



Olli-Pekka Karppinen

A Viola Player's Scale Book

Scales and Studies for the Advanced Violist

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Foreword

Scales are a basic element of music, and players have been practising them throughout the history of stringed instruments. The importance of daily scale practice has been emphasised by numerous virtuosi and teachers from Jascha Heifetz onwards. Practising scales is one of the cornerstones of learning to play a stringed instrument, providing a neutral framework for concentrating on such things as tone, intonation and position shifts.

Most of the scale books used by violists are transcriptions of ones designed for violinists, and with a view to meeting the requirements of Classical-Romantic violin literature. My book addresses scales from the violist's perspective. My fingerings allow both for large instruments and for players with small hands. They accordingly avoid over-stretching by, for example, reducing the frame in the low positions and using the third finger for stretches in the highest positions. The double-stop scales do not enter the highest registers, and they omit both fingered octaves and tenths *. They do, however, include the two-octave scales on one string and four-octave scales not found in most viola scale books because many solo and orchestral works require a smooth command of high positions.

For the most part, the book proceeds progressively. I begin with one-octave scales and arpeggios in order to develop a broad command of shift technique

and to strengthen the player's feel for position in both even- and odd-numbered positions. My fingerings for these scales use fingers in pairs because this involves more position shifts. They also pave the way for the technique required in particular for scales in thirds. The circle of fifths develops the player's command of adjacent strings and feel for the higher positions. The one-octave scales and circle of fifths also prepare the player for handling three-octave scales and arpeggios. The two-octave scales and arpeggios on one string act as a bridge to four-octave scales and arpeggios.

I have devoted separate sections to chromatic and whole-tone scales because, being symmetric forms, they are not directly tied to major–minor tonalities. I have likewise given fourths and fifths separate sections in the double-stop scales, because practising them is vital to the intonation on adjacent strings. Practising fifths also strengthens the left-hand frame and guides the hand towards a natural playing position **. Combining octaves with fifths, so that the first finger rests on the fifth, also helps to strengthen the hand frame.

* Cf. *William Primrose in Playing the Viola* (Oxford University Press)

** Cf. *Rodney Friend in The Violin in 5ths* (Beares Publishing)

The Author

Photo: Tarja Reijonen



Olli-Pekka Karppinen is himself a violist and has been teaching the viola at the Tampere Conservatoire in Finland since 2001. Some of his pupils have gone on to study at such institutions as the Guildhall School of Music & Drama (London), the Sibelius Academy (Helsinki) and the Royal Danish Academy of Music (Copenhagen) and to work in many Finnish orchestras and music schools.

Olli-Pekka Karppinen gained a Master's degree from the Sibelius Academy in 1999 and also studied at the Tel-Aviv University, his teachers including Sep-po Tukiainen, Jouko Mansnerus, Matti Hirvikangas and Yuri Gandelsman. He studied chamber music with Risto Fredriksson, and in masterclasses with the Amadeus Quartet, Ana Chumachenco, Tim Frederiksen and Ralf Gothóni.

From 1991 to 2009, Olli-Pekka Karppinen was a member of the Arkadia Quartet that gave numerous concerts and released highly-acclaimed discs of string quartets by Joseph Haydn, Joonas Kokkonen and Leif Segerstam. In 2010, the Quartet was awarded the Pacius Prize of the University of Helsinki.

In chamber repertoire, Olli-Pekka Karppinen has further performed with Henri Sigfridsson, Timo Koskinen, Hagai Shaham, Yuri Gandelsman, Marcel Bergman and Laszlo Mezö. He has been Artistic Director of the Lappeenranta Chamber Music Festival and Lake Tuusula Chamber Music and of the Nuori Suomi soi chamber music series at the Tampere Art Museum.

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Four staves of musical notation in treble clef, G major key signature. The first staff shows a three-octave scale with fingerings 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2. The second staff shows a three-octave arpeggio with fingerings 1, 2, 1, 3, 4, 2, 1. The third staff shows a three-octave double stop scale with fingerings 2, 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2, 1. The fourth staff shows a three-octave double stop scale with fingerings 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2, 1.

*Three-octave scales, arpeggios and double stop scales
(thirds, sixths and octaves)*

C major/C minor

Six staves of musical notation in bass and treble clefs, C major and C minor key signatures. The first staff shows a three-octave scale in C major with fingerings 1, 1, 4-4, 4. The second staff shows a three-octave scale in C minor with fingerings 1, 1, 4, 3, 3. The third staff shows a three-octave scale in C major with fingerings 1, 1, 4, 3, 0, 1, 1, 4, 3, 0. The fourth staff shows a three-octave scale in C major with fingerings 1, 1, 4, 2, 0, 1, 1, 3, 4, 1, 3, 2, 0. The fifth staff shows a three-octave scale in C major with fingerings 1, 1, 4, 2, 4, 1, 2, 4, 1, 3, 2, 4, 1, 3. The sixth staff shows a three-octave scale in C major with fingerings 2, 0, 3, 3, 4, 2, 3, 0, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3, 4, 2, 2, 4, 1, 3.

A complex musical score for guitar in A major, consisting of five systems of two staves each. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, various chord voicings (A, D, G), and intricate fingerings (1-4) for both hands. The piece concludes with a final chord and a double bar line.

Chromatic scales

sul A

A series of six systems of chromatic scales for guitar, each system containing two staves. The scales are written in treble clef and include fingerings (0-4) for both ascending and descending directions. The scales are in A major and A minor.