

# Easy Peasy Pieces Prospectus

## Michael Christie

### Summary of Easy Peasy Pieces:

A carefully worked-out and gently progressive series of elementary technical exercises for the young beginner 'cellist, covering all the necessary building blocks of a fluent technique in easy methodical stages, with characterful and interesting piano accompaniments. Created with the aim of making the early stages of the technical side of the beginner 'cello studies easy, enjoyable and above all *musical* at all times. The imaginative titles, interpreted primarily by the piano part, give an opportunity for discussing the nature of the music and eliciting authentic responses to, and growing awareness of the different moods and ideas portrayed.

All the pieces, including the very first, are suitable for performance in a schools setting, making it possible for complete beginners to gain experience in performing at a very early stage. All the exercises can be used in conjunction with any suitable tutor book or collection of easy beginner pieces, either to support development in a particular area of technique, or simply on their own to build the foundations of well-grounded technical ability in left-hand dexterity, bowing and articulation patterns.

In addition, the gradual introduction of a wide variety of finger and bowing patterns combined with the repetitive nature of the exercises naturally assists in the development of good sight-reading. At the same time, since the repetitions are always accompanied by interestingly varied music, the tedium usually associated with such repetitions is avoided.

Although the accompaniments range in difficulty from Grade 2 to about Grade 6, it is hoped that teachers with some keyboard skills will be stimulated to study them for their own sake and possibly for their own improvement! Simplified versions are offered in some cases as alternatives, in the appendices to each volume.

### Areas of technical focus for each volume:

Vol.1:	20	Elementary scale-building exercises
Vol.2:	25	Simple finger-patterns (without extensions)
Vol.3:	20	String-crossing exercises
Vol.4:	25	Positions and shifts (up to 4th position, including extensions)
Vol.5:	25	First-position scales (including extensions)
Total:	115	

It is envisaged that each volume will be purchased in turn as the student or class gains in proficiency. Allowing for variations in speed of progress, it is estimated that the entire range of volumes will be broadly suitable for use with students up until at least the second complete year of study, after which they will progress onto the many excellent and well-established exercise books of a more advanced nature which are widely available. Limiting each volume to 20-25 pieces means that the cost of each volume can be kept to a reasonable level, which may assist parents or teachers on a limited budget. It will be possible to buy the 'cello parts separately.

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**Vol. 1:** Elementary scale-building exercises on each string (Pts.1-4): one-octave scales (C major, D-dorian); two-octave C major scale; two-octave C major scale in thirds (Pt.5). The same rhythm and finger-pattern is used for each string. Reading is not stressed at this point, but there is an emphasis on understanding whole- and half-bows, in order to provide the foundations of bow management. A variety of time signatures is used, both simple and compound, introducing different note values as well as different ways of counting them, so that a later stage, reading skills can be worked on, and some elementary theory. Up to No. 11, all notes are fingered, after which identical passages are no longer fingered, to encourage finger memory and

reading skills. A series of varied rhythmic patterns after each item, for use with the same accompaniment, offers progressive options in the further development of bow facility and reading skills. In addition, when sufficient proficiency in playing has been developed, fluency in identifying pitch-names, so important to the establishment of good sight-reading skills, can be easily practiced by speaking or singing the pitch-names together with the teacher in the correct rhythm. The similarity of the scalar patterns across the strings allows the recognition of notes to develop gradually and instinctively.

- Pt. 1: Nos. 1-4 Open strings (C, G, D, A)  
 2: 5-8 Open strings and 1<sup>st</sup> finger  
 3: 9-12 Open strings, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> fingers  
 4: 13-16 Open strings, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> fingers  
 5: 17-20 One and two-octave C major scales, one-octave Dorian mode, scales in broken thirds

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**Vol. 2:** Simple finger patterns (without extensions): graduated finger patterns on each string, with associated bowing exercises based on those finger patterns. Each one starts slow (minims), increases speed to crotchets, then quavers, ending with one slow version (with variations in rhythm between each number). All possible sequences of finger patterns are explored in a logical sequence, starting with the open string and working through each finger in turn, and on each string, plus bowing variants. As before, progressive variants are given so that the left-hand patterns become ingrained in a natural way.

- Pt. 1: 1. 0-1-3/2-4 (on C-, G-, D-, A-string, plus bowing variants for 'cello part)  
 2. 0-1-4-3/2 (sim.)  
 3. 0-3/2-1-4  
 4. 0-3/2-4-1  
 5. 0-4-1-3/2  
 6. 0-4-3/2-1
- Pt. 2: 7. 1-3/2-0-4  
 8. 1-3/2-4-0  
 9. 1-0-3/2-4  
 10. 1-0-4-3/2  
 11. 1-4-0-3/2  
 12. 1-4-3/2-0
- Pt. 3: 13. 3/2-0-1-4  
 14. 3/2-0-4-1  
 15. 3/2-1-0-4  
 16. 3/2-1-4-0  
 17. 3/2-4-0-1  
 18. 3/2-4-1-0
- Pt. 4: 19. 4-0-1-3/2  
 20. 4-0-3/2-1  
 21. 4-1-0-3/2  
 22. 4-1-3/2-0  
 23. 4-3/2-0-1  
 24. 4-3/2-1-0
- Pt. 5: 25. Piece: mixture of different finger-patterns on all the strings.

**Vol.3:** String-crossing exercises: on two, three and four strings, in different rhythms, starting with simple rhythms and adjacent crossings and increasing in complexity and speed; combining with increasing number of fingers (first position, without extensions). Additionally, some bowing pattern variations for the 'cello part, for each piece, written out for ease of study.

- Pt. 1: 1. C-G  
 2. G-D  
 3. D-A  
 4. C-D  
 5. G-A  
 6. C-A  
 7. C-G-D  
 8. G-D-A  
 9. C-G-D-A
- Pt. 2: 10. C-G-D with 1<sup>st</sup> finger  
 11. C-G-D with 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> finger  
 12. C-G-D with 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> finger  
 13. G-D-A with 1<sup>st</sup> finger  
 14. G-D-A with 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> /2<sup>nd</sup> finger  
 15. G-D-A with 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> /2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> finger  
 16. C-G-D-A with 1<sup>st</sup> finger  
 17. C-G-D-A with 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> /2<sup>nd</sup> finger  
 18. C-G-D-A with 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> /2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> finger
- Pt. 3: 19. String-crossing patterns: exercises in common patterns in quavers, triplet quavers, semiquavers, triplet semiquavers and demisemi-quavers, on open strings, and in a variety of bowings and articulations.  
 20. The same, using commonly found single- and double-stopping chords.

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**Vol.4:** Positions and shifts: extension position exercises; ½, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2½, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> ("neck") positions, crossing to all strings in each piece; combining with extensions; with shifts; with various combinations, and introducing for the first time the 2<sup>nd</sup> finger on the C- and G-strings, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> finger on the D- and A-strings. Additionally, some bowing pattern variations for the 'cello part, for each piece, written out for ease of study.

- Pt. 1: 1. ½-position on C-string: 1-2-4-2-1...1-3-4-3-1...1x2x4x2x1  
 2. ½-position on G-string: 1-2-4-2-1...1-3-4-3-1...1x2x4x2x1  
 3. ½-position on D-string: 1-2-4-2-1...1-3-4-3-1...1x2x4x2x1  
 4. ½-position on A-string: 1-2-4-2-1...1-3-4-3-1...1x2x4x2x1
- Pt. 2: 5. 1st position on C-string: 1-2-4-2-1...1-3-4-3-1...1x2x4x2x1  
 6. 1st position on G-string: 1-2-4-2-1...1-3-4-3-1...1x2x4x2x1  
 7. 1st position on D-string: 1-2-4-2-1...1-3-4-3-1...1x2x4x2x1  
 8. 1st position on A-string: 1-2-4-2-1...1-3-4-3-1...1x2x4x2x1
- Pt. 3: 9. 1½-position on C-string: 1-2-4-2-1...1-3-4-3-1...1x2x4x2x1  
 10. 1½-position on G-string: 1-2-4-2-1...1-3-4-3-1...1x2x4x2x1  
 11. 1½-position on D-string: 1-2-4-2-1...1-3-4-3-1...1x2x4x2x1  
 12. 1½-position on A-string: 1-2-4-2-1...1-3-4-3-1...1x2x4x2x1
- Pt. 4: 13. 2nd position on C-, G-, D-, A-strings, plus variations (as Pt. 2)  
 14. 2½ position on C-, G-, D-, A-strings, plus variations (as Pt. 2)  
 15. 3rd position on C-, G-, D-, A-strings, plus variations (as Pt. 2)

16.4th position on C-, G-, D-, A-strings, plus variations (as Pt. 2)

- Pt. 5: 17. Shifts from 1/2 to 1<sup>st</sup> position on C-, G-, D-, A-strings, starting with controlled sliding 1<sup>st</sup> finger shifts using actual glissandi, developing more complex shifts to different fingers in different positions (include preparation exercises using glissandi).  
18. Shifts from 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup>/2 1/2 position on C-, G-, D-, A-strings, as above.  
19. Shifts from 2<sup>nd</sup>/2 1/2 to 3<sup>rd</sup> position on C-, G-, D-, A-strings, as above.  
20. Shifts from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> position on C-, G-, D-, A-strings, as above.
- Pt. 6: 21. Shifts around all positions thus far introduced, plus variations, on C-string, starting with adjacent 1<sup>st</sup> finger shifts and increasing in distance and complexity.  
22. Shifts around all positions plus variations on G-string, as above.  
23. Shifts around all positions plus variations on D-string, as above.  
24. Shifts around all positions plus variations on A-string, as above.  
25. Shifts around all positions plus variations on all strings, as above.

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**Vol.5: Easy (1st position with extensions) scales and pieces:**

all the scales playable in 1<sup>st</sup> position with extensions, plus short easy pieces in those keys. Starting with slow note values and increasing in speed, in a variety of time signatures (e.g., 4/2 with minims, 3/4 with crotchets, 4/8 with quavers in pairs and singly, 4/4 with semiquavers in pairs and singly).

- Pt. 1: 1. C major, 2 octaves  
2. C minor melodic, 1 octave  
3. C minor harmonic, 2 octaves  
4. C-scales piece (in 1<sup>st</sup> position plus extensions)
- Pt. 2: 5. D major, 2 octaves  
6. D minor melodic, 2 octaves  
7. D minor harmonic, 2 octaves  
8. D-scales piece (in 1<sup>st</sup> position plus extensions)
- Pt. 3: 9. Eb major scale, 1 octave  
10. Eb major piece (in 1<sup>st</sup> position plus extensions)
- Pt. 4: 11. F major scale, 1 1/2 octaves  
12. F major piece (in 1<sup>st</sup> position plus extensions)
- Pt. 5: 13. G major scale, 1 octave  
14. G minor melodic, 1 octave  
15. G minor harmonic, 1 octave  
16. G-scales piece (in 1<sup>st</sup> position plus extensions)
- Pt. 6: 17. G mixolydian, 1 1/2 octaves  
18. G mixolydian piece (in 1<sup>st</sup> position plus extensions)
- Pt. 7: 19. A major, 1 octave  
20. A minor melodic, 1 octave  
21. A minor harmonic, 1 octave  
22. A-scales pieces (in 1<sup>st</sup> position plus extensions)
- Pt. 8: 23. Bb major, 1 octave  
24. Bb scale piece (in 1<sup>st</sup> position plus extensions)
- Pt. 9: 25. Piece using all scales given (in 1<sup>st</sup> position plus extensions)