

## ORCHESTRA: Recruiting and Retaining Beginners

BY ASHLEY DICKENS

The following pages are resources provided by the author in extension of this November 2023 *SOUTHWESTERN MUSICIAN* issue Sound Ideas article.



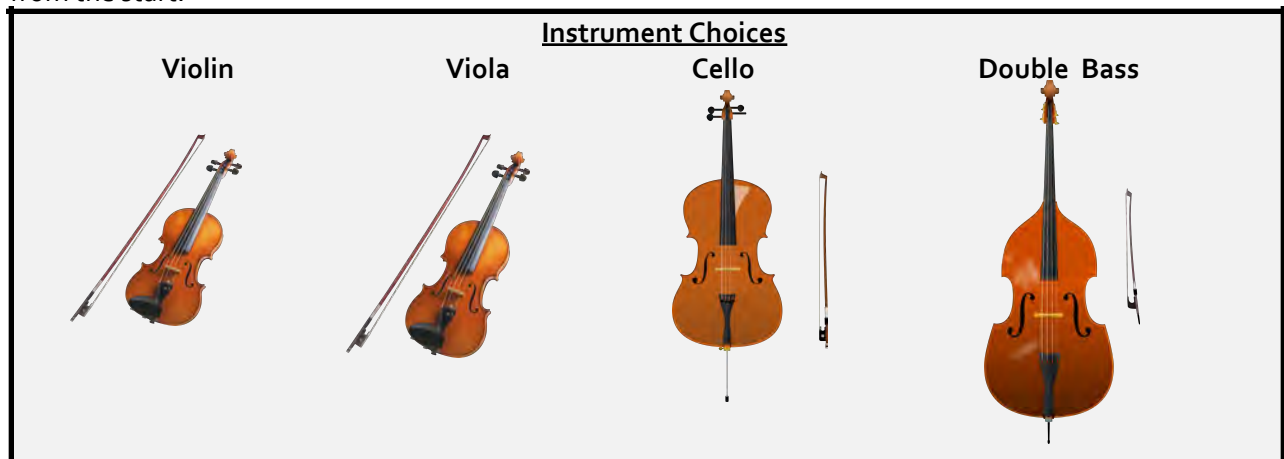
## ♪ SLOAN CREEK INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL ORCHESTRA ♪

Dear Fifth Grade Parents,

In the Lovejoy school district, all sixth grade students have the opportunity to learn to play an instrument. The following information will introduce you to the Sloan Creek Intermediate School Orchestra program. We hope that you will consider orchestra as your elective music choice for next year.

Students begin orchestra in the sixth grade at Sloan Creek Intermediate School and Beginning Orchestra classes meet every day. **There is no prerequisite for participation in the orchestra.** Students do not need to know how to read music or know how to play an instrument. Students who have studied piano or another instrument will find that some things may come a little quicker. Effort and practice will help with your success.

Once you have selected Orchestra as your music elective, we will be sending out information about our Instrument Selection drive, which will occur on **Saturday, February 25th at Willow Springs Middle School**. On this date, you will get to hold and try all four of our orchestra instruments and decide which one is the right one for you. During this time a director will also size you for your instrument. Stringed instruments come in different sizes to match growing students, so it is important that you get the right fit from the start.



When choosing your child's music elective, many questions can arise. Here are some of the most frequently asked questions. If you have other questions, please don't hesitate to email. We are always happy to help!



## Frequently asked questions

### **How do we know what instrument to play?**

At our instrument selection drive on **Saturday, February 25th**, students will get to hold and play all four orchestra instruments with a director's help. You will get a feel for what each one sounds like and what it will be like to play.

### **What if the instrument is too big for me?**

Each stringed instrument comes in different sizes so that they will fit the student. You do not need to worry about the instrument being too big for you. When you come to the Instrument Selection drive, a director will help decide what size of instrument is right for you. Any size of person can play a violin, viola, cello, or double bass, as they make smaller and larger instruments for each size of kid.

### **What will my Orchestra class look like in 6th grade?**

During your 6th grade Orchestra year, your class will be made up of everyone who also plays your instrument (all violins meet together, all violas, all cellos, all basses). Having instrument specific classes creates a specialized learning atmosphere that allows you to grow and develop your musical skills at a fast pace!



### **Does orchestra take a lot of time outside of school?**

We will not have any before or after school rehearsals except right before a concert. Students may come in before or after school for extra help or for private lessons, but this is optional. Students will need to practice 20 minutes, 4 – 5 times a week as homework. We will have 4 concerts each school year.

### **Can I be in athletics and orchestra?**

Students in the sixth grade do not participate in school athletics, but many do successfully participate in outside-of-school teams and orchestra. Many seventh and eighth grade orchestra students participate in athletics and orchestra and continue to do so in high school. The two rarely conflict with each other and help create a very well-rounded student who can excel at the arts and athletics.

### **Do I have to buy an instrument?**

In most cases, students do not buy an instrument. Most parents have found that renting an instrument from one of the local music companies is the best option. Many students start on smaller sized instruments and grow into full size instruments, so renting an instrument is wise in this case. We will provide you with information regarding rental options at the Instrument Selection drive.

Due to the larger size of the instrument, cello and bass students will rent an instrument for home practice and be assigned a school instrument, so that they do not need to carry it back and forth. Violin and Viola students will transport instruments back and forth each day. Special arrangements can sometimes be made for families with financial need. Financial issues should not affect the decision to be in orchestra. Please contact us with your concerns.

**Are private lessons available?**

Yes, private lessons are available! We have amazing private lesson teachers who come during school to teach students individually, or you can take lessons after school. We will provide more information on private lessons once you are signed up for orchestra.

**What other things do orchestra students do?**

There are so many studies that confirm the importance of music in our lives. Orchestra students can participate in solo recitals, small ensembles, solo and ensemble contests, all-region orchestras, all-state orchestras, and trips to other cities to participate in music festivals. Orchestra students are constantly challenging their brains as well as their coordination! Many of our orchestra students are very high academic performers as well. Students in orchestra will build lifelong friendships with other orchestra students and become part of a very unique orchestra family!

**What concerts and events happen in 6th grade Orchestra?**

<p><b>Concerts</b>          Fall Demonstration Concert          Winter Fine Arts Festival Concert          Ice Cream Concert          Spring Concert combined with WSMS</p>	<p><b>Competitions</b>          Solo and Ensemble Contest          6th Grade Orchestra Competition and Water Park</p>
<p><b>Social Events</b>          PINSTACK          After School Movie Parties          Medieval Times          Gingerbread House Holiday Social          Dallas Symphony Orchestra Trip</p>	



Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about the Sloan Creek Orchestra Program. We are here to help you with this decision. Thank you so much for your time and we hope to see you in the orchestra next year!

Sincerely,

Your Lovejoy Orchestra Team

**Michelle New - Head Orchestra Director, SCIS**  
michelle\_new@lovejoyisd.net

**Ashley Dickens - Head Orchestra Director, WSMS**  
ashley\_dickens@lovejoyisd.net

**Jennifer Vanhook - Orchestra Director, LHS**  
Jennifer\_Vanhook@lovejoyisd.net

**Mary Winkler - Orchestra Director, LHS**  
mary\_winkler@lovejoyisd.net

## 5th Grade Demo Day

\*play an upbeat piece from Fall Concert or UIL while students are walking in\*

Welcome 5th graders!! My name Mrs. Dickens and I teach orchestra at both at Sloan Creek Intermediate AND here at Willow Springs Middle School! Today we are joined by our top-level orchestra here at Willow, and we are so excited to tell you everything about joining orchestra! The first thing we'd like to do is play for you, so here is a tune you might recognize -

Play \*Bones\* by Imagine Dragons

Ask the audience if anyone recognizes the piece. Many hands will shoot up! Call on a 5th grader to answer.

Learning how to play music in a group is one of the most fun and rewarding experiences you can choose as a 6th grader. Most of the students in this group began playing their instruments as 6th graders, much like you will in the next few months!! Orchestra is super unique - not every school has an orchestra program, so we feel very fortunate that we have a great orchestra here in Lovejoy! While learning an orchestra instrument, you challenge your brain to do LOTS of things all at the same time! This improves your coordination and BRAIN POWER, but it's also a lot of fun to learn how to play some of your favorite songs.

Through orchestra you not only learn how to play music, you also make lifelong friends! Every year our orchestra students get to take field trips to participate in music contests like Epic Waters, enjoy Medieval Times, Six Flags, have fun at PINSTACK, and see the Dallas Symphony perform. Our high school orchestra gets to take overnight trips -Last year they went to Disney World and this year they are going to the beach!

In orchestra we also get to participate in contests where we win trophies and medals, and many of our students go on to get awards and scholarships for college just to play their instrument!

Now we'd like to tell you about the instruments we play in orchestra - the violin, viola, cello, and bass. All four of these instruments have strings on them, and we use a bow to play them, but you can also pluck the strings (that's called pizzicato). While all of the instruments look a lot alike, they sound very different!

The violin is probably the one you've heard of the most. It's the smallest of the four, and it also plays the highest notes (have the concertmaster play a high note). There are more violin players in the orchestra than any other instrument - in fact, we often split them into two sections that play two different parts. Here's what the violins sound like. \*Taylor Swift Shake it Off\*

Next is the viola! The viola looks a lot like the violin, and we hold it the same way. However, violas are just a little bigger than a violin (show size comparison), and they play slightly lower notes (have the first chair play an open C). This is what the viola sounds like. \*Take On Me\*

The next instrument is the cello, and the cello is so large that students have to sit to play it! They have an end pin that adjusts for the size of the player, and they play notes that are even lower than the viola. This is what the cello sounds like. \*Star Wars main theme\*

Have basses come to the front.

The string bass or double bass is the largest of the instruments in orchestra! It's SO big that students have to use a tall stool or stand up to play it! Basses are used in all kinds of music - everything from jazz to rock, which usually uses the electric bass. You'll often hear them play without the bow, like this: \*Bass line\*. They can also play with the bow, like this \*Jaws\* and \*Hedwig's Theme from Harry Potter\*

Play \*High Hopes\* by Panic at the Disco

When you join orchestra in 6th grade, you start by learning your instrument with other students who chose the same instrument - we have a violin class, viola class, cello class, and bass class. But before long we get to put everyone together and play as an orchestra! Orchestras can play all different styles of music - yes, we play classical music, but we can play jazz, rock, country, and pop music too! No matter what kind of music you like to listen to, you will love learning how to play an orchestra instrument!

Now we'd like to play another piece for you that we have a lot of fun playing together and uses a fun technique called a glissando!

Play \*Orange Jam\* by Jeffrey Bishop

Orchestra is a really cool and fun place to be! As you are deciding which fine art you would like to take as a 6th grader next year, please feel free to come and talk to me or current sixth graders in orchestra if you have questions. We can tell you all of the awesome things that we have experienced being a part of the orchestra, and we hope that you will join us next year!

# Welcome to Sloan Creek Orchestra

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Try to visit every instrument- you can go in any order! When you are finished visiting each instrument, go to the checkout table to pick your instrument! Be sure to stop by and meet with Dallas Strings to get your rental instrument and orchestra supplies set up for next year.

Bass:		
$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{3}{4}$

Cello:		
$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	4/4

Viola:		
12"	13"	14"

Violin:		
$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	4/4

My 1st Instrument Choice: \_\_\_\_\_

My 2nd Instrument Choice: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE TURN THIS PAGE INTO A DIRECTOR BEFORE YOU LEAVE!**

## Beginner Bead Challenges

**What:** Bead challenges are exercises from your Essential Elements for Strings book. When you successfully perform (or “pass off”) an exercise, you receive a bead of your choice to add to your string. Tie your string to your instrument case or binder so you can show off your achievements. When you reach certain milestones in your bead challenges, you will receive a Spirit Stick to add to your string!

**When:** You will do your bead challenge pass offs about every week in class. You will always play your bead lines with a metronome set to quarter note=72 unless otherwise indicated. We will usually do these on Mondays, if we do not have school on Monday we will not do bead challenges that week. If you want to pass off more than one exercise, you may do so as time allows. You must pass them off in order and they must be **perfect** in order to move on to the next one!

<b>BEAD CHALLENGE EXERCISES</b>	
#9 Essential Elements Quiz	
#12 Lift Off	
#18 Morning Dance	
#22 Lightly Row	
#26 Caribbean Island	
#33 Song for Christine	
#43 A Mozart Melody	←Spirit Stick!
#52 A String of D’N’A (With the Bow!)	
#57 Tribal Lament	
#64 Essential Elements Quiz - the D Major Scale	
#73 Buckeye Salute	
#76 Essential Elements Quiz - For Pete’s Sake	
#80 Grandparent’s Day	
#86 Ode to Joy	
#92 Can-Can (A part only)	←Spirit Stick!
#102 Essential Elements Quiz - This Old Man	
#107 Essential Elements Quiz - Sailor’s Song (metronome at 100)	
#116 Song for Maria	
#123 Skill Builder	
#128 Spy Guy	
#140 Bingo	←Spirit Stick!
#155 Monday’s Melody	
#163 Big Rock Candy Mountain	
#171 Skill Builder	
#176 Pop Goes the Weasel (metronome at 130)	
#192 Simple Gifts (A Part Only)	←Spirit Stick!
<b><u>SCALES - Ask your teacher for scales when you get here!</u></b>	
Scale #1	
Scale #2	
Scale #3	
Scale #4	←Spirit Stick!



Violin

# Note Reading Ninja

D String



LEVEL 1: Musical staff for Level 1: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), 4/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes starting on D4 and ascending stepwise to D5.

LEVEL 2: Musical staff for Level 2: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes starting on D4 and ascending stepwise to D5.

LEVEL 3: Musical staff for Level 3: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes starting on D4 and ascending stepwise to D5.

LEVEL 4: Musical staff for Level 4: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes starting on D4 and ascending stepwise to D5.

LEVEL 5: Musical staff for Level 5: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes starting on D4 and ascending stepwise to D5.

LEVEL 6: Musical staff for Level 6: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes starting on D4 and ascending stepwise to D5.

LEVEL 7: Musical staff for Level 7: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes starting on D4 and ascending stepwise to D5.

LEVEL 8: Musical staff for Level 8: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes starting on D4 and ascending stepwise to D5.



Viola

# Note Reading Ninja

D String



LEVEL 1: Musical staff for Level 1. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C#5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C#6, D6, and E6.

LEVEL 2: Musical staff for Level 2. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C#5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C#6, D6, and E6.

LEVEL 3: Musical staff for Level 3. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C#5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C#6, D6, and E6.

LEVEL 4: Musical staff for Level 4. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C#5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C#6, D6, and E6.

LEVEL 5: Musical staff for Level 5. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C#5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C#6, D6, and E6.

LEVEL 6: Musical staff for Level 6. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C#5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C#6, D6, and E6.

LEVEL 7: Musical staff for Level 7. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C#5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C#6, D6, and E6.

LEVEL 8: Musical staff for Level 8. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C#5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C#6, D6, and E6.

Viola

# Note Reading Ninja

A String



LEVEL 1: Musical staff for Level 1. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, and A6.

LEVEL 2: Musical staff for Level 2. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, and A6.

LEVEL 3: Musical staff for Level 3. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, and A6.

LEVEL 4: Musical staff for Level 4. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, and A6.

LEVEL 5: Musical staff for Level 5. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, and A6.

LEVEL 6: Musical staff for Level 6. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, and A6.

LEVEL 7: Musical staff for Level 7. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, and A6.

LEVEL 8: Musical staff for Level 8. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, and A6.

# Note Reading Ninja



D String- Cello  
D&G String- Bass

LEVEL 1: Musical staff for Level 1. It features a bass clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of a sequence of eighth notes: D2, E2, F#2, G2, A2, B2, C#3, D3, E3, F#3, G3, A3, B3, C#4, D4.

LEVEL 2: Musical staff for Level 2. It features a bass clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The melody consists of a sequence of eighth notes: D2, E2, F#2, G2, A2, B2, C#3, D3, E3, F#3, G3, A3, B3, C#4, D4.

LEVEL 3: Musical staff for Level 3. It features a bass clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The melody consists of a sequence of eighth notes: D2, E2, F#2, G2, A2, B2, C#3, D3, E3, F#3, G3, A3, B3, C#4, D4.

LEVEL 4: Musical staff for Level 4. It features a bass clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The melody consists of a sequence of eighth notes: D2, E2, F#2, G2, A2, B2, C#3, D3, E3, F#3, G3, A3, B3, C#4, D4.

LEVEL 5: Musical staff for Level 5. It features a bass clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The melody consists of a sequence of eighth notes: D2, E2, F#2, G2, A2, B2, C#3, D3, E3, F#3, G3, A3, B3, C#4, D4.

LEVEL 6: Musical staff for Level 6. It features a bass clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The melody consists of a sequence of eighth notes: D2, E2, F#2, G2, A2, B2, C#3, D3, E3, F#3, G3, A3, B3, C#4, D4.

LEVEL 7: Musical staff for Level 7. It features a bass clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The melody consists of a sequence of eighth notes: D2, E2, F#2, G2, A2, B2, C#3, D3, E3, F#3, G3, A3, B3, C#4, D4.

LEVEL 8: Musical staff for Level 8. It features a bass clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The melody consists of a sequence of eighth notes: D2, E2, F#2, G2, A2, B2, C#3, D3, E3, F#3, G3, A3, B3, C#4, D4.

# Note Reading Ninja

A String- Cello  
G String- Bass



LEVEL 1:

LEVEL 2:

LEVEL 3:

LEVEL 4:

LEVEL 5:

LEVEL 6:

LEVEL 7:

LEVEL 8:



E

E string  
(open)



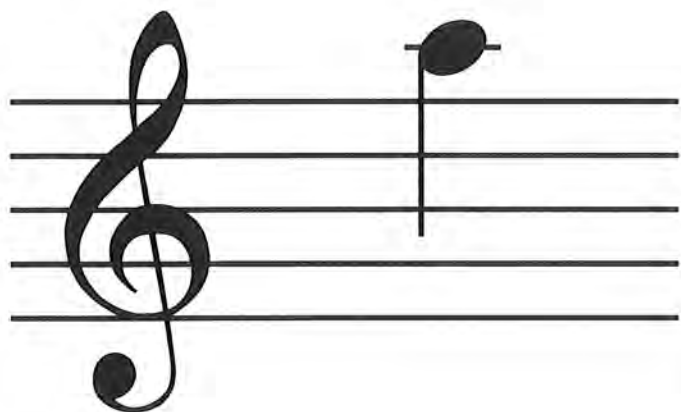
F#

E string  
1st finger



G#

E string  
2 fingers



A

E string  
3 fingers



A A string  
(open)



B A string  
1st finger



C# A string  
2 fingers

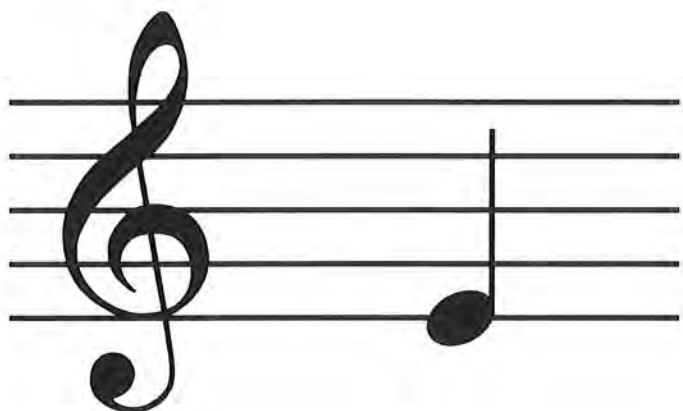


D A string  
3 fingers

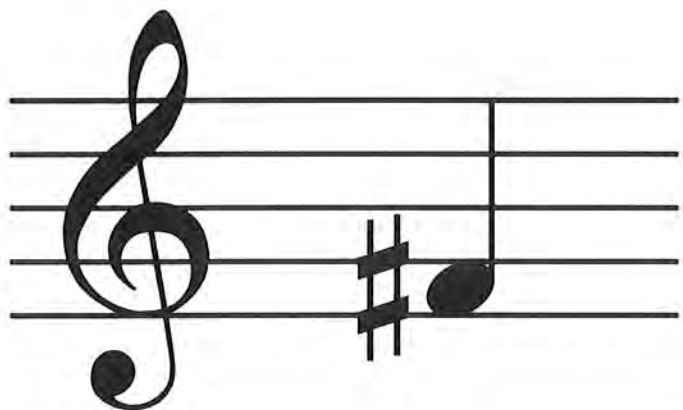




D D string  
(open)



E D string  
1st finger



F# D string  
2 fingers

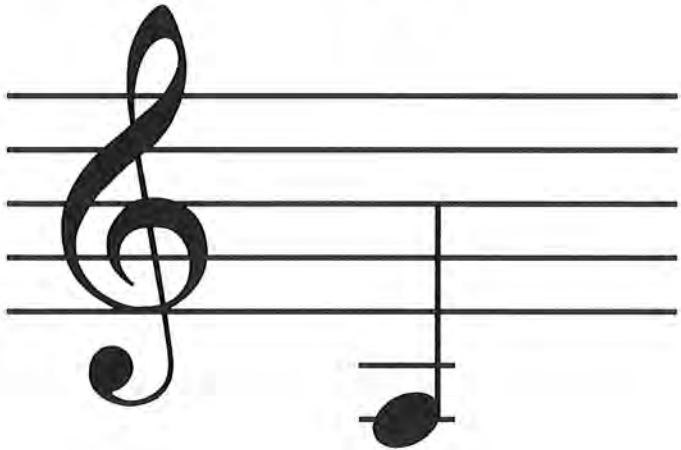


G D string  
3 fingers



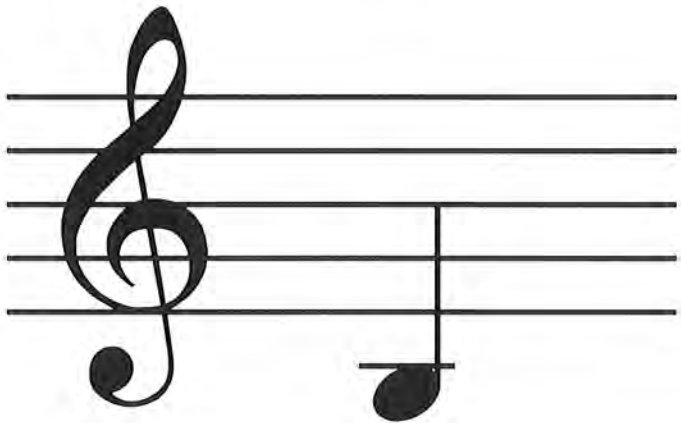
G

G string  
(open)



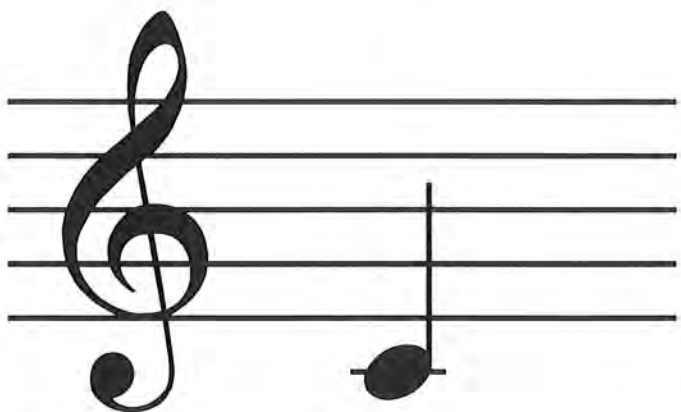
A

G string  
1st finger



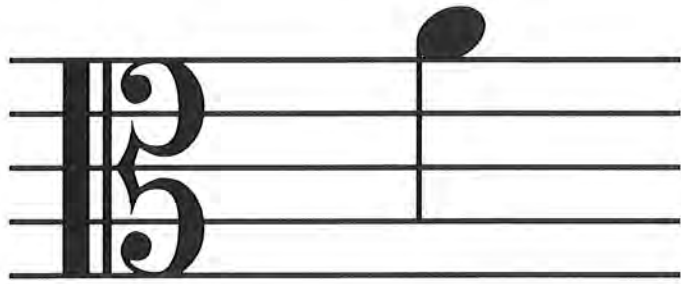
B

G string  
2 fingers

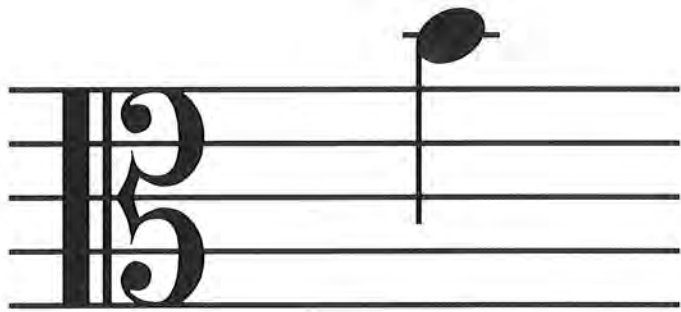


C

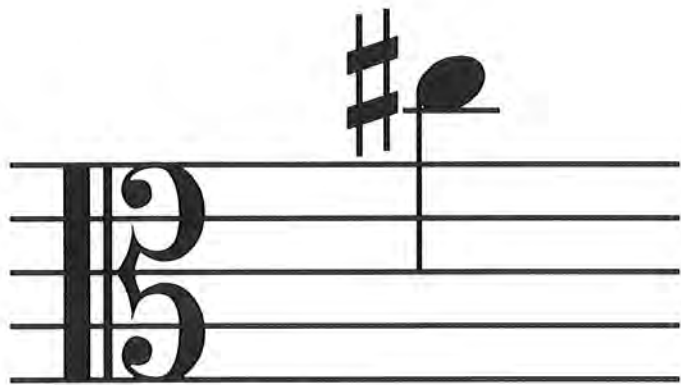
G string  
3 fingers



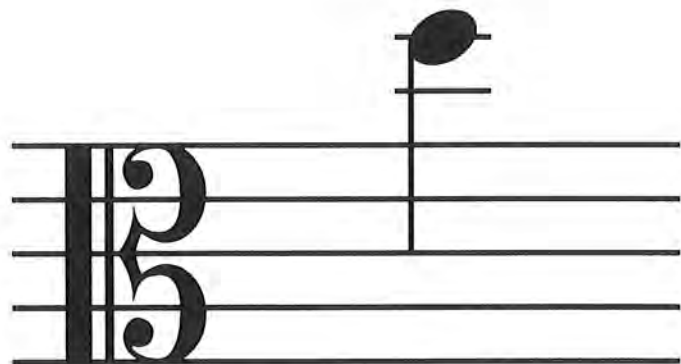
A A string  
(open)



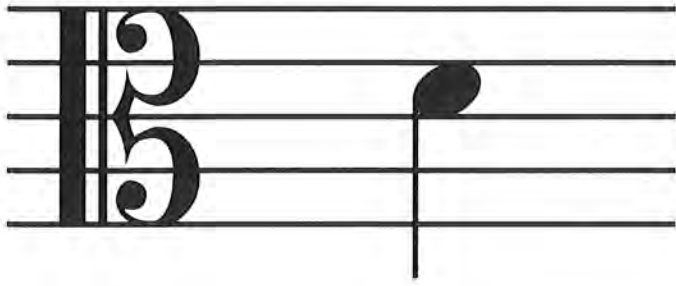
B A string  
1st finger



C# A string  
2 fingers



D A string  
3 fingers



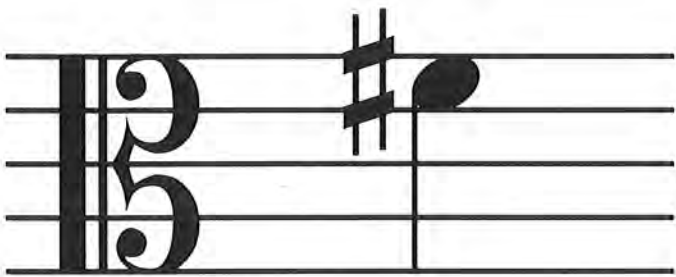
D

D string  
(open)



E

D string  
1st finger



F#

D string  
2 fingers



G

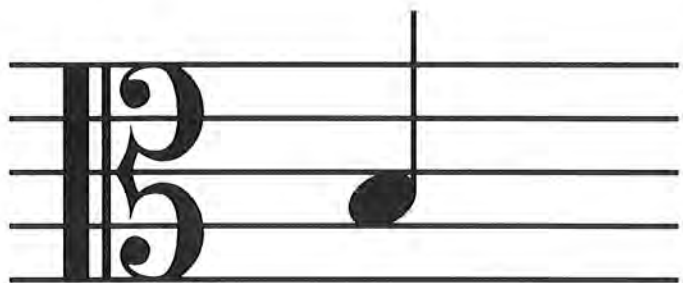
D string  
3 fingers



G G string  
(open)



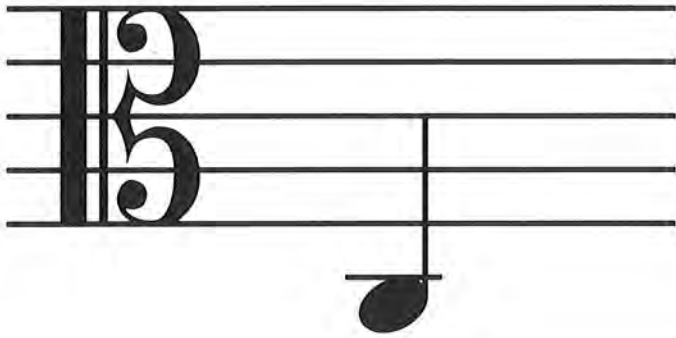
A G string  
1st finger



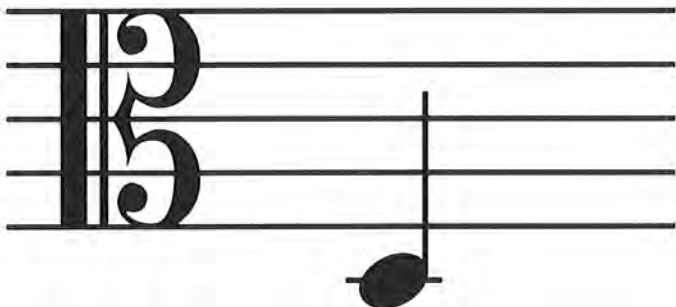
B G string  
2 fingers



C G string  
3 fingers



C C string  
(open)



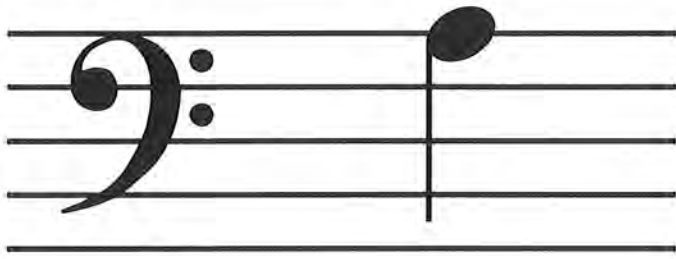
D C string  
1st finger



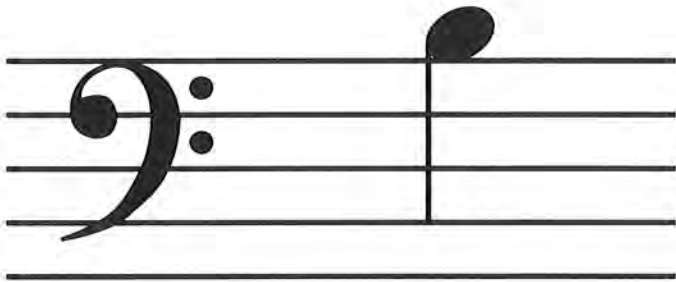
E C string  
2 fingers



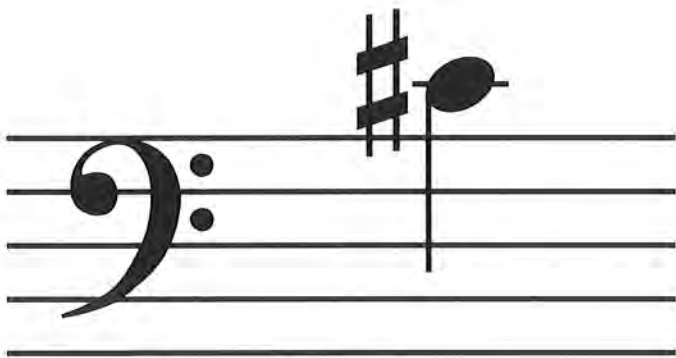
F C string  
3 fingers



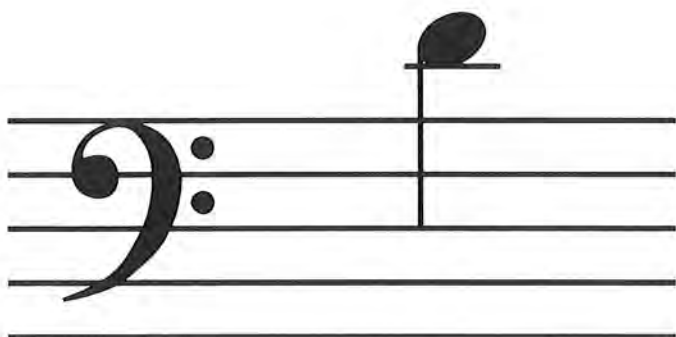
A A string  
(open)



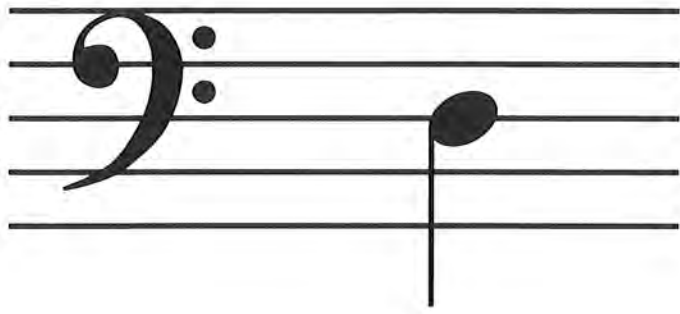
B A string  
1st finger



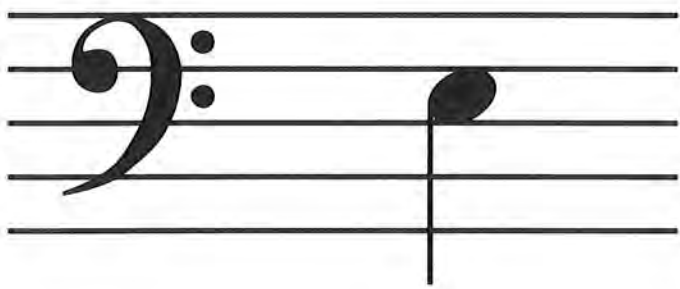
C# A string  
3 fingers



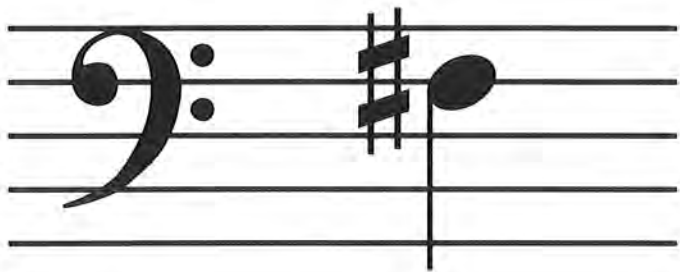
D A string  
4 fingers



D D string  
(open)



E D string  
1st finger

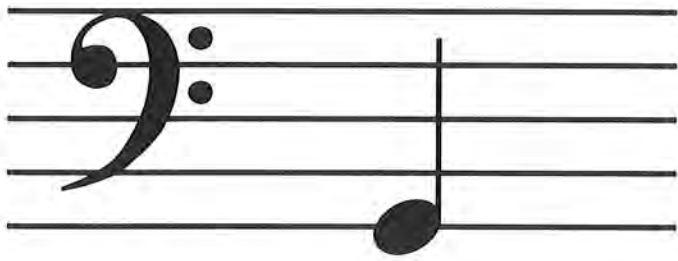


F# D string  
3 fingers



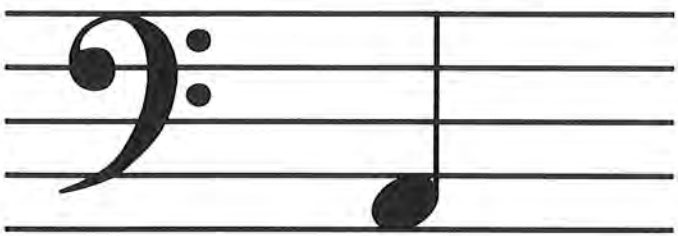
G D string  
4 fingers





G

G string  
(open)



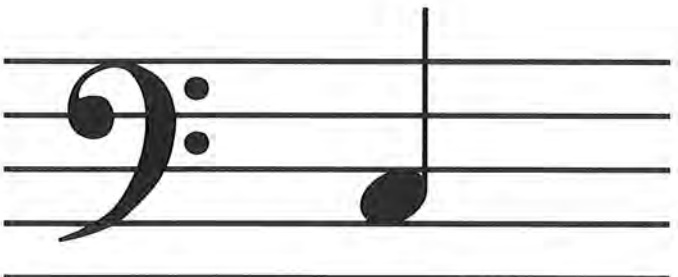
A

G string  
1st finger



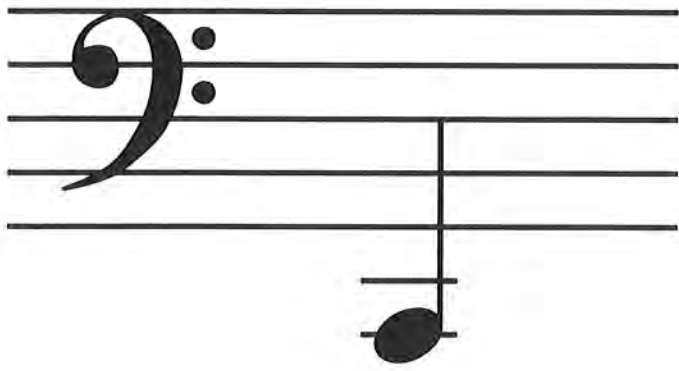
B

G string  
3 fingers

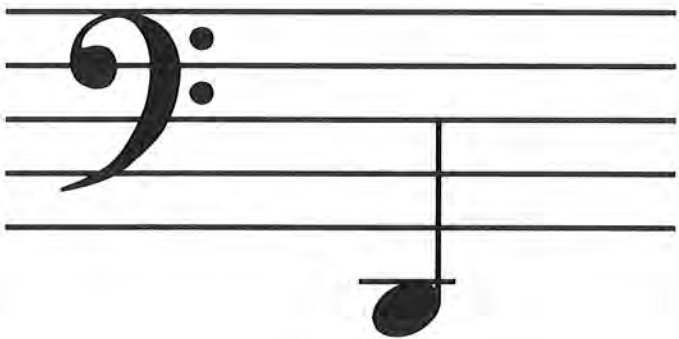


C

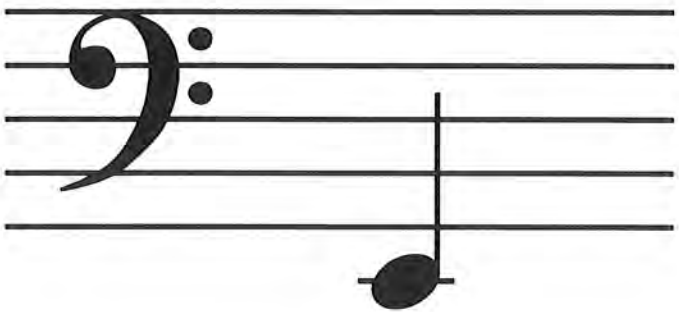
G string  
4 fingers



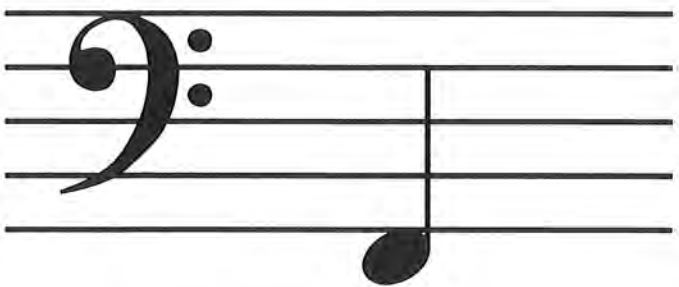
C C string  
(open)



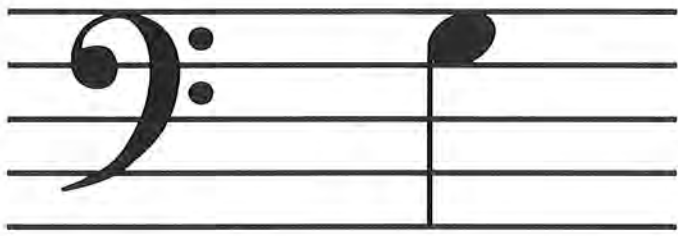
D C string  
1st finger



E C string  
3 fingers

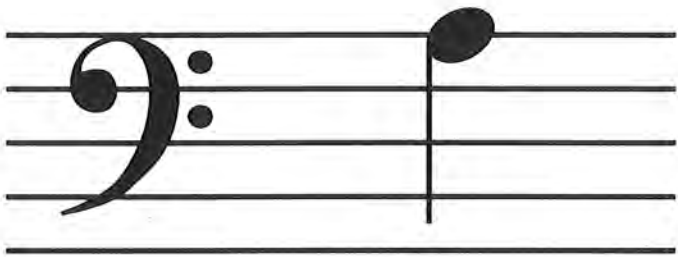


F C string  
4 fingers



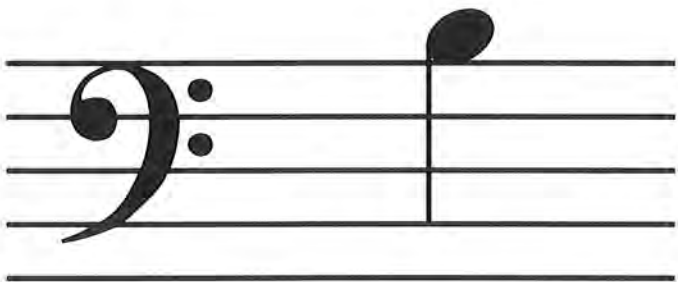
G

G string  
(open)



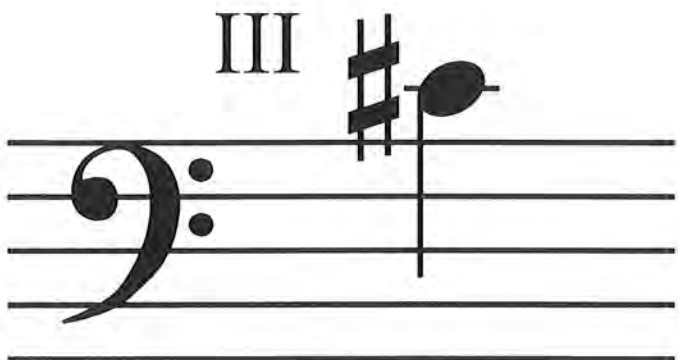
A

G string  
1st finger



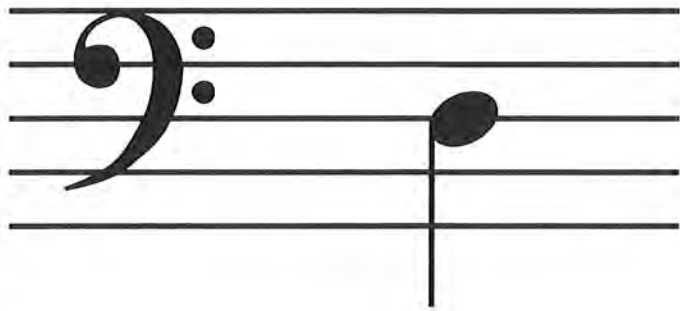
B

G string  
4 fingers

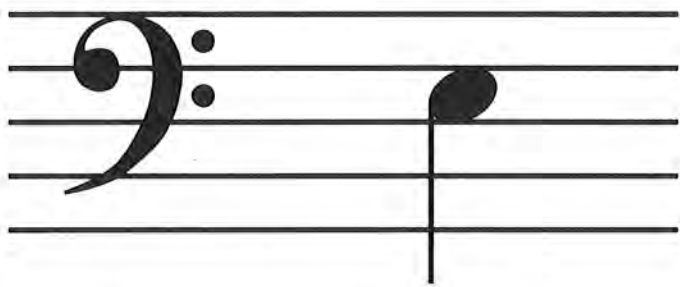


C#

G string  
III pos.  
2 fingers



D D string  
(open)

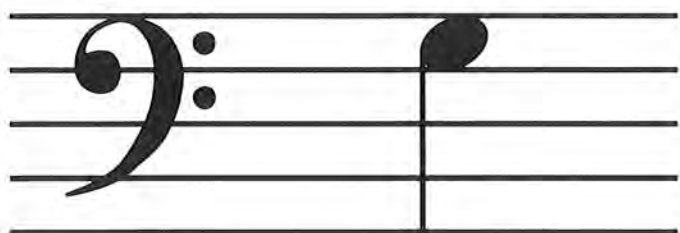


E D string  
1st finger

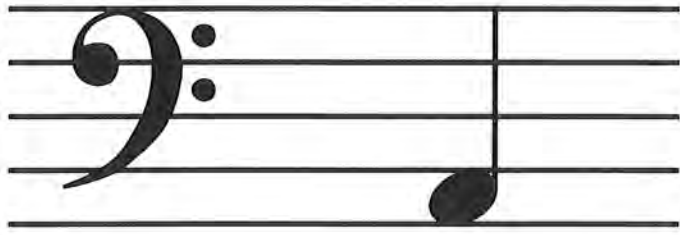


F# D string  
4 fingers

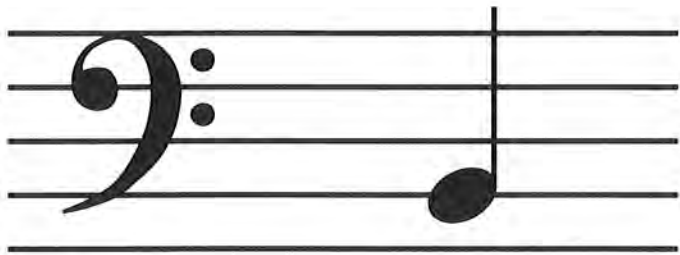
III



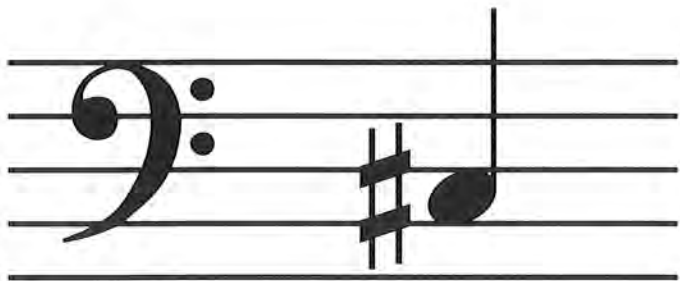
G D string  
III pos.  
1st finger



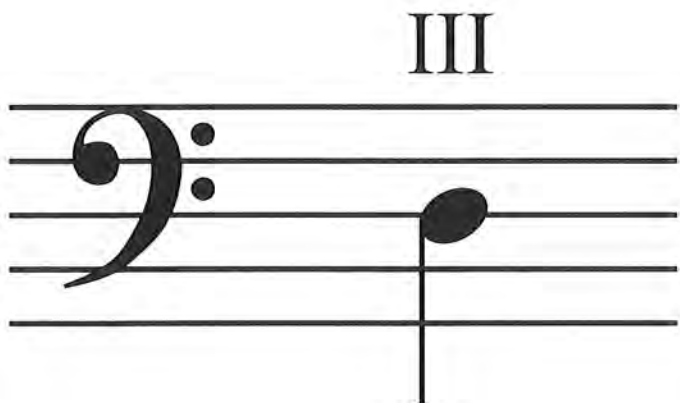
A A string  
(open)



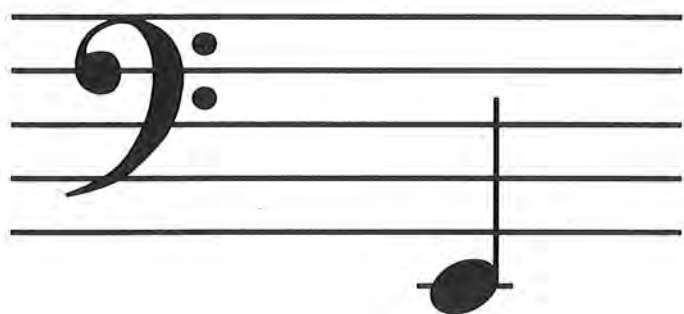
B A string  
1st finger



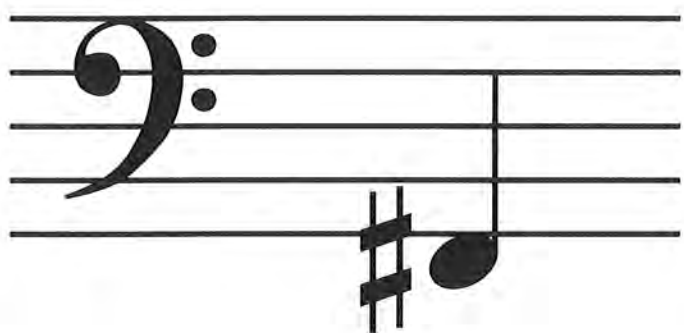
C# A string  
4 fingers



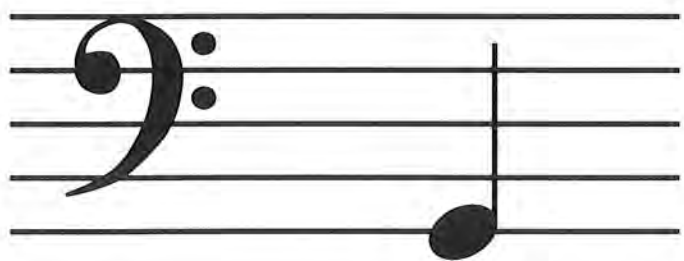
D A string  
III pos.  
1st finger



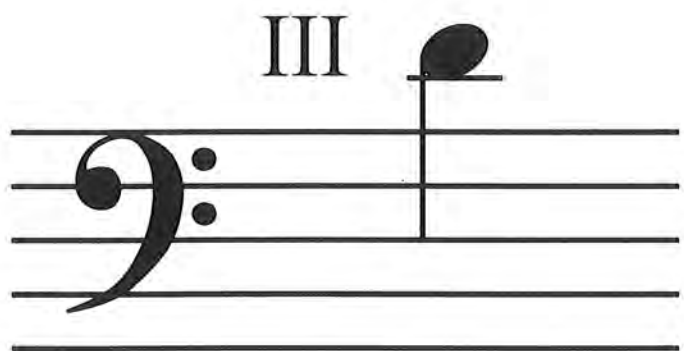
E E string  
(open)



F# E string  
1st finger



G E string  
2 fingers



D G string  
III pos.  
4 fingers

## Jingle Bells Slur Challenge

Students learn Jingle Bells with the slurs indicated below in Essential Elements Book 1. Students who master the Jingle Bells Challenge after just one day will receive a large candy bar, and everyone who passes receives a jingle bracelet! Students also earn their place in the orchestra for our December concert by completing this challenge.

41. JINGLE BELLS J. S. Pierpont

The image shows a musical score for '41. JINGLE BELLS' by J.S. Pierpont. The score is written on four staves in 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a 'pizz.' marking and a '2' above the first note. Handwritten slurs are present above the first two measures of the first staff, and above the first two measures of the second staff. Handwritten fingering numbers (0, 1, 2, 3) are written above various notes. The score concludes with a double bar line.

## Bow-lympics

After students have spent time learning the proper bow hold and have earned their bow license, we play bow-lympics! The events include: best bow hold in the class, who can hold the longest note in one down bow, relay race keeping a balloon in the air while maintaining a perfect bow hold, relay race holding the bow vertically with a perfect bow hold while balancing a small cup on the tip and passing it to the next person in line, who can do the fastest "spider crawl" up and down the bow with only their fingers.

## Hide the rosin

Choose one student to hide the rosin and one student to leave the room. While the student is out of the room, the remaining student hides the rosin somewhere in the room. When the student comes back from outside the classroom, the class must guide them to the rosin by playing different dynamics. If the student gets closer to the rosin, the class plays louder. If the student moves farther away, the class plays softer. You can also do this with High and Low notes.

## **Detective**

One student is the detective and leaves the room. While the detective is out of the room, the class (or teacher) decides on an error to make while playing a passage (it can be a wrong note, wrong posture, wrong style, wrong dynamic, etc.). When the detective returns, they must detect what error is being made. To finish the round, everyone, including the detective, plays it correctly.

## **Staff Twister**

After students learn their note names and locations on A & D strings for violin/viola/cello and D & G note names and locations for bass, we play Staff Twister outside! Draw a really long staff and ledger lines, if needed. Make cards that say right hand, left hand, right foot, left foot and cards with note names you are using, too. Pull 1 note name card and pull 1 body part card at a time to let students know where to place their hands and feet.

## **Throwback Thursday**

When students are further in their method book, start doing Throwback Thursdays where students get to choose old lines in the book that used to be hard to play as a class. This shows them how much they have improved and reviews previous skills that you continuously build upon.