

Chords

About timing finger placement in chords

One of the single most important parts of successful playing is to place the fingers on the string quickly enough time before the bow moves. In any rapid series of chords

key to correct timing is to place the next chord as the final action of playing the previous chord in other words:

Play the first chord – instantly place the fingers ready for the next chord. (Play–place, play–place) instead of

Place the fingers – play; place the next fingers – play, and so on. (Place–play, place–play.)

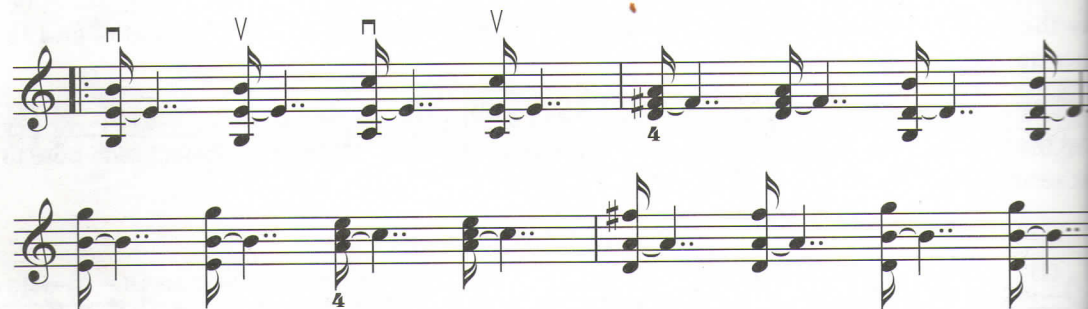
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Voicing



Using the chord sequence above, sound all three strings at the same time to play a short but sixteenth-note (semiquaver) chord. Quickly release the bow, and sustain the tied note (or notes) with a break in the sound. In other words, the tied notes should sound like half-notes (minims):

Example



Play the chord sequence in the following six ways:



Sustain all three strings equally

• Throughout play as close to the bridge as possible – just as far away as necessary to catch all strings at once.

- To begin each chord, place the bow on the middle string of the chord. Press the middle string down until the bow hair catches the outer strings of the chord.

Feel how, at the heel, the hair gives and catches the three strings; while at the point the wood of the bow gives in the middle of the bow, the hair remaining rigid.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *Bow tensions*, page 35

### both pivoting

Go see *Pivoting*, page 27.

#### Exercise 1

Play the chord sequence in the following five ways:

#### Exercise 2

Play the chord sequence in the following eight ways:



## Gradually increasing length

Throughout the exercise, hold the wood of the bow down towards the hair without release. Play as close to the bridge as possible, but as far away as necessary to catch all three strings at once.

- 1 Place the bow on the string near the heel (A in the illustration below). Press the middle of the three strings down until the bow hair catches the outer strings of the chord. Choose a soundpoint where this is possible.

Play the three strings exactly like a triple-stopped *collé*.<sup>1</sup> Think of the stroke as being like a pizzicato. Listen to the chord ring after the stroke.<sup>2</sup>

Repeat at the point-of-balance (B), middle (C), between the middle and the point (D), and near the point (E).

- 2 Starting near the heel again (press the middle string down until the bow has caught all three strings) play the chord slightly longer, e.g., three centimetres long. Repeat as before in the other places on the bow.

- 3 Repeat with quarter bows (A-B, B-C, etc.), and then half bows (A-C, B-D, etc.). Finally play whole bows, sustaining all three strings evenly from the beginning to the end of the chord.

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Repeat using up-bows, starting near the point:

Also use a similar chord on the G-D-A strings.

<sup>1</sup> See *Collé*, page 62

<sup>2</sup> See *Resonance*, page 37