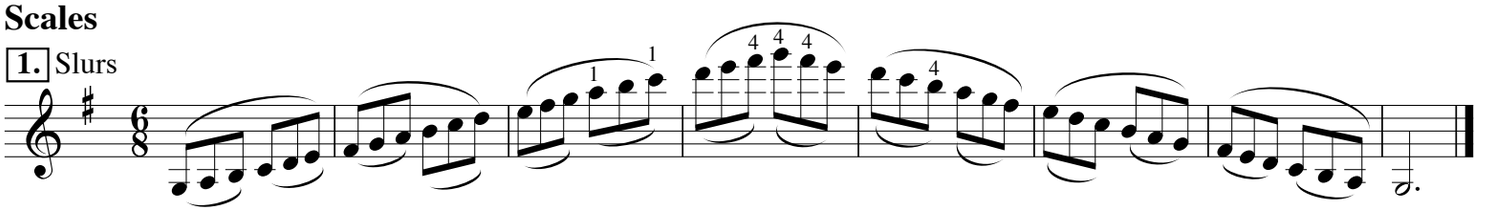
Practice Suggestions for Scales and Arpeggios

The practice of scales need never be monotonous! Bowings and rhythms may be combined in dozens of different ways in the practice of scales and arpeggios. The bowings and rhythmic variants shown here may be applied to the fast passage work in the violinist's repertoire to develop and improve evenness, clarity, agility, speed and intonation. Only a few basic bowings and rhythms are suggested here. The more notes played in one bow, the faster the tempo must be, but never at the expense of accurate intonation. Imaginative combinations of these examples starting on both down-bow and up-bow will produce endless variety.

The scales and seven arpeggio routine found in this book are based on the scale systems of Otokar Sevcik and Carl Flesch. The upper fingerings in the scales and arpeggios have been passed down through several generations of teachers and students from the famous Belgian violinist, Eugène Ysaÿe. In Ysaÿe's system, the bow crosses the strings first, then the left hand shifts on the E string. In the lower fingerings, the first shift occurs on the D or A string. So that the bow arm leads smoothly to the new string, open strings are usually used on the ascending scale and fourth fingers on the descending. There are numerous ways to play scales, arpeggios and double-stops, however, and teachers and students should feel free to employ various fingering systems. Each practice suggestion is shown in the key of G and should be transposed into all keys.

Scales

1. Slurs



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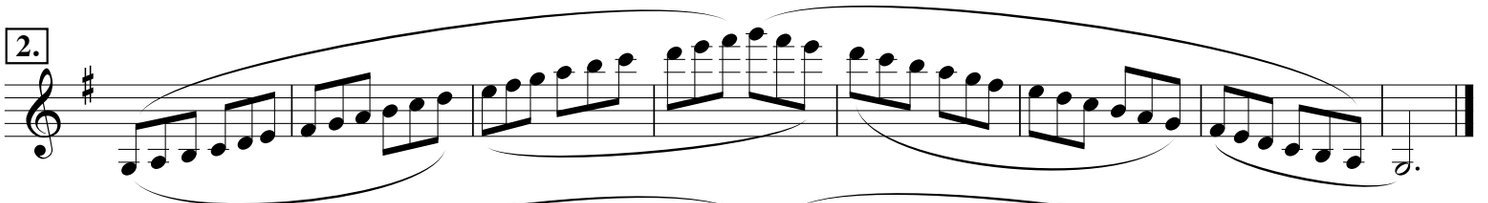

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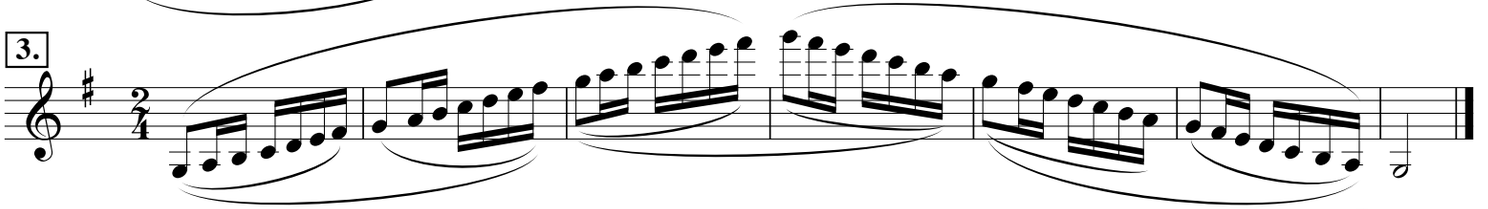

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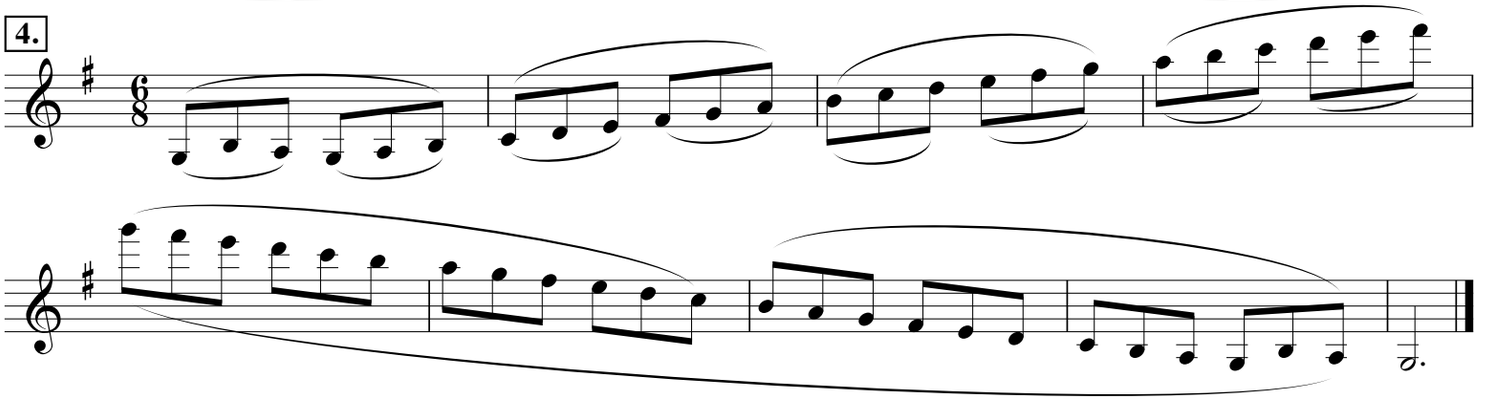

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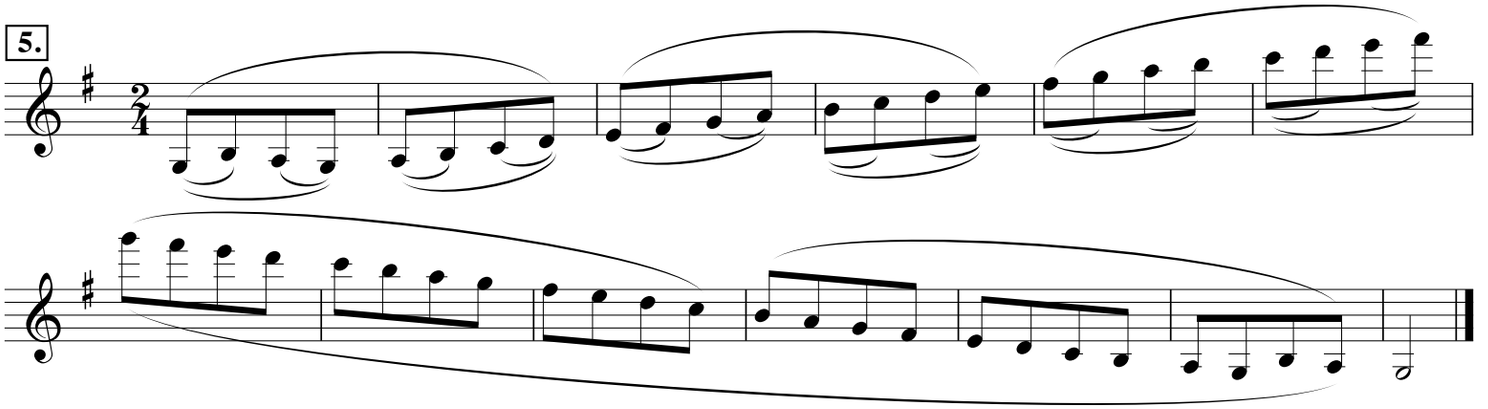
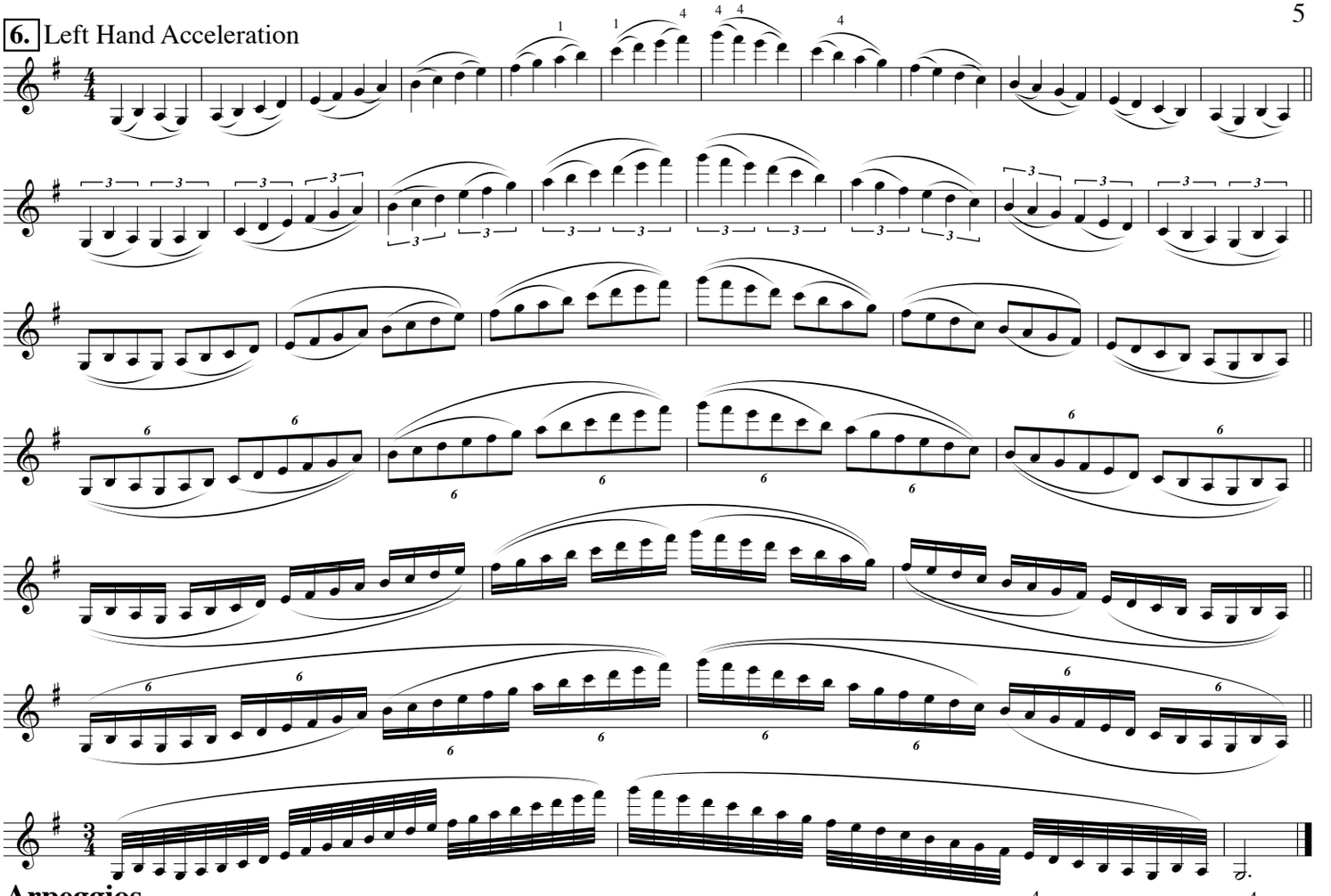
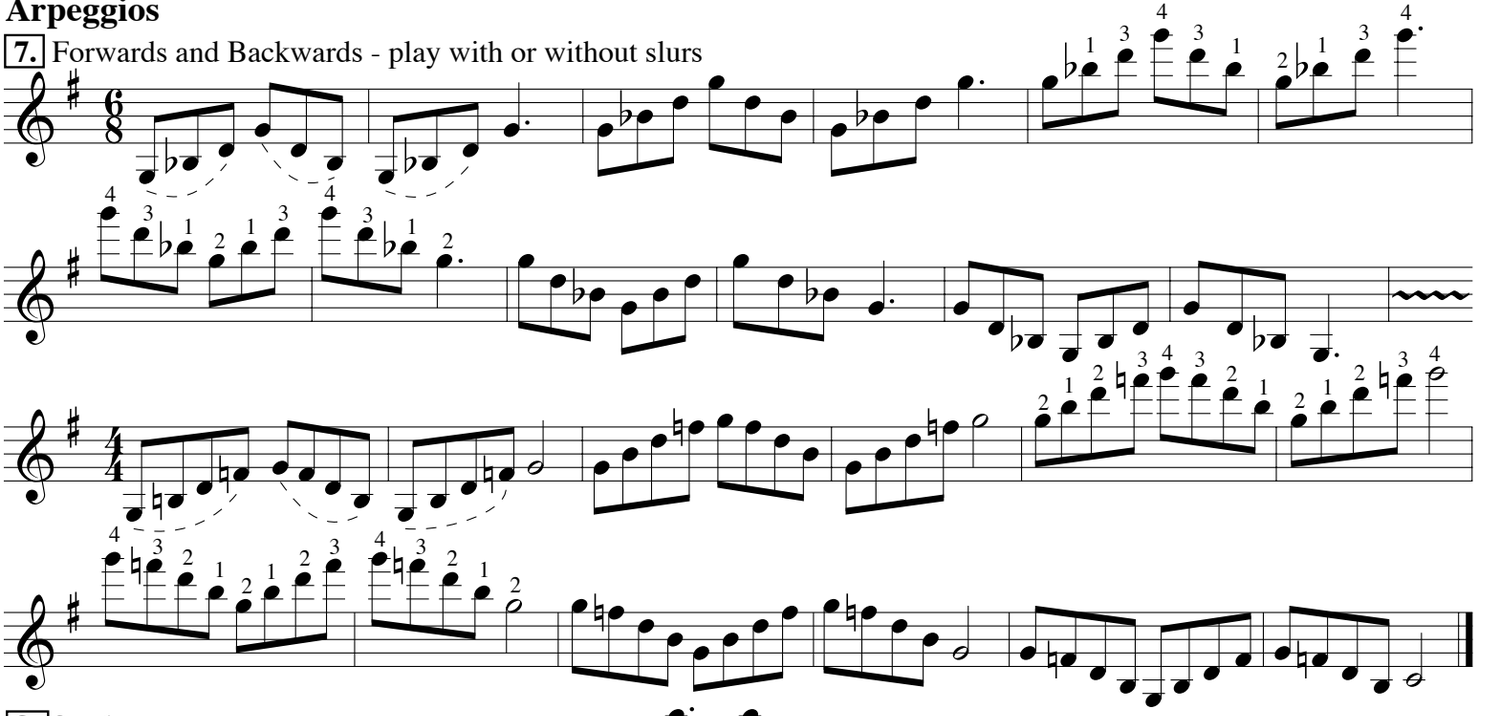


6. Left Hand Acceleration

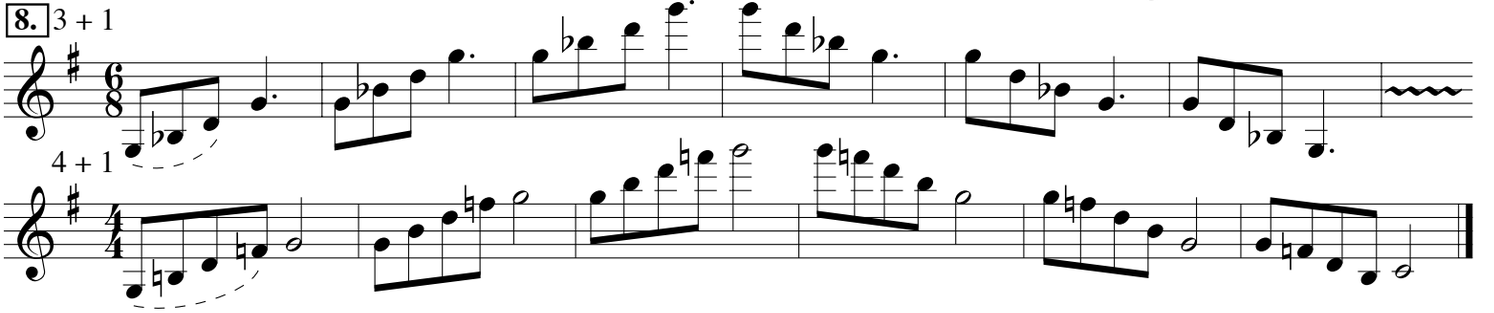


Arpeggios

7. Forwards and Backwards - play with or without slurs



8. 3 + 1



4 + 1