

Intonation Builders

72 Exercises for Strings

Written by Gary P. Gilroy
Edited by Heidi Franklin

Conductor's Score

A unique and innovative string method utilizing a combination of vocalization and playing to enhance overall ensemble intonation and tone quality.



GPG
GARY P. GILROY PUBLICATIONS

Instructions to the Conductor...

Intonation Builders, written by Gary P. Gilroy and edited by Heidi Franklin, is a series of exercises designed to be a supplemental course of study for strings. With the use of both voice and instrument the player and the ensemble will, with daily practice, begin to develop the skills required to “play in tune”.

It is important to use these exercises on a daily basis. It is equally important to both sing and play these exercises each day. It will be necessary to spend significant time on each exercise before moving to the next. Each exercise should be *mastered* before moving on to the next.

The conductor and musician should be concerned with many factors that come into play with regard to playing in tune. Playing unisons or octaves in tune simply requires the musician to eliminate the “beats” created by pitches not matching each other.

Significant as well, and equally important, is the need for the ensemble to play with a balanced sound. An ensemble with poor balance will sound “out of tune”. A simple rule for unison or octave balance is to not play louder than anyone who plays a lower pitch than you. This will create a warm, rich and balanced sound. It is worth considerable effort to insist on a balanced sound from the ensemble. This concept is the focus of Part I of this program.

Once the orchestra has mastered Part I this program moves through three more sections of two, three and four-part harmony. While the prior paragraph outlines the balance of unisons and octaves as they relate to playing in tune, the balance of harmony requires more explanation. While still maintaining good balance of octaves and unisons, musicians must now strive to balance the harmony. The root of the chord must be the dominant voice with the fifth played softer than the root and the third played softer than the fifth and the seventh played softer than all of the aforementioned voices. Maintaining this ratio will make the process of playing in tune achievable.

Finally, musicians must recognize the need to adjust pitches within chords. The root should just be played in tune while the perfect fifth should be played slightly high (about 2 cents high). The minor third should be played high (about 16 cents high), the major third should be played low (about 14 cents low), and the dominant seventh should be played quite low (about 29 cents low). With further research one can discover the pitch tendencies of all chord types.

When the group moves on to sections two, three and four, the conductor will need to assign the split harmonies by dividing each section of the ensemble, separating them into twos (Part Two), threes (Part Three), or fours (Part Four). It is easiest to simply have each section “count off” 1-2, 1-2, or 1-2-3, 1-2-3 or 1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4, depending on whether the exercise is in two, three or four-part harmony. These part assignments should be rotated each day so that each musician gets multiple opportunities to sing and play each part of each exercise.

INTONATION BUILDERS

Exercises for singing and playing

Gary P. Gilroy (ASCAP)

edited by

Heidi Franklin

Part I. Monophonic

Exercise #1

Musical score for Exercise #1, featuring Violin, Viola, Cello, and Bass staves. The score is in G major (one sharp) and common time (C). The exercise consists of 8 measures. The Violin part starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, and a half note G4. The Viola, Cello, and Bass parts play a similar pattern, with the Bass part starting on G2 and moving up stepwise to G4.

Exercise #2

Musical score for Exercise #2, featuring Violin, Viola, Cello, and Bass staves. The score is in G major (one sharp) and common time (C). The exercise consists of 8 measures. The Violin part starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, and a half note G4. The Viola, Cello, and Bass parts play a similar pattern, with the Bass part starting on G2 and moving up stepwise to G4.

Exercise #3

Musical score for Exercise #3, featuring Violin, Viola, Cello, and Bass staves. The score is in G major (one sharp) and common time (C). The exercise consists of 8 measures. The Violin part starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, and a half note G4. The Viola, Cello, and Bass parts play a similar pattern, with the Bass part starting on G2 and moving up stepwise to G4.

Intonation Builders - Page 2 - Full Score

Exercise #4

Exercise #4 is a four-part musical score for Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vla.), Cello (Cello), and Bass (Bs.). The music is written in the key of D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. Each staff begins with a square rehearsal mark. The Violin part starts with a quarter note D4, followed by eighth notes E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, and C5. The Viola part starts with a quarter note D3, followed by eighth notes E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, and C4. The Cello part starts with a quarter note D2, followed by eighth notes E2, F2, G2, A2, B2, and C3. The Bass part starts with a quarter note D1, followed by eighth notes E1, F1, G1, A1, B1, and C2. The exercise consists of two measures of music, with a double bar line and repeat sign in the middle. The first measure contains the initial notes, and the second measure contains the continuation of the sequence.

Exercise #5

Exercise #5 is a four-part musical score for Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vla.), Cello (Cello), and Bass (Bs.). The music is written in the key of D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. Each staff begins with a square rehearsal mark. The Violin part starts with a quarter note D4, followed by eighth notes E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, and C5. The Viola part starts with a quarter note D3, followed by eighth notes E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, and C4. The Cello part starts with a quarter note D2, followed by eighth notes E2, F2, G2, A2, B2, and C3. The Bass part starts with a quarter note D1, followed by eighth notes E1, F1, G1, A1, B1, and C2. The exercise consists of two measures of music, with a double bar line and repeat sign in the middle. The first measure contains the initial notes, and the second measure contains the continuation of the sequence.

Exercise #6

Exercise #6 is a four-part musical score for Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vla.), Cello (Cello), and Bass (Bs.). The music is written in the key of D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. Each staff begins with a square rehearsal mark. The Violin part starts with a quarter note D4, followed by eighth notes E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, and C5. The Viola part starts with a quarter note D3, followed by eighth notes E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, and C4. The Cello part starts with a quarter note D2, followed by eighth notes E2, F2, G2, A2, B2, and C3. The Bass part starts with a quarter note D1, followed by eighth notes E1, F1, G1, A1, B1, and C2. The exercise consists of two measures of music, with a double bar line and repeat sign in the middle. The first measure contains the initial notes, and the second measure contains the continuation of the sequence.