

How to use Successful Scales

Dear Oboist,

Successful Scales is intended to give you lots of different approaches to learning scales. You don't have to play up and down the scale (probably leaving out the sharps or flats) several times and then stop feeling frustrated because it hasn't worked.

Split your scale practice into small sections and spend 5 minutes really working on one scale to improve it. Always play with your best tone and take your time to make them sound beautiful. Each section in Successful Scales contains solo pieces, a duet, circuit exercises to train your fingers and some other fun activities like filling in the missing notes or making up your own sections of the tune.

Don't try and play everything all at once (unless you have half an hour to spare) it is much more fun to work on the scale and then vary which pieces and activities you choose from day to day.

Follow your teacher's advice! Follow your teacher's advice!
Yes I really did write that twice to make sure you read it, your teacher will have already given you lots of useful tips to start working on your scales. The first step is to learn which notes go in the scale and the key signatures. You will save yourself hours of practice if you do this. Learning to say the notes up and down really does work. Do not go on to another scale until you are really confident with the one you are working on, even if it takes a week of daily practice.

If it goes wrong, don't panic, just start again and go slower. If you keep making mistakes it's your brain's way of saying 'help, I need more time to think, please slow down'. It also helps your brain to learn things if you repeat things lots of times. Try playing the scale or any difficult sections 9 times slowly and very carefully followed by 1 time at a faster tempo.

Once you start to get the hang of things then be creative, try different dynamics, vary the tonguing and slurs, make up your own circuits. The most important thing is have fun and make your work on scales part of your regular practice routine, you will be amazed at how easy they become!

Enjoy!

Karen Gourlay
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F major scale and arpeggio one octave

Grade 1
Grade 2



Walkabout



Circuit 1

! Spend 1 minute on each of the circuit exercises for maximum effect



Catch Me



Circuit 2



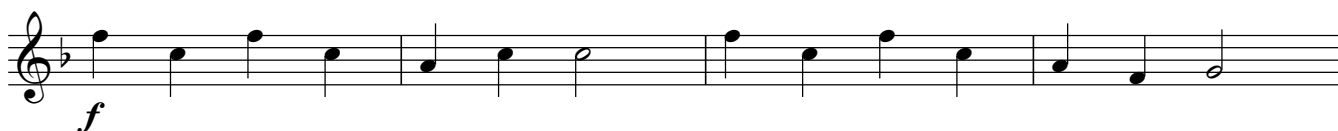
Question and Answer! Fill in the gaps using notes from the F major scale or arpeggio



Circuit 3



Celebration



Final Checklist

1. What is the key signature of F major?
2. Can you say the names of the notes out loud and finger the notes at the same time?
3. Can you play the scale slowly 9 times in a row without any mistakes?

If you got 3 out of 3 then congratulations, you are now ready to learn another scale.

G major scale and arpeggio one octave

Grade 1
Grade 2



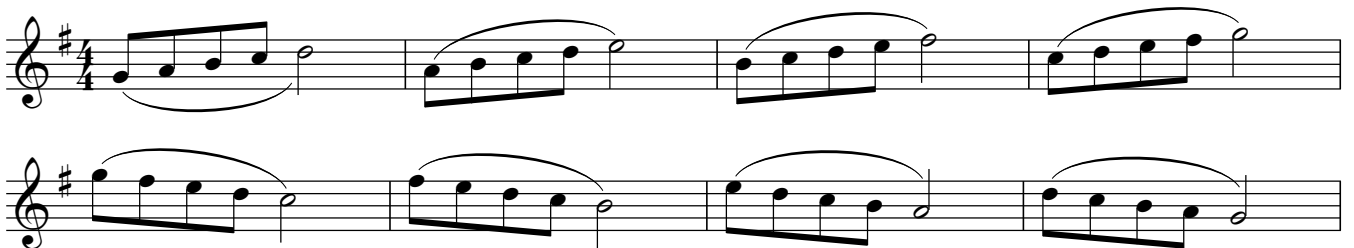
Circuit 1 ! Try this with different articulation patterns (all tongued, slurred in pairs etc.)
! Bars 4 and 5 may need extra work



Jumpabout



Circuit 2 ! Try this using different dynamic levels



Fill in the Missing Notes

