



# Getting in Gear

## FUNDAMENTAL WARM-UPS FOR STRING ORCHESTRA

by Anne Marie Patterson, Katie O'Hara LaBrie & Deborah Baker Monday



A warm-up book for developing players designed as a drop in resource covering everything from finger patterns (AKA "Gears"), to bow distribution, how to master spiccato, syncopation and more!

Getting in Gear has been carefully designed by three long-time string educators with pedagogy and technique in mind. Students will feel like the teacher is right there with them in the book. Teachers will appreciate the varied repetition and opportunities for differentiation. Catchy acronyms, analogies, and visuals will assist with understanding. But most importantly, students will enjoy playing the engaging exercises in this book as they develop their skills.

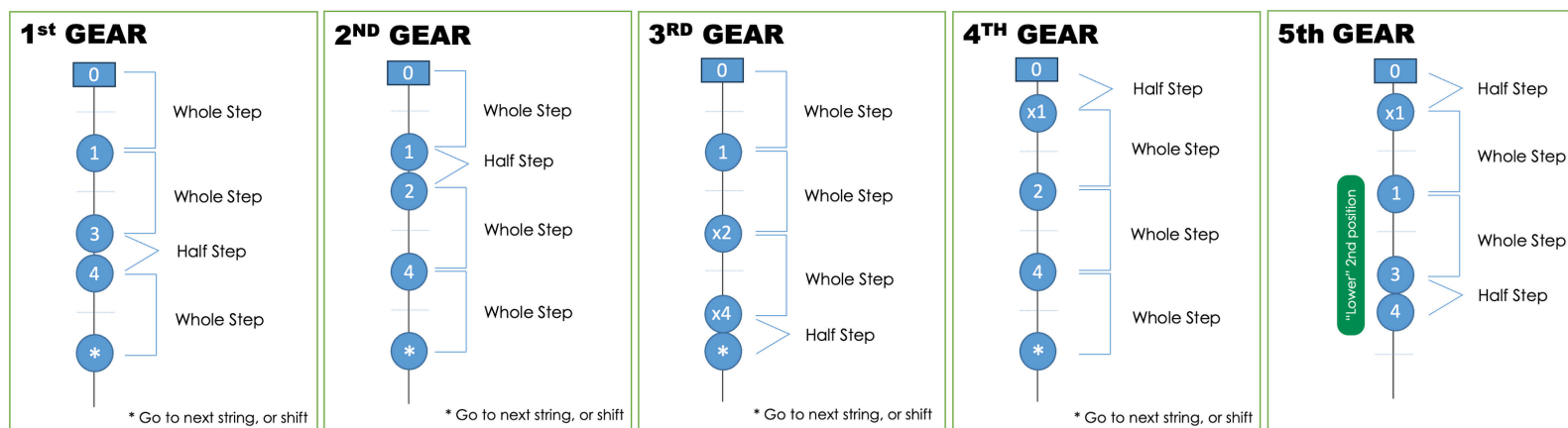
Student Books • \$12

Teacher Manual • \$40



### PART 1: FINGERBOARD GEOGRAPHY

Explore fingerboard geography through the 5 "Gear" finger pattern system. Learn how to mix Gears, apply key signatures, understand enharmonics, improve intonation, & more!



Each Gear is introduced with a Mountain Climber exercise on all four strings, followed by a series of engaging exercises and duets to help students solidify playing in that particular Gear.

#### 1. Cello Book: Mountain Climber - D String - Gear 1



Next we introduce mixing Gears; first just mixing Gears 1 & 2, and later mixing all Gears. Notice that each exercise in the book includes a **Gear Icon** telling you which Gear(s) are used.

## 21. Heavy Metal



Exercise 21, Heavy Metal, is a 4-measure exercise in 4/4 time, key of D major. It is written for two staves, A and B. The first measure is marked *ff*. The exercise involves a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with various accents and slurs. The second system starts at measure 5. The third system starts at measure 9. The exercise concludes with a final chord in the fourth measure of the third system.

Chapter 1 topics include: intonation, tunnels, double stops, anchors, half steps & whole steps, key signatures, chromatic exercises (taught with a hopscotch board!), when to use 4<sup>th</sup> finger / shifting for lower strings, E & C string review, augmented seconds, & more!

## 12. Pitch Benders



In this exercise slide your finger too high and too low before landing perfectly on the target. Try practicing this with an electric drone on G, a tuner, or a friend playing the second part.

Exercise 12, Pitch Benders, is a 4-measure exercise in 4/4 time, key of D major. It is written for two staves, A and B. The exercise involves a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with various accents and slurs. The second system starts at measure 5. The exercise concludes with a final chord in the fourth measure of the second system.

## PART 2: BOWING - TONE & ARTICULATION

This chapter is divided into two sections, each beginning with a series of 4 Etudes that progress through the Gears. Variations for each etude provide varied repetition to support development of technique.

### The LAWS of Tone

**What is Tone?**  
Tone refers to the quality of sound produced when you play. Is it clear and resonant? Is it scratchy or weak?

**What are Dynamics?**  
Dynamics are the levels of volume in music. You can play a wide range of dynamics, from very soft to very loud. Many of the features of tone also affect dynamics, however these are two separate features in music.

**Lane**  
This is where your bow is placed on the string in relation to the bridge and fingerboard. Think of it like lanes on a road. Your bow will often be in the middle lane. The lanes help provide a spectrum of tone qualities, like the colors of a rainbow. Closer to the bridge will be stronger, whereas closer to the fingerboard will have a weaker tone. Work on keeping a straight bow, staying in one lane, parallel to the bridge, by utilizing your shoulder, elbow and wrist joints.

**Amount**  
The amount of bow you use depends on the speed of the music, the rhythm, and the style of music. In order to execute a full bow you need to use your whole arm. For shorter bows in the middle of the bow, open and close the elbow. For fast, short bows, use wrist and finger motion. Make sure to not get "stuck" at one end of the bow or the other.

**Weight**  
Generally, more movement, if you sound becomes or be better when.

**Speed**  
In order to produce bow speed, most speed is very fast resulting in dynamics.

**Tilt**  
Once you've mastered this, tilt the stick of the bow when.

### Exploring Bow Lanes

Think of the space between your bridge and fingerboard like lanes on a highway. You can vary your tone and dynamics by changing lanes. Generally, bowing closer to the bridge creates louder dynamics and stronger tone. Bowing closer to the fingerboard creates other dynamics and lighter tone.

**66. Tone Etude Gear 1**  
You learn the basics of this etude, then practice controlling your bow lane in the variations below.

**Lane Variations**  
A. Play the etude in the pianissimo lane.  
B. Play the etude in the piano lane.  
C. Play the etude in the mezzo-piano lane.  
D. Play the etude in the mezzo-forte lane.  
E. Play the etude in the forte lane.  
F. Play the etude in the fortissimo lane.

**Explore the Spectrum of Tone using these Lane Variations**  
A. Play the etude in the pianissimo lane.  
B. Play the etude in the piano lane.  
C. Play the etude in the mezzo-piano lane.  
D. Play the etude in the mezzo-forte lane.  
E. Play the etude in the forte lane.  
F. Play the etude in the fortissimo lane.

**Keeping the Bow Straight**  
It's important to keep your bow straight between the bridge and fingerboard at all times. If your bow is crooked on the string, it will cut across other lanes as you play, resulting in scratchy tone. Watch in a mirror while practicing to keep your bow straight.

- In the lower half, keep your thumb and index straight.
- In the middle of the bow, your elbow makes a 90-degree angle. Lead with the tip of the bow.
- In the upper half, the elbow follows the hand as it moves forward, keeping the bow perpendicular to the string. (See previous etude page)

Page 16 Part 2: Bowing, Tone & Articulation

**Tone** is introduced using the acronym LAWS (Lane, Amount, Weight, Speed). Vivid imagery, analogies, and clear instructional pictures help students identify how to use their bow to create variety in tone.

The **Articulation** section offers strategies for mastery of bowing techniques such as detaché, martelé, tenuto and more. Designed as a drop in resource, simply jump to the articulation of your choice to find tiered warm-ups on a variety of skills such as slurs, bow lifts & spiccato.

### Articulation

**What is Articulation?**  
Articulation refers to the style with which you play a note, just like when you speak, the beginning of some sounds are gentle (like "Ha") and others are crisp (like "Ta").

For light, gentle articulation, use very little weight at the beginning of the bow stroke.  
For strong, crisp articulation, tug with your index finger to catch and release the string.

Every sound has a beginning, middle and end. Experiment with different energy at the beginning of notes.

Beginning of sound Middle of sound End of sound

**75. Exploring the Articulation Spectrum**  
Experiment with how you produce the beginning of each bow stroke. For crisper consonants you will need to apply some space between each note, and use the index finger to tug the bow into the string.

Ha Wa La Fa Ba Pa Ka Ta

**Articulation Etude: Gears 1 & 2**  
New missing Gears 1 & 2 in the key of D minor, explore variations in articulation.

**77. Articulation Etude: Gears 1 & 2**

**Tenuto** - Notes held for full value, but are often performed slightly detached or with emphasis.

**Puncta or Lark** - Pulsed notes in the same bow direction. The bow moves continuously, like a car going over a speed bump. It does not come to a full stop.

**Martelé** - Crisp, biting tones. Can be indicated with an accent, tenuto, or just determined by style. Use a Martelé bow stroke. (See p. 20)

**Spiccato** - Repeatedly bouncing bow, usually performed at the balance point and at fast speeds. (See p. 44)

**Articulation Variations**  
A. Ha B. Wa C. La D. Fa E. Ba F. Pa G. Ka H. Ta

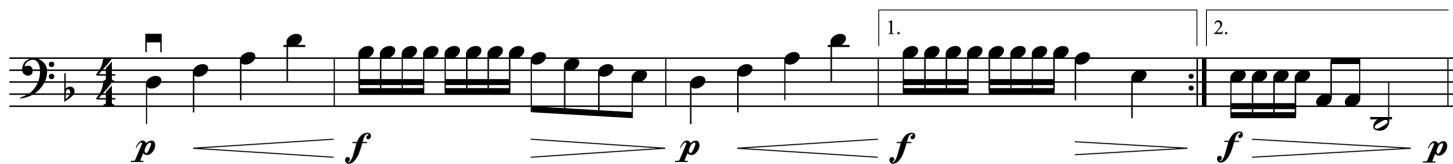
**Martelé** - Bowing used to create a crisp, hard attack to the note. Just like pulling the string with your finger when you do pizzicato, pull with weight on the bow and the string wants to release. Immediately release the weight and let the bow glide for the length of the note. Always stop between notes to apply weight in the opposite direction.

Full stopped (detached) bowing during the "Ta" notes before releasing the bow to play tenors.

Page 17 Part 2: Bowing, Tone & Articulation

After the Etudes, take a deeper dive into tone & articulation concepts such as dynamics, bow placement, bow tilt, slurs, spiccato, martelé, pizzicato, bow lifts, special effects, and more.

### 69. Scary Dynamics!



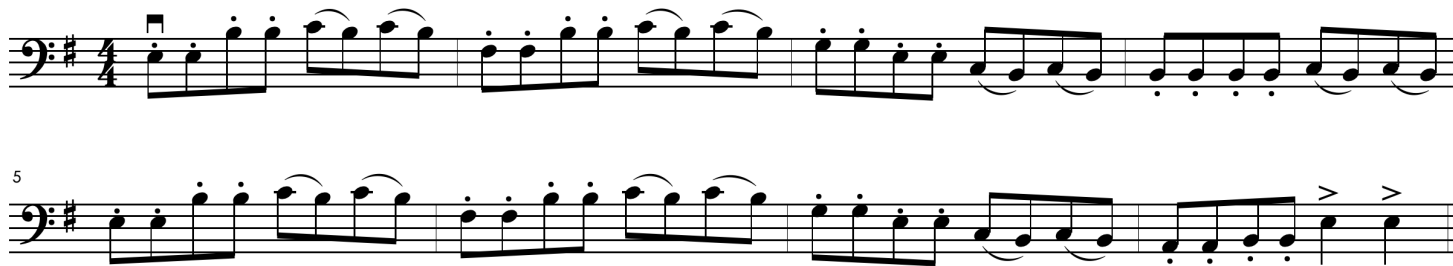
### 82. Speed Trap



Slurs don't affect rhythm. Be mindful not to play slurred notes faster. It may help to clap and count before playing.



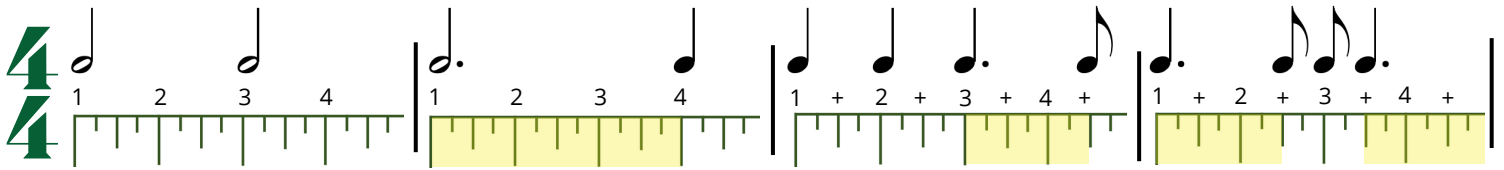
### 96. Off and On



## PART 3: RHYTHM RULES!

In Getting in Gear, rhythm is taught through the concept of a “Rhythm Ruler” that clearly shows the duration of each note. Each exercise in this chapter is a duet, where one voice is working on a new skill and the other is a steady subdivision or motor rhythm.

Skills include basic rhythms, rests, 16<sup>th</sup> note combinations, dotted notes, off beats, syncopation, triplets, and 6/8 time.



### 108. Intro to Dotted Rhythms

Wait until after the 2nd beat of a dotted quarter note to play the next 8th note.



A

B

5

1.

2.

Sample from Cello Book 1: *Getting in Gear: Fundamental Warm-ups for String Orchestra*. ©2025 Randall Standridge Music, LLC. For promotional events only.

## EXTRAS!

**Fingerboard Map**

This map shows all of the notes that you can play in first position. The notes highlighted in yellow are 1st Gear. It's important to understand fingering geography in order to navigate your instrument.

Getting in Gear is designed to be **fun, intuitive and easy** to use for students as well as teachers. **Colored bands** on each cover make it easy to find the instrument part you're looking for and colored sections within the book help identify skill focus.

In addition to a fingerboard map and Gear charts in the student books, the teacher manual includes a wealth of **reproducible resources** and teaching tips.

Play-along tracks are available on our website. The exercises in this book can also be found on makemusic cloud.

Learn more at [getting-in-gear.com](http://getting-in-gear.com)



**Key Signatures in Gear**

Having Key Signatures: Keys can have sharps, or flats, or no natural notes. The key of C Major has no sharps or flats. Having Major Sharp Keys: Go up a half step from the last sharp (or the right in the key signature). For example, if F and C are sharp, the key is D Major. Because D is a half step higher than C.

**Gear Charts**

| Instrument | 1st Gear | 2nd Gear | 3rd Gear | 4th Gear | 5th Gear |
|------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Flute      | C4       | D4       | E4       | F4       | G4       |
| Clarinet   | B3       | C4       | D4       | E4       | F4       |
| Violin     | G4       | A4       | B4       | C5       | D5       |
| Viola      | C4       | D4       | E4       | F4       | G4       |
| Cello      | C3       | D3       | E3       | F3       | G3       |
| Bass       | C2       | D2       | E2       | F2       | G2       |

**Major and Minor Keys**

For each major key there is a corresponding minor key with the same number of sharps or flats. This is known as the **relative minor**. Major keys often sound "happy," and minor keys often sound "sad."

**12th Key Signature Practice**

Practice the following exercises, paying close attention to the key and think through which clef you will need to use before playing. Can you identify which key each example is in without looking at the key signature?

“

It's like the teacher is right there in the book!

- GiG Book 1 Student

”



RandallStandridge.com

“

This is the ensemble training book we've all been waiting for!

- GiG Book 1 Teacher

”