

# placing groups of four

and crossing under  
a beginning etude

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The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of three systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The first system shows a sequence of eighth notes in the treble clef with fingerings 4, 3, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2. The bass clef has corresponding eighth notes with fingerings 4, 3, 2, 1, 2. The second system continues the pattern with similar fingerings. The third system concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots. The score includes various slurs and fingerings to guide the student through the exercise.

One of my favorite things about the Suzuki method is that it teaches the placing of all 4 fingers very early on. Learning to do this teaches you to find a good total hand position. If you can place all 4 fingers on adjacent strings, you'll be well on the way to finding a healthy hand position for nearly every other pattern you'll place. It doesn't come easy, so be patient. Work until all 4 fingers land simultaneously on the strings. If you have trouble, try playing the 4 notes together, as though they should be a chord. Then go back and try to place them as a group and play individually. When you replace for the next group, you should always reach under your thumb. When you've mastered this, you can learn *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*, *Ode to Joy*, *Felicitation* or the *Irish Love Song*. It also prepares you for *Children of the Heavenly Father*. If you've worked through this and the study on root position triads, try out the lever free version of Grieg's *Morning Song*. It's a lot more interesting to fine tune your new skills with music you enjoy than an etude.

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