

II. Off-the-String Strokes

- A. Two Types:
 - 1. Controlled (spiccato)
 - 2. Uncontrolled (sautillé)
- B. Generally introduce controlled before uncontrolled
- C. Spiccato (controlled)
 - 1. bounce in lower half of bow
 - 2. allows fingers to react to bounce
 - 3. involves rub (horizontal) and lift (vertical) motions for each bounce
 - 4. the faster the spiccato, the farther out in the bow
 - 5. student must be able to control the height of lift
 - 6. roll bow at frog
 - 7. allow wrist/hand to flex
 - 8. "U" shaped motion
- D. Sautillé (uncontrolled)
 - 1. faster bounce than spiccato
 - 2. each individual bounce not controlled
 - 3. at or near camber point (different for each bow)
 - 4. allow hand to flop (vertical motion)
 - 5. flat bow hair
 - 6. no weight on bow
 - 7. little arm motion involved
 - 8. low right elbow position
 - 9. fourth finger may come off bow stick

Off-the-String Stroke Teaching Strategies

- A. **When to introduce**

Students have good control of détaché and attack strokes
Generally around the third year of playing
- B. **On-String Rub**

Begin at balance point with a rubbing motion that uses mostly hand and fingers.
Gentle, short rubbing strokes
- C. **On-String Rub and Add a Small Lift**

As above, but add a small lift at each end of the stroke. Slightly interrupt the sound of the stroke. Bow spends more time on string than off.

D. Wrist and Finger Motion/ Let's Get Flexing

Emphasizing the wrist and finger motions essential for refining this stroke

E. Spiccato Tunnels/ Hand over Bow Stick

Upper strings have a buddy place their hand over the bow stick, cellos and basses can do their own – prevents too high of a bounce

F. Descriptive words

Low lift, small lift, slight lift

Gentle stroke, light stroke, brushing, glancing, painting, etc.

G. Draw Shape for Visual Learners

not

H. Close Eyes to force ears to attend to spiccato sound

I. Higher lift = more percussiveness, Lower lift = less percussiveness have them experiment with different lifts/drops

J. Teacher model – the most important teaching device for this stroke. Verbal descriptions just do not cut it.

K. Add the Left Hand

Repeated even number of multiple bounces on individual notes at first

Decrease number of bounces as skill develops – e.g., 8 – 6 – 4 – 2 – then single strokes

Use scales and familiar pieces that can be performed from memory as material

Start the scales and pieces down bow first, then reverse and start up bow

For tricky spiccato passages in music, have students practice the string crossing pattern first on open strings and later add the left hand fingers

L. Sautillé strategies

1. Begin with very sticky detaché stroke around the middle to upper half of the bow
2. Use flat bow hair
3. “Kick” the stroke off the string with a loose, slightly floppy wrist action.
4. Adjust part of the bow to where this stroke perpetuates itself best and let it happen
5. Alternatively, begin with a rather wide tremolo stroke and gradually move down from the tip to the spot where the bow leaves the string of its own accord
6. The actual hair of the bow may not leave the string, but the stick bounces up and down