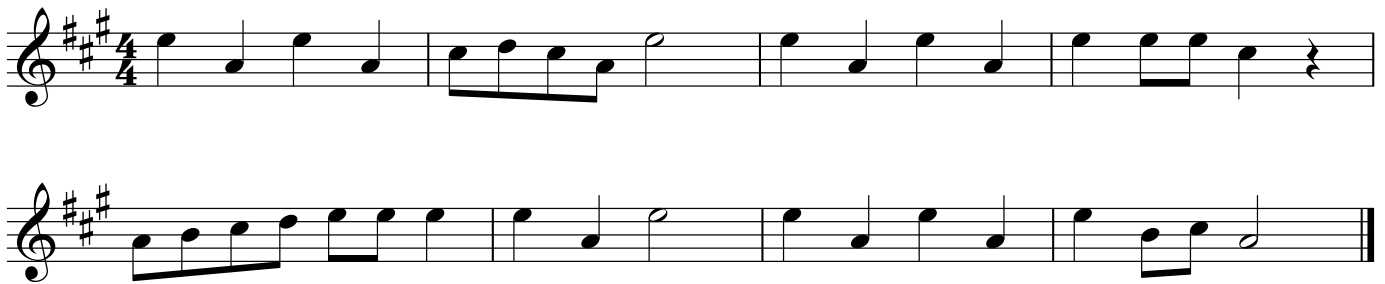


Exercises For Using The Fourth Finger

Adapted from an exercise in Eta Cohen Violin Method Book 2



- Bar 1, 2 and 7 can be played completely left hand pizzicato with the 4th finger.
- More useful for strengthening your 4th and practicing intonation is to play the whole tune with the bow and play every open E string as a 4th finger on the A instead.
- Don't hesitate with the 4th as the more you do this, the more you start to doubt where you believe the correct position is and the more likely you are to actually be sharp/flat.
- If a teacher ever gives you the option of playing a 4th finger or an open string always choose the 4th. My teacher didn't push me to use my 4th finger enough when I first started and you can go a lifetime playing folk music avoiding 4th fingers (apart from on the E string) so to develop confidence and strength in your 4th finger you have to use it as often as possible.
- Make sure your 4th has a relaxed and gentle curve in it. You shouldn't feel you have to 'stretch' for your 4th. Most often the reason why student's pinkies are locked straight and stretching is because their knuckles are not high enough about the fingerboard so the fingers can't drop down on to the string. Their fingers might also be too far away from the fingerboard or the elbow hasn't swung with the hand and their fingers aren't naturally positioned over the string. Every hand is a different shape though so the position you need is unique to you.
- Practice picking small, light objects up with your thumb and a curved pinky to help strengthen it.