

# A Tutor for the Renaissance Lute

DIANA POULTON

 SCHOTT



DIANA POULTON

*A Tutor for the  
Renaissance Lute*

for the complete beginner  
to the advanced student

ED 12324



Mainz · London · Berlin · Madrid · New York · Paris · Prague · Tokyo · Toronto

First published in 1991  
by Schott Music Ltd, London  
48 Great Marlborough Street  
London W1F 7BB

© 1991 Schott Music Ltd, London

*British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data*

Poulton, Diana

A tutor for the Renaissance lute: for the complete  
beginner to the advanced student.

1. Lute—Performance

I. Title

787'.67'0714

ML 1013

ED 12324

Designed by Olivia Kilmartin

Music setting by Andrew Jones

Typeset in 11 on 13 point Plantin  
by York House Typographic Ltd

*All rights reserved.  
Printed in Germany.*

*No part of this publication  
may be reproduced, stored in  
a retrieval system, or transmitted  
in any form or by any means, electronic,  
mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise,  
without the prior written permission of the publishers.*

# Contents

<i>Introduction</i> .....	page I
The instrument.....	I
Stringing .....	2
Tuning .....	2
Some practical advice on tuning .....	3
Tablature .....	4
Holding the Lute .....	6
<i>The Lessons</i>	
1: The right hand.....	7
2: The left hand.....	9
3.....	II
4.....	17
5.....	19
6.....	24
7: The diapasons.....	25
8.....	32
9.....	35
10.....	39
11: Italian tablature.....	40
12: The hexachord.....	50
13: Spanish music and the vihuela .....	51
14: More about Spanish music .....	61
Questions .....	67
15: Scales .....	68
16: The use of graces in Renaissance lute music .....	71
17: The performing of graces.....	77
18.....	78
19: Graces in English sources .....	83
20: Intabulations of polyphonic vocal music .....	95
21: The interpretation of signs in the French <i>air de cour</i> .....	103
22: The 'half' <i>barré</i> .....	106
23: German tablature.....	107
24: <i>Cifra nueva</i> .....	125
25: The ten-course lute .....	130
26.....	134
<i>List of Sources and Modern Editions</i> .....	140

# *Acknowledgements*

The publishers would like to thank the following libraries for permission to reproduce material from their collections:

The British Library, London  
pp. 27, 51, 83, 88-89, 89-91, 104-105 and 106

Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin  
pp. 36, 95 and 98

Bibliothèque du Conservatoire, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris  
pp. 37-39

Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna  
pp. 48-49, 108-113, 114-115, 116-117, 117-119 and 120

Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C.  
pp. 86-87

Národní knihovna, Prague  
p. 122

Musikbibliothek der Stadt Leipzig, Leipzig  
p. 123

Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid  
pp. 125 and 126-127

The lute roses, set as illustrative devices on pp. 6, 85, 121, 124 and 127, are taken from instruments made by Stephen Barber and Sandi Harris, London, and are reproduced here by kind permission.

## *Author's Note*

My thanks are due to Tim Crawford for his invaluable help in correcting the proofs.

---

# *Introduction*

There is no doubt that for anyone who has the opportunity to study with a good teacher much time can be saved and the initial difficulties straightened out more easily. There are still, however, many places where no teacher is available and, in this *Tutor for the Renaissance Lute*, I have attempted to set out a series of lessons which should save the beginner from the time-wasting and disheartening work of trying to find a way to proficiency by trial and error. Without help or guidance in the early stages it is all too easy to fall into habits which may, eventually, hold up further progress.

As with all instruments and music in general, the lute and its music underwent a process of change and development, a process which eventually led to a complete distinction of two styles now generally known as Renaissance and Baroque. However, since these changes came about at different times in different countries, it is impossible to set a hard-and-fast date to which the two terms can be applied.

There was, of course, an intermediate period during which both the earlier instrument and its music predominated, but changes, such as the modification of technique, the addition of more bass courses and some experimental alterations in the basic tuning, began to show themselves. Eventually there emerged an instrument with differences in both shape and sound, music which retained hardly any characteristics of the earlier style and a technique which involved a radical change in the position of the right hand.

The lessons in this book will deal with the lute and its technique from the earliest sources of information up to the end of the time when the type of instrument and its music can, with any justification, be described as belonging to the Renaissance.

The technique which will be taught is based on many years of study of the instructions contained in a number of books, both printed and in manuscript, having their origin in many different countries during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But one of the great difficulties of reconstructing a 'method' for the Renaissance lute is the fact that, during the period of its greatest flowering, no really complete book of instruction was ever produced. Some writers will provide excellent advice on certain points but on others of equal importance nothing is said and a search has to be made to see whether the information can be found elsewhere. Whether it is true or not, a reason for this shortcoming, often given at the time, was that teachers were unwilling to disclose fully the secrets of their own mastery of the instrument. Another reason may have been that some of the basic facts were so well known that it was considered unnecessary to mention them. Such instructions as do exist are generally placed at the beginning of the book, but except in the case of some of the early German masters such as Hans Newsidler and Hans Gerle and, to a certain extent the Spaniard, Luys Milan, there is hardly any pedagogic system and no attempt is made to lead the beginner gently from the easiest pieces to those of more technical difficulty.\*

## *The instrument*

If you have not already bought a lute it is most desirable that you should first seek expert advice. You can waste both time and money by buying an instrument which is not well adjusted in all details or which is unsuitable for your purpose.

\*Thomas Mace, in his *Musick's Monument* (1676; facsimile reprint, C.N.R.S., 1966), gives more detailed and precise instructions than any other writer on the lute. Unfortunately, by his time, the tuning, the fashion in music and the style of play had all changed so radically that much of what he says is inapplicable to the earlier period. *The Burwell Lute Tutor* (facsimile reprint, Boethius Press, 1974), being almost contemporary with Mace, has the same drawback.

In trying to trace the development of the lute it becomes clear that changes of fashion occur in different countries at different times, but even so, these changes are not necessarily consistent since preferences between one player and another can also be clearly seen. For example, evidence suggests that at the beginning of the period with which we are now dealing the lute had six courses, each course consisting of two strings, except in the case of the top course which could be either single or double. Hans Newsidler, the great teacher from Nuremberg, in a book printed in 1536, shows a diagram of a six-course lute with a single top string. In a diagram of an Italian lute in an instruction sheet by Michele Carrara, printed in Rome in 1585, all the courses are double. In Adrian Le Roy's book, which appeared in an English translation under the title *A Briefe and easye instru[c]tion* in 1568, a woodcut shows a lute of six courses with a single top string. Yet Thomas Robinson, in 1603, makes it clear that his lute was strung with double courses throughout and John Dowland, in 'Other Necessary Observations belonging to the Lute' in *Varietie of Lute-Lessons* (1610), implies that his lute also had a double top course.

As early as 1511 a seventh course was mentioned but no music from that date includes its use. By 1585 eight courses are shown on the previously mentioned instruction sheet by Michele Carrara. These extra courses were known as diapasons. For some years to come, however, the greater part of the lute repertoire was still being written for a six-course instrument. By the beginning of the seventeenth century nine courses were in use and a tenth course was added soon after. This was the limit of the true Renaissance instrument.

### *Stringing*

Until the introduction of metal-wound overspun strings for the lower courses in the 1660s (their invention is first mentioned by John Playford in 1664), the lute was strung throughout with gut. Although there is no doubt that the sound of gut is much sweeter than that of nylon and that covered strings for the lower courses give a different sound, it is advisable for the beginner to start with nylon strings since, once the instrument has settled in tune, they are far less susceptible to changes of temperature and humidity than gut. Later, the choice remains open and there are some professional players today who find the extra tuning problems are compensated for by the sweetness and authenticity of the sound.

### *Tuning*

The tuning of the six-course lute is made up of fourths with a third in the middle. Lutes of different sizes, to be tuned at different pitches, were in use during the Renaissance period and, of course, they are made today, but the tuning in most general use consists of the following notes reading from the sixth course upwards: G c f a d' and g'.

At the beginning of the period with which we are dealing the three lower courses were tuned in octaves. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, however, some players began to use unison stringing throughout and, by 1610, John Dowland, in *Varietie of Lute-Lessons*, comments that octave strings were considered to be 'irregular to the rules of Musicke'.

The tuning of the diapasons varies greatly. It can be arranged in any of the following ways for a seven- to a ten-course lute:

7th course	F or D
7th and 8th	F and D
	F and E (or E flat)
	F and C
7th, 8th and 9th	F E (or E flat) and D
	F E (or E flat) and C
7th, 8th, 9th and 10th	F E (or E flat) D and C

Very rarely the 10th is lowered to B or B flat.

In the case of the seven-course lute, if the seventh is strung to be tuned at D it will only be possible to raise it to F if gut strings are used, but the D tuning is probably the most useful since in many cases it is possible to obtain the F by stopping the third fret. This was often done. Nevertheless, as will be seen later, some pieces are written for the F tuning and in such a way that the desired effect is almost impossible to produce if the F does not come from the open string.

Directions for the tuning of the diapasons are seldom given in original sources so, where they do appear, before playing a piece it is necessary to examine the chords or notes under which they occur in order to determine to which note each one should be tuned.

### *Some practical advice on tuning*

The following hints are intended only for the student who has had no previous experience of tuning a musical instrument.

It is not uncommon to find a beginner, wrestling with the early difficulties of tuning, with pegs in a condition which makes success impossible. If the pegs slip a reliable preparation can be bought from most musical instrument dealers, or powdered resin can be used. If they stick, a little French chalk can be used, but care must be taken not to use too much. Sometimes it will be found that when a peg is turned the string either does not move or it moves with a sudden jerk. This means it is not slipping properly over the fret-nut. This can be cured by loosening the string and rubbing the groove with a well-sharpened lead pencil.

There will be the same number of pegs in the peg-box as there are strings, and on these pegs the strings should be arranged in the following order: with the soundboard of the lute facing you, the pegs on the right-hand side will carry the strings highest in pitch. Assuming that you are using a single first course, this will be wound on the peg nearest the fret-nut; the first string of the second course on the second peg; the second string of the second course on the third peg. The rest should follow in exact order, away from you down the right-hand side and towards you up the left-hand side ending with the lowest course on the two pegs nearest the fret-nut. The exact order is essential. For tuning it is important to know by touch the exact point where each string is controlled. If the order of the stringing is altered it will greatly increase the difficulties.

In the actual winding of the string onto the peg, be sure that the winding ends on the side of the peg nearest the inner cheek of the peg-box so that the tension is pulling inwards. If the winding ends towards the thinner end of the peg the tension will press the peg outwards.

It will often be found in books in which polyphonic vocal music has been arranged for solo voice and lute that the soprano vocal line is given in the original key. If this were to be followed exactly, lutes at three, or even four pitches, would be required. That this was not the intention, however, is made clear by Franciscus Bossinensis in his *Libro Secondo*, printed in Venice in 1511. Here he gives an instruction before each vocal line as, for example, to tune the voice 'to the fifth fret of the canto', i.e., the highest course. In any case, it would probably have been necessary to give the singer (if it were not the lutenist himself) the starting note, since evidence suggests that during the sixteenth century pitch for instruments of the lute family was far from standardized. Even as relatively late as the early years of the seventeenth century, lack of a standard pitch was still common. For example, Thomas Robinson, in *The Schoole of Musicke* (printed in 1603), gives the instruction 'first set up the Treble, so high as you dare venture for breaking, setting them both in one tune or sound called an unison'.

Today it is the usual practice to have a lute for solo playing tuned to a nominal G, although some performers prefer to tune to F sharp or F according to the length of the strings and whether or not gut is used. Whichever note is chosen for the highest string the most convenient way for the beginner to tune is to take each note from a well-tuned keyboard, if one is available. If not, a tuning fork should be bought for the note of the third course, relative to the note chosen for the top string. For a top string at G it will be A440; for F sharp it will be G sharp, at F it will be G.

Start with one string of the third course. The tuning fork will sound an octave above the note to which it must be tuned, but your ear will soon become accustomed to this. There are several



good reasons for starting with this string. Now bring the next string of the course into tune with it. Then you should proceed upwards with the second course and then with the first. Should you, to begin with, find difficulty in hearing the intervals, you can help yourself by using the gut frets which are set at semitone intervals on the neck of the lute. With a finger of the left hand stop the course you have just tuned on the fifth fret. When you play this string with a finger of the right hand it will give you the note to which the second course should be tuned. First tune one of the strings and then bring the other into tune with it. Similarly, the fifth fret of the second course will give you the note to which the top course must be tuned. Stop the third course on the third fret and bring the fifth course into tune with it an octave lower. Next, stop the fifth course on the fifth fret—and this will give you the note for the fourth course. The note to which the sixth course has to be tuned can be found (an octave higher) on the second fret of the fourth course. This should then be exactly two octaves below your first course. If your lute has octave stringing on the three lower courses, follow these instructions for the lower string of the course and then bring the higher octave into tune.

Once you have tuned your lute, check it regularly with a keyboard or tuning fork to ensure that the pitch is maintained exactly.

However, in music written for a G to g' lute, whatever pitch is chosen, the notes have to be thought of as G c f a d' g', otherwise in reading from staff notation, unless another pitch is actually stated, the notes will come on the wrong positions on the fingerboard and in transcribing from tablature the music will end up in the wrong key. From now onwards whenever notes of the scale are mentioned they will be referred to as they would occur in the G tuning, unless some other pitch is indicated in the original source.

## Tablature

Music for the lute is written in a form of notation called tablature. Tablature for other instruments exists, but this particular form came into use in answer to the special needs of the lute and other stringed instruments of the same kind. For this purpose it has many advantages in representing the composer's intention. It is also much easier to read onto the lute than staff notation.

There are several different forms of lute tablature all of which will be explained in due course. English lutenists normally used the system known as French tablature, and this will be explained first.

Unlike staff notation, tablature deals only with the positions of the fingers and not with musical sounds. The six-line stave represents the six main courses of the lute. The letters disposed on or between the lines denote the positions in which the fingers are to be placed on the courses and the frets. In French tablature the letters are generally written above the line and not on it, although this is not invariably so. The top line of the stave represents the first course—that is the course highest in pitch. The second line represents the second course, the third line the third course, and so on down to the lowest line which represents the sixth course. All the open courses are represented by the letter *a*. All courses when stopped on the first fret are represented by the letter *b*; on the second fret by *c*; on the third fret by *d*; on the fourth by *e*; on the fifth by *f*, and thus the alphabet is followed up to *g*, *h* and *i*. No *j* is used so *i* is followed by *k* and as many other letters as are needed. Some lutes have extra frets made of wood and glued to the soundboard, but others may have none, in which case the high notes have to be found with the fingers alone. By these means a precise plan is given of where the fingers of the left hand are to be placed, and which courses are to be played with the right hand. On the following page is a diagram, going up to fret *f*, which will make this clear.






The diapasons are indicated in a number of different ways:

7th course	<i>a</i>	<del><i>a</i></del>	<u><i>a</i></u>	
8th course	/ <i>a</i>	/ <del><i>a</i></del>	/ <u><i>a</i></u>	<i>a</i> /
9th course	// <i>a</i>	// <del><i>a</i></del>	// <u><i>a</i></u>	<i>a</i> //
10th course	/// <i>a</i>	/// <del><i>a</i></del>	/// <u><i>a</i></u>	<i>a</i> ///

1	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>f</i>
2	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>f</i>
3	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>f</i>
4	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>f</i>
5	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>f</i>
6	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>f</i>
<i>Course</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>1st fret</i>	<i>2nd fret</i>	<i>3rd fret</i>	<i>4th fret</i>	<i>5th fret</i>

Jean-Baptiste Besard's use of signs in the *Thesaurus Harmonicus* (1603) can be rather confusing. He uses ♯ for the seventh course and a capital A for the eighth course. When he wants the notes D, E and F he uses the capital letters ACD, or for D, E and F sharp he uses ACE. For the note C he uses a Gothic type *C*.

The duration of the note or chord is indicated by signs placed over the staff. In sixteenth- and seventeenth-century books of instruction the signs are given the following values:

- | or | =  Semibreve
- | =  Minim
- | =  Crotchet
- | =  Quaver
- | =  Semiquaver

Every further tail added to the stem divides the note by half. No time-mark longer than | (a semibreve), is used. The tails which are added to the stem have no other significance at all beyond their relation to this basic time value. They give no indication of speed. Thus four | in a bar can represent the very moderate 4/4 of a pavan, and six of them in a bar can represent the very rapid 6/8 of a jig. In a great quantity of lute music, particularly in the manuscripts, no time signature is given at the beginning of a piece. Careful consideration therefore has to be given to the form and character of the piece before its speed can be determined.

A dot following one of the time-marks has precisely the same significance as in staff notation, i.e., it prolongs the note by half its duration.

The way in which the above signs were actually written varies considerably. In printed tablature it is more usual to find the 'signal' type of sign, as in the examples given above. This type holds good for the note over which it is placed and all those that follow until a new sign is given.

Thus | | | | | | indicates four minims followed by four crotchets.

In manuscripts, however, a kind of gridiron is often used. In this system four quavers followed by four semiquavers would be expressed like this:



Where the value of a single note is to be expressed the 'signal' type is used.

In many modern transcriptions the value of these signs is halved.

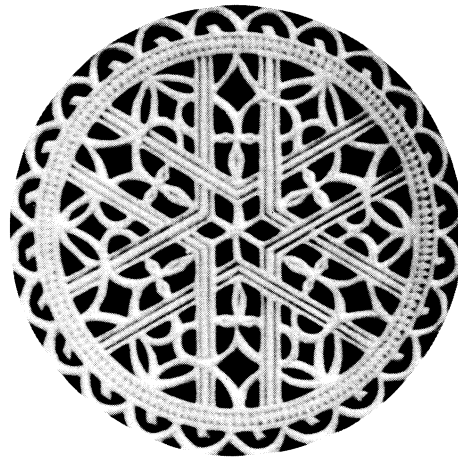
### *Holding the lute*

First it is important to find a chair that suits your height. If the chair is too high it will greatly increase your initial difficulties.

From a study of pictures through the centuries it can be seen that lutes were held in a number of different positions. Some players are shown standing, others sitting with both feet firmly planted on the ground; some use a low footstool for the left foot, others sit with one leg crossed over the other. In many pictures the lute is shown resting on, or supported by, a table and this support is recommended in several of the books of instruction. From these various positions the student should choose the one in which he or she feels most comfortable and relaxed.

The back of the lute rests against the diaphragm of the player and the lower edge rests on the thigh. The right forearm, as it comes over the upper edge of the lute for the hand to touch the courses, exerts a light pressure so that the weight of the instrument is taken by neither hand. It is largely a matter of finding exactly how to balance the lute so that it rests in position even when neither hand is touching it.

It is important that it should be held so that the soundboard is facing slightly upwards and not in a position which projects the sound towards the floor.



# The Lessons

## Lesson 1:

### The right hand

The finger nails must be short and must not touch the courses in playing. Except for one Italian teacher, Alessandro Piccinini, in 1623, this point is constantly emphasized, and even he only advocates that the nail should be gently rounded to coincide with the tip of the finger. Thomas Mace, in 1676, suggests they may be used in consort playing. The long nails of the present-day guitar player will produce an entirely unauthentic sound.

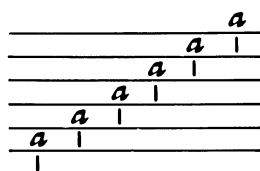
To bring the hand into the correct position the forearm should touch the upper edge of the lute just about level with the bridge. The hand is held obliquely across the strings continuing the line of the arm and, in the technique now being described, not at a right angle across the strings. The little finger is laid on the soundboard. This is a point of great importance and is mentioned in every book of instruction in which the right-hand technique is described. It will lie with the side, and not the tip, touching the soundboard. Although, with this type of technique, the thumb and first finger may touch the courses across the lower end of the rose, it is not usual for the hand to be held directly over the rose as in modern guitar playing.

The movement of the hand up and down the strings in order to change the kind of tone produced is only mentioned by one writer, Piccinini, who appears to have been somewhat eccentric in his time. Other writers, in describing how the little finger is laid on the soundboard use such phrases as 'this is its constant position' or 'as if [it] were glued unto it'.

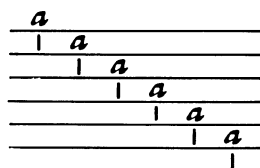
Single notes are played with the thumb and first finger alternately, the thumb always taking the accented note. Later this technique was modified, but it is essential to master this type of fingering before proceeding further. All through this book, where the right-hand fingering is indicated, the conventional signs of a small stroke for the thumb and a dot placed under the note for the first finger, will be used.

Firstly, it is essential to acquire command of the correct movement of the thumb. With the hand in the position already described and with the thumb held low and almost parallel with the sixth course, it should move forward and downward as if it were going to touch the second finger; the course will then be touched with the side of the thumb and not with the tip. This movement should bring the thumb to rest on the course immediately next to it: that is, if the thumb is moving from the sixth course it should come to rest on the fifth. This ensures that both strings of the course are sounded.

Practise this movement across the strings as follows:



When this has been mastered practise the movement in reverse:



Now work backwards and forwards without looking at your hand until you begin to feel the movement with some degree of certainty. Later, more information will be given about this special movement of the thumb and why it is important.

Next the movement of the first finger must be mastered. The finger should be slightly curved and the tip must be laid on the course so that both strings are touched. The movement of the finger is not carried through to touch the next course.

Practise this movement downwards and upwards:

A musical staff with five lines. The first line has an accented note 'a' with a dot below it. The second line has an accented note 'a' with a dot below it. The third line has an accented note 'a' with a dot below it. The fourth line has an accented note 'a' with a dot below it. The fifth line has an accented note 'a' with a dot below it. This sequence is repeated for both downward and upward movements.

Passages of single notes are played with the thumb and the first finger used alternately but in this case the movement of the thumb has to be slightly modified and, while still exerting the downwards pressure, it must be lifted just before it touches the next course. The thumb always takes the accented note.

A musical staff with five lines. Above the staff are four upward-pointing arrows. The staff contains a sequence of accented notes 'a' with dots below them, starting from the first line and moving down to the fifth line. This sequence is repeated for both downward and upward movements.

A musical staff with five lines. Above the staff are four upward-pointing arrows. The staff contains a sequence of accented notes 'a' with dots below them, starting from the first line and moving down to the fifth line. This sequence is repeated for both downward and upward movements.

A musical staff with five lines. Above the staff are four upward-pointing arrows. The staff contains a sequence of accented notes 'a' with dots below them, starting from the first line and moving down to the fifth line. This sequence is repeated for both downward and upward movements.

When one accented note is followed by another accented note the thumb is used twice in succession:

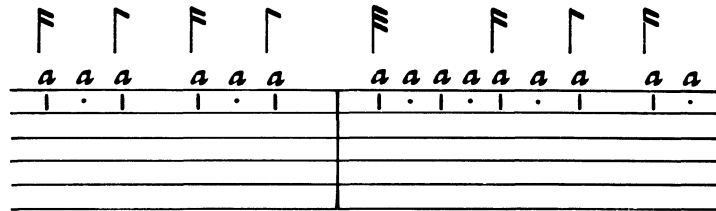
A musical staff with five lines. Above the staff are eight upward-pointing arrows. The staff contains a sequence of accented notes 'a' with dots below them, starting from the first line and moving down to the fifth line. This sequence is repeated for both downward and upward movements.

A musical staff with five lines. Above the staff are eight upward-pointing arrows. The staff contains a sequence of accented notes 'a' with dots below them, starting from the first line and moving down to the fifth line. This sequence is repeated for both downward and upward movements.

A musical staff with five lines. Above the staff are eight upward-pointing arrows. The staff contains a sequence of accented notes 'a' with dots below them, starting from the first line and moving down to the fifth line. This sequence is repeated for both downward and upward movements.



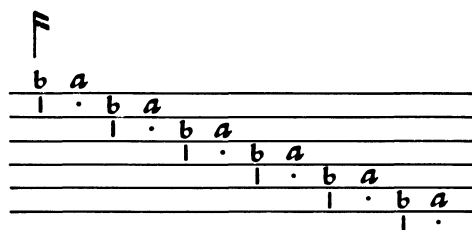
Here is a more complicated rhythmic pattern in which the same type of fingering must be used:



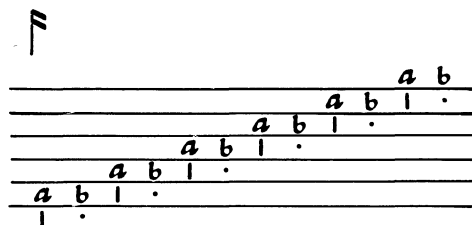
## Lesson 2: The left hand

Allow the left arm to fall into a natural, relaxed position at your side, then lift your hand and place it on the neck of the lute with the thumb on the back of the neck between the first and the second frets; the knuckles should be raised so that the hand is curved and the tips of the fingers fall on the courses. The elbow should be raised slightly from your side so that the forearm and the fingers are parallel with the frets. The thumb and the first finger should be in such a position that they would meet if the neck of the lute were not there. This is the basic position of the left hand. It is of great importance that no weight is taken by this hand and that the thumb rests only lightly on the back of the neck so that it may not in any way impede the movement of the rest of the hand.

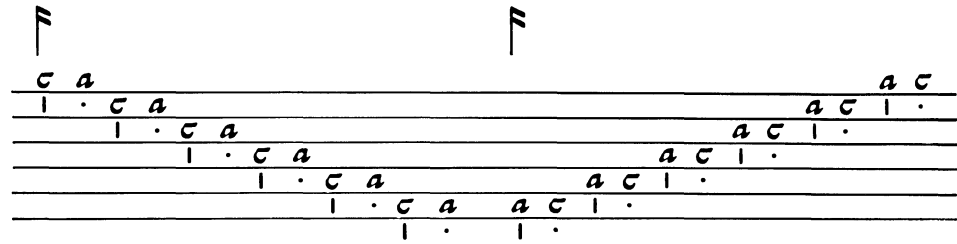
In the next exercise the thumb should be placed between the joint of the neck and the peg-box and the first fret. Place the first finger just behind fret *b*. (The fingers should never be placed actually on the frets; it will deaden the sound.) With the right hand play  $\overset{b}{|} \overset{a}{\cdot}$  with the thumb and first finger. When the left-hand finger moves across towards the fourth, fifth and sixth courses the wrist should rise a little and the thumb should move slightly towards the palm of the hand. In this way the curved position can be maintained and the tip of the finger will fall onto the lower courses. Without this movement the finger will have to be stretched forward and it will only be possible to lay the front of the finger on the courses:



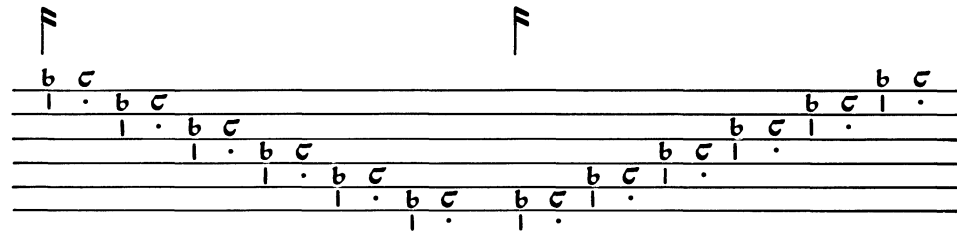
Now reverse the movement, but in moving backwards care should be taken not to allow the left hand to fall into a position where the base of the first finger touches the side of the fingerboard, or the neck to sink down between the thumb and base of the first finger. There must always be a clear space under the fingers at this point.



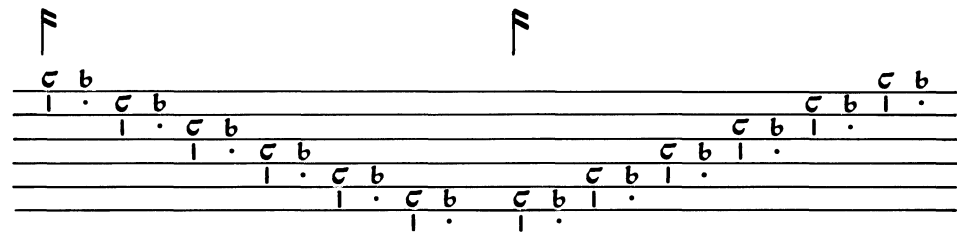
Next, put the thumb between the first and second fret on the back of the neck and use the second finger for the note *c*:



With the thumb in the same place, the first and second fingers will now be used. In this kind of movement when, as in this case, *b* is stopped with the first finger and *c* with the second, after the *b* has been played the first finger should not be lifted until the *c* has been played. Both are then lifted simultaneously.



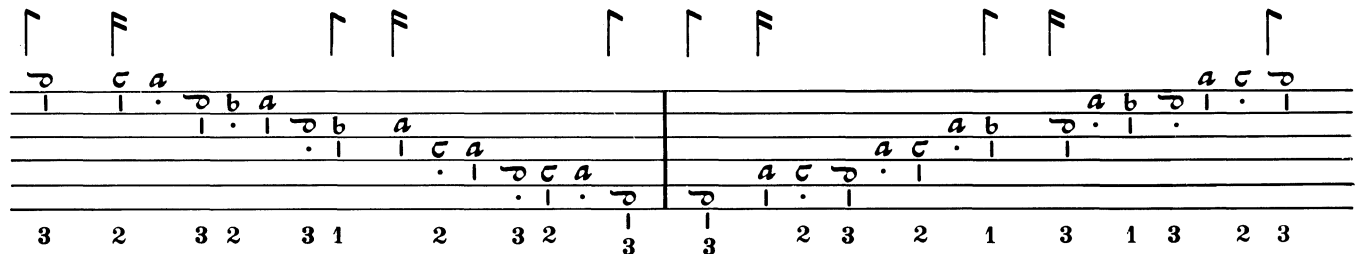
In using these two fingers in the reverse order both should be placed on the course before the first note is struck. When the *c* has been played the second finger is lifted; *b* is then played, the first finger is then lifted and both are placed simultaneously on the next course.



It is important to acquire the ability to move the fingers in these two ways since both contribute greatly to the continuity and smoothness of sound.

Another important point, which should be studied right from the first, is to keep the fingers as close as possible to the courses, only just lifting them clear. If they fly upwards with uncontrolled movements it will eventually become harder to play really rapid passages since the further the fingers travel away from the strings, the longer it takes for them to return. Also, untidy fingers are disturbing to an audience.

Now add the third finger to the two that have been used already. The small numbers under the sixth line indicate which finger to use. Where two stopped notes occur on the same string, remember the directions in the last two exercises, and follow the right-hand fingering carefully.



In the next exercise, when the fourth finger stops the letter *f* on the first course, it will be necessary to place the thumb between the second and the third fret. When the *d* and *c* are stopped on the second course with the second and first finger the thumb should be allowed to come back into position between the first and second fret. Again it will be necessary to allow it to follow the movement of the hand when the final notes of the scale are played. Place the fourth, third and first fingers in position before the first note is struck.