

Put a Bow on it!

Courtney Dowling, Orchestra Director, Rocky Mountain High School, Fort Collins, CO

Beth Wells, Retired Orchestra Director, Rocky Mountain High School

Demonstration group from Rocky Mountain High School:

Logan Manning, Tim Patawaran - Violins

Annalee Knies, Laurel Ladzinski - Violas

Herman Chavez, Erika Hutchinson - Celli



Everybody is matching bow direction - why doesn't it sound together?

Many articulations are not marked

Many markings have several meanings

Bowing Descriptions

DETACHÉ

On-The-String: Legato, Sostenuto

Détaché is played **smoothly**, without separation between notes. Played with a whole bow or any portion **alternating bow direction**. Not specifically accented or articulated beyond change of bow direction. This is the most prevalent stroke in string playing. Sometimes associated with fast passagework in Baroque style.

Variations of Detaché:

ACCENTED DETACHÉ, PORTATO, LOURE, TREMOLO

Detaché Legato

Bach *Brandenburg No. 5*



Detaché Legato

Carol Nunez - *M to the Third Power*

First system of the musical score for Viola (Vla.) and Cello. The Viola part is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 3/4 time signature. It begins with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and features a continuous eighth-note pattern. The Cello part is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, also playing a continuous eighth-note pattern. The system concludes with two measures of rests for both instruments, marked with a 'v' (accusato) symbol.

Second system of the musical score for Viola (Vla.) and Cello. The Viola part continues with eighth-note patterns, marked with an accent (>) and a forte (*f*) dynamic. A hairpin crescendo is shown between measures 8 and 9. The Cello part also continues with eighth-note patterns, marked with an accent (>). The system ends with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic marking.

Bowing Descriptions

On-the-String: Non-Legato, Articulated

STACCATO & MARTELE

*Bow weight is applied before the bow moves. The weight is released instantaneously as the bow is quickly drawn to produce a **sharp attack**. The bow remains **on the string but not in the string**. Whole bow or any portion alternating bow direction. An important stroke for ensemble precision. **Staccato is a softer version of Martelé.***

These bow strokes are used in various contexts but especially when playing baroque composers such as Telemann, Bach, Vivaldi, Handel, & Corelli.

Detaché Legato & Staccato - Baroque Style

Telemann *Sinfonia in A minor*



Detaché Legato & Staccato - Baroque Style

Bach *Brandenburg No. 5*



Martelé – Fletcher's *Folk Tune & Fiddle Dance*

10 In a rough, jovial manner

The musical score is for a piece titled "Martelé" by Fletcher's Folk Tune & Fiddle Dance. It is marked "10" and "In a rough, jovial manner". The score is written for a 2/2 time signature and features six staves. The first four staves are for Violins I, Violins II, Violas, and Cellos/Double Basses. The last two staves are for a Bass line. The music is marked "f well marked" and "arco". The first staff has a "divisi*" marking. The score includes a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/2 time signature. The music is in a rough, jovial manner.



I've taught them the articulation - Why
can't they match styles?

Bow placement matters - Use the "One Inch Rule"

Bowing Descriptions

BRUSH SPICCATO

Begins and ends off the string. Bow brushes the string. **Lower** $\frac{1}{3}$ section of the bow. Defines Classical style technique by allowing faster speeds than on-the-string strokes. Used where a louder, broader sound than Bounced Spiccato is desired.

BOUNCE SPICCATO

Un-slurred, begins and ends off the string. Bow bounces from its own elasticity rather than in the brush stroke. **Middle** $\frac{1}{3}$ section of the bow. Softer, shorter and potentially faster than Brush Spiccato.

FLYING SPICCATO

A form of linked Spiccato used to prepare a downbow landing closer to the frog. The first note usually starts on the string and comes off. **Lower** $\frac{2}{3}$ section of the bow. A common Classical style stroke where bowing alternates on and off the string.

One Inch Rule & Flying Spiccato

Odessa by Bobrowitz (Ed. Cameron Law)

146 147 148 149 150

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

K. 525

Allegro

Violine I

Violine II

Viola

Violoncello und Kontrabaß

7

Brushed Spiccato, Retake to frog, Slur-pop
Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*

Finding the “bounce”: Different Instruments & Speeds

Brushed Spiccato – Bizet’s *L’arlesienne* 2 *Farandole*

The image displays a musical score for the 4th measure of a piece, featuring five staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello (Vcll.), and Double Bass (K.B.). The key signature is one sharp (F#). The Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello parts are marked with a 'V' and a 'V' above the notes, indicating a brushed spiccato technique. The Double Bass part is marked with a 'V' and a 'V' above the notes, indicating a brushed spiccato technique. The score shows a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, with the Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello parts playing a melodic line and the Double Bass part providing a harmonic foundation.



Ok, They all match placement but it still
isn't working... WHY!?

Maybe it isn't their fault - Maybe it's a bad bowing!

Bowing Clean Parts: Where Do I Start?

- Consider Historical Practices
- Tempo and Style
- Meter and Rhythms
- Dynamics
- Bowing ideas from YouTube videos of professional orchestras
- Does the ensemble have the skills needed to perform the bowings put in the part?
- Go on following the Basic Bowing Guidelines

Basic Guidelines for Writing Good Bowings

These are the basic guidelines that we use for writing bowings – often there will be criteria for both down and up-bows at the same time. Therefore, one must decide which of the criteria are more important and then backtrack from there to make it work out.

Down-Bows should be used for:

- Down-beats
- Accents
- Sforzandi
- Phrase beginnings (if on the beat)
- Decrescendi
- On-beats in 16th note groupings and 8th note groupings
- First notes of loud dynamics
- Rolled Chords

Basic Guidelines for Writing Good Bowings

Up-bows

- Pickups
- Weaker beats
- Crescendi
- Certain types of string crossings (opposite for violins/violas than cellos/basses)
- Staccato slurs (hooked ups)
- Classical figuration
- Big upward shifts or ascending scales
- Waltz/Minuet
- Preparing for a quick transition into pizz.
- Evening out syncopation bowings

Basic Guidelines for Writing Good Bowings

Bowing challenges (or things to take into consideration)

- String Crossings
- Triple and compound meters
- Triplets
- Uneven Rhythms (dotted quarter + 8th, dotted 8th + 16th, etc.)
- Hooked bows
- Bounced bowings (speed vs. what section of the bow)
- Transition to and from pizzicato
- Sudden dynamic changes
- Syncopation
- Off-set bowings (when the bow change is not on the beat)
- Mixed articulation (slurs combined with separate bows)
- Long bows

Triple
Meters
Decrescendo
Accents
Weak Beats

Dvorak's
*Allegretto
Grazioso*
arr. Sieving

66

65 67 68 69 70

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

mf *f* *mf* *f*

mf *f* *mf* *f*

f *mf* *f*

mp *f* *f* *mf*

f *f* *mf*

The image shows a musical score for Dvorak's Allegretto Grazioso, measures 65-70. The score is arranged in five staves: Vlns. I, Vlns. II, Vla., Cello, and Str. Bass. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The time signature is 3/4. The score includes dynamic markings (mf, f, mp) and articulation marks (accents, slurs). The Vlns. I and II parts feature a decrescendo from mf to f. The Vla. part features a decrescendo from f to mf. The Cello and Str. Bass parts feature a decrescendo from mp to mf. The Str. Bass part features a decrescendo from f to mf. The score is marked with measure numbers 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, and 70. A box around the number 66 indicates the starting point of the excerpt.

Uneven Rhythms: Solution = Hooked Bowings

Holst's *St. Paul's Suite - I. Jig*

Vivace.

VIOLIN I

VIOLIN II

VIOLA

CELLO

The image displays a musical score for four string instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello. The tempo is marked 'Vivace.' The music is in 3/8 time. The Violin parts feature a complex, rhythmic melody with many beamed eighth and sixteenth notes, creating a 'hooked' or 'staccato' effect. The Viola and Cello parts provide a harmonic accompaniment with similar rhythmic patterns. The score is written on four staves, with the instrument names listed to the left of each staff.

Bow Trap - Uneven down vs. up: Solution = Slur-pop

Susan Day's *Murphy's Jig*

The image displays a musical score for Susan Day's *Murphy's Jig*, specifically measures 34 through 37. The score is written for five staves, with the first three staves marked with a red arrow and a green vertical line, indicating a specific bowing technique. The first three staves are in treble clef, and the last two are in bass clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked *mf* (mezzo-forte) for the first three staves and *f* (forte) for the last two. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings. The measures are numbered 34, 35, 36, and 37 at the bottom.

Measure 34: Treble staves I, II, and III start with a slur over a quarter note and an eighth note, followed by a quarter note and an eighth note. The bass staves start with a quarter note and an eighth note, followed by a quarter note and an eighth note. The first three staves have a *mf* dynamic, and the last two have a *f* dynamic.

Measure 35: Treble staves I, II, and III continue with the same pattern. The bass staves continue with the same pattern. The first three staves have a *mf* dynamic, and the last two have a *f* dynamic.

Measure 36: Treble staves I, II, and III continue with the same pattern. The bass staves continue with the same pattern. The first three staves have a *mf* dynamic, and the last two have a *f* dynamic.

Measure 37: Treble staves I, II, and III continue with the same pattern. The bass staves continue with the same pattern. The first three staves have a *mf* dynamic, and the last two have a *f* dynamic.

Slurs, String Crossings, Bow Distribution

Grieg's *Peer Gynt Suite No. 2 - Death of Ase*



Louré, Crescendo & Decrescendo, Pizz. Transition, Bow placement, bow speed Benjamin Britten's *Simple Symphony*, Mvt 3

The image displays a musical score for Benjamin Britten's *Simple Symphony*, Movement 3. The score is written for five staves, likely representing different instruments or voices. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The dynamics range from *ppp* (pianississimo) to *f* (forte). Performance instructions include *pp teneramente*, *cresc.* (crescendo), *decresc.* (decrescendo), *pizz.* (pizzicato), *arco* (arco), *ten.* (tension), and *pp cresc.* (pianissimo crescendo). The score is presented in a clear, legible format, with the musical notation and performance instructions clearly visible.

Classical Figuration + Bowing Choices for Whole Orchestra

Mozart *Symphony 40 Finale*

The image displays a musical score for the first four staves of a section from Mozart's Symphony 40, Finale. The staves are labeled on the left: Violino I., Violino II., Viola., and Violoncello e Basso. The music is written in G minor (three flats) and 4/4 time. The first staff (Violino I.) features a melodic line with a forte (f) dynamic and a bowing choice marked with a 'V' and a slur. The second staff (Violino II.) has a similar melodic line with a piano (p) dynamic and a bowing choice marked with a 'V' and a slur. The third staff (Viola) has a melodic line with a piano (p) dynamic and a bowing choice marked with a 'V' and a slur. The fourth staff (Violoncello e Basso) has a bass line with a piano (p) dynamic and a bowing choice marked with a 'V' and a slur. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Long Bows with Dynamics: Solution = Split Bows

(Sometimes the bowings are really phrase marks)

Bizet's *L'arlesienne* No. 2 Intermezzo

The image displays a musical score for the Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass parts of Bizet's *L'arlesienne* No. 2 Intermezzo. The score is written in 2/4 time and features a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The Violin I and II parts are marked with long bows and dynamics. The Viola part is marked with long bows and dynamics. The Cello/Double Bass part is marked with long bows and dynamics. The score is divided into measures, with dynamics such as *cresc. molto*, *ff*, and *dim.* indicated. The Violin I and II parts are marked with *(arco)* and **Harfe*. The Viola part is marked with **Harfe arco*. The Cello/Double Bass part is marked with **Harfe arco*. The score is divided into measures, with dynamics such as *cresc. molto*, *ff*, and *dim.* indicated. The Violin I and II parts are marked with *(arco)* and **Harfe*. The Viola part is marked with **Harfe arco*. The Cello/Double Bass part is marked with **Harfe arco*.

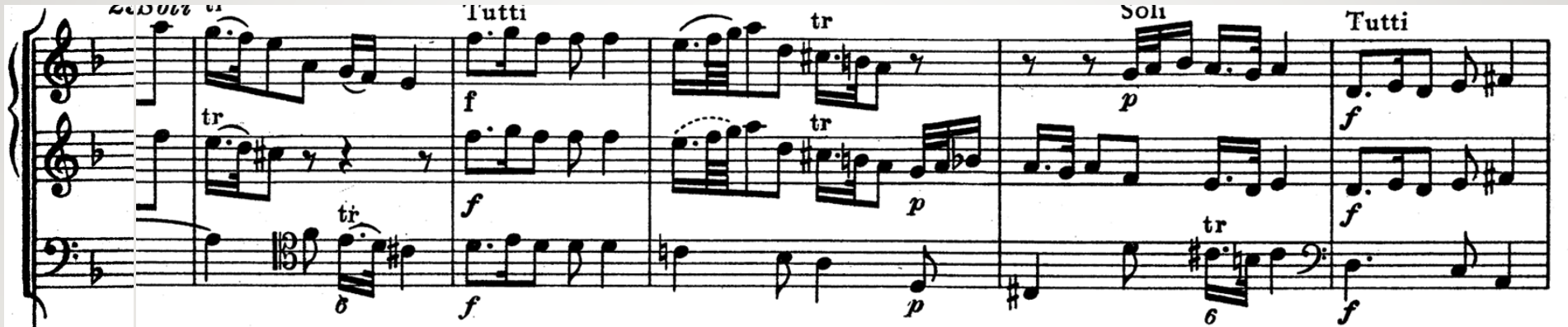
Basic Bowing Guidelines

Putting It Together: Matching Sections

- Same rhythmic ideas should be bowed the same way
- If you make them differ, there should be a musical reason as to why.
- Generally, 1st violin determines other section's bowings but other parts will occasionally take priority – use the score to make that determination.

Clean Parts - No Bowings

Handel *Concerto Grosso No. 9 Op. 6 Larghetto*



Bowing Decisions for: Handel *Concerto Grosso No. 9 Op. 6 Larghetto*

- Historical Style: Baroque, lilting, legato, ornamentation
- Tempo: Larghetto
- Dynamics: forte, piano (echo)
- Compound meter, dotted rhythms, stresses on weak beats
- Violin I Concertino bowing leads Concertino Violin II & 'Cello bowings
- Concertino bowing leads ripieno bowings

Bowings Added

Handel *Concerto Grosso No. 9 Op. 6 Larghetto*



Great Things Happen When Parts are Bowed

- Bowing the score helps you see the whole picture, and check that players are using the bowings.
- When bowings are included in their parts, players learn bowings from the start, as they learning notes and rhythms.
- Good bowings help rhythms to be accurate.
- Students learn how bowing decisions are made when bowings are in the part from the beginning.
- Advanced players in the orchestra may have good bowing ideas. Let them make their case to you.

Resources for Educators

Orchestral Bowing - Style and Function by James Kjelland

Videos: YouTube & Berlin Philharmonic Digital Concert Hall

Contact us with questions or to receive a copy of the full slideshow or Basic Bowings Handout

Courtney Dowling

Beth Wells

cdowling@psdschools.org

bwells0718@gmail.com