

# Technical Work: The ***SUPERFOOD*** of Music

*Violin and Viola Technique  
Student Booklet*

*Please stick this in the back of your AMEB Technical Work Book*



If we **JUST** ate ice-cream and chocolates, our bodies would not function well. We need ***SUPERFOODS*** to get the best results. Teaching Technique is teaching the *skills* needed to ***play better***, whether it be tennis, swimming, gymnastics or playing a musical instrument. If we can understand these concepts, that's great. *If WE can simplify and minimise them for memorisation – ***EVEN BETTER!****

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## What's in it for me?

Swimmers swim lap after lap, for hours in training, before they compete. Tennis players practise their serves, backhands, volleys etc. for hours in training before they ever play a game. Gymnasts do stretches, forward rolls, handstands and back arches, well before they ever get to a bar or beam. Ballet Dancers learn positions and spend hours in front of a mirror, before they ever reach a stage.

- ❖ These are the **SKILLS** required to play well.
- ❖ **TECHNICAL WORK** is learning the **SKILLS of MUSIC**.



In order to play netball, basketball, football or volleyball I need to know the **RULES** of the game. Being able to catch, throw or kick a ball, does not mean I can just play. I need to know the rules. It is the same for Chess - or even Monopoly – you can't play, unless you know the rules.

- ❖ **THEORY** is the **RULES** of music.



Just like in sport, if I have the **SKILLS** and I know the **RULES**, I will **PLAY BETTER!**



**If you tell me you love scales, I will write you a note and send you STRAIGHT to the clinic. There's something wrong with you." It's OK not to love them. So, let's make it as easy as possible, by thinking in patterns. This makes MEMORISING easier and it MINIMISES what we have to do. I could teach you the same thing, using about 25 studies – or just a few sheets. Which would you prefer?**



Left Hand Basic Finger Patterns											
OPEN (O)				HIGH (H)			MIDDLE (M)			LOW (L)	
1	2	3	4	1	2	3 4	1	2 3	4	1 2	3 4

M, L and H are within a FRAMEWORK of a Perfect 4<sup>th</sup> (AUSTRALIANS)  
 Semitone is either in LOWEST, MIDDLE or HIGHEST 2 fingers.  
 The O pattern “steps outside the box”



❖ See if you can show OHMLMHO or HMLMHMLM etc.

Use your left hand, with palm facing you. Place your right index finger where the tones occur.

Feel how close the semitones are. **WHERE' S WALLY? (The semitone)** 

One Octave Major Scales and Arpeggios				INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC
Starting on:				CURRICULUM (IMC)
Open String	Scale MM Arp 0203	GDA		LEVEL 1 – teach “crabwalks” 
1st Finger	Scale HH Arp 1314	AEB, Ab Eb Bb,	move up	LEVEL 3 and up
2nd Finger	Scale OO Arp 2421	BbF (play (Australians”))	move up	LEVEL 4 and up
3rd Finger	Scale LL Arp 3132	CG	move up	LEVEL 2 and up

❖ N.B.FOR ALL SCALES AND ARPEGGIOS THAT BEGIN ON 2ND FINGER,  
 PLAY the first 3 notes of the National Anthem “AUSTRALIANS”,  
 TO PREPARE THE HAND FOR GOOD INTONATION



Two Octave Major Scales – Instrumental Music Curriculum - LEVEL 3 and up					
String	G	D	A	E	
G	M	M	L	L	
A	H	H	M	M	move up to transpose the scale to Bb, B, C etc
Bb	O	O	H	H	move up to transpose (PLAY “Australians” 2 -1 2)

Two Octave Harmonic Minor Scales IMC – LEVEL 4 and up					
String -	G	D	A	E	
G	L	-1+2M	-1H	+1L	
A	M	L+3	L	-1+2M	move up
Bb	H	M+4	M	L+3	move up (PLAY “Australians” 2 -1 2)

Two Octave Melodic Minor Scales – IMC LEVEL 5 and up								
String-	↑G	D	A	E	↓E	A	D	G
G	↑L	M	-1O	L	↓-1	H	-2-1	L
A	↑M	H	L	M	↓-2-1	L	L	M
Bb	↑H	O	M	H	↓L	M	M	H
								move up (PLAY “Australians”)

Two Octave Arpeggios: Circled note is HIGH for Major and LOW for Minor – IMC LEVEL 3 and up								
G	0	②	0	3	①	3	2	
A	1	③	1	0	②	0	3	Move up using 4 <sup>th</sup> finger
Bb	2	④	2	1	③	1	4	move up (PLAY “Aust”)

Dominant 7ths (commencing on) – IMC - LEVEL 7 and up									
G	0	+2	0	-2	3	+1	3	-1	2
A	1	+3	1	-3	0	+2	0	-2	3
Bb	2	+4	2	-4	1	+3	1	-3	4

Diminished 7ths - Preparatory Exercise – IMC LEVEL 9 and up				
0	-2	-4	-2	UP AND DOWN 4 TIMES – all minor 3rds
N1	N3	L1	L3	UP AND DOWN 4 TIMES – all minor 3rds

See Dim 7 Circle diagram

Diminished 7ths Circle (commencing on) – IMC – LEVEL 9 and up									
Find the starting note and go clockwise all the way around the circle, plus one. This works commencing on G, A and Bb.									
From B natural up:	2	4	-2	-4	1	3	-1	-3	+4

CHROMATIC EXERCISE – Do this exercise on a different string each day – LEVEL 5		
Start in ½ position, playing SEMITONES:	012 shift up to ↗ 1 :	(repeat this 4 times)
Stay on 1 and play semitones (Bunch)	1 2 3 4 :	(repeat this 4 times)
Then go backwards	4 3 2 1 :	(repeat this 4 times)
	1 ↘ shift back to 210 :	(repeat this 4 times)
Then go up and down, using different slurs:	2s,3s,4s and 6s	

<b>CHROMATIC SCALE</b>	0	1	2	↗1	2	3	4
IMC LEVEL 5	0	1	2	↗1	2	3	

ONE STRING SCALE in 1st and 4th position - IMC - LEVEL 5 and up					
Major	0	1	23	then go to 4th position	↗ 1 2 34 (M ↗ H)
Harmonic	0	12	3	then go to 4th position	↗ 12 +34 (L ↗ L+3)
Melodic	0	12	3	then go to 4th position	↗ 1 2 34 (L ↗ H)
(descending)	4	-3	-21	then go to 1st position	↘ 3 21 0 (L ↘ L)

- ❖ For 2 octave scales, we need to know the PATTERNS
- ❖ For 3 Octave scales, we need to know the PATHWAY (where it shifts)

### Three Octave Scales and Arpeggios

(↗ ↘ = SHIFT up or Down)

G MAJOR 3 Octave PATHWAY		
G String	M	
D String	M	
A String	L ↗ 3pH	Shift to 3p: what used to be 3 is now 1
E String	1 2 ↗ 5p 0 +4	Move high 4th up ANOTHER semitone
Same Fingering Descending		



G HARMONIC MINOR uses same PATHWAY, but patterns are:		
G String	L	
D String	-1 +2 M	
A String	-1 2 ↗ 3pL+3	
E String	L ↗ 5pM +4 ++4	(Move high 4th up ANOTHER semitone)
Same Fingering Descending		

G MELODIC MINOR uses the same PATHWAY ASCENDING ONLY:	
G String	L
D String	M
A String	-1 2 ↗ 3pH
E String	L ↗ 5pO +4

DESCENDING is DIFFERENT:
DON'T lower the 4th. From the TOP G, it goes
4 -3 -2 ↘ 3 -2 -1 ↘ 3-2 -1 then home to open G (lower the 7ths and 6ths)

ALL OTHER THREE OCTAVE SCALES
START on 1st Finger
They go up on the A String: 0   1   2 ↗   12   3   4

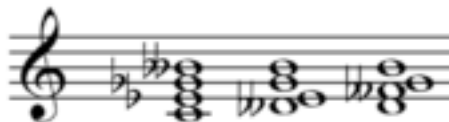
THE FINAL OCTAVE for MAJOR and HARMONIC MINOR is:							
1	2	↗1	2	↗1	2	3	4
↘4	3	2	1	3	2	1	

THE FINAL OCTAVE FOR MELODIC MINOR is:							
1	2	↗1	2	↗1	2	3	4
↘3	2	↘3	2	1	↘2	1	

**LISTEN CAREFULLY to WHERE THE TONES and SEMITONES OCCUR**

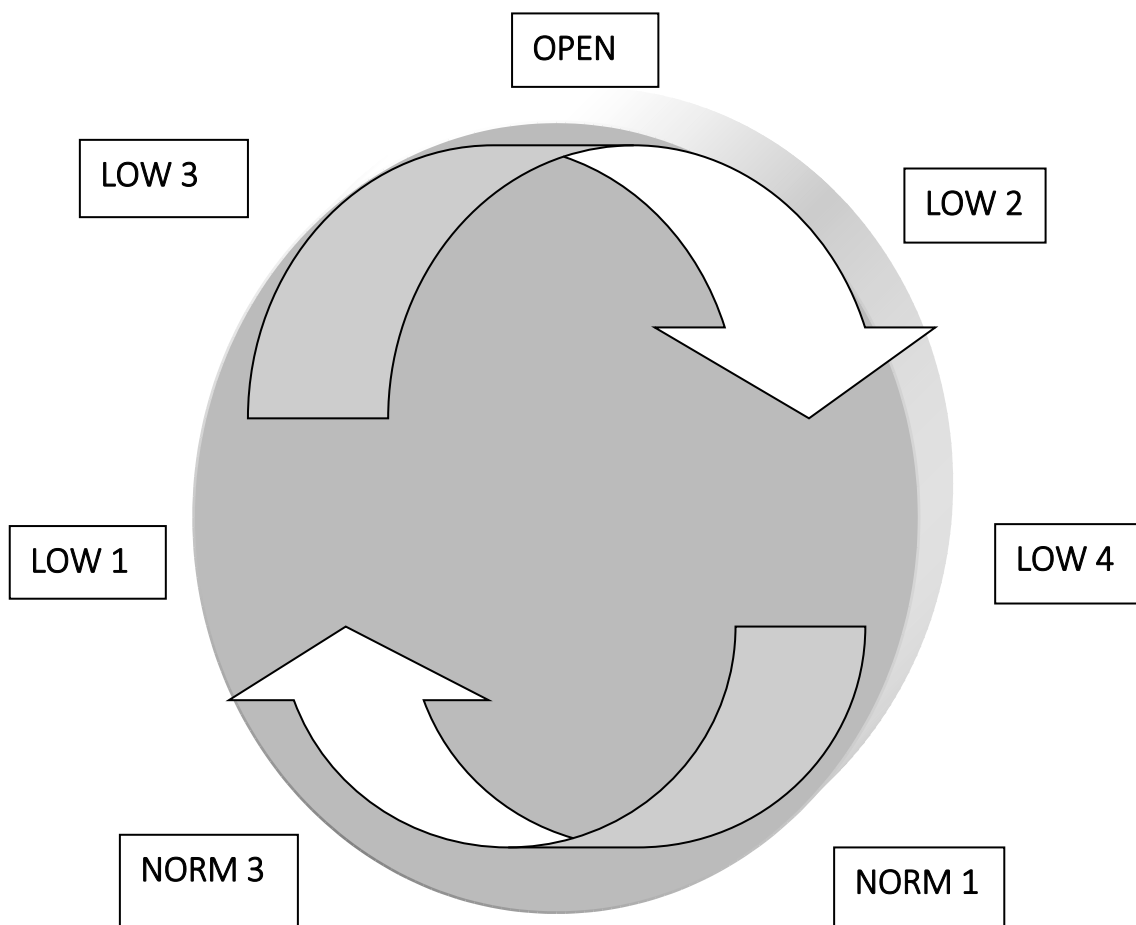
ARPEGGIO – 3 OCTAVES:										
G =	0	②	0	↗1	③	1	↗1	③	1	4 (same desc)
A =	1	③	1	↗1	③	1	↗1	③	1	4 (same desc)
CIRCLED notes are HIGH for Major and LOW for minor										

## WHO WANTS TO READ THIS!??



I invented this Diminished 7<sup>th</sup> “Circle” - it makes Dim 7ths SO easy!

- ❖ Dim 7ths are a “pile of minor 3rds”
- ❖ Find the starting finger
- ❖ Go clockwise up to the top str- end on same 2 fingers you started on
- ❖ Go anti-clockwise descending, to where you started



*With thanks to my former student, ALEX CHIN, who created this artwork c. 2010*

## Key signatures – using strings to help you remember

<b>VIOLIN</b>
<b>Use the open strings going UP to learn MAJOR KEYS with SHARPS:</b>
G major has 1 sharp
D major has 2 sharps
A major has 3 sharps
E major has 4 sharps
<b>Use the LOW first fingers going DOWN to learn MAJOR KEYS with FLATS:</b>
F major has 1 flat
Bb major has 2 flats
Eb major has 3 flats
Ab major has 4 flats
<b>Use NORMAL 1st finger going UP to learn MINOR KEYS with SHARPS:</b>
A minor has NO sharps
E minor has 1 sharp
B minor has 2 sharps
F# minor has 3 sharps
<b>Use 3<sup>rd</sup> finger going DOWN to learn MINOR KEYS with FLATS:</b>
A minor has NO flat
D minor has 1 flat
G minor has 2 flats
C minor has 3 flats

<b>VIOLA</b>
<b>Use the open strings going UP to learn MAJOR KEYS with SHARPS:</b>
C major has NO sharps
G major has 1 sharp
D major has 2 sharps
A major has 3 sharps
<b>Use the LOW 2<sup>nd</sup> fingers going DOWN to learn MAJOR KEYS with FLATS:</b>
C major has no flats
F major has 1 flat
Bb major has 2 flats
Eb major has 3 flats
<b>Use HIGH 2<sup>nd</sup> finger going UP to learn MINOR KEYS with SHARPS:</b>
E minor has 1 sharp
B minor has 2 sharps
F# minor has 3 sharps
C# minor has 4 sharps
<b>Use 3<sup>rd</sup> finger going DOWN to learn MINOR KEYS with FLATS:</b>
Dminor has 1 flat
Gminor has 2 flats
Cminor has 3 flats
Fminor has 4 flats

**You can do a similar thing with celli: just adjust the fingers.**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Position exercise:**

What used to be 3 is now 1 – check with open string on LH side (octave)  
 What used to be 4 is now 2 – check with open string on the RH side (unison)  
 Find Perfect 4<sup>th</sup> framework (P4) and play LMH patterns

**Double Stops – 3rds and 6ths**

<b>Scales in 6ths:</b>	Major	STTS STTS		
	Minor	TTST SSTT	Think about “crabwalks”	
<b>Scales in 3rds:</b>	See sheet below			

**Exercises for Thirds**

Violin

Viola

1st pos.      slide 1st - 3rd pos.      slide 3rd - 1st pos.      1st pos. opens      3rd pos. opens

4 L Pattern - First Position

5 M Pattern - First Position

6 H Pattern - Third Position



## TIPS FOR PRACTICE

- ❖ Once you have learnt the skills, it means you have “**pressed SAVE**” on your computer (brain)
- ❖ You can then **ACCESS the files** whenever you need them
- ❖ If you don’t do it lots when it’s **NEW**, you haven’t **SAVED** and it will be lost!
- ❖ Don’t practise until you get it right, practise until you **CAN’T** get it wrong
- ❖ All things are difficult before they become easy
- ❖ The bigger the investment, the greater the return
- ❖ I can’t play it **YET** because I haven’t done it **ENOUGH**
- ❖ The more you practise them, the less you **HAVE** to practise them!



## HINTS FOR A GOOD SOUND:

- ❖ When the bow is **STRAIGHT**, the sound is **GREAT**
- ❖ **CHECK YOUR C-CURVES**
- ❖ Don’t tread on the puppy dog’s tail – he’ll growl at you
- ❖ The higher you go, the closer the bow (closer to **YOU/Bridge**)
- ❖ Don’t **SCRIBBLE** with your “**ELBONE**”

## ADD YOUR OWN:

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**NOW for some ICE-CREAM and CHOCOLATE!**



**You will play your pieces MUCH better if you have a good technique!**

**There are the 11 Fingers patterns for VIOLIN and VIOLA**

This is WHY I teach in patterns:

- ❖ Scales should be learnt and **played from memory** – patterns make it easier
- ❖ You can **SEE, FEEL and HEAR** how they go
- ❖ ALL music then becomes a “code” of **POSITION PATTERN STRING** – EASY!
- ❖ Over 90% of music we play, uses the **first 4 basic patterns**
- ❖ The next 4 are used in chromatic passages – I call them “BUNCHES”
- ❖ The purple, light brown and pink are mainly used in Harm min passages (I don’t use 12<sup>th</sup> one)
- ❖ They can also be used in chords and double stops – think across the string



**AND THINK IN PATTERNS**