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A compact disc is available with this book. Using the disc will help make learning more enjoyable and the information more meaningful. Listening to the CD will help you correctly interpret the rhythms and feel of each example. The symbol to the left appears next to each piece or example that is performed on the CD. Example numbers are above the symbol. The track number below each symbol corresponds directly to the piece or example you want to hear. Track 1 will help you tune to this CD.

## Free Stroke

The basic and most common stroke in classical playing is the *free stroke*. Keeping the hand still and letting the finger do all the work, follow these steps:

1. Position your right arm so that the large knuckle joints (see photo at far right for the locations of all the finger joints) are more or less over the top of the strings you're plucking.
2. Pluck the string with the finger and follow through toward the palm of the hand.
3. Empty the tension from your finger and allow it to return to its starting point without touching any other strings.

If your knuckle joints are too far behind the strings, you'll either have a very limited follow-through (which affects your speed and tone production) or you'll constantly bump into the string adjacent to the one you intend to pluck. So, be sure to keep your wrist straight and your knuckle joints positioned correctly.

Try the following exercise. Use free strokes alternating between the *i* and *m* fingers. Use the rests to prepare the next finger on the string at its correct contact point.



1  
Track  
2

## Rest Stroke

Another type of stroke is the *rest stroke*. As above, keep your hand still and let the finger do all the work while following these steps:

1. Position the right arm so that the knuckle joints are a couple of strings behind whatever string you are plucking.
2. Pluck the string with the finger, following through and coming to rest on the next lower string with the fingertip.
3. Empty the tension from your finger and allow it to return to its starting point.
4. Be sure to keep the hand still and let the finger do all the work.

Rest strokes tend to be a bit louder and fuller sounding than free strokes. However, they have their limitations, as they prohibit the ringing of neighboring strings. In any case, it is important to learn both types of strokes and not to rely too heavily on one or the other.

Try the free-stroke example above, this time using rest strokes.

2  
Track  
3

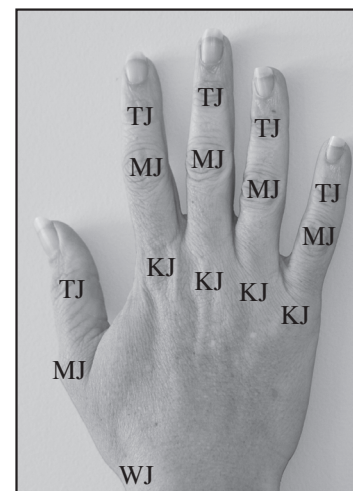


Free stroke preparation.



Free stroke execution.

The finger joints.



TJ = tip joint  
MJ = middle joint  
KJ = knuckle joint  
WJ = wrist joint



Rest stroke preparation.



Rest stroke execution.

**Note:** When working with the right hand, make sure your fingers and thumb do all the work. The right hand should never bounce as you pluck the string. Playing with a moving hand is like playing darts while running at the board. You'll be a lot less accurate in finding the right strings with a bouncy hand!

# Moderato

Following is a more playful piece by Carulli.

## Practice Notes

1. You will find only a few small shifts of position but many opportunities for creative use of dynamics. Though we haven't yet discussed dynamics in detail, use your imagination as you come up with the musical plan for this piece. Then, you can revisit this composition (and others like it) after you've explored dynamics and colors later in the book (Chapter 13). Note that there is a dynamic marking in this piece that we haven't yet seen:

*mf* = *mezzo forte* = moderately loud

2. "Moderato" contains a few musical indications that we haven't seen yet. For instance, beat 2 of the second measure has an *accent* mark (>) on both voices. This instructs you to emphasize these notes, or play them louder than the surrounding notes. And when you see a dot above or below a note, as in measure 12, it indicates that the notes are to be played *staccato* (short, detached; see page 106 for more details).

3. You will also see some musical indications in Italian. These phrases help communicate the composer's intentions for interpreting the piece, and they should be given careful consideration.

- *poco rit.* = slow down a little. (*Poco* means "little"; *rit.* is short for *ritardando* and means "slow down.")
- *a tempo* = return to the original tempo, or speed.
- *e sempre legato* = continuously legato, or connected. (*Sempre* means "always.")



# Moderato

Ferdinando Carulli

♩ = 84

*mf*

*f*

*p*

*i m i a i m i*

# Nocturne

The simple melody of “Nocturne” by Mertz is beautifully supported by the triplet accompaniment, and both voices will need musical attention to make this piece soar.

## Practice Notes

1. No right-hand fingerings are given here, as you should find what works best for your hand in this piece, but be mindful to include natural arpeggio fingerings whenever possible.
2. The melody is in the top voice until the last three lines, at which point you should shift the melodic attention to the bass.



# Nocturne

Johann Kaspar Mertz

♩ = 58