

Viola Skills

*A Coordinated Approach
To Studying Music Performance and Music Theory*

INTRODUCTION

Viola Skills was written for two types of learners:

Violists at the intermediate level, who wish to improve music performance skills and music theory skills.

Violinists at the intermediate level, who wish to begin learning the viola and to improve music performance and music theory skills.

Viola Skills is not intended for violists or violinists at the beginning level. They would be better served by methods by Suzuki, Rhoda or others. It is not specifically intended for violists or violinists at the advanced level, but some of the units may be of interest to them.

Performance skills include the development of bowing and fingering techniques. They do not include detailed instructions on physical motions or suggestions for artistic interpretations. This comes from the belief that such matters are better studied in private lessons or master classes.

Music theory skills include development of music notation understanding, knowledge of music theory terms and techniques, and other skills, especially music dictation. Music theory skills do not include specialized topics such as four-part harmonic writing in Bach style or the analysis of twelve-tone composition. This comes from the conviction that such topics are better studied in music theory classes, music history classes, or individual research.

Usually music performance and music theory are taught separately – music performance in private lessons and master classes, music theory in music theory classes and musicology classes. In **Viola Skills** they are presented in a coordinated manner that makes it possible for the two types of skills to reinforce each other.

Viola Skills is presented in 12 Units. There are 6 Text Units that introduce specific music theory topics and also present suggestions for learning techniques. The Text Units are written primarily for teachers, but could also be used by more mature students.

There are 6 Exercise Units that present exercises based on the music theory topics discussed in the Text Units. Teachers and students may decide whether to begin with Text Units or Exercise Units, or to shift back and forth between the two as desired.

Viola Skills was inspired by and dedicated to the four composers shown on the cover - Johann Sebastian Bach, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Antonin Dvořák, and Paul Hindemith. Each of these was not only a great composer, but also a skillful viola performer and a significant contributor to the development of music theory.

Music examples were written with the score-writing program MUSESCORE 2.0.2. This program may be downloaded free of charge. It enables the user to listen to the music examples in **Viola Skills** and to all other music examples written in MUSESCORE 2.0.2.

HOW TO USE THE UNITS

Viola Skills Units may be used in at least two ways:

1. The materials may be read directly from the computer. This, of course, requires that the user have the proper computer equipment and the necessary computer skills. An advantage of doing this is that students can listen to the music examples.
2. The materials may be printed out and read from the printed manuscript.

The amount of time spent on Text Units and Exercise Units may vary according to the abilities and needs of the student and the plans of the teacher.

AUTHOR

Allen Winold graduated with a Bachelors Degree from the Cincinnati College of Music. His teachers included Jean ten Have, principal violist of the Cincinnati Symphony, Sigmund Effron, concertmaster of the Cincinnati Symphony and André Gertler. After graduation he became a member of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and he also taught violin, viola and music theory part-time at Wilmington (Ohio) College. He was guest professor at the Academy of Music in Vienna, Austria for one year, during which time he taught 2 classes – one on advanced music theory topics and one on the role of music analysis. During this time he also played string quartets with his wife, the cellist Helga Winold, and with two members of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra,

In 1949 he enrolled at Indiana University Jacobs School of Music and completed the PhD in Music theory. He remained at Indiana University for 50 years during which he taught music theory and music history courses, and participated as a violist in various Indiana University orchestra and chamber ensembles. A highlight of this period of time was the opportunity to be coached by William Primrose in chamber music ensembles. He became Professor of Music and Assistant Dean.

He has conducted youth orchestras in the United States and Canada, has published 10 books on music topics, and has written numerous articles on music topics for various music journals.

The author would be delighted to hear from teachers and students regarding their experiences with ***Viola Skills*** and their suggestions for improvement. This may be done with the Comments section in this Cultural Concourse document.