

First Exercise on the E String

♩ = 100 - 116

Johann Kaspar Mertz
(1806 - 1856)

The first system of the exercise consists of two measures. The first measure contains a quarter note on the E string (open), followed by a quarter note on the second fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'), a quarter note on the third fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'), and a quarter note on the second fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'). The second measure contains a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note on the first fret (fingered with the index finger, 'i'), a quarter note on the second fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'), a quarter note on the third fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'), and a quarter note on the second fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'). The piece begins with a piano ('p') dynamic marking.

The second system of the exercise consists of two measures. The first measure contains a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note on the second fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'), a quarter note on the third fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'), a quarter note on the second fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'), and a quarter note on the first fret (fingered with the index finger, 'i'). The second measure contains a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note on the first fret (fingered with the index finger, 'i'), a quarter note on the second fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'), a quarter note on the third fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'), and a quarter note on the second fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm').

The third system of the exercise consists of two measures. The first measure contains a quarter note on the second fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'), a quarter note on the third fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'), a quarter note on the second fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'), and a quarter note on the first fret (fingered with the index finger, 'i'). The second measure contains a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note on the first fret (fingered with the index finger, 'i'), a quarter note on the second fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'), a quarter note on the third fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'), and a quarter note on the second fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm').

The fourth system of the exercise consists of two measures. The first measure contains a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note on the first fret (fingered with the index finger, 'i'), a quarter note on the second fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'), a quarter note on the third fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'), and a quarter note on the second fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'). The second measure contains a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note on the first fret (fingered with the index finger, 'i'), a quarter note on the second fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'), a quarter note on the third fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'), and a quarter note on the second fret (fingered with the middle finger, 'm'). The piece concludes with a fermata over the final note.

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Measures 1-3 of the exercise. The music is in 4/4 time. The first staff shows a melodic line with slurs and accents. The second staff shows the guitar tablature with fret numbers (0, 2, 3, 2, 0, 1, 2, 1, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0) and a 'p' (piano) dynamic marking.

Measures 4-6 of the exercise. The music continues with a melodic line and guitar tablature. The second staff shows fret numbers (0, 1, 2, 1, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 3, 0, 0, 0, 3, 0) and a 'p' dynamic marking.

Measures 7-9 of the exercise. The music continues with a melodic line and guitar tablature. The second staff shows fret numbers (0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 3, 0, 0, 3, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0) and a 'p' dynamic marking.

Measures 10-12 of the exercise. The music concludes with a melodic line and guitar tablature. The second staff shows fret numbers (1, 0, 1, 1, 0, 1, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 1, 0, 0) and a 'p' dynamic marking.

Musical Tip Sheet

The Big 5:

1. Reduce work with posture and a positive attitude
2. Troubleshoot - Everything should be easy
3. Breathe
4. Trust yourself to play accurately and musically inspired (instead of judging)
5. Always play as a gift to yourself and others

The 7 Steps to Learn Any Piece:

1. Make small sections
2. Know all the notes and musical markings
3. Clap and count the rhythm aloud
4. Play the right hand alone, counting aloud
5. Play the left hand alone, counting aloud
6. Play hands together, pausing when needed (no mistakes!)
7. Play hands together slowly in rhythm, counting aloud

Musical Starting Points:

1. Decide which notes are melody (probably stems up), and play the others quieter
2. Connect all melody notes smoothly (no gaps)
3. When a musical line or melody goes up in pitch, get quieter
4. When a musical line or melody goes down in pitch, get louder
5. Don't let the high notes stand out (any note higher than the ones before and after)

Practice Tips:

1. Before slowing down or speeding up (rubato) master it at a steady pace.
2. For tricky spots, state out loud exactly what the problem is, in every detail.
3. Memorize every piece (even if you don't, you'll learn it faster if you try)
4. Have a purpose behind each repetition (so you don't ingrain bad habits).
5. Video yourself for performance practice, and to hear what is working.

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