

Viennese Bass Method

Lesson 1. - Scales

www.viennesetuning.com

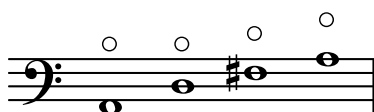
This method is designed to work in conjunction with the materials published on the web site Viennese Tuning at www.viennesetuning.com. With hope that your bass is already well set and that you have already read all the pages in the Playing Technique section of the site, we will commence here with the practical instruction on the Viennese bass.

We will start with common D major scale, which by the very convenience of the Viennese tuning open strings is present in most of the Viennese repertoire. Similarly to the modern tuning, the Viennese tuning can also offer different fingering options, and in the following examples we will explore some usual routes that will lead us to higher positions later on.

It is advisable to start performing these scales in slow tempo and medium dynamic, as the goal here is not a quick tempo or tone development but a familiarization with pitch places. You are welcome to repeat each of the scales several times before starting a different fingering variant. You will learn the pitches quicker if you look at the music and avoid playing from the memory.

Bass Clef

Viennese tuning: Open strings - 4 string setup



IV III II I

Exercise 1. D major scale - Bass Clef

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Exercise 2. Extended D major scale - Bass Clef

In this exercise we will extend the standard D major scale to the lower register and cover the pitches below D string down to A string. As in the previous exercise, several different routes and fingering options are presented.

The exercise consists of three staves of musical notation in bass clef, each with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are: B2, C3, D3, E3, F#3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4. The first staff shows a descending scale with fingerings: III, II, I, II, III, IV, III, II. The second staff shows an ascending scale with fingerings: II, III, IV, III, II, III, IV. The third staff shows a descending scale with fingerings: IV, III, IV, II, III, II, III.

Tenor Clef

Viennese tuning: Open strings - 4 string setup

The notation shows the open strings of a 4-string setup in Viennese tuning on a tenor clef. The notes are: C4, D4, E4, F#4. The fingerings below the notes are: IV, III, II, I.

The following exercises are the exact copy of the Bass Clef material. The left hand should already be familiar with the pitches, thus the reading of the Tenor Clef should be easier. No need to rush here as well. A slow but steady tempo will be the most helpful at this stage.

Exercise 3. D major scale - Tenor Clef

The exercise consists of two staves of musical notation in tenor clef, each with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are: C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C6. The first staff shows a descending scale with fingerings: III, II, I, II, III, III, II, I. The second staff shows an ascending scale with fingerings: II, III, III, II, I.

4 2 4 1 1 o 2 o o 2 2 4 1 4 2 4 4 2 4 1 4 2 2 o

I II III III II I II III

Exercise 4. Extended D major scale - Tenor Clef

o 2 o 1 o 2 2 4 4 2 4 1 1 o 2 o 4 o 1 4 1 4 1 4

III II I II III IV III II

4 1 4 1 4 1 o 4 1 4 o 1 2 4 1 4 4 1 4 2 1 o 4 1

II III IV III II III IV

o 1 4 o 1 4 1 4 4 1 4 1 o 4 1 o o o 2 2 o o o

IV III IV II III II III

Treble Clef

Viennese tuning: Open strings - 4 string setup

IV III II I

Treble clef uses an octave higher range as already explained in the "Playing Technique Notation - Treble Clef" section of the web site. The following exercises are the exact copy of the Bass and Tenor clef material, with a difference of being written in Treble Clef. Slow but steady is the rule.

Exercise 5. D major scale - Treble Clef

III — II — I — II — III — III — II — I —

I — II — III — III — II — I — II — III —

Exercise 6. Extended D major scale - Treble Clef

III — II — I — II — III — IV III — II —

II — III — IV — III — II — III — IV —

IV — III — IV — II III II — III —

Exercise 7. Mozart. Symphony 35, 4th Movement, opening section

While it may be debated whether the one of most difficult orchestra excerpts should be used at the very beginning of any bass method, here indeed it may find its proper place. The excerpt in its present length covers the exact ambitus reached in the previous exercises. Moreover it is in the same D major key and it was actually written for the Viennese bass. The other benefit of presenting this excerpt is that most bass players will be very familiar with it, thus making a fingering transition easier. The only advice that should be heeded here is the tempo. Please refrain yourself from performing this exercise fast although you may be tempted, as the purpose of this excerpt is only to introduce you to the more advanced string crossings at this time. Also notice the B (for bar) and G (for grip) positions.

"Slow"

4 1 1 1 4 1 1 2 2 4

I II I II III IV

4 2 4 4 2 1 1 4 2 1 4 2 4 2 4 1 1

IV III II I II I II

2 1 1 4 2 1 4 2 4 2 4 1 1 1 1 1 2 1

III II I II I II III II III II

1 4 2 4 2 4 1 1 1 1 1 2 1 1

I II III II III II III II

4 2 4 2 4 1 1 1 1 2 4 1 4 4 2 4 2 4 1 1 1 1 2 4 1 4

I II II III I II III I

4 4 2 4 4 2 1 2 1 2 1 4 1 4 2 4 1 1 1 1

I II III IV III IV II III

2 1 2 1 2 1 4 1 4 2 4 1 1 1 1 2 2 2 1 1 1

II III IV III IV II III II