

Viennese Bass Method

Lesson 4. String Crossings

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In this lesson we will cover various string crossing patterns available in the Viennese system. As most bassists are already aware, the Viennese tuning offers a unique triadic convenience that enables easy execution of arpeggios and other chords - sometime with few shifts and sometime not requiring any. This arpeggio technique has almost become a trademark feature of the Viennese solo bass music, and in order for it to be executed well, one should become well familiar with the string crossing options on the Viennese tuning.

Moreover, we will also explore here the common extended position patterns that usually appear in combination with the string crossings. This unique combination can be observed in many instances of period solo and orchestra music, some of which will also be featured here.

The orchestra excerpts in this lesson may already be familiar to the bassists, but it is advisable that all the excerpts be approached as technical exercises in slow tempo first. The idea is to accustom hands to the new fingerings and bowing patterns, before attempting to raise the tempo to the concert standard.

Similar to the scale shifting patterns explained in Lesson 2, the melodic figurations that involve string crossings may also be approached with the Vertical, Conventional and Position fingering patterns. The first three exercises present a typical period figuration with different fingering and string crossing patterns.

Exercise 23. String Crossings - Vertical Pattern, Extended Positions, Bass Clef

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

I

I II

I

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

Exercise 24. String Crossings - Conventional Pattern, Extended Positions, Bass Clef

The music of this exercise is very similar to the previous one; however here we will apply the "block" shifting that follows the music sequence. The extended positions are to be performed on the second string in conjunction with the open first string. While this procedure may appear unusual for the modern bass technique, in the Viennese system it can be very useful.

II I II I II I II I II I II I II I II I

II I II I II I II I II I II I II I II I

II I II I II I II I II I II I II I II I

Exercise 25. String Crossings - Position Pattern, Extended Positions, Bass Clef

This exercise presents the already familiar - and for the Viennese system most typical - pattern where as many notes as possible are to be performed within the same position.

III II III II I II I II I II I II I II I II I

III II III II I II III II I II III II I II

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

