

# Synchronization Drills

## For the Left and Right Hand

by Kevin O'Shaughnessy

The purpose of these drills is to improve the synchronization between the left and right hands. They can also be used to address issues in finger dexterity and to try out different picking patterns.

For each of the exercises, start at a slow tempo; 60 BPM is recommended but you can use whatever you're comfortable with. The goal is to pick a tempo that is slow enough to play through the entire exercise without mistakes.

To get the most out of these exercises, follow these steps:

- 1. Sit with good posture**, as described on my Guide to Sitting With the Guitar.
- 2. Decide on a picking pattern**. You may want to choose alternate picking or all downstrokes. Whatever it is, BE CONSISTENT throughout the exercise.
- 3. Frets equal fingerings**. In these exercises, each fret on the TAB equals a finger on the fret hand, with fret 1 equalling your pointer finger, and fret 4 equalling your pinky. It's important that you follow this fingering precisely to get the best results.
- 4. Play with as little effort as possible**. For the fret hand, use only the amount of pressure needed to generate a good sound out of each note without buzzing. You don't need to press hard on the strings. For the pick hand, strike the string deliberately enough to generate a good sound, but relax the arm so you don't hit the strings too hard. These should be all be relaxed motions.
- 5. Continue up the neck and back down**. Once you've completed an exercise, shift your fret hand up one fret and repeat the same exercise. Continue this way to the twelfth fret then reverse the process. Do this for all the exercises.
- 6. Gradually increase the tempo**. When you've mastered each exercise, increase the tempo by ten points and repeat. Continue this way until you can perform all of the exercises at 120 BPM.

①  $\text{♩} = 60$  The traditional "spider" exercise, works out all fingers.

The image shows musical notation and TAB for a spider exercise. The musical notation is a single staff in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp. It consists of a series of eighth-note patterns: a sixteenth-note followed by a eighth-note, then a sixteenth-note followed by a eighth-note, and so on. The TAB below shows a guitar neck with six strings. The first string (T) has a 1, 2, 3, 4 pattern. The A string has a 1, 2, 3, 4 pattern. The B string has a 1, 2, 3, 4 pattern. The E string has a 1, 2, 3, 4 pattern. The G string has a 1, 2, 3, 4 pattern. The D string has a 1, 2, 3, 4 pattern. The TAB also includes a 1, 2, 3, 4 pattern for the fret hand, corresponding to the fingerings on the strings.

4 3 2 1    4 3 2 1    4 3 2 1    4 3 2 1    4 3 2 1

② Exercise for fingers 1 and 2.

1 2 1 2 3 4    1 2 1 2 3 4    1 2 1 2 3 4

1 2 1 2 3 4    1 2 1 2 3 4    1 2 1 2 3 4

4 3 2 1 2 1    4 3 2 1 2 1    4 3 2 1 2 1

4 3 2 1 2 1    4 3 2 1 2 1    4 3 2 1 2 1

### 3 Exercise for fingers 2 and 3.

A musical score for the first movement of Beethoven's Violin Concerto in D major. The score includes parts for Violin, Viola, Cello, and Double Bass. The key signature is one sharp (D major). The music begins with a treble clef staff, featuring a eighth-note followed by a sixteenth-note pattern. The score continues with a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with the bassoon and double bass providing harmonic support. The notation is in common time.

1 2 3 2 3 4	1 2 3 2 3 4	1 2 3 2 3 4

A musical score for a single instrument, likely a woodwind or brass instrument. The score is divided into two staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a common time signature. The second staff begins with a bass clef, a key signature of one flat, and a common time signature. The music consists of a series of eighth and sixteenth note patterns, with some rests and a dynamic marking of 'p' (piano) in the first staff.

1 2 3 2 3 2 3 4	1 2 3 2 3 2 3 4	1 2 3 2 3 2 3 4

4 3 2 3 2 1 | 4 3 2 3 2 3 2 1 | 4 3 2 3 2 3 2 1

A musical score for a single instrument, likely a woodwind or brass, featuring a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The score consists of four measures. The first measure contains six eighth notes. The second measure contains six eighth notes, with the first note being a flat. The third measure contains six eighth notes, with the first note being a flat. The fourth measure contains six eighth notes, with the first note being a flat. The notes are grouped by vertical bar lines.

## 4 Exercise for fingers 3 and 4.

A musical score for a single melodic line. It features a treble clef at the top left and a 4/4 time signature. The score is divided into four measures by vertical bar lines. The first measure contains six eighth notes: the first is sharp, the second is natural, the third is flat, and the fourth is natural. The fifth and sixth notes are also natural. The second measure contains five eighth notes, all natural. The third measure contains six eighth notes: the first is flat, the second is sharp, the third is natural, the fourth is flat, and the fifth is natural. The sixth note is sharp. The fourth measure contains six eighth notes, all natural.

1	2	3	4	3	4	3	4	1	2	3	4	3	4
1	2	3	4	3	4	3	4	1	2	3	4	3	4

A musical score for the first movement of Beethoven's Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 61. The score is for violin and piano. The violin part is on the top staff, and the piano part is on the bottom staff, indicated by a piano keyboard icon. The score shows various dynamics and articulations, including slurs, grace notes, and a fermata. The violin part starts with a melodic line, followed by a piano dynamic, and then a series of eighth-note chords. The piano part provides harmonic support throughout the movement.

1 2 3 4 3 4 3 4	1 2 3 4 3 4 3 4	1 2 3 4 3 4

A musical score for the first movement of Beethoven's Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 61. The score is for violin and orchestra. The page shows measures 11 and 12. The key signature is one flat (D major). The music consists of two staves: the top staff for the violin and the bottom staff for the orchestra (string section). The violin part features a melodic line with eighth-note patterns, while the orchestra provides harmonic support with sustained notes and rhythmic patterns.

A musical score for a single instrument, likely a woodwind or brass, featuring two staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The second staff begins with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The music consists of various note heads and stems, including eighth and sixteenth notes, with some notes having stems pointing up and others down. The score is set against a background of horizontal grid lines representing musical staffs.