

Introduction

As string players, we understand how crucial good posture, tuning and tone is at every level. This collection of 30 studies will cover all the core and advanced techniques from Grades 6–8 and give an opportunity to secure technique one step at a time. It includes works by famous pedagogues such as Kreutzer, Mazas and Ševčík as well as Rode, Casorti and Gaviniès.

All musicians practise elements of technique separately from their music, but that does not mean there has to be no *music* in your technical practice. These studies have been selected with their musical qualities, as well as their technical demands, in mind. The dynamics, phrasing and articulation play an important role in telling the story of each study and I encourage you to exaggerate and vary these to help immerse yourself in each technique. Changing the bow speed, weight and sound point, for example, will bring a whole new life to playing in high positions and exploring these subtleties of technique at every level of playing will add interest and refinement.

Each study has an optimum tempo mark but starting slowly and allowing time to focus on the core skills will make speeding up controlled and easy. Standing tall with relaxed arms and shoulders, feeling the pulse internally, feeling a balanced bow sitting on the string and the left-hand in a comfortable and relaxed position are key aspects of technique all professionals think about before they begin. Paying special attention to these will allow the other technical demands at hand to develop freely and quickly.

You will find studies in high positions, with double-stops, trills, octaves, shifting work, *detaché* and *spiccato* bowing, and quick string crossings in various bowing patterns. Feel free to use the studies in other ways to reinforce the ideas.

I hope you will enjoy hearing and feeling your skills develop on every single page!

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