



# OPENING MEASURES PRACTICE COMPANION



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

## INTONATION – RINGING TONES & EXPRESSIVE TUNING

the PRACTICE ROOM



DR. SOPHIE'S CELLO LAB

# 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.

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## 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.

# PROGRESS TRACKING

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

## QUESTIONS TO BRING TO Q&A:

- .....
- .....
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- .....
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## OPENING REFLECTION

# *A deeper connection...*

“Intonation is a question of conscience”

~Pablo Casals

Regardless of how much we improve and develop each nuance of our playing, if our intonation is weak, it will still sound bad. Intonation, unfortunately, is a non-negotiable in string playing. We are either in tune, or out of tune.

This said, it can also be the gateway to a deeper, more sympathetic relationship with our cellos; a relationship which increases our understanding of the way our instruments sing and which pitches along each string resonate most freely.

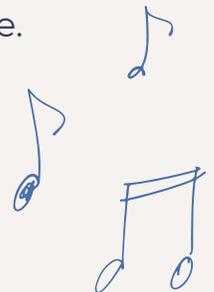
Approached in a mindful and honest way, intonation allows us to develop our ear and touch to both hear and feel sound vibrations in a more responsive, immediate, and rewarding way.



This month’s explorations are an invitation to deliberately and mindfully explore the natural resonance of your cello. To allow an open, free sound to lead us.

We will focus on “ringing” tones and sympathetic vibrations, as well as the “solar-system” nature of a scale, with an introduction to expressive tuning.

Let’s make intonation “work” become honest intonation “play,” where we don’t judge ourselves, but rather connect through listening, listening again, and listening some more.



## OPENING REFLECTION

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

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR CURRENT RELATIONSHIP WITH INTONATION?

IN WHAT AREAS DO YOU WANT TO IMPROVE YOUR INTONATION?

NOTES AND REFLECTIONS:

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# INTONATION - RINGING TONES & EXPRESSIVE TUNING

## Welcome to your journey into Intonation!

Intonation is more than just “playing in tune”—it’s **about resonance, color, and expression.**

A ringing tone doesn’t come from pressing the “right” note—it comes from tuning into the instrument, listening deeply, and **allowing the cello to speak in its fullest voice.**

This month, you’ll explore the power of sympathetic resonance, learn to recognize when your notes “lock in,” and discover how expressive tuning can bring warmth, tension, and emotional shape to your phrasing.

Tuning isn’t fixed—it’s alive. It shifts with harmony, with context, and with intention. So this is your invitation to listen more closely than ever before.

Be patient,  
Stay open, and  
Let your ear lead the way.

Every note is a chance to connect more deeply—with your cello, with the music, and with yourself.

## 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 toolkit development.

**Start by incorporating the warm-ups** into your daily routine—they’re designed to reinforce foundational skills in a way that’s both focused and fluid. **Then, on to the technique exercises and STRETCH ZONE,** you’ll expand as you challenge yourself as you apply these skills in varied contexts.

The **repertoire application** section will show you how it all fits into real music—

**Remember, there’s no rush! Consistency over perfection is key.**

And, if you stumble along the way, embrace it!

Sometimes the best insights come from those moments —because that’s when you pause to 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!)

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### 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)



## WARM-UP PREPARATION

# GENERAL TIPS FOR SUCCESS WITH THE WARM UPS & TECHNIQUE PLANS

### TIPS FOR INTONATION

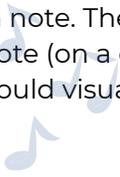
#### - RINGING TONES & EXPRESSIVE TUNING

- Improving your intonation is first and foremost about developing your listening skills, and developing your inner ear to anticipate/hear the correct note ahead of time.
- Keep your fingers rounded, so as to only play one string at a time and not inadvertently dampen a neighboring string
- For checking the “ring”/intonation of a note, make sure to lift the bow (in a gentle scooping motion) after you play each pitch (to maximize the ring)
- Remember to play with clean LH articulation. The LH needs to be fairly strong (ie. no “floppy” hand but rather a quick and easy dropping of a finger onto the string/a very small LH pizzicato when lifting from the string)
- Non vibrato or minimal vibrato (vibrato can disguise the true pitch)
- Pay attention to *every* note
- For beginners (or players of any level looking for a refresher), I recommend spending some time with electrical tape markers along the fingerboard for increased accuracy (see my 3 Part [Introduction to Cello Fingerboard Geography](#) Video Series)
- For 1st position, there is quite a stretch across the back of the hand; pay special attention to maintain distance between the 1st and 4th fingers, and also to keep the stretch between 2nd and 3rd fingers. Visually, the fingers should be pretty much equidistant in closed positions
- Try to avoid looking at your LH too much. If you need to at first, that’s fine, but do try to wean yourself off looking as soon as possible

### BOWING TIPS

- Generally, practice intonation around a healthy mezzo forte dynamic; we want the cello to resonate as freely as possible
- Generally, the bow should move at a slow-medium speed, with ample weight, and a contact point fairly close to the bridge (where there are more overtones in the sound)
- Bow hair should generally be rather flat for this work
- Feel the weight of the bow
- Catch the string before playing each new note
- Keep in mind the bow motion is HORIZONTAL. Pull and push the bow with a slight pendulum motion, hanging from the shoulder

### TIPS FOR FINDING MORE NUANCES

- When searching for ringing tones, play with tiny changes to the finger position (ever so slightly sharper or flatter), paying attention to the “ringing” sweet spot of each note. The open string that correlates to the note (on a different string) that you are playing should visually resonate from side to side) 
- Be sure to lift the bow from the string to maximize and really hear the ring (or lack of ring if it’s out of tune). Every note has a unique resonance, and it’s a little different on every cello and for every cellist... find your unique sound!
- Within expressive passages, (or even a simple scale or collection of notes), experiment with how a tiny lowering or raising of a note (especially the mediant (scale degree 3) and leading tone (scale degree 7)) may change its expressive quality



WARM-UP (5-15 minutes)

Time stamps are in the description area to allow you to go directly where you want.

SINGLE RINGING TONES AND RINGING TONE PATTERNS

**Ringling Tones:** Every note we play has a certain resonance or “ringing quality,” but some pitches ring more freely and openly than others. This is particularly true for the pitches correlating to an open string (ie. any **C, G, D, or A** played on another string *besides* the correlating string itself... eg. play a G on the D string, or an A on the G string).

**Warm Up Guidelines:** As you work through the single ringing tones and ringing tone patterns below, be sure to take time to really center each note... experiment with moving the applicable finger very fractionally higher and lower to find each note’s “sweet spot” -- where the correlating open string can be seen to be resonating as freely as possible, and the sound is as open as possible. It can be very beneficial to cross-reference (ie. play) the open string correlating with the note you are playing. Listen carefully to the overtones and ring, then try to find the center of the stopped note you are working on again.

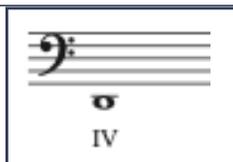
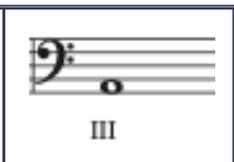
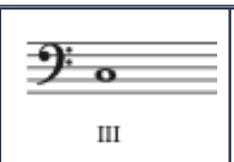
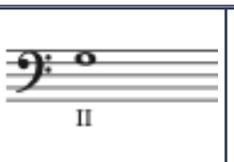
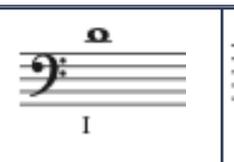
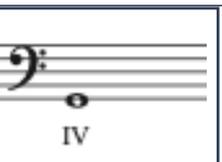
**Additional (optional) Approaches:**

1. Make up your own ringing tone patterns using other notes across the fingerboard that correlate to open strings (ie. Cs, Gs, Ds and As)
2. Make up your own ringing tone patterns with notes that don’t correlate to open strings. Every pitch has a unique resonance; what do you notice about the resonance of each?

Each day, write one single ringing tone, one ringing tone pattern, and (optional) one scale of your choice in each of the boxes below to build your daily intonation warm-up plan

SINGLE RINGING TONE	RINGING TONE PATTERN	FOCUS SCALE

To end your warm up session, play the above cells through twice like a line of music.



# WARM-UP

## REFLECTION ...

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT YOUR PLAYING/HOW YOU FEEL AS YOU GO THROUGH THESE WARM-UP EXERCISES?

WHERE DO YOU THINK YOUR FOCUS SHOULD BE GOING FORWARD?

NOTES AND REFLECTIONS:

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## TECHNIQUE EXERCISE

### FEUILLARD DAILY EXERCISES NO.2:

#### ESTABLISHING EXCELLENT INTONATION IN 1<sup>ST</sup> POSITION

This exercise is wonderful for establishing solid intonation in 1<sup>st</sup> position. We tend to assume that 1<sup>st</sup> position should be the most straight forward position, but in many ways it is actually the most difficult. This is in part because of the larger distances between the fingers needed to cover a half step (compared to higher up the fingerboard where the distances are incrementally smaller), and partly because of the left hand and arm's positioning closer to the shoulder (which can result in a rather cramped feeling at the elbow -we should always try to feel "air" in the joints (Starker))

#### TIPS FOR 1<sup>ST</sup> POSITION:

~A slight stretch across the back of the hand should be felt continuously *throughout any passage in 1<sup>st</sup> position*

~The distance between the fingers should be the same (ie. equidistant)

~Careful to stretch enough between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> fingers, as well as maintaining the correct distance (wide enough) between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> fingers

~For 1st finger forwards and backward extensions: in a forwards extension, 1<sup>st</sup> finger rotates/pivots forward so that it is pointing backwards towards player's chin. In a backwards extension, 1<sup>st</sup> finger points backward so that it is pointing towards player's chin.

[\[EXTENSION DEMONSTRATION Video\]](#)

#### WITH THE PLAY ALONG VIDEOS

- Tempi and Bowings (these are also shown in the time stamps given in the description area):

- i)  = 60, 2 clicks per triplet 8<sup>th</sup>, all separate bows
- ii)  = 40, 1 click per 3 triplet 8ths, 3 notes to a bow
- iii)  = 60, 1 click per 3 triplet 8ths, 6 notes to a bow
- iv)  = 80 (stretch option!), 1 click per 3 triplet 8ths, 12 notes to a bow
- v)  = 120 (stretch option!), 1 click per 3 triplet 8ths, 24 notes to a bow

#### ON YOUR OWN

- Bowing options
  - i) all separate
  - ii) 3 notes to a bow
  - iii) 6 notes to a bow
  - iv) 12 notes to a bow
  - v) 24 notes to a bow
- Cross-referencing ringing tones (C and D are both involved in 1<sup>st</sup> position)
- Try playing the whole exercise (or just parts of it) on different strings

**Tip:** Careful to keep the bow around lane 2-3 (ie. closer to the bridge than fingerboard)



# TECHNIQUE EXERCISE

Time stamps are in the description area to allow you to go directly where you want.

## FEUILLARD DAILY EXERCISES NO.2

The image displays ten staves of musical notation for the exercise. Each staff begins with a bass clef and a common time signature. The notation consists of eighth notes grouped into triplets, with various accidentals (sharps, naturals, flats) and fingerings (numbers 1-4) indicated above the notes. Some notes are marked with a circled 'o'. The exercise is divided into two main sections, each containing five staves. The first section uses a key signature of one sharp (F#), and the second section uses a key signature of one flat (Bb). The final two staves include red asterisks and 'X' marks above certain notes, indicating specific technical instructions.

\*1st finger forwards and backwards extensions



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 <sup>the</sup> **STRETCH ZONE**

I'm so glad you're here.

Let's stretch,

*Sophie*



the  
**STRETCH ZONE**  
*For Advanced and Curious Players*

STRETCH ZONE A

[[STRETCH ZONE A PLAY-ALONG VIDEO](#)]

Time stamps are in the description area to allow you to go directly where you want.

**LOWER 2<sup>ND</sup> POSITION:** CROSS REFERENCE C AND D RINGING TONES



**UPPER 2<sup>ND</sup> POSITION:** CROSS REFERENCE C (in backwards extension) AND D RINGING TONES. E SHOULD ALSO BE A NOTABLY RESONANT PITCH



**LOWER 3<sup>RD</sup> POSITION:**  
CROSS REFERENCE D RINGING TONE  
E SHOULD ALSO BE A NOTABLY  
RESONANT PITCH

**UPPER 3<sup>RD</sup> POSITION:**  
CROSS REFERENCE D (in backwards  
extension) RINGING TONE. E SHOULD  
ALSO BE A NOTABLY RESONANT PITCH

**4<sup>TH</sup> POSITION:**  
CROSS REFERENCE G RINGING TONE  
E SHOULD ALSO BE A NOTABLY  
RESONANT PITCH



**Important:** Always take time to carefully establish the intonation of the new position before playing the exercise in that position. Cross reference any prime ringing tone pitches (Cs, Ds, Gs and As) when you do this (as demonstrated in the Play-Along Videos)



the  
**STRETCH ZONE**  
*For Advanced and Curious Players*

STRETCH ZONE B

[STRETCH ZONE B PLAY-A-LONG VIDEO](#)

Time stamps are in the description area to allow you to go directly where you want.

The image displays ten staves of musical notation for a cello exercise. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music is characterized by a series of slurs and triplets, with fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4) indicated above the notes. The exercise involves chromatic movement across the staff, with a focus on the 4th finger. The notation includes various rhythmic values and dynamic markings, such as accents and hairpins.

In thumb position, this exercise has the unusual advantage of integrating the 4<sup>th</sup> finger, along with a lot of chromaticism up high (great for intonation as well as ear training!)



OPENING MEASURES

*Prelude* from Suite for Solo Cello No.1 in G Major, BWV 1007  
-Johann Sebastian BACH

*Élégie* in C Minor, Op.24  
-Gabriel FAURÉ

On the following Links and pages, you will find the opening measures of each of these two beloved works, both with the primary non-open string ringing tones (Cs, Gs, Ds and As) highlighted for you to cross-reference with open strings

[BACH AND FAURÉ REPERTOIRE PLAY-A-LONG VIDEO](#)]

Time stamps are in the description area to allow you to go directly where you want.

I encourage you to try both methods, and to explore alternative methods of sounding the rhythms verbally too if you would like!

- **WITH THE PLAY ALONG VIDEO** provided
- **ON YOUR OWN WITH THE METRONOME**, starting at a tempo that feels a little slow, and incrementally getting faster. At the same time, count the subdivisions/say the speech cues **OUT LOUD**
- On your own with the metronome, now hearing the subdivisions/speech cues **IN YOUR INNER EAR**
- On your own **WITHOUT THE METRONOME**, hearing the subdivisions/speech cues in your inner ear



REPertoire  
APPLICATION

Prelude from Suite No.1  
for Solo Cello in G Major, BWV 1007

(Opening Measures 1 -8)

Johann Sebastian Bach  
(1685 - 1750)

(Recommended Performance Tempo)

 = ca 50 -70 bpm

1



C

Recommended Tempo

= ca 50 -70 bpm

3



C G

5



G D G A

7



A D G G



# REPertoire APPLICATION

## Élégie, Op.24

(Opening Measures 1 -8)

Gabriel Fauré  
1845 - 1924)

(Recommended Performance Tempo)

 = ca 50 -62 bpm

**Molto Adagio**

1



*f* D C G G

3



*sempre f* G C C

5



*pp* II D C G G

7



G C C



# REPERTOIRE APPLICATION

## REFLECTION ...

HOW DOES REFINING YOUR INTONATION HELP YOU MORE FULLY EXPRESS THE EMOTIONAL DEPTH OF THE MUSIC?

*(In what ways does precision open the door to more nuanced expression?)*

HOW DOES YOUR PURSUIT OF PURE INTONATION REFLECT A DEEPER INTENTION FOR HONESTY, CLARITY, OR CONNECTION IN YOUR PLAYING?

*(What might your tuning say about your artistic priorities?)*

NOTES AND REFLECTIONS:

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## LISTENING & INSPIRATION

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

As you listen, I recommend comparing and contrasting the different approaches to intonation (also noting my own observations in parentheses).

What do you notice, like or dislike about each of these recordings? In addition to intonation, consider aspects such as timing, tempo, bowing, vibrato, articulation etc

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

1

### Prelude from Suite No.1 in G Major, BWV 1007

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 - 1750)

-Pablo Casals: [[www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qQg6YbSMko](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qQg6YbSMko)]  
(sense of deliberate placement of each finger, legato string changes, deep connection with harmony and phrasing)

-Inbal Segev: [[www.youtube.com/watch?v=jpFj-h1sKvs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jpFj-h1sKvs)]  
(more spacious, meandering; higher side of pitch, all separate bows)

-Richard Harwood: [[www.youtube.com/watch?v=vRXv\\_t6Q18I](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vRXv_t6Q18I)]  
(faster tempo makes it easier to connect with phrasing --for both player and audience, although it can also arguably sound a little rushed, lower pitches can be a little high)

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT HOW THESE ARTISTS APPROACH INTONATION?



## LISTENING & INSPIRATION

# 2

### Élégie, Op.24

Gabriel Fauré (1845 - 1924)

-Paul Tortelier: [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0VeM73WDS4>]  
(innate sense of rhythm, clarity of articulation, raw emotion)

-Jacqueline du Pré : [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oY7aH84PYWY>]  
(certain melancholy mixed with vulnerability, inner strength, hanging on to every note)

Gautier Capuçon: [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3CGkTx4KQ64>]  
(wide vibrato, less contrast dynamically between first two phrases)

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT HOW THESE ARTISTS APPROACHES INTONATION?



*"50% of a player's total expressive  
power lies in intonation."*

*~Pablo Casals*





01 WHAT CHANGED IN YOUR AWARENESS OR SKILL THIS MONTH?

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

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03 SET 1-2 GOALS FOR REVIEW OR NEXT EXPLORATION

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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 close this Practice Companion, take a moment to **tune in** — not just to your instrument, but to the way you hear.

In these focused explorations of intonation, you've done more than adjust finger placement or chase perfect pitch.

You've trained your ear to listen more deeply.  
To notice nuance.  
To trust subtle shifts in resonance and color.

May each note you play from here on ring with intention — not just in tune, but **alive**.

It is not just accuracy.  
It is your sensitivity.  
Your resonance.

Your deepening connection to sound.

### 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*





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# 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](http://WWW.SOPHIEWEBBER.COM)



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 30](#)
- HOW TO USE YOUR PRACTICE COMPANION [[ACCESS IT HERE](#)]
- DAILY PRACTICE TRACKER [Page 31](#)

## 2. Resources for Current Companion (Intonation)

This month's edition of Opening Measures dives into the world of intonation — how we feel it, shape it, and play it with intention. Here are some useful resources:

- AN INTRODUCTION TO FINGERBOARD GEOGRAPHY (1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> POSITIONS) [[Access It Here](#)]
- FINGERBOARD GEOGRAPHY CHART [[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:

- TEMPO PROGRESS [Page 33](#)
- WHAT IS SUBDIVISION? [[Access It Here](#)]
- WHAT ARE SPEECH CUES? [[Access It Here](#)]
- TIME SIGNATURES/METERS [Page 34](#)



## 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... )



**PRE-WARM-UP:**

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

.....

**WARM-UP:** Ringing Tones, Ringing Tone Patterns, and Focus Scales.....

NOTES & REFLECTIONS:

<b>M</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>TH</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>S</b>
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**TECHNIQUE FOCUS:** Feuillard Daily Studies No.2.

NOTES & REFLECTIONS:

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

<b>M</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>TH</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>S</b>
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**REPERTOIRE:** either the opening measures of the Bach Prelude OR the Fauré Elégie.....  
(focus on LH shape, spacing and ringing tones for excellent intonation)

NOTES/REFLECTIONS:

<b>M</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>TH</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>S</b>
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(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

## TEMPO PROGRESS

### TECHNIQUE EXERCISE

40-60 BPM

60-80 BPM

80-100 BPM

100+ BPM

### STRETCH ZONE A

40-60 BPM

60-80 BPM

80-100 BPM

100+ BPM

### STRETCH ZONE B

40-60 BPM

60-80 BPM

80-100 BPM

100+ BPM



## TIME SIGNATURES/METERS

In western music, pieces are typically written with a time signature, dividing the composition into a number of measures. There are two kinds of time signatures or “meters;” simple and compound meters.

Simple meters are those in which the main beat is divisible by 2. The most common examples are 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4. The bottom number represents the beat (a quarter note, which is divided by 2 to create two eighth notes). The top number represents the number of beats per measure. So there are 2 quarter note beats in 2/4, 3 quarter note beats in 3/4 and 4 quarter note beats in 4/4.

Compound meters are those in which the main beat is divisible by 3. The most common examples are 6/8, 9/8, and 12/8. For these examples, the beat is a dotted eighth note (which is divided by 3 to create three eighth notes). So there are 2 dotted quarter note beats in 6/8, 3 dotted quarter note beats in 9/8, and 4 dotted quarter note beats in 12/8.

### Metrical hierarchy

Within each measure, there is a basic hierarchical importance or “stress” given to the placement of each beat, as below (relative hierarchical stress is represented through the number of lines under each beat number, more lines indicates a stronger beat with more emphasis):

#### SIMPLE METERS (one beat is a quarter note)



Beats listed in order of importance (stress)

**1, 2**

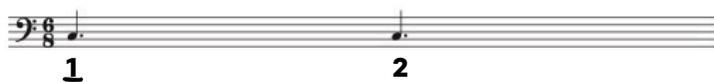


**1, 2, 3**



**1, 3, 2, 4**

#### COMPOUND METERS (one beat is a dotted quarter note)



**1, 2**



**1, 2, 3**



**1, 3, 2, 4**

