

Tremolo Exercise – Sharon Gilchrist

Be sure to LIGHTLY rest the heel of the right hand on the bridge.

Bring the tip of the pick out to the farthest edge of the surfaces of the strings - this will create a very soft, quiet "whisper" of a tone.

There is no resistance from the string here. Low resistance coupled with the low volume, allows the right hand to be very relaxed so that we can focus on teaching the wrist to be relaxed and very tiny in motion and articulate.

The pick will be on the outmost surfaces of the strings.

The pick will not swing off/past the strings and you will use only the wrist for this exercise.

Also make sure the up stroke is as loud as the down stroke. The exercise should have a very even 1/16th note feel to it.

Keeping all these things in mind do the following steps:

Step 1 -

play down-up-down up picking pattern in 16th notes (4 strokes to every click of the metronome)

hang out on each string doing this picking pattern until you find a sweet spot where the two G strings (or whatever strings) feel like one string, then move onto the next string. Make sure you are not swinging past the strings and that you are on the surfaces of the strings.

Do this on the G-string, D-String, A-String and the E-String.

Step 2 -

Come back across the 4 strings (one at a time) reversing your pick stroke pattern to up-down-up-down in 16th notes (4 strokes per click of the metronome).

Do this on the E-string, A-String, D-String, and the G -tring.

To help you click into being able to play this reversed picking pattern, try sync-ing up your up strokes with each click of the metronome (each click of the metronome = a quarter note). Once you are locked in with the metronome playing up strokes and playing only on the clicks, then go into playing 1/8 notes (1& 2& 3& 4&). Then go into the 16th note pattern (counted as "1-e-&a, 2-e-&a, 3-e-&a, 4-e-&a").

Step 3 -

Change strings on every beat/click of the metronome continuing to play in 16th notes in a down-up-down-up picking pattern.

This means you will play four strokes per click of the metronome.

Do this moving from the G-string (4 strokes) to the D-string (4 strokes) to the A-string (4 strokes) to the E-string (4 strokes) and then from E to A to D to G doing the same 4 strokes on each string.

Repeat until you land on each string smoothly and none of the notes are accented, the up strokes are as loud as the down strokes, you are not swinging past strings and you stay out on the outermost surface of the strings - should still sound like a whisper.

Step 4 -

Repeat Step 3 playing an up-down-up-down picking pattern.

Do all 4 steps at each of these tempos: 90, 95, 100bpm.

If 90 feels a little quick, try 80 or 80. Anything slower will be hard to stay small in your pick stroke as you will need to do in this exercise.

Do all three tempos in approx. 20 mins. a day. - If you don't have this much time, simply do all 4 steps at your beginning tempo perhaps 10 mins. a day. Once that is feeling easy, then do the same thing 5 bpm faster until it feels easier and then graduate tempos again. Can't say enough great things about this exercise!!