)

C MAJOR




[\[C NATURAL MINOR 2 OCTAVE PLAY-A-LONG VIDEO\]](#)

C NATURAL MINOR




UNIVERSAL FINGERINGS

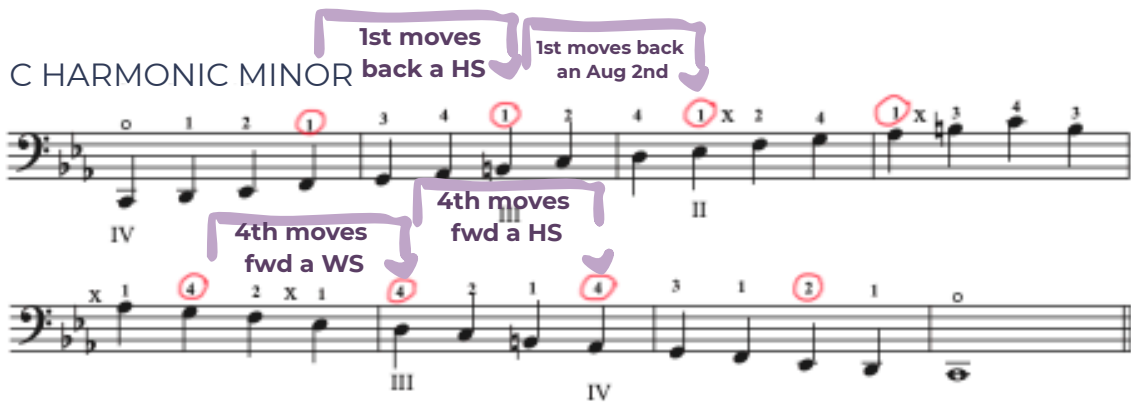
TWO OCTAVES

 = Distance moved by shifting finger within a hand position

 = Shift into a new position
 x = Extension

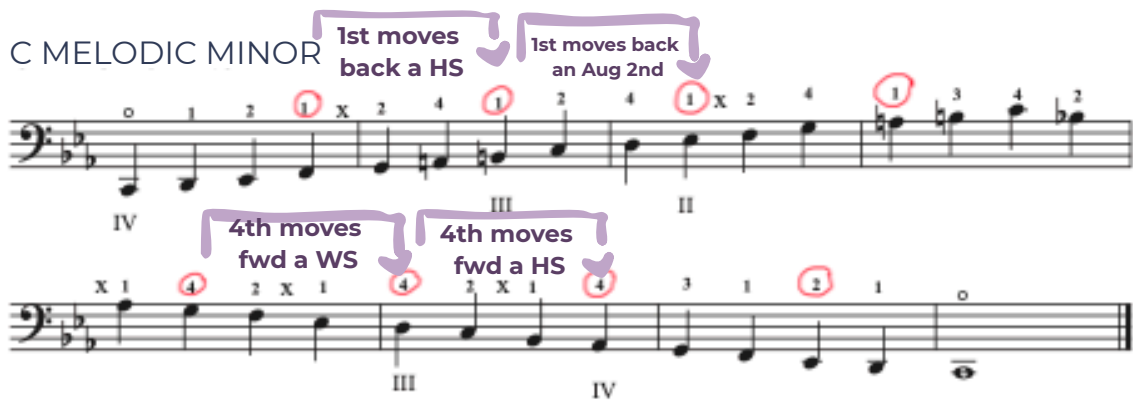
[\[C HARMONIC MINOR 2 OCTAVE PLAY-A-LONG VIDEO\]](#)

C HARMONIC MINOR



[\[C MELODIC MINOR 2 OCTAVE PLAY-A-LONG VIDEO\]](#)

C MELODIC MINOR




UNIVERSAL FINGERINGS

ARPEGGIOS

FINGERING PATTERNS

For TWO, THREE & FOUR OCTAVES:

In the interest of a fluid progression from two to three to four octave arpeggios, the universal fingering presented here for two and three octaves is the same as the first two and three octaves of the four octave arpeggios.

- **Start with 1st finger, followed by a shift to (another) 1st finger playing the first of each group of three notes.** The two exceptions are for arpeggios in the mode of C or G, when we start with an open string instead of 1st finger.
- **There are no open strings** with the exception of arpeggios in the mode of C or G which start with an open C or G string.

***For Three and Four Octave Arpeggios, see Stretch Zones A and B**

[\[C MAJOR ARPEGGIO 2 OCTAVE PLAY-A-LONG VIDEO\]](#)

The image displays two musical staves illustrating arpeggio patterns. The top staff is in C major (one sharp) and the bottom staff is in C minor (three flats). Both staves show a sequence of notes with fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4) and shifts (III, II, III, IV). Red circles highlight the first finger on the first note of each three-note group.



UNIVERSAL FINGERINGS REFLECTION ...

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT YOUR PLAYING/HOW YOU FEEL AS YOU FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THESE UNIVERSAL FINGERINGS?

WHERE DO YOU THINK YOUR FOCUS SHOULD BE GOING FORWARD?

NOTES AND REFLECTIONS:

.....

.....

.....

.....

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TECHNIQUE EXERCISE

CHOOSING A MUSIC-SERVING GOAL

As discussed earlier, always having a clear goal, and understanding how that goal will serve the music we play, is key to meaningful and rewarding practice.

The following Technique Exercises explore three of the most important, but too often rushed through aspects of music making —while this month's group focus is through the lens of scales and arpeggios, I highly recommend also beginning to apply some or all of these ideas to Bach's C Major Prelude and/or any piece you are currently working on. We will be looking at:

- **INTONATION**
- **TONE PRODUCTION**
- **COORDINATING THE HANDS**

Take notes, observe, experiment. The **slight adjustments** we need to make for great results are **often very small**, and this kind of goal-oriented work takes **intense focus and determination**.

The greatest rewards from this work will come from:

- i) understanding these methods and concepts
- ii) experiencing the improvements they lead to through examples given to you (such as the scales and Bach C Major Prelude excerpts in this Companion)
- iii) carefully applying the process to **your own pieces**

Your Path

Allow your natural sense of intrigue to lead you...

Which of these goals seems to give you the most striking results at this point in time?

Which aspect of this discovery process do you find most engaging?

How can you find ways to reduce frustration and increase meaningful engagement in your practice?



TECHNIQUE EXERCISE

INTONATION

RINGING TONES

Every note we play has a certain unique resonance or “ringing quality,” but **some pitches ring more freely and openly than others**. This is particularly true for the **itches correlating to an open strings** (ie. any **C, G, D, or A** played on any string except for the correlating string itself... eg. play a G (1st position, 4th finger) on the D string, or an A (1st position, 1st finger) on the G string).

On the next page, all the ringing tones present in the two octave C mode scales have been colour coded as shown below.

- = C string
- = G string
- = D string
- = A string

Practising scales is an excellent opportunity to really do a deep dive into **truly centered intonation**. Each time you play a “ringing tone,” **cross reference it carefully with its correlating open string**.

Listening for good intonation should be an **intensely active** and **focused experience**. Take time to center each note. Experiment with moving the applicable finger very fractionally higher or lower to find each note’s “sweet spot.” Listen carefully to the overtones and ring. When these notes are truly in tune, **the correlating open string can also be seen to resonate** (moving from side to side—sometimes just a little, sometimes a lot).



TECHNIQUE EXERCISE

INTONATION

C MAJOR

[C MAJOR RINGING TONE PLAY-A-LONG VIDEO]

C NATURAL MINOR

C HARMONIC MINOR

C MELODIC MINOR



TONE PRODUCTION

LOWER, SLOWER (fatter) STRINGS
VS
HIGHER, FASTER (thinner) STRINGS

For good tone production, it is essential that we are cognizant of the physical properties of our strings and their inherent differences. In particular we need to keep the following two factors in mind:

1) When we “pull” (down bow) or “push” (up bow) a string, we enable the string to resonate (move) sideways. While some amount of weight is needed for traction between bow and string, the motion that activates the string is **primarily a horizontal rather than vertical one**.

2) A string’s fundamental pitch correlates to its mass and diameter. **A lower pitched string has a higher mass and diameter (ie. is “fatter”)**, while **a higher pitched string has a lower mass and diameter (ie. is “thinner”)**. This has a very pronounced effect on tone production; to resonate most efficiently, lower strings need more weight and a slower bow, while higher strings need less weight and a faster bow.

We can think of the C and G strings respectively like the slower lanes of a highway (reserved for larger, slow-moving vehicles ie. more bow weight) and the A and D strings respectively like the faster lanes (reserved for faster and lighter vehicles ie. less bow weight). If the large, slow vehicles (more bow weight) try to change to the faster lanes (A and D), they will sink (too much weight) into the soft terrain, getting stuck. If the light, fast vehicles (lighter bow weight) try to change to the slowest lanes (C and G), they can’t get enough traction and will skate on the smooth, hard terrain.

LOWER Strings = LESS BOW, MORE WEIGHT
HIGHER Strings = MORE BOW, LESS WEIGHT

TONE PRODUCTION TECHNIQUE EXERCISE GUIDELINES

- Use Separate bows with the metronome set to ca 60bpm
- Ascending, use incrementally more bow and less weight for each higher string*
- Descending, use incrementally less bow and more weight for each lower string*
- Contact point should be a little closer to the bridge than fingerboard (ca Lane 4)

Focus = Engaged, core sound at all times. Feel the connection between the bow and string with activated fingers!

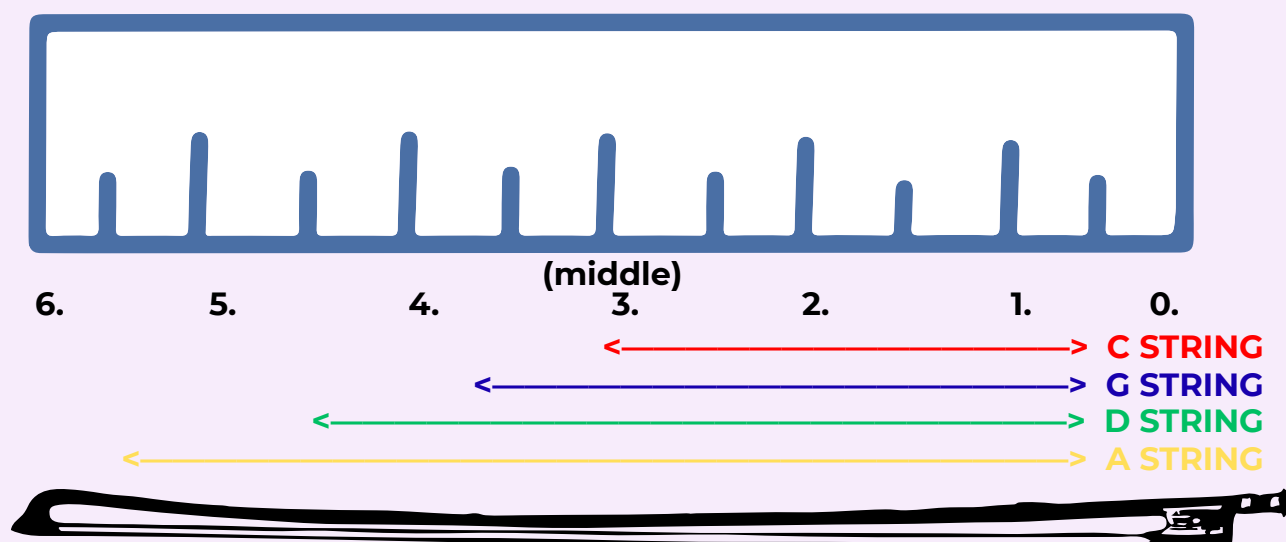
*a more detailed guide of how much bow to use on each string is given on the next page



TONE PRODUCTION

BOW DISTRIBUTION FOR THE TECHNIQUE EXERCISE: A MORE DETAILED GUIDE

Below is a guide to the recommended bow distribution (whereabouts and how much) to use for each string*.



*Figuring out and incorporating these distances should be done **slowly and deliberately**.

LOWER Strings = LESS BOW, MORE WEIGHT
HIGHER Strings = MORE BOW, LESS WEIGHT

TECHNIQUE EXERCISE

TONE PRODUCTION

♩ = 60 bpm

(to help clarify the slight differences in weight and speed on each string, a slightly different two octave fingering is given for this exercise. It's fine if you prefer to use the universal fingering).

C MAJOR

Ascending: 1, 3, 4, 1, 3, 4, 1
 Descending: 2, 4, 1, 2, 1, 4, 2, 1
 Roman numerals: IV, III, II, I, IV, III, II, I

C NATURAL MINOR

Ascending: 1, 2, 4, 1, X, 2, 4, 1, X
 Descending: 2, 4, 1, X, 2, 4, 2, X, 1
 Roman numerals: IV, III, II, III, IV

C HARMONIC MINOR

Ascending: 1, 2, 4, 1, X, 3, 4, 1, X
 Descending: 2, 4, 1, X, 3, 4, 3, X, 1
 Roman numerals: IV, III, II, III, IV

C MELODIC MINOR

Ascending: 1, 2, 4, 1, 3, 4, 1, X
 Descending: 2, 4, 1, 3, 4, 2, X, 1
 Roman numerals: IV, III, II, III, IV



COORDINATING THE TWO HANDS: **SET-CROSS** (-GO!)

THE “SET - CROSS” (or “SHIFT - SET - CROSS”) TECHNIQUE

This is a wonderful way to develop reliable and correct sequencing and coordination between the two hands. It develops **CLEANER, MORE EFFICIENT SHIFTS, STRING CROSSINGS, AND PLAYING**. It breaks each action into its own timed event, allowing us to complete each part in a relaxed and deliberate way, with the correct sequencing. The bow always comes after the left hand is set in place. As the legendary cellist, and one of my dear mentors, Janos Starker, used to say, “**left hand first!**”

Over time, you will feel increasingly confident with this process, and can reduce the amount of time for each step, until ultimately you don't need to take any additional time.

If you want to dramatically clean up your playing, try incorporating **5-10 minutes of careful “Set-Cross” work** into your daily practice sessions!

SHIFT (Left hand shifts into position, *without yet placing finger down*)
SET (Left hand finger is placed down on new string)
CROSS (Bow crosses to new string, ready to play)

DIFFERING CONTEXTS

1. When a finger is placed on the same string after an open string, there is one action; **SET**
2. When there is a string crossing to an open string, there is one action: **CROSS**
3. When a finger is placed on a new string (ie. with a string crossing), there are two actions; **SET-CROSS**
4. When there is a shift on the same string, there are two actions; **SHIFT-SET**
5. When there is a shift onto a different string, there are three actions; **SHIFT-SET-CROSS**

FINGERING OPTIONS

To offer an even wider variety of contexts, I have given **two fingering options** on the following couple of pages. The first uses **open strings** (and only one shift at the top), while the second uses the **universal fingering**, shifting every fourth note.



TECHNIQUE EXERCISE COORDINATING THE HANDS: FINGERING WITH OPEN STRINGS

C MAJOR

[C MAJOR Alternative Fingering SET-CROSS PLAY-A-LONG VIDEO]

Two staves of musical notation for C Major. The first staff shows a sequence of notes with fingerings: 0, 1, 3, 4, CROSS, SET 1, 3, 4, CROSS, SET 1, 2, 4, CROSS, SET 1. Below the staff are Roman numerals IV, III, II, I. The second staff continues the sequence with fingerings: SET-CROSS 2, 1, SET-CROSS 4, 2, 1, SET-CROSS 4, 3, 1, SET-CROSS 4, 3, 1, 0. Below the staff are Roman numerals II, III, IV.

C NATURAL MINOR

Two staves of musical notation for C Natural Minor. The first staff shows a sequence of notes with fingerings: 0, 1, 2, 4, CROSS, SET 1, X 2, 4, CROSS, SET 1, X 2, 4, SHIFT-SET 1, X 2. Below the staff are Roman numerals IV, III, II. The second staff continues the sequence with fingerings: SHIFT-SET 4, 2, X 1, SET-CROSS 4, 2, X 1, SET-CROSS 4, 2, 1, 0. Below the staff are Roman numerals II, III, IV.

C HARMONIC MINOR

Two staves of musical notation for C Harmonic Minor. The first staff shows a sequence of notes with fingerings: 0, 1, 2, 4, CROSS, SET 1, X 3, 4, CROSS, SET 1, X 2, 4, SHIFT-SET 1, X 3. Below the staff are Roman numerals IV, III, II. The second staff continues the sequence with fingerings: SHIFT-SET 4, 3, X 1, SET-CROSS 4, 2, X 1, SET-CROSS 4, 3, X 1, SET-CROSS 4, 2, 1, 0. Below the staff are Roman numerals II, III, IV.

C MELODIC MINOR

Two staves of musical notation for C Melodic Minor. The first staff shows a sequence of notes with fingerings: 0, 1, 2, 4, CROSS, SET 1, 2, 4, CROSS, SET 1, X 2, 4, SHIFT-SET 1, 2. Below the staff are Roman numerals IV, III, II. The second staff continues the sequence with fingerings: SHIFT-SET 4, 2, X 1, SET-CROSS 4, 2, X 1, SET-CROSS 4, 2, 1, 0. Below the staff are Roman numerals II, III, IV.



the STRETCH ZONE

For Advanced and Curious Players

Welcome to the STRETCH ZONE

This space is for those of you who feel ready (or just wildly curious) to go a bit deeper.

Whether you're an experienced player looking to refine and reimagine your technique, or someone simply hungry for nuance and challenge, [the Stretch Zone is here to meet you where you are—and gently nudge you further.](#)

Each month, we'll expand on the foundational ideas presented in the technique exercise(s) and explore how they can evolve at a more advanced level. You might find layered technical work, interpretive perspectives, or small details that unlock big shifts.

The goal isn't perfection—it's expansion.
Precision with freedom.
Effort with ease.
Curiosity that never stops unfolding.

How to use this section:

[STEP 01](#): Start with the main technique exercise to establish your foundation for the month.

[STEP 02](#): Then, visit the STRETCH ZONE when you're ready to deepen, experiment, or add complexity to what you've already begun.

Think of it as an invitation—not a requirement—to stretch your:

Technique,
Thinking, and

Artistic voice a little further each time you visit [the](#) STRETCH ZONE

I'm so glad you're here.

Let's stretch,

Sophie



the
STRETCH ZONE
For Advanced and Curious Players

x = an extension

STRETCH ZONE A

UNIVERSAL FINGERING FOR THREE OCTAVE SCALES

[\[C MAJOR 3 OCTAVE PLAY-A-LONG VIDEO\]](#)

C MAJOR

Two staves of musical notation for the C Major scale, three octaves. The bass staff starts on C2 and the treble staff starts on C4. Fingering is indicated by numbers 1-4 in red circles. Extensions are marked with 'x'. Octave positions are labeled IV, III, II, I. The treble staff ends with a whole rest on C5.

C NATURAL MINOR

Two staves of musical notation for the C Natural Minor scale, three octaves. The bass staff starts on C2 and the treble staff starts on C4. Fingering is indicated by numbers 1-4 in red circles. Extensions are marked with 'x'. Octave positions are labeled IV, III, II, I. The treble staff ends with a whole rest on C5.

C HARMONIC MINOR

Two staves of musical notation for the C Harmonic Minor scale, three octaves. The bass staff starts on C2 and the treble staff starts on C4. Fingering is indicated by numbers 1-4 in red circles. Extensions are marked with 'x'. Octave positions are labeled IV, III, II, I. The treble staff ends with a whole rest on C5.

C MELODIC MINOR

Two staves of musical notation for the C Melodic Minor scale, three octaves. The bass staff starts on C2 and the treble staff starts on C4. Fingering is indicated by numbers 1-4 in red circles. Extensions are marked with 'x'. Octave positions are labeled IV, III, II, I. The treble staff ends with a whole rest on C5.



the
STRETCH ZONE
For Advanced and Curious Players

STRETCH ZONE A

UNIVERSAL FINGERING FOR THREE OCTAVE ARPEGGIOS

[\[C MAJOR ARPEGGIO 3 OCTAVE PLAY-A-LONG VIDEO\]](#)

C MAJOR

Musical notation for C Major three-octave arpeggio. The notation is in bass clef and shows three octaves of the C major scale. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4 above the notes. Hand positions are labeled III, II, I, II, III, IV below the staff. Red circles highlight the first and second notes of each octave.

C MINOR

Musical notation for C Minor three-octave arpeggio. The notation is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4 above the notes. Hand positions are labeled III, II, I, II, III, IV below the staff. Red circles highlight the first and second notes of each octave. 'X' marks indicate natural harmonics for the 3rd and 4th fingers in the minor mode.



the
STRETCH ZONE
For Advanced and Curious Players

STRETCH ZONE B x = an extension

UNIVERSAL FINGERING FOR FOUR OCTAVE SCALES

[\[C MAJOR 4 OCTAVE PLAY-A-LONG VIDEO\]](#)

C MAJOR

Diagram showing the C Major 4-octave scale in bass and treble clefs. The scale is written in 4/4 time. The bass clef part starts on C2 and ends on C5, while the treble clef part starts on C4 and ends on C7. Fingerings are indicated by circled numbers 1-4. Extensions (marked 'x') are shown for the notes G4, A4, B4, and C5 in the bass clef, and G5, A5, B5, and C6 in the treble clef. Octave positions are labeled IV, III, II, and I from left to right.

C NATURAL MINOR

Diagram showing the C Natural Minor 4-octave scale in bass and treble clefs. The scale is written in 4/4 time. The bass clef part starts on C2 and ends on C5, while the treble clef part starts on C4 and ends on C7. Fingerings are indicated by circled numbers 1-4. Extensions (marked 'x') are shown for the notes G4, A4, B4, and C5 in the bass clef, and G5, A5, B5, and C6 in the treble clef. Octave positions are labeled IV, III, II, and I from left to right.



the
STRETCH ZONE
For Advanced and Curious Players

STRETCH ZONE B
UNIVERSAL FINGERING FOR FOUR OCTAVE SCALES (cntd)

C HARMONIC MINOR

Four staves of musical notation for the C Harmonic Minor scale, spanning four octaves. The notation includes bass and treble clefs, a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb), and a common time signature. The scale is written in a single line across the four staves. Fingering numbers (1-4) are circled in red above the notes. Bowing marks (X) are placed above the notes. Roman numerals (IV, III, II, I) are placed below the staves to indicate the starting position for each octave. The scale starts on the C2 string (low C) and ends on the C5 string (high C).

C MELODIC MINOR

Four staves of musical notation for the C Melodic Minor scale, spanning four octaves. The notation includes bass and treble clefs, a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb), and a common time signature. The scale is written in a single line across the four staves. Fingering numbers (1-4) are circled in red above the notes. Bowing marks (X) are placed above the notes. Roman numerals (IV, III, II, I) are placed below the staves to indicate the starting position for each octave. The scale starts on the C2 string (low C) and ends on the C5 string (high C).



STRETCH ZONE B

UNIVERSAL FINGERING FOR FOUR OCTAVE ARPEGGIOS

C MAJOR

[\[C MAJOR ARPEGGIO 4 OCTAVE PLAY-A-LONG VIDEO\]](#)

First octave of C Major arpeggio in Bass clef. Notes: C2 (open), C3 (1), E3 (4), G3 (2), Bb3 (1), B3 (3), C4 (2), C5 (1), E5 (3), G5 (2), Bb5 (1), B5 (2), C6 (3). Fingering: 1, 4, 2, 3, 2, 1, 3, 2, 1, X, 2, X. Position markers: III, II, I.

Second octave of C Major arpeggio in Treble clef. Notes: C4 (4), C5 (X), E5 (2), G5 (X), Bb5 (1), B5 (2), C6 (X), C7 (3), E7 (1), G7 (X), Bb7 (2), B7 (3), C8 (1), C9 (4), E9 (1), G9 (0). Fingering: 4, X, 2, X, 1, 2, X, 3, 1, 2, X, 3, 1, 2, 4, 1, 0. Position markers: II, III, IV.

C MINOR

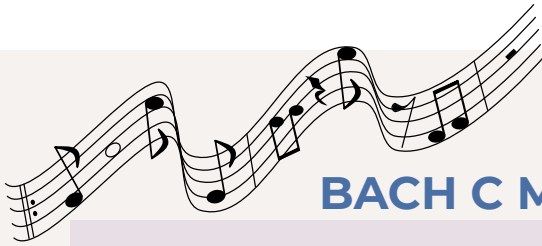
First octave of C Minor arpeggio in Bass clef. Notes: C2 (open), C3 (1), Eb3 (X), G3 (4), Bb3 (2), B3 (1), C4 (X), C5 (3), Eb5 (2), C6 (1), Eb6 (X), C7 (3), C8 (1), Eb8 (X), C9 (2), C10 (X). Fingering: 1, X, 4, 2, 1, X, 3, 2, 1, X, 3, 2, 1, X, 2, X. Position markers: III, II, I.

Second octave of C Minor arpeggio in Treble clef. Notes: C4 (X), C5 (4), Eb5 (X), G5 (2), Bb5 (X), B5 (1), C6 (X), C7 (3), Eb7 (2), C8 (1), Eb8 (X), C9 (3), C10 (4), Eb10 (X), C11 (1), C12 (0). Fingering: X, 4, X, 2, X, 1, 2, X, 3, X, 1, 2, X, 3, X, 1, 2, 4, X, 1, 0. Position markers: II, III, IV.



PRELUDE
SUITE FOR SOLO CELLO NO.3 IN C MAJOR

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 - 1750)



BACH C MAJOR PRELUDE SCORES

[BACH ACCOMPANYING SCORES]

- **BLANK Cello SCORE**
- Cello Part with
 - i) Less FINGERINGS & BOWINGS**
 - ii) More FINGERINGS & BOWINGS**
- Cello Part with **SHIFTS & POSITIONS** (see *Fingerboard Positions Geography PDFs below*)



For deeper familiarisation with the **Cello Fingerboard Positions and Notation** across the strings, please download the following two PDFs:

1. [**Fingerboard Positions Geography Chart PDF**](#)

2. [**Fingerboard Positions Geography Notation PDF**](#)

LISTENING & INSPIRATION

THE FOLLOWING RECORDINGS ARE SUGGESTED TO ENCOURAGE LISTENING SKILLS, AND TO DEEPEN MUSICALITY.

As you listen, pay attention to how each artist allows us to feel we are in safe, deeply competent hands. Notice how each of these recordings conveys both ease and drama, and is carefully paced with no sense of rushing.

What do you notice, like or dislike about each of these recordings?

This kind of critical listening is a great exercise; feel free to explore other recordings too!

1

Prelude

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

~Suite for Solo Cello No.3 in C Major, BWV 1009.

-Anner Bylsma: [\[LINK\]](#)

(wonderfully clean playing (coordination between hands), lighter baroque tone)

~Yo-Yo Ma: [\[LINK\]](#)

(lovely flow allows harmonies to be heard more easily, attention to lighter A string)

~Sophie Webber, with the Chicago's Choir of the Church of the Ascension: [\[LINK\]](#)

(full album streaming on Spotify [here](#) :))

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT HOW THESE ARTISTS HANDLE CHALLENGING PASSAGES?



INTEGRATION & CLOSING REFLECTION



01 WHAT CHANGED IN YOUR AWARENESS OR SKILL THIS MONTH?

02 HOW WILL YOU CARRY THIS INTO YOUR NEXT PRACTICE CYCLE OR REPERTOIRE?

03 SET 1-2 GOALS FOR REVIEW OR NEXT EXPLORATION





WHAT WERE YOUR BEST PRACTICE OR A-HA MOMENTS AND HOW CAN YOU INCORPORATE THIS INTO FUTURE PRACTICE SESSIONS?

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WHAT AREA(S) DO YOU FEEL YOU NEED TO CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON AND IMPROVE?

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CLOSING

As you come to the end of this month's work, pause and notice how your relationship to the fingerboard—and cello—has changed. My hope is that:

There is more clarity in where you are and where you're going.
Shifts feel more connected and less uncertain.
Patterns that once felt distant now feel more familiar and within reach.

Carry this awareness forward.

How you hear spacing, how you feel distance, and how you move between them

Remember, **scales and arpeggios** are **not simply exercises**.
 They are a way of understanding the cello.

A way of connecting sound, space, and movement.

As you continue, notice how your confidence expands — not from reaching further, but from knowing where you are.

What once felt spread out and uncertain will now begin to feel connected and familiar.

And **across the fingerboard, your playing begins to move with greater clarity, ease, and direction.**

A NOTE FROM SOPHIE:

I believe that playing –and practising –the cello should be a joyous thing. Too often, I hear cellists expressing frustration with their playing and practising, unsure how to move forwards and focus their attention. It is my sincere hope that the PRACTICE ROOM gives you the tools to lean into your practice with intentionality and reflection, at your own pace (which, if you're anything like me, should probably be a little slower). Quality always over quantity...

We all need to make space for ourselves to experiment without judgment (perhaps with a little humour, tho ;) and to embrace the journey. I hope you enjoy the PRACTICE ROOM experience as much as I have enjoyed –and continue to enjoy, with your help –creating it.

Happy Cello-ing!

Sophie





WHAT'S NEXT

This month every intentional note, question, and breakthrough you experienced is part of something lasting.

If you're ready to keep going, I'd love to have you join us for another month of grounded, thoughtful discovery inside the PRACTICE ROOM.

Let's keep building together —
one focus,
one phrase,
one step at a time.

[\[Join the next session here\]](#)



Thank you!



WWW.SOPHIEWEBBER.COM



DR. SOPHIE'S CELLO LAB

This curated space is here to support and enrich your monthly practice.

Here, you'll find practical tools, helpful guides, and gentle reminders to help you move forward with clarity and confidence.

Return to these resources as often as you need — they're here to grow with you as you shape your musical journey.

1. Your Monthly Practice Companion

These resources are here to support you every month, no matter the focus. From a structured daily practice plan to helpful notes on play-along videos, these tools are designed to give you clarity, consistency, and confidence in your practice:

- A GUIDE TO OPENING MEASURES –Your Monthly Practice Companion [Page 42](#)
- DAILY PRACTICE TRACKER [Page 4](#)

2. Resources for Current Companion

- AN INTRODUCTION TO FINGERBOARD GEOGRAPHY (1st to 4th POSITIONS) [\[Access It Here\]](#)
- FINGERBOARD GEOGRAPHY CHART and GEOGRAPHY NOTATION PDFs [\[Access It Here\]](#)
- RINGING TONE CHART [\[Access It Here\]](#)

3. Additional Resources on Rhythm

These rhythm-focused tools go beyond this month's core material and are here to deepen your rhythmic awareness across any companion:

- WHAT IS SUBDIVISION? [\[Access It Here\]](#)
- WHAT ARE SPEECH CUES? [\[Access It Here\]](#)
- TIME SIGNATURES/METERS [Page 43](#)



PROGRESS TRACKING

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

QUESTIONS TO BRING TO Q&A:

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A GUIDE TO OPENING MEASURES PRACTICE COMPANION

I'd like to take a moment to summarize the essence of "Opening Measures," what it offers, as well as a suggestion of a sample daily practice plan.

To start, this is YOUR guide and YOUR practice time, so please feel free to tweak my suggestions or even go in a different direction if that feels right to you.

I highly recommend regular note taking to help you organize your thoughts and practice experience. This will also give your own personalized source of reference material for the future.

Whatever path we each choose, it's important to keep our goals in mind, while staying open to ongoing slight course correction --just like Apollo 11 as it ventured towards the moon!

"Opening Measures" is designed to allow YOU to be at the steering wheel, with a helping hand in terms of...

- **mindset and body preparation** (opening reflection, tips for body awareness and tone connection)
- **practice content and structure** (two core methods to improve rhythm and pulse internalization with exercises and drills in progressive difficulty and optional tempo tracking)
- **mindfulness reminders** (a practice calendar, spaces for notes, observations, reflections, aha moments, and questions)
- **inspiration** (listening integration, quotes from famous cellists and musicians)
- **a companion cellist guide** --that's me! (lots of play along videos at different tempi --as well as "playing along" with the videos, these are also a great opportunity to observe other aspects of playing that can help, like set up, use of the bow and LH, and entire body, while playing...)



