

Slurs Part 1

Firstly basic exercises that will remind us of how a slur works.

Upward slur (hammer on) ; use the 'tapping' or 'bouncing' exercises that we have done previously to practice the speed and accuracy of your left hand fingers. Develop this by leaving the finger down after the 'tap'.

Downward slur (formerly pull off now roll off!) ; place the finger on the string, press and then roll off by bending the finger into the hand. Do not use your arm or hand. This does not require a lot of effort, just good movement. Do not grab the string or pull hard.

I have used string 3 and 3rd position for the following exercises. You can increase difficulty when ready by changing string and position.

- 1) Basic slurs in pairs - play 4 times and then slur 4 times:
upward 1 2, 2 3, 3 4, downward 2 1, 3 2, 4 3.

TRY TO HAVE ONLY 1 FINGER PLAYING THE STRING. THIS IS DIFFICULT FOR DOWNWARD SLURS. START WITH BOTH FINGERS ON BUT ONLY WEIGHT ON THE FINGER OF THE PLAYED NOTE. PUT WEIGHT INTO THE OTHER FINGER JUST BEFORE ROLL OFF. WORK TOWARDS THE FINGER THAT YOU ARE SLURRING TO BEING RELAXED OFF THE STRING UNTIL JUST BEFORE THE SLUR. DO NOT HAMMER WITH THIS FINGER.

- 2) Alternate playing and slurring - 1 2 $\widehat{1\ 2}$ etc.

- 3) Linking pairs with separation - 2 times each pair - relax - next pair:

$\widehat{1\ 2}$ $\widehat{1\ 2}$ relax $\widehat{2\ 3}$ $\widehat{2\ 3}$ relax $\widehat{3\ 4}$ $\widehat{3\ 4}$ relax
 $\widehat{4\ 3}$ $\widehat{4\ 3}$ relax $\widehat{3\ 2}$ $\widehat{3\ 2}$ relax $\widehat{2\ 1}$ $\widehat{2\ 1}$ relax

Now try each pattern in reverse, more difficult as hand needs to be balance and you need to feel the transfer of weight.

$\widehat{3\ 4}$ $\widehat{3\ 4}$ relax $\widehat{2\ 3}$ $\widehat{2\ 3}$ relax $\widehat{1\ 2}$ $\widehat{1\ 2}$ AND $\widehat{2\ 1}$ $\widehat{2\ 1}$ relax $\widehat{3\ 2}$ $\widehat{3\ 2}$ relax $\widehat{4\ 3}$ $\widehat{4\ 3}$

- 4) Linking slurs with no separation:

$\widehat{1\ 2\ 2\ 3}$ $\widehat{3\ 4\ 3\ 4}$ $\widehat{2\ 3\ 1\ 2}$ AND $\widehat{4\ 3\ 3\ 2}$ $\widehat{2\ 1\ 2\ 1}$ $\widehat{3\ 2\ 4\ 3}$ repeat as necessary.

- 5) Slurs 'walking' across the strings - smooth movement not jumps: one pair at a time, a slur on each string 6 5 4 3 2 1 and back. As the finger slurs the 'standing finger relaxes and moves to the next string. As that finger plays the slurring finger moves across. This is more challenging with downward slurs. Work with all pairs.

- 6) New pairs - $\widehat{1\ 3}$, $\widehat{2\ 4}$, $\widehat{1\ 4}$ and $\widehat{3\ 1}$, $\widehat{4\ 2}$, $\widehat{4\ 1}$

These are more difficult for control balance and weight transfer. Do all the exercises with these pairs

- 7) **Multiple slurs** - in preparation for the next stage practice groups of 3 and 4 notes. Start on a single string and move to walking only when you feel that you are getting better control with the pairs

$\widehat{1\ 2\ 3}$ $\widehat{2\ 3\ 4}$ $\widehat{1\ 2\ 3\ 4}$ AND $\widehat{3\ 2\ 1}$ $\widehat{4\ 3\ 2}$ $\widehat{4\ 3\ 2\ 1}$

